Cultural nationalism generally refers to ideas and practices that relate to the intended revival of a purported national community’s culture. If political nationalism is focused on the achievement of political autonomy, cultural nationalism is focused on the cultivation of a nation. Here the vision of the nation is not a political organisation, but a moral community. As such, cultural nationalism sets out to provide a vision of the nation’s identity, history and destiny. The key agents of cultural nationalism are intellectuals and artists, who seek to convey their vision of the nation to the wider community. The need to articulate and express this vision tends to be felt most acutely during times of social, cultural and political upheaval resulting from an encounter with modernity. Cultural nationalism often occurs in the early phase of a national movement, sometimes before an explicitly political nationalism has appeared. But it can also recur in long-established national states (see Hutchinson 2013).

The history of cultural nationalism begins in late eighteenth-century Europe. Several developments in the realms of ideas, culture and politics converge at this time, including the emergence of historicism and Indo-European linguistics, the rise of Romanticism in literature and the arts and a growing commitment to constitutional politics and the idea of ‘rule by the people’ (Leerssen 2014, 11). From this period of change, ‘emerged a
polycentric Weltanschauung that presented a pantheistic conception of the universe, in which all natural entities were animated by a force that individualized them and endowed them with a drive for realization. The nation was one such life-force, a primordial, cultural, and territorial people through which individuals developed their authenticity as moral and rational beings’ (Hutchinson 2013, 76). As a part of this new world-view, the rise of a belief in the possibility of progress was crucial. According to Gregory Jusdanis (2001) intellectuals in central and northern Europe became aware of their ‘backwardness’ in the face of French dominance and sought prestige in their own cultures, while simultaneously also embarking upon a programme of progress. From Europe, cultural nationalism spread outwards, enjoying a renewed efflorescence in the decolonising efforts of the twentieth century. It is now a recurring phenomenon throughout the world.

Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) is often attributed the greatest individual responsibility for elucidating the ideology and practice of cultural nationalism. Herder presented the nation as the primordial scene from which the best of human endeavour owed its provenance, and which therefore obliged its cultivation through the recovery and celebration of its history and culture. Interestingly, Herder was as much practitioner as he was intellectual. In his search for the true character of the nation among the rural peasantry of central Europe, he played an influential role in the development of several practices that became associated with the cultural nationalism of the nineteenth century, such as philology, history and the collection of folk songs, myths, and other practices (see Barnard 2003).

Much ink has been spilled debating the character of cultural nationalism and its relationship to political nationalism. The most influential author in these debates is Hans Kohn (1944; 1967). Kohn distinguishes between the political forms of nationalism that are ostensibly associated with the United States, France, Britain and the Netherlands, and the cultural nationalisms that he suggests are representative of central and eastern Europe, as well as the former European colonies. Not only has this dichotomy proved incredibly influential in social research, but Kohn’s valuation of the two types of nationalism has also had great impact. While
Kohn approvingly characterises political nationalism as marked by Rousseau’s idea that political communities are actively willed into being, he takes the opposite view of cultural nationalism, which he characterises as fatally influenced by Herder’s obsession with a nation’s unique character. For Kohn, it is the latter which planted the seed leading to the growth of totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century.

Kohn’s dichotomy has been much criticised of late. Critics claim that it should be abandoned on empirical grounds, on the basis that all national movements tend to contain both political and cultural elements (e.g. Kuzio 2002; Shulman 2002; Yack 1996; Zimmer 2003). Others question Kohn’s characterisation of cultural nationalism as an ethnic or anti-enlightenment ideology, arguing, to the contrary, that it is defensible from a liberal perspective (Gans 2000). Indeed, some analysts distinguish cultural nationalism from ethnic and civic nationalism, suggesting that a focus on language and culture is distinct from adherence to citizenship rights as well as a belief in common ancestry (e.g. Nielsen 1996). Several historical sociologists have also taken issue with the view of cultural nationalism as anti-modern (e.g. Chatterjee 1993; Jusdanis 2001; Hutchinson 2013; Smith 1995). Their suggestion is that when cultural nationalists turn to the past, it is to find ways of accommodating their purported national communities with modernity.

Notwithstanding these historical and normative debates, the concept of cultural nationalism has proved fruitful among social researchers who employ it as ideal type, while acknowledging that in reality it can take many forms. An early exemplar of this approach is provided by Miroslav Hroch (1986). Hroch embeds cultural nationalism within a processual model describing the route by which national movements among several ‘small nations’ (stateless nations) of Europe became institutionalised. According to Hroch, cultural nationalism typifies the first phase (Phase A) of the process of nation-formation, when the ideas and practices associated with the national community are conceived and disseminated by artists and intellectuals. Hroch’s view of cultural nationalism as a key element in the process leading to the emergence nations has provided an important platform for subsequent research and debate on cultural nationalism.
If not specifically concerned with cultural nationalism, at least in his earlier work, Anthony Smith has had great influence on scholarship in this area. For Smith, all nationalism has a cultural dimension; hence his insistence that it is an ideological movement rather than merely a political movement. Across his long career, Smith (e.g. 1986; 1991; 2003) has sought to demonstrate the trans-generational ‘stickiness’ of the culture of nations. According to Smith, this pattern of myths, symbols, memories and values often extends backwards into the pre-modern era, as well as structuring a nation’s particular path toward modernisation. However, while Smith stresses the capacity for cultural patterns to endure in the face of social change, he also acknowledges they can undergo rapid change. Here Smith attempts to carve out a middle ground between those who view nationalism as a Herderian expression of an innate collective spirit stretching back into ‘time immemorial’, and those who view it as a wholly modern ideology conjured up by enterprising elites and imposed upon the masses. For Smith, national cultures take shape through a process of reinterpretation and rediscovery rather than mere invention. Smith has lately focused more explicitly on cultural nationalism. His most recent book seeks to uncover the significance of visual art in the making of national identity in France and Britain, which presents an original typology of national art (Smith 2013).

John Hutchinson has done much to enrich the understanding of cultural nationalism. He was Smith’s first PhD student and his work remains aligned with his approach. Hutchinson’s (1987) study of Gaelic revivalism and the establishment of the Irish national state greatly extends Hroch’s approach to cultural nationalism. While Hroch’s model suggests that the importance of cultural nationalism will diminish once the political movement takes off, Hutchinson presents cultural nationalism as an episodic phenomenon, which can recur even after a national state is established. To bring to light how cultural nationalism is institutionalised and disseminated, the book distinguishes between the intellectuals and artists who furnish the symbols and vision of the nation, and the intelligentsia, a vocational and occupational group including the professions and tertiary education instructors, who communicate this vision to the ‘masses’. In a subsequent book, Hutchinson (1994) discusses,
Among other topics, the myths and symbols that cultural nationalists tend to draw upon, noting the importance of newly ‘discovered’ folklore and legends to nationalist poets, writers and musicians. Here he also discusses the relationship of cultural nationalism to religion, suggesting that cultural nationalists must either appropriate religious myths and symbols or find alternatives.

More recently, Hutchinson has focused on the role of contestation in the endurance of national communities, suggesting that the often intense struggles among nationalists over national identity can paradoxically serve to reify the nation (Hutchinson 2005). He has also recently disavowed the commonly-held view that cultural nationalists will invariably turn to organic myths and symbols of common descent, suggesting that they may be just as predisposed to characterise the nation as a voluntary community grounded in civic principles (Hutchinson 2013). As a result of Hutchinson’s work, it is now possible to analyse cultural nationalism as an ongoing struggle over the definition and character of the nation, with the proponents seeking to convey competing visions to the wider community. In Hutchinson’s various analyses, this struggle is expressed as a series of binary visions of the ‘true’ character of the nation.

Kosaku Yoshino’s (1992) much cited study of cultural nationalism in Japan takes the work of Hutchinson and Smith in a new direction. Yoshino applies the distinction between intellectuals and intelligentsia to investigate how the ideas of intellectuals are diffused among two separate groups of ‘intelligentsia’ – businessmen and educators. Interestingly, Yoshino finds that it is the businessmen who are the more committed carriers of the ideas of the intellectuals. More recently, Yingjie Guo (2004) has applied Hutchinson’s approach to cultural nationalism in a fascinating study of China, where he suggests that a group of intellectuals have become increasingly emboldened to assert an ethnic vision of a Chinese national community against the long-standing rationalist and Marxist representations of China. Both studies confirm Hutchinson’s argument that cultural nationalism is as much a feature of long-established national states as it is of independence movements.
The study of postcolonial nationalism in Asia and Africa has contributed much to our understanding of cultural nationalism. David Kopf’s (1969) history of the intellectual ferment of the College of Fort William of Bengal sheds light on the challenge of fusing (foreign) modernity with (indigenous) culture. This dynamic has recently taken on particular importance. Homi Bhabha’s (1990) suggestion that what emerges is an unstable ‘hybrid’ identity that is neither European nor indigenous has triggered a massive outpouring of research. This even had an impact on the study of nationalism in the former metropole, in which scholars have focused on the cultural politics of the formerly colonised who now make their home in Britain (e.g. Gilroy 1987; Hall 1993).

A central figure in the study of postcolonial nationalism is Partha Chatterjee. In his first major study, Chatterjee (1986) takes aim at Elie Kedourie’s assertion that postcolonial nationalism is merely a derivative discourse imported from Europe, suggesting that it arises out of a dialogue between European and indigenous ideas and practices. While the colonial administrations may have dominated the ‘material realm’, in Chatterjee’s view, they never really fully penetrated the spiritual realm, where intellectuals were involved in the elaboration of the moral community from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. Chatterjee (1993) subsequently applies his approach to a study of the emergence of a national ideology in Bengal through attention to a wide variety of cultural practices, while also focusing on efforts by marginalised groups within India to make claims for their inclusion in the emergent national discourse.

The challenge of constructing novel national identities also characterises settler nationalism. Nationalists in settler societies face the peculiar challenge of distinguishing themselves from a metropole that shares a similar culture, while also not being able to lay claim to an authentic culture rooted in the territory from ‘time immemorial’. In this context, Bhabha’s notion of ‘hybridity’ has again been put to good effect (e.g. Proudfoot & Roche 2005; McDonald 2013). According to Christopher McDonald, ‘the concept of hybridity includes not just Bhabha’s “third space” between European and “Native” but also the cultural "ambivalence" experienced by Europeans in a colonial setting’ (2013, 174). To overcome
this ambivalence, cultural nationalists in Mexico, for example, sought to construct a ‘mestizo’ national identity, which through the mixing of settler and indigenous, can claim rootedness in the territory and also embrace the prestige of European modernity (Doremus, 2001). In the former British settler societies, cultural nationalists proclaim their national communities to be at the vanguard in the construction of a new kind of ‘rainbow’ or ‘multicultural’ community, whose strength is its diversity (Hutchinson 1994, chapter 6).

The significance of gender for cultural nationalism has begun to attract increasing attention. An earlier intervention in this area of research by George Mosse (1985) observes that the rise of nationalism in Europe coincided with the widespread acceptance of the patriarchal family (see also Sluga 1998). A landmark book by Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) has provided a catalyst for research on the gendered symbolism of nationalism. Davis (1997, 43-45) observes that masculinity is associated with the public sphere and men are thereby given an ‘active’ status, as the defenders of the national community, periodically called upon to the sacrifice themselves for the ‘motherland.’ By contrast, the nation’s private sphere, its ostensible ‘inner’ essence, tends to be represented by femininity, and the ‘active’ role that is assigned to women is as reproducers of the national community. More recent research has focused on the symbolic importance of a woman’s body, and how she adorns it, to the national community (Chatterjee 1989; Kandiyoti 1991; Timmerman 2000). A particularly sobering new line of research focuses on the way in which the representation of women as the ‘pure’ essence of the nation has led to them being the target of horrific sexual violence in times of war and crisis (Bracewell 2004; Harris 1993).

An important area of research asks questions about the persistence of cultural nationalism in an era characterised by the increasing globalisation of culture. For many scholars, globalisation undermines nationalism. Until recently, the view that American cultural dominance was leading to the cultural homogenisation of the world was widespread. Others, such as Anthony Giddens (1991), have suggested that globalisation produces a paradoxical simultaneous movement away from the nation towards large-scale continental identities and much smaller, local identities. Pointing to
the proliferation of new imagined worlds that do not readily fit within a national schema, Arjun Appadurai (1990) suggests that global flows are leading to new forms of identification.

Against the arguments that globalisation and nationalism are inimical, Smith and Hutchinson have mounted an impressive alternative reading. Taking a long-view of globalisation as a process that has been underway for centuries, Hutchinson (2001, 75) suggests that ethnicity and nationalism are actually engendered by globalisation. Indeed, Smith (2010, 149) argues that the recent global era should be considered a period of ‘internationalising nationalism’. According to Smith, nationalism has a ‘demonstration effect’, whereby ‘wave after wave of nationalisms have engulfed successive regions, engendering new claims and making equivalent demands.’ Turning to the realm of culture, Smith (2010, 50) suggests that we are witnessing an increasing role for cultural nationalism; if the criteria for entry into the global community of national states were initially political sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction, they now also include a demonstration of ‘cultural unity and solidarity, and preferably some degree of cultural “uniqueness”’.

Arguments over the impact of globalisation have been prevalent in the study of film and cinema. In a highly cited essay, Andrew Higson (1989) raises doubts about the possibility of a ‘national’ cinema, when the production teams and the audiences of even the seemingly most nationalist of films are often transnational. Yet, the fact that films continue to draw heavily on national narratives and imagery seems to suggest nationalism’s ongoing grip on our imaginations. In an analysis of the film Braveheart, Tim Edensor (2002, chapter 5) shows how a film made in Hollywood, whose largest audience was American, had significant impact on Scottish nationalism. Edensor’s analysis points to the possibility of an international ‘normalisation’ of national myths and symbols through Hollywood. Of course, Hollywood’s dominance also suggests the possibility of conflict, as audiences see themselves refracted through American stereotypes. Indeed, in the case of Braveheart, which depicts the English in an unsavoury light, Edensor observes that cinema-goers in England largely chose to stay home.
Joep Leerssen (2006; 2006; 2014) has recently sought to carve out a unique approach to cultural nationalism. In doing so, he builds in particular on path-breaking work by Anne-Marie Thiesse (2001) on the role of intellectuals in the transnational diffusion of nationalism. Leerssen enjoins his fellow researchers to move away from a concern with the significance of cultural nationalism in the progression of particular national movements towards uncovering how the ideas and practices of cultural nationalists are shared across transnational networks. He advocates greater attention to intellectual and artistic developments, whereby new practices and cultural forms emerge and are disseminated among its practitioners. This approach sheds light on the two sides of cultural nationalism, whereby a concern for authenticity ensures that the content is national, but the sharing of ideas and practices among a transnational body of practitioners ensures that the form is international. For example, Leerssen (2006) details how Sir Walter Scott’s approach to the historical novel, as exemplified by Ivanhoe, was adapted by authors working in other social settings, to become an important mechanism in the construction of national myths and symbols throughout nineteenth-century Europe. Leerssen has lately become particularly interested in Romantic nationalism, spearheading a large-scale research project that seeks to shed light on its dissemination through time and space in nineteenth-century Europe. The preliminary results of this project have been mapped on to the project’s interactive website (see http://www.spinnet.eu).
Annotated bibliography


This article suggests that global flows of ‘ethnoscapes’, ‘mediascapes’, ‘financescapes’ and ‘technoscapes’ are leading to new forms of identification in the era of globalisation that do not readily fit within a national schema.


Against the tendency to characterise J.J. Rousseau and J.G. von Herder as presenting diametrically opposed visions of the nation, with the former emphasising politics and territory and the latter emphasising culture, Barnard shows that both philosophers were concerned with the cultural and political aspects of nationhood.


This is widely recognised as an authoritative text on J.G. von Herder’s philosophy of nationalism. The aim of the book is to resuscitate Herder’s thought by demonstrating that his concept of nation was defined by language and culture rather than race and that he was guided by a sense of universal humanity.


This book is an excellent introduction to the role of historiography in constructing national pasts from a global perspective. The essays emphasise broad historical transformations in the writing of national history, as well as the ways in which national histories are contested.


This book focuses on the relationship of historiography to nationalism in Europe from a comparative perspective. Emphasis is on developments since the Second World War. A highlight of the book is the essay by Stefan Berger, in which he argues that history writing in Germany and Britain has become discernibly more nationalist since the 1990s. Another interesting essay compares again the writing of history during the British and Russian Empires.


This book provides an in-depth analysis of the ideology of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and in the process produces fascinating insights about how cultural nationalists creatively combine the past with visions of the future.


This posthumously published book is a collection of essays by Isaiah Berlin, edited by Thomas Hardy. Vico and Herder are presented as being involved in a counter-enlightenment effort that was anti-rationalist, relativist and organic. Hamann is presented as one of the first thinkers to argue that human cognition is a form of language.

A highly cited intervention in the study of national literatures. The authors focus on the role of hybridity and ambivalence in the construction of national identity. Chapters span Europe, the Americas and Australia.


This article focuses on how reports of rape of Serbian women by Albanians were perceived among Serbian nationalists, arguing that it was ultimately read as an attack on Serbian masculinity.


This article discusses women’s fashion as a key site of struggle in postcolonial India, where nationalists sought to reform the treatment of women in line with western expectations, but also sought to retain authenticity.


In this book, Chatterjee takes aim at the view that nationalism in Bengal and India is wholly derivative of European models, arguing that it emerged through dialogue of European and indigenous culture. Central to this
argument is the view that there existed a dichotomy between the material and spiritual realms, and while the material realm was dominated by colonial powers, the spiritual realm was relatively autonomous, enabling intellectuals to construct the cultural foundation for the emergence of a national movement.


This article discusses the role of Indigenism and mestizaje in struggles over national identity in mid-twentieth-century Mexico.


In this book, Edensor suggests that national identity should be studied at the level of the demotic and the popular, and that the impact of globalisation needs further analysis. Through an analysis of the significance of national identity in geography, performance, material culture and film, Edensor suggests that it remains a potent force, even if the routes by which it is instantiated are undergoing rapid change.

This book contains an excellent collection of readings that highlights the role of culture in the construction and contestation of nations, nationalisms and national identities across a wide variety of temporal and geographical settings. The book emphasises the possibilities offered by bringing scholars associated with cultural studies into closer contact with nationalism studies.


In this book, several leading social scientists explore the meaning and significance of the most recent phase of the globalisation of culture and analyse its impact on the cultures and ideologies associated with the nation-state.


This book traces the history of nationalism and examines how and why language commonly comes to be one of the key aspects of nationalist goals and programmes.


This article examines the ethics of cultural nationalism and concludes with the suggestion that the basic tenets of cultural nationalism are defensible from a liberal perspective if ‘the people’ are understood to derive meaning from the cultures in which they live.

This major book collects Giddens’s writings on the consequences of institutional changes associated with modernity, focusing on the intersections of trust and risk, and security and danger. Turning to the present era, the book argues that we do not yet live in a postmodern age, but rather in an age of high modernity, in which prior trends have been made more extreme.


This classic book is a powerful critique of contemporary attitudes to race in the UK. Gilroy explores the relationships among race, class, and nation as they have evolved over the past twenty years, and highlights racist attitudes that transcend the left-right political divide. The book challenges current sociological approaches to racism as well as the ethnocentric bias of British cultural studies.


This book applies the concept of cultural nationalism, as conceived by Anthony Smith and John Hutchinson, to China. Guo uncovers the rise of a new cultural nationalism which often finds itself in opposition to the official nationalism of the state. According to Guo, key elements of this new nationalism include: the rehabilitation of Zeng Guofan of the Qing Dynasty, the revival of Confucianism, the renewed emphasis on the cultural attributes of language and the adoption of a post-colonial posture derived from Said.
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In this much-cited article, which shows how Stuart Hall’s vision of cultural studies differs from that of Raymond Williams, Hall theorises about the ongoing national revival in the West. The article concludes with a celebration of the hybridity represented by migrant communities.


This article discusses how reports of the rape of French women by German soldiers triggered a debate over the potential birth of ‘mongrel’ children, and the ostensible threat that they could pose for the French nation.


In this highly cited essay, Andrew Higson raises doubts about the possibility of a ‘national’ cinema, observing that the production teams and the audiences of even the seemingly most nationalist of films are usually transnational.

HROCH, M., Social preconditions of national revival in Europe: a comparative analysis of the social composition of patriotic groups among the smaller European nations (New York, 2000 [1985]).

This important book seeks to elucidate how the national mass movements occur among the members of non-dominant ethnic groups through comparative analysis of these movements in Europe. The book is well-known for presentation of a three-phase processual model that comprises A) a growing concern with the culture and history of the nation among intellectuals; B) the formation of political movement that attempts to
foment a national consciousness among the masses, and C) the emergence of a mass movement.


This seminal book in the study of cultural nationalism is based on the case of Ireland and draws on Anthony Smith’s approach to nationalism. Cultural nationalism is defined as a recurring ideological movement that arises in response to the erosion of traditional identities and status orders as a result of a modernising state. Its key actors are scholars and artists, whose activities focus on the regeneration of the national community through the cultivation of a unique national history and culture. The book provides a processual model of the political factors leading to the emergence of cultural nationalism, its translation into an ideological movement and its institutionalisation. In the final chapter, the book discusses the conditions under which cultural nationalism can re-emerge after the formation of an independent state.


This book builds on Hutchinson’s earlier work on cultural nationalism in Ireland (Hutchinson, 1987). Focusing on its cultural dimension, the book examines nationalism’s endurance in relation to religious fundamentalism, Soviet communism, the European Union, and the multicultural model. The book concludes that nationalism will survive into the foreseeable future. Although more ambitious than Hutchinson’s first book, it is less
theoretically rigorous and more closely aligned with Anthony Smith’s work. Much is made of the pre-modern ethnic antecedents of nationalism and the political and civic aspects of nationalism are downplayed.


This article reviews several leading approaches to cultural nationalism and outlines an approach that is further fleshed out in Hutchinson’s later work on the integrative role of internal cultural conflicts over the definition and character of the nation.

**Hutchinson, J., Nations as zones of conflict (London, 2005).**

Criticising a tendency in the study of nationalism to treat the nation as a relatively homogeneous collectivity, this book discusses the significance of long-running cultural conflicts over the myths and symbols of the nation. It argues to the contrary of post-modernists that these long-running disputes actually contribute to the nation’s endurance. To conclude, the book suggests that nationalism will survive until the foreseeable future. For a debate on the book, see Delanty e.a. 2008.


An excellent summary of John Hutchinson’s earlier work on the history and sociology of cultural nationalism. A significant addition is his rejection of an earlier claim that cultural and political nationalists can be distinguished by competing organic and voluntarist visions of the nation, arguing that in practice these visions are usually blended, and that a better way of distinguishing the two types of nationalism is whether primary concern is with the establishment of a strong community or a strong territorial state, as the basis of the nation.
In this essay, Jusdanis argues for the constitutive role played by cultural nationalism in the development of the nation-state and considers its fate in relation to the intensification of globalisation. The article contains an excellent discussion of the meanings of cultural nationalism and national culture in relation to leading theorists of culture.

In this book, Jusdanis argues that nationalism is at its heart a cultural phenomenon, and that it should be seen as playing a constitutive role in the development of the nation-state. Pitting his arguments against those who see nationalism as a baleful influence on human society, Jusdanis suggests that the history of nationalism reveals that, much as it is guilty of fostering inter-group conflict, it has also been a progressive force for emancipation, as well as providing emotional and psychological succour in the face of perennial social change. To conclude, Jusdanis puts forward federalism as a way of mitigating nationalism’s centrifugal tendencies.

In this article, Kandiyoti explores the implications of nationalist projects in the Middle-Eastern and Asian post-colonial societies, focusing on changing portrayals of women as victims of social backwardness, icons of modernity or bearers of cultural authenticity. The article further examines the extent to which elements of national identity and cultural difference are articulated as forms of control that infringe upon the rights of women as enfranchised citizens.

This book is a founding text on nationalism in the English language. The tendency in the scholarly literature to distinguish between ‘western’ or political forms of nationalism and ‘eastern’ or cultural forms of nationalism, and to view the former as the more benign of the two, is largely attributed to this book. Through an examination of religious, literary and philosophical texts, this magisterial book traces the roots of nationalism as a ‘state of mind’, from its precursors in ancient Greek and Jewish civilizations to the French Revolution. Key themes are the influence of religious ideas, the interplay of nationalism and universalism and the differences between the nationalisms of Western Europe and those of central and Eastern Europe.


This book is a highly cited comparison of the formation of the French and German nation-states. It presents the argument that the French experience, which proceeded from state to nation, was characterised by an enlightenment-inflected political nationalism, whereas the German experience, which proceeded in the reverse, was characterised by a more reactionary cultural nationalism.


Through an analysis of the practices of the College of Fort William in Bengal, which was established in 1800 as a school for training civil servants for the East India Company, this book shows how the college became a key site for the formation and dissemination of the idea that India could be modernised through the regeneration of Indian heritage.

This book traces the history of the cultural and intellectual underpinnings of nationalism in Europe through a wide variety of sources, including philosophical writings, literature, architecture, art, dramaturgy and monuments. The book treats cultural nationalism as a transnational phenomenon that arises with the growth of the public sphere and whose agents tend to be intellectuals and artists who meet and share ideas and practices in urban centres. The book takes a critical view of nationalism and concludes with support for Habermas’s argument for constitutional patriotism.


This article sets out Leerssen’s approach to the study of cultural nationalism in Europe. The article finds that the study of cultural nationalism has been too narrowly focused on trying to explain how cultural nationalism becomes institutionalised in particular states, and argues that the process whereby the ideas and practices of cultural nationalists are disseminated through transnational networks has been overlooked. The key activity of the cultural nationalists is argued to be the cultivation of culture. To explain the concept, the article provides an interesting definition of culture and outlines a typology of the various activities associated with its cultivation.

LEERSSEN, J., *When was Romantic nationalism? The onset, the long tail, the banal* (Antwerp, 2014).

A concise, well-presented history of romantic nationalism in Europe, which suggests that it is characterised by three distinct phases: 1) rapid onset in the nineteenth century, 2) gradual decline in the first half of the twentieth century, 3) ongoing banal presence in the present.
**Levenson, J.,** *L’iang Ch’i Ch’ao and the mind of modern China* (Berkeley, CA, 1959).

This book is a classic study of a seminal thinker of the Chinese reform movement, who first seeks to reconstruct Confucianism before abandoning it.

**Mosse, G.,** *Nationalism and sexuality: middle-class morality and sexual norms in modern Europe* (Madison, 1985).

This book explores how nationalism became gendered through a history of its rise in central Europe, where it became aligned with bourgeois notions of heterosexual morality, and eventually led to Nazism’s obsession with particular notions of masculinity. Mosse observes that German nationalists tended to differentiate their community by reference to their ostensible masculine disciplined morality, as opposed to the loose-living, sexually degenerate French.


This article suggests that all nationalisms, whether civic or ethnic, are at their core cultural, whether framed as ‘civic’ or ‘ethnic’, and argues for a liberal form of nationalism.


This book, originally published in German in 1996, traces the origins of German nationalism. With respect to cultural nationalism, there is much in here on the declining role of Christianity and the making of a culturally Protestant nationalism, amid the rise of a new national aesthetic culture.
**Peel, J., Religious encounter and the making of the Yoruba (Bloomington, IN, 1989).**

In this book, John Peel focuses on the impact of nineteenth-century Christian missionaries and finds that a modern Yoruban identity emerged out of a dialogue of western and indigenous ideas and practices.

**Proudfoot, L.J. & Roche, M.M., (Dis)placing Empire. Renegotiating British colonial geographies (London, 2010).**

The contributors to this volume discuss how space and place were implicated in the construction of identity for settlers and indigenous peoples in under British rule.

**Smith, A.D., Theories of nationalism (London, 1971).**

In this seminal text in the study of nationalism, Smith evaluates key approaches to the study of nationalism. The book's characterisation of the field of study continues to inform much of the literature. The book also provides the germ of the approach that would eventually coalesce over subsequent publications as Smith's distinctive contribution known as ethno-symbolism. The chapter on nationalism’s response to the crisis of dual-legitimation is particularly notable.

**Smith, A.D., The ethnic origins of nations (Oxford, 1998 [1986]).**

This is a key text in the study of nations and nationalism, which challenges the view that nations are wholly modern by tracing their pre-modern ethnic origins. Smith argues that their shape and character of modern nations tend to be in part derived from the cultural attributes of older ethnic groups (referred to as ethnies), whose dense collection of myths, symbols, memories and values provide nations with their emotional content and stability. The book emphasises the cultural dimension of nationalism, suggesting that it provides modern communities with a sense of rootedness in time and place and a vision of its future.

In this article, Smith sets out his approach to nations as a middle ground to those who emphasise its novelty and mutability and those who emphasise its durability and rigidity. Stressing the role of nationalists in the realm of culture over politics, Smith argues that rather than ‘inventing’ the past, they are involved in a process of rediscovery, reinterpretation and seek the regeneration of their communities.


In this book, Smith looks at the role of visual art in representing the nation and fomenting national sentiment in Western Europe, from 1600-1850. Smith suggests that there are three kinds of national art, i.e. didactic, evocative and commemorative. The artists themselves play an ambiguous role in the book: some are committed nationalists, others are not.


A fascinating discussion of the important role played by romantic novels in the consolidation of Latin American nation-states. The book’s approach could be fruitfully applied to other contexts.


This book puts forward a novel approach to the study of cultural nationalism through an analysis of the tea ceremony in Japan, showing how the cultural nationalism of the intellectuals and the meanings they attach to certain practices is imparted through the teaching and enactment of ritual practices.


In this book, Anne-Marie Thiesse traces the construction of national identity in Europe from a transnational perspective, focusing on the cultural work of artists and intellectuals. The book concludes on an optimistic note, suggesting that if national identity was constructed, so too can European identity be constructed.


This article explores the symbolic role of women in nationalist discourses in Muslim countries. It concludes with a discussion of the possibilities for women to improve their status within this framework.


In this book, Kazuke Yoshino applies the approach to cultural nationalism put forward by John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith to investigate how the ideas of the nihonjinron (discussions of Japanese identity) are diffused among the wider Japanese population. Making use of Smith’s distinction between intellectuals (who formulate the ideas and images of the nation) and intelligentsia (who respond to those ideas and relate them to their own social context), Yoshino investigates how the nihonjinron was taken up by two separate groups of ‘intelligentsia’ – business men and educators and finds that it has had greater impact on the former.

This landmark book examines key issues relating to gender and nationalism. Topics include biological and cultural reproduction of the nation, citizenship, militarism and warfare and ethnicity. The book is notable for applying a differentiated perspective of women and the various symbolic roles that they play in various nationalist projects. The concluding chapter discusses strategies for how women could work together in a struggle for equality, calling for a transversal strategy that highlights dialogue among women from different social positions.


This article argues that the classical distinction between civic and ethnic forms of national identity should be replaced by approach that distinguishes between, on the one hand, the *mechanisms* which social actors use as they reconstruct the boundaries of national identity at a particular point in time; and, on the other, the *symbolic resources* upon which they draw when they reconstruct these boundaries.

This review and annotated bibliography is part of *The State of Nationalism (SoN)*, a comprehensive guide to the study of nationalism. As such it is also published on the SoN website, where it will be regularly updated.

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