

Influence of Culture on Nationalism

Wars and territorial expansion were the cause and result of nationalism in Europe. Yet, culture played an important part in creating the concept of the nation. Each nation in Europe had from the very beginning, developed a culture of its own, with features as unique as its language. Europe was, thus a bouquet of diverse flowers harmoniously bunched together, with each country having a distinct culture of its own. In England and Germany especially, a taste developed for folk literature – ballads, legends and love songs of the people, their dialects and superstitions. Educated people collected and published these materials ; poets and storytellers imitated them.

A scholar such as Herder or a poet-dramatist such as Schiller drew lessons of moral, psychological, and philosophical import from the wisdom found in the subculture of *das volk*.

France by 1789 had been for more than a century, the cultural dictator of Europe, and in England and Germany, the search for native sources of art was led by the desire to break the tyranny of the French language and literature.

Cultural nationalism was also the expression of a genuine desire for truth. The focus on culture can be easily discerned in the French Revolution too. For example — wearing of natural hair instead of wigs and of common worker's trousers instead of silk breeches, as well as the use of title of *citoyen* instead of any other term for rank. Powerful words – liberty, equality and fraternity – find their resonance in cultural rationalism of Europe.

Between 1889 and 1848, the phenomenon of Romanticism occurred and developed its first phase. The Romantic movement was a revolt against nationalism and included a love of nature, the cult of art and a fresh sense of history.

The emphasis was laid on vernacular language and the collection of local folklore, not just to recover an ancient national spirit, but also to carry the modern nationalist message to people who were mostly illiterate.

Cultural nationalism sets out to provide a vision of the nation's identity, history and destiny via intellectuals and artists, who seek to convey their vision of the nation to the wider community.

Culture played the pivotal role in development of nationalism in Ireland, Italy, Belgium, Greece, Poland and Hungary. The first revolt in Ottoman Empire was the Serbian Revolution, which was the culmination of Serbian renaissance. The 8 year long Greek War of Independence against Ottoman rule was a result of Romanticism – a cultural movement which sought to develop a particular form of nationalist sentiment.

Competency Based Questions In MCQs

1. Why was Mazzini called by Metternich ‘the most dangerous enemy of our social order’?
 - (a) Because Mazzini supported Monarchy
 - (b) Because Mazzini relentlessly opposed Monarchy
 - (c) Because Mazzini declared war on Austria
 - (d) Because Mazzini hated Duke Metternich
2. Which of the following statements regarding Zollverein is not correct?
 - (a) It was a political union formed by Prussia in 1834.

- (b) It was a customs union formed by Italy to which many Italian states joined.
 - (c) This union reduced the number of currencies from over thirty to two
 - (d) Both (a) and (b)
3. Which of the following was not the impact of Treaty of Vienna?
- (a) The restored monarchy became despotic
 - (b) They appreciated opposition or criticism
 - (c) They did not tolerate any opposition or criticism
 - (d) They imposed strict censorship on media
4. Choose the incorrect pair.
- (a) Cavour : the Brain (b) Garibaldi : the sword
 - (c) Mazzini : the soul (d) Garibaldi : Young Italy
5. France : Marianne : Germany : ?
- (a) Philipp Veit (b) Germania
 - (c) Bismarck (d) Cockade
6. Which of the following poets died during the Greek War of Independence?
- (a) William Shakespeare (b) Robert Frost
 - (c) P.B. Shelly (d) Lord Byron
7. Which country was left 'untouched' by the Congress of Vienna?
- (a) Poland (b) Belgium
 - (c) France (d) Germany

