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Minahan’s latest venture examines the familiar theme of national identity as seen in his previous works (Nations Without States; Miniature Empires). This time, however, he gives us an overview of over 200 nations and regions and the symbols and emblems that define them. The concise entries—most of four pages or fewer—are arranged alphabetically by continent and begin with a standard demographic profile, including data such as official name, population, language, religion, motto, and type of government. But the most noteworthy feature is the listings of things like national flowers, foods, teams, heroes, and Internet suffixes. Each entry closes with a brief time line of historical milestones in national development. Interestingly, there are profiles not just
for nations but also for regions, provinces, and states within nations with distinctive identities or strong independence movements, e.g., Ambazania, Euskal Herria, Scania, Wallonia, and Zulia. Several international organizations are also profiled in the appendix. Although color plates of flags and coats of arms are found in the center of each volume, they would have been better placed with the entries themselves, following the descriptive analyses of these items. **BOTTOM LINE** Although much similar data can found online with little effort, the inclusion of both basic “hard” statistical data and cultural information makes this set attractive. Recommend for public libraries.—Daniel Sifton, Vancouver Island Univ. Lib., Nanaimo, B.C.