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Terence Chong

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Review Essay

Nationalism in Southeast Asia: Revisiting Kahin, Roff, and Anderson

Terence CHONG

Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia. By George McTurnan Kahin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952.

The Origins of Malay Nationalism. By William R. Roff. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994 (1967).

Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. By Benedict R.O'G. Anderson. London; New York: Verso, 1991 (1983).

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Introduction

Area studies and research into nationalism in Southeast Asia have always mutually reaffirmed each other. Their shared premises like clear territorial boundaries, the centrality of language and culture, and the notion that both must be studied ‘from within’, have shaped the development of Southeast Asian scholarship since Second World War (WWII). The result of which has been a very unproblematic understanding ‘place’ where the sites of nationalist sentiments or cultures have clean perimeters for fieldwork. Another consequence of this mutual affirmation is the search for patterns and common characteristics for generalization. As such, the Southeast Asian literature identifies three general historical sources of nationalism.

The first is through the vehicle of indigenous religions. From Burma's Young Man's Buddhist Association in 1906 to the Indonesian mass political movement, *Sarekat Islam*, in 1912 that brought all Indonesian Muslims together under its banner of reformist Muslim ideas, religion has been a fertile ground for the animation of nationalist sentiments. Religion's indigeneity as a cultural system and its hermeneutical isolation from colonial influence has long provided a conducive space for anti-colonialist and nationalist awareness to nurture. The second is through "western education". Examples include Burma's new "western educated" elite who worked with Buddhist monks and other Burmese, while in the Philippines the "western educated" leaders first fought against Spain, but later worked with the United State, and most effectively, Singapore's People's Action Party comprising middle class English-educated Chinese who went on to form a single party state. The narrative of the "western educated" is the post-colonial tale of the native who is educated in the ways of the west only to find that he is not equal to the Westerner. The anti-colonial struggle, even though it enlists the arguments of local culture, is thus primarily fought with the vocabulary of the Enlightenment whereby the concepts of 'freedom', 'equality' and 'dignity' are harnessed to reject the projection of the colony or dependency as a possession of the metropolis. The third is contact with social radicals and communists. The Malayan Communist Party, the Indonesian Communist Party, and the Vietnamese communists who took control of the nationalist movement in the 1930s are cases in point.

Few other texts have shaped the way areas studies and nationalism have been conceived more than George Kahin's *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, William Roff's *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Published in 1952 and 1967 respectively, Kahin's *Nationalism and Revolution* and Roff's *Origins* emerged in the golden period of Southeast Asian area studies. It is no coincidence that the promotion and funding of Southeast Asian area studies as a matter of national interest for the U.S. Government also led to the keen attention to the stirrings of

nationalist consciousness and subsequent anti-colonial struggle that played out in the region.

From the “Accidents of Agency” to Activism

For many Euro-American men, there were two major routes that led them to Southeast Asian area studies: their participation in either WWII or the Vietnam War or in the Peace Corps (Rafael 1999). Both entailed travel opportunities, extended residence, and sustained contact, hostile as well as friendly, with the peoples of the region, not to mention the need to learn their languages and histories. George Kahin’s *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* is a prime example. Both routes, as Rafael notes, privileged white men, allowing them to step into enormously unequal power relationships. On the one hand, wars and the regimes they install invariably place white men in the position of colonizers vis-à-vis local populations while on the other, the developmentalist altruism of the Peace Corps born in the midst of the Cold War endows the volunteer with considerable privilege backed by the entire apparatus of the American state. Indeed, the American state mediates the conditions that allow for such travel and contact, as well as the inequalities and dependencies that result.

Nevertheless, what is interesting is what Rafael (1999) calls the “accidents of agency”, that is, the series of chance events that leads the Western scholar to build a career and, indeed, devote his life to the region. Take for example the path of George Kahin, who founded Southeast Asian Studies at Cornell University. Kahin’s interest in Asia probably began at the beginning of the Pacific War when he helped campaign on behalf of interned Japanese Americans, urging those who owed the latter money to honour their debts. Enlisting in the U.S. Army, he learnt Bahasa Indonesia and was detailed to be part of the Allied forces that would retake the islands but was, at the last moment, re-assigned to Italy. Still, his interest in Indonesia grew, leading to his field research in 1948 when the revolution against the Dutch was gaining momentum. For a Westerner, Kahin enjoyed unparalleled access to the young Indonesian revolutionaries which

resulted in the landmark study notable for its deep sympathy with the nationalist cause. (For a broader biographical context of Kahin's work see also Kahin (2003); and Anderson (2003).)

The Western scholar as accidental agent who records history unfolding before his eyes has done much to romanticize the region as a site of mystery and danger. And though many of these young American researchers were highly sympathetic to local nationalist struggles not least because they were analogous to the American struggle against the British colonialists, they were also responsible for examining Southeast Asian societies in three historical phases like traditional society, colonial rule and nationalist response, and national independence (McCargo 2006). It can be further argued that the imposition of such markers on unfolding events not only suggests framing these events with a Western concept of linear time, but also allows the researcher to transform himself from accidental agent to an active one by defining a niche and role for himself in the country's political trajectory. The Western researcher chooses his moment of intervention by marking out phases in a country's history, and it is invariably the phase that strikes a moral cord with the historio-cultural experience of his society of origin. From accidental intruder, the Western researcher becomes an active participant in society's march towards nationhood. Or as Daniel Lev (2000) puts it "One can reasonably argue that [Kahin] was above all a research scholar or educator or political activist, each with persuasive evidence. A former student of his once came up with the pat analysis that Kahin had two distinct sides, scholar and activist. It missed the point completely. Kahin drew no lines between the demands of scholarship and those of public engagement or undergraduate and graduate education."

Nationalism and Revolution became the template for how non-Western societies could be presented, described and analysed for the understanding of a Western readership. The first three chapters, "The Social Environment of Indonesian Nationalism", "Genesis of the Indonesian Nationalist Movement", and "History of the Nationalist Movement until 1942", stand together as a classic 'cause and effect'

analysis of a socio-political phenomenon, seeking to answer the ‘why’, ‘where’ and ‘what’ questions which many thesis today take so much for granted. They also showcase Kahin’s mastery over his Dutch, French and English primary and secondary materials. The majority of *Nationalism and Revolution* covers the period from 1942, the beginning of the Japanese occupation which broke three centuries of Dutch rule, to the end of the 1940s, the dawn of Indonesian independence.

Kahin’s position as both scholar and participant in the unfolding events provides him with valuable contacts and insight into the behind-the-scenes struggles at various levels. The fruits of which are a blow-by-blow account of the contention between the Dutch and Indonesians after independence, the Indonesian factions and individuals and within the United Nations over the country’s future from chapters seven to twelve. Kahin’s presence, both on the national landscape and the book, is also constantly underlined in his footnotes. Referring to himself in the third person, footnotes like “The Dutch attack was witnessed by the writer who was then in Jogjakarta” (Kahin 1952, p. 337) or “The writer possesses a copy of the text [of the ‘BIO Decree’]. Paraphrases of it which were obviously carefully sifted from the original were seen by the writer in the press while he was still in Indonesia (which he left on May 18, 1949), but he never saw its most pertinent phrases in literal form made public while he was there” (Kahin 1952, p. 387), give the reader a profound sense of agency and accords the writer much legitimacy, not to mention dramatizing the historiographic process.

However, one criticism, albeit mild, is that, because of the tremendously wide array of players in the field which Kahin offers to the reader, there are some under-fleshed personalities which some readers may have deemed important. One example is the intriguing role of Japanese Vice-Admiral Mayeda, navel chief of Java and in charge of naval intelligence for all Indonesia. In 1944, following a relaxing of Japanese public policy, Indonesian leaders were allowed to speak more openly of independence and freedom. Mayeda and his staff established a school for semi-educated youths and arranged

for them to be lectured on topics such as nationalism, economics, Marxism, with a “principal emphasis to the study of communism” (Kahin 1952, p. 116). Kahin offers little explanation as to why the head of Japanese naval intelligence chose to teach Marxism and communism to Indonesian youths and, indeed, to agree to “turn over his house to a meeting of the nationalists” that included Soekarno and Hatta even when the Kempeitai was on high alert (Kahin 1952, p. 136). There is little doubt that Mayeda was one of the key players that gave the nationalist movement some traction but Kahin ends his role rather abruptly by noting that, upon the launch of the Indonesian revolution, “Mayeda and his entire staff were quickly jailed” (ibid.).

Despite this, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*’s status as a key text on nationalism in Indonesia will never be questioned. It has stood the test of time as a first class combination of scholarship and in-the-field reporting. Kahin’s unproblematic simultaneous participation in the worlds of scholarship and activism has been a fine legacy shared by other luminaries from Chomsky to Bourdieu, and it is perhaps more fitting to allow his contemporaries to speak for the man. In a 1953 review of *Nationalism and Revolution* in the academic journal *Political Research Quarterly*, Maki (1953, p. 185) wrote:

Any aspect of the colonial problem is highly controversial today and revolution (or independence) in Indonesia is no exception. Professor Kahin’s sympathies are obviously on the side of the Indonesians: for this he will be adversely criticized. Yet he has also mentioned (if he has not stressed) some aspects of Indonesian conduct which are scarcely favourable to their cause. He will also be brought to task for this. Professor Kahin’s study may be paralleled, but it’s hard to see how it can be superseded for some years.

In 2000, upon Kahin’s death, Lev (2000), a close associate and former student, observed:

Kahin showed little interest in his own prominence, however, and took in stride the disfavour power visits on critics. During the late 1940s or early 1950s, the American government blocked his passport for a time. The New Order government in Indonesia denied him

a visa but also awarded him a medal, which sums up nicely his odd impact in high places.

The Autochthonous Malay-educated Intelligentsia

The most influential study of Malay colonial society is Roff's *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, published in 1967. A largely retrospective examination of Malay identities and cultural milieus in the colonial era, Roff gathered an impressive amount of Malay literature from periodicals, pamphlets, books and other materials published between the late nineteenth century and the Japanese occupation in order to trace the slow growth of communal, ethnic and national feeling among the Peninsula Malays. According to Roff, although the 1946 rejection of the Malayan Union lent a sense of urgency to the struggle for the Malay soul, the sources of Malay nationalism were certainly diverse. There was the religious-oriented such as the radical *Al-Imam* (The Leader) periodical first published in 1906 that galvanized younger reformists who became known as *Kaum Muda* (Young Faction) against the *Kaum Tua* (Old Faction), and also voluntary organizations and sports clubs formed by the small aspiring Malay middle class. In their diversity, however, a common strand was the rising tide of anti-colonial sentiment within the Malay community. Arabic education in the early twentieth century produced "a small but challenging group of religio-social reformists" but they were too far located in the periphery cities to make any headway (Roff 1967, p. 126). Meanwhile English-educated Malays, not a large group, were pro-British and too comfortably ensconced in the colonial administration to engage in nationalism.

Malay nationalism, according to Roff, arose almost by chance. The seminal *Report on Vernacular Education* (1917) by Richard Winstedt, the Director of Education of Malaya, was a profound influence on Malay education for a quarter of a century. The report was notable for "the absence of any thoughtful reflection on the aims and effects of vernacular education (such as had been demonstrated by Wilkinson [his predecessor]), or of any concern at all beyond the practical aims of British colonial rule" (Roff 1967, p. 139). In fact,

Winstedt's report laid the foundation for the perpetuation of Malay's "agricultural peasantry", thus famously introducing his "rural bias". "In his way, he did more to circumscribe Malay educational progress, and to ensure that the Malay peasant did not get ideas above his station, than anyone else before or since" (ibid.). And yet, it was from this circumscribed vernacular education that the "autochthonous Malay-educated intelligentsia" arose.

At the core of this autochthonous Malay-educated intelligentsia were journalists and teachers of the 1920s. This intelligentsia became known for their strong Malay (and Indonesian) literary and political orientation, as well as their cultural vigour. Previously impoverished, Malay education underwent reformation when the Sultan Idris Training College (SITC), a facility for teacher-training, began to emphasize the study, use and development of the Malay language, history and literature. SITC also became responsible for the "rationalizing" of Malay history where the syllabi steered clear of myths and folk stories, and turned to logical arguments in the education of Malay teachers (Mohd Hazim Shah 2007). Students received something akin to a liberal arts education where all lessons were conducted exclusively in the Malay language. Textbooks were imported from the Netherland East Indies, a fact that opened later Malay literary groups to the influence of Indonesian political ideology.

All this resulted in Malay access to higher education and awareness of a Malay literary tradition that brought about the belief that the state should yield to ethnic loyalties. This belief came at a time in the 1920s when there was enough self-confidence amongst the autochthonous Malay intelligentsia to focus political change and discussion on the redefinition of the relationship between the Malays and the British. The ideological fermentation of this Malay intelligentsia continued without contributing much to the public sphere until 1934. On March of that year, the twice-weekly newspaper *Saudara*, published in Penang by religious reformists introduced a new column — Pa' Dollah — in its back page, usually reserved for children's stories and educational articles. The

young Kedah Malay journalist Arifin Ishak, assuming the Pa' Dollah pseudonym, modelled his new column after *Lembaga Malaya's* widely popular 'Pa' Pandir' which indulged in wry and often insightful socio-political commentary on Malayan society. Arifin's first Pa' Dollah article appeared on 31 March 1934, "and from this small beginning grew, beyond all the expectations of its sponsors, the first and one of the largest pan-Malayan Malay organizations to appear before the Second World War" (Roff 1967, p. 212).

For Roff, there is little doubt that the Malay-educated intelligentsia was the epicenter from which anti-colonial and nationalist awareness arose. The religious ulamas were too peripheral to be of much influence while the English-educated Malays were seen as ineffectual and too comfortably positioned within colonial state. Roff's contribution to the understanding of Malay nationalism was to provide the intellectual trajectory and literary materials from which today's conceptions of the Malay world could be formed. His decision to focus on Malay literary materials to describe the Malay identity that was struggling with the impulses of traditionalism, modernity and brotherhood from a specific agricultural-economic position predates Raymond Williams' notion of "structures of feeling" whereby ethnicity and class narratives bring into sharp focus the historicity, mental and emotional organization of the lived experience as explanation of social life. In the same way "structures of feeling" was a methodological device to describe "a particular quality of social experience and relationship, historically distinct from other particular qualities, which gives us the sense of a generation or of a period" (Williams 1977, p. 131), Roff, through the study of Malay literature, managed to articulate the character and tenor of the Malay identity as shaped under and in response to the colonial state.

The criticism of Roff, however, has been one of functionalism. Written soon after Malaysia's independence in 1957, the retrospective excavation for evidence and clues to explain the present was perhaps understandable. Milner (2002, pp. 4–5) hints at this functionalist approach by describing *Origins* as "one of those works concerned to identify unifying elements and processes in colonial Malay society" and

tells of the need to re-read Roff in order to “tease out wherever possible elements not of cohesion and agreement but of division and debate”. For scholars like Milner, the task is not to present a coherent Malay narrative which Roff sought to do by looking at the Malay-educated intelligentsia of teachers and journalists who later, on 6 August 1950, established the literary movement *Angkatan Sasterawan 50* (Literary Generation of 1950), or *ASAS 50*. The establishment of *ASAS 50*, a nod to the Indonesian literary movement *Angkatan 1945* (Generation 1945), signaled the first time Malay literature and the arts were harnessed to express Malay identity and nationalism, something which the political elites and aristocracy took little interest in (Tham 1981). Instead, the contemporary literature is less keen to present a singular narrative of nationalism. As Milner (2002, p. 6) goes on to note, “nationalism never achieves hegemony as a defined and widely acknowledged doctrine. Even in the last years of the British presence, the character and value of nationalism continued to be a matter of debate”.

It is not a criticism to argue that the strength of *Origins* is not its definitive or hegemonic presentation of Malay nationalism but its detailed histories of Malay socio-cultural groups in a shifting political landscape. His rich gathering of Malay literary materials allows the emergence of several spheres of Malay identities from the Malayo-Muslim world of Singapore, the *Al-Imam* and the reformists as well as the politicization of the *Kuam Muda*, all of which set the scene for the emergence of the autochthonous Malay intelligentsia. *Origins* remains a key text not only for its compelling historical perspective of nationalism but also for its heterogeneous presentation of the Malay identity.

Going Beyond Area Studies

The final and most famous text on Southeast Asian nationalism is Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. And befitting the fate of any classic, it is probably one of the most cited but under-read texts around. *Imagined Communities* dates the rise of national consciousness to the modern-

industrial era in Western Europe. The age of Enlightenment spelt the end of the traditional and stratified models of social organization seen in institutions like Christianity. For Anderson (1991, p. 37), the flattening of these stratified social organizations came with specific economic factors which helped disseminate supposedly universal, homogenous and “horizontal-secular, transverse-time” notions of national space, territoriality, and citizenship. The flattening of stratified structures of social life was complete with what Anderson calls “print capitalism”, that is, the symbiosis between capitalism and the development of print as a process of mass communication.

With print capitalism, comprising pamphlets, posters, tracts, notices and books, an information highway was created. Ideologies, beliefs, values, identities and consciousness suddenly had the vehicle to travel across socio-cultural boundaries to germinate some conception of shared experience or identity. The concept of the ‘nation’, a fast traveling non-religious phenomenon, quickly entered mass consciousness. Meanwhile, Anderson’s conception of the nation is one of a community that is socially-constructed, or “imagined” into being. Hence the often quoted phrase that the nation must necessarily be “*imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (1991, p. 6; italics original).

Chief among *Imagined Communities*’s many contributions is its attention to the culture of symbols, creative imagery and the role of ‘invented traditions’ as a meta-narrative of the nation. The nation then, as Anderson would have it, is not just a story that people tell themselves about themselves, but a story that evolved upon subjection to the forces of capitalism and cultural selection. Anderson’s explanation of nationalism is resolutely modernist in that it diverges from the ‘primordialist paradigm’ of nationalism with rigid ‘racial’ categories where “popular attachments, kinship and cultural bonds” are animated to explain why “millions are prepared to lay down their lives for their ‘nation’” (Smith 2000, p. 2; see also Smith 1998; 2001). Instead, Anderson resolves the question of

“popular attachment, kinship and cultural bonds” by advancing the social construction, even romanticization, of the community. The national community is thus imagined not as a specific network of individuals connected to each other, the way traditional cultures did in a particularistic manner, but as umbilical cords from individuals to a larger abstract community where everyone was imagined as members in a “deep, horizontal comradeship” (1991, p. 7). Thus unlike Smith’s primordialist nation where citizens laid down their lives for their *ethnie* or some ontological essence, Anderson’s nation saw people willing to do so for the fraternity and comradeship of this imagined community, hence offering contemporary scholars a useful framework for today’s multicultural societies.

It is thus deliciously ironic that such an important exposition on nationalism in Southeast Asia should be confronted with the simple yet fundamental question: whose imagined community? The most compelling critique of *Imagined Communities* came from Partha Chatterjee (1986; 1991) whose question reminds us of historical and cultural specificity between the European and Asian experience. Chatterjee takes issue with Anderson’s conception of nationalism as one that exists in ‘modular’ forms, whereby its basic creeds and doctrines may be exported from Europe and resurrected unproblematically in post-colonial societies. Chatterjee’s criticism was devastating: Anderson’s explanation of nationalism came from a totalizing and universal history of the modern world, and failed to consider the dynamics and subjectivities of anti-colonial nationalisms (see also Culler and Cheah 2003).

Anderson’s response to such post-colonial critique was to add the chapter — “Census, Map, Museum” — in the 1991 edition. In so many ways, it is this chapter that elevated *Imagined Communities* from being a merely good book to a great book. One can do no better than let Anderson (1991, p. 163) speak for himself as he begins the new chapter:

In the original edition of *Imagined Communities* I wrote that “so often in the nation-building policies of the new states one sees

both a genuine, popular nationalist enthusiasm, and a systematic, even Machiavellian, instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations, and so forth.” My short-sighted assumption then was that official nationalism in the colonized worlds of Asia and Africa was modelled directly on that of the dynastic states of nineteenth-century Europe. Subsequent reflection has persuaded me that this view was hasty and superficial, and that the immediate genealogy should be traced to the imaginings of the colonial state. At first sight, this conclusion may seem surprising, since colonial states were typically *anti*-nationalist, and often violently so. But if one looks beneath colonial ideologies and policies to the grammar in which, from the mid nineteenth century, they were deployed, the lineage becomes decidedly more clear.

Inspired by Thongchai Winichakul’s (then) doctoral thesis on the mapping of Siam, “Census, Map, Museum” sets about explaining how a ‘modular’ nationalism may, in fact, have been activated in post-colonial Southeast Asian societies. With this chapter Anderson paid more attention to the role of local colonial administrations in shaping the character of later nationalisms instead of the more conventional relationship between colonies and metropole. It demonstrates how colonial administrations organize local peoples, land, cultural artefacts, and knowledge in a linear narrative where meanings are added or excluded such that the historicity of the colony aligns perfectly with colonial orientalist imaginations. In this sense, because of the colonial state’s previous control over artefact and knowledge, postcolonial nationalisms cannot help but be influenced by previous colonial imaginations. After all, the production of knowledge is closely related to the geography of colonial conquest. For example, the mapping and land surveys of colonial territories laid the “cartographic basis” for the imposition of capitalism in much of Asia, Africa, the Americas and Australia (Harvey 1984, p. 2), while the museum — a quintessentially Western institution — was the gate-keeper to the native’s past, instrumental in legitimizing certain histories while ignoring or altering others. Meanwhile much of the ‘positivistic’ forms of scientific ‘Western’ knowledge often claim

objectivity and neutrality without realizing that the colonial context of imperialism and expansionism provided the “social basis for the production and use of that knowledge” (ibid.). With this chapter, Anderson was able to return to his text to correct, reposition and re-argue his original thesis.

This is not to say the book has escaped other criticisms. For one, Breuilly (1996) notes that Anderson lacks a strong economic discussion because the concept of ‘capitalism’ in the book lacks nuance and remains embedded in the background of the discussion on print language. In looking at Ireland, MacLaughlin (2001) disagrees with Anderson’s argument that nationalism emerged and spread in the vacuum that religion left behind. If anything, nationalism actually contributed to the power and legitimacy of the churches, as well as the strengthening of religious beliefs among the working class. Meanwhile Lessnoff (2002) observes that the focus on the supply side of print capitalism and marketing is only half the story. Not enough space is devoted to the discussion of the demand side and the consumer habits and impulses of the readership which would have presented a clearer picture of nationalism from below. Despite certain criticisms *Imagined Communities* remains a highly relevant springboard for any serious discussion of nationalism. According to Hamilton (2006), a recent internet search of the book’s usage in academic courses resulted in over 13,000 hits. This vastly surpassed other classical texts like Gellner’s *Nations and Nationalism* (506 hits), Hobsbawm’s *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (216 hits), Chatterjee’s *Nation and its Fragments* (196 hits), Smith’s *Theories of Nationalism* (191 hits), Smith’s *Nationalisms and Modernism* (116 hits), and Brubaker’s *Nationalism Reframed* (114 hits).

However, the legacy of *Imagined Communities* lies not in its well deserved popularity but its ability to go beyond the paradigm of Southeast Asian area studies to inform contemporary research areas such as diaspora studies, hybrid identities and multiculturalism. Of the three texts discussed here, it is *Imagined Communities* that has the ability to go beyond the ambit of area studies. This is not a criticism of *Nationalism and Revolution* and *Origins* but an

acknowledgement of their hallowed status as shapers of Southeast Asia area studies. One key contribution of *Imagined Communities* to transnational studies is the mechanics of imagination in the age of globalization. Anderson's earlier arguments that print capitalism had made national space "horizontal-secular" and had flattened stratified structures of social life have provided crucial tools to address the porosity of national borders, the deterritorialization of space and the emergence of scapes and flows, thus pushing it to the forefront of diaspora studies.

Its second contribution is its cultural and constructivist arguments for nationalism and ethnicity, thus alerting us to the social constructions of the *ethnie* and primordial memories. This mode of inquiry allows the researcher to transcend the confines of national societies and area studies to understand that the building blocks of national imaginings are often borrowed, stolen or modified from societies across imaginary borders. Such signs and symbols are reified by nationalists and the elite for what Duara (2003) calls "regimes of authenticity" from which ideas of the nation are captured and epitomized by notions of timelessness and sacredness.

Finally, Anderson's idea of "long-distance nationalism", a variant of classical nationalism, where global capitalism, mass communication and mass migration have made it possible for diasporas to retain their 'Old World' identity whilst in a different location, continues to find traction in today's world. Chatterjee's question as to whether this so-called "long-distance nationalism" is not really a case of *failed* cosmopolitanism deserves some thought. Be that as it may, it only shows that the ideas and arguments from *Imagined Communities* have yet again forced us to debate where we believe our place in this world is.

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