

Remembering Banal Nationalism

Because nationalism has deeply affected contemporary ways of thinking, it is not easily studied. One cannot step outside the world of nations, nor rid oneself of the assumptions and common-sense habits which come from living within that world. Analysts must expect to be affected by what should be the object of their study. As was seen in the previous chapter, it is easy to suppose that people ‘naturally’ speak different languages. The assumption is difficult to shake. What makes the problem even more complex is that there are common-sense assumptions about the nature of nationalism itself. In established nations, it seems ‘natural’ to suppose that nationalism is an over-heated reaction, which typically is the property of others. The assumption enables ‘us’ to forget ‘our’ nationalism. If our nationalism is to be remembered, then we must step beyond what seems to be common sense.

Roland Barthes claimed that ideology speaks with “the Voice of Nature” (1977, p. 47). As others have pointed out, ideology comprises the habits of behaviour and belief which combine to make any social world appear to those, who inhabit it, as the natural world (Billig, 1991; Eagleton, 1991; Fairclough, 1992; McLellan, 1986; Ricoeur, 1986). By this reckoning, ideology operates to make people forget that their world has been historically constructed. Thus, nationalism is the ideology by which the world of nations has come to seem the natural world – as if there could not possibly be a world without nations. Ernest Gellner has written that, in today’s world, “a man (sic) must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears” (1983, p. 6). It seems ‘natural’ to have such an identity. In the established nations, people do not generally forget their national identity. If asked ‘who are you?’, people may not respond by first giving their national identity (Zavalloni, 1993a, 1993b). Rarely, if asked which is their nationality, do they respond ‘I’ve forgotten’, although their answers may be not be quite straightforward (Condor, in press). National identity is not only something which is thought to be natural to possess, but also something natural to remember.

This remembering, nevertheless, involves a forgetting, or rather there is a complex dialectic of remembering and forgetting. As will be seen, this dialectic is important in the banal reproduction of nationalism in established nations. Over a hundred years ago, Ernest Renan claimed that forgetting was “a crucial element in the creation of nations” (1990, p. 11).

Every nation must have its history, its own collective memory. This remembering is simultaneously a collective forgetting: the nation, which celebrates its antiquity, forgets its historical recency. Moreover, nations forget the violence which brought them into existence, for, as Renan pointed out, national unity "is always effected by means of brutality" (p. 11).

Renan's insight is an important one: once a nation is established, it depends for its continued existence upon a collective amnesia. The dialectic, however, is more complex than Renan implied. Not only is the past forgotten, as it is ostensibly being recalled, but so there is a parallel forgetting of the present. As will be suggested, national identity in established nations is remembered because it is embedded in routines of life, which constantly remind, or 'flag', nationhood. However, these reminders, or 'flaggings', are so numerous and they are such a familiar part of the social environment, that they operate mindlessly, rather than mindfully (Langer, 1989). The remembering, not being experienced as remembering, is, in effect, forgotten. The national flag, hanging outside a public building or decorating a filling-station forecourt, illustrates this forgotten reminding. Thousands upon thousands of such flags each day hang limply in public places. These reminders of nationhood hardly register in the flow of daily attention, as citizens rush past on their daily business.

There is a double neglect. Renan implied that intellectuals are involved in the creation of amnesia. Historians creatively remember ideologically convenient facts of the past, while overlooking what is discomfiting. Today, social scientists frequently forget the national present. The banal episodes, in which nationhood is mindlessly and countlessly flagged, tend to be ignored by sociologists. They, too, have failed to notice the flag on the forecourt. Thus, Renan's insight can be expanded: historians might forget their nation's past, whilst social scientists can forget its present reproduction.

The present chapter argues that the sociological forgetting is not fortuitous; nor is it to be blamed on the absent-mindedness of particular scholars. Instead, it fits an ideological pattern in which 'our' nationalism (that of established nations, including the United States of America) is forgotten: it ceases to appear as nationalism, disappearing into the 'natural' environment of 'societies'. At the same time, nationalism is defined as something dangerously emotional and irrational: it is conceived as a problem, or a condition, which is surplus to the world of nations. The irrationality of nationalism is projected on to 'others'.

Complex habits of thought naturalize, and thereby overlook, 'our' nationalism, whilst projecting nationalism, as an irrational whole, on to others. At the core of this intellectual amnesia lies a restricted concept of 'nationalism', which confines 'nationalism' to particular social movements rather than to nation-states. Only the passionately waved flags are conventionally considered to be exemplars of nationalism. Routine flags –

the flags of 'our' environment – slip from the category of 'nationalism'. And having slipped through the categorical net, they get lost. There is no other theoretical term to rescue them from oblivion.

The double neglect is critically examined in this chapter. This involves examining the rhetoric of the sociological common sense which routinely reduces nationalism to a surplus phenomenon and which forgets to analyse how established nation-states are daily reproduced as nations. If the narrowing of the concept of 'nationalism' has led to the forgetting of banal nationalism, then it is hoped that a widening of the concept will lead to a remembering. The double neglect is to be reversed by a double remembering: the banal nationalism by which nation-states are reproduced is to be remembered, as are the habits of thought which have encouraged a neglect of this reproduction.

Waved and Unwaved Flags

The place of national flags in contemporary life bears a moment's consideration. Particular attention should be paid to the case of the United States, whose filling-station forecourts are arrayed with uncounted Stars and Stripes. The US legislature has decreed strict laws about how the flag should be displayed and what is forbidden to be done, on pain of penalty, to the precious pattern of stars and stripes. Desecration of the flag is met with reactions of outrage (Marvin, 1991). Of all countries, the United States is arguably today the home of what Renan called "the cult of the flag" (1990, p. 17).

The anthropologist, Raymond Firth (1973), in one of the few studies of the role of flags in contemporary life, distinguished between the symbolic and signalling functions of flags. The forerunners of modern national flags were often employed as signals, reducing entropy in situations of uncertainty. The mediaeval gonfanon presented a clear rallying point for soldiers in the confusion of the battleground. The *semeion*, in ancient Greece, indicated the presence of the commander to other ships of the fleet (Perrin, 1922). Since the eighteenth century, a complex system of signalling with flags has been developed for vessels at sea. In all these cases, flags are a pragmatically useful means of communicating messages. By contrast, argues Firth, the national flag today performs a symbolic function, being a 'condensation symbol' and "a focus for sentiment about society" (p. 356). The national flag, according to Firth, symbolizes the sacred character of the nation; it is revered by loyal citizens and ritually defiled by those who wish to make a protest. It carries no informational message, although, as Firth points out, the manner of a flag's display can, on special occasions, provide a signal. A national flag hung at half mast may communicate the death of an important figure. Notwithstanding this, the majority of national flags likely to be seen by the modern citizen in the course of a lifetime will not be signalling a particular message.

Other distinctions, besides that between symbol and signal, can be made. The signal, if it is to be effective, must pass into the conscious awareness of its recipients. However, the symbol need not have a direct emotional impact, as Firth seemed to assume. That being so, one can distinguish between the ways in which national flags are treated. Some are consciously waved and saluted symbols, often accompanied by a pageant of outward emotion. Others – probably the most numerous in the contemporary environment – remain unsaluted and unwaved. They are merely there as symbols, whether on a forecourt or flashed on to a television screen; as such they are given hardly a second glance from day to day.

The distinction between the waved and unwaved (or saluted and unsaluted) flag can be illustrated with reference to Roland Barthes' classic essay 'Myth Today'. Barthes discussed an issue of the magazine *Paris-Match*, which he was offered in a barber-shop. On its cover, "a young Negro in French army uniform is saluting, with his eyes uplifted, probably fixed on the fold of the tricolor" (Barthes, 1983b, pp. 101f.). Barthes does not make clear whether the Tricolor which the soldier was saluting was to be seen in the photograph. For the sake of illustration, let us presume it was. The three-coloured flag which the soldier actually faced was clearly a flag to be saluted in the appropriate way. However, the photographed flag on the *Paris-Match* cover was not for saluting. It could lie around the corner of the barber-shop. Eyes could flick over it, to be reminded unconsciously of the myth of imperial power, whose photographic image Barthes so brilliantly analysed. But no one stops to wave or salute this image of a symbol. The barber does not straighten up in mid-haircut, his right hand imitating that of the photographed 'young Negro'. The customer in the barber's chair, on catching sight of the cover in the mirror, does not spring to patriotic attention, risking blade and scissor in the service of the nation. The magazine is picked up and put down without ceremony. Ultimately, without risk of penalty, the *Paris-Match* flag is tossed into the rubbish bin.

The young soldier was saluting a single flag in a unique instant, which was caught by the photographer. Thousands upon thousands of the *Paris-Match* flag were distributed, gazed at and discarded. They join other flags, some of which do have recognizable, signalling functions. The French Tricolor, when displayed on loaves of bread, can indicate an approved standard of baking, or *pain de tradition française*. When the government gives such flags *lettres de noblesse*, as Monsieur Balladur's did in September 1993, the Tricolor not only signals the quality of baking; it also flags the quality of the national tradition and the quality of the national state, benevolently supervising the daily bread of its citizenry.

The uncounted millions of flags which mark the homeland of the United States do not demand immediate, obedient attention. On their flagpoles by the street and stitched on to the uniforms of public officials, they are unwaved, unsaluted and unnoticed. These are mindless flags. Perhaps if all the unwaved flags which decorate the familiar environment were to be

removed, they would suddenly be noticed, rather like the clock that stops ticking. If the reds and blues were changed into greens and oranges, there would be close, scandalized scrutiny, as well as criminal charges to follow.

One can ask what are all these unwaved flags doing, not just in the USA but around the world? In an obvious sense, they are providing banal reminders of nationhood: they are 'flagging' it unflaggingly. The reminding, involved in the routine business of flagging, is not a conscious activity; it differs from the collective rememberings of a commemoration. The remembering is mindless, occurring as other activities are being consciously engaged in.

These routine flags are different from those that seem to call attention to themselves and their symbolic message. Belfast in Northern Ireland is divided into mutually suspicious Catholic and Protestant districts. In the former, the Irish tricolor is widely displayed as a gesture of defiance against British sovereignty. In the backstreets of Protestant neighbourhoods, the kerb-stones are often painted with the pattern of the Union Jack (Beattie, 1993). These are not mindless symbols, for each side is consciously displaying its position and distancing itself from its neighbour. The tricolors, in this respect, differ from those hanging on public buildings south of the border. One might predict that, as a nation-state becomes established in its sovereignty, and if it faces little internal challenge, then the symbols of nationhood, which might once have been consciously displayed, do not disappear from sight, but instead become absorbed into the environment of the established homeland. There is, then, a movement from symbolic mindfulness to mindlessness.

Yassar Arafat, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, declared as a peace deal with Israel was becoming a real possibility:

The Palestine state is within our grasp. Soon the Palestine flag will fly on the walls, the minarets and the cathedrals of Jerusalem. (*Guardian*, 3 September 1993)

Arafat was using the notion of the flag as a metonym: by citing the flag, he was flagging Palestine nationhood. If he was discursively waving the flag of Palestine, he was hoping that the flags would actually be waved within the recovered homeland. Yet, in a longer view, Arafat's hope was that the waving would stop. The Palestine flags, displayed routinely on walls and roofs in a Palestine state, would be barely noticed by a citizenry freely going about their business. Occasionally, on special days – an Independence Day or an Annual Arafat Thanksgiving Parade – the streets would be filled with waved, commemorating flags.

Flags are not the only symbols of modern statehood. Coins and bank notes typically bear national emblems, which remain unnoticed in daily financial transactions. Naming the unit of currency can be a highly symbolic and controversial business, especially in the early days of a nation. In 1994, President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia decided that the dinar should be replaced by the 'kuna', which was the unit of currency used

in the Nazi-backed state of Croatia between 1941 and 1945. 'Kuna' is the term for the furry marten which inhabits the forests of Croatia. The president defended his decision by claiming that "the kuna defends our national tradition and confirms our sovereignty" (*Independent*, 15 May 1994). This tradition and sovereignty would become symbolically banalized when the citizenry exchange their kunas without a second thought for furry creatures, President Tudjman or the victims of Nazism. In this way, the tradition, including the Nazi heritage, would be neither consciously remembered, nor forgotten: it would be preserved in daily life.

Psychologically, conscious remembering and forgetting are not polar opposites which exclude all middle ground. Similarly, traditions are not either consciously remembered (or co-memorated) in flag-waving collective activity, or consigned to a collective amnesia. They can be simultaneously present and absent, in actions which preserve collective memory without the conscious activity of individuals remembering. Serge Moscovici has discussed how most social activity is itself a remembering, although it is not experienced as such: "Social and intellectual activity is, after all, a rehearsal or recital, yet most social psychologists treat it as if it were amnesic" (1983, p. 10). Behaviour and thoughts are never totally created anew, but they follow, and thus repeat, familiar patterns, even when they change such patterns. To act and to speak, one must remember. Nevertheless, actors do not typically experience their actions as repetitions, and, ordinarily, speakers are not conscious of the extent to which their own words repeat, and thereby transmit, past grammars and semantics.

If banal life is to be routinely practised, then this form of remembering must occur without conscious awareness: it occurs when one is doing other things, including forgetting. Pierre Bourdieu's notion of the 'habitus' expresses well this dialectic of remembering and forgetting. The 'habitus' refers to the dispositions, practices and routines of the familiar social world. It describes 'the second nature' which people must acquire in order to pass mindlessly (and also mindfully) through the banal routines of daily life. Bourdieu emphasizes the elements of remembering and the forgetting: "The *habitus* – embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product" (1990, p. 56).

Patterns of social life become habitual or routine, and in so doing embody the past. One might describe this process of routine-formation as *enhabitation*: thoughts, reactions and symbols become turned into routine habits and, thus, they become *enhabited*. The result is that the past is inhabited in the present in a dialectic of forgotten remembrance. President Tudjman was hoping that the kuna (and, with it, the history of the previous Croatian republic) would become inhabited as a living, unremembered, collective memory. Once inhabited it would flag the very things which the President could only mention mindfully and controversially.

The forgetting of the national past, of which Renan wrote, is continually reproduced in nation-states. The unwaved national flag – whether literally

in the form of the flag itself, or, as will be suggested in Chapter 6, in the routine phrases of the mass media – is enhabited in contemporary daily life. These reminders of nationhood serve to turn background space into homeland space. The flag may be, as Firth suggested, a focus for sentiment, but this does not mean that each flag acts as a psychological magnet for sentiments. Far from it, mostly the flags are ignored. Their flagging and reminding are habitually overlooked in the routines of the inhabited, enhabited national homeland.

Hot and Banal Nationalism

As has been mentioned, there is a double neglect as far as the social scientific investigation of nationalism is concerned. The neglect of the unwaved flags by citizenry going about their daily business is paralleled by a theoretical neglect. The enhabitation of nationalism within established nations is largely ignored by conventional sociological common sense. Only the waved or saluted flag tends to be noticed. If sociological categories are nets for catching slices of social life, then the net, which sociologists have marked 'nationalism', is a remarkably small one: and it seems to be used primarily for catching exotic, rare and often violent specimens. The collectors of these species tend not to stand in Main Street, USA, with net poised for new varieties.

The standard definitions of nationalism tend to locate nationalism as something beyond, or prior to, the established nation-state. In this respect, the social scientific definitions follow wider patterns of thinking. For example, Ronald Rogowski (1985) defines nationalism as "the striving" by members of nations "for territorial autonomy, unity and independence". He claims that this definition matches "everyday discourse", adding that "we routinely and properly speak of Welsh, Quebecquois and Arab nationalism" (pp. 88–9; for similar treatments of 'nationalism', see, *inter alia*, Coakley, 1992; Schlesinger, 1991). As will be seen, Rogowski is correct in stating that this is the way that 'nationalism' is used routinely – but whether more 'properly' is another matter. The definition, in concentrating on the striving for autonomy, unity and independence, ignores how these things are maintained once they have been achieved. No alternative term is offered for the ideological complex, which maintains the autonomous nation-state.

Nationalism, thus, is typically seen as the force which creates nation-states or which threatens the stability of existing states. In the latter case, nationalism can take the guise of separatist movements or extreme fascistic ones. Nationalism can appear as a developmental stage, which mature societies (or nations) have outgrown once they are fully established. This assumption is to be found in Karl Deutsch's (1966) classic study *Nationalism and Social Communication*. More recently, it underlies Hroch's (1985) valuable study *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*. Hroch

postulates three stages of nationalism. The first two stages describe how interest in the national idea is awakened by intellectuals and, then, how it is diffused; and the final stage occurs when a mass movement seeks to translate the national idea into the nation-state. There are no further stages to describe what happens to nationalism once the nation-state is established. It is as if nationalism suddenly disappears.

Nationalism, however, does not entirely disappear, according to this view: it becomes something surplus to everyday life. It threatens the established state and its established routines, or it returns when those orderly routines have broken down. Ordinary life in the normal state (the sort of state which the analysts tend to inhabit) is assumed to be banal, unexciting politically and non-nationalist. Nationalism, by contrast, is extraordinary, politically charged and emotionally driven.

Anthony Giddens describes nationalism as “a phenomenon that is primarily psychological” (1985, p. 116; see also Giddens, 1987, p. 178). Nationalist sentiments rise up when the “sense of ontological security is put in jeopardy by the disruption of routines” (1985, p. 218). In these circumstances, “regressive forms of object-identification tend to occur”, with the result that individuals invest great emotional energy in the symbols of nationhood and in the promise of strong leadership (p. 218). Nationalism, according to Giddens, occurs when ordinary life is disrupted: it is the exception, rather than the rule. Nationalist feelings “are not so much a part of regular day-to-day social life” (1985, p. 215), but “tend to be fairly remote from most of the activities of day-to-day social life”. Ordinary life is affected by nationalist sentiments only “in fairly unusual and often relatively transitory conditions” (p. 218). Thus, the psychology of nationalism is that of an extraordinary, emotional mood striking at extraordinary times. Banal routines, far from being bearers of nationalism, are barriers against nationalism.

Analysts, such as Giddens, are reserving the term ‘nationalism’ for outbreaks of ‘hot’ nationalist passion, which arise in times of social disruption and which are reflected in extreme social movements. In so doing, they are pointing to a recognizable phenomenon – indeed, one which is all too familiar in the contemporary world. The problem is not what such theories describe as nationalist, but what they omit. If the term ‘nationalism’ is applied only to forceful social movements, something slips from theoretical awareness. It is as if the flags on those filling-station forecourts do not exist.

The issue is wider than that of flags. It concerns national identity and its assumed naturalness in the established nation-state. It might be argued that such identities, far from being maintained by banal routines, are, in fact, supported by extraordinary moments which psychically parallel the extraordinary moments when nationalist movements arise. A dramatic psychology of the emotions, rather than a banal psychology of routines, might be evoked to explain identity in nation-states. All nation-states have occasions when ordinary routines are suspended, as the state celebrates

itself. Then, sentiments of patriotic emotion, which the rest of the year have to be kept far from the business of ordinary life, can surge forth. The yearly calendar of the modern nation would replicate in miniature its longer political history: brief moments of nationalist emotion punctuate longer periods of settled calm, during which nationalism seems to disappear from sight.

Certainly, each nation has its national days, which disrupt the normal routines. There are independence day parades, thanksgiving days and coronations, when a nation's citizenry commemorates, or jointly remembers, itself and its history (Bocock, 1974; Chaney, 1993; Eriksen, 1993). It could be argued that these occasions are sufficient to flag nationhood, so that it is remembered during the rest of the year, when the banal routines of private life predominate. Certainly, great national days are often experienced as being 'memorable'. The participants are aware that the day of celebration, on which the nation is collectively remembered, is itself a moment which is to be remembered (Billig, 1990a; Billig and Edwards, 1994). Afterwards, individuals and families will have their stories to tell about what they did on the day the prince and princess married, or the queen was crowned (Billig, 1992; Ziegler, 1977).

These are conventional carnivals of surplus emotion, for the participants expect to have special feelings, whether of joy, sorrow or inebriation. The day has been marked as a time when normal routines are put into abeyance, and when extra emotions should be enacted. Participants may be uncertain how to mark the great national occasion in the banal setting of home, but the uncertainty itself reveals both the specialness and the conventional nature of the occasion. The Mass Observation Study asked Britons to record how they spent their time on the day in 1937 when George VI was crowned as king. A left-wing woman recalled in her diary:

Woken by conscientious male cook stumping about in kitchen overhead. Troubled by vague necessity for waking husband with suitable greeting. Sleepily wondered whether a 'God Save the King!' would be appropriate (husband likes Happy-New-Years and Many-Happy>Returns). Finally awoke enough to realize that a shaking was sufficient. (Jennings and Madge, 1987, p. 106)

Another routine, or conventional pattern, must be found for the special day which formally breaks the everyday routine. This special routine must enable the actor to perform the expected emotion. Thus, the woman wonders how to accomplish an appropriately patriotic greeting. In this respect, the suitable emotion is not an ineffable impulse, which mysteriously impels the social actor in unforeseeable directions. It is dependent upon, and is sustained by, social forms, which themselves can be modelled upon other familiarly conventional breaks of daily routine, such as birthdays and new year celebrations.

The great days of national celebration are patterned so that the national flag can be consciously waved both metaphorically and literally. However, these are by no means the only social forms which sustain what is loosely called national identity. In between times, citizens of the state still remain

citizens and the state does not wither away. The privately waved flags may be wrapped up and put back in the attic, ready for next year's independence day, but that is not the end of flagging. All over the world, nations display their flags, day after day. Unlike the flags on the great days, these flags are largely unwaved, unsaluted, unnoticed. Indeed, it seems strange to suppose that occasional events, bracketed off from ordinary life, are sufficient to sustain a continually remembered national identity. It would seem more likely that the identity is part of a more banal way of life in the nation-state.

The Return of the Repressed

"The repressed has returned, and its name is nationalism", writes Michael Ignatieff at the beginning of his widely publicised *Blood and Belonging*, (1993, p. 2). At once, nationalism is signalled as something which comes and goes. Ignatieff's book illustrates how easily – indeed, how convincingly – such a portrayal of nationalism can appear today. In this portrayal, nationalism appears as dangerous, emotional and the property of others. Ignatieff's argument is worth close attention, because of what it omits. As will be seen, his portrayal of nationalism, together with its omissions, matches themes right at the heart of sociological common sense.

Ignatieff's book expresses a common-sense view of nationalism which straddles the boundaries between academic and more general thinking. *Blood and Belonging* accompanied a television series, made by the British Broadcasting Corporation, with the rights being sold world-wide. It was also serialized in a British Sunday newspaper. Announcing the first extract, the *Independent on Sunday* declared that "modern nationalism is as passionate and violent as ever, a call to come home and a call to arms" (24 October 1993).

Ignatieff's message is one of warning. Concentrating upon six locations – Croatia/Serbia, Germany, Ukraine, Quebec, Kurdistan and Northern Ireland – he describes how the irrational forces of ethnic nationalism are erupting to haunt the contemporary world. The collapse of communism and the growth of global communications, far from heralding a new world of cooperative rationality seem to be unleashing a primordial reaction: "the key narrative of the new world order is the disintegration of nation states into ethnic civil war" (1993, p. 2).

The theme of the repressed returning is easily maintained at present. Throughout Europe, the impulses of fascism are stirring again, in the form of parties which declare a politics of national regeneration. Political parties in Romania and Hungary are attracting large numbers of voters with their anti-gypsy and anti-alien messages. In Russia, the misnamed Liberal Democratic Party, campaigning for a greater, ethnically pure nation, is currently the largest party in parliament. During the 1990s the Front National has regularly attracted between 12 and 15 per cent of the French

popular vote, whereas in the previous decade it could barely muster 1 per cent (Hainsworth, 1992). The Vlaams Block has become the most popular party of Antwerp (Husbands, 1992). The most striking example of fascism's return is Italy, where in 1994 the MSI (Italian Social Movement), having changed its name to National Alliance, entered the coalition government of Berlusconi. When this occurs, fascism is returning not on the margins of politics, but in the historical heartlands of Europe. No wonder, then, it seems as if the repressed (and the repressive) is returning.

The theme of nationalism's dangerous and irrational return is becoming commonplace in writings by academic social scientists. Majid Tehranian, like Ignatieff, tells a story of repression and return. He suggests that, during the Cold War, "ethnicity and ethnic discourse . . . remained repressed", because, at that time, "the universalist ideological pretensions of communism and liberalism left little room for the claims of ethnic and national loyalties" (1993, p. 193). According to Tehranian, "the end of the Cold War . . . has unleashed the centrifugal, ethnic and tribal forces within nation states" (p. 193). Now, nationalism threatens to turn the new world order into disorder (or 'dysorder', to adopt Tehranian's spelling).

One feature of these stories of repression and return can be mentioned. The claim that nationalism is returning implies that it has been away. In such comments, the world of settled nations appears as the point-zero of nationalism. The wars waged by democratic states, in contrast to the wars waged by rebel forces, are not labelled nationalist. Ignatieff hardly mentions the Vietnam or Falklands Wars, let alone the various US sorties into Korea, Panama, or Grenada. Nor does he mention the popular support given to US military actions, at least while successfully pursued. He does not label wars, occurring during nationalism's so-called quiescent period, as nationalist, despite their accompanying patriotic rhetoric. Moreover, the Cold War itself was couched in nationalist terms. Yatani and Bramel (1984), examining opinion poll evidence, concluded that the American public viewed the confrontation between two great, universalist ideologies as a conflict between two nations: communism was Russian, and capitalism was American.

To be fair, Ignatieff does not entirely forget the nationalism of established nation-states. He remembers it, only to forget it. He distinguishes between 'ethnic' and 'civic' nationalism. Ethnic nationalism is the hot, surplus variety, being based on sentiments of "blood loyalty" (1993, p. 6). It is the nationalism of the intolerant bigots. Ignatieff dissociates himself from ethnic nationalism, declaring "I am a civic nationalist" (p. 9). Civic nationalism, according to Ignatieff, is a political creed, which defines common citizenship and which emerged from the universalist philosophies of the Enlightenment. It is, he writes, the nationalism of established European democracies at their best. Despite Ignatieff's claim to be a civic nationalist, he personally disavows loyalty to a single nation-state. He does not describe how 'civic nationalists' create a nation-state with its own myths; how the civic nations recruit their citizenry

in war-time; how they draw their own boundaries; how they demarcate 'others' beyond those boundaries; how they resist, violently if necessary, those movements which seek to rearrange the boundaries; and so on. In fact, the nationalism of 'civic nationalism' seems to slide away.

Indeed, civic nationalism as a whole slides away textually. When Ignatieff refers to 'nationalism' without qualification, he means the ethnic variety: "Nationalism legitimizes an appeal to blood loyalty" (p. 6). Thus, ethnic nationalism appears as if it were the epitome of all nationalism. The 'nationalism', which was repressed, but which now has returned, is, of course, the dangerous variety. Ignatieff's publishers catch the mood on the book jacket: "Modern nationalism is the language of blood: a call to arms which can end in the horrors of ethnic cleansing." Surplus nationalism has become the genus; its benign form is expelled from the category.

So long as the 'problems of nationalism' are defined in this way, the ideology, by which established Western nations are reproduced as nations, can be taken for granted. The Gulf War disappears from theoretical attention, as does the nationalism of established, democratic nations. This way of presenting nationalism is widespread. In describing political events in Northern Ireland, the British media typically use the term 'nationalist' to describe those who seek to abolish the border between the United Kingdom and Éire, especially if they advocate violence in the pursuit of these aims. The government of the British nation-state, by contrast, is not called 'nationalist', although it, too, can use force to maintain present national boundaries. Often, the term 'nationalist' seems to exert a magnetic pull upon the critical adjective 'extreme' in the force-field of commonplace semantics. The linkage implies that those who desire to change the political map of nations possess an unwarranted surplus of fervour, which is to be identified as nationalist.

Examples can be given from British newspapers. Here, as elsewhere, it is important not to select illustrations from the popular press, whose chauvinistic excesses have been well documented (Taylor, 1991). Nationalism is too general a phenomenon to be projected on to the working-class readers of popular newspapers, as if 'we', the liberal, educated classes, are removed from that sort of thing. 'Our' newspapers, on 'our' daily breakfast tables, present routine flags for 'our' benefit, as do 'our' sociological and psychological theories.

The *Guardian*, Britain's most liberal, left-of-centre quality newspaper, is important in this respect. A detailed analysis would be necessary to sustain the general point about the term 'nationalism', but a couple of illustrative examples can be briefly given. An article on Serbia carried the headline 'Nationalists challenge Milosevic'. The opening sentence asserted: "President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia's problems (sic) will mount today when extreme nationalists table a no-confidence motion against his Serbian Socialist party government" (7 October 1993). In the article, the writer does not once use the word 'nationalist' to describe the Serbian government or its President. Milosevic, himself the architect of a Greater Serbia,

and hence of a lesser Bosnia and Croatia, is described as consolidating his power, having “essentially won the wars in Croatia and Bosnia”. The term ‘extreme nationalists’ refers to the same people as the unqualified ‘nationalists’ of the headline. Thus, the President and his state are being unmade as ‘nationalist’. The territory, gained from the war of expansion, is on its way to international recognition. This flagging of what is nationalism (and by implication what is not nationalism) occurs beyond the level of outward argument. It is ingrained into the very rhetoric of common sense, which provides the linguistic resources for making outward arguments.

A second example also concerns Balkan politics. An article reports the opening of a museum of Serbia on the Greek island of Corfu. The opening paragraph set the tone:

As fiery displays of fervent nationalism go, it was a fine one. There was the archbishop with his golden cross giving a blessing that had grown men in tears. Amid flowers and flags, a dinner-jacketed all-male choir sang patriotic melodies. (*Guardian*, 6 September 1993)

The event was not an official state occasion. It was organized by a group which wishes to alter, rather than protect, existing state boundaries. In this context, the adjective ‘fiery’ takes its textual place as a companion to the word ‘nationalism’. The author assumes that readers will be familiar with the notion of ‘fiery displays of nationalism’, and will appreciate that this was a ‘fine’ example of a generally understood genus. Official occasions in ‘our’ established nations, such as dinners for heads of state or the opening of new national monuments, often involve similar elements of display: flags, flowers, divines in funny costumes and suitably patriotic melodies. However, these occasions are rarely described as displays of nationalism, let alone ‘fiery nationalism’.

The rhetoric distances ‘us’ from ‘them’, ‘our’ world from ‘theirs’. And ‘we’, writer and readers, are assumed to belong to a reasonable world, a point-zero of nationalism. In these newspaper reports and in Ignatieff’s book, nationalism is routinely and implicitly the property of others. Freud claimed that projection depends upon forgetting. He was referring to the individual repressing personal experiences of the past from conscious awareness. There is also, by analogy, a form of collective forgetting and collective projection. Common sense, through gaps in vocabulary and through the pointed rhetoric of cliché, can accomplish what amounts to a collective amnesia. This projection is a social habit of thought. ‘Our’ nationalism is routinely forgotten, being unnamed as nationalism. Nationalism as a whole is projected on to others. But, again and again, not only ‘their’ nationalism seems to return; ‘ours’ does too.

Forgetting the Saluted Flag

The double neglect of banal nationalism involves academics forgetting

routine flagging of nationhood. The flags melt into the background, as 'our' particular world is experienced as *the* world. The routine absent-mindedness, involved in not noticing unwaved flags or other symbols of nationhood, has its reflection in academic theory. However, it is not merely the unwaved flags which have evaded attention. Even the saluted ones can seem so routinely familiar – so near to home – that they are ignored.

Since the 1880s, school pupils in the United States stand each morning before the national flag. At attention, often with hand on heart, they pledge "allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all". The ceremony is a ritual display of national unity. Children, in knowing that this is the way in which the school day starts, will take it for granted that other pupils, the length and breadth of the homeland, are also beginning their day similarly; and that their parents and grandparents, if schooled in the United States, did likewise; they might even suppose that all over the world the school day starts thus. This does not mean that an awareness of national unity bubbles excitedly within the mind of each pupil on each and every school day. But it does mean that the nation celebrates itself routinely.

Here, one might have thought, is a ritual which would have been studied and re-studied endlessly by American sociologists and social psychologists. They should be delighted to have on their doorsteps such a Durkheimian ceremony. Moreover, the ceremony appears with the repeatability of a laboratory experiment, so that micro-processes of gesture, intonation and stance can be repeatedly examined in their controlled conditions. It should be a godsend for functionalists, role-theorists and micro-sociologists, let alone anthropologists, who can do their fieldwork and still return home for lunch. In point of fact, academic interest has been negligible. Anthropologists have headed for the reservations of the native Americans rather than the school-rooms of middle Iowa. When Renan mentioned the 'cult of the flag', ceremonies like the daily saluting were still in their infancy. Their strangeness was apparent. A century later the mysticism of pledging oneself to a coloured piece of cloth has become so familiar as to seem unworthy of attention. The theoretical forgetting of the flag is perhaps as remarkable as the act itself.

One of the few American investigators to draw attention to the ritual has been the psychotherapist, Robert Coles. In his book *The Political Life of Children*, Coles reports conversations with school children in the USA and elsewhere. He notes that the saluting of the flag is not performed in exactly the same way across the States. In predominantly black schools, the ceremony can be somewhat perfunctory; one teacher told Coles that it was "not a good way to start the day" (1986, p. 35). For other children, reports Coles, the saluting "can be an occasion for real emotional expression" (p. 36). A nine-year-old boy told Coles that his uncle was a sergeant in the army; another uncle was in the police department; the boy had visited

army bases; he has seen the flag in church; he had prayed for his country. He was the sort of young, white, middle-class child for whom the flag had great meaning. For the majority, and for most of the time, one suspects that the routine is enacted as a routine. Even the young boy, who patriotically told Coles of his uncles, may have fidgeted, whispered, nudged his neighbour at times during the ceremony. Unfortunately, we only have the young boy's words, as he spoke on best behaviour to the visiting adult, and not his conduct day after day.

Coles, however, has noticed what other social scientists overlook. The significance of the ceremony is not diminished if it is treated as routine, rather than as an intense experience. If anything, the significance is enhanced: the sacral has become part of everyday life, instead of being confined to a special place of worship or particular day of celebration. Significantly, Coles does not see nationalism as a passing emotion or a surplus phenomenon: "Nationalism works its way into just about every corner of the mind's life" (1986, p. 60). Nor does he project nationalism on to others: "Nationality is a constant in the lives of most of us and must surely be worked into our thinking in various ways, with increasing diversity and complexity of expression as our lives unfold" (p. 59).

Coles' position is unusual on two counts. First, he treats the saluting of the flag as being psychologically important in the development of young Americans' views on the world. Secondly, unusually for an American investigator, he sees nationalism as pervasive in his own country. An interesting possibility arises: perhaps the two stances are related. Or, rather, perhaps the absence of both in much social science is connected. Maybe, embedded in conventional social scientific thinking is a habit of thinking, which produces an intellectual amnesia. This habit leads analysts, especially in the United States, to forget those flags, which are daily saluted and those which remain unsaluted. Also, it leads analysts to forget 'our' nationalism.

Nationalism and Sociological Common Sense

If there is such a habit of thought, which produces a theoretical amnesia, then it is not the personal mark of a particular academic. It will reflect something much more widespread and deep-seated: a social scientific, or more particularly a sociological, common sense. Such a common sense will be ingrained into the intellectual habits of those who practise sociology professionally. It will mark out certain topics as interesting and sociologically relevant, while others will be peripheral.

An academic discipline's habits of thinking will be contained in core assumptions and in routine rhetorical practices (Brown, 1977, 1994; McCloskey, 1985; Nelson et al., 1987). These are habits which are widely unquestioned, for to question them might appear to threaten the very basis of the discipline itself. The disciplinary common sense can be found in

major, intellectual works, as well as in the glossy textbooks, which are designed for a mass student readership. In fact, textbooks are often good sources for discovering a social science's common sense (Billig, 1990b; Stringer, 1990). Textbooks, in seeking to transmit the disciplinary vision to a new generation of disciples, tend to package the approved view in handy form.

A quick glance at the subject indexes of standard textbooks in sociology would reveal that nationalism is not a major, disciplinary preoccupation. It certainly is not in two textbooks, written during nationalism's so-called quiescent period: *Sociology in a Changing World* by Kornblum (1988) and *Sociology* by Macionis (1989). Both these texts are aimed at the large US undergraduate market. Their subject indexes accord 'nationalism' no more than a couple of pages each. Britain's most widely read textbook, Haralambos and Holborn's *Sociology* (1991), has no index entry for nationalism. Similar absences can also be found in important academic texts. *Social Theory Today*, edited by Turner and Giddens (1987), is an influential compendium, presenting an overview of major trends in contemporary sociological theorizing. The subject index has large entries for class, social structure and so on, but there are only two pages which are indexed for nationalism. These two pages deal with movements of "racial or ethnic minorities" within nations, rather than nationalism *qua* nationalism (Miliband, 1987, p. 342). To cite a further example: Ulrich Beck's important and well-received analysis of the new conditions of modernity, *The Risk Society*, has no entry for nationalism. It does mention briefly the undermining of national borders as part of a condition which "makes the utopia of a world society a little more real or at least more urgent" (1992, p. 47). Nationalism, here, far from returning is not even depicted as repressed. But, if it is to return, the way is opened for it to return as a special subject, rather than as the endemic condition of the times.

Sociology, from the classic works of Durkheim and Weber onwards, has been presented by sociologists as the study of 'society'. Sociologists routinely define their discipline in these terms. Edward Shils, writing on 'Sociology' in *The Social Science Encyclopedia*, describes sociology as "at present an unsystematic body of knowledge gained through the study of the whole and parts of society" (1985, p. 799). According to Kornblum, "Sociology is the scientific study of human societies and human behaviour in the many groups that make up a society" (1988, p. 4). Macionis begins his textbook by defining sociology as "the scientific study of society and the social activity of human beings" (1989, p. 2). Haralambos and Holborn define a sociological theory as "a set of ideas which claim to explain how society or aspects of society work" (1991, p. 8). All these definitions assume that there is such a thing as 'a society' which exists in an unproblematic way.

A number of critics of orthodox sociology have drawn attention to the way that sociologists take the existence of 'society' for granted. According to Giddens, it is a term which is "largely unexamined" in sociological

discourse (1987, p. 25). Immanuel Wallerstein claims that “no concept is more pervasive in modern social science than society, and no concept is used more automatically and unreflectively than society” (1987, p. 315). Mann (1986), in making a similar point, announces that, if he were able, he “would abolish the concept of ‘society’ altogether” (p. 2; see also Bauman, 1992a, 1992b; Mann, 1992; McCrone, 1992; Turner, 1990). The problem is not that sociologists, whether in textbooks or works of theory, leave ‘society’ undefined. It lies in the assumption that ‘we’ readers will know more or less what a ‘society’ is: ‘we’ have common-sense ways of understanding ‘society’ (Bowers and Iwi, 1993).

It often turns out that the ‘society’ which lies at the heart of sociology’s own self-definition is created in the image of the nation-state. Indeed, in the case of Max Weber there is evidence that his support for German political nationalism directly influenced his conception of ‘society’ (Anderson, 1992). The connection is continued in today’s textbooks. Macionis (1989), having defined sociology as the scientific study of ‘society’, unusually goes on to give a definition of ‘society’: it is “a people who interact with one another within a limited territory and who share a culture” (p. 9). This is, of course, precisely how ‘nations’ are typically viewed both by themselves and by theorists: as peoples with a culture, a limited territory and distinguished by bonds of interaction. For sociologists it is a banal cliché to define their discipline as the ‘science of society’; and it just as banal a habit of thought to imagine ‘society’ as a bounded, independent entity. A number of years ago Norbert Elias put the issue well: “Many twentieth century sociologists, when speaking of ‘society’, no longer have in mind (as did their predecessors) a ‘bourgeois society’ or a ‘human society’ beyond the state, but increasingly the somewhat diluted ideal image of a nation-state” (1978, p. 241).

There is a further point. The phrase ‘science of society’ implies that societies can be treated as self-contained units, with ‘society’ as something to be studied in isolation. The discipline has historically concentrated upon social relations within the ‘society’, or the groups, to use Kornblum’s phrase, that make up a society. In so doing, it neglects the relations between ‘societies’, even failing to ask why there is a world of ‘societies’, let alone a world of nations (Wallerstein, 1987). Bauman (1992a) claims that the boundaries of ‘society’ (as conceived in terms of the nation-state) limit sociologists’ conception of the social world. What is outside the ‘society’ is treated as an unanalysed ‘environment’. However, nations (or ‘societies’) exist in a world of other nations (or ‘societies’). Nationalism as an ideology, which spread throughout the world, was always an international ideology. Nations have never been hermetically sealed, but, as Bauman suggests, “nation states, those prototypes of theoretical societies, were porous” (p. 57). If the interrelation between the nation and the world of nations has been largely ignored by orthodox sociology, then sociology has been even less equipped to study cultures and epochs, such as

Mediaeval Europe, where forms of community are not apparently organized into neatly separated entities.

Far from leading to nationhood's being in the forefront of sociological inquiry, the emphasis on 'society' and the implicit modelling of 'society' on nation, has both reified and concealed nationhood. 'Society' is conceived as a universal entity. All human social life is presumed to take place within the orbit of 'society'; 'societies' are to be found wherever humans live socially. The problematic for orthodox sociology, particularly Parsonian sociology, has been to study how members of a 'society' become socialized into adopting the 'values', 'norms' and 'culture' of their 'society'. Haralambos and Holborn (1991), in the opening chapter of their textbook, specifically introduce readers to these concepts. These are all universal terms: it is presumed that all 'societies' have 'norms' and 'values'. Thus, 'our' society is not unique, but is an instance of something which is universal.

The image of 'our' society, however, is a nation-state. Kornblum (1988), in his textbook, asserts that the nation-state is "the social entity that, for most people in the world today, represents 'society' itself" (p. 72). If the nation is merely a variant of something universal (a 'society'), then the processes by which it is reproduced need not be identified by special words. Its particularities can be subsumed under general terms such as 'norm', 'value', 'socialization' etc. 'Nationalism' in this context need not make an appearance. Yet, it can return as a special subject to demarcate those who are striving to have their own 'society', or those who might be threatening the integrity of 'ours', or those who are proposing an extreme, fascist politics of nationality. If the repressed continues its dramatic return in Eastern Europe and elsewhere, then the textbooks of sociology, in their future editions, are likely to add sub-sections or even whole chapters on nationalism. If they do, nationalism will still be seen as something surplus, even contingent. It will be a special subject. 'Society', modelled on the image of 'our' nation, will continue to be treated as necessarily universal. In this way, 'our' nationalism need not return textually.

This sort of sociological common sense can leave its mark on investigations of individual nations. For example, American sociologists, examining the state of American 'society', often overlook the national dimension of their topic, as they transform the particular into universal categories (Woodiwiss, 1993). For example, Bellah et al.'s *Habits of the Heart* is a superbly executed study, investigating the effects of individualism in contemporary American culture. It is based upon wide-ranging interviews with large numbers of American citizens. The book attracted a wide readership, becoming a non-fiction best-seller in the United States. The authors utter a message of warning, as they argue that individualism is undermining a sense of community. According to Bellah et al., "we live in a society that encourages us to cut free from the past . . . no tradition and no community in the United States is above criticism" (1986, p. 154).

The phrasing of the argument is significant. The sense of community, which is being lost, refers to feelings of township or locality. There is still a presumed locus in which the sense of community and tradition is evaporating. As the authors state, "we live in a society": the 'society', of course, is the United States. And the 'we', whom the authors are invoking, are Americans. Whatever the decline of 'community', the national society continues to exist. The authors' analysis seems to overlook their respondents' sense of being American; this sense is shared by the authors, as their text flags its own national identity. In this way, the authors take the framework of their own nation ('our society') for granted. Despite their other warnings of collapse, they do not suggest that the United States will fail to continue as the United States. Indeed, their text, by treating 'our society' as an assumed context, does its bit to enhabit the nation. And for all the authors' detailed accounts of community, tradition and its absence, they do not specifically point out the tradition in the schools, where the young routinely proclaim the unity of their nation under God.

Our Patriotism – Their Nationalism

The repressed is not totally forgotten in orthodox social scientific writings, for it can return in a textually changed form. 'Our' loyalties to 'our' nation-state can be defended, even praised. A rhetorical distinction is necessary for accomplishing this defence. 'Our' nationalism is not presented as nationalism, which is dangerously irrational, surplus and alien. A new identity, a different label, is found for it. 'Our' nationalism appears as 'patriotism' – a beneficial, necessary and, often, American force.

In consequence, some social scientists insist that patriotism and nationalism represent two very different states of mind. The distinction would be convincing if there were clear, unambiguous criteria, beyond an ideological requirement to distinguish 'us' from 'them'. Walker Connor, one of today's leading specialists on nationalism, claims that nationalism and patriotism "should not be confused through the careless use of language" (1993, p. 376; see also Connor, 1978). According to Connor, nationalism is an irrational, primordial force, "an emotional attachment to one's people" (1993, p. 374). Nationalists often appeal to 'blood ties', in order to tap into these irrational forces. Nationalism, argues Connor, arises in ethnic groups, which claim common origins of blood. Connor cites the rhetoric of Hitler, Bismark and Mao to illustrate the dangerously irrational force of such appeals. Because nationalism is based upon a sense of the nation's ethnic unity, the national loyalties of 'immigrant' nations should not be described as 'nationalist': "I wish to make it clear that my comments do not refer . . . to immigrant societies such as those within Australia, the United States and non-Quebec Canada" (1993, p. 374).

If the loyalties, engendered in the United States, are not properly called nationalist, then they should be called 'patriotic'. Connor writes of his

school days in the United States, when he and fellow pupils were taught to sing 'America' and to think of Washington and Jefferson as the founders of the nation. The United States might have adopted some of the ideas of 'nationalism', but still this was not nationalism proper. It did not possess the emotional depth and irrational force of nationalism. Politically, this puts patriotism at a disadvantage, when competing with the (alien) forces of nationalism:

Despite the many advantages that the state has for politically socializing its citizens in patriotic values, patriotism – as evident from the multitude of separatist movements pockmarking the globe – cannot muster the level of emotional commitment that nationalism can. (Connor, 1993, p. 387)

The rhetoric tells its story. American loyalties, inculcated in school, are constructed as being 'patriotic'; they do not constitute a problematic irruption of the irrational psyche, unlike nationalism, which provokes "countless fanatical sacrifices" (1993, p. 385). The words 'fanatical', 'irrational', 'instinct' attach themselves to 'nationalism' in Connor's text. 'Patriotic values' (the term has a comforting rhetoric) are threatened by the nationalist movements, which 'pockmark the globe' (and, here, the rhetoric of disfigurement is used). 'Their' emotional bonds, so different from 'ours', are the problem and the threat.

The language is psychological, yet there is no direct psychological evidence to distinguish the rational state of patriotism from the irrational force of nationalism (see also the arguments of Eller and Coughlan, 1993). The evidence lies in the social events themselves: mass movements of nationalism are deemed irrational. The analysis, with its dire warnings, soothingly reassures. So much can be forgotten, as 'we' recall 'their' nationalism with horror. The wars waged by US troops; the bombings in Vietnam and Iraq; the bombast of successive US presidents; and the endless display of the revered flag: all these are removed from the problems of over-heated nationalism. If required, they can be transmuted into the warm glow of patriotism, the healthy necessity rather than the dangerous surplus.

A number of social scientists have attempted to draw a psychological distinction between nationalism and patriotism, in terms of the direction, rather than intensity, of the attitudes. Morris Janowitz (1983), advocating that American schools should instil a patriotic civic consciousness, defined patriotism as "the persistence of love or attachment to a country". He distinguished this love from xenophobia, or hatred of others (p. 194). A similar distinction can be found in Snyder's (1976) *Varieties of Nationalism*. Patriotism is "defensive", being based upon a love of one's country, whereas nationalism "takes on a quality of aggression that makes it one of the prime causes for wars" (p. 43, see also Doob, 1964). The social psychologist Daniel Bar-Tal (1993) has argued that patriotism is a functionally positive force, providing stability for the 'ingroup' and a sense of identity to its members. He defines patriotism as the "attachment of group

members towards their group and the country in which they reside" (p. 48). He distinguishes this positive attachment from chauvinism and nationalism, both of which include negative feelings against outgroups (p. 51).

The problem is how to distinguish in practice these two allegedly very different states of mind. One cannot merely ask potential patriots whether they either love their country or hate foreigners. Even the most extreme of nationalists will claim the patriotic motivation for themselves. Frederick Hertz, writing on nationalism when Hitler was still Chancellor of Germany, put the matter well. If one asked fascists what their creed was, they will invariably say that "it consists in passionate devotion to the nation and in putting its interests higher than anything else" (1944, p. 35). Fascists will protest that they are defenders, not attackers, only taking against foreigners when the latter are a danger to the beloved homeland. Hitler, for example, imagined that he was defending Germany against the Jews, asserting in *Mein Kampf* that "the Jew is not the attacked but the attacker" (1972, p. 293). Today's fascists, likewise, claim that they only desire to protect the homeland from invasion, conspiracy and racial pollution (Billig, 1978, pp. 224f.; Billig, 1991). The hatreds will be justified in the name of love. In the world of nation-states, everyone claims to be acting in defence, going to war through necessity, rather than choice. 'We don't want war, but . . .' is the common phrase of politicians leading their countries to battle (Lauerbach, 1989). Semantically, even the notion of 'jingoism' owes its origin to this stance. "We don't want to fight", went the music hall song of 1878, "but, by Jingo, . . ." (Reader, 1988, p. 46).

The claim that nationalism and patriotism are psychologically distinct needs to be backed by evidence about different states of mind or underlying motivations. Often the force of the claim is stronger than the empirical data cited in support. Kosterman and Feshbach (1989) claim to have found empirical evidence that patriotic attitudes about one's own country are unrelated to negative attitudes about foreign nations. Their claims and their evidence are worth examining: they reveal, not so much an objective difference between nationalism and patriotism, but the readiness to claim such a difference.

Kosterman and Feshbach gave samples of US residents questionnaires, asking them about their views of America. Having factor-analysed the replies, Kosterman and Feshbach argued that patriotism and nationalism formed separate dimensions, which can be assessed by independent scales. The patriotic scale included items such as 'I love my country' or 'When I see the American flag flying, I feel great.' The nationalist items compared America with other countries (i.e. 'generally, the more influence America has on other nations, the better off they are'). The mean scores of the patriotism scale were generally high (significantly higher than the nationalist scale), indicating that the patriotic statements about being emotionally committed to America attracted general assent. Despite Kosterman and

Feshbach's claims about the independence of the patriotism and nationalism scales, the data, in fact, showed the two scales to be significantly correlated (1989, Table VII, p. 268). Also both scales correlated with other variables in similar ways: for example, on both scales Republican supporters scored more highly than Democratic supporters (Table X, p. 270).

Kosterman and Feshbach draw wide-ranging conclusions from their data. They claim that their results supported "a sharp discrimination between nationalism and patriotism" (p. 273). They warn against nationalism: "one cannot help but be concerned" by nationalism, which encourages "belligerent actions". By contrast, patriotism is valuable because it is as "important to the well-being of a nation as high self-esteem is to the well-being of an individual"; patriotism, far from causing wars, may actually be a means "of *reducing* international belligerence" (p. 273, emphasis in original). This conclusion comes after evidence that those with higher nationalist scores tend to have higher patriotic scores. Thus, the sentiments, which supposedly reduce international belligerence, tend to accompany those which promote it, despite the protestation that the two should be sharply distinguished. It would seem that something other than the empirical results was pushing the authors to their praise of patriotism and their criticism of nationalism.

Underlying such arguments is the assumption that hatred of the outgroup (rather than love of the ingroup) provides the motivation for nationalist warfare. This is almost certainly an oversimplification. In an important analysis, Jean Bethke Elshtain (1993) argues that, in the past century, young men have gone to war in their millions motivated not primarily by hatred of the enemy, but by a 'will-to-sacrifice'. The willingness to die in the cause of the homeland precedes a motive to kill. The elements of this will-to-sacrifice in the cause of the nation are uppermost in the items on the 'patriotism scale': the love of the flag, the 'great pride in that land that is our America', the importance 'for me to serve my country' and so on. As Kosterman and Feshbach's study shows, such sentiments are widely held in the United States by men and women. Arguably, these shared sentiments provide the background for nationally united responses, should some other nation appear to threaten the pride, politics or economics of 'our' great America.

This is the context for those doubly forgotten flags. Contrary to what respondents claimed in response to the questionnaire item, they do not feel great whenever they see the American flag flying. They see it far too often to feel that way each time. They see it too frequently even to notice that they are seeing it. Those flags, together with other routine signs of nationhood, act as unmindful reminders, preventing the danger of collective amnesia. The citizens, however, do not forget their appropriate responses, when the social occasions demand: they know to declare that the flag gives them a great feeling. All the while, the forgetting is doubled. Social scientists have probed the most intimate parts of modern life. They

have calculated the number of sexual fantasies the average adult American is likely to have per day. But a census of flags has not been undertaken. No one asks how many stars and stripes the average American is likely to encounter in the course of the day. Nor what is the effect of all this flagging.