

The main argument of the book was to prove that nationalism was not the product of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries bourgeois states in Europe, but rather the logical result of a long process of development in all human history. The authors traced the development of nations from the infant stages of the family, the tribe, and the city state. Their purpose was to show that nationalism was not merely a phase in the history of human development, but rather the motivating force behind history. They claimed that there was no other force by which human history could be explained. This claim was supported by arguments aimed at rejecting other explanations. They emphasized that human societies neither develop along the lines of class divisions, nor according to religious differences. There are no workers' societies and capitalists' societies. Likewise, there are no Muslim or Christian societies. Societies had developed along the lines of nations, and the motivating force was nationalism. It is obvious that the whole argument was based upon the assumption that nationalism had something to do with human nature.

The above theory runs into a real difficulty when it attempts to spell out its humanist virtues. The authors explained this by emphasizing that a true nationalist believes in the right of all nations to develop along the lines of their respective nationalisms. An Arab nationalist respects all other nationalisms, and this is so by definition. Why did history not demonstrate such humanist tendencies by