

## Recensions / Reviews

- ALAIN-G. GAGNON, ANDRÉ LECOURS, AND GENEVIÈVE NOOTENS (eds.). *Contemporary Majority Nationalism*. By Eric Kaufmann 713
- CHRISTOPHE PARENT. *Le concept d'État fédéral multinational. Essai sur l'union des peuples*. By François Rocher 714
- ANN E. TOWNS. *Women and States: Norms and Hierarchies in International Society*. By Andrea Chandler 716
- GENEVIÈVE NOOTENS. *Souveraineté démocratique, justice et mondialisation. Essai sur la démocratie libérale et le cosmopolitisme*. By Alain Létourneau 718
- BENOÎT PELLETIER. *Une certaine idée du Québec. Parcours d'un fédéraliste. De la réflexion à l'action*. By François-Olivier Dorais 720
- JARED J. WESLEY. *Code Politics: Campaigns and Culture on the Canadian Prairies*. By Allen Mills 722
- LOUIS CÔTÉ, BENOÎT LÉVESQUE, ET GUY MORNEAU (dir.). *État stratège & participation citoyenne*. By Gilles Paquet 724
- DAVID WELSH. *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. By Tom Lodge 726
- MARIO TELÒ (ed.). *The European Union and Global Governance*. By Anastasia Chebakova 727
- ANNE-MARIE GINGRAS. *Médias et démocratie. Le grand malentendu*. By Catherine Côté 728
- MICHAEL MANIATES AND JOHN MEYER (eds.). *The Environmental Politics of Sacrifice*. By Peter Stoett 730
- PASCAL BOUVIER. *Petite histoire de la philosophie politique*. By Djamel Chikh 731
- DAVID E. SMITH. *Federalism and the Constitution of Canada*. By Jean-Phillipe Gauvin 734
- PAUL CARTLEDGE. *Ancient Greek Thought in Practice*. By Sara MacDonald 735
- MARC JACQUEMAIN ET PASCAL DELWITT (dir.). *Engagements actuels, actualité des engagements*. By Joël Madore 736

### Contemporary Majority Nationalism

Alain-G. Gagnon, André Lecours and Geneviève Nootens, eds.

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Ethnic studies emerged from the American urban context of the 1920s and has been centred in departments of anthropology and sociology. The systematic study of nationalism is more recent, dating only from the early 1980s. A European-origin discourse, it is anchored mainly in departments of history and political science. In both cases, however, the focus has been on minorities, with the majority either subsumed within the state or portrayed as a kind of taken-for-granted backcloth against which minority exotica can be studied.

This impressive edited volume cuts against this grain. It grows out of the work of Alain Gagnon and his research group on plurinational societies at Université de Québec à Montréal, arguably Canada's leading research network in nationalism. The group's previous focus has been on minority nationalisms, but this book addresses the oft-neglected phenomenon of majority nationalism and how it relates to minority nations.

Not all of the chapters succeed in this endeavour, but there are enough high points to more than justify the purchase price. The most original and germane piece is the introduction by Lecours and Nootens. This neatly sets out the state of the field of majority nationalism to date. This feat alone guarantees its relevance to scholars. It follows on from their important *Dominant nationalism, dominant ethnicity* (2009). That work marked the coming of age of these rising scholars and was the first appearance of the concept of "dominant nationalism." Their chapter in *Majority Nationalism* clarifies the concept and attempts to distinguish majority nationalism from cognate ideas such as dominant ethnicity or state nationalism. They nicely navigate between these shoals by claiming that while the classic work on state nationalism by Gellner, Tilly and other "modernists" has tended toward the materialistic, that on dominant ethnicity and ethnic nationalism has overemphasized culture. Where Lecours and Nootens part company is in their focus on the non-material aspects of state-defined nations such as Canada. In other words, just because the nation is coextensive with the state and defined by civic elements does not mean it can be reduced to the material functions of the Weberian state. While I largely accept their analysis, the work of Philip Resnick must be considered, at the very least, to be a forerunner of the majority nationalism approach. This said, there is certainly a need for a book which offers a sustained examination of the phenomenon.

The main body of the book brings together a high-powered collection of scholars from both sides of the Atlantic. Part I features four papers, from Alain Dieckhoff, Angel Casti[v]nera, Louis Dupont and John Coakley, focusing on theoretical aspects of the problem. Part II applies this framework to the cases of France and Britain (John Loughlin), Canada (James Bickerton), the United States (Liah Greenfeld) and Spain (Enric Fossas). Part one moves in a number of different directions. Alan Dieckhoff nicely demonstrates that globalization has worked to strengthen rather than weaken national and ethnic sentiment. Angel Casti[v]nera alerts us to the manifold connections and analogies between personal biographies and national narratives. John Coakley deploys his deep scholarship to offer a new typology of majority strategies for managing ethnic diversity based on inclusion–exclusion and group recognition versus non-recognition. Louis Dupont offers what is arguably the most unconventional and original chapter in the book. It nicely encapsulates the central issue by setting up the device of the *vivre ensemble*, a "cultural composition" that weaves together majority and minority aspirations within a stable whole. His writing is light, and he uses metaphors well to nudge our minds out of their customary grooves. Thus, in describ-

ing the *vivre ensemble* of Britain, he writes: “The English planet is at the centre of the British universe: the merged nationalities orbit closely around the centre while the ethnic cultures orbit further away.” Not all will agree with his assessment that the United States formed around a clear WASP ethnic core while France was a universalist political compact between distinct ethnic regions. Yet this nice unseating of New World–Old World stereotypes is a welcome departure from orthodoxy. So, too, is the view that multiculturalism and nationalism are, in a sense, two sides of the same majority nationalist coin.

Among the case studies, Bickerton offers a cogent, fluid account of the thirty-year tension between the charter-based unitary nationalism of the Anglophone majority and the linguistic project of Quebec, with its demand for a binational Canada. Fossas outlines a similar tension in the Spanish case, likewise focusing on legal–political aspects. Loughlin moves deftly through the histories of France and Britain to argue that centralizers like Chèvenement in France or Thatcher in Britain may have represented the last gasps of a dying order as nationality is recast along pluralist lines. Fossas, using the example of Spain’s majority nationalist People’s Party, suggests this may not be a *fait accompli*. Greenfeld’s examination of the American case confirms this view, suggesting that ethnic and religious diversity in America has tended to become trivialized and Americanized upon contact with the powerful voluntarism and individualism which pervades American society.

While authors might have stuck more closely to the editors’ hymn sheet by distinguishing majority nationalism from the state, on the one hand, and dominant ethnicity, on the other, the book broadly hits its mark. In nicely plumbing the depths of the majority–minority dialectic in nationalism, it renders a service to all scholars of nationalism and deserves to be widely read.

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### **Le concept d’État fédéral multinational. Essai sur l’union des peuples**

Christophe Parent

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La nécessité de prendre en compte la présence de plusieurs entités nationales au sein d’un même espace politique étatique a conduit plusieurs chercheurs, politologues, juristes, philosophes et sociologues à remettre en question les paramètres traditionnels de l’État-nation. Cette mutation de la pensée libérale a conduit au développement du concept d’État multinational qui répond à la nécessité de la reconnaissance de la diversité culturelle et de son inscription dans l’État. Pour Christophe Parent, le concept d’État multinational renvoie, pour l’essentiel, à l’idée selon laquelle la communauté politique s’est construite sur la base d’un pacte librement consenti entre nations souveraines et que celles-ci disposent d’un droit à l’autodétermination. L’idée d’État multinational s’énonce minimalement sous quatre formes distinctes : il vise, dans son acception la plus simple, à décrire une réalité qui touche aux très nombreuses communautés politiques où l’on retrouve des revendications nationalistes de nature politico-identitaires; il interpelle les théories libérales classiques de l’État dont le sujet principal est l’individu et, en ce faisant, laisse de côté les composantes nationales qui s’y trouvent; il permet de prendre la mesure des aménagements juridico-institutionnels, particulièrement de type fédératif, qui tentent de rendre compte de la diversité; finalement, il se décline sous forme de projet politique à réaliser pour les nations minoritaires en quête de reconnaissance et de statut politique particulier au sein d’espaces politiques déjà constitués. L’ouvrage de Christophe Parent propose une remarquable analyse de ce concept. Il en présente la genèse, développe une riche