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Lloyd S. Kramer. *Nationalism in Europe and America: Politics, Cultures, and Identities since 1775.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. xii + 260 pp. $65.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8078-3484-8; $24.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8078-7200-0.

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Nationalism as Transnational Framework

Scholars of nationalism are presented with a unique challenge. On the one hand, they encounter rhetoric and archival material that highlights a nation-state's difference or uniqueness; on the other hand, they understand "nationalism" as a pattern or overarching framework within which to compare and contrast specific case studies. The impulse to accept implicit assumptions about nationalism, such as the primacy of the nation-state or a tendency of continental regions to adopt one form of nationalism over another, is strong and can weaken the foundations of the analysis. In *Nationalism in Europe and America: Politics, Cultures, and Identities since 1775*, Lloyd Kramer seeks to break out of the binary conventional wisdom heretofore dominating studies of nationalism and national identity in the United States and Europe, seeking instead to construct a usable comparative framework of analysis. Rather than emphasizing the differences of American and European nationalisms, Kramer instead highlights the threads of continuity that span the Atlantic Ocean thematically, dating back to the eighteenth century.

Kramer acknowledges the curious paradox of comparative nationalism studies in his first chapter, dedicated to analyzing cultural meanings of nationalism, arguing that the challenge is in "striving to find broad historical patterns in political and cultural movements that regularly claim to be unique" (p. 23). In his bid to explain characteristics common to a variety of nationalisms, Kramer focuses on "Western" contexts, grouping the usually differentiated U.S. and European examples. In doing this, Kramer tries to frame complex, multilevel conceptions of nationalism in cultural terms despite specific political, economic, or military differences. This also allows him to argue for competing or contrasting visions of nationalism within a single nation-state as they emerged philosophically from the Enlightenment, a period that arguably influenced intellectual movements on both sides of the Atlantic equally. No example could better illustrate this heritage than the debates and tension about individual or human rights, the source(s) of national or political power, and dissent. This discourse, as it was expressed in revolutionary tracts or political documents, ties together calls for national unity and popular sovereignty both in early America and nineteenth-century Europe.

Kramer's analysis shifts the focus away from specific formulations of national borders, language, and narrative; that, he argues, prompts the language of national differences. Rather, the commonality of those elements in nationalist rhetoric demonstrates a pattern. The work of J. G. Herder, Kramer points out, mirrors the writings of Guiseppe Mazzini in Italy and proponents of "manifest destiny" in the United States in linking land, national unity, and common language. The specifics of those examples were different, but the function was the same. In some ways, Kramer's argument echoes Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" as well as the political religion of the state, demonstrating the impulse of Western nationalists to frame their appeals in similar ways. Kramer likens the creation of a nationalist lexicon to religious conversion, necessitating an almost re-education of the masses. This education was fundamental to the cultural understandings of the nationalist rhetoric and mission(s). It is here that Kramer references newspapers, literature, educational systems, and a new national terminology as systems or structures that buttressed national life. This did not happen evenly across Europe and America, but efforts to foster a nationalist public occurred at a variety of levels on both continents.

Another similarity Kramer points out is the tendency to create a sort of religion of state; he argues that "More

people have died for their nations in modern times than for any other creed or political ideal" (p. 81). The focus on religiosity, sacrifice, and even the practice of pilgrimage to secular political monuments almost affirms the power of the "state-as-religion" argument. What Kramer seems to argue, though, is that nationalism as a political ideology did not just supplant widespread religious devotion; it made service to the nation a moral and even religious obligation. By highlighting Judeo-Christian language to inculcate citizens, Kramer reinforces his thesis that Western nationalisms on either side of the Atlantic had more similarities than they had differences. Particular symbols or rituals, such as national hymns, organize national institutions such as the military, citizenry, and cultural artifacts under a common umbrella.

Building on the emotional connotations of religious experience, Kramer discusses the gendered and racial elements of nationalism, especially in relation to the family. In his chapter on religion, Kramer hinted at the inherent gendered imagery that went along with religion, such as the sacrificial Christ-like figures (soldiers for the national cause) and the weeping mothers-as-Madonnas at home. Expanding on that notion, and the traditional idea of "separate spheres," Kramer sees nationalism as the connective tissue between the public and the private. Again echoing Benedict Anderson, Kramer points out that "imagined communities" essentially create a large, extended, national family, replete with concrete social roles. Women, for instance, provided symbolic motivation for protecting the nation, even in some instances becoming the nation itself (such as in the cases of Germania or Marianne). On the other hand, though, women up until the twentieth century, could not actively participate in protecting the nation; their role was much more indirect. Nationalist rhetoric reified and reinforced already entrenched gendered norms, giving nationalists a new reason to insist on separating the public and private spheres.

At the same time, this "national family" implied racial similarity. While American and European variants of nationalism were still infused with gendered language and references to the imperiled status of the national family, Kramer makes a convincing argument about the common ties between them. Mostly analyzed through the lens of imperialism, Kramer offers examples of racial rhetoric that privileged white, "Anglo-Saxon" national characteristics above Native Americans (in the United States during the height of westward expansion and "manifest destiny"), Africans, and Asians. Tracing this impulse to the Enlightenment and Social Darwinism, Kramer elicits apt comparisons between American and European imperial projects.

While the first six chapters of Kramer's book identify and discuss the elements that constructed nationalism(s), chapters 7 and 8 move beyond the themes that dominated the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, putting nationalist dreams and aspirations into practice. Covering the period between 1870 and the present day, Kramer highlights such events as the "scramble for Africa," the world wars, and the Cold War. Starting with the establishment of the German and Italian nation-states, Kramer argues that the turn of the century and the eve of World War I demonstrated the success of nationalists in convincing American and European populations of the necessity and even primacy of the nation-state. By viewing private, religious, imperial, or military actions as contributing to the overall health and even survival of "the nation," Kramer sets up World War I primarily as a competition between nations using the same language and nationalist structures. Bound up in the conflict, especially once the guns fell silent in 1918, was the suppressed nationalism(s) of unrealized nation-states. This concept gained traction with Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points" and highly publicized ideas of self-determination, which Kramer argues "sought to combine the democratic political themes of the American and French Revolutions with the later cultural themes of romantic nationalism" (p. 158). By linking revolutions on both sides of the Atlantic with themes developed over the course of the 1800s, Kramer again reinforces his contention that nationalisms in America and Europe tended to follow similar patterns.

These patterns encountered a new challenge after World War II. In an era after the hypernationalist rhetoric associated with Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, both of whom emphasized the racial and gendered "needs" of the nation, the fallout of war opened the door for colonized and postcolonial peoples to pursue their own nationalisms. While Kramer does not go in depth in the character and elements of these nationalisms, he does point out how the presence of Gandhi, Nehru, and other non-Western nationalists necessitated reevaluation of Western nationalisms. Nationalism during the Cold War evolved, especially in western Europe where organizations such as the Common Market and the nascent European Union began to take shape. This is not to say individual national identities subordinated themselves to broader union; rather, individual nationalisms helped make the case for economic and political agreements to focus on other nationalist projects. Kramer really sees American and European nationalisms diverging in more recent history, especially with the continued evolution

of the European Union. While he does reference radical nationalist movements, such as the National Front in France, the move in the twenty-first century to conflicts with "nonstate enemies" such as Al-Qaeda reframes nationalist rhetoric and national goals.

Kramer's work problematizes the traditional, often binary, narrative of the development of nationalism in America and Europe; this challenge can be applied to conventional analyses of "Western" and "Eastern" nationalism. The overall utility of Kramer's work is that he constructs nationalism as a lens, rather than a thing, in much the same way gender, class, and race have come to be used. *Nationalism in Europe and America* is provocative example of how nationalism can frame a truly transnational and comparative work, tracing the long history of an idea beyond the contexts of individual nation-states.

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