The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity

Also by James Kellas

The Scottish Political System
Modern Scotland

The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity

Second Edition

James G. Kellas

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First edition 1991

Reprinted three times

Second edition 1998

Published by

MACMILLAN PRESS LTD

Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS

and London

Companies and representatives throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-333-73193-2

ISBN 978-1-349-26863-4 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-26863-4

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources.

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
07	06	05	04	03	02	01	00	99	98

Published in the United States of America 1998 by

ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, INC.,

Scholarly and Reference Division,

175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

ISBN 978-0-312-21553-8

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Acknowledgements

I first studied nationalism as an undergraduate student of Joseph Frankel at the University of Aberdeen in 1957–8, and later specialised in the study of Scottish politics as a university lecturer. Once more, the subject of nationalism came to the fore, in the form of Scottish nationalism. As a Visiting Professor of Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh in 1985–6, I taught a course on nationalism generally, and had regular discussions on the subject with Richard Cottam (an expert on Middle East nationalism), Dennison Rusinow (an historian with a particular interest in Balkan nationalism) and Christina Paulston (a linguist specialising in language survival). These sessions broadened my perspective considerably.

At the University of Glasgow, I have kept up a continuous discourse on nationalism with colleagues, many of whom are experts on political theory and the study of particular areas of the world. Most of these will perhaps be surprised at the content of this book, and perhaps alarmed. I hope they do not mind my thanking them here, but they are of course not a party to what I have written.

Special thanks are due to Avril Johnstone, who coped with the frequent revisions during the production of the original typescript.

JAMES G. KELLAS

Preface to the Second Edition

Since the first edition was published in 1991, much of the material contained in it has had to be changed and updated. The USSR has disintegrated into its 'national' components, as have Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. In general, the eastern European communist bloc has been replaced by independent nation-states, each showing its own strong nationalism. Meanwhile, in the rest of Europe, nationalism vied with the supranational European Union for the loyalty of governments and peoples. Again, nationalism showed its continuing strength in the face of integration. The old states, such as Britain, France, Spain, Belgium and Canada, continued to be threatened by nationalisms within them, but none broke up entirely. Nationalist and ethnic conflict continued unabated in Africa and Asia.

Apart from updating, there has been some alteration of emphasis. There is more specifically on politics and less on other aspects of nationalism and ethnicity which do not impinge clearly on politics. A somewhat different approach has been adopted for international relations, to take account of the effect that international society has on nationalism in aspiring nation-states, notably those in the former states of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the USSR. This 'top-down' view can be contrasted with the 'bottom-up' perspective, which sees international society as the product of nationalism.

The theory presented has not been altered, but account has been taken of criticisms by some reviewers. It is true that the theory is as much a collection of interlocking and interdependent aspects of nationalism as an hypothesis which can be falsified, unless one rejects entirely one or more of its 'building-blocks'. For example, some would remove the block which links nationalism to aspects of human nature. The problem is: what evidence can be found to verify or falsify this (or any other) part of theory? As the study of human genes progresses rapidly, we shall no

doubt be able in the future to determine if our genes are in any way related to ethnocentric and nationalist behaviour.

As for politics, the period since the first edition has amply demonstrated that nationalism and ethnicity are as relevant at the end of the twentieth century as at any other time in history.

JAMES G. KELLAS