



英国

民族国家研究

The Formation of British Nation-State

岳蓉 / 著



贵州人民出版社

798608



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淮阴师范学院图书馆 798608



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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英国民族国家研究/岳蓉著. —贵阳:贵州人民出版社, 2004. 11

ISBN 7-211-06759-7

I. 英. . . II. 岳. . . III. 民族国家-研究-英国
IV. D756.1

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2004)第 114104 号

责任编辑:李兰敏

封面设计:张 彪

技术设计:安 然

英国民族国家研究

岳 蓉 著

出版发行:贵州人民出版社

贵阳中华北路 289 号

经 销:新华书店

印 刷:贵阳科海印务有限公司

规 格:889 × 1194mm 1/32

印 张:10

字 数:250 千字

版 次:2004 年 11 月第 1 版

印 次:2004 年 11 月第 1 次

印 数:1000 册

书 号:ISBN 7-221-06759-7/D·365

定 价:28.00 元

本书获贵州师范大学博士科研基金
暨贵州省2004年度高层次人才特助经费资助出版

英国民族国家研究

The Formation of British Nation - State

岳蓉 著
Yuerong

贵州人民出版社

不列颠社会是一个“想象的社会”。

——本尼迪克特·安德森

选自《想象的共同体：民族主义的起源与散布》

“不列颠”是一个溯及既往的发明，它是专门设计用来建立一个根本就不真实存在的实体的一套符号。

“英国特色”其实就是一种填平一个民族国家的裂缝的方式，不列颠民族之间的裂缝是内部征服时形成的，在大英帝国时期这种裂缝达到了顶点。

没有一个人不是不具有其他身份的“不列颠人”——作为英格兰人、苏格兰人、威尔士人或者北爱尔兰的“反对独立者”……英国特色总是一种本来就模棱两可的观念。

[英]安东尼·吉登斯

选自《为社会学辩护》

ABSTRACT

Nation – state, appeared in Europe in the late Middle Ages, had become popular and mature in the bourgeoisie revolution. Linguistically, *Nation* and *State* are similar in meaning, signifying the same thing. But there exist differences between the two concepts. *Nation* implies nationality and culture of a country, while *State* possesses the sense of the political aspect. The use of nation – state reveals a feature of modern country – the unity of state power and national traits, and the binding of the people's interests to the state's. Today, nation – state is the most fundamental subject in the international political activities and an eye – catching object in world history study.

There is a tradition that nation – state means nation and/or state. However, a comprehensive observation of the building – up of the British nation – state suggests that it is an insufficient interpretation. With an exploration of the formation and development of national language and identification, governmental administration, state power and territorial entity, this book traces out the building – up of the British nation – state and its specialty. The formation of the British nation – state takes a long course, in which England acts as the core. To satisfy modern England capitalists, the English nation, having nation-

al identification consciousness earlier, starts the recruitment of the weak ones (the Wales, the Scottish, and the Irish) around by arms and law, and the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland thus comes into being.

This book consists of three parts and seven chapters. The first part is an introduction, a theoretical review of concerned concepts. Traditional views of nation - state are mainly around three aspects: class struggle, the structure of nationality, and the identity of national culture. There is an inclination in the theoretical frame of studies on British to crosswise observations on the European nation - states or the political entity of England itself, and a systematic and full - scale historical study of British, a complicated and huge political entity, is ignorant. Clearly, "nation - state", the product of history, is a changing concept, and state sovereignty and constitutionalism are highlighted more than ever before. Therefore, this author, based on the ready achievements, is to make a relatively comprehensive observation of the British nation - state from views of politics and history in this book.

The second part is on the formation of the core (modern England) of the British. In Middle Ages England is carved up by two splitting powers: the local and foreign forces (represented by the religious privilege) weakening the centralization of power. The latter is much more powerful, and the confrontation and conflicts between the throne and the Roman Catholic Church become the principal contradiction in the formation of modern England. Two vital problems were settled down in England's religious reform starting from 1630's: specific national consciousness forged up and an independent English state

set up, which results in the driving out of the foreign power superior to the state and the establishment of independent sovereignty, and which strengthens the state internal and external functions. All of these safeguard the state interests at most.

The third part is on the territorial element, which is essential in the building – up of the British. When modern England is setup, judiciously and flexibly, the capitalists start the recruitment of the weak nations around by annexation or subjugation. The first victim is Wales, then Scotland and Ireland, and the British nation – state, England the dominant, gives its birth.

In the construction of the British nation – state, modern England is the core, and Wales, Scotland and Ireland the periphery. In late 16th century modern England was shaped, and the frame of the British was fixed up during the same period. The signature of the three significant proposed laws——Treaty of Union (1536/1543), Union of Act (1707), Combination Act (1800)——marks the formation of the British nation – state. In the course of the building – up of this nation – state, the capitalists of England, in order to have their own interests realized, take in the weak nations around by annexation or subjugation, which leads to continuous contradictions and conflicts between/among the major nationality and minor nationalities within this nation – state and disruptions for local or national independence witnessed in a long period.

Today, in the context of globalization, the traditional base of sovereignty and principle of legality of nation – state are facing a never – met challenge, and the effect and role of the principle of state sovereignty in nation – state, and the formation and development of nation

and nation – state once again fire a hot topic in humanities and sociology. The present book is to point out the effect of the principle of state sovereignty in advancing economics and social progress, keeping the state security, and dealing with international relationships through a case study of the formation of British nation – state by borrowing politics, history, lingual – culturology, and ethnology.

Keywords: Britain; Nation – state; Formation of Core Part; Expansion of Periphery

序

岳蓉同志思维敏捷,奋发努力。2002年以“英国民族国家的形成”为题的论文在南京大学获得历史学博士学位。后以两年时间,再加研究,在博士论文的基础上写成《英国民族国家研究》一书。试读书稿,感到此书在篇幅、结构和内容诸方面,较之原先博士论文,规模更大、理论涉及更广、内容更充实,呈一崭新景象,可喜可贺。

民族和民族国家形成问题,是历史学和人文社会科学领域的重大课题。它牵涉到民族学、文化学、政治学学科知识,也涉及民族的联合和融合、扩张兼并等英国历史和政治难题;它跨越较长的历史时期,是一个有研究难度,需要勇气,也需要理论分析概括能力才能解决的课题。

岳蓉同志此书,在研讨了国内外有关民族和民族国家理论诸种流派的方法基础上,取多家之长,兼用了语言学、历史学、心理学的方法,确定了近代民族国家的结构要素,探讨了语言、文化、民族意识在民族形成中的关系,凭借丰富的英国历史著作和资料,详细地评述了英国民族国家多种要素的历史形成过程,分析的框架结构合理,概括全面。

该书扬弃了英国史学界一度流行的认为英国民族国家在16世纪都铎王朝便已形成的旧说,把英格兰对威尔士、苏格兰等地区的整合纳入英国民族国家形成的分析框架,指出这是武力征服和

融合双重作用的结果。在总结英国民族国家的形成道路时,作者借用了“依附论”学派关于“核心”、“外延”的概念,用以评述英国民族国家形成中多民族历史上的不平等关系,具有创新性。作者认为英国民族国家形成是资本主义发展在一个方面的反映,它具有资本主义发展和扩张的两重性。有理论深度,成一家之言。

如岳蓉同志指出的,在资本主义全球化的今天,民族国家的主权基础和合法性正遭遇到前所未有的挑战和破坏。因而,民族国家的历史作用重新成为人们关注的热点话题。在这种背景下,岳蓉同志的《英国民族国家研究》一书的出版,更具有现实意义。

沈 汉

2004年5月30日于南京大学

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