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John Breuilly

Modernisation and Nationalist Ideology

It is frequently and, in my opinion, persuasively argued that nationalism is modern.¹ However, such arguments present nationalism as one contingent outcome of modernity. By contrast, modernisation theory rarely engages with the subject of nationalism. Here I want to put a case for doing so because nationalism is not one contingent outcome but an essential component of modernity.

I begin by outlining key elements of modernisation theory and debates about the modernity of nationalism. I then consider the ideas of Ernest Gellner, the one major theorist to advance a general theory of modernisation and a modernist theory of nationalism. I go on to suggest that there is a major absence in modernisation theory: a concept of modern political space or what I will call territory.² I deploy just such a concept, combined with what I call modernising practices of territoriality, to argue that nationalist ideology is a necessary component of state modernisation.³ After linking this argument to a broad historical survey, I consider a range of cases relating practices of territoriality to different kinds of nationalism. In the compass of what is principally a theoretical article, I can only offer assertive sketches of cases without much historical detail.

Modernisation as Societal Transformation

At the heart of classical sociology is a notion of modernisation as societal transformation. The transformation may be framed as feudalism to capitalism (Karl Marx); mechanical to organic division of labour (Émile Durkheim); religious world views to rationalisation and the disenchantment of the world (Max Weber); social organisation as concentric circles to separate circles (Georg Simmel); differentiation by group to differentiation by function (Niklas Luhmann). There are affinities between these and other modernisation theorists.⁴

They share the view that modern society gets things done by organising *how* instead of *who*. A simple pre-modern society is defined as a face-to-face group which performs in common the essential tasks of securing food, shelter and security, sharing meaningful values and reproducing the next generation. Such a society will split into more than one group once a certain size is reached. A more extensive and complex pre-modern society consists of different groups which divide up these tasks, organising themselves hierarchically and

1 For a good introduction to debates about the modernity of nationalism see *Umut Ozkirimli, Theories of Nationalism. A Critical Introduction*, London 2017 (first published 2010). See note 15 below on whether Ernest Gellner treats nationalism as a contingent function or necessary outcome of modernity.

2 I take this term and its conceptual meaning from *Stuart Elden, The Birth of Territory*, Chicago/London 2013.

3 For practices of territoriality I draw on *Charles S. Maier, Transformations of Territoriality 1600–2000*, in: *Gunilla Budde/Sebastian Conrad/Oliver Janz* (eds.), *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen 2006, pp. 32–55; *Charles S. Maier, Leviathan 2.0: Inventing Modern Statehood*, in: *Emily S. Rosenberg* (ed.), *A World Connecting. 1870–1945*, Cambridge/London 2012, pp. 29–282.

4 Most of these are associated with sociology and philosophy. In social anthropology, theory has focussed on »becoming« rather than »being« modern. See the pioneering work of *Godfrey Wilson/Monica Wilson, The Analysis of Social Change: Based on Observations in Central Africa*, Cambridge 1945.

legitimising this arrangement with social codes such as those of caste and inherited privilege, usually presented as divinely ordained. A modern society, by contrast, is understood as one where distinct tasks are carried out by *social subsystems* (Luhmann) in which, in principle, all members can participate and that have no necessary hierarchical ordering, although each subsystem may be so ordered internally.⁵

Historians rarely operate at the level of abstraction of such theories, but that does not make them irrelevant. Historians implicitly assume some transition from pre-modern to modern and sometimes explicitly offer accounts for particular cases. Only rarely do historians – whose own discipline shares the features of functional specialisation central to modernity – link such accounts to general theories of modernisation.⁶

Nationalism and Modernity

The central debate which defines the field called nationalism studies is about whether nationalism *was* modern.⁷ The key writers selected an aspect of modernity and related that to the origins of nationalism. Benedict Anderson associated modernity with Newtonian conceptions of space and time as well as new technologies of communication he called »print capitalism«. ⁸ These conceptions and technologies enabled many people who did not personally know each other to imagine themselves as members of a nation, a large group sharing a long-run linear history and occupying defined space, separated from other such nations. The relationship between modernity and nationalism was contingent because the key aspects of modernity (space, time, communication) were established before national imagining and both could and did enable other extensive group identities (class, race, gender, religion, et cetera) to be imagined. Furthermore, there is a long and winding road from imagined national identity to the political ideologies and movements we call nationalism.

Marxist modernisation theory faced the challenge of explaining why capitalists and workers – the essential classes formed under capitalism – should ever frame their interests and values in terms of non-, even anti-class nationalism. A class approach would suggest that capitalists incline to cosmopolitan liberalism favouring free trade and workers take up class positions opposed to capitalists. Nationalist ideology appealing to opposed classes appears as contingent, requiring additional explanation extending beyond the core features of capitalism.⁹

Theories which start with modern state and politics instead of modern culture/communications or capitalism do not need to derive nationalism from a non-political starting point. However, the modern state and modern politics cannot be equated with nation-state and nationalist politics, given the importance of other state forms (e.g., empires, multinational dynasties), institutions (e.g., bureaucracies, parliaments) and political ideologies (e.g., liberal, radical, socialist, conservative) which accompany political modernisation. Once

5 The literature by and on Luhmann is large. For a good recent survey of his ideas see *Jeffrey C. Alexander/Paul Colomy* (eds.), *Differentiation Theory and Social Change. Comparative and Historical Perspectives*, New York 1990; *Balázs Brunczel*, *Disillusioning Modernity. Niklas Luhmann's Social and Political Theory*, Frankfurt am Main/Berlin etc. 2010.

6 The relationship between historical writing and modernisation theory is the central theme of this issue of AfS.

7 See *John Breuilly*, *Modernism and Writing the History of Nationalism*, in: *Stefan Berger/Eric Storm* (eds.), *Writing the History of Nationalism*, London 2018 (forthcoming).

8 *Benedict Anderson*, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd, rev. ed., London/New York 1991 (first published 1983); *John Breuilly* (ed.), *Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities: A Symposium*, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 22, 2016, pp. 625–659.

9 For an introduction see *Ephraim Nimni*, *Marxism and Nationalism. Theoretical Origins of the Political Crisis*, London/Boulder 1991.

again, there is a looseness and contingency in the relationship between modernity and nationalism.

Finally, the contingency of the modernity/nationalism relationship is framed differently in non-modernist approaches, which stress the pre-modern existence of national or ethnic identity in shaping modern nationalism.¹⁰ This is doubly contingent. Non-modernists concede that not every pre-modern ethnicity leads to modern nationalism and not every modern nationalism is based on such ethnicity. The debate between modernist and non-modernist theories of nationalism is about whether, as a contingent phenomenon, it can wholly be understood in relation to conditions of modernity.

I. GELLNER AS THEORIST OF MODERNITY AND NATIONALISM

Gellner is unique in elaborating a theory of modernity and connecting that to a theory of nationalism. In »Sword, Plough, and Book« Gellner outlined an ambitious universal history which located modernity in »industrialism«, following the earlier stages of hunter-gatherers and agrarian empires.¹¹ He made the link to nationalism by arguing that the functional specialisation of industrial society shifted the basis of social identity from structure to culture.¹² In pre-modern societies, identity was connected to segmented or stratified groups. In modern society, individuals are not locked into such groups but into functional social subsystems. I am household member, citizen, consumer, worker, tourist, churchgoer, et cetera and in each capacity interact with other individuals according to different rules and values. My social identity as a »human being« cannot therefore be framed in terms of these different subsystems but will instead be represented by attributes I carry with me such as my language, skin colour or core beliefs, in short what Gellner calls »culture«.¹³ It is on this basis that national identity as something transcending social subsystems becomes central in industrial society.¹⁴

However, even if one accepts this argument (and there are many problems with it), this still leaves the links between »culture«, national identity and nationalism unclear and apparently contingent. Skin colour can be framed as racial, not national; beliefs in the transcendent as religious, not national; language as local or regional, not national. Something more is needed to explain the conversion of such »cultural« differences into national differences and in turn into nationalist ideology and politics.

Implicitly conceding this point, Gellner elaborated a secondary argument that nationalism, as opposed to national identity, originated in the resentment nurtured by intellectuals in societies that had not yet industrialised.¹⁵ These intellectuals appropriated ideas about

10 The key thinker whose arguments largely defined the field of nationalism studies is Anthony D. Smith. From his many works see especially *Anthony D. Smith, The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford/Malden 1991 (first published 1986).

11 *Ernest Gellner, Plough, Sword, and Book. The Structure of Human History*, London 1988.

12 Gellner's triad is similar to Luhmann's of segmented society, stratified society and functionally differentiated society. I use Luhmann's terms because they link more closely to what I will later argue about modernisation.

13 It also could be represented by a concept of »humanity«. However, such a concept cannot differentiate between human beings, so that when a distinction is made, the danger is that »other« humans come to be regarded as non- or sub-human instead of differently human.

14 *Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford 2006 (first published 1983). This second edition of Gellner's classic study has an extensive introduction by me outlining and critiquing Gellner's arguments as well as referencing the extensive literature on Gellner.

15 Gellner's first argument about national identity in modern society is seen as functionalist. His second argument about nationalism is avowedly intentionalist. I seek to replace both with the

national identity formed in industrial society and used them to mobilise popular support in »backward« regions against »developed« industrial societies.¹⁶

Gellner's work (as well as that of the pioneering theorist Karl W. Deutsch¹⁷) is indebted to the Austro-Marxists Otto Bauer and Karl Renner.¹⁸ They argued that national identity was an intrinsic feature of modern society and, *contra* orthodox Marxism, becomes stronger and more socially inclusive with the advance of modernity. However, they also contended that this cultural process could and should be separated from the politics of class consciousness and conflict, which inevitably accompanied capitalism. Institutionally separating culture from politics would enable one to preserve the multi-national Habsburg Empire and take it forward to socialism.

I will return to the inherent flaws in the scheme for »national cultural autonomy« within a multinational state.¹⁹ Here I note that the Austro-Marxist argument enables us to shift perspective beyond individual nations or nation-states and adopt a view that positions them within a regional, even global framework.²⁰

However, the kind of historical account to which this leads also involves the construction of a long chain of contingent events with imperial metropolises generating nationalism in resentful peripheries and in conflicts with each other, this extending geographically, culminating as the organising principle and template for global political organisation, as embodied in the League of Nations after 1918 and the United Nations after 1945. In those accounts, by hindsight the units which become nation-states are projected back into a national historiography, thus resurrecting the problem of methodological nationalism.

To break with this problem and incorporate nationalism conceptually into modernisation theory, I draw attention to a major absence in such theory. This is a concept of modern political space.

II. STATE MODERNISATION, TERRITORY AND THE PRACTICE OF TERRITORIALITY

State Modernisation as Evolution

Should modernisation be seen as a general transformation determined by changes in one key sphere (e.g., the economy) or a plurality of changes with affinities and inter-connections? The debate is insoluble and usually ends up with a woolly convergence such as the Marxist argument that the economic is the »ultimate« determining level.

One way forward is to treat modernisation as social evolution. Functional differentiation in one field (leaving aside for the moment how that comes about) puts pressure on less

argument that nationalism is a necessary feature of modernity. For the distinction between function and necessity in Gellner see three articles by *Hudson Meadwell*, *Nationalism Chez Gellner*, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 18, 2012, pp. 563–582; *id.*, *Gellner Redux?*, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 20, 2014, pp. 18–36; *id.*, *Philosophic History and Common Culture in Gellner's Theory of Nationalism*, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 21, 2015, pp. 270–288.

16 The argument resembles that of Nairn who located the origins of nationalism in colonial reactions against modern imperialism. *Tom Nairn*, *Faces of Nationalism. Janus Revisited*, London/New York 1997.

17 *Karl W. Deutsch*, *Nationalism and Social Communication. An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality*, Cambridge/London 1966 (first published 1953).

18 *Otto Bauer*, *A Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, Minneapolis/London 2000 (first published in German 1907).

19 *Ephraim Nimni* (ed.), *National Cultural Autonomy and Its Contemporary Critics*, London 2005.

20 This raises the problem of »methodological nationalism«, whereby the national unit (whether nation or nation-state) is taken as the framework for the study of nationalism, thereby assuming what needs to be explained.

differentiated fields. It does this because the differentiated field performs more effectively than its less differentiated predecessor, and this is enhanced when coupled with parallel differentiation in other fields. More effective performance replaces the less effective, relatively undifferentiated field, whether through the rare event of extinction (e.g., a more modern army destroys a less modern one) or marginalisation (e.g. the pre-modern military power becomes less powerful). Alternatively, it diffuses modernity when the society with the less functionally specialised military and related institutions successfully introduces modernising reforms designed to make it more effective. I suggest that state modernisation is just such a selection process and nationalism one element in this process.²¹ This is a different approach from that of determinism or pluralism. It also enables one to make a connection between modernity and intentional action but without presenting modernisation as primarily an intentional project. In such a way, one can combine agency and structure in historical accounts.

In the case of nationalism, the question is how the modernisation of state power selects the presentation of that power as nationalist ideology. That ideology then functions to coordinate political elites, mobilise popular sentiment and legitimise political objectives in the pursuit of state power.²²

To pursue this idea, I treat modernisation as a series of *double transformations*. I can only characterise this in general terms before focusing on one particular aspect, namely the ideological impact of the practice of territoriality.

This double transformation involves a transition from functionally undifferentiated to differentiated fields of social action. It is a double transformation because it simultaneously reduces and increases the power of social action in two complementary ways. It reduces the *range* by focusing on one function at the expense of others formerly discharged by specific groups. It increases the *reach* by radically extending that function across different groups.²³ The overall result is to generate a new group in relation to the relevant social subsystem. Therefore, state modernisation, taking the form of political specialisation, generates subject or citizen identity, just as economic modernisation generates producer and consumer identity. However, taken alone that is not enough to account for the emergence and spread of nationalist ideology and politics as a component of modernity. We need to consider how state modernisation occurred and interacted with other strands of modernisation. I do this in two ways: first, a broad historical survey and then a conceptual account.

The European Location of State Modernisation

The initial shifts towards modernity were located on the Atlantic seaboard of early modern Europe.²⁴ This was not a political system characterised by one hegemon with a surrounding

21 I have developed this argument generally for 19th century Germany: *John Breuilly*, *Modernisation as Social Evolution: The German Case, c.1800–1880*, in: *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 15, 2005, pp. 117–147.

22 I outlined these functions of nationalist ideology in *John Breuilly*, *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester 1982. Here my focus is on political ideology and not the role it plays in political movements. All nationalist ideologies (and their related organisations and mobilisations) are contingent in the sense that they could have been different in claims and achievements. The necessity resides in all such ideologies having a national component linked to the modern concept of political space.

23 For examples see *Breuilly*, *Modernisation as Social Evolution*.

24 The literature is too vast to cite. A good start are the relevant chapters in *Michael Mann*, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 1: *A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*, Cambridge 1986; *id.*, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 2: *The Rise of Classes and Nation-States 1760–1914*, Cambridge 1993.

plethora of subordinate polities but by a series of competing polities unified by a broad value consensus based on Christianity, though one which no longer was monopolised by a single institution and authoritative creed but had become a belief system marked by intense internal disputes. This competition within a consensual value system enabled the rapid diffusion of innovations, whether through common experiences, learning or imitation.²⁵ This meant that any competitive advantage was quickly cancelled. Military innovations were closely linked to financial and administrative, ideological and communication innovations.²⁶

These changes shaped and extended a »public« within each of these polities, a public which critiqued its own government and reacted against threats from similarly modernising states in the limited space of Western Europe. The consequences were the growth of forms of state oriented patriotism which engaged in both internal and external critique in the name of the »nation«.

This conflict was projected into the world beyond Europe. In some zones, this encountered little indigenous resistance.²⁷ In others – usually higher density populations engaged in sedentary agriculture, with elaborate religious and political structures and not vulnerable to European diseases – the competing western powers proceeded more cautiously and initially with less dramatic consequences.²⁸

Whilst the competing European polities developed national statist ideologies²⁹ based on ethnic or other stereotypes to explain why they were different from each other – precisely because they were not very different from each other –, in these other zones they elaborated cruder race, civilisational or religious ideologies to explain why difference meant inferiority and justified conquest, exploitation and mass murder. Generally speaking, alien segmented societies were depicted as primitive and alien stratified societies as decadent.

Thus were formed two concentric rings of ideological distinction and related political action: elaborate national statism in competition within and between (mainly European and white settlers) modernising polities; crude assertions of superiority in (largely non-European) peripheries.

This created a permanent tension. Imperial rule – except in its harshest, highly unstable and usually short-lived forms (e. g. the Nazi racial empire and King Leopold's rule in the Congo) – requires extensive collaboration from indigenous elites. An imperial ideology which constantly treats such elites as essentially inferior cannot be sustained for long. There will be constant pressure to change it to an ideology of equality which will be associated with projects of assimilation to or separation from the imperial core. This means that the nationalism of the imperial cores, developed in interaction with other such cores, becomes attractive to the colonial peripheries.³⁰

25 For more on these processes of diffusion see *John Breuilly*, *Nationalism as Global History*, in: *Daphne Halikiopoulou/Sofia Vasilopoulou* (eds.), *Nationalism and Globalisation. Conflicting or Complementary?*, London/New York 2011, pp. 65–83.

26 Some political units were marginalised or extinguished in this competition but what was crucial was that no one political unit emerged as dominant.

27 See *Jared Diamond*, *Guns, Germs and Steel. A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years*, London 1997.

28 See *Anna Jackson/Amin Jaffer* (eds.), *Encounters. The Meeting of Asia and Europe, 1500–1800*, London 2004.

29 I use this awkward term because this is not yet nationalist ideology as it is not associated with the concept of popular sovereignty which involves legitimising the state in relation to the identity and interests of all its subject/citizens.

30 I develop this argument in *John Breuilly*, *Modern Empires and Nation-States*, in: *Thesis Eleven* 139, 2017, pp. 11–29.

The Modern Conception of State Territory

There is one final concept which must be introduced to complete my argument: territory. Nationalism claims to express the values of nations understood as complete societies which exist in a particular kind of space and time: a shared long-run cultural identity in a common homeland. However, theorists of modernisation have not integrated a concept of space into their arguments, let alone connected this to theorising about nationalism.³¹ Liberal, Marxist and conservative conceptions of modernity are connected to general modes of identity (individual, class, tradition) and norms (liberty, justice, stability) regarded as universal, thus not confined to particular places. Why such identity claims should take a *spatial* form remains a puzzle so long as the modernity of territory as a special kind of political space is neglected.

I leave aside the general history of the development of this concept.³² My focus is on the subsequent practical transformation of territory into territoriality, and why this is essentially modern. The modernising polity extends the range of its specialised coercive power across all groups under its rule and increasingly expresses that power as sovereignty over a precisely defined territory. These two processes are necessarily related. In a segmentary society, the reach of rule is defined by the members of the group, not their territorial location. This is most obviously the case for nomadic and hunter-gatherer societies, but it applies generally. In a stratified society, the spatial dimensions of coercive power vary according to the strata and hierarchical ordering involved. In medieval Europe, the boundaries within which churches, guilds, noble estates, autonomous villages and princes exercised power did not spatially map on to each other. A privileged landowner could owe allegiance to more than one prince, according to where his manors were located. The boundaries could be different because the institutions involved were not functionally specialised. Instead, a guild or manor, church or prince exercised what a modern society would regard as combined political, economic, religious, welfare, legal and other functions in relation to a defined group, without making clear distinctions between such functions. In addition to these vertical and territorially non-integrated forms of governance, such societies also had a layered conception of authority that meant that the connections between high authority – such as an emperor or Pope – and lower strata such as villages and towns were indirect and mediated through other forms of authority.³³

Functionally specialised power cannot define its social reach in terms of *who* it rules because it does not rule any social group as a whole, only some functional aspect of many groups. The alternative is to define its reach in terms of *where* it rules.

As far as coercive rule is concerned, this means that the collective identity of the subject-citizens comes to exhibit an intrinsically spatial aspect. Identity concepts associated with economy (class, occupation), religion (confession, world religion), status (privilege, rank) or civilisation (race, language, culture) do not possess this quality. Nationalism is the

31 Luhmann is a good example. In his analysis of modernity he distinguishes three elements: fact (what), time (when) and social (who) which in terms of his theory links to the concepts of differentiation, evolution and communication respectively. The absence of the element space (where) is striking.

32 *Elden*, *The Birth of Territory*, traces the history of this concept back to classical political thought and argues it had become firmly established by the early modern period.

33 *Mann*, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 1, distinguishes between despotic and infrastructural power. The despot has enormous personal authority within a circumscribed social sphere but no systematic power beyond that. Infrastructural power can extend to all the subject-citizens of a polity but is confined to a functional sphere and is exerted impersonally by office holders. A related distinction between »capstone« and modern states is made by *Michael Hechter*, *Containing Nationalism*, Oxford/New York etc. 2001.

ideology which seeks to merge this spatial aspect of rule by connecting *where* to *who*, transforming a bare subject/citizen identity into a thick identity framed in such terms as common language, ethnicity, history or faith. The modern territorial state is re-imagined as a national homeland, whether in existing or different state boundaries.

Is this sharp territorial definition and delimitation of coercive power intrinsic to modern polities? Contingently, it appears rooted in the changes I have outlined for the politics of the European Atlantic seaboard, taking the form of intense competition between a plurality of similar polities within a very limited space, which is subsequently projected on to a much wider global stage. However, we can trace a convergence of many processes tending to generate a precise concept of state territory and linked to practices of territoriality such as to make this appear more than contingent.

Thus, in order to address the coordination problems of functionally differentiated modern society, a range of functions or powers are organised within the same sharp territorial boundaries, such as levying tariffs, meeting welfare claims, imposing taxes, providing legal rights and enforcing legal sanctions, and enabling political participation as voters and representatives.³⁴

Consequently, the state boundary acquires salience for citizens not only or even principally as something they encounter physically but as mediated through all these functions. As it acquires more and more significance, it also becomes increasingly effectively monitored and guarded, enabled by new technologies such as those of cartography, censuses and other documentations as well as a range of surveillance methods. All this in turn is justified in mass political communication which encourages a sacralisation of the state boundary. This is achieved by linking that boundary to the state citizenry understood as a body of people with a special identity and value: the nation.³⁵

Distinguishing Modern State Identity from Modern National Identity

The exception proves the rule. Multi-ethnic polities which have broken into national components are often regarded as disproving the contention that nationality is an ideological representation of state membership. To pursue this question further we must distinguish between different kinds of multi-ethnic polities and the role nationalism plays in them.

First, there are non-modern multi-ethnic polities surviving into a period in which the most powerful states are modernising. The Ottoman and Romanov empires were two such empires. They were stratificatory societies though with very different kinds of dominant elites: a Russian service nobility and a Muslim administrative caste. Both were »despotic« or »capstone« states, lacking specialised coercive power that penetrated to the lowest social strata but instead depended upon a combination of higher state-wide strata and segmented local notability to exercise power at varying levels and in different places. In such polities, there is no room for the cultivation of a generalised national identity except as a final defensive response from endangered elites such as high-ranking Ottoman bureaucrats and army officers or Russian nobles when the empire is crumbling.

Contrast such states with overseas empires formed by a modernising national core ruling over peripheries which are regarded as consisting of different kinds of people. In such polities, sharp territoriality in the core and competition between other such cores encourages the growth of nationalism which is congruent with state territory.

34 I elaborate this argument for Germany in *John Breuilly, Sovereignty, Citizenship and Nationality. Reflections on the Case of Germany*, in: *Malcolm Anderson/Eberhard Bort* (eds.), *The Frontiers of Europe*, London/Washington 1998, pp. 36–67.

35 For the link of the modern territorial state to citizenship see *Andreas Fahrmeir, Citizenship. The Rise and Fall of a Modern Concept*, New Haven 2007.

There is a significant exception to these two broad types of multinational polities that can help to more clearly bring out the link between modern state territory and national identity. The Habsburg Empire shared with the Romanov and Ottoman empires the qualities of being dynastic, territorially continuous and multi-ethnic. However, it shared with the modernising national core of overseas empires many modern features such as mass elections, sophisticated state bureaucracies, rule of law, extensive market economies and high levels of literacy.

For a long time, the simultaneity of the end of the Habsburg Empire with that of the Romanov and Ottoman empires and their replacement by a series of nation-states led historians to bracket all three together. It was a combination of their backwardness compared to modern powers and conflicts between nationalities located within them that were seen to account for their collapse. The First World War was seen as just the occasion for this collapse which would have happened eventually because of the failure to confront the twin challenges of modernity and nationality.

However, in recent decades this historical consensus has been vigorously challenged. The alternative historical interpretations which have been constructed enable us to distinguish between the roles of modernity and ethnicity in the emergence of modern nationalism. It has been persuasively argued that the Habsburg Empire was essentially a modernising state, especially in its western half.³⁶ In line with Gellner's theory, this favoured the construction of cultural identity framed as national, but it also promoted a citizenship identity framed in statist, territorial terms. Such cultural identity – often itself territorialised through such state practices as language censuses and separate electoral arrangements – was mobilised in support of nationalism at the time of state collapse towards the end of the First World War. However, this nationalism, as movement or ideology, was not dominant before the war.³⁷ It is this distinction between national identity as a modern cultural form and nationalism as a modern political ideology and movement which was picked up by Otto Bauer and Karl Renner. Unsurprisingly, therefore, their arguments about »national cultural autonomy« were deterritorialised. However, the argument about modernity and territoriality suggests that only the territorialisation of national identity could generate nationalist ideology and mass political mobilisation. This was catalysed less by internal political forces than by the triumphant Allied powers taking up, at the initiative of US President Woodrow Wilson, the principle of national self-determination as the basis for a post-war settlement. That appeared to be a »natural« principle because of the specific nation-state form in which modernisation had taken place in the USA, Britain and France.³⁸ I will return to this argument in a later section concerning the global diffusion of nationalism after the First World War. First, I want to show how various cases of state modernisation involving practices of territoriality helped generate nationalist ideology.

36 See *John Deak*, *Forging a Multinational State. State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War*, Stanford 2015.

37 This is a key argument in *Pieter M. Judson*, *The Habsburg Empire. A New History*, Cambridge/London 2016.

38 I develop this comparative argument about the different kinds of empires and nationalism just before, during and immediately after the First World War in *John Breuilly*, *Popular Nationalism, State Forms and Modernity*, in: *Nico Wouters/Laurence van Ypersele* (eds.), *Nations, Identities and the First World War. Shifting Loyalties to the Fatherland*, London 2018 (forthcoming). See also chapters by Laurence Cole and Nikolai Vukov in that book dealing with the Habsburg Empire and the Balkans region respectively.

III. STATE MODERNISATION, TERRITORIALITY AND NATIONALISM IN THE »LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY«

Enlightenment and Revolution

I have already sketched out how the inter-state conflicts on the Atlantic seaboard of Europe had, by mid-18th century, produced a discourse of states as territorial and national, while the projection of their conflicts beyond Europe was framed in expansionist and civilisational terms. The revolutionary events of the late 18th century and their consequences crystallised and hardened the concept of the state as a clearly bounded space and made central the problem of how this »decision-space« had to be transformed into »identity-space«, the »solution« to which was both the key achievement of nationalist ideology and the reason for its ubiquity.³⁹

The focus on the population as a state resource which can be optimised is expressed in the enlightenment notion that societies controlled by a sovereign are not fixed, unchanging units whereby state power can only be increased as a zero-sum game, either by conquering other lands or seizing more resources from one's own subjects. Instead, subjects come to be regarded by their rulers as malleable and, by the forceful use of reason, capable of being made more plentiful and richer, thereby making the sovereign more powerful. Such notions were more often projects than achievements in the 18th century but they did produce changes in how territoriality and rule were understood.

For complex and much debated reasons, socio-economic change at home and expansion abroad did start to have such envisaged effects, in turn producing new concepts about »society«. It increasingly came to be regarded as no longer an object of old or new style, unenlightened or enlightened rulers but as a dynamic and autonomous force, one which might reshape the state rather than the other way round.⁴⁰ Such concepts crystallised in the increasingly global conflict between the two most powerful of the European Atlantic seaboard states – Britain and France – with contrasting theatres of conflict between crowded and territorially defined Europe, the thinly populated, »open« territories of much of the Americas, Africa and the densely populated, »closed« territories of Asia.⁴¹

These conflicts form a crucial background to the »Atlantic revolution«, starting with the rebellion of the thirteen British colonies in North America and then the revolution in France. The ways in which these movements were understood and justified takes us from enlightenment discourse to ideas about revolution and democracy. We observe a transformation of the concept of sovereignty as flowing from God, embodied in monarchy and hierarchy, to that of popular sovereignty with its implications of equality and participation. The way had been prepared with the enlightenment notion that the sovereign was the »first servant« of the people but that had been little more than a metaphor, not a constitutional doctrine or practice.

The doctrine of popular sovereignty had clear territorial implications. In the case of the thirteen British colonies, it led to the construction of a new territorial and institutional concept intermediate between the separate colonies and the larger imperial polity. The derivation of the USA from the existing, clearly mapped out and institutionalised thirteen colo-

39 I take these terms from *Maier*, *Transformations of Territoriality 1600–2000*.

40 See, for a good example, *John G. Gagliardo*, *From Pariah to Patriot. The Changing Image of the German Peasant, 1770–1840*, Lexington 1969.

41 A fuller account would need to take account of two other zones. Parts of Africa were incorporated into this global system, above all through the slave trade. In Asia, European powers encountered densely populated societies with highly organised states which conditioned both the ways Europeans understood these worlds and the forms of conflict in which they engaged both with each other and indigenous rulers.

nies is clear from the name of the new creation: the United States of America. The creation and expansion of the USA was closely associated with surveying, map-making, private property and state territorial claims and purchases. It is no accident that George Washington was, amongst other things in his early career, a surveyor.⁴²

A stark vision of the nation-state as a unitary territory was embodied by the Jacobins in their »rational« arrangements of French space and time and the abolition of corporations, privileges and »intermediate powers« which had obscured the spatial projection of power from the new sovereign: the nation. The Jacobins insisted that the boundary of France was one clear line; there could no enclaves whereby people living in »France« owed obligations to privileged individuals or corporations located outside France.

These new and precise concepts of space, time, sovereignty and nation were being reinforced by new capacities to territorialise, such as in map-making, which enabled people to visualise and enforce specific boundaries. The first great map project for France had begun in the late *ancien régime* and was brought to conclusion under Napoleon, an inveterate map-maker and road builder.⁴³ Furthermore, it was two clashing concepts of territoriality – the revolutionary French with insistence on one precise border where France was wholly sovereign on one side and some other state on the other side, and the *ancien régime* of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation⁴⁴, where private and public were mixed and an archbishop or an imperial knight had authority over territories which appeared as enclaves within other authorities, including the French state.⁴⁵

This is also the time when the paired concepts of natural and artificial boundaries make their first clear appearance.⁴⁶ Ever since then, the boundaries of nation-states have been linked to the »natural« qualities of the nation and its spatial location. Louis XIV and his apologists had made claims for the »natural« frontiers of France – the »hexagon« – but these were framed in a language which the enlightenment and revolution regarded as one of artifice, namely the legitimate claims of the Bourbons. Apart from that, it was little more than the language of prudence expressed in religious form: God had created such natural barriers as the Rhine and the Pyrenees to protect France. Note also that the emphasis was on the protection of the territory of France, not the people of France: France was not yet »identity-space«.

In reaction, the Jacobins made a cult of nature as superior to *ancien régime* artifice. The ten months of the new calendar were named in relation to seasonal phenomena; the departments which replaced the historic provinces had their boundaries and names based on »natural« features such as rivers, watersheds and hills. The natural was good, opposed to the artificial conventions of the *ancien régime*.

42 On surveying and mapping the USA see *Andro Linklater*, *Measuring America. How the United States was Shaped by the Greatest Land Sale in History*, London 2002; *John Rhodehamel*, *George Washington. The Wonder of the Age*, New Haven/London 2017.

43 See chapter 9 of *Jerry Brotton*, *A History of the World in Twelve Maps*, London 2012.

44 »Nation« in Jacobin language meant the »people« who were the source of sovereignty. »Nation« in the title of the Holy Roman Empire meant the princes, imperial cities, ecclesiastical and other authorities which together composed the imperial institutions. The people (*Volk*) in late 18th century discourse were conceptually quite distinct from this nation and without political characteristics. See the book-length entry *Reinhart Koselleck/Fritz Gschnitzer/Karl Ferdinand Werner* et al., *Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse*, in: *Otto Brunner/Werner Conzel/Reinhart Koselleck* (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vol. 7, Stuttgart 1992, pp. 141–431.

45 On the clashing concepts and the road to war in 1792 see *Timothy C. W. Blanning*, *The French Revolution. Class War or Culture Clash?*, Basingstoke 1998 (first published 1987).

46 *Peter Sahlins*, *Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century*, in: *AHR* 95, 1990, pp. 1423–1451.

However, this was a short-lived and arguably self-destructive moment. We can see this in the changing concepts of the »people«. The focus on natural reason marginalised, even rejected, identity based on traditions that were regarded as little more than the accumulation of errors. This is expressed vividly in the writings of Tom Paine who found an enthusiastic readership of British radicals, Jacobins and American rebels. Even Rousseau, who did advocate the cultivation of a particular sense of pride which he called patriotism – whether in a city-state like Geneva or an extensive, loosely organised polity like the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth –, saw this being created through civil ceremonies and rituals, and above all through common sacrifices, not as an historic legacy.⁴⁷

Such rational cults failed miserably and came to be associated with destructive wars and constant and arbitrary changes of frontiers. Just at the level of mapping, we find cartographers in Napoleon's time noting the disjuncture between natural boundaries and those that appear as the contingent result of military victories and defeats. Indeed, the more rapidly Napoleon changed the political map of Europe, the more cartographers took refuge in the idea of »natural« frontiers as a source of intellectual stability.⁴⁸ Yet even as these boundaries were changed by war and imperial will, so too they were accorded a more precise significance.

For example, the efforts to introduce the »Code civil« (so identified with Napoleon that it was usually called the »Code Napoléon«) into satellite states beyond France required a clear mapping out of boundaries between individual property owners to replace various kinds of common, shared, corporate and privileged types of property as well as a clear delineation of state territory to determine where the law was to apply.⁴⁹

Perhaps because of this tension with the idea of the state as clearly bounded but constantly changing, as natural yet man-made, such changing political arrangements were bizarrely accompanied by historical nomenclature. Thus Napoleon created an imperial nobility based on landed wealth and with grand titles but justified by merit and service, not lineage, and funded from land revenues such as those seized from the new »model« state of the Kingdom of Westphalia. He created new monarchies, but in some cases the new king was drawn from Napoleon's family, such as his brother Jerome in Westphalia, or Napoleon raised up non-French rulers to the status of kings, as in Württemberg and Bavaria. His own imperial coronation harked back to the crowning of Charlemagne, enacted in the presence of the Pope. After his second marriage to the daughter of the Austrian Emperor, Napoleon conferred the title of »King of the Romans« upon their son, drawing directly on traditions of the Holy Roman Empire. Thus the concept of France as a »natural« state with national frontiers jostled uncomfortably with other state concepts, such as an artificial but sharply bounded creation and a traditional empire lacking modern qualities of clearly defined territory and sovereignty. All these were, in turn, coupled with enlightenment, universalist justifications for the extension of Napoleonic rule beyond France.

This failed application of reason combined with historical *kitsch* produced a double reaction. One was the insistence on returning to the genuine, accumulated wisdom of a society embodied in its traditions. Burke's reflections on revolution, written even before the

47 Erica Benner, Nationalism: Intellectual Origins, in: *John Breuilly* (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, Oxford/New York etc. 2013, p. 36–55.

48 I consider this for the German lands: *John Breuilly*, *The Response to Napoleon and German Nationalism*, in: *Allan Forrest/Peter H. Wilson* (eds.), *The Bee and the Eagle. Napoleonic France and the End of the Holy Roman Empire, 1806*, Basingstoke/New York 2009, pp. 256–283.

49 For how Napoleonic officials approached the task of imposing a particular model of the state on satellite allies see *Michael Broers*, *Pride and Prejudice: The Napoleonic Empire through the Eyes of its Rulers*, in: *Ute Planert* (ed.), *Napoleon's Empire. European Politics in Global Perspective*, Basingstoke/New York 2016, pp. 307–317.

radical phase of the French revolution, expressed this eloquently, although Burke never sought a return to the past or denied the need for piecemeal reform, unlike some other European conservative thinkers.

The other was a search for sources of deep identity to be found not in traditions linked to pre-revolutionary hierarchy but in emotions, folklore, popular language and customs, and origin myths. These themselves could be selectively appropriated and combined by elites, often in the same shallow way Napoleonic rule was dressed up, as when the Habsburg court donned »German« peasant costumes (under the influence of the Spanish insurrection) as part of the effort to mobilise popular support for its most radical war against France, that of 1809. With its thorough defeat, such notions of old elites leading a popular movement were firmly rejected as Metternich, with his rational but also restorationist values, was appointed Chancellor.⁵⁰ It would appear that the brief moment of radical nationalism was being successfully suppressed.

The Dominance of Unification Nationalism

Most people today, if asked, probably envisage state-seeking nationalist movements primarily as separatist movements. The three great waves of nation-state formation which followed the two world wars and the collapse of the Soviet Union are associated with the end of empires and the carving out of a number of small nation-states from that former imperial territory. What remain as nationalist movements are either assertions of greater sovereignty for existing nation-states, such as expressed in the movement for Brexit in the United Kingdom, or secessionist nationalism such as one finds in Scotland and Catalonia.

Yet in the 19th century, separatist nationalism was not significant. I cannot go into detail about the apparent exceptions such as Belgium, Serbia, Greece and Romania but would simply assert that nationalist ideologies and movements were marginal in those cases. When 19th century liberals and radicals such as John Stuart Mill, Giuseppe Mazzini and Marx thought about nationalism, their concern was mainly with what were at the time called »historic« nationalities. In central and eastern Europe there were above all four such nationalities: German, Polish, Italian and Hungarian. Insofar as these developed nationalist ideologies and movements, they always had a »separatist« component in that they pursued freedom from the dynastic rule, direct or indirect, of the Habsburgs, Romanovs and Hohenzollerns. However, with the qualified exception of Hungary, they were as much concerned to unify what was seen as a fragmented nation.⁵¹ Liberals and radicals saw them as progressive both because they opposed dynastic, authoritarian monarchy and because the constitutional states (monarchical or republican) they envisaged would be large states, conducive to economic progress and exercising significant power.

Yet on the face of it, such nationalism seems less connected to any sharp notion of territory than nationalism based on nationalising the existing state(s) such as in France or the Thirteen Colonies or in separating one specific region from the existing state. Here I will make some brief comparisons of 19th century unification nationalist movements, why they were so powerful and often successful, and how modern practices of territoriality contributed to their development.

The German lands, defined in a loose territorial way by the boundaries of the member polities of the Holy Roman Empire, lost that institutional expression with the end of the empire in 1806. Numerous historians have pointed to forms of »nationalism« in the 18th

50 For the recent study which supersedes all previous treatments of Metternich see *Wolfram Siemann, Metternich. Strategie und Visionär. Eine Biografie*, München 2016.

51 Magyar nationalists did wish to standardise and centralise the political institutions of the eastern or Transleithian half of the Habsburg Empire.

century German lands – whether based on the empire or the principal territorial states – but the links to later forms of German nationalism are, in my view, tenuous. They did not challenge the *ancien régime* distinctions of privilege; they did not champion the notion of popular sovereignty as national sovereignty.⁵²

The institution which replaced the Holy Roman Empire – the Confederation of the Rhine – was territorially quite different as it excluded Prussia and Austria as well as lands, such as those of the left-bank of the Rhine, which were annexed directly to France. Furthermore, its member states had been radically reduced in number by the destruction of numerous imperial knights and cities and ecclesiastical polities. Unlike the old empire, it was a collection of clearly bounded territorial, secular and nominally sovereign states.

This was not simply an »accidental« result of Napoleon's dramatic defeats of Austria and Russia in 1805 and Prussia and Russia in 1806–7. This process of territorial state displacement of the micro-polities of the empire had begun in the 1790s, especially through secret negotiations between France, Prussia and the Habsburg rulers.⁵³ The subsequent military events were significant in terms of the balance of power within the German lands and the specific political geography generated but represented just one variant on the general theme of the growth of the territorial state. This trend continued into the post-1815 period. It can also be discerned in other parts of Europe during the Napoleonic period and remained an important legacy after Napoleon.⁵⁴

The typical member of the Confederation of the Rhine was a small, territorial, nominally sovereign state ruled by a native prince or a member of Napoleon's family, all joined under the »protectorship« of Napoleon. Sovereignty was a fiction: these rulers were compelled to grant Napoleon money and soldiers and could conduct no independent foreign policy. However, clearly bounded territoriality was not a fiction but a key component of the state reforms imposed by Napoleon.

Meanwhile Prussia and Austria had also undergone major territorial contraction, in the case of Prussia of a very radical kind following the defeat of 1806–7. Yet such contraction to the »core« of the dynastic state made it easier to link dynasty to people, as Austria tried in 1809 and as Prussia was to do with much greater success in 1813–15, than it was for the Confederation states in which the core had diminished in significance because of the extent of the territorial additions.⁵⁵ Later this would enable a powerful current of German national historiography to portray these states as »artificial« because of their novel territorial and institutional features and Austria as »artificial« by virtue of its multi-ethnic composition, thus leaving Prussia as the only »natural« state which would go on to be the core of the later German state.

52 It is impossible in this article to cite the extensive literature and debates. A very good introduction placing the issue within a longer-term perspective is *Dieter Langewiesche/Georg Schmidt* (eds.), *Föderative Nation. Deutschlandkonzepte von der Reformation bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, München 2000.

53 Until 1806, the Habsburg ruler was Emperor Francis II by virtue of holding the elective office of Holy Roman Emperor. »Austria« is a shorthand term historians use for the different lands ruled by Francis separately from his imperial title. In 1804, emulating Napoleon, Francis assumed a hereditary and territorial imperial title which is also normally designated »Austrian«. For two years, therefore, he was both Francis II and Francis I.

54 For a good recent overview and with chapters covering every region affected by Napoleonic rule see *David Laven/Lucy Riall* (eds.), *Napoleon's Legacy. Problems of Government in Restoration Europe*, Oxford/New York 2000; *Planert*, *Napoleon's Empire*.

55 I consider this relationship between core and periphery in *John Breuilly*, *Napoleonic Germany and State Formation*, in: *Michael Rowe* (ed.), *Collaboration and Resistance in Napoleonic Europe. State-Formation in an Age of Upheaval, c.1800–1815*, Basingstoke/New York 2003, pp. 121–152.

If by artificial we mean new, it is true that the Confederation rulers had little or nothing in the way of political traditions which they could map on to their new and dependent states. The rulers of these dependent polities pursued a policy of bureaucratic rationalisation drawing upon Napoleonic concepts of a society of equal subject-citizens, hoping that the benefits this produced compared to the old privileged order would create acquiescence, if not loyalty. However, this was a flimsy basis for generating popular loyalty. It perhaps was having some degree of success during the short period of relative stability and peace enjoyed between 1807 to 1811. However, any such gains were overwhelmed by the suffering so many experienced from the time of Napoleon's preparations for invasion of Russia to his final overthrow.

The conventional story of German nationalism frequently starts with responses to the earliest of Napoleon's military successes. The humiliating defeats inflicted on the German lands by Napoleon are seen to stimulate a strong nationalist response. The emphasis introduced by revolutionary France on the people or nation as the bedrock of a strong state required a political ideology that broke with older conceptions of German nationality as articulated through the privileges of the Holy Roman Empire. This would extend beyond the individual polities of the German lands and also break with the non-German parts of Austria.

As far as nationalist ideology was concerned, the key idea was that of the *Kulturnation*. This might take a »high« cultural form, as expressed in the achievements of major composers, artists and, above all, writers. It might take a populist form with the stress on the »common folk« as the heart of national culture and identity. The distinctions were often blurred and merged with a stress on the German language, which was taken to comprehend both its sophisticated literature and its everyday speech.

However, this emphasis sits uneasily with the argument I have been developing about nationalism as the ideological expression of a sharper concept of state territoriality associated with political modernisation. Here I want to press this argument for the German case, challenging the opposition made between *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation*, often particularised as a contrast between France and Germany.⁵⁶

As far as the impact of these kinds of cultural nationalist ideology is concerned, there is now a large literature based on innovative research into popular politics and mentalities that questions its significance for the Napoleonic period and until well into the 19th century. Lower-class conscripts led by old-regime officers were more important than artisan and bourgeois nationalist volunteers in the military coalition that defeated Napoleon. Such military mobilisation had more to do with traditional elite solidarity in the face of the French threats than any independently popular movement. Nationalist discourses, which figured so centrally in traditional accounts, such as Johann Gottlieb Fichte's »Addresses to the German Nation«, are now seen as marginal at the time, even if having much influence on political thought after 1871. In that particular case, the French permitted Fichte's lectures in Berlin, seeing them as harmless effusions about language and education, far less threatening than advocacy of guerrilla resistance or insurrection.

Indeed, following conventional military defeats the inhabitants of the German lands put up extraordinarily little resistance to Napoleon. The major exception is that of the Tyrol but this cannot be connected to German nationalism, given that it was directed against Bavaria and framed its cause in terms of Habsburg loyalism. Arguably, geography matters more than national identity as such resistance resembles that one finds in other mountainous territory such as much of Spain and the south of Italy.

Both Prussia and Austria were military allies in the invasion of Russia. Both states cooperated in delivering indemnities to France. Prussia's army only abandoned its French

56 Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Cambridge/London 1992.

ally in December 1812, and that at first unofficially and disavowed by the king. Austria, under Metternich's leadership, waited until after the June 1813 armistice talks had failed before joining the anti-French coalition. Napoleon's own creations – the Confederation states – also switched sides (with the signal exception of Saxony) in 1813, in part to ensure that they survived Napoleon. The triumphant dynastic states easily crushed noisy student nationalism after 1815, even as they also exaggerated its significance.

What this suggests is that the crucial shift from a pro-French to an anti-French position was, at elite level, more a matter of a military balance of power than ideological antipathy, whether nationalist or something else. At a popular level, anti-French sentiment and even protests increase significantly with the terrible experiences from 1812 onwards.

Consequently, control remained firmly in the hands of princes focused mainly on the survival of their own states. This emphasis on the princely state increased with the territorialisation of the German lands under Napoleon.

This trend towards the territorial, sovereign state was confirmed, indeed strengthened after 1815. The micro-polities of the Holy Roman Empire were not resurrected, thus ensuring that the post-1815 states were larger, more secular and sharply territorial than what had existed before. Only the »purely« French creations – the annexed left-bank of the Rhine and the state ruled by Napoleon's relatives – were destroyed but their territories given to other territorial states, above all Prussia. Furthermore, the Napoleonic-era reforms ensured that these were states in which personal monarchy had declined in the face of increasingly centralised bureaucratic government which accepted the ideas of specialised ministries, private property rights and equality before the law, even if there remained many exceptions to such arrangements. Also inherited from Napoleon was a distrust of popular involvement in government and of constitutions being more about defining the sovereignty of the state than ensuring any significant role for representative institutions.

Second, a German state system survived in the form of the German Confederation (»Deutscher Bund«). Although drawing on certain traditions from both the Holy Roman Empire and the Confederation of the Rhine, it accorded considerable internal sovereignty to its members.⁵⁷ On this basis, the medium states – especially Hannover, Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg – were able to engage in state-building projects, including constitutionalism, building upon the reforms initiated under Napoleon. By contrast, diversity mattered more in Austria and Prussia, where one finds varying systems of law, urban administration and forms of land tenure in different provinces. It is difficult to see how appeals to German »nationality« based on language and literature could make much headway under such conditions. However, the ability of these two states to control the affairs of the »Deutsche Bund« had important consequences for the growth of German nationalism.

There were two convergent forces at work that produced an increasingly significant kind of German nationalism. First, there was one broad social group which was attracted to the idea of a national culture: the educated bourgeoisie. Germany was not only a political system in the form of the »Bund«; it was also an educational and communications system at elite level. The elite secondary school – the *Gymnasium* – displayed an educational ethos that was becoming increasingly similar across different German states. This was even more the case at university level where students frequently moved from their own state to study in universities in other states, often attending more than one. Given the growing role of trained officials in state government, this common cultural formation could become politically significant. German language books, newspapers and periodicals circulated across

⁵⁷ Member states could not pursue an independent military and foreign policy. However, any state which also had territory outside the Confederation – like Austria and Prussia – was not bound by this rule.

state boundaries to a growing readership. Here, it would appear, an »imagined nation« could be constructed.

Yet, unless able to cooperate with more powerful established or emerging elites and/or to persuade their rulers to take on board their values, it is difficult to see how this bourgeois sense of national identity could become a significant political force, still less acquire popular support. Here the second factor plays its part, which is to do with the effect of continuing practices of territoriality and its impact within a German political system.

The most obvious practices of territoriality can be seen in the state-building efforts of the medium states.⁵⁸ Less obvious but, I would argue, more significant was what happened in Prussia, the reason being precisely that this was less an intentional project pursued from the centre but more something arising from the pressure to select appropriate policies in a modernising process.

One relevant policy field concerns tariffs. It was in Prussia's state interest to remove internal tariff barriers, between provinces and between town and countryside. Given the territorial separation of the six eastern and central provinces from the two western provinces, this naturally extended into efforts to integrate the adjacent non-Prussian territories. This had a further logic. The costs of enforcing a customs boundary vary inversely with the length of that boundary. Prussia could offer to pass on much of this cost reduction to other states if they joined in a customs union. That offer appealed to other states anxious to reduce their dependence on negotiations with their subjects in order to increase revenue. The formation of the German customs union was motivated initially by such considerations, not as a Prussian weapon in a long-run policy aimed at national unification and against Austria. Only later did it acquire that meaning, one which national historiography then read back into the earlier phase of the process.

Another policy area with territorialising implications was poor relief. In primarily agricultural, *ancien régime* societies the principal welfare benefit regulated by government was relief offered to those thrown temporarily into poverty for no fault of their own. This was regarded as a local matter. Migrant workers unable to support themselves were to be returned to their parish (*Gemeinde*) of birth to receive poor relief. However, in a society where increasing numbers of workers moved far from their place of birth, often migrating into large cities, where unemployment was more closely related to the rapid economic cycles of an early industrialising economy, not to the periodic failures of harvests, this was an irrational way to administer poor relief. There was pressure to »select« a more rational policy. In the case of Prussia, this involved setting time limits to the policy of returning impoverished workers to their place of birth. This made poor relief a matter for the central state to organise, or at least coordinate, not for the local state alone or private charity.

This had a further consequence. Under the local system, one could depend upon each parish to police eligibility for poor relief. There was no need to keep a special control over »foreigners« because automatically they would not be eligible in any parish. To be Prussian was to be born in a Prussian parish. This no longer applied with the innovation of state-coordinated poor relief. Now it became necessary to distinguish Prussians from non-Prussians. On the same day in 1842 that the law on poor relief was passed, so too was a law defining who was Prussian. (The term used was not citizen – inappropriate given the lack of political citizenship rights and the continuation of distinction by privilege of the parishes of Prussia – but »state member«, *Staatsangehörige*). In turn, that made it necessary to devise methods of enforcing the new law, such as insistence on documentation.

This is one instance of how modernisation set in train practices of territoriality which themselves had an escalating logic. Centralised states became more salient to their sub-

58 *Abigail Green*, *Fatherlands. State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, Cambridge/New York etc. 2001.

jects, which in turn stimulated the growth of state level politics. This was especially expressed in the growing strength of liberal political movements. Given the prominent role of educated bourgeois in these movements, it was to be expected that their values included an emphasis on a shared elite German culture.

However, this combined with something else to endow this liberal movement with a national character. I have stressed that the German medium states had »internal« sovereignty. There comes a point when the meaning of this term is questioned when it turns out that not having »external« sovereignty has domestic consequences. Increasingly liberal opponents of the territorialising states found this to be the case as their efforts to constitutionalise state government and make it more efficient were frustrated by the rules of the Confederation, rules that ultimately the two dominant states of Austria and Prussia were ready to enforce. Liberals, as well as a growing radical democratic opposition, were pushed into developing a national political programme, if only as a means to pursue state-centred objectives. In this way a »national« movement was formed out of the links between similarly minded liberal and radical associations in the separate states.

This culminated in the revolution of 1848–49 when such movements dominated the elections to the German National Assembly with its key objective of establishing a constitutional nation-state. As is well known, the project failed. However, it also laid bare the tensions between sovereignty and non-sovereignty in the German political system and between Austrian and Prussian interests in different ways of organising that political system. Mark Hewitson has recently argued persuasively that in many ways the »answers« provided by the assembly deeply shaped the actual arrangements brought into being by 1871 with the formation of the German Second Empire.⁵⁹ German nationalism was as much a response to problems posed by modernisation and the practices of state territoriality as it was an expression of some pre-existing national cultural identity. It was how these could be combined that mattered.

This is but one such argument one could mount in order to revise national historiographies which either make too much of long-run cultural or ethnic identity or the instrumental interests of particular individuals, classes and states (e.g., Otto von Bismarck, capitalists and Prussia) and too little of the pressures to ideological innovation brought about by modernisation, in particular the practices of territoriality.

The final moves to the triumph of unification nationalism in the German case are inextricably linked to the selective modernisation of key forms of power in the Prussian state. This was most obvious with the military modernisation, which also caused the constitutional crisis that brought Bismarck to power. That military modernisation was linked to modernising communications and transport technology, mass manufacture of weapons, new kinds of military training and constitutionalism. (One can only have a constitutional crisis if constitutional politics matters).⁶⁰

Germany is the most clear-cut case of how the new German state was conceived of as the territories of the existing German states minus Austria coupled with selective modernisation processes that enabled one existing state to take the leading role.

As for the other three »historic« nations of central Europe, one can again link the role of practices of territoriality to the power and character of nationalist movements. The

59 Mark Hewitson, *Nationalism in Germany, 1848–1866. Revolutionary Nation*, Basingstoke/New York 2010.

60 I consider this cluster of modernisation changes and their impact in chapter 6 of *John Breuilly, Austria, Prussia and the Making of Germany, 1806–1871*, London/New York 2011 (first published 2002). It is not possible to cite the vast literature on 19th century Germany. Very useful are the five volumes (13–17) of the tenth edition of the series »Gebhardt. Handbuch der deutschen Geschichte« produced under the general editorship of Jürgen Kocka.

strongest and most successful was that of Hungary based as it was on Magyar elite control of Transleithian Habsburg Empire. Radical separatism failed in 1848–49 but more conservative assertions of autonomy following the crisis of the Habsburg defeat by Prussia in 1866 succeeded. From then on the dominant Magyar elite sought to impose its rule ever more strongly on its state territory.

Mazzini insisted on a clear territorial concept of Italy based on the peninsula south of the Alps, including offshore islands. Yet though such a geographic concept appears to modern eyes more clear-cut than, say, one based on »wherever the German tongue is heard«, what matters is whether those who live in this abstractly defined territory actually share that view. There is much evidence to suggest that they did not, and that this increased the further south one moved. There was no equivalent to the »Deutsche Bund« or the »Zollverein« or a diffuse bourgeoisie to some extent brought together by cultural tastes, educational institutions and elite liberal associations. Unification consequently was more a function of international crisis, powerful external support (France in 1859, Prussia in 1866 and 1870–71) and the contingent collapse of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in the face of Giuseppe Garibaldi's miniscule nationalist expedition. One could almost rephrase the famous quote attributed to Massimo d'Azeglio: »We have made Italy, now we must make Italians« as »We have conquered states in Italy, now we must create an Italian state.«

The final case – that of 19th century Polish nationalism – failed in the sense that a Polish nation-state was only formed after the First World War. Yet arguably it was the most powerful movement of the four – linked to uprisings and brutal repression in 1830–31, 1846, 1848, and 1863. That capacity was based on the links between aristocratic elites with direct connections to the actual state of Poland, which had existed until the third and final partition of 1797. Yet that gentry nationalism arguably could never convert into enduring and popular nationalism. Only with its final destruction by Russian power in 1863 could something more modern and formidable develop. Furthermore, as each of the partitioning states created different notions of state territoriality in what had been former Poland, so did effective political movements adapt to each of these circumstances in ways which made coordination between them difficult, if not impossible. Only when the power of the three partitioning powers was destroyed in 1917–1918 could unification nationalism succeed. By then, as I will show in the next section, this was a very different kind of nationalism from that of the 19th century.⁶¹

The contrasts between these four nationalist movements aiming to consolidate large nation-states, which were not defined by ethnicity rather than by a claim to cultural dominance over a multi-ethnic zone, can help illuminate the role played by state territoriality. I return to the period of the mid-century revolutions. German and Hungarian nationalism could connect to a clear conception of state territoriality. In the case of Hungary, this was the Transleithian Habsburg Monarchy, which Magyar elites loosely controlled (with the significant exception of Croatia, which had its own autonomous institutions played a major counter-revolutionary role).

In the case of Germany, this was the German Confederation. This enabled the convening of the German National Assembly, a unique constituent assembly in that it was organised through a plurality of states. A comparable example is the Congress that convened in Philadelphia. Just as the USA was defined as the totality of the thirteen colonies, or sub-states, so was Germany as the totality of the member states of the Confederation. This is clear in the first sentence of Article 1 of the 1849 constitution drawn up by the assembly: »The

61 My treatment of these nationalisms draws upon my chapter *John Breuilly, Nationalism and National Unification in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, in: *id.*, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, pp. 149–174.

German Reich consists of the territory of the former German Federation.«⁶² State territoriality, not ethnicity or language, provided the institutional base and the boundaries of Germany. The division that eventually took place was a division between state territories, namely the separation of Austrian Germany from the remaining member states of the Confederation.

Nothing like this happened in the cases of Polish and Italian nationalism. It is telling that the most recent effort to assert the centrality of nationalism in mid-19th century Italian history, associated with historian Alberto Banti, has no institutional or territorial focus at all but rather treats the Risorgimento as a »canon« associated with key texts, musical compositions and paintings and the vision and enthusiastic followings these evoked.⁶³ It is a weak basis on which a nationalist movement can coordinate elites and mobilise popular support, and so it proved.

That is even more the case for Poland. So firmly integrated were the four zones of partitioned Poland into their respective state territories that Polish politics – nationalist and non-nationalist – took different directions in each zone.⁶⁴ Failure to coordinate between the zones weakened Polish nationalism. Thus, an attempted insurrection in Galicia took place in 1846 and its repression (helped by widespread opposition from Polish speaking peasants) meant no resistance was possible during the 1848 revolution. The uprising in Congress Poland in 1863 was isolated from the other zones and crushed. Polish nationalism was a strong movement but it took on different forms according to the state territory in which it was located. Only a general collapse of those states, which is what happened in 1917–1918, provided the space within which Polish nationalism could achieve success.

The dominance of unification nationalism in the 19th century can be extended beyond Europe. Charles Maier has argued persuasively that such unification, based on modern conceptions of state territoriality, can be seen in the US Civil War where the modernising Unionist movement eventually prevailed over the Confederacy and imposed a more unitary system of authority than had existed before. The Meiji Restoration was another civil war in which the modernising elites triumphed and centralised. Maier takes other cases too, such as Mexico. This can also explain why nationalism was not seen at this time as an ideology in its own right but rather as one aspect of modernising movements, variously associated with economic progress and large constitutional states.

IV. DIFFUSING NATIONALISM GLOBALLY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

My arguments so far have applied to Europe and some other parts of the world up to the First World War. In this final section, I want to sketch out how the connection between modern practices of territoriality and nationalist ideology extended globally after 1918 but at the same time took different forms from earlier.

The separation into two spheres of conflict (inter-imperial and core/periphery) could not be indefinitely sustained. Relations between the modern powers were unstable and membership of this club itself changed (e.g. the rise of Japan by the early 20th century), accompanied by constant fears of one power becoming hegemonic. In turn, imperial ex-

62 I take the English translation from *Elmar M. Hucko* (ed.), *The Democratic Tradition. Four German Constitutions*, Leamington Spa 1987, pp. 79–117.

63 *Lucy Riall/Axel Körner/David Laven* et al., Alberto Banti's Interpretation of Risorgimento Nationalism. A Debate, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 15, 2009, pp. 396–454.

64 These were the lands brought directly under Romanov rule, the constitutional Polish state (»Congress Poland«) bound by personal union to the Russian Tsar, Prussian Poland – itself divided between East Prussia, West Prussia and Posen, and the Austrian province of Galicia.

plottation as well as inter-imperial competition provided motives and opportunities for groups in the peripheries to acquire modern knowledge and skills, often at the behest of the imperial power that could not run its empire on a simple, non-collaborator basis such as race domination. This in turn led colonial elites to reflect on why and how such skills and knowledges conferred power and to the formulation of strategies to possess that power for themselves. In these ways, nationalism was generated and diffused as political ideology within modernising polities, in the competition between those polities, and in the responses of peripheries.

However, initially the construction of such ideological responses in the peripheries was detached from practices of territoriality. There is a problem about seeking to extend the kind of analysis that works for Europe with its clearly defined borders and national-imperial states to the non-European world largely divided into imperial blocs and dominated by practices of inter-empire conflict and cooperation.⁶⁵

An important early nationalist periphery response to this world of imperial blocs took the form of pan-nationalism. One can point to a plethora of pan-national ideologies and movements taking shape around 1900: Pan-Africanism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Turkism, Pan-Arabism, Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism, Pan-Celtism, and Pan-Americanism. This spread and simultaneity suggests a common origin. I consider them all to be responses to the most powerful and successful pan-movement of all, what we might call Pan-Whiteism or Pan-Westernism, as cooperative global imperialism practised by the major European powers and the USA reached its zenith.⁶⁶

This imperialism constructed a hierarchical view of the world, whether racial, religious or civilisational, which was communicated to its »own« populations through popular writings, cartoons and exhibitions, fairs and popular science. It was also communicated, more forcibly and effectively, to those deemed inferior, above all in violent forms of discrimination. Pan-nationalism was a set of counter ideologies and movements which opposed this hierarchical vision. Pan-nationalists shared with imperialism the assumption of a world of a few large blocs – civilisations, races, world religions or cultures – but they converted hierarchy into plurality.⁶⁷ This conversion parallels the earlier one whereby representatives of »non-historic« nationalities in Europe opposed a vision of equal nations to the hierarchical vision of »historic« nations.⁶⁸

Another parallel between how these two subordinate forms of nationalist ideology were elaborated can be found in the role played by transnational networks of political exiles in imperial cities. Different versions of Polish and Hungarian, German and Italian nationalism, all combined with varieties of European pan-nationalism, were formed in London and Paris in the middle decades of the 19th century. Those same two cities saw the elaboration

65 The cooperation is as, if not more, important than overt conflict, for example in the six-power military repression of the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900.

66 *Marilyn Lake/Henry Reynolds*, *Drawing the Global Colour Line. White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality*, Cambridge/New York etc. 2008. The problem with these terms is these powers include Japan. The very ambivalence of its position is linked, as I will argue, to its unique role in the development of pan-nationalism.

67 There were some who inverted the hierarchy in one way or another, including certain kinds of »Orientalist« westerners but this was not common.

68 For an introduction to this rapidly developing research field see *Cemil Aydin*, *Pan-Nationalism of Pan-Islamic, Pan-Asian, and Pan-African Thought*, in: *Breuilly*, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, pp. 672–693. For the non-historic/historic distinction and the »small« nationalism response see *Miroslav Hroch*, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe. A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*, Cambridge/New York etc. 1985; *Roman Rosdolsky*, *Engels and the »Nonhistoric« Peoples. The National Question in the Revolution of 1848*, Glasgow 1986.

of different types of Pan-Africanism in mid-20th century. Black US and Caribbean intellectuals did something similar in New York and Washington.

Especially dramatic for the spread of pan-nationalism was the impact of the Japanese defeat of Russia in 1904–5. This destroyed the myth of white race superiority. It provided pan-nationalists with an intellectual model and place of refuge. Tokyo in the first three decades of the 20th century played a similar role for Asian intellectuals to develop nationalist ideologies as Paris and London had earlier. Furthermore, there was now a powerful state which, for its own purposes, promoted certain kinds of pan-nationalism, especially one form of Pan-Asianism.⁶⁹

A key feature of pan-nationalism is negative: it lacks territorial focus. This was its strength as a proselytising ideology but a key weakness in terms of elite coordination. From this perspective, the vision of a world of nation-states presaged in the 14 Points of Woodrow Wilson and the near simultaneous call by Wladimir Iljitsch Lenin for national liberation, declarations with global impact⁷⁰, was not a continuation of that earlier pan-nationalism but a rupture produced by a war of unparalleled destruction, the collapse of the European dynastic empires and the unwillingness of the victorious Allies to extend direct rule to the territories of the defeated.

There were two kinds of rupture. Within multi-ethnic, »continuous« dynastic empires in Europe itself, earlier visions of cultural autonomy and limited federalism were transformed into demands for sovereign territorial nation-states. These were given precise territorial and constitutional expression, as it was only such a demand which the triumphant Allies with their own models of the nation-state could understand how to implement. Indeed, it was above all the US deputation to the Versailles Peace Conference, with its hundreds of »experts«, maps and census figures, which provided the intellectual instruments through which arguments about the territory of successor states were conducted.⁷¹

In the modern states of Germany and the Habsburg Empire, these arguments could be related to already well developed practices of territoriality. The arguments played out differently in the Soviet Union, both because one empire replaced another and because there was a less modern set of territoriality practices. Yet the USSR itself set about dividing its lands (in particular those designated as non-Russian) into a series of national republics, a practice that would shape the manner of its collapse some seventy-five years later.

These arguments played out differently in the non-European lands of the Ottoman Empire, a story with more parallels to the shift from pan-nationalism to territorial nationalism that principally took place in European overseas empires after 1945. The story that is often told here is of the construction of »artificial« states, whether this be post-1918 »Iraq« or post-1960 »Tanzania«. This concept has echoes of the original radical nationalist critique of the European Ancien regimes I discussed earlier and it remains just as problematic.

Part of the reason for the shift from pan to territorial nationalism was the firm view amongst the western powers after 1945 that ethnic ideologies (the principal nationalist justification for the new nation-states of post-1918 central Europe) were unstable and dangerous bases on which to found states. The failure of the successor states produced by Versailles (seen as due to a combination of internal instability associated with embittered national minorities, insufficient power to assert themselves against powerful neighbours and inadequate international security arrangement), along with the barbarisms associated with

69 The best known figure is Sun Yat Sen, though Hawaii and Christianity are other crucial non-Chinese experiences in his intellectual formation.

70 Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anti-colonial Nationalism*, Oxford/New York etc. 2007.

71 Lilitana Rigal James Kennedy, *Mitteleuropa as Middle America? »The Inquiry« and the Mapping of East Central Europe in 1919*, in: *Ab Imperio* 4, 2006, pp. 271–300.

fascism, especially Nazism, more than explain this attitude. Yet the nation-state model could not be surrendered by the western powers, anxious both to resist Soviet imperialism and to generalise its own model to the world. The answer was to take the distinct colonial territories as the basis for the successor nation-state.

Only a transnational framework can explain this transformation of nationalism into what became the familiar demand for »national self-determination«. That claim, notoriously vague and ambiguous, would go through characteristic changes in the interwar period, after 1945 and following the collapse of the Soviet bloc, each change only to be understood within a global historical perspective.⁷²

These were not wholly novel constructions. Already, especially in the years between 1930 and 1960 (though interrupted by war) new forms of imperial exploitation had given more meaning to colonial territories. In turn, the original boundaries were not as arbitrary as often portrayed, with complex negotiations taking place between imperial agents and indigenous elites. This has been argued, for example, in relation to the Berlin Conference of 1884–85, which is usually depicted as an arbitrary division of African territories between the European powers.⁷³ It has also been used to rebut the view that Iraq was an »artificial« state based on the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916.⁷⁴ (The names are those of the British and French diplomats involved.) More generally, the growing field of what might be called »boundary studies« has probed the complexities involved of drawing boundaries, both for internal administrative reasons and to delineate internationally recognised frontiers.⁷⁵

Irrespective of that, however, the colonial practices of territoriality forced nationalist movements into using such territories and their political institutions to construct and justify their own organisations and objectives. Furthermore, apart from any practical issues such as control of movements of goods and people, the symbolic importance of national boundaries in modern international relations compelled states to proclaim the sanctity of their frontiers and to obtain mutual recognition of these. Finally, the international forces at work in many parts of the world – especially during the period of the Cold War – ensured that boundary changes were ruled out of order.⁷⁶

V. CONCLUSION

There are many countervailing forces to the modernising processes I have sketched and, in particular, the development of a modern concept of state territory, which I have argued is closely related to the rise and impact of nationalist ideology. Not all state boundaries

72 The changes from the perspective of US policy are traced in *Liliana Riga/James Kennedy*, To Build a Nation. US State Department Nation Building Expertise and Postwar Settlements in 20th Century East Central Europe, in: *Sociological Research Online* 18, 2013, issue 2, URL: <<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.5153/sro.3097>> [20.9.2017]. For a transnational history into the interwar period see *Adam Tooze*, *The Deluge. The Great War and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916–1931*, London/New York 2014.

73 For revisions of this standard view of the Berlin Conference of 1884/85 see *Simon Katzenellenbogen*, It Didn't Happen in Berlin. Politics, Economics and Ignorance in the Setting of Africa's Colonial Boundaries, in: *Paul Nugent/Anthony Ijaola Asiwaju* (eds.), *African Boundaries. Barriers, Conduits and Opportunities*, London 1996, pp. 21–31.

74 *Sara Pursley*, »Lines Drawn on an Empty Map«. Iraq's Borders and the Legend of the Artificial State (Part 1), 2.6.2015, URL: <<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/21759/>> [9.8.2017].

75 See *Paul Readman/Cynthia Radding/Chad Bryant* (eds.), *Borderlands in World History, 1700–1914*, Basingstoke/New York 2014.

76 On African state practices of territoriality see *Jeffrey Herbst*, *States and Power in Africa. Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, Princeton 2000. On the »stability« of African state boundaries see *Pierre Englebert*, *Africa. Unity, Sovereignty and Sorrow*, Boulder 2009.

are precisely mapped out and their enforcement made part of the »normal« sovereignty of the state.⁷⁷

There continue to be many cases of »extra-territoriality«. Economic, ideological and other forms of social power, each organised as a specialised sub-system, often transcend the specialised functions and meanings associated with state boundaries. New forms of inter-state agreements and trans-state movements of people, capital, goods and services undermine the significance of state boundaries. As the very process of modernisation destroys the segmented and/or stratified groups which long continued to exist within the framework of functional differentiation, so this also reveals many of the dysfunctionalities of a »pure« modern society. In addition, that in turn leads to efforts to blur or reconfigure functional differences. All of this is associated with the many debates about multiple paths to modernity, post-modernity and globalisation. I cannot enter into these here.

Rather I had a more limited concern, which was to sketch out a theory of modernisation in which the construction of a new kind of political space – state territory – was a crucial element. That both stimulated and crystallised the most effective forms of nationalist ideology and associated political movements that formed around spatial conceptions of the nation and thereby shaped the key nationalist objective of achieving a sovereign nation-state.

⁷⁷ Many pre-modern boundaries are precisely defined and effectively enforced, such as the military border districts of the Habsburg Empire. However, the border zone is a special area, ruled in a different way from the rest of state territory. What is modern is to have a precise and all-purpose boundary, effective enforcement based above all on the documentation of citizens and non-citizens, and »normal« sovereignty, i.e. that the last strip of state territory is ruled in just the same way as any other part of the state.