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978-1-107-00785-7 - Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism

Azar Gat With Alexander Yakobson

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## Nations

What are the origins of nationalism and why is it capable of arousing such intense emotions? In this major study Azar Gat counters the prevailing fashionable theories according to which nations and nationalism are modern and contrived or “invented.” He sweeps across history and around the globe to reveal that ethnicity has always been highly political and that nations and national states have existed since the beginning of statehood millennia ago. He traces the deep roots of ethnicity and nationalism in human nature, showing how culture fits into human evolution from as early as our aboriginal condition and, in conjunction with kinship, defines ethnicity and ethnic allegiances. From the rise of states and empires to the present day, this book sheds new light on the explosive nature of ethnicity and nationalism, as well as on their more liberating and altruistic roles in forging identity and solidarity.

**Azar Gat** is Ezer Weitzman Professor and Chair of the Political Science Department at Tel Aviv University. His more recent publications include *A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War* (2001); *War in Human Civilization* (2006), named one of the best books of the year by the *Times Literary Supplement*; and *Victorious and Vulnerable: Why Democracy Won in the 20th Century and How it is Still Imperilled* (2010).

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## CONTENTS

*Acknowledgments* vii

- 1 Introduction: is nationalism recent and superficial? 1
- 2 The evolution of kin–culture communities 27
- 3 From tribes to statehood 44
- 4 Premodern ethne, peoples, states, and nations around the world 67
  - A *Ethnos and city-state* 68
  - B *The premodern national state* 83
  - C *Were empires ethnically blind?* 111
- 5 Premodern Europe and the national state 132
  - A *The mushrooming of national states in emergent Europe* 140
  - B *Southern versus northern Europe* 185
  - C *Was the premodern European nation impossible due to religion, empire, dynastic rule, inequality, and dialect fragmentation?* 212
- 6 Modernity: nationalism released, transformed, and enhanced 244
  - A *The will of the people and the nation: what enabled what?* 246
  - B *Civic nations or ethnic nations? Europe, the English-speaking immigrant countries, Latin America, Africa, and Asia* 260
  - C *National conflict and solidarity in a globalizing world* 313

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

vi / Contents

**7** State, national identity, ethnicity: normative and  
constitutional aspects 328

ALEXANDER YAKOBSON

Conclusion 380

*Notes* 388

*Index* 435

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