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STRANGE MULTIPLICITIES: THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT[1]

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I. The Strange Multiplicities of Our Times

Our contemporary condition is marked by the melting down of all naturalistic signifiers in the political and cultural realm and a desperate attempt to re-create them. Since 1989, the decline of superpower polarism and the end of the Cold War have brought with them a dizzying reconfiguration in the map of Europe. The terms *east* and *west*, which in the nineteenth century would have drawn the line that divided Europe from the "Orient" at the borders of the Ottoman Empire, in the aftermath of World War II had come to stand for the separation of regimes that divided Europe at its very heart, through the city of Berlin. "Eastern Europe" referred to those countries like the former Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, East Germany, the former Yugoslavia, and even the Baltic republics. With the establishment of communism in East and Central Europe, the East moved westward. Otherwise, what sense would it have made to refer to Prague as in Eastern Europe, since this city is to the west of Vienna? Obviously, the terms "Eastern" and "Western" Europe until 1989 designated a geopolitical rather than a geographical demarcation, a demarcation that the language of Cold War politics naturalized by making it seem as if a geopolitical boundary was a geographical one. The antagonism of regimes became marked by a naturalistic signifier—East, them vs. West, us. Among other things, 1989 showed the arbitrariness of trans-

forming political differences in regime types into quasi-naturalistic boundaries.

Not only in Europe, but elsewhere in the world as well, one senses contradictory pulls at work: as globalization proceeds at a dizzying rate, as a material global civilization encompasses the earth from Hong Kong to Lima, from Pretoria to Helsinki, worldwide integration is accompanied by cultural and collective disintegration. India, Algeria, and Turkey, which are among the earliest and oldest democracies of the Third World, are in the throes of struggles that call into question the very project of a secular, representative democracy. Need one mention in this context the civil war in the former Yugoslavia; the Russian destruction of Chechnya; the simmering nationality conflicts in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Macedonia, and Greece; the continuing tribal massacres in Rwanda? Displaying a social dynamic we have hardly begun to comprehend, global integration is proceeding alongside sociocultural disintegration and the resurgence of ethnic, nationalist, religious, and cultural separatisms.[2]

These developments show that the universalization of liberal democracy, which only several years ago Francis Fukuyama had declared to be the endpoint of mankind's ideological evolution,[3] is far from actual. The global trend toward democratization is real but so also are the oppositions and antagonisms asserting themselves against this trend in the name of various forms of difference — ethnic, national, linguistic, religious, and cultural. Throughout the globe a new politics for the recognition of collective identity forms is resurging.[4]

Since every search for identity includes differentiating oneself from what one is not, identity politics is always and necessarily a politics of the creation of difference. One is a Bosnian Serb to the degree to which one is not a Bosnian Muslim or Croat; one is a Gush Emmunim settler in the West Bank to the extent that one is not a secular Zionist; one belongs to the European anthropological community to the degree that one is not from the Maghreb, the Middle East, or Asia. What is disturbing in these developments is not the inevitable dialectic of identity/difference that they display but rather the atavistic belief that identities can be maintained and secured only by eliminating difference and otherness. The negotiation of identity/difference,

to use William Connolly's felicitous phrase,[5] is the political problem facing democracies on a global scale.

The various political struggles for the recognition of identities, or the reassertion of differences, emerging at the present throughout the globe can be divided into three types.

A. The term *politics of identity* initially emerged out of the experiences of new social movements in the late 1970s and early 1980s in Western capitalist democracies. Movements like those of women, ecology, ethnic and linguistic autonomy, and gay and lesbian rights were seen as expressions of postmaterialist values[6] and were interpreted as signaling a shift from issues of distribution to a concern with the grammar of forms of life.[7] Through the experiences of new social movements, major transformations occurred in the nature of issues defined as being political concerns. The struggles over wealth, political position, and access that had characterized bourgeois and working-class politics throughout the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries were replaced by struggles over abortion and gay rights; ecology and the consequences of new medical technologies; and the politics of racial, linguistic, and ethnic pride (colloquially referred to in the U.S. context as the politics of the Rainbow Coalition). These new issues were represented by novel groups of political actors: as loosely coalesced groups of activist women, people of color, gay individuals, and concerned citizens militated for gender and ecological rights against big science and technology and for the recognition of language rights, there was a shift from party to movement politics. The phrase *strategy or identity* aptly captured this transformation in the politics of Western capitalist democracies.[8]

B. Unlike social movements, cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious *separatist movements* question precisely the constitutional framework and identity boundaries of the body politic in Western capitalist democracies. As examples of separatist movements, one can give the Québecois aspirations in Canada, as well as the search by the aboriginal peoples of Canada for more extensive forms of self-determination. A successfully negotiated cultural separation and constitutional compromise currently exists between the Spanish central government and the province of Cataluña. The Basque separatist movement, ETA, on the other hand, presents a glaring example of an unfinished ethnic, lin-

guistic, and regional conflict. The struggle over Kurdish self-determination rights, which is encompassing in different forms Turkey, Iran, and Iraq, is also a particularly poignant example of separatism. Whereas in some cases, like the Québecois movement, the Catalán and aboriginal cultural rights movements, and movements for the linguistic and cultural demands of the Hungarian minority in Romania, such struggles aim at constitutional accommodation and compromise *within the boundaries of an existing sovereign nation-state*, other movements like those of the Basque, the Irish Republican Army, and the Kurdish Liberation Army envision the destruction or transformation of existing forms of sovereignty. I will name forms of identity/difference politics that demand more extensive constitutional transformations than do new social movements but less than do full-blown nationalist movements, movements for *multi-* or *pluricultural polities*. Lebanon, before its destruction in the 1980s, and the current states of Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, and Canada are typical cases of such pluricultural polities.

C. As the cases of the Irish, Kurdish, Basque, and Québecois movements reveal, the line separating struggles for pluricultural polities from ethno-nationalisms is not always a hard and fast one. I shall follow Ernest Gellner in defining nationalism as "a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and, in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state…should not separate the power-holders from the rest."[9] Put in simpler terms, nationalism is the collective ideology that requires that the sovereign people in a given polity be an ethnically, religiously, and linguistically homogeneous majority. It views the state as expressing the will of this people qua a distinct nation; furthermore, it maintains that every people that constitutes a nation should have its own sovereign state. Nationalism is an extremely powerful ideology that in one form or another is coeval with the emergence of the modern state. Nationalist movements are like the shadow cast by the modern European state formations since the seventeenth century, which, however, reach their zenith under certain cultural and social conditions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The terms *civic nationalism* and *ethnic nationalism* are used to distinguish early nation-constituting democratic movements

from subsequent movements for ethnic purity and homogeneity.[10] Whereas the French and American Revolutions defined the nation as the democratic people and granted equal civil rights to Catholics, Protestant sects of various kinds, and Jews alike, in the nineteenth century and after the Dreyfus Affair, a different kind of nationalism emerged in France. This nationalism sought to replace the category of the French national as primarily one who is the citizen of the French republic — *citoyen Français* — with one who is an ethnic French national—a descendant of the Franks and the Gauls.[11] Similar nativist and nationalist movements emerged in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century against immigrants from Ireland, Italy, Eastern European countries, and China. These movements sought to transform the concept of the American people, as specified in the Constitution — *e pluribus unum* — into an *unum*, an ethnically, religiously, and linguistically homogeneous entity, namely white, male Protestants of Northern or Western European origin.

National sovereignty movements have been particularly salient among the successor peoples of erstwhile communist regimes. Not only in the former Yugoslavia, but among the peoples of the Baltic countries as well as in the former Soviet republics, the principle of "one people, one nation, one state" has come to dominate. As the continuing conflicts in Yugoslavia and Chechnya and the potentially simmering hostilities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Macedonia indicate, the struggles for new state forms have not been settled in these regions.

The coexistence of these three types of movements, some of which overlap and flow into others, poses a tremendous challenge for the critical social and political thought of the present. Many of the categories of modern social and political theory, from constitutionalism to citizenship, from secularization to individualism are challenged by these developments. In his remarkable new book, *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity*, which seeks to rethink the European constitutional tradition in light of these recent developments, James Tully argues that the question "Can a modern constitution recognise and accommodate cultural diversity?" is "one of the most difficult and pressing questions of the political era we are entering at the dawn of the twenty-first century."[12]

My purpose in this essay is to look at these most difficult and pressing questions, not in terms of constitutional theory but rather through that elusive philosophical concept — *identity* — that appears to be presupposed by all these movements in one form or another. I want to begin by examining what may be termed a meta-philosophical argument between essentialists and constructivists as it has unfolded in the last two decades. What, if any, light can this debate throw on the "strange multiplicities" of our times? The question of identities, it will turn out, does have profound political implications.

II. Essentialism vs. Constructivism Debates in Contemporary Feminist Theory

The terms *essentialism* and *constructivism* designate a wide range of theoretical positions in contemporary identity/difference debates by subsuming them under two somewhat simplistic categories. I will treat these categories as provisional road markers, the meaning of which will be delineated more sharply as one considers their usage in different contexts. Debates within feminist theory over the last two decades offer a particularly salient example of these alternative ways of conceptualizing identities. The transition from standpoint feminism to postmodernist feminisms can be taken as paradigmatic in this context.[13]

By "standpoint feminism" I mean a type of feminist theory and research paradigm that shows the following characteristics and that dominated the significant initial phase of theory formation in the Second Wave of the Women's Movement:[14] in the first place, there is the claim that philosophical as well social-scientific theories of the past have been cognitively inadequate because they have been "gender blind," i.e., because they have failed to take into account the standpoint, the activities, the experiences of women. Gender blindness is not an accidental omission or oversight, but it affects the cognitive plausibility of theories. Second, to correct gender blindness, it is necessary to identify a set of experiences, activities, and patterns of thinking and feeling that can be characterized as "female." Third, such experiences and activities are a consequence of women's social position or of their position within the sexual division of labor. Whereas the male of the species has been active in the public

spheres of production, politics, war, and science, women's activities by and large have been confined throughout history to the "domestic/reproductive" and "private" spheres. Fourth, the task of feminist theory is to make this sphere of activity and its consequences for human life at large visible, audible, and present at the level of theory. Feminist theory articulates the implicit, tacit, everyday, and nontheorized experiences and activities of women and allows these to come to the level of consciousness. Fifth, by aiding in the articulation of female experience, feminist theory not only engages in a critique of science and theory but also contributes to the process of transforming women's consciousness in that it gives female activities and experiences presence and legitimacy in public life. Hence, a number of seminal works, mostly from the late 1970s, had the characteristic titles of *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*; *In A Different Voice*; and *Public Man, Private Woman*.[15]

Standpoint feminist theories were influenced by the research paradigms of Marxism and psychoanalysis. *Strictu sensu* it is inaccurate to characterize any of these theories or the research inspired by them as "essentialist," since both Marxism and psychoanalysis reject a concept of human essence, and historicize and temporalize social relations in the one case and the formation of individuality in the other. Each paradigm attempts to render one conscious of processes, be they social or individual, that determine the lives of collectivities and individuals despite and precisely because they are not understood, comprehended, and temporalized. In this context, the contrast between historicity and *Naturwuechsigkeit*, a term meaning "naturally grown" or "developed" but also "wild" and "spontaneous," is crucial. For both Marx and Freud, collective and individual processes determine us insofar as they are *naturwuechsig* and can be viewed as unchanging, immutable, atemporal, and ahistorical. For this reason, it is deeply misleading to characterize standpoint feminist theories, which applied the lessons of Marxism and psychoanalysis to the formation of gender relations, as essentialist. But when the charge of essentialism was raised against these early theories, it was not the contrast between "nature" and "history," between an "unchanging immutable substratum" and "malleable, consciously alterable processes" that was meant. Rather, essentialism implied that there was a unified subject, namely

women, whose life conditions and experiences rendered them all so alike that a unified, grand theory could speak in their name. Essentialism came to stand for the view that the subject of feminism was a *unitary* one, both in theory and in practice.[16]

To be sure, the paradigm shift to poststructuralist-discourse feminisms that took place in the North American academy by the mid-1980s was influenced by French thinkers like Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, Luce Irigaray, and Hélène Cixous. As the impact of their theories, no matter how diverse and contradictory their philosophical discourses may have been, was felt upon the core of study of the humanities in the United States, feminist theorists also discovered an attractive ally in these positions for their concerns. What is unique about the American feminist reception of French poststructuralist thought is that, rightly or wrongly, the interest in French theory coincided with a set of intense political struggles within the American feminist movement.[17]

Throughout the 1980s there was a convergence between the theoretical message of the French masters of suspicion and the *political critique* by lesbian women, women of color, and Third World women of the hegemony of white, Western European or North American, heterosexual women in the movement. This political critique was accompanied by a *philosophical shift* from Marxist and psychoanalytic paradigms to Foucaultian types of discourse analysis and Derridean practices of textual deconstruction. In terms of *social research* models, there was a shift from analyzing women's position in the sexual division of labor and the world of work to the analyses of identity constitution and construction, problems of collective self- and other-representation, and issues of cultural contestation and hegemony.[18]

No concept reveals the nature of this paradigm shift more explicitly than the one that is central to feminist theory, namely gender. Divergent theoretical attempts to define gender also indicate what has been gained and what has been lost in this theoretical sea-change. As an example of early standpoint feminism, I would like to cite the historian Joan Kelly Gadol on "The Social Relations of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History." She observes,

> In short, women have to be defined as women. We are the social
> opposite, not of a class, a caste, or of a majority, since we are a
> majority, but of a sex: men. We are a sex, and categorization by
> gender no longer implies a mothering role and subordination to
> men, except as a social role and relation recognized as such, as
> socially constructed and socially imposed.[19]

Kelly Gadol makes a clear distinction between gender and sex;
whereas sex is given — we as women are the opposite sex of an
equally nonproblematic one, namely men — gender is socially
constructed and contested.

Poststructuralist-discourse feminism challenges precisely this
dichotomy between sex and gender, and the logic of binary
oppositions it creates. Judith Butler gives a trenchant critique of
the epistemic assumptions underlying such previous forms of
feminist theory. Butler writes, "Gender is not to culture as sex is
to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which
'sexed nature' or a 'natural sex' is produced and established as
'prediscursive,' prior to culture, a politically neutral surface *on
which* culture acts."[20] For Butler the myth of the already sexed
body is the epistemological equivalent of the myth of the given:
just as the given can be identified only via a discursive frame-
work that first allows us to name it, so too it is the culturally
available codes of gender that sexualize a body and that con-
struct the directionality of that body's sexual desire. Writing
from within the experiences of lesbian women in the women's
movement, Butler's sharp critique of the distinction between sex
and gender allows her to focus on how oppressive and debilitat-
ing the compulsory binarity of heterosexual logic has been for
some women and men. The view that not only gender but also
sexuality is socially *constructed* allows one to enter the terrain of
political contestation around issues like sexuality and sexual
identity, terrains that were hitherto considered to lie outside
politics. Thus the shift from "essentialism" to "constructivism"
within feminist debates heralded a complex transformation of
theoretical as well as political sensitivities. The single most
important consequence of this shift is that all identity markers,
including the sexuality of the body one is born within, are now
"denaturalized," that is, rendered historical, and viewed as com-
plex sites of struggle among conflicting social, cultural, and psy-

chological forces. Simone de Beauvoir's famous phrase "One is not born but becomes a woman" can now be rendered as "One is not born but is constructed as a woman through the psycho-sexual struggles of diverse societies and cultures at diverse points in history."

The principal consequence of viewing gender as well as sexuality as socially constructed is the fluidity this view introduces to categories of identity, as well as making the construction of identities a central political issue.[21] Identities, personal as well as collective, are seen as social constructions with no basis of givenness in nature, anatomy, or some other anthropological essence. Such social construction, most identity/difference theorists also add, is to be understood as a process of social, cultural, and political struggle for hegemony among social groups vying with one another for the imposition or dominance of certain identity definitions over others. For example, what does "we the people" mean? Originally, it meant the propertied, white male heads of household in the Colonies. What about the African-American slave population who were considered three-fifths persons? What about the Native Americans whose presence on the territory of the Colonies was not even acknowledged? What about women whose civic identity was subsumed under that of the male head of household through a practice known as "couverture"? Our identity as a "we" contains the results of collective struggles for power among groups, cultures, genders, and social classes. The identity of every "we" is formed by the sedimentation of such past struggles for hegemony.[22] If this is so, the history of every "we" presupposes differentiation from a "they." Applying one of G. W. F. Hegel's insights, one can say that there is no identity without difference; to be one of a certain kind, i.e., identical, presupposes that one is different from another. Identity formation is a process of self- and other-differentiation.

The perspective opened by this thesis concerning the social construction of collective identities for social and historical studies is extremely fruitful,[23] and has implications beyond the debates concerning gender within feminist theory. Let me develop what the "essentialism"/"constructivism" pair would mean when applied to the other two varieties of politics of identity/difference developed in the first section of this essay: the

politics of "multi- or pluricultural polities" and the politics of "ethno-nationalisms."

III. The Politics of the Construction of Corporate Identities

The following statement from the introduction to an influential collection of essays by social philosophers and legal theorists expresses the quandaries of the creation and undoing of identity categories in the context of pluricultural polities very well. Dan Danielsen and Karen Engle write,

> In one sense, this work, which we term post-identity scholarship, would be unimaginable without the diversity of discourses enabled by identity politics—voices of women, gay men and lesbians, blacks and others. At the same time, the scholarship represented in these essays critiques the tendency of these discourses to obscure the differences among women, among gays, among blacks, and others, and to ignore the significance of multiple allegiances, communities and experiences to the construction of these identities. *Broadly stated, the authors assert that, in order to generate more effective legal strategies, legal consciousness should take account of the role of law in the constitution of identities and of the simultaneity of multiple identities and perspectives.*[24] (Emphasis added.)

As this quote reveals, there is a new consciousness afoot among jurists and social scientists, policymakers and social activists of the role of law and, more broadly, of governmental and non-governmental social policies in the constitution as well as contestation of identities. The volume just cited is a retrospective look by a generation of North American legal scholars and activists, mainly from the Critical Legal Studies Movement, whose own previous work had contributed to the very creation of identity politics that the current volume is seeking to challenge and question.

I will use the term *corporate identities* to refer to forms of group identity that are officially recognized, sanctified, and legitimized by the state and its institutions. This usage of the term departs from legal parlance, for in the eyes of the law, not only groups, but also artificial entities like cities and towns as well as financial, industrial corporations have a "corporate" identity.[25]

For my purposes, what is important is the relationship between forms of group identity based on language, ethnicity, religion, and culture as these are experienced by individuals themselves in a society, and forms of group identity that are recognized by the state and its institutions as legal or quasi-legal entities, which then confer upon members of such groups certain rights and privileges. It is important to make this distinction because groups clamoring for the recognition of their corporate identities will claim that the differences of language, culture, ethnicity, and religion as they live and experience them are essential and that states and their institutions should give these essential differences public recognition by deeming them officially established corporate identity forms.

Sociologists like Daniel Bell had already noted in the early 1970s that the welfare state, which sought to redress social and economic inequalities among societal groups by rectifying their differential forms of disadvantage in society, would give rise to such corporate identities by encouraging a revolution of entitlements.[26] An ever growing number of social groups would be able to show that they were placed in unequal and unfair positions vis-à-vis the job market, education, housing, health care, or employment in professional and scientific institutions. By extending the net of social equality beyond mere income distribution to encompass equality of opportunity in the major sectors of a society like health, education, and housing, the welfare state created a form of public-political culture that encouraged the formation and development of corporate identities. Contemporary debates about affirmative action, as well as the increasing public disenchantment with affirmative-action policies, are in part a consequence of a growing sociological sophistication on the part of the citizenry, namely their realization that "what the welfare state hath wrought it can also undo." Differences of race and gender, some argue, are not essential differences, as claimed by their advocates. They are differences that seem essential only because advocates and lobbyists have been strong and tenacious enough to convince lawmakers that they should protect certain group rights while discriminating against others.

Additional examples of the politics of the constitution of corporate identities are offered in the growing literature on migrant workers, postcolonials, and foreign nationals in contemporary

Europe. For instance, sociologist Yasemin Soysal introduces the concept of "incorporation regimes" to describe the manner in which the policies of the host countries in which foreign nationals, guest workers, and postcolonials reside come to define, delineate, and establish forms of corporate identities.[27] Instead of seeing the identities of these groups to be consequences of some essential features and characteristics that these groups supposedly bring with them from their home cultures, a growing social science literature is emphasizing the constitutive role of existing incorporation regimes in the creation of new corporate identities.

Whereas in countries like Germany, for example, foreign workers were absorbed first as individuals and workers, not as Turks, Greeks, and Yugoslavs, and were entitled to the protection of their civil rights as well as certain social welfare benefits like unemployment compensation qua individual workers, the policies of countries like Holland have followed a different route. The National Advisory Council of Ethnic Minorities created by the Dutch Government in 1981 has recognized Turks, Moroccans, Tunisians, Surinamese, Dutch Antilleans, Moluccans, South Europeans (meaning Greeks, Spaniards, and Portuguese), Gypsies, and refugees as official minorities.[28] The granting of official minority status to a group entitles it to certain housing, education, employment, and welfare benefits as well as encouraging the preservation of certain collective forms of cultural identity. The arbitrariness of this politics of the "construction" of corporate identities becomes clear when one considers that the Chinese and the Pakistanis in Dutch society, whom one would have thought would have sufficiently resembled members of other official minority groups from a cultural point of view, were not recognized as ethnic minorities by the Dutch government because they were not deemed to be in a low enough position in society.

In recent years the most spectacular example of the construction of a corporate, collective identity resulting in a constitutional crisis has been the Québecois separatist movement. Charles Taylor, in reconstructing the development of Québecois identity, emphasizes its evolution from a largely clerical, Catholic identity expressed primarily through educational policies to an increasingly autonomous, regional government, in

part encouraged by the differential tax systems and policies granted to it by the Canadian central government, and referred to as "asymmetrical federalism."[29] Will Kymlicka, by contrast, sees the sources of the current Québecois claims to a separate corporate identity — whether or not short of the sovereign state-form depends on how one lines up in the current political spectrum, ranging from the separatist Partie Québecois to the moderate New Democrats — to be rooted in the history of Canada. Arguing that Canada is a multination as well as a poly-ethnic state, Kymlicka maintains that the granting of special group rights of the Anglophone, Francophone, and aboriginal communities in Canada go back to the historical contract that founded the Canadian nation.[30]

These diverse instances of the recognition of collective identities show the crisscrossing effects of historical circumstance, and social and political policies in the formation of corporate identities. Indeed, the constructivist view has a great deal more analytical leverage in explaining these phenomena than does the essentializing viewpoint. Some of the most interesting conceptual as well as political difficulties emerge when one considers the essentialist-constructivist dichotomy in the context of ethno-nationalisms.

IV. Ethno-Nationalisms: Essential or Constructed?

Ernest Gellner expresses the tensions between the essentializing and constructivist visions of nationalism as follows:

> The great, but valid, paradox is this: nations can be defined only in terms of the age of nationalism, rather than, as you might expect, the other way round. It is not the case that the "age of nationalism" is a mere summation of the awakening and political self-assertion of this, that, or the other nation. Rather, when general social conditions make for standardized, homogeneous, centrally sustained high cultures, pervading entire populations and not just elite minorities, a situation arises in which well-defined educationally sanctioned and unified cultures constitute very nearly the only kind of unit with which men willingly and often ardently identify. The cultures now seem to be the natural repositories of political legitimacy.[31]

For Gellner, it is "nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round."[32] Human beings have always lived in some form of collectively defined constellations—from tribes to neighborhoods, from the manor of the feudal lords to old multinational empires. Diverse forms of collective, political, legal, and cultural units have shaped human history. What is distinctive about nationalism is that it emphasizes that the commonalities of language, religion, ethnic origin, history, etc. shared by a human group constitute them as a unity and clearly distinguish them from others. Nationalism is the claim that the will to unity should take the form of a sovereign state. Ernst Renan, one of the main thinkers of nationalism, puts this point as follows: "A nation's existence is, if you will pardon the metaphor, a daily plebiscite, just as an individual's existence is a perpetual affirmation of life.... The wish of nations is, all in all, the sole legitimate criteria [*sic*], the one to which we must always return."[33]

Students of nationalism like Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson, Homi Bhabha, and Edward Said point out, however, that the "wish of nations" (Ernst Renan) does not spring from a timeless and eternal essence. Rather, the will to exist and be recognized as a nation emerges in human history at certain points and as a consequence of certain economic, technological, sociocultural transformations. For Gellner, these are the conditions for the production of standardized, homogeneous, centrally sustained high cultures. These conditions would include the development of a free market in commodities as well as labor, in news as well as goods. Furthermore, civil society and the state would have to be sufficiently differentiated from one another so that a sphere of autonomous culture, in the printed media and vernacular literature in particular, could develop. In addition to the institutions of the market and the cultural media, other homogenizing and disciplinary institutions like the army, the educational system, a civil bureaucracy, and, in some cases, democratic political institutions would be a precondition of such processes.

To be sure, these brief remarks cannot do justice to the intense and complicated debates about the origins of nationalisms and varieties of nationalisms that have occupied historians and social scientists since the last century.[34] Not only are there differ-

ent paths to the formation of the nation in the European framework — compare British, French, German, Italian, and Russian nationalisms — but the emergence of nationalist movements in the Third World as a result of anticolonial struggles presents complicated sociohistorical cases, each of which requires scrutiny in its own right. Nonetheless, one generalization would safely hold across all these diverse historical instances, namely that a nationalist movement emerges and a people is mobilized as a nation insofar as out of the multiple and myriad commonalities of everyday life a sense of special unity and belonging together can be forged. A nation must be one. And in some significant and nontrivial sense, it must be distinguishable from other nations and peoples.

What constitutes the "unity" of the nation? It is at this point that we return to the essentialism/constructivism controversy. For Gellner, "[N]ationalism is not what it seems, and above all it is not what it seems to itself. The cultures it claims to defend and revive are often its own inventions, or are modified out of all recognition."[35] Nationalists, members of these movements, as well as their ideologues claim to express the "soul" of a people, existing from "time immemorial" and articulating its "manifest destiny" to be "one nation under God, indivisible." The skeptical student of human affairs, by contrast, sees in these claims the "invention" of the soul of the people, as narrated to exist from time immemorial and as forging its manifest destiny as one nation under God, indivisible. Nationalists claim that nations are *given*, while the skeptical theorist claims that they are *invented*; nationalists claim that they are *expressing* the will of the people, while the skeptic claims that they are *constructing* it.

Benedict Anderson and Homi Bhabha have given extremely powerful accounts of the discursive and literary strategies through which the nation is constructed as a unity. Anderson has coined the felicitous phrase "imagined communities" to describe how nationalist literature creates a community of past and future togetherness by projecting a sense of shared history and future purpose through various narratives.[36] In a brilliant essay called "Dissemination: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation," Bhabha lays bare the narrative strategies and tropes through which the "one" is constructed out of the "many." He writes,

> The scraps, patches and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a coherent national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpellates a growing circle of national subjects. In the production of *nation as narration* [emphasis added] there is a split between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative. It is through this process of splitting that the conceptual ambivalence of modern society becomes the site of *writing the nation*.[37]

What Bhabha names the "continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical" refers to narrative strategies, to the writing, production, and teaching of histories, myths, and other collective documentations, through which the nation as one represents itself as a continuous unit. In such strategies of representation, the people as signified is constituted as one. Time is rendered homogeneous in that the conflicting, irreconcilable, often contradictory and illogical daily narratives and experiences of individuals and collectivities are re-presented as aspects, elements, stages, or, in Hegelian language, as "moments" of a unified narrative.

> The people are neither the beginning nor the end of the national narrative; they represent the cutting edge between the totalizing powers of the "social" as homogeneous, consensual community, and the forces that signify the more specific address to contentious, unequal interests and identities within the population.[38]

The "recursive strategy of the performative" (a phrase to which I shall return below) is the invention by intellectuals and ideologues, artists and politicians, of narrative and representational strategies through which the "nation's *self-generation*" is reenacted. From Fichte's call to the German people to the celebration of the nation's everyday reality in the works of the Impressionists, from Smetana's and Dvořák's music to Theodor Herzl's tract on the Jewish state, and, of course, the works of Third World nationalists like Frantz Fanon, one can think of many examples of the performative self-generation of the nation in literature, music, painting, and journalism.

Politically and conceptually the interesting point is that the performative self-generation of the nation enacted in these

works must be presented instead as a discovery of the given and not admitted to be the creation of the new. For, as Gellner suggests, "[N]ationalism is not what it seems, and above all it is not what it seems to itself."[39] Nationalism is not what it seems, for the unity it claims to express and the notion in whose name it acts is not one that it has *found* but rather one that it *creates*. If, however, nationalist movements become critical and self-conscious about the conditions of their own performativity, i.e., about the reality of enacting rather than unfolding the manifest destiny of the unified people, then nationalism becomes something else. It can become democratic or liberal nationalism, moderating its claims to the oneness of the people with a stronger emphasis on state-building and civic consciousness; it can be argued that self-government and not ethnic belonging constitute the nation. Or, as was the case with fascist movements in this century, a nationalism that has become cynical about the conditions of its own performativity can heighten and intensify the process of the generation of representations—in good old-fashioned language, the processes of propaganda—in order to present to its adherents and the population at large the "one" people as the unmistakable site of a naturally and scientifically verifiable unity. Nationalism can (although it must not) turn into fascism. Racially based fascism, as in the case of National Socialism, is an example of the total degeneration of the pedagogical into the performative: the total creation of a racially pure German *Volk* through the equally totalizing negation, exteriorization, and eventual elimination of the threatening Other. To be quite clear on this point, I do not mean to imply that nationalisms must, either conceptually or historically, lead to or culminate in fascisms, racist or otherwise. What I am saying is that the imperative to create the "one" out of the "many" is potentially oppressive and exclusionary, and that, furthermore, it is particularly difficult for movements of collective identity, like nationalism, to retain a sense of their own contingent origins and to exercise reflexive distance vis-à-vis their own historicity. A nationalism that would be enlightened about the conditions of its own possibility would most likely end up in liberalism or democracy, for it would then justify its demand for the sovereign self-expression of the people through recourse to the values of self-government, self-determination for all peoples, the

virtues of democratic practice, and the like. Liberal nationalism is a fragile and volatile but nonetheless genuine historical option.[40] It was represented by Hegel against Fichte in nineteenth-century Germany; by David Ben Gurion, Martin Buber, and others against Vladimir Jabotinsky in the Zionist movement; and by de Gaulle against the legacy of the Catholic nationalism of Charles Maurras in France.

V. The Limits of the Essentialist/Constructivist Dichotomy

I indicated above (see section II) that I would treat the essentialist/constructivist dichotomy as a "road marker." This dichotomy, in crucial ways, is too simple to help us capture some of the deeper perplexities of identity politics in all their shapes and forms. At one level, the duality of perspectives created by the essentializing vs. constructivist pair corresponds to the standpoints of the participant vs. the observer in social and political life.

Members and theorists of movements clamoring for the recognition of identity forms, be they members of women's movements, cultural or ethnic rights movements, or nationalist movements, must assume that the differences in the names under which they are militating are so fundamental and essential to their lives as individuals that they are willing to go to the streets or, as the case may be, to the barricades for them. To be motivated by an identity-based movement, individuals must think and feel that aspects of their identities and the ways in which these differ from others are so significant that they must be recognized, acknowledged, and legitimized as such. Without a fundamental belief in the crucial significance of these identity-based differences, social movements would not motivate individuals and sustain their participation and sacrifices. So the perspective of the "constructedness" of identities and the views of the members of identity-based movements that their identities are essential are not compatible.

For the social and political theorist, or simply for the observer of these movements, it is almost axiomatic that identity-based movements are historical events, taking place at certain points in time, on account of certain other transformations going on in culture, politics, economics, and society. For the observer, these

movements do not express *given* identity-related differences, but ones that are *created*. These are identities that are not expressed but articulated. There is a rift between the perspective of the observer and that of the participant. The only identity-based movement in which the tensions among these perspectives are discussed (though not fully accepted) by members of the movement itself is the women's movement. Since this movement began by questioning the naturalness, immutability, or supposed givenness from time immemorial of gender differences, it made the constructivist perspective its meta-theoretical vision. But within the women's movement, and in particular in the newly emergent Queer movement as well, the question of how essential or significant certain forms of difference are — let us say the significance of mothering and of reproductive activities for understanding and transforming gender identities, or the question of whether homosexuality is a natural trait some individuals are born with or whether it is a choice that some individuals make — is causing friction and at times splitting the movement. It is not easy for members of identity/difference movements to accept the sociological contingency of their own claims. Between sociological enlightenment and social militancy there is a hiatus.

The observer's perspective must not only explain the historical and sociological contingency of these movements but also show how and why they are plausible, desirable for their members. There has to be a level of the motivational explanation of action. At this point, we begin to reach the limits of an exaggerated constructivism. In human affairs not everything is possible, and anything does not go. Analyzing the crises and contradictions of the welfare state may enable us to see why certain forms of corporatist identity are likely to emerge within these political formations, but this level of analysis does not account for the relationship between state actions and policies and individual needs, desires, biographies, and motivational structures. These latter lead individuals to find in group-based identity forms more than simply a convenient formula for getting privileges and benefits from the welfare state. Or do they? We have to examine more closely the interactions between the formulation of policies and the creation of identities.

Take the example of nationalisms. According to Gellner, "The cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary historical inventions. Any old shred and patch would have served as well. But in no way does it follow that the principle of nationalism itself, as opposed to the avatars it happens to pick up for its incarnations, is itself in the least contingent and accidental."[41] It is not obvious that "the cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are…arbitrary historical inventions." There has to be an "elective affinity" between the narratives, works of art, music, and painting through which the nation is narrated, to use Homi Bhabha's language, and the past history as well as anticipated and projected future of this group of people. What Bhabha names the "pedagogical" and the "performative" aspects of a narrative somehow have to hang or fit together. It is precisely this "fit" that, more often than not, the student of human affairs is trying to explain.

Let me give an example that will be quite unfamiliar to European and North American students of nationalism. The creation of modern Turkey through the reforms of Atatürk can be viewed as a paradigmatic example of civic nationalism. In order to forge a new civic identity out of the old Ottoman Empire, which prided itself on being composed of 72 "millets" (peoples, nations in the prenationalist sense of the term), Atatürk had to position the new nation in opposition to the Persian and Arabic legacies that dominated the cultural life of the empire. In a radically constructivist gesture, Atatürk abolished the old script, which was written in Arabic letters and was a mélange of Persian, Turkish, and Arabic, and created a new official language using a modified version of the Roman alphabet and consisting of a vocabulary from the vernacular Turkish, which was spoken quite differently in the city than in the countryside. In abolishing the old alphabet and in choosing the Roman alphabet, Atatürk was combining the pedagogical and the performative in a most interesting way.

The new alphabet, this primary instrument of the pedagogy of the nation, also reinforced a certain kind of identity. The performative dimension of this reform is contained in the final resolution of the identity conflict that had plagued the Ottoman Empire since the eighteenth century. The conflict was caused by the fact that the Ottoman Empire was a bridge between Europe

and the Orient, West and East, at once Moslem and Oriental, yet controlling significant parts of Europe. And the resolution was that Atatürk simply chose the West, expressing this most dramatically by abolishing the cultural and literary medium in which the elite of the empire had expressed itself. So, "the cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism" are not arbitrary historical inventions. These cultural shreds and patches have to fit together, they have to tell a story and perform a narrative that makes sense, that is plausible and coherent, and that motivates people to the point that they are willing to sacrifice their lives for it. It is also the case that such collective narratives can cease to make sense, cohere, motivate, or hold people together. Such appears to be the case in contemporary Turkey, where the dominant ideology of Kemalism has fallen out of grace and new and competing collective narratives are clamoring to fill its place.

The limits of constructivism are reached, then, around the following issues: (1) constructivism cannot adequately explain what motivates individuals to consider identity-based differences as essential for them; (2) constructivism cannot account for the "fit" between the cultural shreds and patches that movements and militants pick up from the culture around them, and the identity dilemmas and options that these shreds and patches appear to resolve; and (3) constructivism, in short, can account for *contingency* but not for *coherence*; constructivism can account for *sociological distance* but not for the *motivating closeness* of ideologies.[42] I would like to conclude these observations by examining the relationship between the new constellation that this paper has sketched and the theme of the Roundtable, "The Divided Self: Identity and Globalization."

VI. The Divided Self and the Search for Narratives

During historical periods such as ours, when economic-technological and political changes are leading to the restructuring of millions of lives, the search for certainty grows. The more fluid the environment becomes, the more unpredictable and opaque it grows, the more we retreat behind the walls of our certainties and within the markers of the familiar. Globalization, not surprisingly, is accompanied by demands for isolationism, for pro-

tectionism, for raising the walls that divide "us" and "them," for making these walls sturdier.

As a way of mediating some of the oppositions outlined in the preceding sections of this essay between the essentialist and constructivist perspectives, and of anticipating certain political options, let me suggest a narrative model of identity constitution.[43] At this stage, the links between identity-related debates in the women's movement and the narrative model, as well as the implications of this narrative model for explaining nationalisms, have been established. I am not suggesting a simple transposition of a model that has a lot of plausibility in the realm of the constitution of individual identities to the collective level. Clearly, however, the one has implications for the other.[44] A narrative understanding of identity is against both unitaristic visions of the self and celebrations of fragmentary selfhood. A more precise working out of the implications of this narrative model for collective movements will be the task of future work.[45] Nonetheless, it is important to outline the ways in which this view differs significantly from both essentialism and constructivism, from unitary as well as fragmentary views of the self.

The narrative model of identity constitution makes its appearance as early as Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel's insight is that human identity, as opposed to the identity of events and objects, let us say, is based upon the constitutive complication of self and other. The inevitable and ineliminable opacity and nontransparence of two consciousnesses, who are nonetheless indispensable for each other, in Hegel's famous account, leads to a struggle for recognition. For Hegel, to be self-conscious, i.e., to be conscious of this self as oneself, means at the same time to be aware that one is an "other" to another self who is just like oneself at this formal level; furthermore, it is to know that in the eyes of the other I remain an "alter" — an "other." Self-identity is a complex process of learning to reconcile the I and the me, the perspective that I have of myself with the perspective that the other has of me as an "other." Self-identity is a process of learning to view the self as agent and as object. This is an ongoing narrative as well as dynamic achievement.

This Hegelian insight about the intersubjective nature of identity constitution can be restated without the rationalistic teleolo-

gism implied by Hegel's own hopes for a resolution of the "struggle for recognition" among selves. In his *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, for example, Charles Taylor extrapolates this Hegelian insight to develop a powerful conception of the identity of the self. He writes,

> This is the sense in which one cannot be a self on one's own. I am a self only in relation to certain interlocutors: in one way in relation to those conversation partners who were essential to my achieving self-definition; in another in relation to those who are now crucial to my continuing grasp of languages of self-understanding—and, of course, these classes may overlap. A self exists only within what I call "webs of interlocution."[46]

The answer to the question "Who am I?" always involves reference to where I am speaking from and to whom or with whom. Analytically the crux of the matter is how we conceptualize the self in context. The superiority of Taylor's conception of "webs of interlocution" derives, in my view, from the appropriate balance of agency and passivity, initiative and conditioning, freedom and determination this view implies.

To be and to become a self is to insert oneself into webs of interlocution: it is to know how to answer when one is addressed; in turn, it is learning how to address others. Of course, we never really insert ourselves but rather are thrown into these "webs of interlocution," in the Heideggerian sense of *Geworfenheit*. We are born into webs of interlocution or into webs of narratives—from the familial narrative to the linguistic one to the gender narrative and to the macro-narrative of one's collective identity. We become who we are by learning to become a conversation partner in these narratives. Although we do not choose the webs in whose nets we are initially caught or select those with whom we wish to converse, our agency consists in our capacity to weave out of these narratives and fragments of narratives a life-story that makes sense for us, as this unique individual self. Certainly, the codes of established narratives in a culture define our capacity to tell the story in different ways; they limit our freedom to vary the code. But just as in a conversation, it is always possible to drop the last remark and let it crash upon the floor in silence, or to carry on and keep the

dialogue alive and going, or to become whimsical, ironic, and critical and to turn the conversation upon itself — so, too, in telling the tale of a life-story that makes sense to us, we always have options. These options are not ahistorical; they are culturally and historically specific; furthermore, for each individual there is the master-narrative of the family structure and of gender roles into which he or she is thrown. Nonetheless, just as the grammatical rules of a language, once acquired, do not exhaust our capacity to build an infinite number of well-formed sentences in a language, so, too, socialization and acculturation processes do not determine the life-story of this unique individual and his or her capacity to initiate new actions and new sentences in a conversation.

This narrative model of identity constitution, which I have briefly outlined above, is shared by thinkers as diverse as G. W. F. Hegel, Charles Taylor, Hannah Arendt, Jürgen Habermas, and Alasdair MacIntyre. The insight common to all is the interdependence of individuation and socialization, i.e., that to become a self and to become a member of some human community are not mutually exclusive but rather interdependent processes.

The intuition that there is a close link between certain views of identity and subjectivity, and collective politics is an old one. At least since the work of the Frankfurt School, which attempted to explain the rise of fascism in Europe through a mix of Marxist and psychoanalytic theory, we can hold onto the following insight: the inability of an individual at the psychic level to acknowledge the otherness within oneself will, more often than not, manifest itself in the urge to split the "other" off and project it onto an external figure outside oneself.[47] This projected or "abjected" other is thus excised from oneself; by placing it outside itself, the self feels secure in maintaining the boundaries of its own identity without being threatened by dissolution into otherness. The other is the stranger, the foreigner, the one who is *alien* and *unlike* us. All authoritarian and fascist movements manipulate this fear of losing ego boundaries and self-identity by making a group of collective others the bearers and carriers of certain naturalistic traits that are said to be different from and a threat to one's own identity. Already in the sixteenth century, the Spanish Inquisition against the Jews of Spain began with the

doctrine of *la limpieza de la sangre*, purity of the blood. Not doctrinal belief or religious practice but a biological category, itself only a phantasmagoric judgment of the imagination, became the divider between the Jews and the Catholics. How does one prove "purity of the blood"? In the case of the Spanish Inquisition, this meant not only that those who had intermarried with other Jews but also all others who had some Jewish descendants had to be eliminated. You can imagine what mechanisms of state control and persecution had to be mobilized in a sixteenth-century society in order first to establish the fact of Jewish blood in one's lineage and second to carry out the extermination or forced conversion of those so identified.

To take a more recent example, during the war in Bosnia-Herzogovina, Bosnian Serb soldiers not only raped Bosnian Muslim women but also detained them in special camps where they were subject to continuous rapes so they would become pregnant. To view women as the spoils of war is an ancient human practice. Reflect for a moment, though, on the ethnic genocide behind this act of impregnation. Since Bosnian Serbs refuse to acknowledge a separate Muslim Bosnian identity and since, in the eyes of the Serbs, the Bosnian Muslims are an insignificant and bastard category — a people who should never have been granted official recognition—by impregnating their women, the Serbs took themselves to be ending this group's identity. Muslim women would now bear Bosnian Serb offspring. Yet the bizarre blindness in this act is in the Serbs' not recognizing that this offspring would be half-Serb and half-Muslim; by virtue of being born of a Muslim mother, a child would continue her ethnic lineage. Paradoxically, then, the attempt to eliminate ethnic otherness results in the creation of more *ethnic bastardization* or *hybridization*. These children of war will become the *purest* examples of *collective impurity* and hybridity.

While narrativity stresses otherness and the fluidity of the boundaries between the self and others, authoritarian and repressive movements respond to the search for certainty, for rigid definitions, for boundaries and markers. Theories of fragmentary and dispersed subjectivity, which were so fashionable at the height of postmodernism, ignored demands for stability, control, and understanding. The dispersal of the subject, yes, indeed the *death* of the subject, was thought to be a good thing.

Yet the search for coherence in an increasingly fragmentary material and cultural world; the attempt to generate meaning out of the complexities of life stories; the demand that our governments do something to save those of us who are most vulnerable, weak, and sick from the ravages of global technological and economic forces — these searches and demands are neither wrong nor unjust nor meaningless.

The challenge in the new constellation is the following: can there be coherent accounts of individual and collective identity that do not fall into xenophobia, intolerance, paranoia, and aggression toward others? Can the search for coherence be made compatible with the maintenance of fluid ego boundaries? Can the attempt to generate meaning be made compatible with an appreciation of the meaningless, the absurd, and the limits of discursiveness? And, finally, can we establish justice and solidarity at home without turning in upon ourselves, without closing our borders to the needs and cries of others? What will democratic collective identities look like in the century of globalization?

Notes

1. The research leading to this article was supported by a visiting fellowship at the Institute für die Wissenshaften vom Menschen (Institute for Human Sciences), Vienna, Austria (July–December, 1996).

2. One of the few recent attempts to do so is Benjamin Barber's *Jihad vs. McWorld* (New York: Times Books, 1995).

3. Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History" in *The National Interest* (Summer 1989): 4. See also his *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

4. See the collection entitled *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, ed. Seyla Benhabib (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

5. William Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991); see also Ernesto Laclau, ed., *The Making of Political Identities* (London: Verso, 1994).

6. Ronald Inglehart, *Cultural Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

7. See Jürgen Habermas, "Dialectics of Rationalization: An Interview" in *Telos* 49 (Fall 1981): 5–33, and his *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, vol. 1 of *The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Thomas A. McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), 339–403.

8. Jean L. Cohen, "Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements" in *Social Research* 52 (1985): 663–716.

9. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (London and Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1.

10. See Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994); and Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994).

11. See Hannah Arendt's discussion of the development of French nationalist thinking through the work of thinkers like Comte Joseph Arthur de Gobineau in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, 1979), 161 ff.

12. James Tully, *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1.

13. I have dealt with these issues at greater length in my article "From Identity Politics to Social Feminism: A Plea for the Nineties," in *Radical Democracy: Identity, Citizenship and the State,* ed. David Trend (New York: Routledge, 1996), 28–41.

14. The term, as far as I can tell, was introduced into feminist theory by Nancy Hartsock, who analyzed the possibility of building a feminist theory along the lines suggested by Georg Lukács in his *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971). See Hartsock, *Money, Sex, and Power: Toward a Feminist Historical Materialism* (New York: Longman, 1983; Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1984).

15. Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds., *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1987); Carol Gilligan, *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981); and Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

16. For a philosophical analysis of the question of essentialism, see Elizabeth V. Spelman, *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988).

17. Linda Nicholson and Nancy Fraser have captured this well in their article "Social Criticism without Philosophy: An Encounter between Feminism and Postmodernism," in *Feminism and Postmodernism*, ed. Linda Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1990), 33:

> [T]he practice of feminist politics in the 1980s generated a new set of pressures which have worked against metanarratives. In recent years, poor and working-class women, women of color, and lesbians have finally won a wider hearing for their objections to feminist theories which fail to illuminate their lives and address their problems. They have exposed the earlier quasi-metanarratives, with their assumptions of universal female dependence and confinement to the domestic sphere, as false extrapolations from the experience of the white, middle-class, heterosexual women who dominated the beginnings of the second wave.... Thus, as the class, sexual, racial, and ethnic awareness of the

movement has altered, so has the preferred conception of theory. It has become clear that quasi-metanarratives hamper rather than promote sisterhood, since they elide differences among women and among the forms of sexism to which different women are differentially subject.

18. The volume *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), attempts to show that charges that poststructuralist/postmodernist feminisms refer not only to cultural postures but that they have policital implications. For a debate on the issue of feminism/postmodernism, see Seyla Benhabib, et al., *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

19. Joan Kelly Gadol, "The Social Relations of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History," in *Women, History, and Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 6.

20. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 7.

21. Judith Butler's conclusion in *Gender Trouble* spells out these issues provocatively; cf. 142 ff.

22. For a further elaboration of the political and theoretical implications of questioning identity, see my "Democracy and Difference: The Metapolitics of Lyotard and Derrida" in *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 2, no. 1 (January 1994): 1–23.

23. For some recent examples of the utilization of these insights in the context of postcolonial studies, cf. Gyan Prakash, "Postcolonial Criticism and Indian Historiography" in *Social Text* 10, nos. 2 and 3 (1992): 8–18; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience," in *Destabilizing Theory*, ed. Michelle Barret and Anne Phillips (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1992), 74–92; and Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, eds., *The Post-colonial Studies Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

24. Dan Danielsen and Karen Engle, eds., *After Identity: A Reader in Law and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995), xiii.

25. See Gerald E. Frug, "The City as a Legal Concept" in *Harvard Law Review* 93, no. 6 (1980): 1059–154.

26. Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

27. See Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 30.

28. Ibid., 48.

29. See Charles Taylor, *Reconciling the Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Federalism and Nationalism*, ed. Guy Laforest (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).

30. Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 26 ff.

31. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 55.

32. Ibid.

33. Ernst Renan, "What Is a Nation?" as quoted in Homi K. Bhabha, "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation," in his *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 160.

34. Cf. Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, and Reality* (Cambridge, England, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and, more recently, Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).

35. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 56.

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

37. Homi K. Bhabha, "Dissemination," in *The Location of Culture*, 145–46.

38. Ibid., 146.

39. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 56.

40. For a powerful recent statement, see Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

41. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 56.

42. Constructivism does not pay sufficient attention to the dimension of memory or to the way in which collective memory constrains identity options, by making some more plausible, maybe even more necessary, than others. For an exploration of these themes in the context of German national identity and its limits, see Dan Diner, "Gedaechtnis und Institution: Ueber ethnischen und politischen Ethnos," in *Anderssein, ein Menschenrecht*, ed. Hilmar Hoffmann and Dieter Kramer (Weinheim: Beltz/Athenaeum, 1995), 37–47.

43. This model of narrative identity is also explored in Paul Ricoeur's work. Cf. his *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), and "Self as Ipse," in *Freedom and Interpretation: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures of 1992*, ed. Barbara Johnson (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 103–21.

44. The debate among Charles Taylor, Jürgen Habermas, and Anthony Appiah in the volume *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, edited and introduced by Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 107–49 and 149–63, is a significant exploration of these issues.

45. I am currently at work on a manuscript titled "In Search of the Civic Polity: Democracy, Identity, and Legitimacy at Century's End" in which these issues are explored.

46. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 36.

47. Julie Kristeva has also analyzed these links in *Nations without Nationalism*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).