WHAT IS A NATION?

Europe 1789–1914

EDITED BY TIMOTHY BAYCROFT AND MARK HEWITSON
WHAT IS A NATION?
This page intentionally left blank
What is a Nation?

*Europe 1789–1914*

Edited by
TIMOTHY BAYCROFT
and
MARK HEWITSON
Acknowledgements

The fact that this is a commissioned volume rather than a collection of conference papers has not prevented the editors accumulating a long list of debts. The authors were able to hear each other’s contribution at a conference kindly hosted by the German Historical Institute in London. Hagen Schulze, the Director of the Institute, was instrumental in helping to initiate the project and made very much appreciated suggestions throughout.

For a comparative topic of this scale, we required—and found—a large number of sponsors. In addition to the German Historical Institute, we are indebted to the British Academy, the German History Society, the Association for the Study of Modern Italy, Sheffield University’s Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies, and UCL’s Centre for European Studies for their financial and logistical support.

We are also very grateful to Peter Alter, John Breuilly, Miles Taylor, and Martin Brown for acting as chairs of panels and for stimulating discussion of various questions, as well as sharing their expertise on the subject of nationalism more generally. Together with intellectual stimuli provided by the contributors themselves, their interventions made possible—we hope—a coherent volume on a bewilderingly broad and unwieldy topic. At a later stage, we also received welcome suggestions and support from Oxford University Press’s editorial staff and anonymous referees. Any remaining errors in the volume, which are of course difficult to excise completely from a book of this type, are very much our own.

Mark Hewitson, University College London
Timothy Baycroft, University of Sheffield
March 2006
This page intentionally left blank
Contents

Notes on Contributors ix
Maps xii–xiii

Introduction 1
Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson

PART I. CIVIS AND ETHNIE

1. Nation, Identity, and Enmity 17
   Michael Jeismann

2. France 28
   Timothy Baycroft

3. Germany 42
   Stefan Berger

PART II. DEMOS

4. Nation and Region 63
   Maiken Umbach

5. The Low Countries 81
   Carl Strikwerda

6. Switzerland 100
   Oliver Zimmer

7. The Ottoman Empire 120
   Constantin Iordachi

PART III. KULTUR

8. Language and Nation 155
   Brian Vick

9. The Habsburg Monarchy 171
   Mark Cornwall

10. Denmark, Norway, and Sweden 192
    Mary Hilson
## Contents

11. Spain
   *Stephen Jacobson*
   
   **PART IV. ÉTAT**

12. Nation-States and Wars
   *Jörn Leonhard*
   
13. Italy
   *David Laven*
   
14. The United Kingdom
   *Chris Williams*
   
15. Russia
   *Vera Tolz*
   
   **Conclusion**
   *Mark Hewitson*
   
   **Select Bibliography**
   
   **Index**
Notes on Contributors

TIMOTHY BAYCROFT is a Senior Lecturer in Modern French History at the University of Sheffield. He works on questions of identity and borders in France and Europe. His publications include Culture, Identity and Nationalism: French Flanders in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Woodbridge, 2004) and Nationalism in Europe 1789–1945 (Cambridge, 1998). He is currently completing a book on the construction of the French nation entitled France: Inventing the Nation to appear in the Arnold Inventing the Nation series.

STEFAN BERGER is Professor of Modern German and Comparative European History at the University of Manchester. He is working on issues of nationalism and national identity, as well as on historical theory and historiography and on comparative labour history. Currently he is directing a five-year European Science Foundation programme on the writing of national histories in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe. Among his recent publications in the area of nationalism are Germany: Inventing the Nation (London, 2004) and The Search for Normality: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Germany since 1800 (Oxford, second edn., 2003).

MARK CORNWALL is Professor of Modern European History at the University of Southampton. He specializes in the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire and nationalist conflict in the Czech and Yugoslav regions of East-Central Europe. His publications include a monograph about nationalist propaganda in the First World War: The Undermining of Austria-Hungary (Basingstoke, 2000); and an edited volume of essays: The Last Years of Austria-Hungary (Exeter, 2002). He has also written extensively on the Czech-German relationship in Bohemia, and is currently completing a book about Youth, War and National Regeneration in Bohemia 1900–1940.

MARK HEWITSON is a Senior Lecturer in German Politics and History at University College London. His publications include National Identity and Political Thought in Germany: Wilhelmine Depictions of the French Third Republic, 1890–1914 (Oxford, 2000) and Germany and the Causes of the First World War (Oxford, 2004). He has written various articles on German foreign policy, the construction of national identities, and aspects of economic, military, and constitutional history. He is currently working on a study of the politics of nationalism in Germany in the period from the 1840s to the 1930s.

MARY HILSON is a Lecturer in Contemporary Scandinavian History at University College London. She has published on Swedish and British social history, and has recently finished a book entitled Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective: Britain and Sweden, c. 1890–1920 (Lund, forthcoming).

CONSTANTIN IORDACHI, is a Junior Research Fellow at the Past, Inc. Center for Historical Studies, and is Assistant Professor of History at the Central European University, Budapest. His publications include: Charisma, Politics and Violence: The Legion of the ‘Archangel Michael’ in Inter-war Romania (Trondheim, 2004); Citizenship, Nation- and
State-Building: The Integration of Northern Dobrogea in Romania, 1878–1913 (Carl Back Papers in Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 2002); and his book The Making of Nation-State Citizenship in Southeastern Europe during the Long Nineteenth Century: The Case of Romania is forthcoming with the CEU Press, Budapest. He is also the co-editor of Nationalism and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies (Budapest/Iaşi, 2001).

Stephen Jacobson is a Lecturer in European Studies at King’s College London. His major publications on nationalism include: “‘The Head and Heart of Spain’: New Perspectives on Nationalism and Nationhood’, Social History, 29/3 (2004), 393–407; and ‘Law and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe: The Case of Catalonia in Comparative Context’, Law and History Review, 20/2 (2002), 307–47. He is currently writing a book on Barcelona lawyers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Michael Jeismann lectures at the University of Basel and works for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. His publications include Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich 1792–1918 (Stuttgart, 1992) and Auf Wiedersehen Gestern: Die deutsche Vergangenheit und die Politik von Morgen (Frankfurt a. M., 2001).

David Laven is a Lecturer in Italian History at the University of Reading. His research focuses on the impact of Napoleonic rule and Habsburg domination in the Italian peninsula. He is the joint editor of Napoleon’s Legacy (Oxford, 2000) and is completing a monograph entitled The Habsburg Administration of Venetia 1814–35.

Jörn Leonhard is the Friedrich Schiller Reader in West European History at the Historical Institute of the University of Jena. His publications include a study of Liberalism, and he has jointly edited Nationalismen in Europa: West- und Osteuropa im Vergleich (Göttingen, 2001).

Carl Strikwerda is the Dean of Arts and Sciences at the College of William and Mary in Virginia. He is the author of numerous works on the Low Countries, including A House Divided: Catholics, Socialists, and Flemish Nationalists in Nineteenth-Century Belgium (Lanham, Md., 1997). He has also edited works on labour activism and migration and the consumer cooperative movement, and is currently working on a book on globalization and the First World War.

Vera Tolz is a Professor of Russian Studies at the University of Manchester. She has published widely on various aspects of Russian nationalism and the relationship between intellectuals and the state under the communist regime. Her books include (co-editor) Gender and Nation in Contemporary Europe (Manchester, 2005); Russia: Inventing the Nation (London, 2001); (co-editor) European Democratization since 1800 (Basingstoke, 2000); and Russian Academicians and the Revolution: Combining Professionalism and Politics (New York, 1997).

Maiken Umbach is a Senior Lecturer in Modern European History at the University of Manchester, and an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at University College London. In the past few years, she has also held visiting appointments at the Australian National University, Harvard, and the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. She is author of Federalism and Enlightenment in Germany, 1740–1806 (London, 2000), editor of German Federalism: Past, Present and Future (Basingstoke, 2002) and, with Bernd Hüppauf, Vernacular
Modernism: Heimat, Globalization and the Built Environment (Stanford, Calif., 2005), as well as numerous articles on the cultural politics of European ‘second cities’ and regionalism. Umbach is currently completing a book-length study on German Cities and the Genesis of Modernism, 1890–1930.

Brian Vick is Lecturer in Modern European History at the University of Sheffield. In addition to two articles on nineteenth-century German nationalism, he is author of the book Defining Germany: The 1848 Frankfurt Parliamentarians and National Identity (Cambridge, Mass., 2002). Currently he is working on a new project that takes a fresh look at the Vienna Congress of 1814–15 within the context of European political culture, in which the Congress is explored as an event in intellectual and cultural as well as political and diplomatic history.

Chris Williams is Professor of Welsh History at the University of Wales Swansea. He has published on many areas of modern Welsh and British history, nationalism, and identity. He is the editor of A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain (Oxford, 2004), and is currently working on a book on collective identities in Newport, Monmouthshire, as well as jointly editing a volume on Wales at War and Peace.

Oliver Zimmer is a Lecturer in History at the University of Durham. His research focuses upon German-speaking Europe 1760–1914, with particular reference to the development of nations and nationalism. He is the author of A Contested Nation: History, Memory and Nationalism in Switzerland, 1761–1891 (Cambridge, 2003), Nationalism in Europe, 1890–1940 (Basingstoke, 2003), and is the co-editor of Power and the Nation in European History (Cambridge, 2005).
Europe in 1914
Europe in 1815
This page intentionally left blank
Introduction

What was a Nation in Nineteenth-Century Europe?

Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson

A nation is therefore the expression of a great solidarity, constituted by a feeling for the common sacrifices that have been made and for those one is prepared to make again. It presupposes a past; however, it is epitomised in the present by a tangible fact: consent, the clearly expressed desire that the common life should continue. The existence of a nation is (excuse the metaphor) a daily plebiscite, just as the existence of the individual is a perpetual affirmation of life. . . . In the order of ideas I am placing before you, a nation has no more right than a king to say to a province: ‘You belong to me, therefore I am taking you.’ A province, for us, is its inhabitants, and if anyone has the right to be consulted in this matter, it is the inhabitant. A nation never has a genuine interest in annexing or retaining a country against its will. The desire of nations to be together is the only real criterion that must always be taken into account. . . .

Human desires change; but what does not change on this earth? Nations are not something eternal. They have begun, they will end. They will be replaced, in all probability, by a European confederation. But such is not the law of the century in which we live. At the present time the existence of nations happens to be good, even necessary.

Ernest Renan, Qu’est-ce qu’une nation? (1882)¹

The question ‘what is a nation?’, posed over a century ago by the French historian Ernest Renan, still awaits a satisfactory answer. During the last three decades, as Western European nation-states appeared to be breaking up under the impact of European integration and globalization, and as the boundaries of the post-war order began to be challenged after the fall of the Iron Curtain, scholars have helped to make the ‘national question’ one of the most pressing problems of contemporary historical and political debate. There is a danger, however, that much of the general literature which such

scholars have produced overlooks the conditions and causes of nationalism’s
 genesis and diffusion. In particular, commentators have ignored Renan’s acknow-
 ledgement that ‘ethnic’ mythology and history—the sentiment of sacrifices
 which one has made—frequently existed alongside the ‘civic’ and political
 voluntarism of a daily plebiscite’. This study re-examines such nineteenth-
 century ‘contradictions’ in order to place historical European forms of national-
 ism in a more appropriate context and to understand contemporary nationalism
 more fully.

Few political forces have had greater impact in the modern world than nation-
 alism. At the root of wars, revolutions, social and cultural movements, inspiring
 works of art and forming the basis of extensive political ideologies, nationalism
 has had global repercussions throughout the modern period, yet its tremendous
 diversity renders it difficult to analyse. Europe in the period from the French
 Revolution of 1789 up to the outbreak of the First World War was central to the
 development of nationalism. Boundaries shifted, a system of nation-states came
to cover the map of Europe, much of the world was divided up into nation-states’
 empires, waves of social and political unrest erupted throughout the continent,
 and new political languages of nationalism were developed. In order to understand
 nationalism, its nature and impact on the contemporary world it is necessary
to examine the place where it emerged in its modern forms: Europe in the long
 nineteenth century.

The study of the growth of nationalism in nineteenth-century Europe has been
 the object of countless works, ranging from case studies of individual countries
 or regions, through comparative analysis to overarching explanatory frameworks
drawing on the theory and methodology of numerous disciplines. Debates
 about chronology, causality, the essence of nationalism, and whether it is ‘natural’
have engaged scholars for several decades.² Nationalism itself can be understood
in a variety of ways, as ‘an ideology or political religion, a political movement
seeking state power, a cultural formation allowing industrial societies to function,
a modern cognitive framework, a movement of cultural and historical revival, or
a combination of these factors’.³ This volume analyses and compares these
different forms of nationalism, many of which emerged for the first time between
1789 and 1914, across a range of European countries and regions. It aims to put
detailed studies of nationalist politics and thought, which have proliferated over
the last ten years or so, into a wider European context. Furthermore, it questions
the theoretical framework of specific ‘types’ of nationalism as an explanatory
mechanism, through both case studies and comparative analysis. To begin with,
an understanding of the existing theories and the debates nationalism has gener-
ated is essential.

² For excellent coverage of the historiography of nationalism, see P. Lawrence, Nationalism: 
History and Theory (Harlow, 2005).
³ O. Zimmer, Nationalism in Europe 1890–1940 (Basingstoke, 2003), 5.
THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF MODERN NATIONALISM

The main explanatory theory in the general literature on nationalism still concerns the existence of distinct civic and ethnic types, with the former supposedly preponderant in Northern and Western Europe, and the latter in Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe. According to this explanation, civic nations are those characterized by an emphasis on citizenship, individual rights, and obligations within a political community, and which have been observed in countries with the early development of a unified state, a long and shared political history, and strong and adaptable political elites within a defined territorial and legal framework. Countries where the emergence of nationalism is held to have followed a civic form include Britain, France, and the Netherlands. Ethnic nations, on the other hand, have the emphasis placed upon shared myths of ancestry and historical memories, as well as common culture, and have been observed in places with threatened elites, and early democratization or late modernization. The repressive presence of polyglot empires or the defenceless fragmentation of small states are seen to have underpinned the growth of more unstable forms of ethnic nationalism in Germany, Italy, Russia, and the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Underlying the model is the idea that the growth and nature of nationalism, as well as the kinds of effects it has in the long-term development of individual nation-states can to a great extent be explained by the type of nationalism—civic or ethnic—which is found there.⁴

The origins of this model can be found in Hans Kohn’s distinction between ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ types of European nationalism, and was arguably already implicit in Friedrich Meinecke’s analytical separation of French and British ‘state-nations’ from German and Italian ‘cultural nations’, which was first made in 1907.⁵ Their work continues to resonate in contemporary accounts of nineteenth-century nation-building, nationalist politics, and the invention of national ideas, symbols, and rituals. The numerous influential works by Ernest Gellner sustain and refine the distinction between the two types of nationalism, linking the development of political nationalist movements with cultural definitions of the nation. While he does attempt to create a more complicated model, the basic dual distinction remains.⁶ The same dichotomy can be detected in analyses of civic, liberal, and democratic traditions, such as Rogers Brubaker’s comparison between French and German forms of citizenship, Jack Snyder’s recent thesis about the

---


radicalizing effects of rapid democratization, or Michel Winock’s distinction between ‘open’ nationalism, filled with the rhetoric of the civilizing mission and expressing solidarity with other would-be nations, and ‘closed’ nationalism, which arises in times of crisis (especially economic) and focuses on internal purity and rivalry with the ‘enemies’ who are ostensibly responsible for the crisis. It can also easily be discerned in investigations of ethnic and national mythologies, such as Liah Greenfeld’s typology of modern nationalism. While refining the model through the addition of an individualistic-libertarian versus collectivistic-authoritarian dichotomy to the civic and ethnic categories, her five individual case studies are nevertheless based on long-established ‘dual’ traditions in the historiography of Germany, Russia, and elsewhere.

Distinctions which have subsequently been made between reformist, unificatory, and secessionist types, between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forms, and between successive liberal and conservative variants of nationalism in Europe tend to overlay rather than undermine the dichotomy between civic and ethnic traditions. This volume aims to reassess the fundamental premises of the civic-ethnic model, as well as the much less visible framework of assumptions which underpins many specialized investigations of the national question in specific countries. It also attempts to unite two largely separate literatures; namely, historical accounts of nationalism as a form of politics, tracing the establishment of movements, parties, and institutions, on the one hand, and historical analyses of national identities as sets of competing ideas and images, representations and perceptions, on the other.

The most influential theoretical study within the first of these literatures is John Breuilly’s *Nationalism and the State*, where he argues that the modern state is the most important feature of the political context in which a nationalist movement can arise. Without implying that nationalism is a direct product of the modern state, his position is that within the context of power struggles to control such a state, nationalism has much greater potential as a political force able to mobilize, coordinate, and legitimate certain claims for power. For him, nationalist thinking only has serious consequences when it is actively adopted by a political movement. In such an interpretation, the character and specific composition of any particular nationalist ideology will be determined by the structure of the state to which it is opposed and ‘closely related to the institutional framework within which the conflict took place’. Eric Hobsbawm offers another interpretation of nationalism as an essentially political phenomenon, as a tool for elites to use to further their own interests. In his opinion, nationalist ideology served as a means

---

10 J. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester, 1982), x.
11 Ibid. 44, 61, 115.
to obtain and then to preserve power at a time in which European nations were
giving increasing influence to the masses through the extension of the franchise.¹²
Neither of these positions contradicts the basic premises of a civic-ethnic
dichotomy. Rather, both scholars are primarily interested in identifying and
analysing the political causes behind different types of nationalism in order to
debunk the idea that communities of descent are real or ancient (Hobsbawm) and
that cultures or ethnies are politically significant (Breuilly).¹³ It could be con-
tended that the very terms of Hobsbawm’s and Breuilly’s arguments are framed
against the backdrop of a dispute between ‘modernists’, who have stressed the
civic, political, and constructed aspects of nationalism, and ‘primordialists’ or
‘perennialists’, who have paid more attention to supposedly common ethnicities
and cultures.¹⁴

An alternative view of nationalism holds that it was not merely an ideology
developed to support a political movement seeking power within the context of a
modern state, but rather a cultural and ideological movement in its own right,
which had political applications, and which can best be understood through an
analysis of ideas, images, and perceptions of the nation. A good example is Ernest
Gellner’s claim that the basic characteristic of nations and of nationalism is the
development of a literate, standardized high culture, and its extension to an entire
population through education and communication.¹⁵ Nationalism developed in
the modern period with the growth of industrial society because communication
was easier and because such societies functioned more efficiently in the context
of linguistic and cultural homogeneity which resulted from nationalism. As men-
tioned above, this position preserves the distinction between different types of
nationalism along the lines of the civic-ethnic model, distinguishing ‘Habsburg’,
unificatory (Germany and Italy) and diaspora ‘varieties’ in accordance with the
relationship between political power, education, and high culture. The ‘identity
or diversity’ of the latter is, he asserted, ‘most crucial from the viewpoint of
nationalism’.¹⁶ Nations are also essentially cultural constructions for Benedict
Anderson, who defined them as ‘imagined political communities’.¹⁷ ‘Imagined’
because they are too large for all of the members to know each other, nations
are special sorts of communities because they are imagined as both limited
and sovereign. Furthermore, the attachment of members to their nations can
be extremely powerful, to the extent that it can be compared to that of a religion,
yet the philosophical or theoretical position underlying it is far from coherent.¹⁸

(eds.), The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge, 1983).
¹³ J. Breuilly, ‘The State and Nationalism’, in M. Guibernau and J. Hutchinson (eds.),
Understanding Nationalism (Cambridge, 2001), 33–4, 49–51; id., Nationalism and the State,
¹⁴ On this debate from the ‘other’ side, see A. D. Smith, ‘Nations and History’, in Guibernau
and Hutchinson (eds.), Understanding Nationalism, 9–31.
¹⁵ Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 35–8.
¹⁶ Ibid. 92.
¹⁸ Ibid. 5.
Although not analysing nations specifically in categories, Anderson’s extensive case studies are perfectly compatible with the civic-ethnic model. They are based on the premiss that the disappearance of an all-embracing religious realm and the concomitant transformation of political ideas and public spheres created the cultural and intellectual conditions necessary for the emergence of nationalism, first in Western Europe, then—with the national model formulated during the French Revolution—in other parts of the continent and the rest of the world.\textsuperscript{19} Arguably, both Gellner and Anderson assume that nationalism in Western Europe appeared earlier and was less problematic than in Eastern and Southern Europe.

Whether stressing cultural and ideological content or political context, each of the significant theoretical explanations of nationalism discussed so far is in agreement that nationalism is a modern phenomenon, for which the long nineteenth century was a key period of its development in Europe. This position is not universal, however, and a body of scholarship exists which challenges the notion that the development of nationalism was directly linked to the arrival of modernity, and asserts that examples can be found in the pre-modern period.\textsuperscript{20} Belonging to either the ‘perennialist’ or ‘primordialist’ schools, their arguments tend either to centre on exceptions to the general ‘modernist’ chronology, or rely upon less rigid definitions of nationalism than those used by the modernists, in particular leaving out the element of self-determination with its assertions of national sovereignty and political legitimacy.\textsuperscript{21} Without this dimension, nationalism essentially becomes reduced to national sentiment or identity, which even those in the modernist school would agree existed in the pre-modern period. Some of the perennialists themselves would also concede that nationalism and its role in European society underwent a change with the advent of modernity, making their distinction from the modernists more semantic than substantial.\textsuperscript{22} In neither of the positions is the civic-ethnic model seriously questioned, and often lies at the heart of individual works. The position in this work is that even if there are exceptions to the rule, nationalism is an essentially modern phenomenon, since claims for the political legitimacy of national sovereignty which were developed and promoted intensely from the time of the French Revolution onward are central to an understanding of nationalism in Europe.

The past ten years have seen a wealth of case studies of individual nations and regions which have demonstrated that the complexity of each case makes any

\textsuperscript{20} See for example J. A. Armstrong, Nations before Nationalism (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982), and A. Hastings, The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism (Cambridge, 1997).
\textsuperscript{21} See Zimmer, Nationalism, 15–18.
understanding of nationalism based on a simple typology at best a place to start, and rarely a satisfactory explanatory mechanism. Taken together, they suggest that the civic-ethnic model, which has not been seriously challenged—if, also, not positively defended—by all of the main theoretical works within the literature on nationalism, needs to be re-examined. A new typology or set of historically grounded concepts is required, which takes account, for instance, of the uncontroversial nature of race in many nineteenth-century contexts or of diverse kinds of political or civic involvement across the entire continent. This work aims, therefore, not only to challenge existing theories of the nation, but also to suggest novel ways of comparing, categorizing, and explaining the development of nationalist politics and the construction of national identities in what was arguably the most critical period and locus for the genesis of modern and contemporary nationalism.

BEYOND CIVIC AND ETHNIC TRADITIONS

All authors in this volume agree that the dichotomy between civic and ethnic forms of nationalism corresponds, at most, to an ideal type. In most cases, it fails to describe the diversity and contradictoriness, and to explain the evolution—and discontinuities—of nationalism in modern Europe. This inadequacy, which is the subject of Part I, is particularly apparent in the two classic points of reference in academic studies of nationalism: France and Germany. Michael Jeismann, whose chapter relies on a comparison of the two countries, demonstrates how any scheme based on functionalist theories of modernization, such as that implied in the divergence of voluntary, civic forms of nationalism and organic types of cultural and ethnic belonging, necessarily neglects the emotional and irrational mechanisms of national antipathy and political identification. The delineation of internal and external enemies, as well as other kinds of religious belief and cultural affiliation, was common to most European nation-states in the nineteenth century, leading to long-standing national rivalries and short-term explosive national conflicts. As the experiences of France and Germany showed, it proved difficult to predict the outcome of different instances of political identification. Civic and ethnic components were usually combined.

The majority of authors concur that other ways of explaining the scope and significance of nationalism in nineteenth-century Europe are necessary, in addition to—or instead of—a typology based on ethnic and civic traditions. In France, as Timothy Baycroft points out in Chapter 2, there were significant and largely unquestioned ethnic and cultural components in republican ideology.

and policy-making, from insistence on a common French language to a broad championing of French imperialism. The ‘reactionary nation’ in France, partly because it drew on popular criticism of state corruption or widespread opposition to national enemies such as Germany, overlapped in important respects with the ‘revolutionary nation’. Similarly, in the German lands, liberal and conservative strands of nationalism were difficult to disentangle. Stefan Berger shows in Chapter 3 how liberal ideas such as ‘national education’ and civic associations, which carried the national movement for much of the nineteenth century, respectively implied the existence of an exclusive national culture and a close relationship with the state, not least because of the central role of civil servants and academics in associational and party politics. Although radical nationalist organizations became more prominent after 1871, their claim to monopolize national debate continued to be challenged by the left-liberal, social-democratic, and Catholic Centre parties, and by associations such as the Jewish League for the Defence against Anti-Semitism. The fact that ‘many nationalists used both civic and ethnic definitions of the nation depending on what specific goal they wanted to achieve’ means that Germany, like France, cannot serve as an ideal-typical pole in a geographical typology of nationalism.²⁴

National movements and national-minded policy-making were characterized, above all, by their diversity and discontinuity. In the Conclusion, it is contended that the nature, strength, and significance of nationalist sentiment and politics can better be explained through an examination of the context in which they arose, rather than relying on the civic-ethnic dichotomy or on developmental theories of ‘modernization’. Nineteenth-century European manifestations of nationalism, in the form of a body of ideas or a series of actions, developed within a framework of different types of conflict, five potential sources of which are explored: economic dislocation, democratization, tension between different cultural groups, increasing state intervention, and foreign rivalries and wars. Depending upon the source of the conflict and the degree of radicalization in each case, nationalism took different courses across Europe. For the purposes of this volume, these five explanatory types have been grouped in three sections: those relating to conflicts caused by democratization and economic distribution (demos); those resulting from cultural and historical conflicts in areas of mixed settlement (Kultur); and those involving state intervention at home and abroad, including the waging of wars (état). Each section opens with a comparative thematic chapter, followed by three specific examples in which the main sources of conflict against which nationalism developed were similar.

Part II examines cases in which political struggles over power and resources were especially salient. Sometimes, as Jack Snyder has pointed out, rapid democratization and economic change led to violent conflicts and a radicalization of nationalism. At other times, however, such conflicts were defused or averted by the plurality of

²⁴ For example, see S. Berger, Inventing the Nation: Germany (London, 2004).
Introduction

politics in the nineteenth century. In particular, as Maiken Umbach rightly proposes in Chapter 4, many of those areas of political activity later associated with individuals’ experience of state power tended to be exercised primarily by regions. These regions and towns, which were strongest in areas of ‘early-modern sub-state-building’ such as Italy, Germany, and the Low Countries, provided a locus for patriotism, political discussion, and policy-making. Long-established political practices, economic growth, or constitutional guarantees within federal structures allowed cities such as Turin, Venice, Munich, Hamburg, and Barcelona to protect their civic cultures and, by insisting on the complementarity of regionalism and nationalism, to counteract the radicalization of politics at the centre. Of course, such municipal and regional traditions and centres of power did not override the claims of the central state nor prevent separatism, as the twentieth century has demonstrated, but they did encourage the trading of interests within moderate and composite, rather than unitary and exclusive, political systems.

One area with particularly pronounced local civic traditions was that encompassed by Belgium and the Netherlands. Yet Carl Strikwerda outlines in Chapter 5 how unusual the conditions permitting such traditions were in the nineteenth century. They included—in addition to local and regional affiliations—international neutrality, only possible in small states; the necessity of free trade, given the economic weight of mercantile interests; and the strength of Flemish and Catholic opposition parties, which were able to use the machinery of a representative system of government. What was more, civic nationalism in the Low Countries rested on ‘pillarization’ (verzuiling), or the formation of vertically integrated subcultures—Catholic, conservative Protestant, Liberal, and Socialist in the Netherlands, weaker Liberal, Catholic, and Socialist subcultures in Belgium—which militated against individualism and many of the tenets of liberalism.

In some respects, Switzerland’s position was similar to that of the Low Countries, with powerful local and cantonal traditions both underwriting civic voluntarism and reinforcing inward-looking, communal, or exclusive attitudes to the outside world, both within and beyond the nation-state. Like its Dutch counterpart, the Swiss case revealed the paradoxes, contradictions, and limitations of civic or liberal nationalism, above all in respect of citizenship, which had become an unusually pressing political question partly because it seemed to challenge the constitutional rights of the Gemeinden and cantons within the federal system. Thus, as Oliver Zimmer shows in Chapter 6, Switzerland’s poor record of naturalization and its refusal to introduce jus soli resulted to a considerable extent from the unwillingness of rural municipalities, which retained ultimate control over the granting of citizenship, to take on burdens such as additional poor relief. However, although—like Belgians—Swiss officials and politicians were obliged to tie such debates to a broader voluntarist understanding of national identity, given the polyglot and polyethnic nature of their country, they also tended to bolster these arguments, not least in opposition to Pan-Germans who contended that Switzerland was not a real nation, by referring to the historical and natural
integrity of a Swiss national ‘character’. Even liberals regularly treated ‘foreigners’—
the very large numbers of whom (14.7 per cent in 1910) accounted for the visibility of citizenship as a political issue—as cultural outsiders, threatening an organic indigenous population with ‘inundation’ or ‘Überfremdung’. At best, foreigners were to be assimilated; at worst, they were to be excluded.

In the Swiss case, political debates within civic institutions could, partly under the impact of democratization and disputes over resources, lead to unexpected national outcomes. The same was true within the Ottoman Empire, which aggravated a series of nationalist struggles by introducing imperial forms of citizenship from 1839 onwards. As in Switzerland, debates about citizenship were significant, but for different reasons. Here, Constantin Iordachi explains in Chapter 7, the central state imposed Ottoman citizenship from above, although in accordance with inclusive and liberal criteria, including the right of all foreigners’ children born in the empire to claim citizenship at the age of majority and the opportunity for immigrants to apply for naturalization after five years of residence. Such measures were introduced as part of ‘a process of socio-political transformation and economic modernisation that included strategies of modernisation and a change in the rhetoric of state legitimisation’.²⁵ In effect, debates about citizenship took place against a background of struggles for independence and great power intervention, which in turn occasioned fundamental political restructuring, as newly independent states such as Romania and Bulgaria sought to integrate their disparate populations and the Ottoman Empire attempted to stem the flow of its citizens from diaspora to these new states. In such circumstances, as elites tried to defend or extend their powers and states struggled for survival and pre-eminence in an unstable region, political conflicts—including those concerning citizenship rights to property, voting, and office—were closely connected to the emergence of nationalism. Even then, notwithstanding the possibility of extremism, international monitoring and the need for both ‘old’ and ‘new’ states to integrate their disparate populations militated against a uniform or incremental radicalization of national politics in the Balkans.²⁶

Political conflicts often derived in part from cultural differences. Part III of the volume examines cases in which such cultural differences played an important role, usually in conjunction with other historical processes. Thus, in the Habsburg Monarchy, which is examined by Mark Cornwall in Chapter 9, the existence of distinct vernacular cultures frequently gave the impression—or were used as proof—of separate communities of descent. Partly as a consequence, both Hungary and Bohemia experienced an ethnicization of politics in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Yet ethnic myths and oppositions remained one element, albeit a very significant one, in broader economic and political struggles involving

²⁵ See below, Chapter 7, p. 129.
²⁶ This did not rule out anti-Semitism and xenophobia, of course, for example when Romania used laws of religious exclusion inherited from the Ottoman era to deny state citizenship and political rights to Jews.
local notables and the imperial state, as the latter refashioned itself in order to try to meet domestic criticism and external challenges. Even many nationalist intellectuals continued to pursue claims based on ‘historical rights’ and resistance to ‘centralism’ rather than what the Hungarian liberal József Eötvös called a ‘fashionable’ linguistic and ethnic interpretation of nationality, which he believed had come from France. In contrasting ways, Hungarian leaders, who insisted on the observance of constitutional and historical procedures in their dealings with the other parts of the Habsburg lands, and their Czech counterparts, who continued to prefer a reformed monarchy to secession, went on balancing cultural claims and recognition of ‘ethnic’ differences against other political goals. Despite the significance of cultural politics in areas of mixed settlement, limits were placed on antagonism between Czechs and Germans in Bohemia and on policies of Magyarization in Hungary.

The close and complex relationship between cultural conflict and politics could be observed in other areas of Europe. In Scandinavia, for instance, Romantic folk traditions remained influential. They were reinforced by conflicts between nationalities, such as that between Germans and Danes in Slesvig. Yet in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, peasants, who were the main object of folk myths, were also citizens and political actors, forming the backbone of rural democracies or, at least, representative institutions. Accordingly, legends of common descent, cultural particularity, historical rights, constitutional guarantees, and political praxis were, as Mary Hilson evinces in Chapter 10, frequently combined. This contiguity and overlap between politics and culture could also be seen in Spain, where antagonism between different cultural identities (pueblo, región, patria, nación) and territories (Catalonia, Castille, the Basque lands) have been the focus of one of two main schools of thought on the subject of Spanish nationalism. The other school, however, has concentrated on the political, economic, and cultural consequences of a weak, or ‘invertebrate’, state. In addition, in Chapter 11, Stephen Jacobson points to other political discourses, many of which had been imported from France, and to religious traditions such as ‘National Catholicism’, which had both political and cultural implications, and which cut across the boundaries of Spain’s various nationalities and regions. *Ipso facto*, the existence and consolidation of cultural differences do not explain the divergent paths taken by Basque nationalists, who emphasized race and descent, and Catalan nationalists, who championed constitutional and civic causes such as the legislation of a separate Civil Code.

The consequences of cultural difference, although often essential to the genesis and perpetuation of nationalist conflicts, were difficult to predict in a nineteenth-century setting. Even policies concerning language, which counted—as Brian Vick makes clear in Chapter 8—‘as one of the most important markers of the difference between peoples’, could not be understood in terms of a dichotomy between voluntarism and liberalism in the West, and determinism and authoritarianism in the East. Instead, policies of assimilation were pursued most vigorously
by republicans in France, although always with a degree of toleration and accommodation. For much of the nineteenth century, the less liberal German states and the Habsburg Monarchy acknowledged and underwrote the use of ‘minority’ languages at a local and, in the latter case, at a national level, even if such provisions were partially overturned from the 1880s onwards. Vick concludes that toleration, assimilation, forced assimilation, and total exclusion were possibilities that could emerge from almost any type of nationalism in different times and places. The national implications of culture certainly became less ambiguous during the course of the nineteenth century, but they were only occasionally sufficient in themselves to explain an intensification of nationalist conflict.

Such conflict was more commonly provoked by state intervention, either at home or abroad. The cases presented in Part IV, however, show that the relationship between nationalism and the state was neither linear nor exclusive. Official nationalism was regularly ineffectual or counter-productive. In Italy, for example, statesmen and politicians used national propaganda in a failed attempt to conceal the inactivity of a weak state. In the absence of other foundation myths, leaders relied unsuccessfully on the lustre of the Risorgimento and the unification of the Italian state itself to mobilize and unite the population. As David Laven contends in Chapter 13, an appeal to the material interests of ordinary Italians was necessary to attach citizens to a united state but, among those who set up the new political order, neither radical romantics like Mazzini nor the pro-Piedmontese moderates were prepared to introduce the sort of sweeping reforms necessary to accomplish this.

Other states were more successful in harnessing the national sentiments of at least some sections of their populations. The United Kingdom succeeded in winning over the majority of the political nation in Scotland and Wales, because of its constitutional flexibility, a series of successful wars, and its expanding and apparently lucrative imperial mission. Yet, even here, there were many sources of resistance and opposition to official nationalism, as Chris Williams demonstrates in Chapter 14: Catholic Ireland never fitted into a Protestant ‘Britain’, established through wars against Spain and France; the unifying effects of war were only felt on a large scale during the 1810s and 1850s, and those of empire only from the late nineteenth century onwards; and both the idea of ‘England’ and that of the state were only vaguely defined. In Russia, a state tradition was long established, to the extent that Vera Tolz—in Chapter 15—characterizes Russian nationalism as ‘state framed’. Nationalists, however, abetted by the late conversion of Russian governments to national-minded policy-making, failed to realize that the state had outstripped the nation, so that Russians did not have a state within the borders of which nation-building could take place. Furthermore, the gap between intellectuals, officials, and the peasantry was too wide to allow national unity. In some respects, in spite of its belated efforts to ‘nationalize’ the peasantry, the tsarist state had unintentionally foiled attempts to build a viable Russian nation.

²⁷ This is in line with Rogers Brubaker’s definition, below Chapter 15, p. 293.
One of the most effective means of nation-building, which was squandered by the Russian state in the Crimea in 1856 and in Manchuria in 1905, was a victorious war. The consequences of armed conflict, however, were difficult to foresee, as Jörn Leonhard indicates. Thus, although ‘war nationalism’ in France was founded on the notion of the levée en masse, with its democratic and civic implications, it also enshrined common historical and cultural memories in popular consciousness, particularly those involving suffering. As wars became more ‘absolute’ in Carl von Clausewitz’s phrase, the same combination of citizen-soldiers and an ethnic community of fate was present in Germany, despite Helmuth von Moltke’s resistance to the democratic ramifications of mass conscription. Even Britain, which avoided conscription, witnessed the transformation of its army from an amateurish, aristocratic institution into a professional imperial force symbolizing the British Empire and Britishness. Here, under the impact of colonial small wars and repeated war scares, ethnic and racial identities had been consolidated, notwithstanding the absence of a ‘cult of a nation in arms’.

In Britain, as elsewhere, civic and ethnic components combined in unpredictable ways, variously reinforcing and contradicting each other. Such unpredictability militated against a more or less linear process of radicalization, which occurred during the interwar period in many areas of the continent. Before 1914, nationalism was a changing compound of different elements. It was sometimes obtrusive, at other times unnoticed. It is not comprehensible as a series of relatively straightforward and closely intertwined ‘roads to modernity’. Instead, the paths taken by nationalism were uneven, varied, and occasionally led nowhere, depending upon the nature of the conflict in which they arose, and the particular context in which they developed.²⁸ This volume studies such paths during the critical period of nationalism’s genesis in Europe over the course of the long nineteenth century.

²⁸ Greenfeld, Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity.
PART I

CIVIS *AND* ETHNIE