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Old Languages, New Models

The close of the era of successful national liberation movements in the Americas coincided rather closely with the onset of the age of nationalism in Europe. If we consider the character of these newer nationalisms which, between 1820 and 1920, changed the face of the Old World, two striking features mark them off from their ancestors. First, in almost all of them 'national print-languages' were of central ideological and political importance, whereas Spanish and English were never issues in the revolutionary Americas. Second, all were able to work from visible models provided by their distant, and after the convulsions of the French Revolution, not so distant, predecessors. The 'nation' thus became something capable of being consciously aspired to from early on, rather than a slowly sharpening frame of vision. Indeed, as we shall see, the 'nation' proved an invention on which it was impossible to secure a patent. It became available for pirating by widely different, and sometimes unexpected, hands. In this chapter, therefore, the analytical focus will be on print-language and piracy.

In blithe disregard of some obvious extra-European facts, the great Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803) had declared, towards the end of the eighteenth century, that: 'Denn *jedes* Volk ist Volk; es hat

seine National Bildung wie *seine* Sprache.'[1] This splendidly *eng*-European conception of nation-ness as linked to a private-property language had wide influence in nineteenth-century Europe and, more narrowly, on subsequent theorizing about the nature of nationalism. What were the origins of this dream? Most probably, they lay in the profound shrinkage of the European world in time and space that began already in the fourteenth century, and was caused initially by the Humanists' excavations and later, paradoxically enough, by Europe's planetary expansion.

As Auerbach so well expresses it:[2]

> With the first dawn of humanism, there began to be a sense that the events of classical history and legend and also those of the Bible were not separated from the present simply by an extent of time but also by *completely different conditions of life.* Humanism with its program of renewal of antique forms of life and expression creates a historical perspective in depth such as no previous epoch known to us possessed: the humanists see antiquity in historical depth, and, against that background, the dark epochs of the intervening Middle Ages. . . . [This made impossible] re-establishing the autarchic life natural to antique culture or the historical naiveté of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The growth of what might be called 'comparative history' led in time to the hitherto unheard-of conception of a 'modernity' explicitly juxtaposed to 'antiquity,' and by no means necessarily to the latter's advantage. The issue was fiercely joined in the 'Battle of Ancients and Moderns' which dominated French intellectual life in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.[3] To quote Auerbach again, 'Under Louis XIV the French had the courage to consider their own

1. Kemiläinen, *Nationalism*, p. 42. Emphases added.
2. *Mimesis*, p. 282. Emphasis added.
3. The battle opened in 1689 when the 59-year old Charles Perrault published his poem *Siècle de Louis le Grand*, which argued that the arts and sciences had come to their full flowering in his own time and place.

culture a valid model on a par with that of the ancients, and they imposed this view upon the rest of Europe.'[4]

In the course of the sixteenth century, Europe's 'discovery' of grandiose civilizations hitherto only dimly rumoured – in China, Japan, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent – or completely unknown – Aztec Mexico and Incan Peru – suggested an irremediable human pluralism. Most of these civilizations had developed quite separate from the known history of Europe, Christendom, Antiquity, indeed man: their genealogies lay outside of and were unassimilable to Eden. (Only homogeneous, empty time would offer them accommodation.) The impact of the 'discoveries' can be gauged by the peculiar geographies of the imaginary polities of the age. More's *Utopia*, which appeared in 1516, purported to be the account of a sailor, encountered by the author in Antwerp, who had participated in Amerigo Vespucci's 1497–1498 expedition to the Americas. Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1626) was perhaps new above all because it was situated in the Pacific Ocean. Swift's magnificent Island of the Houyhnhnms (1726) came with a bogus map of its South Atlantic location. (The meaning of these settings may be clearer if one considers how unimaginable it would be to place Plato's Republic on any map, sham or real.) All these tongue-in-cheek utopias, 'modelled' on real discoveries, are depicted, not as lost Edens, but as *contemporary* societies. One could argue that they had to be, since they were composed as criticisms *of* contemporary societies, and the discoveries had ended the necessity for seeking models in a vanished antiquity.[5] In the wake of the utopians came the luminaries of the Enlightenment, Vico, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau, who increasingly exploited a 'real' non-Europe for a barrage of subversive writings directed against current European social and political institutions. In effect, it became possible to think of Europe as only one

4. *Mimesis*, p. 343. Notice that Auerbach says 'culture', not 'language'. We should also be chary of attributing 'nation-ness' to 'their own.'

5. Similarly, there is a nice contrast between the two famous Mongols of English drama. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587–1588) describes a famous dynast dead since 1407. Dryden's *Aurangzeb* (1676) depicts a contemporary reigning Emperor (1658–1707).

among many civilizations, and not necessarily the Chosen or the best.[6]

In due course, discovery and conquest also caused a revolution in European ideas about language. From the earliest days, Portuguese, Dutch, and Spanish seamen, missionaries, merchants and soldiers had, for practical reasons – navigation, conversion, commerce and war – gathered word-lists of non-European languages to be assembled in simple lexicons. But it was only in the later eighteenth century that the scientific comparative study of languages really got under way. Out of the English conquest of Bengal came William Jones's pioneering investigations of Sanskrit (1786), which led to a growing realization that Indic civilization was far older than that of Greece or Judaea. Out of Napoléon's Egyptian expedition came Jean Champollion's decipherment of hieroglyphics (1835), which pluralized that extra-European antiquity.[7] Advances in Semitics undermined the idea that Hebrew was either uniquely ancient or of divine provenance. Once again, genealogies were being conceived which could only be accommodated by homogeneous, empty time. 'Language became less of a continuity between an outside power and the human speaker than an internal field created and accomplished by language users among themselves.'[8] Out of these discoveries came philology, with its studies of comparative grammar, classification of languages into families, and reconstructions by scientific reasoning of 'proto-languages' out of oblivion. As Hobsbawm rightly observes, here was 'the first science which regarded evolution as its very core.'[9]

From this point on the old sacred languages – Latin, Greek, and Hebrew – were forced to mingle on equal ontological footing with a motley plebeian crowd of vernacular rivals, in a movement which complemented their earlier demotion in the market-place by print-capitalism. If all languages now shared a common (intra-)mundane

6. So, as European imperialism smashed its insouciant way around the globe, other civilizations found themselves traumatically confronted by pluralisms which annihilated their sacred genealogies. The Middle Kingdom's marginalization to the Far East is emblematic of this process.

7. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, p. 337.

8. Edward Said, *Orientalism*, p. 136.

9. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, p. 337.

status, then all were in principle equally worthy of study and admiration. But by who? Logically, since now none belonged to God, by their new owners: each language's native speakers – and readers.

As Seton-Watson most usefully shows, the nineteenth century was, in Europe and its immediate peripheries, a golden age of vernacularizing lexicographers, grammarians, philologists, and litterateurs.[10] The energetic activities of these professional intellectuals were central to the shaping of nineteenth-century European nationalisms in complete contrast to the situation in the Americas between 1770 and 1830. Monolingual dictionaries were vast compendia of each language's print-treasury, portable (if sometimes barely so) from shop to school, office to residence. Bilingual dictionaries made visible an approaching egalitarianism among languages – whatever the political realities outside, within the covers of the Czech-German/German-Czech dictionary the paired languages had a common status. The visionary drudges who devoted years to their compilation were of necessity drawn to or nurtured by the great libraries of Europe, above all those of the universities. And much of their immediate clientele was no less inevitably university and pre-university students. Hobsbawm's dictum that 'the progress of schools and universities measures that of nationalism, just as schools and especially universities became its most conscious champions,' is certainly correct for nineteenth-century Europe, if not for other times and places.[11]

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10. 'Just because the history of language is usually in our time kept so rigidly apart from conventional political, economic and social history, it has seemed to me desirable to bring it together with these, even at the cost of less expertise.' *Nations and States*, p. 11. In fact, one of the most valuable aspects of Seton-Watson's text is precisely his attention to language history – though one can disagree with the way he employs it.

11. *The Age of Revolution*, p. 166. Academic institutions were insignificant to the American nationalisms. Hobsbawm himself notes that though there were 6,000 students in Paris at the time, they played virtually no role in the French Revolution (p. 167). He also usefully reminds us that although education spread rapidly in the first half of the nineteenth century, the number of adolescents in schools was still minuscule by modern standards: a mere 19,000 *lycée* students in France in 1842; 20,000 high school pupils among the 68,000,000 population of Imperial Russia in 1850; a likely total of 48,000 university students in all Europe in 1848. Yet in the revolutions of *that* year, this tiny, but strategic, group played a pivotal role. (pp. 166–67).

One can thus trace this lexicographic revolution as one might the ascending roar in an arsenal alight, as each small explosion ignites others, till the final blaze turns night into day.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the prodigious labours of German, French and English scholars had not only made available in handy printed form virtually the entire extant corpus of the Greek classics, along with the necessary philological and lexicographic adjuncts, but in dozens of books were recreating a glittering, and firmly pagan, ancient Hellenic civilization. In the last quarter of the century, this 'past' became increasingly accessible to a small number of young Greek-speaking Christian intellectuals, most of whom had studied or travelled outside the confines of the Ottoman Empire.[12] Exalted by the philhellenism at the centres of Western European civilization, they undertook the 'debarbarizing' of the modern Greeks, i.e., their transformation into beings worthy of Pericles and Socrates.[13] Emblematic of this change in consciousness are the following words of one of these young men, Adamantios Koraes (who later became an ardent lexicographer!), in an address to a French audience in Paris in 1803:[14]

> For the first time the nation surveys the hideous spectacle of its ignorance and trembles in measuring with the eye the distance separating it from its ancestors' glory. This painful *discovery*, however, does not precipitate the Greeks into despair: We are the descendants of Greeks, they implicitly told themselves, we must either try to become again worthy of this name, or we must not bear it.

Similarly in the late eighteenth century, grammars, dictionaries and histories of Rumanian appeared, accompanied by a drive, successful at first in the Habsburg realms, later in the Ottoman, for the replacement of Cyrillic by the Roman alphabet (marking

12. The first Greek newspapers appeared in 1784 in Vienna. Philike Hetairia, the secret society largely responsible for the 1821 anti-Ottoman uprising, was founded in the 'great new Russian grain port of Odessa' in 1814.

13. See Elie Kedourie's introduction to *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, p. 40.

14. Ibid., pp. 43–44. Emphasis added. The full text of Koraes's 'The Present State of Civilization in Greece' is given in pp. 157–82. It contains a stunningly modern analysis of the sociological bases for Greek nationalism.

Rumanian sharply off from its Slavic-Orthodox neighbours).[15] Between 1789 and 1794, the Russian Academy, modelled on the Académie Française, produced a six-volume Russian dictionary, followed by an official grammar in 1802. Both represented a triumph of the vernacular over Church Slavonic. Although right into the eighteenth century Czech was the language only of the peasantry in Bohemia (the nobility and rising middle classes spoke German), the Catholic priest Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829) produced in 1792 his *Geschichte der böhmischen Sprache und ältern Literatur*, the first systematic history of the Czech language and literature. In 1835–39 appeared Josef Jungmann's pioneering five-volume Czech-German dictionary.[16]

Of the birth of Hungarian nationalism Ignotus writes that it is an event 'recent enough to be dated: 1772, the year of publication of some unreadable works by the versatile Hungarian author György Bessenyei, then a resident in Vienna and serving in Maria Theresa's bodyguard. . . . Bessenyei's *magna opera* were meant to prove that the Hungarian language was suitable for the very highest literary genre.'[17] Further stimulus was provided by the extensive publications of Ferenc Kazinczy (1759–1831), 'the father of Hungarian literature,' and by the removal, in 1784, of what became the University of Budapest to that city from the small provincial town of Trnava. Its first political expression was the Latin-speaking Magyar nobility's hostile reaction in the 1780s to Emperor Joseph II's decision to replace Latin by German as the prime language of imperial administration.[18]

In the period 1800–1850, as the result of pioneering work by native

15. Not pretending to any expert knowledge of Central and Eastern Europe, I have relied heavily on Seton-Watson in the analysis that follows. On Rumanian, see *Nations and States*, p. 177.

16. Ibid., pp. 150–153.

17. Paul Ignotus, *Hungary*, p. 44. 'He did prove it, but his polemical drive was more convincing than the aesthetic value of the examples he produced.' It is perhaps worth noting that this passage occurs in a subsection entitled 'The Inventing of the Hungarian Nation,' which opens with this pregnant phrase: 'A nation is born when a few people decide that it should be.'

18. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, pp. 158–61. The reaction was violent enough to persuade his successor Leopold II (r. 1790–1792) to reinstate Latin. See also below, Chapter VI. It is instructive that Kazinczy sided politically with Joseph II on this issue. (Ignotus, *Hungary*, p. 48).

scholars, three distinct literary languages were formed in the northern Balkans: Slovene, Serbo-Croat, and Bulgarian. If, in the 1830s, 'Bulgarians' had been widely thought to be of the same nation as the Serbs and Croats, and had in fact shared in the Illyrian Movement, a separate Bulgarian national state was to come into existence by 1878. In the eighteenth century, Ukrainian (Little Russian) was contemptuously tolerated as a language of yokels. But in 1798 Ivan Kotlarevsky wrote his *Aeneid*, an enormously popular satirical poem on Ukrainian life. In 1804, the University of Kharkov was founded and rapidly became the centre for a boom in Ukrainian literature. In 1819 appeared the first Ukrainian grammar – only 17 years after the official Russian one. And in the 1830s followed the works of Taras Shevchenko, of whom Seton-Watson observes that 'the formation of an accepted Ukrainian literary language owes more to him than to any other individual. The use of this language was the decisive stage in the formation of an Ukrainian national consciousness.'[19] Shortly thereafter, in 1846, the first Ukrainian nationalist organization was founded in Kiev – by a historian!

In the eighteenth century the language-of-state in today's Finland was Swedish. After the territory's union with Czardom in 1809, the official language became Russian. But an 'awakening' interest in Finnish and the Finnish past, first expressed through texts written in Latin and Swedish in the later eighteenth century, by the 1820s was increasingly manifested in the vernacular.[20] The leaders of the burgeoning Finnish nationalist movement were 'persons whose profession largely consisted of the handling of language: writers, teachers, pastors, and lawyers. The study of folklore and the rediscovery and piecing together of popular epic poetry went together with the publication of grammars and dictionaries, and led to the appearance of periodicals which served to standardize Finnish literary [i.e. print-] language, on behalf of which stronger

19. *Nations and States*, p. 187. Needless to say, Czarism gave these people short shrift. Shevchenko was broken in Siberia. The Habsburgs, however, gave some encouragement to Ukrainian nationalists in Galicia – to counterbalance the Poles.

20. Kemiläinen, *Nationalism*, pp. 208–15.

political demands could be advanced.'[21] In the case of Norway, which had long shared a written language with the Danes, though with a completely different pronunciation, nationalism emerged with Ivar Aasen's new Norwegian grammar (1848) and dictionary (1850), texts which responded to and stimulated demands for a specifically Norwegian print-language.

Elsewhere, in the latter portion of the nineteenth century, we find Afrikaner nationalism pioneered by Boer pastors and litterateurs, who in the 1870s were successful in making the local Dutch patois into a literary language and naming it something no longer European. Maronites and Copts, many of them products of Beirut's American College (founded in 1866) and the Jesuit College of St. Joseph (founded in 1875) were major contributors to the revival of classical Arabic and the spread of Arab nationalism.[22] And the seeds of Turkish nationalism are easily detectable in the appearance of a lively vernacular press in Istanbul in the 1870s.[23]

Nor should we forget that the same epoch saw the vernacularization of another form of printed page: the score. After Dobrovský came Smetana, Dvořák, and Janáček; after Aasen, Grieg; after Kazinczy, Béla Bártok; and so on well into our century.

At the same time, it is self-evident that all these lexicographers, philologists, grammarians, folklorists, publicists, and composers did not carry on their revolutionary activities in a vacuum. They were, after all, producers for the print-market, and they were linked, via that silent bazaar, to consuming publics. Who were these consumers? In the most general sense: the families of the reading classes – not merely the 'working father,' but the servant-girded wife and the school-age children. If we note that as late as 1840, even in Britain and France, the most advanced states in Europe, almost half the population was still illiterate (and in backward Russia almost 98 per

21. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, p. 72.

22. Ibid., pp. 232 and 261.

23. Kohn, *The Age of Nationalism*, pp. 105–7. This meant rejection of 'Ottoman', a dynastic officialese combining elements of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic. Characteristically, Ibrahim Sinasi, founder of the first such newspaper, had just returned from five years study in France. Where he led, others soon followed. By 1876, there were seven Turkish-language dailies in Constantinople.

cent), 'reading classes' meant people of some power. More concretely, they were, in addition to the old ruling classes of nobilities and landed gentries, courtiers and ecclesiastics, rising middle strata of plebeian lower officials, professionals, and commercial and industrial bourgeoisies.

Mid-nineteenth-century Europe witnessed a rapid increase in state expenditures and the size of state bureaucracies (civil and military), despite the absence of any major local wars. 'Between 1830 and 1850 public expenditure per capita increased by 25 per cent in Spain, by 40 per cent in France, by 44 per cent in Russia, by 50 per cent in Belgium, by 70 per cent in Austria, by 75 per cent in the USA, and by over 90 per cent in The Netherlands.'[24] Bureaucratic expansion, which also meant bureaucratic specialization, opened the gates of official preferment to much greater numbers and of far more varied social origins than hitherto. Take even the decrepit, sinecure-filled, nobility-ridden Austro-Hungarian state machinery: the percentage of men of middle class origins in the top echelons of its civil half rose from 0 in 1804, through 27 in 1829, 35 in 1859, to 55 in 1878. In the armed services, the same trend appeared, though characteristically at a slower, later pace: the middle class component of the officer corps rose from 10 per cent to 75 per cent between 1859 and 1918.[25]

If the expansion of bureaucratic middle classes was a relatively even phenomenon, occurring at comparable rates in both advanced and backward states of Europe, the rise of commercial and industrial bourgeoisies was of course highly uneven – massive and rapid in some places, slow and stunted in others. But no matter where, this 'rise' has to be understood in its relationship to vernacular print-capitalism.

The pre-bourgeois ruling classes generated their cohesions in some sense outside language, or at least outside print-language. If the ruler of Siam took a Malay noblewoman as a concubine, or if the King of England married a Spanish princess – did they ever talk seriously together? Solidarities were the products of kinship, clientship, and

24. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, p. 229.

25. Peter J. Katzenstein, *Disjoined Partners, Austria and Germany since 1815*, pp. 74, 112.

personal loyalties. 'French' nobles could assist 'English' kings against 'French' monarchs, not on the basis of shared language or culture, but, Machiavellian calculations aside, of shared kinsmen and friendships. The relatively small size of traditional aristocracies, their fixed political bases, and the personalization of political relations implied by sexual intercourse and inheritance, meant that their cohesions as classes were as much concrete as imagined. An illiterate nobility could still act as a nobility. But the bourgeoisie? Here was a class which, figuratively speaking, came into being as a class only in so many replications. Factory-owner in Lille was connected to factory-owner in Lyon only by reverberation. They had no necessary reason to know of one another's existence; they did not typically marry each other's daughters or inherit each other's property. But they did come to visualize in a general way the existence of thousands and thousands like themselves through print-language. For an illiterate bourgeoisie is scarcely imaginable. Thus in world-historical terms bourgeoisies were the first classes to achieve solidarities on an essentially imagined basis. But in a nineteenth-century Europe in which Latin had been defeated by vernacular print-capitalism for something like two centuries, these solidarities had an outermost stretch limited by vernacular legibilities. To put it another way, one can sleep with anyone, but one can only read some people's words.

Nobilities, landed gentries, professionals, functionaries, and men of the market – these then were the *potential* consumers of the philological revolution. But such a clientele was almost nowhere fully realized, and the combinations of actual consumers varied considerably from zone to zone. To see why, one has to return to the basic contrast drawn earlier between Europe and the Americas. In the Americas there was an almost perfect isomorphism between the stretch of the various empires and that of their vernaculars. In Europe, however, such coincidences were rare, and intra-European dynastic empires were basically polyvernacular. In other words, power and print-language mapped different realms.

The general growth in literacy, commerce, industry, communications and state machineries that marked the nineteenth century created powerful new impulses for vernacular linguistic unification within each

dynastic realm. Latin hung on as a language-of-state in Austro-Hungary as late as the early 1840s, but it disappeared almost immediately thereafter. Language-of-state it might be, but it could not, in the nineteenth century, be the language of business, of the sciences, of the press, or of literature, especially in a world in which these languages continuously interpenetrated one another.

Meantime, vernacular languages-of-state assumed ever greater power and status in a process which, at least at the start, was largely unplanned. Thus English elbowed Gaelic out of most of Ireland, French pushed Breton to the wall, and Castilian reduced Catalan to marginality. In those realms, such as Britain and France, where, for quite extraneous reasons, there happened to be, by mid-century, a relatively high coincidence of language-of-state and language of the population,[26] the general interpenetration alluded to above did not have dramatic political effects. (These cases are closest to those of the Americas.) In many other realms, of which Austro-Hungary is probably the polar example, the consequences were inevitably explosive. In its huge, ramshackle, polyglot, but increasingly literate, domain the replacement of Latin by *any* vernacular, in the mid nineteenth century, promised enormous advantages to those of its subjects who *already* used that print-language, and appeared correspondingly menacing to those who did not. I emphasize the word *any*, since, as we shall be discussing in greater detail below, German's nineteenth century elevation by the Habsburg court, German as some might think it, had nothing whatever to do with German nationalism. (Under these circumstances, one would expect a self-conscious nationalism to arise *last* in each dynastic realm among the native-readers of the official vernacular. And such expectations are borne out by the historical record.)

In terms of our lexicographers' clienteles, it is therefore not surprising to find very different bodies of customers according to different political conditions. In Hungary, for example, where virtually

26. As we have seen, vernacularization of the languages-of-state in these two realms was under way very early. In the case of the UK, the military subjugation of the Gaeltacht early in the eighteenth century and the Famine of the 1840s were powerful contributory factors.

no Magyar bourgeoisie existed, but one out of eight claimed some aristocratic status, the parapets of print-Hungarian were defended against the German tide by segments of the petty nobility and an impoverished landed gentry.[27] Much the same could be said of Polish-readers. More typical, however, was a coalition of lesser gentries, academics, professionals, and businessmen, in which the first often provided leaders of 'standing,' the second and third myths, poetry, newspapers, and ideological formulations, and the last money and marketing facilities. The amiable Koraes offers us a fine vignette of the early clientele for Greek nationalism, in which intellectuals and entrepreneurs predominated:[28]

> In those towns which were less poor, which had some well-to-do inhabitants and a few schools, and therefore a few individuals who could at least read and understand the ancient writers, the revolution began earlier and could make more rapid and more comforting progress. In some of these towns, schools are already being enlarged, and the study of *foreign* languages and even of those sciences which are taught in Europe [sic] is being introduced into them. The wealthy sponsor the printing of books translated from Italian, French, German, and English; they send to Europe at their expense young men eager to learn; they give their children a better education, not excepting girls . . .

Reading coalitions, with compositions that lay variously on the spectrum between Hungarian and Greek, developed similarly throughout Central and Eastern Europe, and into the Near East as the century proceeded.[29] How far the urban and rural masses shared in the new vernacularly imagined communities naturally also varied a great deal.

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27. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, p. 165. For an excellent, detailed discussion, see Ignotus, *Hungary*, pp. 44–56; also Jászi, *The Dissolution*, pp. 224–25.

28. Kedourie, *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, p. 170. Emphasis added. Everything here is exemplary. If Koraes looks to 'Europe,' it is over his shoulder; he faces Constantinople. Ottoman is not yet a foreign language. And non-labouring future wives are entering the print-market.

29. For examples, see Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, pp. 72 (Finland), 145 (Bulgaria), 153 (Bohemia), and 432 (Slovakia); Kohn, *The Age of Nationalism*, pp. 83 (Egypt) and 103 (Persia).

Much depended on the relationship between these masses and the missionaries of nationalism. At one extreme, perhaps, one might point to Ireland, where a Catholic priesthood drawn from the peasantry and close to it played a vital mediating role. Another extreme is suggested by Hobsbawm's ironic comment that: 'The Galician peasants in 1846 opposed the Polish revolutionaries even though these actually proclaimed the abolition of serfdom, preferring to massacre gentlemen and trust to the Emperor's officials.'[30] But everywhere, in fact, as literacy increased, it became easier to arouse popular support, with the masses discovering a new glory in the print elevation of languages they had humbly spoken all along.

Up to a point, then, Nairn's arresting formulation – 'The new middle-class intelligentsia of nationalism had to invite the masses into history; and the invitation-card had to be written in a language they understood'[31] – is correct. But it will be hard to see why the invitation came to seem so attractive, and why such different alliances were able to issue it (Nairn's middle-class intelligentsia was by no means the only host), unless we turn finally to piracy.

Hobsbawm observes that 'The French Revolution was not made or led by a formed party or movement in the modern sense, nor by men attempting to carry out a systematic programme. It hardly even threw up "leaders" of the kind to which twentieth century revolutions have accustomed us, until the post-revolutionary figure of Napoléon.'[32] But once it had occurred, it entered the accumulating memory of print. The overwhelming and bewildering concatenation of events experienced by its makers and its victims became a 'thing' – and with its own name: The French Revolution. Like a vast shapeless rock worn to a rounded boulder by countless drops of water, the experience was shaped by millions of printed words into a 'concept' on the printed page, and, in due course, into a model. Why 'it' broke out, what 'it' aimed for, why 'it' succeeded or failed, became subjects for endless polemics on the part of friends and foes:

30. *The Age of Revolution*, p. 169.
31. *The Break-up of Britain*, p. 340.
32. *The Age of Revolution*, p. 80.

but of its 'it-ness', as it were, no one ever after had much doubt.[33]

In much the same way, the independence movements in the Americas became, as soon as they were printed about, 'concepts,' 'models', and indeed 'blueprints.' In 'reality', 'Bolívar's fear of Negro insurrections and San Martín's summoning of his indigenes to Peruvianness jostled one another chaotically. But printed words washed away the former almost at once, so that, if recalled at all, it appeared an inconsequential anomaly. Out of the American welter came these imagined realities: nation-states, republican institutions, common citizenships, popular sovereignty, national flags and anthems, etc., and the liquidation of their conceptual opposites: dynastic empires, monarchical institutions, absolutisms, subjecthoods, inherited nobilities, serfdoms, ghettoes, and so forth. (Nothing more stunning, in this context, than the general 'elision' of massive slavery from the 'modal' USA of the nineteenth century, and of the shared language of the 'modal' Southern republics.) Furthermore, the validity and generalizability of the blueprint were undoubtedly confirmed by the *plurality* of the independent states.

In effect, by the second decade of the nineteenth century, if not earlier, a 'model' of 'the' independent national state was available for pirating.[34] (The first groups to do so were the marginalized vernacular-based coalitions of the educated on which this chapter has been focused.) But precisely because it was by then a known model, it imposed certain 'standards' from which too-marked deviations were impermissible. Even backward and reactionary Hungarian and Polish gentries were hard put to it not to make a show of 'inviting in' (if only to the pantry) their oppressed compatriots. If you like, the logic of San Martín's Peruvianization was at work. If 'Hungarians' deserved a

33. Compare: 'The very name of the Industrial Revolution reflects its relatively tardy impact on Europe. The thing [*sic*] existed in Britain before the word. Not until the 1820s did English and French socialists – themselves an unprecedented group – invent it, probably by analogy with the political revolution of France.' Ibid., p. 45.

34. It would be more precise, probably to say that the model was a complex composite of French and American elements. But the 'observable reality' of France until after 1870 was restored monarchies and the ersatz dynasticism of Napoléon's great-nephew.

national state, then that *meant* Hungarians, all of them;[35] it meant a state in which the ultimate locus of sovereignty had to be the collectivity of Hungarian-speakers and readers; and, in due course, the liquidation of serfdom, the promotion of popular education, the expansion of the suffrage, and so on. Thus the 'populist' character of the early European nationalism, even when led, demagogically, by the most backward social groups, was deeper than in the Americas: serfdom *had* to go, legal slavery was unimaginable – not least because the conceptual model was set in ineradicable place.

35. Not that this was a clear-cut matter. Half the subjects of the Kingdom of Hungary were non-Magyar. Only one third of the serfs were Magyar-speakers. In the early nineteenth century, the high Magyar aristocracy spoke French or German; the middle and lower nobility 'conversed in a dog-Latin strewn with Magyar, but also with Slovak, Serb, and Romanian expressions as well as vernacular German . . . .' Ignotus, *Hungary*, pp. 45–46, and 81.