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# UNIT 16 NATIONALISM AND THE NATION-STATE

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## 16.0 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this Unit you shall be able to learn:

- how the ideas of nationalism evolved in Europe;
- the role of nationalism and modern state in creating the nation-state;
- the role of language and democratic politics in mobilizing people and fostering the growth of nationalism and nation-state; and
- phases in development of national identities in some Eastern European countries.

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## 16.1 INTRODUCTION

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Nationalism is a modern phenomenon. Even though its idea can be traced back in time, nationalism in the modern sense emerged only during the eighteenth century in western Europe. During the 19th and 20th centuries it spread throughout the world. Nationalism aligned with the modern state in giving rise to nation-state. In certain cases, the modern state fostered a spirit of nationalism to provide the people inhabiting its boundaries with a viable nationalist ideology. Both together gave rise popular mobilizations which further strengthened the state and helped the formation of nation-states.

## 16.2 THE MEANING OF NATIONALISM

In March 1882, during a lecture at the Sorbonne, the French orientalist and historian Ernest Renan argued that the nation was a spiritual community which wished to uphold its sense of unity through a day to day vote of confidence. In a tract entitled **Marxism and the National Question**, Joseph Stalin argued that "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture". Though Renan offered an 'idealist' definition of the nation as against the 'materialist' analysis of Stalin, it is interesting that both authors believed that there was nothing eternal or everlasting about nations. Nations had a beginning and they would also have an end.

Hans Kohn, regarded as one of the founders of the academic study of nationalism, argues that "nationalities are products of the living forces of history, and therefore always fluctuating never rigid." Nationalities are not identical with clans, tribes or folk-groups nor are they the simple outcome of common descent or common habitat. Kohn argues: "Ethnographic groups like these existed throughout history, from earliest times on, yet they do not form nationalities; they are nothing but 'ethnographic material', out of which under certain circumstances a nationality might arise. Even if a nationality arises, it may disappear again, absorbed into a larger or new nationality".

Kohn argued that "both the idea and the form of nationalism were developed before the age of nationalism". The idea of nationalism was traceable to the ancient Hebrews and Greeks. The idea of the chosen people, the consciousness of national history and national Messianism were three traits of nationalism which emerged with the ancient Jews. But he acknowledges that, despite their "fierce nationalist ideology", the Greeks lacked "political nationalism" and there was only a brief period of patriotism during the Persian Wars.

Although it is possible to trace the idea of the nation to the earliest times and certainly to the 16th century - as in the case of the German word Volk for people — there is considerable unanimity among historians that nationalism is a modern concept. Despite other disagreements, scholars like Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm agree that nationalism is a phenomenon which emerged in the eighteenth century in western Europe and then spread during the 19th and 20th centuries to other parts of the world. **It is the considered view of historians that nationalism in the modern sense emerged with the growth of industrial capitalism or print capitalism and was then sustained by a variety of factors — by notions of community based on language, ethnicity or religion or by the rivalry and competition among states and imagined communities.**

Within the Marxist tradition, the definition of the nation has evolved from the writings of Marx and Engels, through Lenin and Stalin, to those of Hobsbawm. Broadly speaking, within this tradition the nation is regarded as a historically evolved phenomenon which emerges only with decline of feudalism and the rise of capitalism. Tribes, clans and peoples existed prior to the emergence of capitalism but it was because of new economic relations produced by the emergence of the capitalist mode of production that nations were created. Nationalism was regarded as an ideological construct which enabled the bourgeoisie to identify its interests as a class with the interests of the whole society.

Hobsbawm also emphasises that nations and nationalist aspirations have to be examined in "the context of a particular stage of technological and economic development." Though essentially constructed from above, nationalism cannot be understood unless it is also analysed from below" in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people which are not necessarily national and still less nationalist".

## 16.3 IDEA OF NATIONALISM AND NATION-STATE

The modern concept of the nation emerged during the Age of Revolution, the American Revolution of 1776 and the French Revolution of 1789. In America political discourse did not emphasize the unitary aspect of nationalism - the Americans were concerned with the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, with the proper relation between the American union and the states and with development of a liberal capitalist society. By contrast in France the nation was conceived as "one and indivisible". The idea of the nation was inextricably linked up with mass participation, citizenship and collective sovereignty of the people or of a

given nationality. Hobsbawm draws a distinction between the revolutionary democratic and the nationalist conception of the nation. In the revolutionary democratic view of the nation the sovereign citizen people within a state constituted a nation in relation to others whereas in the nationalist view the "prior existence" of some distinguishing features of a community, setting it apart from others, was necessary to constitute a nation. The French insistence on linguistic uniformity after the Revolution was quite strong but the Revolution itself recorded how few people actually spoke it. In the revolutionary French concept of the nation, the willingness to speak French - by non-French speakers in France - was one of the conditions for full French citizenship.

In the case of Italy the only basis for unification and nationalism was the Italian language. In 1860 when Italian unification was achieved only two and a half percent of the population used the language for everyday purposes. The prophet of Italian nationalism, the leader of Young Italy, Mazzini, believed that the popular sovereignty of the nation must be indivisible and that various proposals for a federal Italy were mere mechanisms for ensuring the longevity of local ruling classes. Mazzini also believed that the Italian people had to be 'formed' so as to overcome the division of Italy, although he had a mystical faith in the sanctity and unity of the popular will. Mazzini argued that writers must "explore the needs of the peoples" so that Italian literature could inspire and revive the nation. Literature could precede and help to shape political development.

## 16.4 STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM

The growth of nationalism can be broadly divided into two phases. The first phase occurs before the late 18th century when certain preliminary notions of national unity can be said to have existed. Its chronology varies from one country to another, but these ideas of geographical or cultural unity were only precursor to the modern nationalism. The latter takes shape only in the wake of French Revolution, except perhaps in the cases of Britain and France where the nation-building exercise had been going on since 16th century and 17th century respectively.

### 16.4.1 Nationalism Before 1789 : Proto-nationalism

In the historical literature, the emergence of the modern nation and nationalism is in the late 18th Century. Nationalism acquires a more democratic character in the period of mass politics in the late 19th Century. However, there is some emphasis on looking back into the medieval past to understand issues in post-medieval Europe in some recent work.

Several 19th Century observers believed that elements of nationalism emerged in the medieval period - a sense of ethnic or linguistic or national identity. This can be called a form of patriotism or of protonationalism. The 19th century French historian and politician Guizot believed that the Hundred Years War between England and France (1337-1453) - provoked by the claim of the king of England to the throne of France - brought together the nobility, burghers and peasantry in a common desire to defeat the foreigner who had attacked and plundered France. Though modern historians regard this as a period of crises marked by war, plague and famine, it did create a sense of patriotism. In a later period the growth of monarchy took place which brought about the creation of a unified French state. Though some historians have emphasized that France was a geographical reality which did not depend on the role of the centralizing monarchy this geographical determinism is not very convincing. Geographically speaking there was no Gallo-Roman predestination of France and there were no real natural frontiers of France. The state of France was the accidental creation of history and there could well have been a southern Mediterranean France, a Franco-English empire or even a Burgundian France.

The struggle of free peasants living in the rural communities and of the large towns against feudal tutelage from the 13th century onwards helped in the emergence of Swiss national consciousness. The four different nationalities which created a modern state in 1648 managed to create a distinct Swiss national consciousness only by 1848 after the victory of the liberals and the drafting of a new federal constitution.

### 16.4.2 Modern Nationalism : The 19th Century

The 19th century is regarded as a century of nationalism — a period in which the idea of the nation and nation state based on Britain and France was generalized and perceived as the

universal principle for modern societies. Friedrich List in *The National System of Political Economy* (London 1885) stated that, "a large population and an extensive territory endowed with manifold national resources, are essential requirements of the normal nationality .... A nation restricted in the number of its population and in territory, especially if it has a separate language, can only possess a crippled literature, crippled institutions for promoting art and science. A small state can never bring to complete perfection within its territory the various branches of production". In practice, the principle of nationality applied only to nationalities of a certain size in the liberal period of nationalism because of this faith in the benefits of large scale states. It is this tacit liberal assumption of a certain size of states which Hobsbawm calls the "threshold principle" of nationality which the liberal bourgeoisie broadly endorsed from about 1830 to 1880. It is this threshold principle of nationality which is shared by figures as far apart as John Stuart Mill, Friedrich Engels and Mazzini. It is this principle which explains why Mazzini, the apostle of nationalism, did not support the cause of Irish independence. The principle of national self-determination in the period of Mill and Mazzini was therefore substantially different from that in the period of the American President, Woodrow Wilson. Mazzini's map of Europe drawn up in 1857 based on nations included only a dozen states and federations. By contrast the Europe refashioned after World War II on the basis of the right to national self-determination had 26 nation states. In the post World War II period 42 regionalist movements have been identified in Western Europe alone.

The big change in the attitude towards nationality and nationalism came about in the late 19th century with the growth of mass political movements in the era of democratic politics. After 1880 the debate about the national question becomes important with the need to mobilize voters for different political parties and to gain adherents for new ideologies whether among socialists or minor linguistic and national groupings. In the later stage of mass politics and national movements, the state played an active role. Colonel Pilsudski, the liberator of Poland, in fact observed, "It is the state which makes the nation and not the nation the state". Whatever view one takes of the relation between nation and state, it was electoral democracy which undermined the liberal theory of the nation.

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## 16.5 HOW NATIONALISM AND THE MODERN STATE CREATE THE NATION STATE

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Nationalism as an ideal began to grow in the 19th century based on the ideas of the French revolution and the consequences of Napoleonic military victories and the political realignments which these victories produced. The simplification of the political map of Europe by the reduction in the number of states within the German Empire; the quickening of the pulse of Spanish nationalism during the military campaigns of the Peninsular War; and the rise of Italian and German nationalism based on the inspiration of the French armies, the Napoleonic role in nation-state building and the contagion of revolutionary and democratic ideas helped to spread the gospel of nationalism in Europe. It appealed to the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie which spearheaded the movement for Italian and German unification. Mass politics in the late 19th century was to give an additional fillip to nationalism specially in Eastern Europe, a region which was relatively backward compared to the more industrialized parts of Western Europe.

### 16.5.1 Absolutism and Modern State

The absolutist states, particularly in Western Europe played an important role in the gradual transition from feudalism to capitalism. The dynastic rulers of Europe in the 16th century and 17th centuries were responsible for the creation of centralized states with substantial standing armies. The absolutist states claimed rights to taxation and a monopoly over the legitimate use of force within the boundaries of the state. The emergence of strong centralized states was the product of wars among the absolutist rulers; the growth of state taxation was linked to the costs of waging such wars; and the prime objective of the mercantilist policies of absolutist rulers was to enhance the economic power and thereby the military power of their states vis--vis other states. The wars of the 16th and 17th centuries accelerated "all the fundamental state-making processes". In the economic and military competition of this period, most of the 500 or so political entities or states perished but the political unification of Italy and Germany was possible only with the emergence of nationalist ideology in the 19th century.



Tilly observes, "the European state-making process minimized the cultural variation within states and maximised the variation among states". The minimization of internal cultural variation within states was accomplished by the centralization of state power as well as the development of a concept of sovereignty which was absolute and indivisible. The centralizing monarchs tried to overcome obstacles in the way of exercising sovereign rights by local and regional assemblies or by the aristocracy, clergy or bourgeoisie. Ultimately it was the 'revolutions from below' in Holland, England and France which removed the barriers in the way of the modern state. It was only the bourgeois revolutions — in the Age of Revolutions — which finally led to the rise of the modern capitalist state.

### 16.5.2 Modern States and System of States

One can approach the study of the system of states which emerged from the period of the 16th and 17th century onwards in terms of the development of the economy — in terms of capitalist development and its uneven spread across Europe during the 19th century.

The development of industrialization in Britain during the late 18th century led to the gradual expansion of industries in Europe over the course of the 19th century. The process was uneven and the late industrializing countries had certain disadvantages in competing with those who had established a lead in industrial production. Gerschenkron argued in his book **Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective** that in countries like Germany and Russia which began to industrialize later than Britain — the first industrial nation — the role of the state was much greater. To compensate for a late start the state played an active role in creating appropriate conditions for rapid industrialization by creating a system of tariff protection and aiding a process of cartellization of industry. There was a greater degree of concentration of capital in Germany and a much stronger nexus between banks and industrial firms than obtained in the case of Britain. The doctrine of free trade liberal capitalism as propounded by Britain was challenged by the German economist Friedrich List to enable the German economy to develop behind protectionist walls and to catch up with Britain. The businessmen and industrialists favoured political unification because their self-interest as a class was linked with the creation of a national market for German entrepreneurs. In the perception of the German bourgeoisie the creation of a German national state was a necessary precondition for German economic development. The economic challenge presented by England had a no less enduring impact on German nationalism than the political challenge thrown down by Napoleonic France, regardless of distinctions between Germans based on economic and political ideals, a German national state was regarded generally as an essential condition for economic progress. The German nation state was created by a revolution from above, following the wars of 1864-1866 and 1870-71, by Bismarck and the Prussian Army.

In Italy the idea of nationalism was associated with the literary Italian of Dante, and the youthful idealism of Mazzini's Young Italy before it was linked to the economic ideology of the bourgeoisie

During the 1840s a programme for economic unification was propagated by journalists and intellectuals. This new ideology was linked to the interests of the nascent Italian bourgeoisie as well as the growing success of the German customs union the Zollverein. The Austrian opposition to the integration of the Italian railway — to the linking of the Piedmontese and Lombard railway system fuelled the growth of economic nationalism. There was, however, no agenda of the Italian industrialists which championed railway building, customs union, common currency and the creation of a national market. The Piedmontese were perceived as rivals by the Milanese industrialists and the latter in fact favoured integration with the larger German market. Industrialists were too weak to profit from the widening of markets and often had genuine reasons to fear the growth of competition. Even commercial interests were not always in favour of the economic unification of Italy. In fact, landlords and farmers engaged in production for the market favoured unification most consistently. Cavour, Minghetti in Bologna and Ricasoli in Tuscany, all improving landlords and moderate liberals, played a leading role in Italian national unification. In Italy the weakness of the bourgeoisie gave greater salience to the role of the landlords and urban professionals in the movement towards economic unification.

### 16.5.3 Nations and Nation-States

Modern states, nations and nationalism are all territorial in the sense that they claim or are based on specific geographical areas. In the 19th century, the idea spread that the state and the nation should “coincide geographically in the nation state”. The modern state is often called the “territorial state” since it has a clearly demarcated territory in which it claims sovereign rights over all its citizens. Nationalism is a territorial ideology which is internally unifying and externally divisive. As an ideology nationalism discourages conflicts based on social class or status within a nation but enhances the differences between different peoples and nations.

Authorities as different as Max Weber and Lenin have argued that nations and nationalism have to be seen “primarily in political terms in relation to statehood”. Nationalism is an ideology which links culturally and historically defined territorial communities called nations, to political statehood. Nationalism as an ideology may produce a demand for an independent state, transformation of a pre-existing state, or merely an attempt to seek political legitimacy for state policy in the higher interests of the nation, i.e. national interest.

Three ways in which nationalism has shaped the modern state have been identified. In the older states like England and France the rise of nationalism was linked to the development of more democratic relationships between the state and civil society. Secondly, nationalism furthers the internal unification of culturally and economically diverse regions into a more homogenous state territory. Finally, nationalism divides one political community or nation from another and even determines the geographical boundaries of the nation in many cases.

Nationalism can support both movements of unification and separation. In Italy and Germany, nationalism and the state created a new nation state. In Scandinavia, nationalism produced the separation of Norway from Sweden. In the case of Poland, there was both separation and unification which created the Polish nation state. In the late 19th century the doctrine of national self-determination was the basis for creating new nation-states based on language, on an invented national language, ethnicity or common culture and tradition. The nationalism of Greece, Czechoslovakia and Ireland emerged before the emergence of these nation states which gained their freedom from the multi-national empires within which they had blossomed. These new nation states were carved out of the Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary and Britain respectively. As the idea of nationalism spread to Central and Eastern Europe - in regions with little industrialization and weak bourgeoisies the role of the lower middle class and the peasantry in the shaping of nationalism increased. As a result of the growth of industrialization, of the rise of the working class and socialism, and of inter-imperialist rivalries, nationalism became associated with conservative and right wing ideologies not just with the republican ideas of the French Revolution.

#### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Answer the following in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.
  - a) Nationalism existed since time immemorial.
  - b) The French Revolution had no role to play in spreading the idea of nationalism.
  - c) Britain and France were the first nation-states.
  - d) Language played an important role in the growth of nationalism.
- 2) When did the idea of nationalism develop? Answer in 100 words with examples.

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- 3) Discuss in 100 words the role of nationalism and modern states in the development of nation-states.

## 16.6 RELATION BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC AND NATIONALIST MOBILIZATIONS

In this section we are going to discuss the relationship between various popular mobilizations and the rise of nationalism.

### 16.6.1 Liberal Democracies and Nationalism

The French Revolution with its ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity and the Rights of Man served as a source of inspiration for all subsequent democratic and popular movements. The Jacobins inspired the radicals in the 19th century throughout Europe. In fact, the ideal-type of the bourgeois revolution was derived from the experience of the French Revolution. Although recent historians have questioned the significance of the bourgeois revolution for economic growth in France even the revisionists concede that it gave a tremendous impetus to democratic movements and radical ideas. Although the democratization of France took place gradually, and the French Revolutions of 1830 and 1848 and the Paris Commune of 1871 are part of the gradual process of democratization of French politics and society, the significance of the radicalism of the years 1792-95 cannot be denied.

The radicalization of French politics during the years 1792-95 was spearheaded by the sans-culottes who were adversely effected by war, poor harvests food shortages, price rise and collapse of the currency. The sans-culottes were the politically active groups in the towns who had been adversely effected by the war and economic crises. Shopkeepers, artisans, wage-earners and the unemployed who have been designated sans-culottes not only favoured price-control and rationing but also believed in the sovereignty of people and the principles of direct democracy.

After the invasion of France in August 1792 and the execution of the King a new constitutional convention was elected by universal adult male suffrage. Once the tide of war against France had abated by 1794 the Jacobin societies and militia were brought under control as also the local government assemblies. The phase of direct democracy dominated by ideas about egalitarian distribution of property, revolutionary justice and a right to subsistence came to an end.

Owing to the failure of the liberal democratic state to function adequately during 1795-1799, France was taken over by the military led by Napoleon. The divisions among the electorate and the lack of consensus about the public good within the state, and the successful military exploits of French republican armies helped them to achieve political ascendancy for the French military. Napoleon subsequently became emperor of France and produced an Imperial constitution in 1804. Although the Napoleonic dictatorship was a retreat from the ideals of the Revolution it is equally true that his military exploits and conquests simplified the political map of Europe and spread the ideas of nationalism and democracy among the conquered people. The Congress of Vienna not only wished to contain France but through the Metternich system the conservative European Powers — represented by Prussia, Austria and Russia — sought to restrict the spread of both democratic and nationalist ideas. The Concert of Europe actively tried to suppress all liberal and nationalist movements in Europe which threatened the dominant position of the autocratic rulers. There were revolutions in Spain, Greece and Italy

in 1820. A far more serious outbreak of revolutions affected France, Germany Belgium and Poland in 1830. Middle class radicals and peasants and workers produced a revolution which won independence for Belgium. Despite the systematic efforts to suppress democracy in Europe the spread of liberal ideas could not be held back indefinitely.

The revolutions of 1848 which engulfed most of Europe led to an accelerated movement towards democracy and nationalism. It brought Napoleon III to power in France, hastened the unification of Germany and Italy and stirred national sentiments in the multi-national Austrian empire. The process of democratization in the first half of the 19th century was accelerated not only by revolutions but by a gradual process of socio-economic change, that is the growth of industries and the new social classes of the bourgeoisie and workers. There was also the growth of the modern state and bureaucracy which led to the development of official languages and the growth of public education. There was the growth of the press which fostered both democratic and nationalist ideas in Europe as the number of publications and the size of the reading public grew steadily. The policies of the state became matters of public concern as public instruction and public employment increased the size of the liberal middle class and as political movements of different strata began to confront the state. In Britain where there was no revolution during the 19th century inspired by the French Revolution there was the growth of the Chartist movement and the widening of the franchise by the Reform Acts of 1832 and 1867. In Britain not only did the Industrial Revolution lead to the development of capitalism largely on the basis of private capitalist accumulation but also gave civil society a decisive advantage in its relationship with the British state. Nevertheless, the British ruling class and the state represented a compromise between the rising bourgeoisie and the older aristocracy. The capacity of Britain's political elite to adapt to the changing nature of civil society or the balance of social classes has been observed by liberal and Marxist alike. Some have seen it as the creation of class alliances essential to perpetuate the dominance of the successful commercial landowners, the rising industrialists and finally the finance capitalists based on the export of capital and invisibles. Cain and Hopkins have developed the concept of a 'gentlemanly elite' to explain the successful coalition of social classes which ruled Britain from 1688 onwards right until the mid 20th with the dominant element changing with the economic transformation of Britain. While Cain and Hopkins regard Britain's economic performance as satisfactory given its size and resources others who have argued that Britain failed in the late Victorian period and did not respond satisfactorily to the second industrial revolution of the late 19th century argue that the absence of a bourgeois revolution and of industrial capitalist influence on the British state led to the retardation of the British economy. Perry Anderson developed this point in his analysis of the late 20th century crisis of the British economy in terms of the antiquity of the British state and its management of relationship between social classes. Whatever this skillful British management of social and class conflict might have meant for Britain's economic growth it enabled the successful development of British democracy based on a progressive extension of the franchise. It also enabled a successful integration of the working class and the ordinary British citizen in British society. Even the British labour movement accepted the ideals of the British nation, the value of preserving the monarchy and the British empire.

### 16.6.2 Factors Affecting National Mobilization and Democratization

As the 19th century advanced, the idea of democracy, despite the reactionary role of the Concert of Europe and the Holy Alliance, grew in popularity. This was associated with the growth of liberal capitalism in Britain and France. It is customary to contrast the experience of the first wave capitalisms of Britain and France with those of Germany and Italy which were late industrializers or part of the second wave. Before going into this issue let us observe the general consequences of economic development, modernization and democratization.

As the economy developed new social classes, of which the emergence of the working class in particular posed new problems for the 19th century modernizing states and the liberal bourgeoisie. After the 1832 Reform Act in Britain the struggle of the liberal middle class parted company with the struggles of the working classes. The inclusion of the propertied middle classes within the framework of electoral democracy was typically achieved in several European states by the mid 19th century. It was the emergence of the labour and socialist movement in the late 19th century which affected the balance of social forces. The rise of the Social Democratic Party in Germany during the late 19th century affected the position of the liberal bourgeoisie vis-a-vis the conservatives in German politics and society. Mass participation - even the participation of a broad based socialist party - did not successfully democratize German society, though the extent of pre-World War I German conservatism has been exaggerated.



The modernization of states was accompanied by the development of a centralized administration and a large bureaucracy based on rational-legal principles. This process was accompanied by the development of a national language, of a language of administration and not merely local communication. The choice of a dialect or language as the medium of official communication led to public or state support for its propagation, specially through the school system. The growth of a professional middle class and of modern state bureaucracies were based on the growth of modern universities, law and journalism. The expansion of the secondary school system and the state choice of the official or national language in schools became a source of great conflict among rival ethnic linguistic groups within multi-ethnic states like Austria-Hungary and in Eastern Europe in general. In earlier periods language had been less divisive because literacy levels were very low, the elite mass relationship was not based on regular interaction, and the state did not seek legitimation on the basis of some form of representative government. The controversies about language in the 19th century were about "school and office," and linguistic nationalism was linked to the growth of modern bureaucracy and the aspirations of a rising class of the petty bourgeoisie seeking jobs and cultural influence.

Language became an issue in international politics with the dispute between the Danes and the Germans over Schleswig-Holstein and of the Germans and French over the Rhine frontier during the 1840s. Even more significant was the increasing importance of language as a factor in the emergence of nationality conflicts in the late 19th century. The modern state and its administrative innovations themselves sharpened a sense of linguistic identity among the general population. The statisticians and census data collectors from the 1860s onwards sought data on language. For the development of a sense of linguistic nationalism the distinctions debated by the International Statistical Congress or the statisticians of the Habsburg empire were of little practical importance. Language itself was undergoing change and the choice of a language of public use depended on several criteria e.g. the language of state and school, the mother tongue, the 'family tongue' or language usually spoken at home. As Hobsbawm observes, "In truth, by asking the language question censuses for the first time forced everyone to choose not only a nationality, but a linguistic nationality".

**Nationalism, State and Class**

In older states like Britain and France a state-based patriotism itself encouraged a sense of nationalism during the course of the 19th century. The processes which turned subjects into citizens helped to encourage a sense of nationalism and patriotism in several states. Popular perceptions of natural-cultural differences or distinctions, political and national characteristics contributed to both nationalism and national chauvinism in the late 19th century in countries regardless of whether they were liberal capitalist states like Britain or second wave late industrializing states like Germany. The patriotism of the working classes in Europe did not deny the chasm between classes but affirmed its loyalty to the nation state. The most significant illustration of this is the manner in which the working class and socialist parties of the Second International which had repeatedly passed political resolutions condemning the idea of an imperialist war and emphasizing the international character of the struggle of the socialist parties very quickly identified with their nations and their national interest once the First World War broke out. Despite being opposed to the ruling classes and imperialist cliques of their respective societies the workers and socialist parties patriotically marched into the Great War of 1914-18. Lenin could not believe his eyes when he read that the German Social Democrats - the largest socialist party in Europe which controlled about one-third of the vote in Germany - had voted for war credits no sooner than the war was declared. Later day observers have acknowledged that the Socialists and Marxists had underestimated the power of nationalism and the patriotism of the working classes, even of those groups who professed socialism and identified with the social democratic parties.

**Nationalism, Empire and Imperial Rivalry**

The gradual extension of the franchise and the efforts of liberal states like Britain, modernizing states like Germany, or survival strategies of autocracies like Tsarist Russia to gain legitimacy and popular support, produced a form of patriotism. National pride and national identification was also encouraged by overseas expansion, by the material and psychological rewards which imperial possessions brought to countries like Britain, France, and even Holland and Spain. In Britain a sense of national identification was encouraged not only because of the "peculiarities" of the English and the glorious tradition of free born Englishmen, but also because of pride in a world wide empire. Britain's pride in its industrial achievements were celebrated during the Industrial Exhibition of 1851 and its sense of imperial greatness by colourful pageants like the

Coronation of Queen Victoria and the Imperial Durbar in India in 1877. Although there was a sense of Scottish nationalism which developed in the 18th and 19th centuries after the Union of 1707, economic development deepened the diversity of regions and social classes within Scotland. Scottish workers, Highland crofters, and hard pressed tenants were at loggerheads with Scottish landlords, and Scottish nationalism was a weak and ineffective force. The Scots played such a great role in both the acquisition and management of the Empire that "their self-esteem and sense of identity may have been fortified rather than weakened by the imperial adventure, even though the bulk of its profits ended in London." However, as Victor Kiernan argues, the Welsh, unlike the Scots, "showed no love of army or empire".

The policies of the state designed to achieve greater legitimacy and support for state policies, the spontaneous and state-sponsored support for imperial exploits and colonial profits encouraged a sense of national pride. Some of this form of patriotism was reflected in jingoistic responses in Britain to the Boer war fought against the settlers in South Africa at the end of the 19th century, in 1898-1902. In the late 19th century, as imperialist rivalries among the European powers increased, it was possible to deflect attention from domestic economic difficulties or class conflicts. Though the partition of Africa was accomplished without any war between the European powers, the struggle for overseas markets, raw materials, and opportunities for investment, together with territorial expansion, encouraged identification with the nation state among a broad section of the population. A military adventure or successful commercial achievements overseas always helped to rally support for 19th century states whether among countries with a large overseas empire like Britain or with very limited overseas influence like Germany. Part of the nationalism of the 19th century was linked to the economic and military rivalry of Britain and Germany, the naval building competition between these two Powers and the general desire of the more right wing governments in Germany and Italy to catch up with the British and French who had industrialized early and thus acquired vast colonial possessions. The aggressive nationalism of the conservative regimes in the late industrializing countries like Germany helped to rally support for the regime and to encourage nationalist sentiment throughout Europe. The speech by the German Emperor, William II, at Tangiers in Morocco in 1905, induced widespread fear in France, encouraged particularly by the large number of French newspapers. French anxiety about Germany's hostility towards France and the memories of the defeat of France at Sedan in the Franco-German War in 1870 helped to create a sense of national unity which was able to transcend domestic conflicts in times of acute crisis. Although France was divided into two antagonistic blocs and although ideological and political differences did not vanish with the outbreak of World War I, the French nation was united in the war against Germany. The Nationalists got an opportunity to regain French greatness, the Catholics to prove their patriotic credentials, the socialists to defend the principles of the French Revolution. The period from 1890 to 1914 is often called the period of armed peace" based on the creation of rival military and diplomatic alliances, between contenders for industrial and military supremacy and for colonial possessions and profits. The memorialization of major events in national calendars by school texts and nationalist newspapers, the reactions of press and public to diplomatic military rivalry encouraged both the spontaneous and state sponsored support for the nation-state in 19th century Europe.

### 16.6.3 Ethnic-Linguistic Basis of Nationalism in the Late 19th Century

By the late 19th century the processes of modernization and homogenization had produced a sense of nationalism in the older states and those large states which had achieved unification by then. The idea of unitary nationalism often produced a counter-nationalism among groups - ethnic or linguistic - which felt either oppressed or excluded by a process of nationalist homogenization. Nationalism in the period 1880-1914 was no longer constrained by the 'threshold principle' which had limited the demands for nation states earlier. Any body of people claiming to be a nation could claim the right to national self-determination. In these "non-state" nationalisms the ethnic linguistic criterion for defining nationalism became a decisive, probably sole, consideration. In Hobsbawm's view the late emergence of the ethnic-linguistic criterion in defining nations is insufficiently acknowledged in the literature on nationalism. Although linguistic and cultural revival movements grew in Europe between the 1780s and 1840s it was only a body of agitators who created a national idea in the second phase of the national movement. Only in the third stage, according to Hroch did mass support for nationalism emerge in late 19th century European nationalist movements.

The reasons for the increasing readiness of real and imagined communities to make claims of nationhood and national self-determination was because of the pace of change, economic

distress and large scale migrations of peoples in this period. Traditional groups felt threatened by the pace of modernization. Educated middle strata with modest incomes - journalists, school teachers and petty officials were the torchbearers of linguistic nationalism. Migration produced friction and conflicts between groups unused to coexistence with different groups. It was the nationalist, petty bourgeoisie which played a major role in the emergence of the new ethnic linguistic nationalism as well as the chauvinist and right wing movements within the older nation states. Contrary to conventional views Hobsbawm argues that in practice it was hard to separate the support which the masses gave to socialism, nationalism or religion since they had "several attachments and loyalties simultaneously, including nationality". Mass movements could simultaneously express aspirations conventionally regarded as incompatible. The movements which were making class appeals were later in post World War I Europe the basis for mass based national movements. Hobsbawm, however, overestimates the significance of the perspective of 1917 - of social transformation based on revolutionary or primarily class based movements - for the assessment of nationalism in post War Europe. The oppressed nationalities of Eastern Europe did become independent states based on Wilson's support for the principle of national self-determination but it is hardly possible to assert that significant numbers had dreamed of both social revolution and national independence. The collapse of the belligerent states first led to isolated and short-lived revolutionary upsurges and then to fascist and right wing movements. Nevertheless the relation between revolutionary movements and the desire for social transformation requires a more elaborate analysis.

#### 16.6.4 Nationalist Movements and Democracy

The nation and nationalism as an idea has been identified with the people, popular sovereignty and democratic rights. Rousseau's concept of General Will, of the Rights of Man, of the right to elect governments on the basis of universal adult male franchise constituted some of the democratic ideas which animated politics in the 19th century. Although the French Revolution was an important influence on national movements in the 19th century, towards the late 19th century there was an illiberal or right wing shift in the nature of nationalist politics. This rightward shift within nationalist politics took place even while the level of mass participation based on regular elections increased. In fact the reason for this growth in right-wing orientation of nationalism was the fear of popular participation in politics, specially by the working class and the left -wing or socialist parties. The liberal intelligentsia and middle class which had championed a republican or liberal nationalism in the first half of the 19th century made a compromise with the conservative landowners and dynastic states after the defeat of the revolutions of 1848. It was the liberals who compromised first to achieve national unification and subsequently to cope with the political challenge of the working classes and the socialist parties. Ideologies of race and empire buttressed the conservative version of nationalism. Although less strident in their support for social imperialism and social Darwinism the working class and even socialist supporters were not immune to such influences.

The relation between democratic and popular movements and nationalism and national movements has always been complex. In the late 18th century Britain, Linda Colley has shown that while the common people were in favour of a national mobilization of resources and manpower in the struggle against revolutionary and Napoleonic France, the ruling class and the British state were reluctant to unleash popular energies which might endanger their local dominance. On the other hand, the resistance to the French Revolution in the Vendee - as well as in Brittany - was a rejection of orders from Paris and of military conscription. It was not only fomented by the local aristocracy and priesthood but had deep-rooted support within the French countryside. The ideals of the French revolution did not command universal respect and the armies of revolutionary France, specially Napoleonic armies, were plagued by desertions. Although Mazzini had espoused democratic ideals and proposed a people's war of national liberation, the Italian liberals were unable to enthuse the masses and were confined to the towns. Though Mazzini derived his notion of peoples war from the Spanish war of 1808-13 he failed to learn from this war the major role played by the clergy in winning over the peasants to the cause of Spanish nationalism. Carlo Pisacane, a Neapolitan who had played a major role in the defense of the Roman Republic and who believed that the Italian leadership had lagged behind popular initiative and that Garibaldi had failed to produce a true revolutionary army, was himself slaughtered by local peasants at Sapri in 1857 together with his own small revolutionary force. In Italy the relation between the national movement for political unification and popular participation was so weak that Massimo d'Azeglio observed : "We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians".



## 16.7 NATIONALISM AND SOCIAL CLASS : GERMANY AND BRITAIN

It was the revolutions of 1848 that revealed the weakness of the liberal bourgeoisies in Europe. It compelled the liberals in Germany to accept a compromise with the Prussian state and led to the ascendancy of Piedmont-Sardinia in Italy. In Europe the revolutions of 1848 revealed the emergence of nationalist sentiment within the Habsburg Empire and Eastern Europe, the emergence of working class and socialist ideology throughout Europe, and the differences within the liberal democratic movement which separated the middle classes from the workers, peasants, and urban poor. During the 1848 revolutions in Europe the struggles, of the poor and of the middle classes had distinct features and objectives which were apparent. The middle classes were willing to side with conservative Prussia or the Emperor of the French, Napoleon III, rather than accept a greater pace of change.

In Germany, liberal nationalism which had an anti-feudal orientation acquired anti-clerical and anti-socialist overtones during the *Kulturkampf*. While anti-clericalism was partly progressive in its support for enlightenment rationalism, it also was regressive in so far as it criticized the "black horde of Romans without a fatherland". During the years 1870-1878 the anti-clerical element in bourgeois nationalism prepared the basis for the conflict with the Social Democratic party and movement after 1878. The new right-wing nationalism which emerged in the late 1870s was hostile to left-wing liberals as well as Social Democrats. In this new phase of right-wing nationalism Prussian large landowners and small manufacturers weighed down by economic competition actively began to collaborate with industrialists favouring protectionist economic policies. In the economic crisis of the 1870s marked by slower growth and international price deflation, social tensions multiplied and vindicated Marxist theories about capitalism and class struggle. The middle classes both old and new, the latter consisting of white collar employers and officials, became anxious to preserve their economic and social standing as well as to distance themselves from Marxist internationalism. Winkler states, "In the late 1870s to be a nationalist no longer meant being anti-feudal but instead anti-internationalist, and very frequently, anti-semitic".

In Germany liberalism was not very strong, and though there was indeed a silent bourgeois revolution in Germany in the 19th century, the traditions of political democracy were weaker than in Britain and France. The weakness of liberal democratic movements in 19th century Germany certainly led to the growth of right wing nationalism and the containment of Socialist Democracy. It is significant that the only way the liberal sociologist Max Weber thought it possible to reduce the power of the Junkers and the authoritarian state was to adopt a prestigious German world policy.

Successful overseas expansion was supported by the right wing to secure economic benefits which would not only benefit businessmen, and middle class colonial officials, but also the industrial working class, at least in the export industries. Whether or not a labour aristocracy arose in countries with substantial overseas trade and investments or not, it is true that economic prosperity and cheap colonial and overseas produce improved the lot of the industrial workers and the common people in metropolitan countries like Britain, France and Germany. Though recent experts like Davis and Huttenback have argued that the return on overseas and specifically colonial investments was not very high in the case of British foreign investments, cheap food and raw materials from overseas did have some beneficial consequences. The popular support for overseas expansion and investments was not only about chauvinism and ideology, but also about economic rewards. Although recent writers like Patrick O'Brien have returned to old Cobdenite free trade arguments about the economic irrelevance of empire to Britain there is still much merit in the social class analysis of the motivations for imperial expansion and an assessment of the economic benefits of empire. In any case the improvement in the living standards of workers and urban consumers in the industrial nations like Britain and Germany did help in co-opting the labour movements in these countries. The reformist trade unionism in Britain and the combination of repression and co-optation in Bismarckian Germany diluted the challenge of labour and left wing opposition to ideologies of race, empire and right wing nationalism. In Britain the franchise was extended in 1867 and 1884 to incorporate most adult males into a reformist parliamentary democracy. Repressive laws in Germany against trade unions and socialist political parties between 1878-1890 were combined with progressive welfare legislation, the Hohenzollern emperor's 'social message' of 1881 and a system of social insurance for the workers. Though the SPD grew under a repressive and right wing



regime its weaknesses cannot be attributed to such restrictive conditions alone. Critics of the SPD have argued that though the party vote grew from 5,50,000 in 1884 to 2 million in 1898 to nearly 4 million by 1913 it was a party which had been weakened by its social limitations and ideological beliefs. The party had become a prisoner of parliamentary democracy, its leaders and sections of the workers had acquired middle and lower middle class incomes and values and the party's beliefs were debilitated by revisionism and economism. Therefore, the enthusiastic participation of the SPD and its supporters in the Kaiser's war in 1914 is not a matter of such great surprise. Furthermore by an analysis of the failings of the SPD we get an idea of one of the ideological and political factors which allowed German right-wing nationalism to retain its political ascendancy despite powerful countervailing forces which emerged in German politics and society. The German right-wing was able to forge an alliance of landowners, industrialists and middle class to hold in check the growth of the liberal middle class, workers and socialism but this cannot be regarded as an inevitable outcome of Germany's authoritarian modernization and political unification.

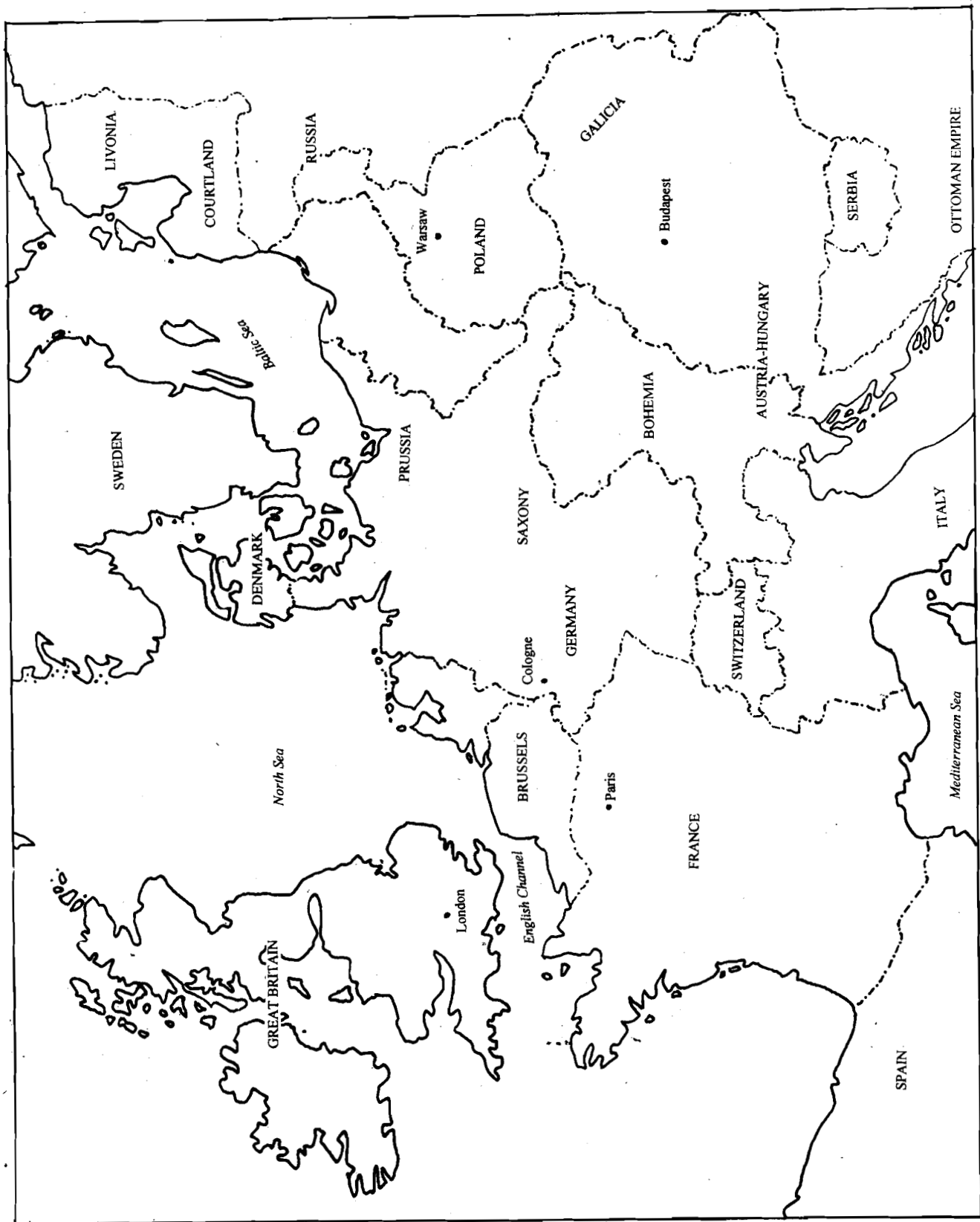
## 16.8 ITALIAN NATIONALISM AND POPULAR MOBILIZATION

In Italy the participation of the masses and the peasantry was limited because of the conservatism of the rulers of states, the reluctance of the landlords to grant concessions to the peasants to draw them into the national movement, the inability of the intelligentsia and the revolutionaries to bridge the gap between the town and country and the fear of radical change which affected the elite which dominated Italy in the 19th century.

It has been argued by Coppola that the 1848 war was an "ideological war" on the Italian side. In the War against Austria, Garibaldi's volunteers and Milanese revolutionaries fought with the troops from Piedmont, the Papal States, Tuscany and Naples.

Yet the participation of the rulers was born out of fear of revolution or the force of public opinion. In the failure of the Republic in Venice and Rome is to be found further evidence of the failure of the Mazzinian ideals of people's war. In the period 1859-61 the motives of Cavour were "patriotic rather than nationalist" since his objective was to secure a dominant position for Piedmont more than an ideological commitment to Italian unification. The successful 'southern initiative' of Garibaldi produced a revolution in Sicily and after his victory in Naples he seemed to have willingly accepted an auxiliary role in the process of Italian unification which Cavour had assigned to him. Garibaldi had accepted the need to work with the monarchy long before he launched his movement. It was thus possible to unify Italy both by force and popular consent as manifested in plebiscites. The centralized form of government of the new Italian state alienated opinion in both Naples and Sicily. A war with brigands in the Neapolitan provinces between 1861 and 1865 represented the sense of alienation felt in the Italian south from the new centralized Italian nation state. The fact that only a tiny minority of 2.5% spoke Italian at the time of unification, that over 100,000 troops had to be deployed to establish control over the turbulent south soon after unification, the fact that Cavour had to instruct his agents in Central Italy to conduct plebiscites to demonstrate that the people endorsed the decisions of their assemblies to enter into a union with Piedmont, the fact that Napoleon III of France and Cavour of Piedmont conspired to ensure that the plebiscite in the Romagna and the Duchies went in favour of Piedmont, and in Nice and Savoy in favour of the French, revealed the insufficiency of mass participation in the process of Italian unification.

In Italy the divisions between the more industrialized north, the less developed central region and the neglected and backward south actually intensified after the Italian unification. The Italian south remained an alienated, almost colonized, region. The Italian unification, due more to military success and international diplomacy rather than people's war or mass struggles, was based on the lowest possible mobilization of the masses required for achieving independence and unification. Even after the creation of the Kingdom of Italy the politics of the nation was dominated by political parties with narrow social bases and limited contact with the Italian masses. The extension of the franchise, the spread of public education, the growth of industries and towns in Italy was slower than in France and Germany. For these reasons the politics of Italy was regarded as a form of 'trasformismo' in which despite frequent political realignments and changes there was little substantial change. In Gramsci's words, the process of Italian unification was a form of passive revolution in which the Italian elite had mobilized the Italian masses only to the extent necessary to achieve the political objective of national unification and



Map 1 : Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

independence from Austria. The democratic mobilization of the masses was slow and the absence of organic intellectuals in Italy impeded the development of more radical movements. With the growth of industries, workers organisations, and socialism, the conservative politicians of Italy and the landowners and lower middle class in particular, felt endangered. In fact the economic development of Italy and the growth of civil society and democratic values was so slow and inadequate that the crisis after World War I created the conditions for the growth of fascism and Mussolini's victory. The post-war crisis led to a fascist victory despite the fact that Italy had played a less significant role in the war and had joined late. Italian democracy developed slowly even after unification and Italian nationalism did not succeed in winning over the Italians in the south.

## 16.9 PHASES OF NATIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: EASTERN EUROPE

The study of nationalism in the small states of Eastern Europe by Miroslav Hroch yielded the notion of three phases in the development of national movements. In the first stage or phase A there was primarily an emphasis on culture, literature and folklore; in phase B pioneers of the national idea and its publicists occupied centre-stage. It was only in the third stage — phase C — that the national movements acquired mass support on any significant scale. There may be problems with this schema but it is a suitable point of departure for the study of nationalism in Eastern Europe. It may be more useful to club phase A & B together for our purposes.

### 16.9.1 Cultural Nationalism : Phase A and B

The development of a European romantic perception of the natural and untainted peasantry and a serious study of folklore by the late 18th century provided a basis for many a national movement in Eastern Europe by the late 19th century. The cultural and linguistic revival movements in Europe between the 1780s and 1840s were the handiwork of scholars and ruling elites anxious to preserve and develop national tradition of some forgotten people or peasants and were sometimes the product of foreign scholars and elites. However, the language based cultural revivalism of this early phase has also been regarded as a conscious act of constructing a 'national' language rather than rescuing an ancient tongue and culture. Cultural nationalists chose one among several dialects to produce a national language, standardization of grammar and additions to vocabulary being matters of lesser importance. Literary Bulgarian was based on the West Bulgarian idiom; literary Ukrainian on its south eastern dialects; Lithuanian was based on one of two dialects and Latvian on one of three. While many of the East European languages developed or constructed their literary language somewhere between the late 18th and 19th centuries, literary Hungarian emerged in the 16th century.

Although the Croats spoke three dialects, the Croat proponent of Illyrianism, Ljudevic Gaj (1809-72) switched to Stokavian in 1838 since this was also the major dialect of the Serbs. This was a conscious effort to unite the southern Slavs. Although Serbo-Croat developed as one literary language, the Catholic Croats used Roman characters while the Orthodox Serbs used Cyrillic ones. In the case of Slovak, the choice of one dialect chosen about 1790 had to be abandoned in favour of another a few decades later as the basis for literary Slovak. In eastern Europe - specially south eastern Europe - the ethnic and linguistic diversity was greater than in the rest of Europe, specially western Europe, and awareness of distinct linguistic cultural identity emerged late. The Magyars, however, probably had a distinct sense of themselves as an ethnic group with a language of their own even in the 13th century. In fact not only the Magyars, but the Czechs and the Poles too had developed a distinct identity based on ethnicity or language but their concept of the nation did not include the peasants and the common people.

#### Czech Nationalism

The emergence of a common Czech national feeling is attributable to the fear of competition for senior posts from immigrant German clerics felt by the native clergy. The influx of German colonists into Bohemia in the 12th century where they were successfully engaged in mining and handicraft production, led to the emphasis on language by the Czechs in order to draw a distinction between themselves and the German foreigner. The existence of a reasonably strong state and the attachment to their language gave the Czechs a sense of common identity even in the Middle Ages. During the Hussite era language, origin and faith bound the Czech nation.

The Czechs did not have their own independent state during the 18th and 19th centuries. As a consequence, the nobility spoke German, Spanish or French, the townsmen German, leaving only the peasantry and the urban poor to speak the Czech language. The development of capitalism and the migration of Czech workers into towns created the basis for modern Czech nationalism. The revival of Czech language and literature was taken up by the intelligentsia in the late 18th century, by the sons of clerks, handicraftsmen and servants who had received university education. In the 1780s Czech language and theatre was patronized even by craftsmen and workers. The objective of the rising Czech intelligentsia was to "acquire equal rights for the modern Czech nation with that of the German nation in the Czech Lands". Over the first half of the 19th century, the Czech intelligentsia, drawn mainly from small town craftsmen's families, promoted Czech as the language of instruction in schools. By using newspapers, theatres and public discussions, the Czech cause was promoted and linked with Slav solidarity. The Czechs who constituted about 70% of the population in Bohemia and Moravia in the mid 19th century had almost no political rights while the Germans had full political rights. Discussions in public houses and the Czech debates over the internal conditions in Russia and Germany led the intelligentsia to opt for equality with the Germans in the Czech lands within the Austrian framework. In Austria it would be possible to live with other Slavs - Poles, Serbs, Slovaks, Croats - affording both safety in numbers and a better chance for the Czechs to achieve their rights than under the more authoritarian Tsarist autocracy or more homogenizing German Empire. The Germanization of the Elbe Slavs was a factor influencing Czech thinking on their attitude towards political union with Germany. These factors shaped the political concept of Austroslavism which emerged in the 1840s. The doctrine wanted to transform the Austrian absolutist state into "a federal state of nations enjoying equal rights".

### **Hungarian Nationalism**

In the case of Hungary national awakening among Hungarians took place at about the same time as among other ethnic groups in the late 18th century. Niederhauser distinguishes between two phases in the national movements, the cultural and the political. During the cultural nationalist phase the national language is created from among numerous dialects and a historical consciousness emerged. In the political phase demands for local autonomy and the use of the national language in administration eventually creates a nation state. In Hungary, diverse ethnic groups existed - conquering Hungarian tribes settled amongst Slavonic tribes, German settlers, and Turkish ethnic groups; Vlachs in Transylvania added to Hungary's ethnic mix. Ottoman occupation from 1541 until the end of the 17th century of the central part of Hungary affected the ethnic balance just as the subsequent Habsburg policy of introducing German settlers in Southern Hungary. Only the Magyars and the Croats had produced a significant feudal elite in Hungary together with a legal political life in the Diets, though Transylvania had its own Diet.

### **16.9.2 Spread of National Idea and Nationalism**

Hobsbawm cites evidence to show that autonomous popular movements of national defense against foreign invaders had ideologies which were "social and religious" rather than national. In 15th and 16th century Europe peasants who felt betrayed by their nobles decided to take up cudgels on behalf of their faith against invading Turks. A popular national patriotism could arise in Hussite Bohemia or on the military frontiers of Christian states among armed peasant groups, given sufficient freedom to enable them to combat invaders. The Cossacks are an example. Protonational feeling existed among the Serbs because they had kept alive the memory of the old Serb kingdom which was destroyed by the Turks. Some form of patriotism was kept alive by the Serbian Church which had canonized the Serb kings. Although the Cossacks were not drawn from any one ethnic group, they were united by beliefs. In 17th century Russia, pressures from both Catholic Poland and Muslim Turks made religion and holy icons an important element in popular national consciousness. It was only after the growth of a sense of cultural nationalism based on a sense of language, culture and history that nationalism as an idea influenced the smaller nationalities of Eastern Europe.

### **Czechoslovakia**

The Czech politicians of the late 19th century produced no grand political schemes and had to settle for small concessions. Economic and cultural advances in the Czech Lands meant that the bourgeoisie had insufficient reason to support Czech nationalism. It was World War I which triggered nationalism in the Czech Lands as elsewhere in Europe. Wartime difficulties produced unrest in the towns, desertions on the battlefield from 1915 onwards and Czech writers in 1917



published a manifesto supporting a future democratic Europe of free nations. Tomas Masaryk had pleaded for the independence of small nations in Europe in October 1915 and the rapid political changes during World War I led to the realization of such dreams. In 1915 the demand for an independent Czechoslovak state was made. Czech and Slovak military units joined the enemies of Austria-Hungary during World War I and thus established their claims to recognition by the victorious Entente powers. After a thousand years the Czech Lands were reunited with Slovakia - the result of Czech nationalism, the effects of World War I on large dynastic states, and President Wilson's support for national self-determination.

### Hungary

In Hungary the creation of the Dual Monarchy appeased the Hungarians but aroused national sentiment among the other nationalities. According to the official census between 1850 and 1910, conducted by the Hapsburgs, the Hungarians constituted an absolute majority only from 1900 onwards. Even including Croatia in 1910, the Hungarians constituted only 51.5% of the whole population. Under the Nationality Act of 1868, the state gave non-Magyars the right to schools in their mother tongue and the right to form banks and economic associations but the idea of the nation-state demanded that the Hungarian nation and its claims be placed uppermost. In 1883 the government made Hungarian compulsory by law in secondary schools. It was not to be compulsory in elementary schools until 1907. Hungarian statesmen tried to assimilate the non-Magyar population by means of the state language Hungarian. According to Peter Hanak, between 1890-1914, as a result of modernization and industrialization, more than a million people were successfully assimilated by the Magyars. Budapest, which in the mid-19th century had a German speaking and non-Magyar population, became a Hungarian speaking city by the early 20th century. In fact Magyarisation became an essential precondition for economic success and social mobility. Emigration to the United States was in fact encouraged by the government to reduce the non-Magyar population. Approximately three million people migrated to the USA, mainly Slovaks and Serbs.

The government could not however influence the economic performance of the various nationalities. It could not thwart the rise of Romanian-owned savings banks. The Churches supported secondary schools where students were taught in their mother tongues. Since the Church prelates had representation in the Upper House, they could represent their nationalities there. All the Churches were considered 'national' Churches with the exception of those of the Slovaks and Germans since these nationalities were divided on the basis of faith between Catholicism and Lutheranism. The Orthodox Church took up the cause of the Serbs and the majority of Romanians, and the Uniate Church for the Ruthenes and the minority of Romanians. The high electoral census was intended not merely to keep out the non-Magyars from the political system but also Magyar parties hostile to the regime. By the early 20th century a new and more active political elite emerged among the Romanians and Slovaks.

The break-up of the Hapsburg empire of Austria-Hungary led to the creation of new nation states of Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia. Owing to the problems involved in demarcating precise national frontiers - which plagued the post-war settlement - over three million Magyars became a minority in the newly independent neighbouring states of a truncated Hungary. It was a "great reversal of roles" which made the dominant Magyars a minority in new states, since the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 forced one in three Magyars to live outside the country. Hungarian ruling elites lost big estates, banks and factories, and therefore they used discontent produced by the reduction of Hungary to one-third of its former size to mobilize opposition to the unjust Treaty of Trianon. The conservative elites, utilizing this Treaty to deflect popular discontent into nationalist channels, eventually carried Hungary into the camp of fascist Germany and Italy during World War II.

### Poland

In Poland the nobility by the 18th century developed a sense of Polish identity based on the acceptance of the Polish language and culture. The Polish nobility, constituting 8% of the country's population, was large by European standards. The peasants and even burghers were not included in the political nation at the end of the 18th century.

As for the peasantry, they spoke Polish dialects in the western provinces, Ruthenian dialects in the east, and Lithuanian in the north-east. Language was not yet in the 18th century a basis for national consciousness. The religious differences of the Polish population played a significant

role in this period. Peasants did not have a developed national consciousness but they had participated in the battle for Polish independence in the late 18th century. It was during the 19th century that abolition of serfdom and enfranchisement - the ending of villeinage - took place at different points in time under the auspices of the three Great Powers - Prussia, Austria and Russia, which had partitioned Poland among themselves in the 18th century. National consciousness was speeded up by granting civil and democratic rights to burghers and later Jews; by movements and parties demanding agricultural reform; and by the gradual elimination of legal inequalities between classes.

The second half of the 19th century saw the emergence of a Belorussian and Ukrainian national consciousness based on a language and literature which resisted domination by Polish language and literature. Polish writers from Belorussian lands also wrote in Belorussian and helped to create a national literary tradition.

These differences of language were linked to social differences. Polish was linked to the nobility and intelligentsia while Belorussian and Ukrainian consciousness emerged from within a plebeian tradition opposed to the Polish state. In so far as Polish was the language of the upper classes or those seeking upward mobility it was considered a natural step for the peasant to accept Polish as the higher cultural language. Therefore Belorussian, Ukrainian and Lithuanian, regarded as peasant languages, were considered inferior. While Polish national consciousness had developed as a response to oppressive German nationalism after the creation of an independent Poland in 1918 the nationalism of the Poles too, became oppressive towards minority groups

The Polish Republic which came into being in 1920 was a product of the revolutionary changes which swept the whole of central and eastern Europe stirring the national consciousness of several groups. In the new Polish state over one-third of the population was non Polish: the Ukrainians constituting 16% the Jews 10% and the Belorussians 6% of the population in 1931. It was during the inter-war years that national consciousness developed among the Ukrainians and Belorussians although simultaneously processes of assimilation were also at work and many people "belonged to groups of intermediate or incipient national consciousness".

The growth of fascism intensified national antagonisms throughout Europe in the 1930s and thus helped to undermine the settlement at Versailles based on the principle of national self-determination at the end of World War I. The development of national movements and nationalism in Eastern Europe during the inter-war period, the course of World War II, and the final post-war settlement devised at Tehran, Potsdam and Yalta by the victorious Allies, shaped the post World War II map of nation states in Eastern Europe and the political map of all Europe.

### Check Your Progress 2

- 1) How did the liberal democratic ideas fostered the growth of nationalism in Europe?

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- 2) What was the role of language in the development of nation-states?

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3. Discuss the emergence of nationalism in Eastern Europe in about 150 words.

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## 16.10 LET US SUM UP

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In the preceding discussion about nationalism and nation-state you have seen that in most cases the nationalist idea preceded the growth of the nation-state. The democratization of polity in Europe helped the popular mobilizations around the issues like language and empire-building which strengthened the feeling of nationalism among people. The modern states also played a crucial role in giving shape to nationalist feelings and forging the nation-states. We have also discussed that in Eastern Europe, excepting Russia, the cultural issues proved to be more important in giving rise to national sentiments.

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## 16.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

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### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) (a) no; (b) no; (c) yes; (d) yes
- 2) See the sections 16.2 and 16.3
- 3) See section 16.5

### Check Your Progress 2

- 1) See subsection 16.6.1
- 2) See subsections 16.6.2 and 16.6.3
- 3) See section 16.9