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## Which state, which nation? States and national identity in Europe, South America and the United States compared 1750-1950

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**WHICH STATE, WHICH NATION? STATES AND  
NATIONAL IDENTITY IN EUROPE, SOUTH AMERICA,  
AND THE UNITED STATES COMPARED, 1750-1930**

**Fernando Lopez-Alves**

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**WHICH STATE, WHICH NATION? STATES AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN  
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1930.**

*This paper stands as a short version of the argument I am making in a book in progress under a similar title. Given the numerous cases involved and the length of the selected period I do not dwell into specifics in terms of both the regions under consideration and the national history of individual countries. Rather, I have concentrated on concept definition, the main questions under consideration, and the logic of the argument.*

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The views are personal and do not necessarily represent the position of the Universidad del Cema.

## Abstract

For almost two centuries substantial research in Sociology, Political Science, History and Anthropology has focused on the state, the nation, nationalism, and national identity. Despite a very remarkable amount of knowledge and intelligent theorizing a number of questions need revisiting and more encompassing comparative work is needed. Here, I offer an argument that involves three areas seldom, if ever, compared: Western Europe, South America, and North America (particularly the United States). The period spans from the sixteenth century to the 1930s but I specially focus on the epoch that starts in the 1750s. The length of the period under scrutiny allows testing correlations among variables over long periods of time.

First, I revisit the concept of “nation” and stress that nations are intellectual constructs as much as they are cultural and imagined ones. Second, I emphasize the state’s *conceptualizing* of the nation as a key independent variable connected to the construction of national identity. Third, I bring some findings of the philosophy of language to bear upon the ways states conceptualize nations and construct their public discourse in relation to national identity. Fourth, I argue that rather than other important factors such as the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic characteristics of the national community, the construction of national identity depends upon the modernization of bureaucracies (in Max Weber’s sense) and the characteristics of the civil service. I am particularly interested in the way modern bureaucracies institutionalize meaning.

Finally, I suggest that the terms “nation-state” and “national-state” have contributed more to a theory of the state than to a theory of the connections between states and nations. I therefore redefine these terms and add a third concept (*‘state-nation’*) in order to better capture the relations between states and nations in the regions compared. I identify the relation between states and nations as one of *codependency* and I claim that different types of codependency are connected to the consolidation of different types of political regimes. During the last two and a half centuries codependency between states and nations has progressively augmented, despite the ups and downs of globalization, different types of international conflict, and changes in the global economic cycle.

“It has come to be commonly held that many utterances which look like statements are either not intended at all, or only intended in part, to record or impart straightforward information about the facts...Can saying (something) make it so? Are we then to say things like this: ‘To marry is to say a few words’ or ‘Betting is simply saying something’? Such a doctrine sounds odd or even flippant at first, but with sufficient safeguards it may become not odd at all.”  
Austin, J. L. (1975) How to do Things with Words, Second edition, Harvard University Press, p 7.

At least since the eighteenth century *the nation* has progressively become one of the major sources of political and social power. At the time of writing international organizations, global forums, and governments alike have accepted and encouraged the notion that national communities constitute an undeniable and inevitable datum of the political, institutional, and cultural landscapes. Indeed, the authority of governments and their legitimacy to rule has come to

depend upon their keeping harmonious relations with their national community/s. When congruence between nations and states weakens, we expect civil conflict to erupt, superpowers to worry, and the United Nations to encourage restraint. Rather than undermining the power of nations twentieth first century capitalism has increased their influence.

More than ever in recorded history collective national identities are linked to individual identities to the point in which people around the globe believe that their personal well-being depends on the well-being of their nations. The writing of national histories and the defense of national values, customs, cultures and ways of life has not only been taken up by intellectuals and grass roots organizations but also by villages, cities, counties, regional governments, and national states. Nations are not just intellectual, cultural, and ethnic constructs. They materialize political and institutional practices that create a concrete day-to-day reality ingrained in the social and economic life of countries. Nations indeed are no longer an “exception” to world history.<sup>1</sup> In our world they provide, in fact, the stuff of history.

Many times during the twentieth century debates about the rights of nations and, especially, the influence of nationalism, were moved to the back burn of scholarly agendas. In real world politics, however, these issues have never lost centrality. Problems concerning the evolving linkages between states and nations and the rights of nations to construct their own states, in particular, have remained a constant preoccupation. In the last decades and under different forms of discourse and labels, governments and international organizations alike have tried to reinforce the congruence between states and nations. In part, the claim that congruence facilitates governance is a consequence of the spreading of democracy. Other factors are however also at work. Since the early 1990s and in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union scholarly literature, journalists, and world leaders, have pointed to the importance of building harmonious relations between nations and states as a necessary step to world peace. There are solid

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<sup>1</sup> Whether one can still consider nations an “exception” surely depends upon the historical timeline under scrutiny. On the exceptionality of nations see McNeill, William H. (1986) Polyethnicity and National Unity in World History, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, pp 28-30.

reasons behind this claim. Somewhat similar to the spreading awareness about the rights of nations that characterized the end of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth centuries, in the twentieth first ethno-national conflict has come again to dominate the political discourse. Scholarly literature has not been indifferent to this threatening syndrome. Indeed, in the last decades this type of conflict has reached proportionally higher levels in relation to other kinds of conflict, including the decades prior to WWI.

The centrality of nations, national identity, and nationalism is self-evident in the fact that most of today's wars are either fought by nations that want to have their own state or by ethnic and religious groups that aspire to become independent nations within the same state. Andreas Wimmer has just published an illuminating book in which, among other things, gives exact figures as to the current ethno-nationalization of war and the progressive warring nature of the modern nation-state.<sup>2</sup> Terrorism and unabashed conflict in the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere express internal, regional, and external wars connected to the distribution of resources. Yet at the same time these kinds of conflict are also fueled by clashes between different notions of *the national* and/or communal loyalties based on ethnicity, religion, and politics.

It is not by chance that increasing numbers of local, regional, and federal governments around the world have been sponsoring a public discourse that includes richer and variegated forms of conceptualizing, imagining, and thinking the nation. During the last three decades public authorities have ritualized the importance of collective memories, indigenous distinctiveness, gender identities, and a variety of activities that supposedly contribute to better visualizing, sensing, and symbolizing the nation. Some governments have also subsidized the writing of national history while foundations increased their funding for research on the ancestral backgrounds of peoples.<sup>3</sup> City councils have been

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<sup>2</sup> Wimmer, Andreas. 2013. Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation, and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World. Cambridge University Press, see especially figure 1.2 and pp 3-5.

<sup>3</sup> One should add an array of educational policies aimed at revisiting foundational myths, identity symbols, national culture, language, race, ancestry, and ethnicity.

busily preserving rural and urban spaces connected to *the national* and caring to landmarks symbolizing the nation.<sup>4</sup> Nongovernmental organizations and institutions of higher learning have customarily praised policies geared at preserving identity, too.<sup>5</sup> To sum up, during the last two decades states both in core and periphery have devoted considerable budgetary allocations, time, and efforts to producing public policy with the objective of persuading citizens that governments do care about the nation and that they are active at safeguarding the national patrimony. States, it has been strongly asserted, “should not surrender traditions and cultural values neither to time nor to foreign influence.”<sup>6</sup> Governments are not the only ones interested in promoting national identity. The World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, or the IMF usually make of national identity and national patrimonies an important part of the conversation.<sup>7</sup> This is even more apparent in the agenda of the United Nations, whose very name conveys the idea that the organization is composed of actors that represent the unity of nations and states.

Nations have been central to policy making but they have not conquered a comparable centrality in scholarly literature. Surely many scholars have acknowledged the importance of nations and their ubiquitous character in the global system, but without really centering on them. Rather, literature has focused on nationalism, that is, the defense of the nation and the ideology and collective action that this defense may generate. A summary view of the literature would reveal that most work has either loose sight of the nation in order to study

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<sup>4</sup> During the last three decades local governments and city councils in Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere have promoted “cultural activities” (festivals, parades, military revels, religious celebrations, and so fourth) that supposedly invigorate an otherwise threatened national identity and the country’s “social national capital”.

<sup>5</sup> The popularity of biographies of notable individuals who are supposed to incarnate the best of national cultures, such as founding fathers, heroes, and exemplary citizens, is also an indicator.

<sup>6</sup> News Conference given by Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, October 10, 2012, in the occasion of a visit with French President Francois Hollande in Paris.

<sup>7</sup> Nations’ rights, nationalism, and national identity are issues usually included in the agenda when discussing global order, state power, globalization, economic development, democracy, border disputes, legitimacy, grass roots participation in decision making, civil war, and regional conflict. See World Bank World Report, 2000-2011.



nationalism or has drawn blurred lines between the two. Nations have been understood either as incarnations of nationalism, as entities subsumed in nationalism, or as byproducts of nationalism. Nationalism has therefore inspired more writing than nations themselves. However, rather than representing epiphenomena of nationalism, nations and the way they are conceived stand as the main engine of identity building.

I submit that the conceptualizing of nations (and not just the imagining of nations) has shaped both national identity and nationalism. I suggest that nationalism, even if it generates its own dynamics by creating collective action and ideology, springs from these conceptualizations. The conceptualizing of nations, as we shall see, comes in the form of *performative* linguistic acts, in the sense coined by J. L. Austin in his How to do Things with Words.

The present importance of nations, nationalism, and national identity results from a long historical process that I comparatively explore below. Nations have long represented forms of communal life that assume congruence between people, state, territory, and culture. Such congruence, however, has only been partially studied and more has been assumed than demonstrated. Today's nations are clearly multicultural and yet this is not a new development. Multiculturalism has been an essential and unavoidable ingredient of national communities since the pre-modern era; yet the argument has been made that the multicultural character of nations is an obstacle for their very existence. It has indeed been claimed that smaller nations united by a common ethnicity represent the ideal and at times only incarnation of nations.<sup>8</sup> Some multicultural arguments have gone as far as stressing that because all nations are diverse not fully unifying national identity can ever exist. My own suggestion is that despite contending accounts as to what the nation could mean for different groups/individuals and the inevitable identity clash that diversity might generate, large communities have in fact emerged as *national* and continued to be so in

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<sup>8</sup> Connor, Walker, (1987) "Ethnonationalism" in Myron Weiner and Samuel Huntington (ed.) Understanding Political Development, HarperCollins, pp 196-221; see also his 1994 Ethnonationalism, New Jersey, Princeton University Press.

theory and practice because of the unifying policies of the state. As we shall see, I am not alone in arguing along these lines; we will also see, however, that the comparisons suggested below question venerable findings and add interesting twists to this line of thinking.

Empirical evidence shows that in the absence of state policies geared toward the creation of a sense of belonging there would be no “national identity” to wrestle about. I understand national identity to mean the consolidation of some degree of self-consciousness about belonging to a larger community called nation. I submit, however, that the existence of “a community of nationals” or what some authors have understood as a “community of horizontal solidarity” does not emerge spontaneously.<sup>9</sup> National self-consciousness needs to be somehow defined and conceptualized in order for it to consolidate. Self-consciousness ought to be about something. This ‘something’ needs to be defined one way or another since it represents what members of the nation think that they share, have been persuaded that they share, or forced to believe that they do. Social practices that generate identity, therefore, are founded upon some conceptualizing and defining of a larger whole. This conceptualizing and the construction of modern national identity have, for the most part, fallen into the hands of the state (for specifics, see Figure 2 below).

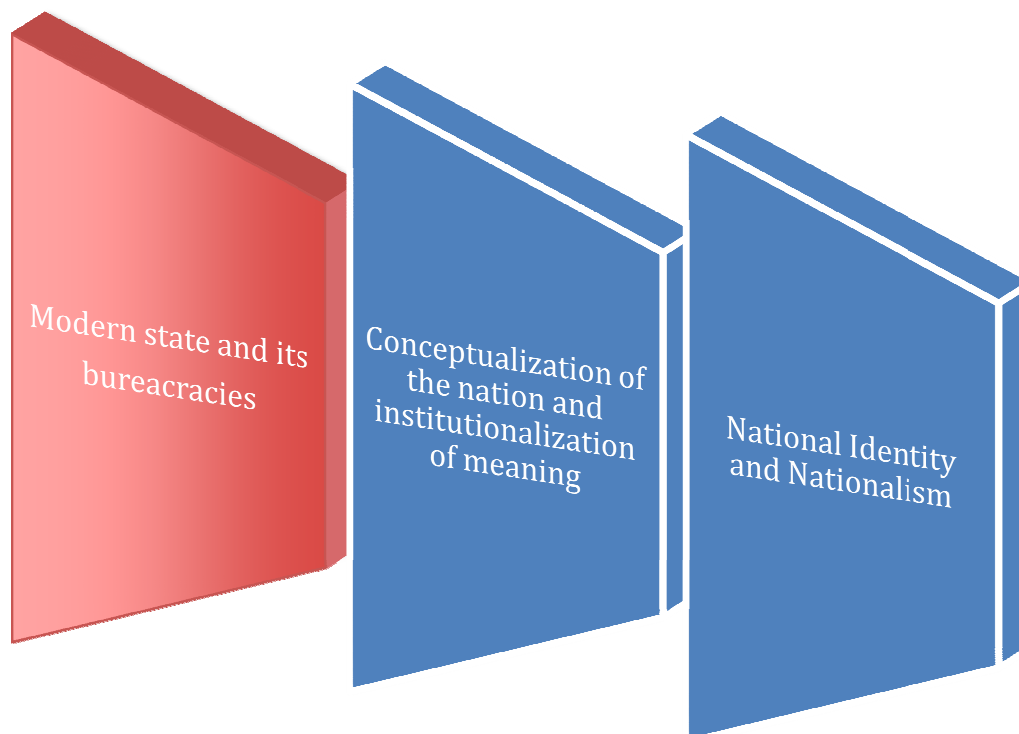
At least in the West, states have created historical, cultural, institutional, and physical spaces where different cultures and ethnicities are able to live and interact. They have done so in the context of a larger assumed identity structured and installed by the state. In other words, cultural, symbolic, and physical constructs crafted by the state unite populations into *the national*. Communities’ efforts to assert their individuality, severe from the state, claim their particular rights to nationhood, or create their own set of institutions, acquire meaning precisely because they represent struggles taking place within a larger whole structured by the state and its institutions in the first place. By excluding

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<sup>9</sup> Anderson, Benedict R. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso. Here Anderson makes a case, among other things, for the nation as a network of horizontal social solidarity.

some groups from the nation and favoring others, states also create cleavages and degrees of exclusion that, at the end, contribute to the construction of national identity. To put it differently, policies of inclusion and exclusion and the institutionalized use of a public discourse regarding *the national* shape and provide “the other”. Figure 1 pictures lines of causality between my independent variables in regards to the construction of national identity and nationalism. As we shall soon see, under certain conditions nationalism can also shape the nation.

Figure 1: The influence of the modern state and its bureaucracies over the institutionalization of meaning, the conceptualization of the nation, national identity, and nationalism.



Cultural identities, like markets, come from somewhere and have histories. Myths, “invented traditions”, “imagination”, symbols, founding fathers, war, and

migration are part of those histories.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the fundamental source of national identity –however loose or diverse— lay with power centralization and the spreading of bureaucratic practices geared toward the creation of a needed degree of unity. This applies to the multicultural and multi-ethnic populations of South America, the United States, and Europe. Many have argued likewise for Asia, especially in the case of India.<sup>11</sup>

Most decision makers in the world today recognize, at least in theory, that nations possess the right to build their own states and that they can choose the institutional structures and political systems that best represent their collective interests. And so did the 1776 American Declaration of Independence and most South American founding constitutions during the early part of the nineteenth century. This goes to show that at least since the eighteenth century the centrality of nations, albeit in different ways, has remained a constant component of political institutions and policy making. Even in cases in which one state rules over more than one nation the diverse linkages uniting the different nations involved with the state in question are considered central to the functioning of both. I call these relations between states and nations relations of codependency.

We are witnessing a revolution in the conceptualization and understanding of the nation at the individual, governmental, and international organizations levels. As indicated, however, this revolution has been long in the making and this essay seeks to offer a theory that could account for these fascinating developments.

Before going into the next section, it must be pointed out that during the long period examined here higher or lower global pressures do not seem to affect

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<sup>10</sup> Distinguished scholars have coined terms such as “inventing traditions” or “imagined communities” to account for the nation and national identity. On the concept of “invented traditions” see Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger Eds. 1983 The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge, University Press. For the well know argument about nations as imagined communities, see Anderson, Benedict R. (1983) Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso

<sup>11</sup> Hansen, Thomas Blom (1999): The Saffron Wave. Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India. Princeton: Princeton University Press; see as well Srirupa, Roy (2007) Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism, Duke University Press.

variations in terms of the centrality of national identity in state's agendas or the importance that states assign to the conceptualizing of the nation. This means that a number of arguments made popular by theories of globalization during the last two decades (the predicted passing of local identities and the weakening of nationalism) need revisiting.<sup>12</sup> This also undermines the opposite claim, that is, globalization triggers resistance to foreign influence and therefore increases national awareness and strengthens identity. The disparities I do find in terms of the importance of national identity in the public discourse and in policy making do not necessarily vary in accordance with ups and downs of globalization except, of course, at times of war.

### **I) Codependency, Nations, and States**

I wish, in a broad sense, to study the evolution of what has been called the modern *nation-state* in connection to the construction of nations and national identity. In part, the concept of the state and state formation used in this book is based on arguments of my earlier work, *State Formation and Democracy in Latin America: 1810-1930* (Duke University Press, 2000) which analyzed the nature and traced the development of the state in that region of the world but in close comparative dialogue with the formation of European states. Here, I focus on the combined process of state *and* nation building. I have also added a fuller treatment of Western European cases and included the United States experience with nation making as a comparative instance; some sporadic references to Canada will also illustrate the argument. I seek to make a contribution to literature that has, finally, started to treat the U.S. as “a case” rather than as an exception comparable to none. Thus, my argument wishes to bridge literatures on the state, the nation, and identity fusing them into one comparative argument.

While I, as many others, stress the importance of the period that starts in the late eighteenth century I also reach back to the fifteenth to capture the origins

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<sup>12</sup> These arguments were connected to, but were not the same as, what are by now abundantly discussed claims about the death of the state.

of larger, modern national communities. While there is both a qualitative and quantitative jump from the sixteenth to the late eighteenth century in the way nations were defined and states engaged in nation building, there are also continuities. A textbook lesson about states is that they have always tried to build mass support that could legitimate their ruling. Joseph Strayer has long talked about the emergence of a “cult” of the state as a result of a shift in loyalties amongst the bulk of the population and elites alike toward the state. Indeed, the state emerged as a “priority” in terms of political and social obligation.<sup>13</sup> As nation-states formed, demographics changed, and war became almost endemic, ruling coalitions found popular support even more wanting. The nation hence became the centerpiece of a secular move to legitimate political and economic power.

I claim that one important aspect that distinguished modern states from pre-modern ones has been the need to *define* “the nation”. States built up symbolic capital with, among other things, the purpose of creating cultural and structural conditions under which their power could be justified and, in fact, welcome. The nation stands as the centerpiece of this symbolic capital. Pre-modern and modern states shared a similar objective: cementing power, building symbolic capital, constructing legitimacy, and gaining support; therefore, they tried to build a sense of community out of a number of multiracial, multi-ethnic, and multicultural collectives. By the eighteenth century empires, city-states, and dynastic kingdoms covered about half of the earth surface and ruled over most of its inhabitants. For centuries these systems governed over quite diverse populations achieving high levels of efficiency and resilience. It is not therefore surprising that their erosion spanned a long and lingering period of resistance and renovation. Modern states emerged in that context and for a long time coexisted with these more often than not larger states.

It was the modern and smaller nation-state, however, that allocated a proportionally higher number of resources and enormous political efforts to

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<sup>13</sup> Strayer, Joseph (1973). On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State, Princeton, University Press, pp 45-50.

create a different and more effective sense of unity among its heterogeneous populace and between the latter and the state. The central role of states in national identity building was, to a large extent, achieved by defining and conceptualizing a different type of “national community” which also created different opposite “others” and instituted concrete policies to defend the “ours”. This was not achieved by persuasion and public discourse alone. Modern states expanded and cemented their power by creating bureaucracies that contributed to amass information which, in due time, was organized into coded databases. This process created standards and categories by which the state interpreted social reality and that added to its cognitive capacity.<sup>14</sup> Bureaucracies did not only create routines out of administrative practices that established job descriptions and rationalized systems of promotions, but they also established “rational” routines (in the sense put forward by Max Weber) connected to the conceptualizing of *the national*. This, I submit, stands as a crucial independent variable in connection to nation building. It contributes to understanding why at some points in time during the evolution of the modern state we see the rise of more encompassing degrees of national self-consciousness. In other words, modern bureaucracies contributed to conceptualizing the nation and installing consciousness about national identity.

As shown in Figure 1 above, I have selected two major independent variables. First, I focus on the use of public discourse about the nation and the process of institutionalization of meaning carried through by the state. Second, I pay attention to the expansion of bureaucratic practices that modernized the state, a process that can be observable in the three regions I have chosen for comparison. Modernity, among other things, meant that the state increasingly monopolized the institutionalization of meaning regarding nationhood. Other powerful contenders surely tried to challenge the state by creating alternative versions. Yet the modern state prevailed at connecting national myths, social practices, and rituals attached to the national --regardless of their origins and

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<sup>14</sup> Among others, James Scott, for instance, has studied such capacity and how the state reads society as a result. See Scott, James C, (1998). Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed, Yale University Press

historical traditions-- to a process of institutionalization of meaning that expressed its own interests. By institutionalizing notions of the national and incorporating them into the public discourse, the state encouraged and triggered an array of linguistic, psychological, ideological, cultural, and political practices that contributed to the consolidation of a larger identity.

I argue that this process connects with the modern state's move toward more "rational" bureaucratic forms of administration (in the sense coined by Max Weber). New forms of administration changed notions of the public and the private as well as the structure of decision-making, thereby creating favorable conditions for the consolidation of national identity and more widespread acceptance regarding definitions of the nation. Larger and more efficient bureaucracies gave the state and ruling coalitions the power to create the conditions under which they could "do things with words" when conceptualizing the nation (more below). Technological innovations in communications, mapping, manufacturing, and warfare added needed ingredients.

Conceptualizing the nation and practices involving the institutionalization of meaning developed what I call *codependency* between states and nation (not accounted for in Figure 1). This meant that as the process of national identity construction advanced, chosen conceptualizations of the nation and specific meanings of the national became institutionalized while others were either eliminated or survived as sub- alters. Codependency means that neither the state nor the nation can be defined or function in isolation from one another. In other words, at least in the West, neither states nor nations could survive without connecting with each other; this also meant that codependency evolved in tandem with the construction of national identity. An important aspect of codependency is that state policies of identity creation sought not only to construct a sense of concord amongst heterogeneous populations but also to encourage unity among the ruling elites. Here lay the origins of the so-called "congruence" between states and nations. This congruence, therefore, is one of *codependency*.



It goes without saying that there was nothing inevitable about both the present centrality of nations and the strong codependency that consolidated between nations and states, neither in the West nor elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> I wish to make a comparative rather than tautological argument about the origins and evolution of codependency; therefore, cases in which state and nation have failed at creating strong enough codependency are as important as the ones in which codependency thrived and consolidated. Indeed, at many junctures during the historical period studied below the connections between states and nations weakened, and the conscious construction of national identity on the part of the state seemed to come to a halt. European states of the sixteenth century formed colonies with which they built a vast and complex network of national ties. Those linkages, however, varied in terms of their strength, with some states and national collectives drifting apart not only in the colonies but also within the mother country. Colonial and post-colonial communities would later develop into multicultural, multi ethnic, modern nations and they themselves also found it difficult to build solid ties of codependency both with local authorities and the center of power. All these different forms of codependency in Europe and its colonies spanned a period of more than three centuries. In the nineteenth century, and despite claims of anti-imperialism, more colonial collectives were added to the already powerful European states, which created an even more complex scenario of multiculturalism in regards to the nation, national identity consciousness, and nationalism.

In the 1800s European powers extraordinarily expanded their territorial claims redefining again the nation and that of their colonies in the process. Indeed, by 1878, they exerted control over 67% of the earth's land.<sup>16</sup> By the beginning of WWI those ties united more than 85% of the world's surface. Yet

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<sup>15</sup> Other regions of the world tangentially considered below (Africa, Asia, the Middle East) featured different degrees and types of codependency, too. My main focus, however, remains on South America, Western Europe, and the United States

<sup>16</sup> Hill, Christopher L. (2008) National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States, Durham and London, Duke University Press, p. 6.

again their rate of success at creating unity and national identity varied, both at the domestic and colonial levels, creating different types of codependency along the way as well. Some linkages between states, local governments, city states, principalities and bishoprics with emerging larger communities remained spurious and faded away. In addition, and as we shall see, a number of rulers did not seem interested enough in building national identities and promoting the idea of an encompassing nation. Most regimes sponsored the construction of a collective identity at the national level, that is, the entirety of the territory dominated by the state. Others did not and concentrated, instead, on cities as the focal points of identity building. The evolution of codependency varied and, as we shall see, different types of codependency emerged. Unlike most theories of state formation I do not look at the relations between states and nations (codependency) as the exclusive outcome of war and conflict.<sup>17</sup> As I have argued elsewhere war is no doubt a venerable variable that impacts institution and identity building; yet when it comes to explaining the relations between states and nations or national identity it leaves too much out.<sup>18</sup> Other factors need to be included to obtain a fuller picture.

## **II) Period and Questions**

What unites the long period under scrutiny here is the high frequency of radical changes affecting state formation, national identity, and conceptualizations of the nation. While the process of codependency formation started in the fifteenth century it was in the eighteenth that codependency sketched social, institutional, and political scenarios that are still in place today. The whole period is rich in terms of observable variations in my independent and dependent variables. Additionally, during the last two hundred years the regions compared experienced at least two phases of intense globalization and

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<sup>17</sup> An inspiring classic within this approach is of course Charles Tilly's work on state formation in Europe (1992) Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell and also his (1993) European Revolutions, 1492–1992. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

<sup>18</sup> Lopez-Alves, Fernando, (2000) State Formation and Democracy in Latin America, 1810-1930, Duke University Press

contraction, measured by the ups and downs of international trade and their overall integration into the global system. This allows gauging the impact of global markets and other external factors upon variations in the conceptualizing of the nation and the construction of national identity. Thus, although this is not my main purpose, the analysis will be dotted with references to the structure of the global system and its impact on the conceptualizing of the nation as well as on the construction of bureaucracies. The regions and cases under comparison can be seen in Table 1. Canada is placed under a different color in this table because it will be used as comparative background only.

Table 1: Regions and Cases

EUROPE	SOUTH AMERICA	NORTH AMERICA
FRANCE	ARGENTINA	UNITED STATES
SPAIN	COLOMBIA	
		CANADA
ITALY	PERU	
GERMANY	URUGUAY	

Well-known variables like war, industrialization, and international conflict were common occurrences in the history of these countries. Indeed, they witnessed plenty of wars during the period under examination: wars of decolonization, colonization, annexation, independence, civil wars, and wars of imperial expansion. In addition, the period includes WWI. A similar observation can be made about economic development and industrialization. My sample includes industrial and less industrial countries whose economic structures were transformed by an array of different factors: the creation and erosion of enclaves, different economies of scale, the commercialization of agriculture, industrial revolutions, and dissimilar systems of taxation. In terms of systems of collective bargaining and the use of workforce the sample covers almost the actual totality

of historical variations. The cases selected also offer a rich institutional and political universe for comparison (monarchies, empires, city states, republics, modern military regimes, and democracies). All these developments make the comparison only richer and contribute to the elimination of possible independent variables. Within each regions cases were selected on the basis of variations in the independent variables and different kinds of codependency (Tables 2 and 3 below).

As indicated, three regions of the West are compared: North America, South America, and Western Europe. Despite fairly recent and welcome efforts, literature has not comparatively paid attention to the Americas.<sup>19</sup> I wish to avoid the term “Latin America” as much as I can simply because it entails, at best, a cultural rather than a geographical criterion of classification. While both in current parlance and academic jargon very few people would call North America --or specifically the United States-- “Anglo America” or “Non-Mediterranean America”, scholarly literature, however, uses the term “Latin America” to do just that. Africa and the Middle East are not defined culturally either. Rather, the meaning of these labels refers to location. In some ex colonies, definitions also include labels inherited by old colonial mappings but the decisive factor used in most categorizations is, again, geography. The same applies to Eastern Europe, Southeast or Central Asia, and so forth. Why, therefore, do we label just one region on the basis of an ambiguous cultural principle? When one explores national identity this label poses even more problems. Thus, I rather prefer a geographical categorization than one based on a vague definition of culture.

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<sup>19</sup> See for instance the edited volume by Doyle, Don H. and Marco Antonio Pamplona (2006) Nationalism in the New World, The University of Georgia Press. On the fruitfulness of comparisons between Europe, Latin America, and the United States, see Lopez-Alves, Fernando “Nation-States and Nationalist States: Latin America in Comparative Perspective”, in Hanagan, Michael and Tilly, Chris (2011) Eds. Contention and Trust in Cities and States, Springer, 2011. See also Lopez-Alves, F. “Modernization Theory Revisited: Latin America, Europe, and the U.S. in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century” (2011) Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura, Vol. 38, No. 1 (January-July 2011) pp. 243-279. See also Kramer, Lloyd, (211) Nationalism in Europe and America: Politics, Cultures, and Identities since 1775, Chapel Hill, the University of North Carolina Press

Indeed, to speak of a “Latin American Culture” or a “Latin Culture” would be totally inaccurate and misinformed, as it would to speak of a “North American”, “Middle Eastern” or “Easter European” one.

The analysis of variances in observed correlations of codependency offers, to paraphrase Barrington Moore in *Social Origins*...., the opportunity to identify and compare “different paths” to modernity.<sup>20</sup> It also presents the opportunity to identify different paths to national identity. By creating secular notions of legitimacy based upon different conceptualizations of the nation and constructing national identity upon those definitions, ruling coalitions and states delineated paths of codependency that changed the relations between states and civil society. This comparison therefore also contributes to an understanding of variations in terms of regime outcomes.

The factors highlighted by Moore --revolution, class conflict, and the dosage of power due to landlords and peasants that explained different kinds of political arrangements-- are different but complementary to the ones I select here. In addition, Moore’s thesis nicely harmonizes with my findings on the reasons why different linkages developed between states and civil society via conceptualizations of the nation and the construction of national identity, a topic that Moore did not squarely tackled in his famous opus. In terms of cases I add South America, an area of the West that Moore did not include.

Max Weber is present in my characterization of the nation and yet the goal of my analysis is different. I endeavor to offer comparative scenarios that would allow assessing how and why his “community of sentiment” became a community in the first place, and the ways in which it interacted with political institutions. In addition, while Weber’s arguments about identity are compatible to the ones I submit here and I, like him, pay attention to the different origins of those special types of communities called “nations”, I however emphasize the *conceptualizing* of the nation as a nation maker.

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<sup>20</sup> Moore, Barrington (1966) Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World. Bacon Press

As it can be guessed by now, the guiding question of the enquiry is the pervasive one of ‘what is the nation’? During the last decades much good scholarly work has addressed this question and I am fortunate to be able to profit from such impressive record.<sup>21</sup> Needless to say, I have also benefited from excellent literature published prior to the last three decades. We are at a point in which plenty of definitions, meanings, and incarnations of the nation have been debated. As it will be shortly discussed, mine places less emphasis on “imagining” and “inventing traditions” and more on conceptualizing.

Although actors obviously made “rational choices” under specific historical circumstances that are analyzed here, my comparative historical approach is more in line with structural theories that have discussed the nation as a cultural/ideological construct than with rational choice approaches like that of Robert Bates and others. Nonetheless, conceptual bridges between rational choice theory and the conceptualizing of nations are explored. When states conceptualized nations they acted “rationally” in the broadest sense used by rational theory. Conceptualizing is closely linked with making rational choices. These choices emerged from a negotiation processes that generated a number of possible options in connection to the available information that actors could muster at any given point in time. Ideological and cultural constructs, therefore, can emerge from a process that rational choice theory knows too well. Yet, rational choice theory alone does not suffice to account for the richness of

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<sup>21</sup> Among others, see Anderson, Benedict R. 1983. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso; Greenfeld, Liah (1992) Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity. Cambridge. Harvard University Press and her (2001) The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth, Harvard University Press; Hill, Christopher L. (2008) National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States, Durham and London, Duke University Press; and Marx, Anthony, 2003 Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism, Oxford University Press, and Bell, David A. 2003 The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800, Harvard University Press, whose excellent contribution to the birth of the nation as a concept and an ideological tool during the French Revolution has been extremely useful. I also found the approach taken by Silberman, Bernard S. in his 1993 Cages of Reason: The Rise of the Rational State in France, Japan, the United States, and Great Britain. Chicago: University of Chicago Press inspiring since he, *pace* Max Weber, stresses why very different sorts of bureaucracies formed in these four countries.

historical contexts in which actors operated nor for the success or failure that states faced when attempting the institutionalizing of meaning.

Exploring the nation means analyzing differences between the nation, nationalism, and national identity. How do they differ? These notions are closely connected historically but they should be separated analytically. This is especially the case with nationalism, which as I have indicated, represents a different but related process of identity building. Both as a concept and as an actor capable of generating ideology and collective action, nationalism has travelled dissimilar paths from those of the nation and national identity. Tellingly, its prestige in both the literature and the public eye often declines and rises, while for the most part those of the nation and national identity remain steady.

Hence, I am at variance with most literature in terms of the centrality that I grant to the nation.<sup>22</sup> My interpretation is that nationalism mirrors the different—at times conflicting--- conceptualizations of the nation that public officials, grass roots movements, intellectuals, scientists, and the arts put forward at any given time. This shift in emphasis is not only of analytical importance but also of empirical consequence. Surely nationalism can generate collective action, create ideology, and redefine the nation; it can, therefore, act as an independent variable. In connection with the questions asked in this essay, however, I claim that it makes more theoretical and empirical sense to treat it as a dependent factor.

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<sup>22</sup> Although there are important differences among the following very important contributions one can argue that rather than the nation or national identity nationalism has acquired the status of independent variable in these arguments. Many times the nation is not a substantial part of the analysis and in other occasions is seen as a product of nationalism rather than the other way around. See, among others, Anderson, Benedict R. 1983. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso, and his 2005. Under Three Flags: Anarchism and Anti-Colonial Imagination. London. Verso; Breuilly, John 1993. Nationalism and the State, Manchester, Manchester University Press; Dann, Otto & John Dinwiddy 1988: Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution. London: Doyle, Don H. and Marco Antonio Pamplona, eds (2006) Nationalism in the New World, The University of Georgia Press; Hobsbawm, E.J. 1990. Nations and Nationalism since 1789. Programme, Myth, Reality. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, and the recent work of Wimmer, Andreas. 2013. Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation, and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World. Cambridge University Press.

The abundantly studied nature of the relation between these three concepts with the state remains controversial. Codependency, as indicated, was not the same in all cases considered. The expression *nation-state* has attempted to capture the complex associations between nations, the state, national identity, and nationalism but in my view the term needs serious revisiting. What does the equation “nation-state” mean exactly, especially in terms of the connections between institutions and collective identities? Can the state and the nation be analytically separated and therefore examined as independent phenomena? As Edmund Glenn pointed out in 1970, “the core of the contradiction may well be the ambiguity which underlines the concept nation-state. ‘Nation’ and ‘state’ are concepts of different orders. Placing them together in a hyphenated community suggests that two different social and political processes lead to the same end product –something which may, or may not, be the case.”<sup>23</sup> Is the state, therefore, that builds the nation or the nation that shapes the state? I argue that different forms of codependency create contexts in which, under certain conditions, both nation and national identity can shape the state (Figure 2 below).

I ask therefore whether the nation and national identity can be considered independent variables rather than dependent ones, as they have been treated in most literature on the modern state. While scholars using culture as an approach have surely attributed independent status to these factors and differentiated between political and cultural nationalism, most studies on the state have not.<sup>24</sup> This should not come as a surprise. Work on state formation and the state has traditionally borrowed from other approaches and theories, such as rational choice, institutional theory, political economy, economics, conflict, and collective action. Perhaps as a consequence or perhaps as a preference, for the most part

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<sup>23</sup> Glenn, Edmund S. (1970) “The Two Faces of Nationalism” Comparative Political Studies, volume 3, pp 347-366, p 348.

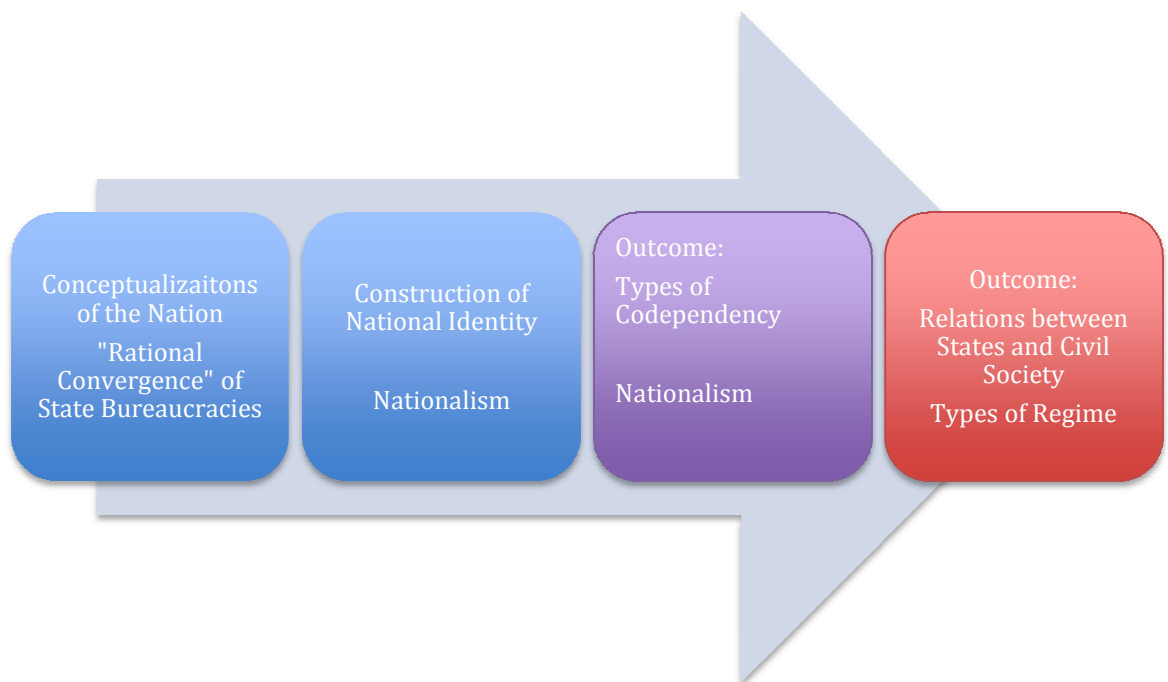
<sup>24</sup> For a recent pointed discussion of the cultural approach in studies of the nation and nationalism and, specifically, the cultural meaning of nationalism, see Kramer, Lloyd, (211) Nationalism in Europe and America: Politics, Cultures, and Identities since 1775, Chapel Hill, the University of North Carolina Press, pp 7-20. Kramer’s is one among few welcome contributions to the study on nationalism that compares European cases (France, Germany) with the United States. In this regard, see also the important contribution of Greenfeld, Liah (1992) Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity. Cambridge. Harvard University Press



literature on the state has regarded issues connected to national identity as effects rather than causes. Depending on conditions that will be spelled out below, my take is that national identity and nationalism can actually act as independent variables in regards to the nation and, in some cases, institutions of government.

Before analyzing in detail my two independent variables (conceptualizing of the nation and the characteristics of modern state bureaucracies, particularly the status of the civil service) a more encompassing picture of the argument is needed. Figure 2 provides that picture. In it, the selected independent factors shape different types of codependency and the relations between the state and civil society. In the last instance they also influence state-civil society relations and contribute to the rise of different types of regime.

Figure 2: The Argument



As indicated, in the long run the state remained the most important actor among those who could institutionalize meaning and conceptualize the nation through public discourse and policy making. Yet it did not do so by itself. The outcome responded to alliances with selected groups, which left other actors out

thereby establishing distinctions that constituted an essential part of the process of identity building. Indeed, the different regions compared allow gauging different degrees of exclusion and inclusion in accordance to official conceptualizations of the nation. Degrees of exclusion made a difference for national identity and the resulting type of political regime.

Nationalism is no doubt a force, and Figure 2 places it both as an independent and dependent variable. Independent variable in connection to the construction of national identity --which means that it had a role to play in the rising of national consciousness— and a dependent factor in connection with the building of codependency. In other words, different types of codependency shaped different kinds of nationalisms. This also means that nationalism originally sprang from some sort of defining and conceptualizing the nation; this allowed nationalism to be more specific when construction “the other” and thus built upon a notion of “the self”. In due time, nationalist movements and ideology can of course become a force and modify the conceptualization of the nation.

Figure 2 shows that variations in national identity and types of codependency connect to different types of political institutions; they also influence the overall framework in which ongoing relations between the state and civil society take place. The fact that types of national identity linked with specific types of political institutions should not come as a surprise. The argument has been made that strong correlations between democratic stable political institutions and civic forms of national identity do exist. Mansfield and Snyder have persuasively argued, for instance, that in strong democracies the national community appears less fragmentary and a sense of unity prevails. Contrastingly, when weaker, unstable, or less participatory forms of government are in place national communities are more fractured and less unified. In other words, when democratic institutions are weak or absent national identity may become dominated by disjointed, “multiple versions of nationalism”.<sup>25</sup> Mansfield

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<sup>25</sup> Mansfield, Edward and Jack Snyder (2005) Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War. Cambridge, MIT Press. See as well Schulman, Stephen (2002). “Challenging the Civic/Ethnic and West/East Dichotomies in the Study of Nationalism.” Comparative Political Studies, 35, pp 554-585

and Snyder also show that when competing forms of national identity (civic, ethnic, religious) emerge within a given national territory the notion of an overall unifying national identity becomes problematic.<sup>26</sup> As we shall see, some countries in Latin America and Europe illustrate this claim. The same applies to most of Africa, the Middle East, and South East Asia. We will come back to the connection between institutions of government and the nation and national identity shortly below. Before, a more in depth definition of the category ‘conceptualizing the nation’ is in place.

### **III) Conceptualizing the Nation**

What is the process by which the bulk of the population and ruling elites alike arrive to that particular historical point in which they conceive themselves as part of a larger community sharing in an identity called “national”? The characteristics of the object upon which this awareness is predicated (the nation) are as important as the awareness itself. Literature has long pondered over which of the many characteristics associated to that particular community are essential to its definition. My point is that there is no national awareness or self-consciousness that could be possible without some reference to a particular defining and conceptualizing of the group of people (nation) that remains the motif and locus of such awareness in the first place.

This is not to claim that *all* or even the majority of members of given nations shared in this awareness. Did eighteenth century European peasants, for instance, have a connection with the center of power and, if they did, what was that united them with it? Discussing nationalism Hobsbawm had long argued that if we were to figure out the “sentiments” of the majority –especially the illiterate—toward the nation we would run into insurmountable difficulties.<sup>27</sup> This and other similar claims have encouraged a top-heavy approach in which popular

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<sup>26</sup> Mansfield and Snyder, pp 555 and passim.

<sup>27</sup> Hobsbawm, Eric J. (1990) Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality. Cambridge, University Press, p. 48

beliefs have hardly found a place in the analysis. Available data, although scattered, however indicates that by and large states succeeded at installing recognizable degrees of collective national consciousness both amongst the populace and the elites. In the present day, data points in this direction.<sup>28</sup> In other words, there is evidence that, in addition to public figures of which we have a record, many individuals amongst the larger populace did believe to be members of a nation, too.<sup>29</sup>

Because *the nation* is an abstract notion and rests in part upon beliefs, it is not surprising that literature has found similarities between nationalism and religious practices. Indeed, by the end of the eighteenth century a new deity, the nation, generated its own cult and worshipping. These practices increased national consciousness (national identity as I have defined it) and engendered nationalisms, which, in turn, also contributed to redefining the ideas associates with the nation and creating an emotional attachment to one's own community. There are important differences, however, in the meanings and practices associated with these beliefs. The work of theologians notwithstanding, by and large people do not try to define and conceptualize the object of their faith. In the case of the nation, the opposite is true; conceptualizing and describing go along with emotional attachment and imagination. Much literature has persuasively argued that the rise of consciousness about the nation in the West, especially in Europe, represented a watershed that separated two worlds: one founded,

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<sup>28</sup> In terms of data on the contemporary period, during 2007-2011 a team and I conducted several opinion polls in 3 Latin American and one European city (1000 cases each). The questionnaire tried to capture the meaning of the nation, the definition of the national, and the characteristics of the national community in the popular imaginary. Among other things, we found that the highest degrees of consensus about the meaning of the nation emerged in relation to conceptualizations of the national directly connected to government policies that favored certain meanings of national identity over others. It also connected with the overall strength of the state during the last fifty years in all cases considered. This research is in progress. However, related surveys can be found in my "Uncertainty, the Construction of the Future, and the Divorce Between Citizens and the State in Latin America", in Fernando Lopez-Alves and Diane Johnson (2007) ed. Globalization and Uncertainty in Latin America, Palgrave/McMillan.

<sup>29</sup> Obviously the more one goes back in the historical record, the less data one finds about what the bulk of the population believed, if anything at all. Yet the late nineteenth and early twentieth century furnishes precious evidence that "belonging to a nation" had become a part of the personal identity of individuals. We will expand on this point below.

structured, and ruled by God, and the other shaped by modernity and nation-states. Secular conceptualizing and defining were added to faith, love, and emotional attachment. Theology had done likewise and had presented sophisticated arguments about Divine Law as the organizing principle of the universe. Conceptualizing the nation, however, represented something different.

Unlike religion the nation did not claim to be the only organizing principle of the universe but rather an unifying force focused on a new, more reduced, and controllable collective. Religiosity remained ingrained into the conceptual fiber of this new organizing principle and hence the nation kept some of the old sacred aura connected to the divine. Yet it revolved around different foundations connected to modernity. Starting in the seventeenth century, consultation with religious institutions or members of the clergy continued to be important as a symbol. Soon, in practice however it was no longer necessarily needed. Western states grew to be free to craft the philosophical foundations of their own political legitimacy and progressively the clergy became to directly depend upon the secular power.

As E. Kamenka puts it: "Since kings were to cease governing and the 'people' were to take their place, people had to be mould into some sort of unity, defined and limited in some sort of way. The concept of 'nation' thus came to the fore as a fundamental political category."<sup>30</sup> Hence secular states were able to fabricate the ideological justification of their own claim to power. The terms "people" and "nation" had meant different things but under republican rule *the nation* started to be identified with *the people* and both of them turned into major sources of political legitimacy. Religion and nationalism, God and nation; they do share some basic principles but at least in the West a radical process of differentiation separated the two. By the onset of the 1900s and most definitely by the end of WWI, no state (except, of course, symbolically) ruled in the name of

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<sup>30</sup> Kamenka Eugene (1973) "Political Nationalism: The Evolution of the Idea" in E. Kamenka (ed.) Political Nationalism, op.cit, p 10

Kings, Queens, or Popes.<sup>31</sup> Rulers ruled in the name of the “nation” and of the “people”.<sup>32</sup>

What does ‘conceptualizing the nation’ involve? *Conceptualizing*, in the way I use this concept, is not just reduced to words and definitions but it entails both the institutionalization of meaning and a process of social and political conciliation. The main line of negotiation involved the state and ruling coalitions vis-à-vis sectors of civil society. Other lines implicated intra-elite negotiation and horizontal processes of coalition formation. Yet the use of words and the public discourse that emerged about the nation were key for the consolidation of identity. Words and definitions are for the most part verifiable because they have an indicative meaning. Some particular actions of “defining”, however, entail other dimensions. Some forms of discourse, for instance, do not necessarily mean that we need to test their accuracy or their truth. I argue that this applies to *the nation* and also to *national identity*. These two belong to a specific type of discourse usually expressed in sentences called *performatives*.

In the 1960s the British philosopher John L. Austin published his landmark book How to do Things with Words.<sup>33</sup> Against the usual interpretation of language of philosophers and grammarians he argued that there are meanings in words and sentences that are not necessarily true or false. Austin was particularly interested in one of these kinds of sentences, which he labeled

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<sup>31</sup> For a canning analysis of the political atmosphere, cultural change, and bellicose renovation that preceded WWI as well as the strong influence of nationalism that characterized Europe at that time, see Eksteins, Modris (1989) Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. On government coalitions and the cultural and scientific transformations that paralleled the rise of the strong nationalism that lead to the war, see as well the delightful book of Tuchman, Barbara W. The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the War, 1890-1914, (1966) New York, Ballantine Books. For a broad analysis of Europe and nationalism by the end of WWI and beyond, see also Johnson, Paul (1993) Modern Times: The World from the Twentieths to the Nineties New York: Harper Perennial

<sup>32</sup> See Mosse, George (1975) The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich. New York, Howard Fertig and, again, Ortega y Gasset, Jose (1932). The Revolt of the Masses, New York, Norton & Company

<sup>33</sup> Austin, J. L. (1975) How to do Things with Words, Second edition, Oxford University Press.

*performative* utterance calls, or just "performatives". These sentences and concepts are not used to describe (or "constate") and thus are not true or false. They have no truth-value. As Austin warned us in the first pages of his classic book, statements do not always describe some state of affairs or "state some fact". Some statements do something very different, since the "uttering of the sentence is, or is part of, the doing of an action, which...would not *normally* be described as... 'just' saying something."<sup>34</sup> There lies the difference between what Austin calls "*performatives*" and "*constatives*". To utter a performative sentence "under the appropriate circumstances" is to perform a certain kind of action. For instance, "I do (sc. take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife) –as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony".<sup>35</sup> Why are these sentences *performatives*? Because their very utterance is the performing of an action, that is, they allow us to do things with words. Words and definitions therefore are not just the carriers of indicative meaning; they, in fact, do something that can have social, political, and cultural consequences.

In other words, under specific "circumstances", to say something also means doing something. This is what I argue that the state does when defining the nation and the national. The fact that the actor that performs the elocutionary performative act has the power to institutionalize meaning in connection to that particular performative (regardless of the veritable character of the concept in question) makes the use of these performatives quite effective. The intellectual construction that goes into defining something (the nation in this case) is not aiming at constructing discourse with indicative meaning but, rather, to creating the nation by conceptualizing it in a certain way.

The state differs from other groups and institutions in that it possesses other attributes that make it a powerful maker of meaning able to reach a larger community. The modern state become able to creating the "appropriate circumstances" that Austin insisted must be present for performatives to perform.

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<sup>34</sup> Austin, op. cit. pp 5

<sup>35</sup> Austin, ibid. p 5

<sup>36</sup> Albeit different degrees of success, therefore, these states wield enough power to create the “specific circumstances” under which the performative can perform. The state is neither completely able to fully institutionalize meaning nor of imposing given meanings upon the total sum of the population upon which it rules. Yet in relative terms (at least in the cases considered here) it remained the most powerful actor capable to do things with words and to institutionalize resilient connotations. It bears repeating that type of conceptualizing constructed the concepts of nation and national identity. As indicated, this process also shaped nationalism but in a number of ways nationalism remained a different matter.

Two examples, one taken from Austin, the other from a Latin American President will bring this point closer to home. Austin gives the following example: “I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth –as uttering when smashing the bottle against the stem...it seems clear that to utter the sentence (in, or course, the appropriate circumstances) is not to describe ... it is to do it.”<sup>37</sup> Early twentieth century President Jose Batlle y Ordóñez of Uruguay defined the nation thus: “I say that this nation is the good people of this country and their generosity”.<sup>38</sup> Both illocutionary acts are doing something similar. This last sentence is of course offering in part a *description* because is stating something that supposedly corresponds with some sort of reality (good people and their generosity). At the same time, however, this definition acts as a performative more than as a mere indicative sentence. Moreover, it is the very uttering of these performatives when defining *the national* that would, if required, serves as empirical proof of its accuracy. In conclusion, conceptualizing and defining the

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<sup>36</sup> For an elaborate but clear account of these and other variations in illocutionary acts as well as a wider discussion on the method of linguistic philosophy and the philosophy of language, including Austin’s arguments about non-indicative and non-verifiable words, see Searle, John R. (1999) Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language, Cambridge University Press. The first edition is from 1969.

<sup>37</sup> Austin, op. cit. pp 5-7

<sup>38</sup> Cited in Barran, Jose Pedro and Benjamin Nahum (1979-1986) Batlle, los estancieros y el imperio británico, seven volumes, Montevideo: Banda Oriental, volume 2, pp 123-124



nation is, to a large extent, making it. These definitions have their share of “infelicity”, as Austin characterizes it when talking about jurisprudence and the act of promising something in connection with *performative* acts (pp 16-24). At the same time, they are also part of a ritual that is not reduced to identify misunderstandings or different degrees of infelicity; rather, performatives are able to perform regardless of these shortcomings. And states have been the most important ritual makers of modern times.

I am in general agreement with literature that has argued that there is a powerful quota of elite manipulation in creating the nation and identity.<sup>39</sup> I stress, however, variables seldom mention by that particular literature and do not claim that other actors cannot influence national consciousness and/or definitions of the nation. The intelligentsia, especially influential writers --a subject most studied both in literature using history or ideas approaches or focusing on the different ways in which national history has been written—have influenced, for instance, the way in which societies conceive nationalist principles and understand national identity. Moreover, as we shall see, various organized actors successfully competed with the state in trying to institutionalize and install different versions of the national among populations, elites, and institutions. They used performatives, too. What I argue is that this is, however, part of the bargaining process of meaning mentioned above. In the long run, these subaltern meanings of the nation (and the performatives used to define them as well as the ‘infelicities’ that they might have generated) remained either partly absorbed or ostracized by the state. While this is plainly clear in the case of South America it also applies to the other two regions.

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<sup>39</sup> Tilly, Charles (1992) Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, and his (1993) European Revolutions, 1492–1992. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell; Kohn, Hans, (1939) “The Nature of Nationalism”, *The American Political Science Review*, V. 33, no. 6, pp 1001-1021. Ibarra, Federico. Origenes del nacionalismo argentino: 1927-1937. Buenos Aires, Celsius. 1969; Grodzins, Morton. (1966) The Loyal and the Disloyal: Social Boundaries of Patriotism and Treason. Meridian Books, World Publishing Company; Hobsbawm, E.J. (1990): Nations and Nationalism since 1789. Programme, Myth, Reality. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger Eds. (1983) The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge, University Press.

The modern state did not just impose particular notions of identity and forced populations to accept them; this was more the case with pre-modern states, if at all. The modern conceptualizing of the nation emerged as a more complex process that included institutionalizing meaning through the incorporation of established memories (ethnic and otherwise) as well as the use of historically rooted myths that, as Anthony Smith has argued, constitute important grass-roots sources of nationalism and identity.<sup>40</sup> This particular conceptualizing constructed versions of *the national* in the context of a national history in part constructed by the state and in part drawn from already established but selected meanings.

The importance of ancient traditions and myths in relation to the conceptualization of the nation takes us back to the debate about old and new nations. There are basically two general arguments about the meaning of the term “nation” in connection to its historical trajectory. On one side stand those who support the idea that the nation is defined by “civic nationalism” (all people living within the same borders are part of the nation), and on the other those who believe in “ethnic nationalism” (nations are defined by a shared heritage which includes a common faith, a common language, and common ethnic ancestry). The first group associates nations with the rise of the modern state, notions of citizenship, republican revolutions, and modernity. The latter does not. Hence, are nations really modern phenomena or can they be traced back to the middle ages or even antiquity? Because I argue that the rise of national consciousness and modern nation building are closely tied to the process of power centralization and bureaucratic growth associated with the rise of modern states, before going into the next section this debate needs to be briefly addressed.

Germany is a good place to start. For many years theories of the German nation have reflected the unsettled character of these debates. Philosophers and theorists, for instance, have usually opted for the idea that the German nation is

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<sup>40</sup> See Smith, Anthony, 1991 National Identity. University of Nevada Press, and, especially, his The Ethnic Origins of Nations, 1986 Oxford, Basil Blackwell.

a product of modernity and therefore tied to modern institutions and republican concepts of citizenship. In the nineteenth century Hegel supplied a powerful foundation for this position when he argued that the rise of the German nation was associated with the rise of a modern collective self. The true German nation “ought to be modern” by force of the inevitable works of the evolution of the Spirit. Modernity provided a unique and advantageous standpoint from which to look at the past, and hence the modern German nation of Hegel’s own times would express the construction of an identity that incarnated the negation of identities prior. In his Philosophy of History and his Phenomenology of Spirit the modern present furnished an empowering analytical tool. Going back to a medieval German nation would limit our perspective of the trajectory of history. The modern German nation, thus, expressed a much superior consciousness of it-self and therefore a fuller “reality”, in the Hegelian sense.

Other literature has also supported the idea of a modern German nation but for different reasons. Some, for instance, feared a German nation defined on the basis of a glorious and predetermined future. Habermas’ thinking about the matter is a case in point. The idea of a German medieval nation was, for Habermas, not only inaccurate but also undesirable. Thus his exhortation that “Germans...(should)... understand themselves as a nation solely on their loyalty to the republican constitution”. Germans “would not hang onto the pre-political crutches of nationality and community of fate”.<sup>41</sup> At the opposite end lay arguments claiming the medieval origins of German national identity.<sup>42</sup> Substantial scholarship has likewise detected the existence of pre-modern national identities in England.<sup>43</sup> Similar claims have been also made about

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with Habermas in Borradori Giovanna, Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jurgen Habermas and Jaques Derrida. Chicago, University Press, 2003, pp. 10-11.

<sup>42</sup> For a good review of the literature and the importance of this debate in the case of Germany, see, for instance, Scales, Len (2012) The Shaping of German Identity Authority and Crisis, 1245-1414, Cambridge, University Press. See also Smith, Helmut Walser (2008) The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race Across the Long Nineteenth Century. Cambridge, University Press

<sup>43</sup> See, among others, Butterfield, Ardis (2009) The Familiar Enemy: Chaucer, Language, and Nation in the Hundred Years War. Oxford, University Press.

French, Russian, and Swedish nations. Not to mention that a growing literature continues to contribute fascinating research on the pre modern origins of identity and the cultural constructs that characterized it.<sup>44</sup>

Does this debate impact my argument? It looks as if it does. Medievalists have shown that during the Middle Ages a number of European kingdoms and City States develop systems of institutional authority and political centralization that would have facilitated the emergence of concepts of common identity that we usually associate with the modern nation and that I treat as key variables in the foundation of modern national identity. Anthony Marx has made an argument along similar lines.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, since I stress the role of state institutions in conceptualizing the nation and creating the necessary degree of national consciousness needed for an encompassing national identity to emerge, it would seem that I should go back to this period in order to look for the roots of the process. Modernity, after all, seems not to be novel. It has been long argued that the kernel of modernity --its philosophical assumptions, its vocabulary, its art, and its cult of reason and scientific knowledge—finds its foundation in ancient times. Stephen Greenblatt, for instance, has recently and elegantly added to this line of argumentation by finding solid precedents of modernity both in Lucretius poem *De rerum natura* and medieval scholars' interpretations of the poem that revealed the existence and vitality of what we would identify as "modern" ideas.<sup>46</sup>

Nevertheless, more than the origins of nations in Antiquity or the late Middle Ages what interest me here is the assembly of national identity as a conscious and institutional process able to go beyond ethnicity and ancient

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<sup>44</sup> The work of Connor, Walker, has become a landmark of this literature. See his 2006 "The Dawning of Nations", in Ichijo and Uzelac, Eds. When is the Nation? Routledge, See also his "Ethnonationalism" in Myron Weiner and Samuel Huntington, ed. (1987) Understanding Political Development, HarperCollins, pp 196-221 and also Connor (1994) Ethnonationalism, New Jersey, Princeton University Press

<sup>45</sup> Marx, Anthony, 2003. Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism, Oxford University Press.

<sup>46</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen (2012) The Swerve: How the World Became Modern. New York, Norton and Company.

myths and capable of conceptualizing a much larger community called “nation”. Ethnic, racial, and religious differences do not prevent members of this kind of nations from sharing in the conviction that they have something in common and that their nation is different from other nations, regardless of the origins of these beliefs. And while modern notions of identity can be found in the centuries that preceded modernity, I see in the “rational” bureaucratic convergence observed by Max Weber a useful indicator of the modern state’s capacity of “conceptualizing” a different kind of nations and constructing a different type of national identity.

### Imagining Nations and Inventing Traditions

My emphasis on *conceptualizing* the nation rather than imagining it differentiates my definition from that of Benedict Anderson’s already famed and clever characterization of the nation as an “imagined community”. According to Anderson, in such community members “imagine” that they belong to the larger group.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, a nation is “an imagined political community –and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign...It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of its fellow members, meet them, or even herd of them, yet in the minds of each lives an image of their community”.<sup>48</sup> As much as imagining is important, conceptualizing, rather, is key, especially when rulers wish to expand the boundaries of the state and encourage a collective sentiment of identity and loyalty among heterogeneous populations. Moreover, imagination, which in Anderson’s emerges as a consequence of several historical developments and the actions of many actors, is to a large extent based upon some sort of conceptualizing, that is, definitions of what the nation means, what it offers, and what it can do for its members.

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<sup>47</sup> For Anderson’s argument, see his Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso, 1983. For additional nuances on this argument, see as well his Under Three Flags: Anarchism and Anti-Colonial Imagination. London: Verso, 2005

<sup>48</sup> Anderson, Benedict, op. cit. p 5.

The Constitutions of the New World, for instance, usually started by defining the nation and what it stood for in order to make a wider appeal to loyalty. Imagination played a role but it was triggered by the new Republics' conceptualizing of the nation --in the sense used above. And it was the institutionalization of meaning regarding these definitions that furnished the fundamental pillar upon which identity was built and that promoted, among other things, the "imagination" of the nation. Constitutions were quite adamant in defining and stressing not only the sovereignty and rights of this collective called *nation* but also its meaning. Thus, they framed the definitions of this community in relation to institutions, since the latter provided both a conceptual framework and an empirical base from which to conceptualize the nation. In the United States the nation referred to the qualities of the "good" or "fortunate" people who constituted the national community and who, because of such membership, had gained the right to elect their own authorities. Nations were conceptualized as communities capable of creating their own institutions and states. Whoever read these documents or was somehow exposed to them through public discourse or any other means, had a pretty good idea as to what the nation meant. Imagination --the idea that other members of the same nation share in the same events that affect me as an individual and that therefore I have something in common with them-- came later, after the performative sentences that defined the nation were institutionalized and accepted.

Constitutions clearly linked nations to institutions of government. This is apparent in Latin American Constitutions written circa 1811-1830.<sup>49</sup> But it is also true of the 1776 American Declaration of Independence. There, individual rights stand as the centerpiece of the polity but only in close association with a given institutional framework. The state becomes the guarantor and protector of such rights, which are in turn the core definition of the American nation. Yet the state is

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<sup>49</sup> In the case of Latin America, this argument has been put forward in Fernando Lopez-Alves, "Modernization Theory Revisited: Latin America, Europe, and the U.S. in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century", *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (January-July 2011) pp. 243-279

able to act as a guarantor only if the nation wishes it; from the beginning, therefore, one can detect a clear codependency between state and nation in connection to a republican framework. Indeed, the American Declaration of Independence grants “the people”, as a collective, the right to substitute governments for others that would better represents the people’s interest. More than modular notions of nationalism, it has been the conceptualizing of nations that lay behind the history of codependency and national identity.

Thomas Jefferson connected his definition of national government with the unalienable rights of the “American people” (i.e. the nation, as defined in the constitution) to erect their own, “laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most to affect their Safety and Happiness”. The new nation was conceptualized as comprising the “good People of these Colonies” that now could institute new rules and laws that suited them best. In order to be attuned to the people the institutions that ruled over them should be linked to “Free and Independent States”.<sup>50</sup> Thus, there ought to be, according to Jefferson, a direct likeness between institutions of government (the state in its totality) and the nation, that is, between states and the national community. Both in Europe and the Americas ruling elites hoped that conceptualizing nations and creating this sort of codependency would bind populations more effectively to the political system.

The French Revolution, of course, greatly contributed to the idea that nations needed to be defined in the context of institutions that represented their interests, and that the nation (by the time of the revolution conceived as the “people” as citizens) had the right to choose and shape the institutions that best represented their interests. In all these South American, European, and American versions of the nation the state was defined as the guarantor of the unity of the new independent and sovereign national community, and such

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<sup>50</sup> Jefferson, Thomas (1950). “The Declaration of Independence, As Amended by the Committee and by Congress”, in The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Julian P. Boyd et al, Princeton University Press, pp 429-433

national community was clearly conceptualized in the context of, and in close connection with, institutions of government. Anderson is right that “imagined nations” could bring in diverse populations to share in an identity that is “imagined as sovereign and limited”. It was, however, the institutional framework of the state that provided the preconditions under which a more widespread popular “imagining” of the nation could take place.

Before leaving Anderson’s argument, an additional point needs to be made. As has been many times rightly asserted, his shift in focus from Europe to the Creole nationalism of the Americas marked a welcome contribution to the study of nations, nationalism, and national identity. As he strongly put it: “It is an astonishing sign of the depth of Euro centrism that so many European scholars persist, in the face of all the evidence, in regarding nationalism as an European invention.”<sup>51</sup> Following Anderson’s argument one could assume, therefore, that the new world provided not only the origins of “nationalism as a cultural construct” but also a modern notion of the nation based upon that particular imagining. This new nation, however, remains in an often-undefined background. Rather, what becomes the center of attention is nationalism. Nationalism, as he put it, is not “just another ism” but the key to modern identity. It is a “radically changed form of consciousness that creates its own narrative” and overrules the nation in importance and scope.<sup>52</sup>

In a way similar to Hobsbawm’s, Anderson for the most part sees nationalism as the crafter of the nation, distinction which by the way is blurred in Hobsbawm’s work as well. At the same time, the nation seems to keep some degree of autonomy in Anderson’s argument. For instance, he links the nation – rather than nationalism—with the break down of the religious conception of the world that, according to much literature, could no longer provide continuity and therefore opened the door for a new source of secular legitimacy (the nation). In

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<sup>51</sup> Anderson, *ibid.* p. 191

<sup>52</sup> Anderson, *Benedict*, *op.cit.* p. XIV



the century of rational secularism, he argues, the “disintegration of paradise” led to a desire for the construction of a new kind of continuity. A “secular transformation of fatality into continuity was required; contingency had to be absorbed into meaning. And few things were (are) better suited to this end than the idea of nation”.<sup>53</sup>

That specific and one is lead to assume autonomous imagining that constructs the nation, however, is by and large missing in his analysis of specific historical events leading to the spread of nationalism. In Spanish America, he reminds us, people thought of themselves as “Americans” because “this term denoted precisely the shared fatality of extra-Spanish birth”. One could therefore assume that this resulted in a somehow different conception of the nation connected to the “modular notion” of nationalism that, Anderson suggests, Latin American bureaucrats created.<sup>54</sup> Yet a specific analysis of the Latin American “imagining” of the nation is lost in an examination that takes “modular” nationalism as its central focus. The new Latin American nation, thus, remains in the background and does not acquire a life of its own, at least analytically.

Is this important? I suggest that it is. The comparisons offered below will show that both in Europe and in the Americas conceptualizations and awareness of the nation either preceded or were simultaneously connected to the rise of nationalism as a movement and as an ideology. They will also show that both the conceptualizations of the nation and the nationalisms that they spurred differed in opposite shores of the Atlantic due to different variables than the ones highlighted by Anderson. For different reasons Yael Tamir has also suggested that Anderson’s definition of the national community is precisely the weakest point in his work. Most communities, Tamir observes, can be considered “imagined” and there is no clue in Anderson’s as to what differentiates a nation from other kinds of imagined communities. More precision is needed. Anderson

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<sup>53</sup> Anderson, p. 11.

<sup>54</sup> Anderson, *ibid.* p. 63

disagrees. He writes that what differentiates nations from other communities, rather, is the “style in which they are imagined”. Tamir claims that this does not seem to settle the issue.<sup>55</sup> Be this debate as it may, we no doubt face the question of how to distinguish communities called nations from others that are not. In addition to the differences between religious and national communities that I suggested above, three other factors combined distinguish nations from other types of community: the role of the state in conceptualizing them, their connection with what Weber defined as *rational bureaucratic convergence*, and, precisely, their relation with nationalism in the way I describe it.

Anderson’s important contribution cannot surely be reduced to his emphasis on imagining. As Christopher Hill has put it “Anderson ...takes economic evolution as the base line of his theory, although this aspect of his book has often been neglected because of narrow engagement with the phrase of its title”.<sup>56</sup> Hill also reminds us that Anderson connects an economic narrative with an anthropological approach and that this allows to incorporate race and ethnicity in the analysis of nationalism.<sup>57</sup> He is, of course, right. Anderson has elegantly showed that studies on the nation as a “cultural construct” do need to pay close attention to the evolution of economic systems, markets, and communications.<sup>58</sup>

In conclusion, my emphasis on nations and the defining of nations differs from Anderson’s argument on nationalism. It is also at variance from Hobsbawm

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<sup>55</sup> Tamir argues that Anderson does not show evidence for these different styles of imagining either; “The Enigma of Nationalism”, World Politics, v. 47, no 3; pp 421-423; see as well his Liberal Nationalism. Princeton, University Press, 1993.

<sup>56</sup> Hill, Christopher L. (2008) National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States, Durham and London, Duke University Press, pp 36-37.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p. 37. Hill also offers a sound critique of Anderson’s argument regarding the geographical emergence of his modular notion of nationalism as well as the analytical implications of Anderson’s work.

<sup>58</sup> Anderson, Benedict, op. cit. pp 3-7.

and Ranger's famed argument about "invented traditions". They define these traditions thus: "Inventing traditions, it is assumed here, is essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by imposing repetition".<sup>59</sup> One learns that at certain historical points traditions need to be invented while at others the need is not there. The authors warn us thus: "Where the old ways are alive, traditions need be neither revived nor invented".<sup>60</sup> Indeed, the chapters in the Ranger and Hobsbawm's edited volume argue that some traditions that tend to fade away are afterwards revived and invented. One wonders, however, under which conditions the "old ways" cease to be alive or become sufficiently irrelevant to create the need for the invention of new traditions. In other words, under which conditions and in what contexts do some traditions erode and can be replaced by others? What would the key differences be between traditions that endure and others that do not? Because answers to these questions are either not fully developed or clearly spelled out, the Hobsbawm and Ranger's volume seems unable to contrast successful invented traditions with unsuccessful ones. Indeed, most of the traditions studied in the volume represent successful cases of inventing. This surely presents problems in terms of the falsification of the main hypothesis put forward.

Contrastingly, in the argument presented here one can identify successful and less successful conceptualizing of nations as well as the reasons behind the resilience of associated traditions. Successful conceptualizing and institutionalizing of meaning determines the way in which national identity emerges. In the construction of national identity some traditions make sense and others do not. For the most part, conceptualizations of the national that resist the meaning imposed by the state and its agencies tend, in the long term, to erode and/or to radically change. The opposite is true of conceptualizations of the national that represent a process of negotiating meaning that involves the state. In my argument the state sets the stage in which this negotiating process

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<sup>59</sup> Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger Eds. (1983) The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge University Press, p 4

<sup>60</sup> Hobsbawm and Ranger, Ibid, p. 8.

conceptualizes, institutionalizes, and creates policies that explain why some traditions survive and others do not.

A last differentiating aspect remits to agency. In Hobsbawm and Ranger's the makers of invented traditions include a huge variety of groups, individuals, associations, institutions, parties, movements, and nationalism itself. No doubt plenty of empirical evidence backs the finding that a variety of groups and agencies are involved in inventing traditions and creating cultural spaces of identity. Nonetheless, in my analysis it is the state that in the last instance remains the most important agent capable of setting up the basic structure of *the national* within which these traditions, invented or not, operate. It is the state that sponsoring some group's interests and blocking others creates the conditions under which some practices and traditions associated to the national tend to fade away while others do not.<sup>61</sup>

### **III) Nations, States, and Cases.**

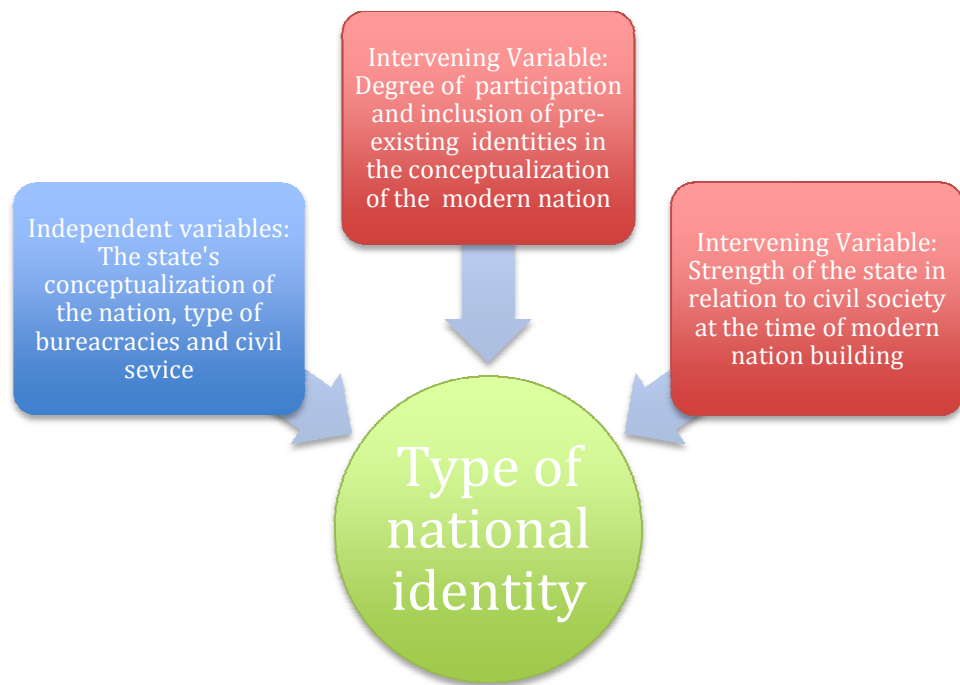
In order to spell out the argument in more detail we need to expand on the concept of national identity and on the role of intervening variables. By *national identity* I mean the consolidation of varying degrees of consciousness and consensus upon —usually very broad—conceptualizing and meanings of the nation. National identity also means the consolidation of cultural, symbolic, and historic spaces that, at some point in time, come to be shared by the majority of a given population. Figure 3 depicts my general argument about the construction of national identity, including independent and intervening variables. To the independent variables mentioned above Figure 3 adds intervening factors that will be discussed immediately below.

#### Figure 3: The construction of national identity

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It goes without saying that like other ideological constructs conceptualizations of the nation do not completely disappear. Most of them make comebacks. The state, however, contributes to create the conditions under which some conceptualization remain part of the stuff of national history and the public sphere while others do not.



In order to better analyze the role of the intervenient variables shown in Figure 3 we need to make a connection with specific cases (see Table 1, above, and Tables 2 and 3, below). Before discussing these tables, however, we need to sum up the argument made so far. Conceptualizations and definitions of the nation are *performatives*, in the sense coined by Austin, and definitions of the nation are for the most part not meant to be tested. The state can create the nation with words; yet, as I have also argued, that this is but one step in a longer process that includes the institutionalization of meaning and the rituals and bureaucratic practices that reinforce this conceptualizing.<sup>62</sup> Nothing, however, is fixed. Conceptualizing the nation and creating an emotional attachment to a prevailing conceptualization of meaning created different types of codependency

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<sup>62</sup> The state did not conceptualize the nation out of social emptiness; it did its conceptualizing by absorbing and/or rejecting different cultural constructs: religious beliefs, cultures, visuals, slogans, music, epics, symbols, rituals, uses of the public space, and so fourth.

(tables 2 and 3 below). Codependency in all cases considered here became stronger overtime.

Modern bureaucracies played a crucial role. Ruling coalitions and the state resembled the shareholder, the manager, or the business owner who needs a mission statement and a definitional chart in order to feel identified with the firm. At the same time and as part of the same process, mission statements and charts allow the firm to install some notions of unity and identification amongst employees. The goal is obviously to create consciousness of belonging to a larger whole. Bureaucratic practices facilitated what Ernest Renan and Max Weber long defined as the “emotional attachment” to a larger “national community”. Indeed, they acted as the main crafters of the parameters under which diverse sectors of civil society attributed meaning to the nation, thereby creating the conditions that facilitated this attachment to the larger national community. While by definition all states centralize authority, what distinguished the modern state was a particular centralization of authority that fostered types of institutional structures and social management that tended to resemble one another. This facilitated comparisons among very dissimilar states such as those of South America and Europe, for instance.

In the early 1900s Max Weber observed that the nineteenth century had witnessed a steady move toward the uniformity of organizational practices. “Rational-legal” structures, as he called them, were converging all over Europe and beyond: the changing role of the individual bureaucrat within the organization constituted a key engine behind these transformations. As Bernard Silberman has pointed out, Weber’s theory about such convergence was not so much about whether the organizational structure of bureaucracies are more or less “rational” as it was about whether or not essential qualities of the role of the individual bureaucrat were present in all of them: job descriptions and systems of promotion were key.<sup>63</sup> These included more homogenous quantified and qualified definitions or eligibility, merit, career options, appointments, professionalization,

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<sup>63</sup> Silberman, Bernard S. (1993): Cages of Reason. The Rise of the Rational State in France, Japan, the United States, and Great Britain. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

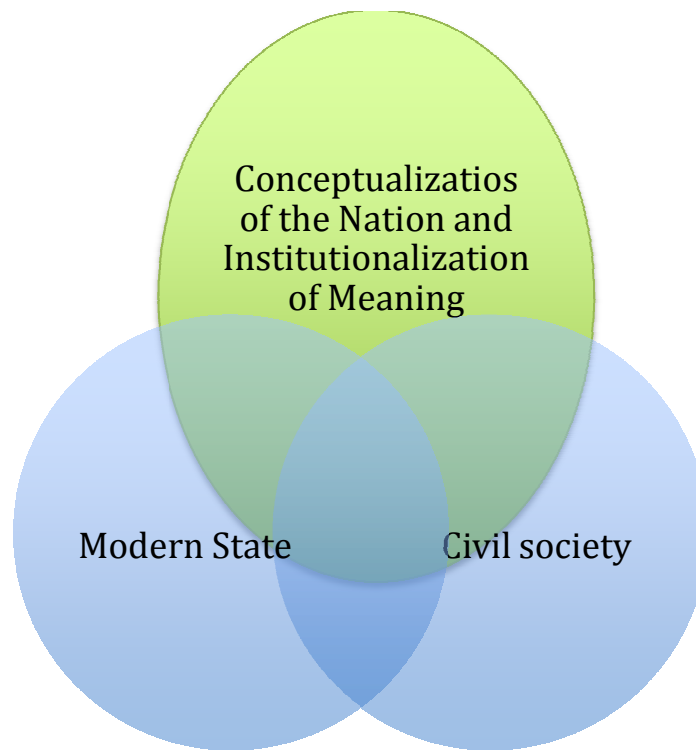
and discretion across the board. I add to this list the relations between civil servants –especially upper level civil servants—with the political elite and ruling coalitions. In weak states with a small and less autonomous professional civil service (South America in general) political and economic elites retained the upper hand of nation building and the institutionalization of meaning. In states with a professional, established, and more autonomous stratum of civil servants the task of conceptualizing the national remained, to a large extent, in their hands.

This does not mean that weaker states with less professionalized bureaucracies barren members of the civil service from participating in the construction of national identity. What it means is that the decisions that they took did not always translate into policy. These states were not less “rational” either. Weber’s emphasis on the role of individual bureaucrats as well as the rationalization of systems of promotion and so forth, “frees us from simple assuming that the stronger the state the more rational its bureaucracy”.<sup>64</sup> Downplaying state strength and focusing, rather, on bureaucracies and the role of civil servants facilitates comparing, as I do, different states at dissimilar levels of economic development without exclusively focusing on the strength of the state or its capacity. So, the conceptualizing of nations and the institutionalization of meaning takes place at the crossroads of the state and civil society. National identity, once strong enough to create national self-consciousness about a larger group becomes also an influential actor. Figure 4 represents these crossroads. It also shows that the state and civil society develop ties with each other that are not necessarily absorbed by or subsumed under codependency.

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<sup>64</sup> The argument is forcefully made in Silberman, Bernard S. (1993): Cages of Reason. The Rise of the Rational State in France, Japan, the United States, and Great Britain. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pace Max Weber, Silberman argues here that different sorts of bureaucracies formed in these four countries which, apparently, developed different kinds of states in terms of strength, capacity, and autonomy.

Figure 4: Intersections between the State, Civil Society, and National Identity.



As Figure 4 illustrates, there is an overlapping between civil society and the state (bottom interaction of the figure) that does not intersect with the institutionalization of meaning. In other words, this area represents linkages between the state and civil society that are not necessarily connected with conceptualizations of the nation or the process of national identity construction. Some interactions between the state and civil society, thus, can function independently from the influence that, I argue, the nation and national identity can exert on both; these include institutional, economic, and social interactions.

Figure 4 also shows two areas of intersection comprising the conceptualization of the nation and the institutionalization of meaning with the modern state, on the one hand, and civil society, on the other. These areas can be assumed to show two different ways in which the state and the nation, on the one hand, and civil society and the nation, on the other, can relate. The shaded area that links the three circles at the center of Figure 4 represents the



crossroads at which codependency is built. Let us now elaborate on types of codependency in reference to cases and finally bring up the impact of intervenient factors over the overall argument.

#### Types of Codependency: Nation-States, National-States, State- Nations

At least in the regions considered here one finds three types of codependency between states and nations. Codependency, again, means that neither the set of institutions and policies that conform the state nor the conceptual and cultural construct of meaning that structures the nation exist independently from one another. They are inseparable factors of an equation that evolved through different “paths” of consolidation. The traditional concepts of *nation-state* and *national state* do not sufficiently account neither for the variety of codependency paths nor for the resulting outcomes.<sup>65</sup> Somewhat paradoxically, the conceptual shortcomings of these terms become evident when one tries to study the different combinations of codependency that emerged in the West, precisely the region that has furnished most of the empirical evidence supporting the formulations of “nation-state” and “national state” in the first place. Part of the problem is that the study of states and nations has developed as two parallel discussions that often do not dialogue with one another. Literatures have grown on different theoretical terrains because they have departed from dissimilar premises and assumptions, therefore favoring different theoretical tools. Not surprisingly, much work that has concentrated on the state has customarily either ignored the analysis of the nation or disregarded theories associated with its formation, a consequential oversight if the goal is to study the nation-state. By the same token, substantial literature on nationalism and national identity has overlooked theories of the state and hence has failed to integrate them into the

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<sup>65</sup> For a discussion of these concepts in connection as they evolved in Latin America and Europe, see Fernando Lopez-Alves “Nation-States and Nationalist States: Latin America in Comparative Perspective”, in Hanagan, Michael and Tilly, Chris (eds) Contention and Trust in Cities and States, Springer, 2011

analysis. In the last decades work on the nation and nationalism has begun to close these definitional gaps, although much work is still to be done.<sup>66</sup>

As has been almost tediously repeated, long ago Charles Tilly argued that states made war and war made the state.<sup>67</sup> This sort of circular definition nonetheless makes sense. In a similar way, states can make nations and nations, by contributing to the consolidation of national identity and nationalism, can also shape states or, as some have argued, even create them.<sup>68</sup> I submit that states, however, have remained the main engine of nation building and the force that structured codependency.

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<sup>66</sup> A short list would include: Anderson, Benedict R. 1983. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso. Bell, David A. (2003) The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800, Harvard University Press; Breuilly, John (1993) Nationalism and the State, Manchester, Manchester University Press; Brubaker, Rogers (1992) Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, Harvard University Press; Greenfeld, Liah. (1992) Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity. Cambridge. Harvard University Press, and her (2001) The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth, Harvard University Press; Hill, Christopher L. (2008) National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States, Durham and London, Duke University Press; Marx, Anthony W. 1998. Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics and Tamir, Yael (1993) Liberal Nationalism. Princeton, University Press

<sup>67</sup> This has surely been his most quoted phrase but it does not at all represent the fullness of Tilly's argument. Tilly's book Coercion, Capital and European States AD 990–1990, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell (1992) furnishes a good example. There, the fundamental question of how the concentration of authority occurred in European history and why it culminated in the triumph of the national-state over other state forms (such as city-states, nation-states, and systems of loosely articulated regional empires) is answered in a much more complex form. War is just one variable; historical contexts, prior institutions, and, especially, degrees of capitalist development and accumulation are also crucial.

<sup>68</sup> It has been argued that in the case of Germany a preceding national identity became an engine of state formation, Germany's unification under Bismarck has been often cited as an example. See Clark, Christopher (2007) Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia: 1600-1947, Penguin Books. For German unification viewed from the standpoint of the personal life of Bismarck, see the entertaining and detailed book of Steinberg, Jonathan B., (2011), Bismarck: A Life, New York, Oxford University Press. See also the argument put forward by Erich Eyck in his 1968 Bismarck and the German Empire. New York, Norton & Company, where he argues that Bismarck's project of state building changed the national consciousness of the German people but built upon a number of well established national traditions all the same.

In order to better account for different types of codependency I propose to revisit familiar conceptual tools and classifications in the following way:

- 1) I call “state-nations” modern political, ideological, and institutional units in which the state conceptualizes the nation and institutionalizes meaning trying to build one encompassing and unique nation. The construction of national identity translates into policymaking geared to physically and culturally shaping the desired national community. That is, the institutionalization of meaning is paralleled by state’s policies attempting to erasing or redefining pre-existing group identities and subsuming them under the mantra of one encompassing national distinctiveness. Conceptualizations of the nation focus on the idea of constructing one, and only one, indivisible nation. The process of negotiating meaning does not fully succeed at including pre-existing identities into the official nation. The formula for codependency is that of *one state, one nation*, which means that the state aims to rule upon one nation and one nation only. Therefore, it wishes to establish one dominant, encompassing, and “official” conceptualization and logic of the national. These state-nations are more often than not unable to totally erase alternative “nations” or “identities”; thus, these survive as “subaltern” identities. Literature has traditionally studied these state-nations under the label “nation-state”. This conceptualizing of the nation and this particular form of national identity building corresponds to South America.
- 2) Borrowing the concept from Charles Tilly and other authors, but giving it a broader and encompassing meaning I call “national-states” political, ideological, and institutional units in which the state does not build a nation from scratch. Rather, it conceptualizes the nation upon diversity and tries to create conditions that could connect already established group identities into an encompassing notion of the national. The state excludes some groups but usually acts as a broker amongst different preexisting identities building enough power to rule over them. In other words, unlike

state-nations, for the most part the state does not try to transform the physical, cultural, religious, and ethnic characteristics of the national community. Therefore, it develops institutional arrangements that enable government to act as a manager and mediator of group identities while at the same time the state conceptualizes the nation in a general and encircling way. In most cases, the state is able to effectively rule and impose symbols, conceptualizations, myths, and imaginaries of the nation upon large sectors of the population. Its aim is to attach different groups to states institutions. The state remains flexible in terms of the parameters of integration that it devises for that purpose. The construction of a more homogeneous national community is not a pressing priority. This conceptualizing of the nation and this particular type of codependency has historically developed in most of Western Europe.

- 3) I call “nation-states” political, ideological, and institutional units in which the conceptualization of the nation is built upon one pre-existing identity. The state destroys or ignores alternative identities as it draws strength from having accepted a preferred and already established definition of the nation that includes not only imaginaries but concrete definitions of a shared identity. The state can create new foundational myths, symbols, and national history to encourage national identity but it does not transform the structure, composition, and basic meaning of this accepted definition of the national. The state does not wish to change the physical, ethnical, religious or cultural characteristics of the nation either. Rather, it builds upon it, and devotes itself to create an institutional framework to support it. In other words, while a number of competing identities are at work at any given point in time, from its beginnings the state adopts one already existing and recognizable conceptualization as its trademark. Unlike postcolonial *state-nation* situations in postcolonial *nation-state* scenarios the state favors a preceding colonial identity in order to build its institutions and promote a particular version of “the national”. As state bureaucracies expand, the state obviously modifies this original conceptual

blueprint. This is the case of the United States and it also applies to instances of national identity building in Europe (France and Germany). Table 2 correlates regions and countries with types of codependency during the selected period.

Table 2: Regions and Types of Codependency, circa 1780-1930.

<u>REGION (1780-1930)</u>	<u>COUNTRY CASES</u>	<u>TYPE OF CODEPENDENCY (OUTCOMES circa 1900'S)</u>
<u>WESTERN EUROPE</u>	<p>FRANCE: EPISODES OF STATE-NATIONS AND OF NATION-STATE</p> <p>GERMANY: EPISODES OF NATION-STATE, A FEW ATTEMPTS AT STATE-NATION</p> <p>ITALY: EPISODES OF NATION-STATE AND STATE-NATION</p> <p>SPAIN: FEW EPISODES OF NATION-STATE</p>	<p>MOST CASES OF CODEPENDENCY ARE CAPTURED BY THE TERM <i>NATIONAL-STATE</i> BUT EPISODES OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF CODEPENDENCY (STATE-NATION AND NATION-STATE) ALSO OCCURRED</p>
<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>	<p>ARGENTINA COLOMBIA URUGUAY: NO EPISODES OF NATIONAL-STATES OR NATION-STATES</p> <p>PERU: STRONGER BUT BRIEF EPISODES OF NATIONAL STATE</p>	<p>MOST CASES OF CODEPENDENCY ARE CAPTURED BY THE TERM <i>STATE-NATION</i></p>
<u>NORTH AMERICA</u>		

CANADA: (STRONG EPISODES OF NATIONAL STATE)	UNITED STATES (BRIEF EPISODES OF STATE-NATION)	DOMINANT TYPE OF CODEPENDENCY OUTCOME: <i>NATION-STATE</i>
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In all cases the degree of autonomy and professionalization of the civil service varied but sharper differences are to be found between South America (relatively weak civil services with the exception of Uruguay after 1900) and Europe. During a considerable period of its history the United States fell sort of in the middle. Like Europe, it developed a civil service with higher degrees of autonomy and able to participate in conceptualizing the nation but it did so much later.<sup>69</sup> Canada was included in Table 1 (above) just as a background and it is argued that it qualified more as a national-state than as a nation-state or state-nation. Although there were periods of state-nation codependency in North America, these were for the most part obliterated by stronger civil societies than their analogues in South America.

In sum, in state-nation situations the state forced a sense of identity upon the population by strongly ostracizing and eliminating certain groups and pungently favoring others. Like in Europe and the rest of the Americas, at several points in time these states incurred into genocide policies in their attempts to demographically reduce the numbers of undesired groups. Yet what differentiated South American states from national-states and to a point from nation-states was that these weak states conceptualized nations to be built from scratch. The compromise that guided their conceptualizing of the nation was that each state should have its own nation and that states and nations should mirror each other in terms of their ethnic and racial composition. Somewhat contradicting arguments about the congruence between republican institutions and civic nationalism, these states adopted republican rule and democracy but they conceptualized the nation in a similar way as that of ethnic nationalism. The

<sup>69</sup> Indeed, The War Department in the United States generated decentralized bureaucracies within a Federal system that slowed down bureaucratic growth and professionalization.

tenants of ethno nationalism and civil nationalism combined to generate a hierarchically organized postcolonial national community where the “horizontal ties of solidarity” that many have argued contribute an essential component of “imagining” the nation were weak. Uruguay remained the exception among state-nations, and this is one of the reasons why it is included in these comparisons. There, after the 1900s, we see a move toward a more inclusive conceptualization of the nation in tandem with a civil service that grew in professionalization and autonomy. This differentiated Uruguay from the other three South American cases and from Italy and Spain as well.

In national-states situations of codependency the state succeeded at creating a functioning sense of identity that sufficed to rule but failed at totally integrating important groups with claims to sovereignty. It also failed at totally excluding others. In Europe, this type of exclusion and mixed integration created a kind of codependency in which several identities were supposedly represented by the same state. In nation-state situations the state could more easily impose an encompassing sense of national identity because the conceptualizing of the nation relied upon an already semi-established (colonial) conception of the national. The state conceptualized the nation taken as its main reference a rather homogenous linguistic/religious/institutional pre-existing community. Among the cases compared here, the term “nation-state” applies to the United States since it characterized most of the early conceptualizing of the nation and the subsequent institutionalization of meaning. One can, however, find phases of nation-state codependency in other countries as well (France, Germany, at times Italy). In addition, similar to our South American cases, in the United States the conceptualization of the nation included a mix in terms of ethno and civic nationalist strategies of nation building. American states along the new world conceptualized nations that ostracized African Americas and Africans in general and that also excluded indigenous communities and a number of immigrant groups.

Table 2 shows that in each region a dominant type of codependency emerged. It also shows, however, that important variations within the same

region also occurred. At least three counterintuitive propositions emerge from this table that are consequential for our thinking about the ways nations and states relate to each other. One is that we find *episodes of similar codependency in regions at different levels of economic development* (South America, the United States and Europe). Second, one also find *different types of codependency in regions with similar levels of economic development and industrialization* (the United States and Europe). Third, in part challenging some of the tenants of rational choice theory *weak states with very limited nation building tools at their disposal (South America) conceptualized nations and pursued models of national identity disproportionately difficult to construct*.

#### Interventient Variables and Regions

Table 2, connected different type of codependency with regions and cases. The relation between intervenient factors, cases, and different types of codependency are shown in Table 3. Interventient factors include:

1) The degree to which the state made it possible for identities residing in the national territory (and that preceded the formation of the modern state) to partake in conceptualizing the nation and institutionalization meaning; 2) The degree to which ruling coalitions imposed their own identity upon the construction of national identity, and 3) The strength of the state vis-à-vis that of civil society, customarily represented in a two factor equation that varies according to the strength of one or the other (strong state-weak civil society; weak state-strong civil society; weak state-weak civil society, and strong state-strong civil society). At several points in time the balance between the state and civil society changed, influencing the formation of codependency.

Table 3: Intervening Variables, Regions, and Outcomes

Region	Intervening Variables	Outcome and Type of Codependency
Western Europe	-Strength of preexisting groups, and their participation in state building:	



	<p><u>high</u></p> <p>-Extent to which state makers imposed their own identity and conceptualizations of the nation: <u>low and medium</u>. State's support for nation building using pre-existing (modern) identities: <u>high</u></p> <p>-Relations between the state and civil society at the time of state making  <u>Strong civil society/strong states;</u>  <u>strong civil society/weaker states</u></p>	<p><b>National-States.</b></p> <p><b>Also includes instances of State-Nation and Nation-State codependency. City States remained in place into the modern period.</b></p>
<b>South America</b>	<p>- Strength of preexisting groups, awareness of modern national identity, and participation in nation building <u>low</u>.</p> <p>- Extent to which state makers imposed their own identity and conceptualizations of the nation: <u>high</u>. State's support for nation building using pre-existing (modern) identities: <u>low</u></p> <p>-Relations between the state and civil society at the time of state making  <u>Weak civil society/weak states</u></p>	<p><b>State-Nations</b></p> <p><b>Includes some instances of National-State codependency</b></p>
<b>United States</b>	<p>-Strength of preexisting groups, awareness of modern national identity, and participation in nation building: <u>high</u>.</p>	<p><b>Nation-State</b></p> <p><b>Includes some instances of</b></p>

	<p>-Extent to which state makers imposed their own identity and conceptualizations of the nation: <u>high</u>. State's support for nation building using pre-existing (modern) identities: <u>high</u></p> <p>-Relations between the state and civil society: <u>Strong civil society/middle to strong state</u></p>	<p><b>State-Nation codependency</b></p>
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## Conclusions

I have introduced a number of new theoretical terms in the hope of contributing to a theory of national identity and the relations between states and nations (*codependency*, *state-nations*, *conceptualizing nations*). I have also redefined others (nation-state, national-states) and revisited arguments about the imagining of nations and the inventing of traditions. In addition, I have applied findings from the field of linguistics and the philosophy of language in order to contributing to a better understanding of the characteristics of the public discourse on the nation and national identity. By suggesting that conceptualizations of the nation are based on the use of *performatives* I have claimed that nations are, to a large extent, something that can be done with words. And states, I have shown, are in a privilege position to do things with words because they are able to create what Austin called the “sufficient safeguards” under which performatives can perform. This, however, constituted just one step in the construction of national identity. The rise of national self-consciousness also required a complex process of negotiation and coalition formation involving the state and an array of groups in civil society. Among these last, I underlined that their strength in the bargaining process depended upon the

different degrees of national consciousness linked to particular group identities at the time of state formation and nation building. This went a long way in explaining their bargaining power vis-à-vis the state. At the end, however, structures of meaning favored by the state win the day. Modern bureaucratic practices offered the needed institutional infrastructure to institutionalize meaning.

Finally, almost two decades ago Charles Tilly hinted at the importance of comparing European states with the Americas and other regions and warned that states elsewhere should not to be taken as offspring's of the European state: "If we explain the various paths taken by European states, we will better understand today's non European states. Not that the states of Africa or Latin America are now recapitulating the European experience. On the contrary: the fact that European states formed in a certain way, then impose their power on the rest of the world, guarantees that non-European experience will be different."<sup>70</sup> The argument presented here confirms his claim but rather than focusing on the structure and strength of states I make a similar claim about codependency and national identity.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. Pp 16