

Nations and Nationalism

Nationalism is a conscious bond shared by a group of people who feel strongly attached to a particular land and who possess a common language, culture, and history, marked by shared glories and sufferings. One's highest loyalty and devotion should be given to the nation, which has been specially chosen by God or history. The nation, its culture and history, give meaning to an individual's life and actions. Like a religion, nationalism provides the individual with a sense of community and with a cause worthy of sacrifice. Identifying with the nation's achievements enhances self-esteem.

1. revolutionary movements gave new prominence to more recent kind of human community—the nation
 - a. idea that humans are divided into separate nations, each with a distinct culture and territory and deserving an independent political life
 - b. before the nineteenth century, foreign rule in itself wasn't regarded as heinous
 - c. most important loyalties were to clan, village, or region
2. independence movements acted in the name of new nations
 - a. Napoleon's conquests stimulated national resistance
3. erosion of older identities and loyalties
 - a. science weakened the hold of religion
 - b. migration to cities or abroad weakened local allegiances
 - c. printing standardized languages
4. nationalism was often presented as a reawakening of older cultural identities
5. nationalism was enormously powerful in the nineteenth century
 - a. inspired political unification of Germany and Italy
 - b. inspired separatist movements by Greeks, Serbs, Czechs, Hungarians, Poles, Ukrainians, the Irish, and Jews
 - c. fueled preexisting rivalry among European states
 - i. drive for colonies in Asia and Africa
 - ii. can see its height in the suffering of World War I
 - d. efforts to instill national loyalty in citizens
6. nationalism took on a variety of political ideologies
 - a. "civic nationalism" identified the "nation" with a particular territory, encouraged assimilation
 - b. some defined the nation in racial terms (e.g., Germany)
7. nationalism was not limited to Europe