

Chapter 1

Nationalism in Europe – Notes

Learning objectives

- Analyze the impact of French revolution
- Learn about the different process of unification of Germany, Italy and Britain
- Locate the important places related with the nationalist movement in the Europe on the map of world
- Students collaboratively realize the idea of the nation, and making of nationalism in Europe
- Appreciate the concepts and practices of the nation state
- Establish the relationship and bring out the difference between European nationalism and anti- colonial nationalism

Learning outcomes

- Students should be able to define nationalism and understand its significance in European history and contemporary politics.
- Students should be able to analyze historical events in Europe, such as the French Revolution, the unification of Italy and Germany, and the collapse of empires.
- Familiar with key figures associated with European nationalism, such as Napoleon Bonaparte, Giuseppe Garibaldi, Otto von Bismarck, and leaders of independence movements in various European colonies.
- Students should be able to identify and compare different nationalist ideologies, including liberal nationalism, cultural nationalism, and romantic nationalism.
- Students should understand how nationalism influenced various aspects of European society, including culture, language, education, and the arts.
- Students should be able to analyze the role of nationalism in contemporary European politics
- Students should develop critical thinking skills by considering different perspectives on nationalism

Frédéric Sorrieu Vision of World

Frédéric Sorrieu, a French artist, in 1848 prepared a series of four prints visualizing his dream of a world made up of democratic and Social Republics.



- The first print shows the people of Europe and America moving in a long train and offering respect to the Statue of Liberty as they pass it.
- The torch of Enlightenment was carried by a female figure in one hand and the Charter of the Rights of Man in the other.
- On the earth in the foreground lie the shattered remains of the symbols of absolutist institutions. An Absolutist institution is generally a form of government in which all the power is vested in one authority or ruler.
- In Sorrieu's utopian vision, the world's people are grouped as different nations, identified through their flags and national costume.
- The United States and Switzerland led the procession, followed by France and Germany. Following the German people are the people of Austria, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, Lombardy, Poland, England, Ireland, Hungary, and Russia.
- Christ, saints, and angels look upon the scene from the heavens above. The artist has used them to symbolize fraternity among the world's nations.
- During the nineteenth century, nationalism emerged as a force that brought huge changes in Europe's political and mental world. The result of these changes was the emergence of the nation-state.

The French Revolution & the Idea of a Nation

- Europe in the 19th century witnessed the emergence of nation-states, in which the citizens and the rulers developed a common identity.
- From the very beginning, the French revolutionaries introduced various measures and practices that could create a sense of collective identity amongst the French people.

- Ideas such as la Patrie (the fatherland) and le citoyen (the citizen) created a sense of collective identity among the French.
- The Estates General was elected by active citizens and renamed the National Assembly.
- A centralised administrative system was put in place and it formulated uniform laws for all citizens within its territory.
- The revolutionaries further declared that it was the French nation's mission and destiny to free the peoples of Europe from despotism, in other words, to help other peoples of Europe become nations.
- With the outbreak of the revolutionary wars, the French armies began to carry the idea of nationalism abroad.
- Rise of Napoleon and the introduction of the Civil Code of 1804 or the Napoleonic Code.
- In the Dutch Republic, Switzerland, in Italy, and Germany, Napoleon simplified administrative divisions, abolished the feudal system, and freed peasants from serfdom and manorial dues.
- In the towns, too, guild restrictions were removed. Transport and communication systems were improved.
- Peasants, artisans, workers, and new businessmen enjoyed a new-found freedom.



The Making of Nationalism in Europe

- Germany, Italy, and Switzerland were divided into Kingdom, duchies, and Cantoneses. These divisions had their autonomous rulers.
- They did not see themselves as sharing a collective identity or a common culture. Often, they even spoke different languages and belonged to different ethnic groups.
- The Habsburg Empire that ruled over Austria-Hungary included the Alpine regions— the Tyrol, Austria, and the Sudetenland — and Bohemia, where the aristocracy was predominantly German-speaking. It also included the Italian-speaking provinces of Lombardy and Venetia.
- In Hungary, half of the population spoke Magyar, while the other half spoke various local languages. In Galicia, the aristocracy spoke Polish.
- Besides these three dominant groups, there also lived within the boundaries Of the empire, a mass Of subject peasant peoples— Bohemians and Slovaks to the north, Slovenes in Carniola, Croats to the south, and Roumans to the east in Transylvania.
- Such differences did not easily promote a sense of political unity and the only tie binding these diverse groups together was a common allegiance to the emperor.

The Aristocracy and the New Middle Class

- The Aristocracy was the dominant class on the continent politically and socially.
- A numerically small group owned estates in the countryside and townhouses and spoke French for diplomacy and in high society.
- The majority of the population was made up of the peasantry.
- Industrialization began in England in the second half of the eighteenth century.
- New social groups emerged: a working-class population and a middle class of industrialists, businessmen, and professionals.
- It was among the educated, liberal middle classes that ideas of national unity gained popularity following the abolition of aristocratic privileges.

What did Liberal Nationalism Stand for?

- Ideas of nationalism in early-nineteenth-century Europe were closely allied to the ideology of liberalism.
- The term ‘liberalism’ derives from the Latin root liber, meaning free.
- For the new middle classes, liberalism stood for freedom for the individual and equality of all before the law.
- Politically, it emphasized the concept of government by consent.
- The right to vote and to get elected was granted exclusively to property-owning men.
- Men without property and all women were excluded from political rights. They organized opposition movements demanding equal political rights throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

- In the economic sphere, liberalism stood for the freedom of markets and the abolition of state-imposed restrictions on the movement of goods and capital.
- In 1834, a customs union or Zollverein was formed at the initiative of Prussia and joined by most of the German states. The union abolished tariff barriers and reduced the number of currencies from over thirty to two.
- The creation of a network of railways further stimulated mobility, harnessing economic interests to national unification.
- A wave of economic nationalism strengthened the wider nationalist sentiments growing at the time.

A New Conservatism after 1815

- In 1815, European governments were driven by a spirit of conservatism. Conservatives believed in monarchy, the Church, social hierarchies, property, and the family should be preserved.
- The majority of conservatives did not advocate for reverting back to the pre-revolutionary era society. Instead, they recognized that Napoleon's reforms demonstrated the potential for modernization to bolster traditional institutions such as the monarchy, resulting in increased effectiveness and strength of state power.
- A modern army, an efficient bureaucracy, a dynamic economy, the abolition of feudalism and serfdom could strengthen the autocratic monarchies of Europe.
- In 1815, representatives of the European powers – Britain, Russia, Prussia and Austria met in Vienna to draw up a settlement for Europe.
- The delegates drew up the Treaty of Vienna of 1815 to undo most of the changes that had come about in Europe during the Napoleonic wars.
- The Bourbon dynasty was restored to power and France lost the territories it had annexed under Napoleon.
- A series of states were set up on France's boundaries to prevent future French expansion. The main intention was to restore the monarchies that Napoleon had overthrown and create a new conservative order in Europe.
- Conservative regimes set up in 1815 were autocratic and they did not tolerate criticism and dissent, and sought to curb activities that questioned the legitimacy of autocratic governments.
- The memory of the French Revolution nonetheless continued to inspire liberals.
- The major issue taken up by the liberal nationalists, who criticized the new conservative order, was freedom of the press

The Revolutionaries

- In 1815, secret societies were formed in many European states to train revolutionaries and spread their ideas. Revolutionary opposed monarchical forms, and fight for liberty and freedom.

- Most of these revolutionaries also saw the creation of nation-states as a necessary part of this struggle for freedom.
- The Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini, born in Genoa in 1807, founded two more underground societies,
- first, Young Italy in Marseilles.
- Secondly, he founded Young Europe in Berne, whose members were like-minded young men from Poland, France, Italy, and the German states.
- Following his model, secret societies were set up in Germany, France, Switzerland, and Poland.
- Mazzini's relentless opposition to monarchy and his vision of democratic republics frightened the conservatives.
- Metternich described him as 'the most dangerous enemy of our social order'.

The Age of Revolutions: 1830-1848

- Liberalism and nationalism became associated with revolution in many regions of Europe such as the Italian and German states, the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Ireland and Poland.
- The first upheaval took place in France, in July 1830. Liberal revolutionaries installed a constitutional monarchy under Louis Philippe



- The Greek War of Independence was another event that mobilized nationalist feelings among the educated elite in Europe.
- The growth of revolutionary nationalism in Europe sparked off a struggle for independence amongst the Greeks which began in 1821.

- The English poet Lord Byron organised funds and later went to fight in the war, where he died of fever in 1824.
- Finally, the Treaty of Constantinople of 1832 recognised Greece as an independent nation.
- The 1830s saw a rise in prices, bad harvest, and poverty in Europe. Besides the poor, unemployed and starving peasants, even educated middle classes, revolted.

The Romantic Imagination and National Feeling

- Culture played an important role in creating the idea of the nation: art and poetry, stories and music helped express and shape nationalist feelings.
- Romanticism, a cultural movement that sought to develop a particular form of nationalist sentiment.
- Other Romantics such as the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) claimed that true German culture was to be discovered among the common people — das volk. It was through folk songs, folk poetry and folk dances that the true spirit of the nation (volk sgeist) was popularised.
- Language also played an important role in developing nationalist sentiments.
- The Russian language was imposed everywhere and in 1831 an armed rebellion against Russian rule took place which was ultimately crushed.
- The use of Polish came to be seen as a symbol of the struggle against Russian dominance.

Hunger, Hardship and Popular Revolt

- Europe faced economic hardships in the 1830s. The first half of the nineteenth century saw an enormous increase in population all over Europe.
- Population from rural areas migrated to the cities to live in overcrowded slums.
- Small producers in towns were often faced with stiff competition from imports of cheap machine-made goods from England, where industrialisation was more advanced than on the continent.
- In those regions of Europe where the aristocracy still enjoyed power, peasants struggled under the burden of feudal dues and obligations.
- The rise of food prices or a year of bad harvest led to widespread pauperism in town and country.
- In 1848, food shortages and widespread unemployment brought the population of Paris out on the roads.
- In 1845, weavers in Silesia had led a revolt against contractors who supplied them raw material and gave them orders for finished textiles but drastically reduced their payments.

The Revolution of the Liberals

- In 1848, a revolution led by the educated middle classes was underway.

- Men and women of the liberal middle class demanded the creation of a nation-state on parliamentary principles – a constitution, freedom of the press and freedom of association.
- A large number of political associations came together in Frankfurt to vote for an all-German National Assembly. On 18 May 1848, 831 elected representatives marched to take their places in the Frankfurt parliament convened in the Church of St Paul.
- The Constitution drafted for the German nation was headed by a monarchy, subject to a Parliament.
- The Crown was offered to Friedrich Wilhelm IV, King of Prussia but he rejected it and joined other monarchs to oppose the elected assembly.
- The Middle Class dominated the Parliament and a large number of women participated in the liberal movement.
- Women formed their own political associations, founded newspapers and took part in political meetings and demonstrations, but they were still denied suffrage rights during the election of the Assembly.
- In the years after 1848, the autocratic monarchies of Central and Eastern Europe began to introduce the changes that had already taken place in Western Europe before 1815.
- Thus, serfdom and bonded labour were abolished both in the Habsburg dominions and in Russia.

The Making of Germany and Italy Germany – Can the Army be the Architect of a Nation?

- After 1848, nationalism in Europe moved away from its association with democracy and revolution.
- Nationalist sentiments were often mobilised by conservatives for promoting state power and achieving political domination over Europe.
- As you have seen, nationalist feelings were widespread among middle-class Germans, who in 1848 tried to unite the different regions of the German confederation into a nation-state governed by an elected parliament.
- This liberal initiative to nation-building was, however, repressed by the combined forces of the monarchy and the military, supported by the large landowners (called Junkers) of Prussia.
- On the bitterly cold morning of 18 January 1871, an assembly comprising the princes of the German states, representatives of the army, important Prussian ministers including the chief minister Otto von Bismarck gathered in the unheated Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles to proclaim the new German Empire headed by Kaiser William I of Prussia.
- The new state placed a strong emphasis on modernising the currency, banking, legal and judicial systems in Germany.

Italy Unified

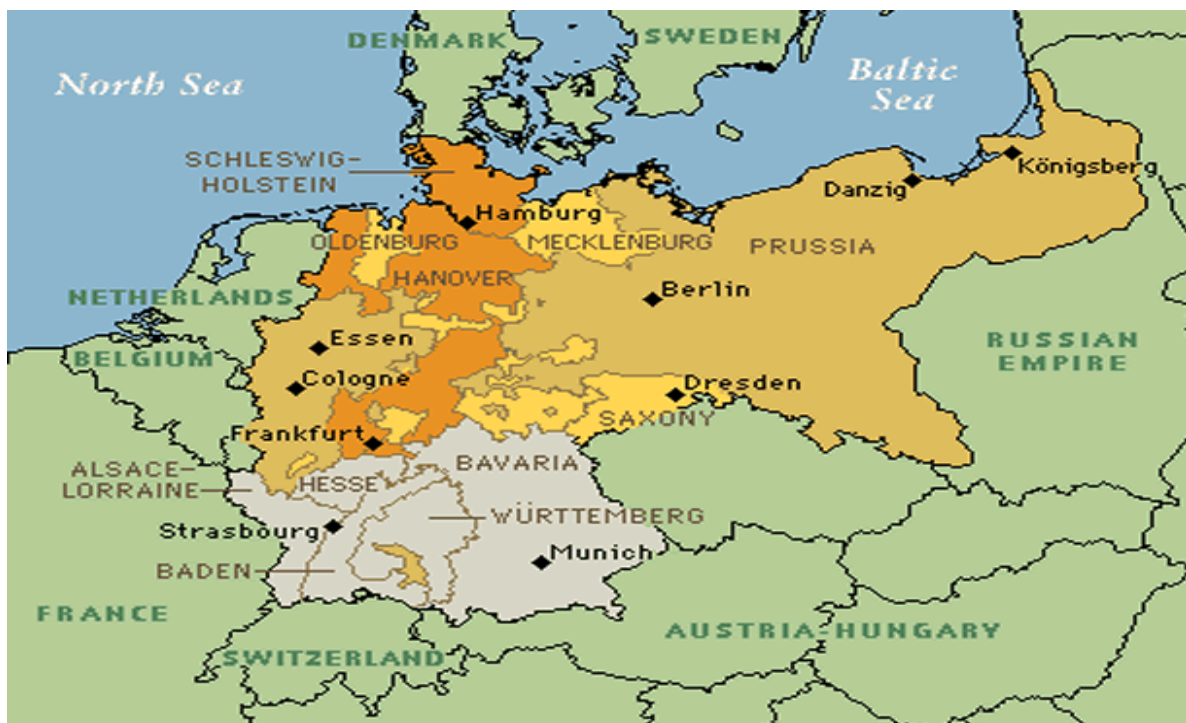
- Italy was also politically fragmented into various small states which were ruled by monarchies.
- During the mid-nineteenth century, only the state of Sardinia-Piedmont was ruled by the Italian monarchy.
- The northern states were under the Austrian monarchy, Central Italy was under the control of the Pope and the states in the south were under the control of the Bourbon kings of Spain.
- Giuseppe Mazzini was a revolutionary who actively supported the unification of the Italian states during the 1830s. For achieving this aim, he formed a secret society called 'Young Italy'.
- The state of Sardinia-Piedmont took the responsibility of fulfilling this task after the failed uprisings in 1831 and 1848. The king of Sardinia-Piedmont, Victor Emmanuel II, was actively helped by his Chief Minister Cavour. Cavour led the process of the unification of Italy.
- In 1859, the state of Sardinia-Piedmont defeated the Austrians. In 1860, the Italian forces, helped by Giuseppe Garibaldi and his volunteers, marched into southern Italy and unified it with Italy.
- King Victor Emmanuel II was proclaimed as the king of united Italy. The complete unification of Italy was achieved in 1871.



The Strange Case of Britain

- The transformation of Great Britain into a nation state was not a sudden process. There was no one British nation before the eighteenth century.
- People residing in the British Isles were mainly English, Welsh, Scots and Irish. These ethnic groups had distinct political and social traditions.
- As the English nation grew in wealth and power, it began to dominate the other islands.
- In 1688, the English Parliament seized power from the monarchy.

- The Parliament passed the Act of Union, 1707, by which England and Scotland were unified resulting in the formation of the 'United Kingdom of Great Britain'.
- The Parliament was dominated by the English, and the political and cultural identities of the Scots were systematically suppressed. The Catholics in Scotland were brutally suppressed whenever they wanted to regain their independence.
- Ireland was inhabited by the Protestants and the Catholics. The English supported the Protestants and established their rule with their help and support. Catholics, who constituted a majority in Ireland, revolted against the British on numerous occasions but were suppressed.
- Ireland forcibly became a part of Britain in 1801. The English language dominated. Both Scotland and Ireland were subordinate to England.
- The idea of a nation was expressed in various forms by artists and painters. Most of the nations were portrayed as female figures.
- The female figure became an allegory of the nation. 'Marianne' in France and 'Germania' in Germany became allegories of a nation.



Visualising the Nation

- In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, artists represented a country as a person and nations as female figures.
- The female form that was chosen to personify the nation did not stand for any particular woman in real life; rather it sought to give the abstract idea of the nation a concrete form.

- During the French Revolution, female figures portray ideas such as Liberty, Justice and the Republic. Liberty is represented as a red cap, or the broken chain, Justice a blindfolded woman carrying a pair of weighing scales.
- Statues of Marianne were erected in public squares to remind the public Of the national symbol Of unity and to persuade them to identify with it.

Nationalism and Imperialism

- Nationalism which is the feeling of love for one's own nation became intense and narrow minded in the mid-nineteenth century.
- Many nations became intolerant of each other and competed with one another for the control of territories.
- Imperialism is territorial control of a region or a country by another country by using military control.
- This feeling of nationalism became intense in the Balkan region. The Balkan region formerly comprised the present-day territories of Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Croatia, Greece, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro. The people in these countries were called Slavs.
- The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in the region made the situation very explosive in the region as every state was jealous of one another and hoped to gain independence at the cost of the other.
- One by one, the European nationalities in the Balkan broke away from the control of the Ottoman Empire and declared independence.
- As the different Slavic nationalities struggled to define their identity and independence, the Balkan area became an area of intense conflict.
- During this time, many powerful European nations such as England, France, Russia and Germany competed to gain control in the Balkan region. This competition for gaining prominence in the region finally led to the First World War in 1914.
- Later, several Asian and African countries which were colonised by the European nations began to oppose imperial domination.
- Anti- imperial movements that began in colonies were nationalist in nature as people were fighting to form independent nation states.