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## A Historiography of Nationalism: And the Case for Scandinavia

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A HISTORIOGRAPHY OF NATIONALISM:

AND THE CASE FOR SCANDINAVIA

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Summer Research 2020

## Introduction

The goal of this project is to survey the historiography of nationalism and its theoretical shortcomings. By building upon the work of emerging theorists and revisionists across a wide variety of disciplines (i.e. history, ethnic studies, religious studies etc.), this project first seeks to contextualize nationalism and its related theories in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. After establishing context, this project summarizes and builds upon the work of medievalist scholar Susan Reynolds to discuss the historical errors in the modern narrative of nationalism by reexamining medieval collective activity, and more importantly identity. The work of other historians such as Adrian Hastings will also further validate the claims made by Reynolds and contextualize the significance of their contributions to revising medieval historiography. After establishing a firm historical foundation, this project then analyzes the confusing definitions for the *nation* before moving onto nationalism and juxtaposing the orthodoxy of nationalism theory to more current and emerging theories of nation-state formation and nationalism. Lastly, this project quickly surveys Scandinavian history during the Middle Ages to suggest that the conditions for nationalism, or a proto nationalism, were present in the Middle Ages and that these developments heavily contributed to the modern conception of nationalism. Furthermore, this project's main goal is to challenge the implicit biases that lead scholars to wrongfully reject the possibility for nationalist tendencies amongst the elite and lay during the Middle Ages.

After examining the scholarship done on nationalism, most scholarship on nationalism has focused on Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. It is from these regions where the majority of nationalism theory rests on and is then extrapolated (wrongfully so) onto other regions.

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Besides the implicit and cringeworthy ethnocentrism exhibited by some nationalist scholars,<sup>1</sup> this impertinent error must be ameliorated to acknowledge the different manifestations of nationalism in other regions, including Northern Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The whole world does not operate like Western, Central, or Eastern Europe. Yet, when taking a geographical survey of the scholarship done on nationalism, most of it tends to hyper focus on France, the United States, Great Britain, the Habsburg Empire, and Russia. While some recent scholarship has analyzed countries in Latin America, East Asia, and South Asia, there remains large regional gaps in the scholarship of nationalism.

In addition to these regional gaps, some prominent scholars of nationalism biasedly excluded religion as a mechanism of nationalism; thus, causing a gap in discipline and analysis. This is incompatible even with 19<sup>th</sup> century forms of nationalism where national and religious identities intersected such as Schönerer's German nationalism embraced anti-Catholicism, anti-Slavism, and anti-Semitism.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the essential field of ethnic studies also causes a gap in discipline for most theorists because of its more recent emergence in academia. Concepts such as ethno-nationalism were not even discussed amongst 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century theorists. Therefore, one's religion and ethnicity are important to analyze because like one's nation, religion and ethnicity can be heavily tied to one's identity and in extension can be tied to the identity of the nation<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>This probably contributes to the disagreement surrounding the definitions of "nationalism," "sovereignty," and "nationhood."

<sup>2</sup> **Speeches by Schönerer.** From Heinrich Schnee, ed., Georg Ritter von Schönerer. Ein Kämpfer für Alldeutschland [Georg Ritter von Schönerer. A Fighter for Pan-Germany], third, improved and expanded edition (Reichenberg: Sudetendeutscher Verlag Franz Kraus, 1943), pp. 126-27, 140-42, 175, 238-39. Translated by Jeremy King & Rachel Coll, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> For example, the Law and Justice Party in Poland has tied their brand of Polish nationalism to Catholicism. Given this gap in scholarship (both by region and by discipline), the goal of this project is to further expand upon the scholarship done on nationalism.

Moreover, rather than going down the rabbit hole of determining the “origins” of nations and nationalism, this project looks at nations and nationalism (in a European context) as a combination of religious, social, economic, political, and even early ethnic movements that rise and dip over centuries across different regions. Although this argument would be strengthened by also analyzing non-European nations, it is beyond my expertise and ability to analyze nationalism in these regions—while also respecting cultural diversity.

Despite this limitation, there are more aspects of nationalism theory that warrant greater scrutiny. The chronological narrative espoused by nationalism scholars reliantly point to the French and Industrial Revolutions as the foundations for nations and nationalism in modern Europe.<sup>4</sup> However, if this is the prevailing logic, then why wouldn’t the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, or the “Discovery of the New World”<sup>5</sup> engender such radical changes that would produce intense loyalties such as nationalism? Thus, while the orthodoxy of nationalism points to the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution as the causes of modern nationalism,<sup>6</sup> this project points to the Renaissance and the Reformation in late medieval Europe as the catalysts of a proto-nationalism that spurred the formation of early modern Europe. My reasoning is that similarly to the French and Industrial Revolutions, the Renaissance and the Reformation restructured European politics, economics, cultures, and society. For instance like the French Revolution—which changed the ways in which people interacted with their governments and participated in politics—the Renaissance generated

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<sup>4</sup> They emphasize these two events because the Industrial Revolution changed man’s relationship to the land, the economy, and society, while the French Revolution changed man’s relationship to governance by “introducing the notion of consent of the governed.”

<sup>5</sup> I would imagine “discovering” new groups of people would shake European identity, positionality, and cosmology; let alone cause the reflective question of “Who am I?” and “Who are my people?” as explorers started categorizing the different groups of Native Americans.

<sup>6</sup> Ernest Gellner, “Nationalism and Modernization,” in *Nationalism*, ed. by John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, 55-63. Oxford: Oxford University Press (1994) 161-162.

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concepts such as civic humanism—which established the notions of the ideal citizen—and encouraged greater participation in government (albeit for the elite). And the religious wars of the Reformation contributed to the establishment of hard borders in Europe and codified the concept of sovereignty in the Peace of Westphalia (1648).

### Literature Review

Nationalism in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century was primarily studied by historians, philosophers, and philologists; however, in the later half of the twentieth century (after the collapse of Nazi Germany) the study of nationalism gained more traction in other social-scientific disciplines. Today, scholars of nationalism vary across disciplines from communications studies, economics, sociology/anthropology, and more recently, ethnic studies. These emerging disciplines, therefore, demonstrate the need for the revision of nationalism theory because so many concepts related to one's identity (such as ethnicity) were barely explored before the "orthodoxy" was established. Despite this need, nationalist schools of thought continue to be dominated by an orthodoxy of modernist historians, philologists, and sociologists who claim that the origins of nations and nationalism are inventions of the nineteenth and twentieth century nation-states.<sup>7</sup> This is a weakness for modern-nationalism theory because there has not been enough time to conduct a *longue durée* that could determine some greater trends of nationalism during this period. Maybe this is why it's been hard for nationalism theorists to agree on what comprises nationalism and its definition? Nevertheless, among the old guard of nationalist thought, prominent theorists such as Ernest Gellner, Max

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<sup>7</sup> Most of this history, may I point out, is chronologically newer compared to the history of the Middle Ages (which has and continues to be revised by medievalists after errors were found in 19<sup>th</sup> century scholarship).

Weber, John Breuilly, Benedict Anderson, and Eric Hobsbawm defend the modernist interpretation of the origins of nations and nationalism.

Again, the purpose of this project is to better contextualize the work of modern nationalist scholars and offer an alternative perspective on the nation and nationalism. Rather than binding nationalism to modernity, I propose to recategorize their arguments under the umbrella of “modern nationalism theory”—which has no claim to the origins of nationalism—but postulates how nationalism took form during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in parts of Europe. By recategorizing modern nationalism this way, I am acknowledging the temporality and variant forms of nationalism. This is essential to do because a concept as complex as nationalism did not spontaneously emerge from two, albeit important, events. Rather, it developed over the Middle Ages and became fully realized in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some foundations for this premise build upon the work of medievalist scholar Susan Reynolds from *Kingdoms and Communities*, and the theoretical works of Hugh Seton-Watson’s *Nations and States*, Adrian Hastings’ *The Construction of Nationhood*, and Karl Deutsch’s *Nationalism and Social Communication*. In combination, these works and others extend the debate on nationalism because they undo the modernist narrative<sup>8</sup> and acknowledge the early developments of nations and nationalism.

From a historical perspective, Reynolds’ work really contextualizes the Middle Ages and subverts the preconceptions held by many scholars who merely have a general knowledge of the pre-modern world. According to Reynolds:

Medieval historians today do not always realize how many of their assumptions derive from arguments put forward by lawyers, historians, and political writers of the

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<sup>8</sup> The idea that the nation state is a product of modernity and that it happens as nations/states modernize.

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18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century...whose preoccupations were different from the time of the Middle Ages.<sup>9</sup>

This is important to understand because most nationalist scholars disregarded the Middle Ages due to their faulty interpretations of the period. For example, she rejects the modernist narrative that tend “to see medieval councils and parliaments as purposeful strivings towards representative government.”<sup>10</sup> These assumptions (which 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century theorists purported) blind academics from scrutinizing the unanswered questions of nations and nationalism because they neglect to analyze the pre-modern developments and forms of nationalism. Thus, by undoing this 19<sup>th</sup> century narrative<sup>11</sup> Reynolds revises the preconceived notions of the Middle Ages held by many historians, which in turn requires the revision of early modern and modern European historiography around nationalism so that these faulty assumptions are removed from the theories of nationalism.

Understanding Reynold’s “three principle arguments,”<sup>12</sup> it is evident that given these revisions to the historiography done on the Middle Ages, it is essential for other fields to revise their 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century theories and undo the modernist narrative(s) in their fields of study too. In Political Science and Ethnic Studies, Hugh Seton-Watson and John Armstrong, for example, have started this revision process with their theories of nationalism and nations (their work will be explained below). While their theories are helpful in extending the debate around

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<sup>9</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities In Western Europe, 900-1300*, E-book, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.01503>. Accessed 14 Aug 2020. Downloaded on behalf of University of Puget Sound, xiii. This introduction this is a field changing publication that interrogates the narratives many people believe.

<sup>10</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities In Western Europe, 900-1300*, “The Community and the Realm,” 250-251.

<sup>11</sup> Which many 20<sup>th</sup> centuries continued such as modernization theory.

<sup>12</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities In Western Europe, 900-1300*, 1-11. 1) collective activity was more important and more pervasive in Medieval Europe—rejecting the notion that communes and parliaments are the product of modern democracy, (2) lay political ideas were not merely “power-struggles of value-free, rational self-interest, or relics from the clergy, (3) there was a minimal difference between social-political organization.



nationalism, further revisions are yet to be made. Thus, for scholars of nationalism it is essential that the “Age of Nationalism” include the transitional periods of late medieval Europe and early modern Europe. This is essential because medievalists have demonstrated that the “idea of a people”<sup>13</sup> was already established and contributed to the early development of collective consciousnesses in medieval England, France, and Scandinavia.<sup>14</sup> Given that these revisions directly contradict modernist assumptions of medieval collective activity, it warrants that the narrative of nations and nationalism, and the assumptions held by modernist scholars, be challenged.

According to Reynolds, the medieval conception of a “people” was more “similar to the modern concept”<sup>15</sup> than “originally” perceived. This is important to understand because if a group can conceptualize some form of horizontal solidarity, then as groups grow and interact with others (possibly creating more bonds of horizontal solidarity among groups they perceive to be similar enough to be included) they are able to develop a larger collective consciousness.<sup>16</sup> So, by understanding the concept of a “people” (an imagined community) these groups can then inch towards the concept of a “nation.” In addition to these developments, the legal categorization of people was reinforced during the Middle Ages because “the stage at which law [became] territorialized also seems to have been [the time] at which peoples came to be

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<sup>13</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1-6. Which was reinforced by Christian teachings of the Bible and the story of Moses leading his people from to salvation and away from a foreign oppressor.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities In Western Europe, 900-1300*, 9.

<sup>16</sup> Christianity would be a precursor to national consciousness because like a nation, Christendom was an “imagined community” in the Middle Ages. While Christendom was not always at the forefront of lay thought during the Middle Ages, it is important to remember that the knightly orders and their entourages during the Crusades had a concept of Christendom as they waged war to extend its boundaries and “defend the Holy Land.”

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perceived in territorial terms too.”<sup>17</sup> By territorializing people, the land was claimed by competing groups and long term institutions were formed to govern the people who reside within their borders.<sup>18</sup> Finally, once the territory was claimed, institutions established, and the maps made, the later medieval ages saw the fusion of new humanistic ideas and new forms of government that eventually “shaped an essentially new sort of national consciousness.”<sup>19</sup> It is from this new national consciousness that the nation state was established and early modern Europe eventually emerged.

Moreover, part of the difficulty with studying nations and nationalism, is that there is not an agreed upon definition for these terms. Thus, there continues to be an ongoing debate as to “What is a nation?” and “What is nationalism?”. These questions can be tricky to answer due to their subjectivity, and in a contemporary context, nations and nationalism are hard to define due to the attachment of legal concepts such as sovereignty and the nation-state to them.<sup>20</sup> In addition to this confusion, scholars are invoking the definitions of previous scholars to support their claims, but are neglecting to undo the faulty modernist interpretations assumed by the authors who they are invoking. Therefore, for this project my working definition of nationalism is that it is the product of social, political, economic, religious, and ethnic movements geared towards protecting the shared, mythic concept of the nation. While it is difficult to determine who exactly comprises the nation—since this can change quite frequently (especially in periods of territorial

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<sup>17</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities In Western Europe, 900-1300*, “The Community and the Realm,” 319

<sup>18</sup> These institutions and claims to form the foundation for the mythic narrative many nationalists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century employed.

<sup>19</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities In Western Europe, 900-1300*, “The Community of the Realm,” 330.

<sup>20</sup> The legality of a nation is also blurring the definitions of a nation because some modernists discredit the nation’s existence if it is not a sovereign state. This is important to distinguish between because a *state* is a political organization whereas the *nation* is a community of people. There can be nations who are stateless i.e. Palestine or Tibet.

expansion)—I find it easier to flip the question and analyze the ways in which groups of people differentiated themselves from others to better understand the “nation.”<sup>21</sup> Rather than asking who is “in” the nation, it can be easier to analyze who is “out.” John Armstrong in *Nations Before Nationalism* gets to this idea by noting that “groups tend to define themselves not by reference to their own characteristics but by exclusion, that is, by comparison to ‘strangers’.”<sup>22</sup> Thus, while state institutions are usually analyzed to understand the nation, this project looks at the ways in which people identified with each other and differentiated themselves from others.

Unlike modernist scholars who, in general, point to the French and Industrial Revolutions as the origins for the nation-state, and then nationalism, this project focuses on identity, not the analysis of institutions. Nonetheless, it is still important to have a firm understanding of the modern theorists of nationalism to better understand where this project diverges from their narratives. Ernest Gellner (1925-1995), for example, answers the question (“What is nationalism?”) by theorizing that nationalism is a sociological concept embedded in modernity.<sup>23</sup> To Gellner, the need for cultural homogeneity amongst modern societies engenders nationalism, which he purports is the product of the transition of agro-literate societies to industrial societies.<sup>24</sup> As societies and economies became more complex after the Industrial Revolution, literacy and technological competence became more important for a nation’s citizenry. Thus, the role education played in society became evermore crucial. However, education had to be taught in a language, and especially for multi-ethnic empires that governed over a variety of peoples and languages, this proved difficult. While Gellner acknowledges that education couldn’t be

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<sup>21</sup> Note that the composition of a nation can change over time (temporality), but also can change structurally as nations undergo territorial expansion and turn into empires with the inclusion of more groups/peoples and their local institutions.

<sup>22</sup> John Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1982) 5.

<sup>23</sup> Gellner, *Nationalism and Modernization*, 161-162

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

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personalized to encompass every vernacular, he argues that education and language sparked nationalist sentiments in Europe if a vernacular had a “higher” or literary form that could encompass the varying vernaculars of a single language.<sup>25</sup> Thus, if these prerequisites were fulfilled, this desire for the language of instruction to be closer to one’s vernacular ignites nationalist sentiments amongst a population. In a multi-ethnic empire with a ruling population utilizing a single language, this becomes a competition between the other languages within the territorial borders of the empire and in turn spurred nationalism in European empires. Therefore, to Gellner it is not the nation which evokes nationalism, but the inverse.

While this is great in theory to describe the events of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in some parts of Europe, according to Adrian Hastings (1929-2001), French and English national consciousnesses were already established by the Middle Ages and were simply reinforced by the French and Industrial Revolutions.<sup>26</sup> They were not a product though; these national consciousnesses were developed over long periods of time and demonstrate certain patterns. For example, both nations have an “extensively used vernacular,” a long struggle against an external threat, and the “nation [formed from one or more ethnicities] claims the right to political identity and autonomy over a territory.”<sup>27</sup> Once these components were present, the French and English nation-states then formed under the ruling monarchies and the state identified itself with the nation (as a people). It is at this point that Hastings notes that the people were no longer viewed as “subjects of the sovereign, but a horizontally bonded society.”<sup>28</sup> Once the society was bonded, it was then easier for the monarchs and later the bourgeois to direct national efforts in most aspects of society such

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<sup>25</sup> Gellner, *Nationalism and Modernization*, 158-160.

<sup>26</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood* 1-6.

<sup>27</sup> Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, 30-34.

<sup>28</sup> Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, 3.

as the economy and culture. Religion then further solidified this in England in particular where King Henry VIII established the Church of England—making the Church subservient to the crown’s decrees. At this moment, essential political, economic, religious, and other cultural institutions became more entrenched with the state and became pillars upon which nationalism/nationalists claim to defend.<sup>29</sup>

But what are the nationalists exactly defending? According to Max Weber (1864-1920) the ‘nation’ is a “prestige community...which often extend deep down to the petty bourgeois masses of political structures rich in historical attainment of power-positions.”<sup>30</sup> He continues by acknowledging that while nations vary in form, they are horizontally integrated under the myth of common ethnic descent.<sup>31</sup> Since Weber supports the notion that the ‘nation’ is a bourgeois invention he implicitly acknowledges that the ‘nation’ is also a modern invention as the bourgeoisie acquired more power-positions in Europe after the French and Industrial Revolutions. With the emergence of vast empires during these periods, Weber also notes that those in power then crafted the myth of common descent to justify the nation’s political missions whether it be war or imperial expansion. In doing so, the nation was able to establish solidarity amongst its population with the intention of crafting a homogenous culture and society that is subservient to the imperial missions of the autonomous nation-state.

Even though Weber does provide excellent analysis of the events of modernity, he is without a doubt a product of his times. For instance, like Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and Benedict Anderson, Weber was born in a world dominated by European empires. Weber (who

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<sup>29</sup> It is worthy to note here that Hasting’s hyper focus on the “origins” of nations and nationalism does limit his findings because he mainly focuses on France and England and continues the narrative that these western countries were the first nation-states.

<sup>30</sup> Weber, *The Nation*, 171.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

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was German) lived under three regimes throughout his life: the Prussian Empire, the German Empire, and the Weimar Republic. Although the Prussian Empire began the process of German unification, it was not until Otto von Bismarck and the German Empire that the German national consciousness began to be fully realized.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, the Austrian Empire (which competed with Prussia/Germany as the “champion” of the German people) failed to cope with nationalist uprisings post Napoleonic Wars, the 1848 revolutions, and the Industrial Revolution. So for a German intellectual during this period, it would appear that the French and Industrial Revolutions played an influential role in awakening the German national consciousness. However, this model should not be extrapolated onto other nationalities who have had longer histories of national consciousness. Thus, once the narrative of modernity is deconstructed by analyzing its subjectivity to the author, the implicit biases of their theories are revealed.

In the same way Weber’s implicit biases and fixation on modernity affect his theories, the prominent theorist and Marxist historian, Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012) also weakens his theories of nationalism by disregarding Christianity’s impact on the formation of national identities for Europeans. There is no doubt that Hobsbawm’s instrumentalist approach to nationalism can accurately analyze some of the events of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that are worthy of a class/Marxian critique, but to describe the nation as an “invented tradition”<sup>33</sup> Hobsbawm disregards the collective consciousnesses of the peasantry and other non-elite groups who established early senses of community via national identity.

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<sup>32</sup> Otto Pflanze, "Bismarck and German Nationalism" *The American Historical Review* 60, no. 3 (1955): 548-66. Accessed September 4, 2020. doi:10.2307/1845577.

<sup>33</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Nation as Invented Tradition*, in *Nationalism*, ed. by John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, 76-83, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1994) 13. The nation is ‘invented’ because the political elite crafted the concept of the nation to legitimize their power in a period of revolution and democratization (modernity) and it is a ‘tradition’ because it harks to the mythic past; thus, crafting a ‘national history.’

Additionally Hobsbawm, also attributes the rise of nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a consequence of capitalism and the industrial revolution (a view shared with Gellner).<sup>34</sup> In order to justify the maintenance of a system ruled by the political and economic elite, nationalism was created to distract the masses from vertical inequalities in society by focusing on horizontal solidarity.<sup>35</sup> Although very logical, Hobsbawm continues to lay out his theory, but knowingly overlooks religion as a contributor to the formation of nations and nationalism. This bias—which possibly stems from his more Marxian analysis—neglects the role played by religious institutions in molding modern Europe and contributes to what Adrian Hastings refers to as religion being a “neglected dimension” of nationalism theory.<sup>36</sup> Since this essential facet of society and culture is overlooked, it demonstrates the need for revision in nationalism theory due to its incompleteness.

Moreover, in direct contraction to Hobsbawm, according to Hugh Seton-Watson, “to attribute [horizontal solidarity] to the rise of capitalism and the bourgeoisie is an error,”<sup>37</sup> because the events that occurred during this period in Central and Eastern Europe should not be extrapolated to the entire globe. In his book *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (1977), Watson distinguishes between “old” and “new” nations. To Watson, “old nations had a process that took place at a time much harder to pinpoint,” while on the other hand, for “new nations” national consciousness and the modern doctrine of nationalism advanced together as these new nations underwent state formation (i.e. Germany).<sup>38</sup> For examples, in England, France, and Sweden national identity was acquired

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<sup>34</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Nation as Invented Tradition*, in *Nationalism*, 264-265.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood* 1-6.

<sup>37</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, (Boulder: Westview Press 1977) 15-88.

<sup>38</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, 1-14.

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before the conception of the modern state; thus, it requires more historical research to determine when nationalism could have emerged in these regions.<sup>39</sup>

Deviating slightly from other modernist scholars, Benedict Anderson pays the most attention (compared to his predecessors) to this need for historical research by qualifying and extending nationalism theory to include the American Revolution. Famously coining the term “imagined community,” to Anderson, the nation 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.”<sup>40</sup> It is also a “*community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”<sup>41</sup> With these theoretical underpinnings guiding most of his work, Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* also offers the closest example among the “old guard” to a *longue durée* for the history of nationalism. This can explain Anderson’s claim that nationalism originated with the American and French Revolutions at the end of the eighteenth century and explains why he categorizes the construction of nations and nationalism as a New World phenomenon.

Nonetheless, for Anderson, the “nation only arose when, and where, three fundamental cultural conceptions, all of great antiquity, lost their axiomatic grip on men’s mind.”<sup>42</sup> These three conceptions: (1) the collapse of Latin as the language of the educated elite, (2) the challenge to divine rule with the Enlightenment concept of “consent of the governed,” and (3) the conception of “temporality in which cosmology and history were indistinguishable, the

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<sup>39</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, 15-88.

<sup>40</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, ed. by John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, 89-96, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1994) 36.

<sup>41</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 37.

<sup>42</sup> Anderson *Imagined Communities*, 36.



origins of the world and of men essentially identical.”<sup>43</sup> Anderson attributes this shift in “men’s mind” to the rise of print-capitalism which individualized education and thought, and offered profound changes to the ways in which individuals saw themselves in relation to others.<sup>44</sup> This is especially true in Europe after the Thirty-Years War (1618-1648) when the Bible was rapidly translated into common vernaculars, and the notion of territorial sovereignty was codified in the Peace of Westphalia (1648). For the first time in European history, it was internationally recognized that borders could be delineated along religious and linguistic differences; hence, as Anderson put it, men began to view themselves and their relationship to others drastically different than the ways of “great antiquity.” In addition to print media and the establishment of sovereignty, it is also important to note that man’s relationship to antiquity started to change before these political developments with the Copernican Revolution and the Scientific Revolution (1543-1687). Breaking away from the Ptolemaic model of the heavens, Copernicus’s model shifted European cosmology by placing the Sun at the center of the Solar System. Therefore given these late developments in the Middle Ages and early modern Europe, it is clear that Europe was already transitioning following Anderson’s conditions alone.

While the theoretical work pioneered by these men offer a tremendous amount of insight into the development of nations/nation-state and nationalism in the modern period, they unfortunately, do just that. For theorists such as Hobsbawm, his Marxist ideology hinders his ability to fully analyze earlier variations of nations and nationalism because he delineates between the church’s power and the power of secular institutions, which for medieval society were almost inseparable. Remember, separation of church and state is an Enlightenment

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 40.

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principle and it obviously (per the case above) was retroactively applied by Hobsbawm in his theories and historical analysis in an implicit manner. This is a historical error and only contributes to a sort of confirmation bias, or as Adrian Hastings puts it a “crisis of historiography,”<sup>45</sup> amongst nationalism theorists. This confirmation bias leads scholars to wrongfully reject the possibility for nationalist tendencies amongst the elite and lay during the Middle Ages.

So while the work of theorists accurately analyzes the multifaceted causes for modern nationalism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it neglects, however, the shaky foundations upon which modern nationalism (and many of their theoretical assumptions) rests. Thus, these theorists, I would say, properly conceptualize modern nationalism, but simply that; their limited perspective of the past, warrants that their analysis be limited to their period of study.

Furthermore, the study of nationalism primarily relies on the historical analyses of Western Europe (i.e. France and Great Britain), Central Europe (i.e. Germany and the Habsburg Monarchy), and Eastern Europe (i.e. Poland and Russia); however, there appears to be little historical analysis of nationalism in Northern Europe (i.e. Sweden and Denmark). Moreover, I propose that nations/nation-state formation and nationalism are examples of the combination of social, political, economic, religious, and ethnic movements that include periods of flux and transregionally vary. Therefore, from a theoretical perspective, as newer nationalism theories have emerged from rising academic fields, it calls into question the scope and the validity of past theories.

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<sup>45</sup> Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, 21-23.

In Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia in particular, these nations formed early national consciousnesses quite differently than those of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, the “need” for a common language and culture was not as important to the “old nations” of Scandinavia because their languages were more similar in the Middle Ages than they are now, and communication among merchants and those who lived near borders was easily facilitated. For these nations, economic cleavages, different regnal institutions, and distinct religious practices slowly developed the national consciousnesses of Sweden and Denmark.<sup>46</sup> On a religious standpoint, the archbishop’s cathedral at Uppsala only celebrated religious holidays and saints closely tied to the Swedish realm, whereas Denmark (who viewed themselves as the leader of Scandinavia at the time) incorporated both Swedish and Danish religious holidays in an attempt to project its primacy in Lund as the leader of the Catholic Church in Scandinavian.<sup>47</sup> In doing so, Swedish Christianity established its own distinct traditions beknown and practiced mainly amongst Swedes, and in the case of Denmark, the competition between the archbishops of Lund and Uppsala demonstrated the ways in which political differences manifested in (and at times perpetuated by) members of the Church. Given these cultural and national distinctions, and their deviations from modern nationalism theory, more research into these nations is necessary to better analyze the nationalism’s emergence in the region.

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<sup>46</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, 66-75.

<sup>47</sup> Tracey R. Sands, “Saints and Political Identities in Late Medieval Lund and Uppsala,” in *Saints and Sainthood around the Baltic Sea*, ed. by Carsten Selch Jensen, Tracey R. Sands, Nils Holger Petersen, Kurt Villads Jensen, and Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen, Medieval Institute Publications: Western Michigan University, 2018.

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