

## The New Nationalism

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The study of nationalism presents several complex problems from the outset, not least that of simple definition. As a concept, nationalism is both particular and completely adaptable: on the one hand everyone knows what it means, but on the other no consensus has ever been found around a precise definition which can cover the full gamut of situations in which it is clearly at work. Nationalism can be primarily about xenophobia and racism; it can be the spreading of high and literate culture to the masses; it can be about states and borders, and the quest to make the political and the national units 'congruent' (through unification or separatism) to create a world of straightforwardly recognisable nation-states; it can be about identity, the mutual recognition of those who belong, and do not belong, to a particular national community; or it can be as simple as the quest to give greater glory and pride to a particular and universally recognised nation (on theories, see Lawrence, 2005). A range of theories have been developed to explain the diversity, the most widespread of which is a grand scheme of classification into 'civic' and 'ethnic' types of nations and nationalism, although more recent work has shown the limitations of this theory, particularly for the nineteenth century (Baycroft and Hewitson, 2006; see also *The ASEN Bulletin*, 1996/7). Likewise, no consensus can be found regarding the period and places in which nationalism can be said to have had an impact. The perennialist school of thought sees nationalism as a force to be found for many centuries in Europe (Smith, 1998), including some looking as far back as old Testament Israel (Hastings, 1997), while modernists argue that nationalism is a force which arrived in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century or thereabouts, gradually spreading across Europe and the globe over the next few centuries (see for example Breuilly, 1982). To understand nationalism as a force during the *fin de siècle* will require a more general sense of what the term could mean then, as well as an examination of what distinguishes nationalism at that time from the period which preceded it, that is to say, what was new, different and particular about nationalism during the *fin de siècle*. After exploring several dimensions of what nationalism meant at the *fin de siècle*, this chapter will then turn to an examination of several examples.

To cover all possibilities, a nation can be defined as a group of people sharing any number of real or perceived characteristics, at least some of the members of which are conscious of the extent and the limits of the group and identify themselves with it. These characteristics may include any number of cultural traits, such as language, religion, dress or cuisine, a sense of the history of the nation (as heroes or martyrs), some kind of political or institutional structure (from a fully-fledged State to an underground independence movement), and almost all include an identifiable territory or homeland. The combination of characteristics will be different for each nation, and can grow and become enhanced over time. The potential to conceive of the whole membership of the national community, and for individuals to draw some elements of their identity from the nation is an important element in nationhood, making a nation, in the phrase of Benedict Anderson, an imagined community (1991). Nationalism is the word which is given to political movements which create, enhance and then draw upon sentiments of national identity and love of the nation in order to put a particular group into power or to mobilise support for their political agenda, most effective and obvious in times of crisis (Hewitson, 2006, 312-55). Nationalism

has also at one time or another been successfully combined with just about any other political agenda, be it liberal or conservative, authoritarian or democratic, progressive or reactionary. It is this very flexibility of possible definitions and potential compatibility with a wide range of political circumstances which make nations so adaptable, and nationalism potentially so powerful as a motivating political force.

One of the most widespread notions of nationalism has been that it is about bringing power to 'the people', but the ways in which the people were thought of changed dramatically in the century preceding the *fin de siècle*. From the time of the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century through the early nineteenth century, 'the people' were primarily defined against the aristocracy, and nationalist movements centred most commonly around overthrowing absolutism, breaking the power of entrenched aristocratic elites, and bringing about some kind of democracy. Different nations at this time were the allies of one another, seeking to bring about the triumph of not only their own people against the elite oppressors, but that of all nations against all forms of absolutist tyranny. The drive to establish democracy was a part of a universalist project aiming to see all nations triumph and the use of reason and Enlightenment spread throughout the world, paralleling the decline and fall of absolutism and the empowered aristocratic elites (see Hobsbawm, 1994).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, much nationalist discourse was more closely influenced by romanticism, and the quest for the 'authentic' voice of each particular nation and its people. Understanding folk customs, tales and music were all a part of building a fully developed understanding of the cultural characteristics which defined each nation, made it special and valued, and upon which a national identity could be built and promoted (Baycroft and Hopkin, 2012). Absolutism had not been completely vanquished, nor democracy fully ensconced, but the attention and objectives of nationalists had already begun to shift. At this stage, differentiation between each nation and the precise elaboration of the cultural specificity and uniqueness of each gradually superseded the universalist objectives of the nationalism of the Enlightenment and Revolution which had been more about the principles of sovereignty of the people than about each nations' individuality and uniqueness.

The *fin de siècle* saw new dimensions to nationalism and the various political discourses about nations emerge as the general political and diplomatic context became transformed. The map of Europe had already been influenced by nationalist movements, having seen the unification of Germany and Italy, as well as the development of nascent nationalist or regionalist movements within the Austro-Hungarian Empire and elsewhere. The extension of the franchise had brought about an era of mass politics, where the electorate was there to be wooed and influenced by the various factions competing for political power. Nationalism had already proved a powerful motivating factor among urban elites and then masses earlier in the century, and by the *fin de siècle*, rival political elites sought to mobilise further support throughout the entire population with their nationalist discourses. Those already in power developed systems of mass education which would extend elite nationalist cultures and languages, as well as increase awareness of 'national' history and encourage and develop national identity among their populations (Gellner, 1983). As the ability of states to regulate, monitor and control affairs within their own territories increased, each nation state needed to mobilise more resources to compete with its neighbours, as well as use a greater proportion of its resources to influence its own

population. Much of the development of national sentiment and identity was based upon the creation or even invention of the 'characteristics' which define a nation (see Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983, and Weber, 1921)

Internationally, the major nation-states of Europe were also increasingly engaged in competition with one another. Economically, each sought to industrialise as quickly as possible, competing for markets, raw materials, and to develop techniques which would give their industries an advantage over others. At the same time they competed with one another for colonies, and as the remaining available territories diminished, so the competition between rival nations was heightened, leading to more than one crisis during the period (see for example Merriman, 2010, 742-82). One part of this competition between nations involved cultivating and developing an ever-greater sense of nationalism among the populations, such that they would approve and support further mobilisation of resources in the name of competition between states, and to build up the fear of other nations and keep the nationalists themselves in power domestically.

In this context of increasing competition and rivalry between nation-states, the nature of nationalism began also to shift, incurring the label 'new nationalism'. In some ways such a label is simply a sign of the awakening consciousness of self which characterised the *fin de siècle*, coupled with the belief that whatever was happening was a part of definitive (as opposed to simply cyclical) change which was a part of the 'end' to which they were driving towards the turn of the century. The label 'new' was, after all, applied to other things in the period (including the 'new woman', the 'new imperialism' and the "new journalism"). This suggests that those analysing nationalism were conscious that the developments which had occurred in the area of political nationalism were a part of the wider trend during the *fin de siècle* to adapt old forms into something new and different.

The new nationalism of the *fin de siècle* was not only more self-conscious but also relied more explicitly on defining 'the other'. 'The other' was in the first instance a simple means to refine a sense of the national self through greater awareness of national characteristics and cultures via those that were different. By the *fin-de-siècle*, however, 'the other' became much more prevalent among nationalist discourses, encompassing both the external enemy and also the enemy within. The latter could include immigrants (especially those of other races), the colonised, those of other religions (Jews in particular, but also Catholics or Protestants, depending upon which religion could be easily exploited as potential national enemies), as well as the potential "traitor," the member of the "fifth column," or anyone not fully "national." Anything which could be presented as threatening the sanctity of the nation as it was perceived by the educated middle classes who dominated each nation's political elite was fair game.

The nationalists of the *fin de siècle* were particularly concerned with contemporary theories of racial superiority, whether scientifically or culturally based, as well as the predominance of xenophobia. The scientific and racial theories led credence to the nationalist idea that the particular nation was the greatest, and that those from other nations were genuinely inferior. Even within Europe, the differences between the 'latin' and 'germanic' races could be used as a basis both to define self

and to explain how others were ‘naturally’ different and therefore justifiably scorned as inferior or as enemies.

The fear of the other, whether of the immigrant or the rival nation, which leads to a corresponding need to increase the importance of one’s own nation at the expense (at least rhetorically) of other nations, is also one of the key elements characterising the. One of the great fears was of course tied to the term itself, that the ‘fin’ towards which all were heading was uncertain, and possibly worse than the present. Belief in the ‘end’ meant that the place of a particular nation (and culture) had therefore to be secured, and while history might be mined for examples of national greatness, it was the present threats and future security and prosperity (if not survival) which were presented as being at stake and the most important. In such an atmosphere, nationalists were able to exploit the general sense of fear (or uncertainty) by stating that their nation was under threat of disappearance (or diminishing importance and power) and thereby promote their own agendas when they made the claim that they were best suited to protect the nation from the uncertainties which the new century would bring. It was also a fear of the disappearance of traditional culture (the familiar) faced with a modernity that would threaten traditional national culture, or at least those parts which came from rural and folk traditions. Thus nostalgia for an idyllic past of national traditions could be mobilised by nationalists, particularly if these traditions could be presented as under threat of disappearing.

Many of the descriptions of nations at the time began to take on a particularly *fin de siècle* character as well. The language of the psychology of individual nations began to intermingle with that of the simple cultural or ethnic descriptive characteristics that had come before. In a well-publicised speech called ‘What is a Nation?’ at the Sorbonne in Paris in 1882, Ernest Renan claimed that a nation was ‘a soul, a spiritual principle’ and that to understand a nation implied more than a comprehension of the simple culture, but required an understanding of the national character, of the national personality and mentality (Renan, 1882). Nations were personified and came to ‘understand’ and to ‘feel’ – usually what the political elites seeking to mobilise support in their favour thought and felt, it is true, but expressed very much in the language of psychology associated with the *fin de siècle*.

The final general characteristic of the *fin de siècle* that can be seen in the nationalism of the time consists of a ‘dark underside’ to the more general discourse about nations. It can be seen that on the one hand nations were still upheld as that which brought about, indeed stood for, the transmission of power to the people, representing not only democracy, progress and modernity, but openness and universal values derived from reason and the enlightenment. On the other hand, nationalists also began to use their very discourses of national identity to turn inwards and to make war on other nations, to exclude even those who a generation before had been a part of the nation, and to prevent those they colonised from achieving equal status within their nations. This is the ‘dark underside’ of *fin-de-siècle* nationalism. Where previously nationalism had been a kind of pure celebration of ‘the people’, which included all peoples opposed to tyranny, even when trying to discover the essences of each national type through an examination of ‘authentic’ folklore or culture, by the *fin de siècle* nationalism was about identifying national enemies, internal and external, and finding ways to keep them out or down.

Thus the “new nationalism” of the *fin de siècle* was still a political force seeking to mobilise support for nationalist politicians, but with a greater emphasis on the fear of the other, on threats and rivalries, based on language that was more psychological and that revealed a dark underside to the positive connotations of the mere promotion of patriotic loyalty and promotion of high culture. We will now turn to several examples of nationalism during the *fin de siècle*, beginning first of all with France and Germany, as examples of the traditional state-centred nation, before turning to the more diverse example of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the phenomenon of regionalism that was a related and increasingly significant factor at the time.

## France

Most studies of nationalism include France, which has been held up as the archetype of state-sponsored and successful centralising nation-building, and was able to mobilise and assimilate its diverse population into a coherent nation with a strong identity and clearly defined history and culture. It has also become the model of a ‘civic’ nation, based on notions of individual citizenship, and a social contract that allows those outside to join, as opposed to an ‘ethnic’ nation founded upon a discourse of ethnic or racial descent (Brubaker, 1992). Such a view among much of the historiography of nationalism notwithstanding, the development of French nationalism is nowhere near as free from ethnic, racial or cultural discourses as has been commonly believed, and the *fin de siècle* is a moment in time when these other elements can most easily be seen (see Baycroft, 2006).

The French Third Republic prided itself on its universalist, republican principles, inherited from the revolutionary tradition that had begun in 1789. As a nation, not only was France the beacon and example of these values to the world, but was also characterised by the greatness of its culture, language, history, and its ability to assimilate all comers into the home of liberty, equality and fraternity. Paris was the leading artistic and cultural centre of the world, and the centre stage of global attention during the whole of the *fin de siècle*. Twice during the period it played host to the World’s Fairs, for the centenary of the revolution in 1889 and again in 1900, using them as a platform to showcase the greatness of the French nation to its own people and to the globe (Weber 1986).

Behind the the glamour and the glory, however, the French nation also showed the signs described so far in this chapter of the changing form of nationalism found during the *fin de siècle*. Having been defeated and humiliated by Prussia in the Franco-Prussian war, which saw them lose Alsace-Lorraine to the newly united Germany in 1871, the French tried ever so much harder to seek glory. Although theoretically incompatible with the republican discourse of liberty to peoples, the French conquered many new colonies and tried to influence if not dominate the international scene, along with a renewed discourse of national greatness and rivalry with Germany. Along with their more obvious rivals across the Rhine, other groups were also targeted as enemies of the nation --enemies from within -- Catholics, Jews, and the far left. Contributing to this atmosphere of fear, the 1880s and 1890s saw crisis after crisis, where nationalism was prominent among the arguments of all political groups seeking to build a stronger nation based on the fear and hatred of the supposed enemies of the French nation (see Baycroft, 2008).

The first internal enemy was the Catholic church, accused of having supported the counter-revolution and monarchy in opposition to the republic and all of its values from the first revolution onwards. The fact that in 1890 the church officially changed its politics and proclaimed an acceptance of the republic to all of the clergy and the faithful not only did not lessen the charges against it, but on the contrary led to greater charges of trickery and backroom plotting to overthrow the republic in secret. The 1890s and the first few years after the turn of the century saw the highest levels of anticlericalism and anti-Catholic rhetoric in a century. The church was accused of being anti-national, fundamentally opposed to the defining principles of the French nation (that is to say republicanism) and the increased pressure of the *fin de siècle* years led through the proscription of monastic orders to the final official separation of the church and state in 1905 (Larkin, 1995).

While anticlericalism was a phenomenon essentially of the nationalist republican left, both the right and the mainstream left agreed that international socialism also represented a threat to the nation. Although much socialist rhetoric within France sought to keep the far left within the nationalist revolutionary tradition, the personal and later institutional links to the Second Workers International were hard to pretend as being other than dedicated to the destruction and removal of all nations in the name of the working class of all countries. Some real electoral success by socialists in France in the 1890s encouraged nationalists to continue to keep the threat of socialism as alive as possible, and their oppositional rhetoric played strongly upon how the far left were traitors to the nation. The journalist and poet Charles Péguy warned that if ever France entered into another war, the first thing they would need to do is execute the socialist leader Jean Jaurès, so as to prevent ‘the traitor from stabbing us in the back’ (1913).

Finally, antisemitism was also increasing in France during the *fin de siècle*. Edouard Drumont wrote his book *la France Juive* [*Jewish France*] in 1885; in its wake numerous antisemitic newspapers and other writings multiplied through the next couple of decades. The Jews, it was argued, were not inherently a part of the French nation, but perpetually other, and incapable of proper patriotism since they could only prey upon France for their own benefit. Much of the rhetoric was contemporary, of course, but they could draw upon the traditional language of antisemitism and the image of the foreign Jew (see Wilson, 2007).

The Dreyfus Affair was the event which draws all of the elements of *fin-de-siècle* nationalism together. Captain Alfred Dreyfus was charged and convicted by the French Army of treason (betraying secrets to Germany) in the early 1890s, and sentenced to prison in far-off Devil’s Island. Even as the evidence mounted that he was in fact innocent, the army went to great lengths (including forging documents) to see that its initial conviction was upheld and its honour not questioned. The antisemitic press supported the army and mounted a large campaign against Dreyfus the Jew, arguing that his ‘nationality’ indicated his traitorous disposition. By 1898 a political scandal erupted of huge proportions, bringing down the government. The result was a great strengthening of French nationalism, very much in the style of the *fin de siècle*, as fear of the foreigner and antisemitism combined to create new flights of nationalist rhetoric (Cahm, 1996).

## Germany

Although in many respects the historical context was strikingly different, nationalism in Germany during the *fin de siècle* bore many resemblances to that of France. Having only been unified in 1871, the first two decades of the united Germany had been dominated politically by the Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. The new era at the *fin de siècle* was marked by the coming to the throne of a new Kaiser, Wilhelm II, in 1888 and Bismarck's fall shortly thereafter in 1890. The post-Bismarckian years would see a "new nationalism" arise in Germany, encouraged from the top (Green, 2001, 298-337). The young Wilhelm II picked as his first new Chancellor General Leo von Caprivi, who sought a policy of internal reconciliation through his 'new course' (see Kitchen, 2006, 180-5; Feuchtwanger, 2001, 119-29 and Segara, 2001, 209-13). The quest to calm domestic unrest was combined with an aggressive foreign policy, known as the *Weltpolitik* or world policy, in which Germany would take its place as a leader in global affairs. German nationalism assumed a new character as well, very much in the style of the *fin de siècle*, characterised by the hunt for domestic traitors alongside of the fear of the other outside of the nation.

Internally, three groups were targeted in their different ways as enemies of the German nation (not dissimilarly to France): socialists, Jews and Catholics (see Berger, 2004, 84-92). Changes in the laws and a rise in unrest in certain quarters saw electoral successes of the socialists during the 1890s, which ironically contributed directly to an alliance of former rivals (conservatives and liberals) against the further rise of the far left. Socialists, while operating within a national framework, and perfectly willing to encourage love of the fatherland alongside of the class solidarity of the workers, did oppose certain overt forms and symbols of bourgeois, militaristic nationalism (such as commemoration of the victory of Sedan), which made them an easy target for the nationalists wanting to label them as anti-national.

Criticising the Church was in many ways easier, for official criticism of the Catholic Church was already well established in Imperial Germany by the start of the *fin de siècle*. Beginning in the early 1870s, Bismarck had waged a battle against the Catholic Church, known as the *Kulturkampf*: the Church had been labelled not only as reactionary, opposed to progress, but as fundamentally anti-national. Like the socialists, Catholics in Germany were not fundamentally opposed to the nation as such, but they did disapprove of the ways in which much of the German national imagery included Protestantism as one element of Germaness. Integrating German Catholics in support of the regime was important during the *fin de siècle*, but the discourse concerning the Church itself as at least a potential enemy lasted beyond the end of the *Kulturkampf* in the early 1880s (Smith, 1995).

As with the criticism of the Catholic Church, a tradition of antisemitism also pre-dated the *fin de siècle*. Traditional religious antisemitism combined with criticism of the capitalism and wealth of the German Jews, fear of increased numbers of poor non-German Jews from further east, and an association of Jews with the rise of socialism, internationalism, feminism and pacifism, all of which made the group as a whole subject to being seen as anti-national at just about every level. The potential lack of coherence of the different levels of antisemitism did not reduce its potency, nor make the Jews less of a target for the nationalists seeking an internal enemy to blacken. (see Hagen, 2012 and Smith 2008).

Unity among the nationalists forged out of opposition to the internal enemies (Catholics, Jews and socialists) was fragile, and required regular effort to build and re-build. In 1897, the government introduced an overt policy of solidarity, called the *Sammlungspolitik*, to unite the productive classes (agriculture and industry) and to bring about a deliberate ‘mobilisation of national consciousness’ and identity (Smith, 1995, 118-19). The aim was simply to garner support for the government. They also used a renewed foreign policy and a targeting of external enemies of the German nation as a complement to the domestic policy: this was the *Weltpolitik*.

Under this policy, Germany aimed to surmount other world nations and to develop a colonial empire rivalling those of the other great European powers. The chief external enemies targeted by the nationalists were France and Great Britain, both of whom were rivals to the rise and greatness of Germany. Their neighbours to the east, the various Slavic nations, were derided as backward and racially inferior (Berger, 2004, 92-3). Colonial expansion and the development of a large scale naval programme would eventually lead Germany into conflict with the other powers, but such an aggressive foreign policy was intended in large part as a means to enhance unity, stability and solidarity on the domestic front. Chancellor Bülow overtly stated that his foreign policy of grand gestures was a political device, for ‘only a successful foreign policy can help to reconcile, pacify, rally unite.’ (Quoted in Mommsen, 1995, 151). Overall, Germany fits the pattern of the big states in their changing nationalism at the *fin de siècle*. It turned increasingly towards the rhetoric of internal and external enemies, as well as cultivating fear of these enemies and pride in German superiority, as ways of enhancing internal political support for the nationalists in the closing years of the century.

### Austria-Hungary

The Austro-Hungarian Empire provides a different sort of example to the state-centred nationalism seen in both long-standing France and recently united Germany. In addition to ‘Austrian’ (German-language) and ‘Hungarian’ nationalisms, the Empire was home to quite a few other national groups in different states of political advancement and popular self-consciousness. During the *fin de siècle*, the sheer diversity of the different groups makes generalisation quite difficult. The division of the territory also leaves two different contexts, where Hungary appears more like the standard model of centralised nation-building based upon the education and assimilation of the population into the single national cultural community, and the remaining territories under Austria more tolerant of diversity in a (relatively) more pluralistic society bound together by loyalty to the crown. Ironically, it was the more pluralistic, tolerant and culturally diverse Austrian system which provided an environment more conducive to the development of fragmented national communities than the assimilationist Hungarian one (Haslinger, 2012, 111-28). Furthermore, a disagreement persists in the historiography as to whether or not it was nationalism which was the primary cause of the eventual break-up of the Empire, or alternatively whether it even posed a threat to the Empire at all, which was only brought down by external defeat rather than internal nationalism (for a summary, see Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007, 268-77). Either way, the nationalists would capitalise on the defeat in 1918 as the basis for the division of the Empire into smaller nation-states, and the *fin*



*de siècle* was a key moment for the development of the nationalist discourses and movements in the first place.

The key developments in the rise of nationalism in Austria-Hungary were the spread of education and the development of written versions of what would become the national languages; a longer term development which led to the formation of educated elites in these languages that could rival the centre; and more importantly, at this particular moment, the successful association of nationalism with the discourses of progress and modernity. As the reactionary, conservative and traditional elites stood for empire, those supporting 'progressive' liberalism economically and constitutionalism politically increasingly allied themselves with the new elites from outside the traditional German-speaking circles. It was this association of the liberal, progressive and constitutional discourses with an emotive sense of historic roots in a language community that contributed to the rise of nationalism, and made it so powerful. The "new nationalism" of the *fin de siècle* was recognisably different from earlier nationalisms elsewhere. As Robin Okey observed, progress was increasingly identified 'with the aspiration for a dynamic nationhood rather than a more abstract concept of advancing humanity,' (2001, 284) which, as we have seen, is what the nationalists at the time of the French Revolution and in the early nineteenth-century had promoted.

Because of the slightly different political position of the nationalists in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the 'enemy' other who was to be feared was slightly different than what we have seen for France and Germany, particularly in the sense of who was internal and who was external. Since the groups were in practice mixed on the ground, everyone was internal, at least to the Empire, and the proximity lent force to the tension between them. As with other nationalist thinking during the *fin de siècle*, national divisions were also expressed increasingly in terms of racial differences. Internal 'traitors' occupied a slightly less central position, partly because other religious groups, for example, simply formed or were conceived of as rival nations. Socialism was still there to be feared as internal and anti-national, but in some ways, ironically, helped to promote the growth of nationalism. Socialist thinkers, writers and activists throughout the Empire at this time, though genuinely internationalist in their objectives, made a point of providing material in the various languages, inadvertently supporting the creation of a wider political sphere in each language, and ultimately playing into the nationalists' hands, rather than the socialist ones. Thus, although differing in many respects with France and Germany, nationalism in *fin-de-siècle* Austria-Hungary still bore the characteristics of attempting to generate national consciousness among the population and mobilise the masses using fear of the other and the threats they represented to the national community, which itself was presented as representing progress and modernity.

### Regionalism

Just as nationalism in France, Germany and the different minority nations within the Austro-Hungarian Empire developed differently, so each of the other nations of Europe not specifically covered here had its own story, determined by the specific political context of the states in which they developed. Thus in Great Britain, questions of Empire and imperialism, as well as the rivalry between 'Britain' on the one hand, and England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales on the other, gave a particular

character to the development of identities, and the ways in which national sentiment was mobilised by different political groups. Meanwhile, nationalism developed in Italy against a background of recent unification, in Belgium coloured by two rival linguistic groups in a non-historic state, and in Spain in the context of rival large regional centres and a perception of general decline. In each case, the specific political context determined the potential for the political mobilisation of national sentiment. But they all witnessed some form of nationalism, as a result of the unsettling and rapid changes – political, economic, social and cultural – of the *fin de siècle*, which various political groups capitalized on for their own purposes. Similarly, the *fin de siècle* also saw the widespread development of regionalism.

If nationalism is difficult to define, regionalism is perhaps even more so. A region can be sub-national, or group together several nations (such as Scandinavia or the Balkans). On the one hand, it may refer to the kind of culturally or ethnically defined group that is simply not yet politically developed enough to be called a nation, or that others want to consign to non-national status, but which does constitute the basis of an identity for its inhabitants or members. On the other hand, it may imply political objectives as diverse as formal separatism to the desire for a greater place for regional languages or traditions in local education. Within the scope of regionalism, Joost Augusteijn and Eric Storm include ‘particularism, decentralisation, *Landespatriotismus*, nation-building, cultural regionalism, political regionalism and separatism.’ (Augusteijn and Storm, 2012, 3) Across Europe during the *fin de siècle*, regions and regionalism were becoming widespread and gaining in significance, though they were not always as widely known or visible as nationalism. Visible in the forms of regional societies interested in folklore, festivals, or the philology of the local dialect, the development of identities linked to regions at the same time as nations was truly a transnational phenomenon, and one which grew significantly in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Facilitated by the rise in the levels of education, one way to think about this trend in terms of the *fin de siècle* was that it was partly fuelled by the fear that modernity would eliminate traditional ways of life (such as local dialects or traditions), and that efforts were needed to ensure their preservation and survival into the twentieth century. The local character of particular regionalisms was then determined by the particular political context of each state, the presence of large regional cities outside the capital, the historical legacies of wars and boundary changes, as well as religious and linguistic factors, which all varied from place to place. Thus the rise of nationalism in the *fin de siècle* took place against a background of increased development of regional cultural identities alongside of the national ones, some of which would grow into nationalist movements in their own right, and which also helps to explain the prevalence and power of the national political discourses.

## Conclusion

Although more often associated with the whole of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a whole, the *fin de siècle* was a distinctive turning point in the history of European nationalism. Its roots were still in attempts made by political groups to mobilise support for themselves using emotive national language and persuasive arguments to foster and enhance national consciousness among the population, and to associate their particular political point of view with the supposed interests of the nation and its people. In the rapidly changing social, economic and political climate

resulting from the development of mass politics, increased urbanisation and industrialisation, coupled with the widespread fear that was a characteristic feature of the *fin de siècle* as a whole, nationalist arguments proved particularly potent in these years. Nationalism became not only a part of the political platform of the liberal left and centre, but also of the conservative right, mobilising nationalism in the interests of more traditional elites, military growth, colonial expansion and economic protectionism. Nationalism also became a factor among numerically smaller groups, particularly in eastern Europe, not just of the elites in larger states. Nationalism also began to change somewhat in nature during the *fin de siècle*. Still about ‘the people’, *fin de siècle* “new nationalism” built much more upon the fear of the other (including the internal traitor) than earlier nationalisms had done. Rivalries with enemy nations were presented as a crisis in which nationalism was the solution, one that continued to operate through the end of the century and into the next. Nationalism would also spread throughout the world, as other continents sought to escape the direct control of European empires through the creation of modern nation-states after the European image, with strong identities, popular support, nationally-defined cultures, institutions and economies and identifiable “others”.

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