INTRODUCTION:
Building Nations In and With Empires—A Reassessment

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“IT is hardly likely that anyone in the future will achieve what Charles V, Louis XIV and Napoleon I failed to do. The founding of a new Roman Empire or of a new Carolingian empire would now be impossible … France, England, Germany and Russia will, for centuries to come, no matter what may befall them, continue to be individual historical units, the crucial pieces on a checkerboard whose squares will forever vary in importance and size but will never be wholly confused with each other. Nations, in this sense of the term, are something fairly new in history.” Isn’t it striking that Renan in his famous lecture Qu’est-ce qu’une Nation names four of the strongest European Empires (or rather their imperial core areas) as examples of nations? And isn’t it also striking how little attention has been paid to that curious fact by historians? This famous passage from Ernest Renan’s lecture is one of the most often quoted definitions of the national principle:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Only two things, actually, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other is in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of remembrances; the other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold in common … A heroic past, of great men, of glory … that is the social principle on which the national idea rests. To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present; to have accomplished great things together, to wish to do so again, that is the essential condition for being a nation.¹

The passage is formulated in and for an age of nation-state formation, for which the nation-state seemed almost the natural spatial reference point. Renan goes on to say a lot about the imagined nature of that reference point, but his article ultimately also helped to make the nation-state the dominant form of thinking about nation, thereby pushing to the sideline what was, still at the point where Renan wrote these lines, the dominant state form in Europe—the imperial state. Whether we think of sea-based empires in the west or contiguous empires in Central and Eastern Europe, imperial imaginations had been vital for state formation and continued to be the dominant imaginations during the nineteenth century. National imaginations, as we shall argue in this volume, were taking place within such imperial frameworks.

If we jump from Renan’s famous nineteenth-century definition of nation to one of the most impressive contemporary attempts to portray the history of a nation-state in Europe—the German Historical Museum in Berlin—we observe an interesting shift, backwards and forwards, in representations of nation and empire. When the visitors enter the main hall of the museum, they are confronted with maps of Germany from the Middle Ages to the present day, which project very different imperial and national shapes and constantly elide the national and the imperial. When entering the exhibition proper, almost the first thing that the visitors are confronted with is a sign reading “Wir sind ein Volk”—a phrase made famous in the revolution of 1989, but it can also be read here as being projected to all German history. However, ethnic Germanness historically stood uneasily between very different imperial, national, and regional state-building efforts: the histories of the Bavarian, Saxon, Swiss states, states of the Holy Roman Empire, Imperial Germany, or National Socialist Germany are not congruent with the notion of “one people.” Hence we would argue that the German Historical Museum in Berlin is a fine example of how today, the categories of the national and the imperial are still often deeply entangled and intertwined. It therefore appears to us as extremely timely to re-assess the relationship between nation-states, nationalism, and empires in European history.

The strict opposition between empire and nation-state as two profoundly different types of political organization of society and space has dominated historiography for decades. Recently, several authors began to question this dichotomy. For an early and thought-provoking call to take seriously the entangled nature of the diverse spatial and non-spatial histories of Europe see Philipp Ther, “Beyond the Nation: the Relational Basis of a Comparative History of Germany and Europe,” Central European History 36, no. 1 (2003): 45–73.

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want to build on such re-assessments and develop them further. In order to do so, we shall focus on nation-building in the imperial core, which, until now, largely escapes theoretical reflection. So, for example, Ernest Gellner’s famous definition of nationalism as a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent, does not fit the case of nationalism in the imperial core. Projects of building nations in the imperial metropolis aim at the preservation and extension of empires rather than at the dissolution of empires or the transformations of entire empires into nation-states. In some cases nation-building projects in imperial core areas had to be adjusted to the circumstances of imperial collapse, but causality here again puts imperial dynamics first. In many European societies, memories of empire came to shape the nation-state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Jürgen Osterhammel was one of the first to challenge the dominance of the traditional framework among historians. As he pointed out, the nineteenth century was not the age of nation-states; rather it has to be described as the age of empires and nationalism. He described four different types of formation of nation-states in the nineteenth century. The first type was “revolutionary autonomization.” European cases included Greece, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Romania, and Bulgaria. Greece achieved its own state and independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1827 because of a combination of an indigenous independence movement, cross-European Philhellenism, and a military naval intervention by Britain, Russia, and France. What was internationally recognized as a Greek state in 1830, was, Osterhammel argued, not yet a Greek nation, which was still in the making. Over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Serbia, Montenegro, Romania and Bulgaria all made use of the weakness of the Ottoman Empire and followed the Greek example. The Belgian case was entirely different, as it was not a struggle against imperial domination but rather resistance to autocratic rule in the form of a revolutionary movement demanding secession from the Netherlands. But, like in the Greek case, the European great

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4 Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1: “Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent (…) Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment. A national movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind.”

5 For Britain, see the impressive “Memories of Empire” trilogy by Bill Schwarz, in particular: The White Man’s World, vol. 1 of Memories of Empire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
powers, all of them empires, once again played a crucial role in facilitating the Belgian dream. The second type of nation-state, Osterhammel argued, came about through “hegemonic unification.” Classic cases were Germany and Italy, where one part—Prussia in Germany and Piedmont-Sardinia in Italy—took the initiative to unify the nation. We should note that in both cases the emerging states immediately embraced imperial legacies and pursued imperial policy in order to consolidate the nation and join the club of European great powers. Osterhammel also subsumes cases like the Netherlands and Switzerland under “hegemonic unification,” although he has to admit that there was considerable polycentrism in the federal unification processes in these countries. The third type of nation-state that emerges in the course of the nineteenth century, according to Osterhammel, comes about through “evolutionary autonomization.” The only European example he cites here is Norway, which, after a long process of gaining more and more autonomy, finally ended its dynastic union with Sweden in a peaceful way in 1905. Osterhammel’s fourth type includes former centers of empires abandoned by their imperial possessions. His prime examples are Spain and Portugal. Especially in Spain he sees the first post-imperial nation-state in Europe. However, in this typology, the older conceptual underpinnings of nationalism, as represented by Gellner, strangely survive, as this typology barely mentions one of the most paradigmatic cases of nation-building in the nineteenth century, namely the nationalism that aimed at building imperial nations at the heart of empires, including Britain, France, Spain, Germany, and Russia. Osterhammel does mention that “diverse nationalisms could be found in empires and in nation-states” and that pride in the empire became an important facet of nationalism in the imperial metropoles. But overall, he tends to underestimate the close entanglement of nation and empire in the major imperial nations of nineteenth-century Europe. In fact, in his contrasting comparison of “nation-states” on the one hand and “empires” on the other, Osterhammel re-enforces the identification of nation with nation-state.

**Nation-Building in Imperial Nations**

Where the term “imperial nation” appears in the literature on empire, it usually denotes an unrealistic project of total assimilation of all the subjects/citizens into a single nation, thus in fact transforming empire into a nation-state. By contrast, we would like to use the term “imperial nation” to refer to the nation-building project which was conceived and implemented in the imperial core. These projects never aimed at including all the subjects/citizens of an empire into a nation. They equally never aimed at including all the territorial possessions of an empire into the concept of national

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8 Osterhammel, “*Verwandlung*, 671.
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territory, but they unlike separatist peripheral projects, saw empire as a political and economic asset of its own. Instead of being anti-imperial, the proponents of these projects were pro-imperial in terms of their support for the preservation and further extension of the existing empire or its reorganization in order to make it more effective. A closer look at European history of the nineteenth century shows that the biggest and often most advanced nation-building projects were implemented with different degrees of success in the imperial core areas, but they were invariably very closely linked to empire in a variety of ways. States created nations, and empires provided those states with various resources. Frederick Cooper suggested a term “empire-state” to challenge the historiographical tradition which is focused on the nation-state. The territorial, institutional, and cultural designs of these imperial nations were very much linked to the development of empires. In this sense, the imperial dimension and the nation-building dimension cannot be treated separately in the case of imperial nations. In the existing literature, this link was acknowledged in its negative aspects only, that is, how empires hindered nation-building projects. However, we would like to restore the balance and draw attention to both the obstacles that empires posed to nation-building projects and the incentives and (broadly understood) resources empires provided for building nations at the core of empires.

There is, in fact, a whole host of areas where the imperial is closely entangled with the national in the process of building imperial nations. Without trying to provide here an exhaustive list, we should mention, first, various aspects of managing space, including the imagined geography of national territory, migrations, the development of communication systems, urban development, particularly in the capital cities, which combined the roles of national and imperial capitals. For Spain it has recently been pointed out that the geographical societies played the most important role in promoting Spanish Africanism from the last third of the nineteenth century onwards. These associations, such as the Sociedad Africanista y Colonial (Africanist and Colonialist Society) promoted a racially-based affinity between Morocco and Spain and presented Morocco both as a case of backwardness in need of development and as a landscape of desire. National and imperial imagination, as Ferrán Archilés has pointed out, were closely interwoven in the Spanish ambitions in Africa. Secondly, we would like to highlight the cultural and linguistic consolidation on both the elite and mass levels, as well as the importance of concepts of “the Other” and concepts of civilizing missions, which worked both in imperial and national contexts. Thirdly, we underline the importance of the development of economic ties between various

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9 See also John Breuilly, Nationalism and the State, 2nd edn. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).
regions, which were vital both in imperial and national contexts. Fourthly, we think it necessary to discuss mechanisms of political involvement on the elite and mass levels, which included concepts of citizenship, as well as gradually emerging social rights linked to citizenship. Foreign policy in general, and inter-imperial competition in particular, were extremely important factors. Finally, we should also like to draw attention to institutions, which were central both for empires and imperial nations, ranging from the army to scientific societies.

The subsequent articles in this volume will take account of all of these factors from the perspective of their respective case studies or their thematic concerns. However, as we did not want to make these factors into a straitjacket for individual cases—they will be dealt with and emphasized to a very different degree in the different chapters. Chapter authors had to take account of the existing research for their particular empires and recognize that in some areas there was not yet sufficient work being done. As is particularly evident in the chapters by Broers and Komlosy, the very concept of nation and imperial core could acquire a dramatically new meaning under different circumstances of place and time. Thus, Broers shows that Napoleon never saw the whole of France but rather some northern parts of France, Belgium, and some parts of western Germany as the core of his future pan-European empire. Komlosy demonstrates how the consolidation of the Habsburg Empire—or, rather, of her Austrian parts after 1867—was based on economic integration and legal equality and not on processes of cultural and linguistic unification. In this area the Habsburg Empire achieved far higher levels of integration than many so-called nation-states. To a large extent that became possible due to Ausgleich, which as a matter of fact gave Hungarians their own sub-empire in Transleithania, where they could pursue an aggressive strategy of imperial nation-building. It should be noted in this context that the model of Habsburg dualism was perceived as attractive by Catalanism in the early twentieth century.

During the high point of the age of historiographical nationalism, roughly between 1850 and 1950, historians atomized the spatial entities that dominated the nineteenth century, that is, empires, into smaller, national units and, at the same time, they downplayed the imperial components of nation-states. In this perspective, the “normal” historical development went from empire to nation-state. This legacy lived on in nationalism studies during the second half of the twentieth century. With the rise of

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13 For a detailed comparison of the Habsburg, Ottoman, and British Empires and their different strategies of integrating core and periphery and for a convincing argument that, of those three, only the British Empire attempted to nationalize its British core, see Andrea Komlosy, “Habsburgermonarchie, Osmanisches Reich und Britisches Empire—Erweiterung, Zusammenhalt und Zerfall im Vergleich,” Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte 9, no. 2 (2008): 9–62.

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imperial studies in the 1990s—which has many diverse origins, among them the collapse of the Soviet Union and the globalization of historical studies figure prominently—much new research was produced on empires and imperialism, but it remained, at least as far as it was about Europe, almost entirely separate from the research on nationalism and nation-states. Overall, by bringing together these two distinct bodies of scholarship, one on empires and one on nationalism and nation-states, we are confident that we can provide intriguing new perspectives on both phenomena—empires and nations—and highlight the much neglected sphere of their entanglement.

A Word on Chronology

Our project does not have firm chronological borders. In some respects we can talk about the long nineteenth century being the focus of our investigation. The First World War marks a convenient end point, as it had a profound transformative impact on European empires. In the initial stages it triggered powerful processes of nationalist mobilization rallying around notions of the imperial fatherland. In the later stages, for various reasons, it contributed to the rise of secessionist sentiments and the strengthening of organizational structures of peripheral nationalisms. Some empires collapsed entirely, e.g. the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires. Some were re-integrated into the framework of a profoundly different imperial project, e.g. the USSR. Even those empires in Western Europe who survived the First World War faced new challenges with Wilson's and Lenin's championing of the principle of national self-determination. Of course, the First World War was much less of a decisive event in Spain and Denmark then it was for the rest of the empires dealt with here. Nevertheless, the

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15 These issues were perceived as very much entangled within post-colonial and subaltern studies, but they generally focused on colonial peripheries, not European metropolitan areas. For an introduction, see Rochona Majumdar, Writing Postcolonial History (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010).

16 One important reason was the support for secessionist nationalisms in enemy empires by opposing rival empires. Political and financial support of secessionist politicians in enemy countries was supplemented by the use of POW camps for nationalist mobilization. István Deák believes that the “dissolution of the (Habsburg) monarchy into hostile national entities had begun in the POW camps” during the First World War. See István Deák, Beyond Nationalism: a Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 198. On analogous processes in the POW camps for the soldiers of the Russian army in Germany and Austria, see Chapter 7 of Miller, The Romanov Empire. The occupational politics of the Central powers and Russia were also designed to support the secessionist political forces in rival empires. See F. Grelka, Die ukrainische Nationalbewegung unter deutscher Besatzungsherrschaft 1918 und 1941/42 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005); M. von Hagen, War in a European Borderland: Occupations and Occupation Plans in Galicia and Ukraine, 1914–1918 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); V. G. Liulevicius, War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
years immediately after the First World War marked the rise of the nation-state as a normative spatial unit. However it does not bring to an abrupt end the age of empires, which is why all chapters, in a kind of coda or outlook, consider the continued interrelationship between empires and nations after the First World War.

The age of empire is, of course, not strictly speaking, a modern age only. As the article of Jean-Frédéric Schaub in this book demonstrates, early modern empires were already an extremely powerful force in nation-building processes and their legacies reach deep into the nineteenth century. This makes it difficult to find a clear watershed which could mark the beginning of the period under investigation here. Conventionally, the beginning of the long nineteenth-century and the age of nationalism is linked to the French revolution and the Napoleonic conquest of Europe. However, for our purposes it will be vital to take into account the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The traditional dichotomy of empire and nation-state, which we are aiming to overcome, neglects important developments which precede the nineteenth century and manifest themselves prior to the rise of nationalism. If we assume that a state is necessarily a nation-state and an empire is always pre-modern, we cannot reconcile this understanding with the experience of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, because the processes of state-building, inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment and the well-ordered police-state, were prerequisites of nationalism and not its product. State-building in the eighteenth century in fact very much happened in an imperial framework—something which remains valid to a large extent for the nineteenth century. Industrialization, urbanization, universal conscription, alphabetization, mass schooling—all of these phenomena, which we associate with the rise of the modern state, can in fact be linked to empires and inter-imperial competition as well as nations and nationalism and indeed, regionalism. The variety of experiences of state-building in the nineteenth-century included the German states within the post-1815 German Confederation, especially Bavaria, which was well on its way toward a nation-state in the 1860s. There was no teleology of nation-state building. The phenomena, mentioned above, helped to modernize regions as well as empires, enhanced their competitiveness (which was usually the main rationale) and also created the conditions for nation-building at various spatial levels. This is precisely why all the chapters consider the period before 1789 in a kind of preface or introductory section. How far back in time they go depends on how far back these modernizing impulses can be

17 There is a long tradition of juxtaposing empires as traditional polities with modern states, which are supposed to be nation-states. In 1962, Rupert Emerson wrote “empires have fallen on evil days and nations have risen to take their place.” This statement can be seen as paradigmatic of the clear juxtaposition of nation and empire which once held supreme. See Rupert Emerson, From Empire to Nation (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 3; see also, for example, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, The Political Systems of Empires (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); Charles Tilly, Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990–1992 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 91.

18 Ronald Suny once remarked that “many, if not most, of the oldest nation-states of our own time began their historic evolution as heterogeneous dynastic conglomerates with the characteristics of imperial relationships between metropole and periphery.” Suny, The Empire Strikes Out, 27.
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traced. Although they were important foundations of the subsequent process of consolidation of imperial nations, they are not analyzed in any detail, as we would like to maintain our focus on the long nineteenth century.

A Word on Geography

In terms of the spatial boundaries of the current volume, the analysis in particular chapters goes beyond the limits of Europe to include imperial peripheries on all five continents. Those peripheries are vital for our analysis insofar as they impacted on the development of the core. They were involved in the transfer of human and material resources and carried issues of prestige. Migrations were absolutely vital in imperial/national contexts, as a recent British survey has impressively underlined. Core–periphery relations involved various versions of the idea of a “civilizing mission” and racialism. Both were important elements of the development of nationalism at the core of imperial nations. This is also true for cases, such as Italy and Germany, which did not have empires at the time they commenced the building of their nation-states in 1861 and 1871 respectively. However, the legacies of past empires (the Roman and the Venetian Empires as well as the Holy Roman Empire) and the imagining of future empires (in Africa, elsewhere overseas, and Eastern Europe) played an extremely important role for nation-state building even here.

In attempts to relate notions of imperial space to nation, the category of race was of crucial importance. The population of the imperial core was often constructed as racially complementary and racial differences were downplayed in contrast to the function of race in the colonies, where the idea served the purpose of segregating and isolating the colonizers from the colonized. Thus, the Scots, the Irish, and the Welsh were regarded as of similar “racial standing” as the English, even if Anglo-Saxonism often drew important racial distinctions between an allegedly superior English race and its inferior Celtic counterparts. The Celts were, however, rarely depicted in the same racial terms as the people on the Indian sub-continent. And, of course, to use Paul Gilroy’s famous title, there was no “black in the Union Jack” well into the

20 See many of the brilliant essays in Catherine Hall and Keith McClelland, eds., Race, Nation and Empire: Making Histories, 1750 to the Present (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).
twentieth century. In the Russian project, the Eastern Slavs played the key role, but the Finno-Ugric population was also described as complementary, and sometimes as inseparable part of Russia.

The relations between the imperial authorities (particularly their more traditionalist wing) and emerging dominant nationalisms (both as public sentiment and organized movement) were usually complicated. But, from the late eighteenth century onwards, both aimed at transforming the core areas of empires, previously defined mostly in dynastic terms, into “national territories.” These nation-building projects usually were expansionist, in other words they claimed certain peripheral regions as parts of these newly conceived national territories. Nationalism thus brought with it new ways of imagining and structuring imperial space. In some cases, the idea of “national territory” even incorporated regions that were located beyond the current borders of the empire. Thus, for example, Eastern Galicia for decades was claimed by Russian nationalism as “Russian land,” and it was indeed occupied in 1914 under irredentist slogans, and the German claims on Alsace precisely as “German land” led directly to the annexation of the territory after the Franco-Prussian war in 1871. It is often intriguing to look at such bordering and also border transgressions between empires.

Success or failure of particular empires in their imperialist endeavors overseas could have a profound impact on competition between dominant and secessionist nationalist projects in their European core or metropolitan areas. They also provided the means to integrate imperial elites by involving peripheral elites in Europe into the business of running the empire. At times, even patterns of nationalism were imported from the periphery into the core area—as is very evident in the chapter on the Spanish empire in this volume, which shows how political developments in her American colonies influenced diverse regionalisms in Spain and their relationship with the Castilian core. However, overall we concentrate on the imperial nations that are located in Europe. We recognize that Japan and the United States can be approached from the same perspective, but they will not form part of our analysis here.

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24 See Miller, Imperiia Romanovykh I natsionalizm, 147–71.
26 For the Habsburg-Russian context, see, for example, Malte Rolf and Jörn Happel, eds., Grenzgänger in Vielvölkereichen: Grenzziehungen und Überschreitungen in Russland und Österreich-Ungarn (1840–1918), special issue of Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft 59, no. 5 (2011): 397–462.
Imperial Modernities

This volume seeks to provide new material for understanding the mechanisms of social and political transformations that were at work in Europe and which are often grouped together under the concept of modernity. We look at these transformations through the experience of building imperial nations. Two ways to classify empires generally prevail in historiography. Empires are divided into maritime and land based, or contiguous. If Britain and Spain can be seen as exemplary cases for a maritime empire, the Russian, Habsburg and Ottoman Empires fit well the definition of the contiguous empire. Of course, there are certain cases that fit this classification less comfortably. France had substantial overseas possessions; however, she also engaged in a breathtaking Napoleonic project of building a pan-European contiguous empire, and Napoleonic France was more willing to sacrifice some of her overseas possessions for the sake of her European expansionist project. Germany was initially a land-based empire, but soon after its unification it embarked on the race for overseas colonies. Even England and Spain had an important element of contiguous empire in their structure. Britain—with Scotland, Wales, and Ireland—was a composite contiguous structure in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Spain was also a composite imperial structure, as far as Catalonia, the Basque country, and other peripheral kingdoms were concerned, plus Spain had quite a tricky relationship with Portugal, including a period where the latter had become part of Spain. Edward Ross Dickinson suggested an elegant solution to this problem, by imagining empires lying at various points on a continuum. Some were rather close to the ideal type of relatively homogenous European core and considerable overseas periphery, like Portugal or the Netherlands after the loss of Belgium in 1830. Others were more heterogeneous in their European core, like France or Britain. Yet others had major extra-European continental components contiguous with their core territories, like the Ottoman and Russian Empires. The respective proportions of European, contiguous extra-European, and overseas possessions could change considerably over time, like in the case of Germany.

The sea could play a very different role for different empires, both functionally and in the imperial imagined geography. Thus, it could act as a dividing space, but also as a comfortable means of communication. Whether Ireland was part of the

27 The concept of modernity in the singular has recently been problematized and for good reasons. See Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, *Multiple Modernities* (New York: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2000); also Dominic Sachsenmaier, Jens Riedel, and Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, eds., *Reflections on Multiple Modernities: European, Chinese and Other Interpretations* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); while we do not centrally engage with this debate, we are providing information relevant to it.


British core was hotly debated throughout much of the nineteenth-century, whereas there was rather less debate on Algeria belonging to the French core—areas therefore separated by stretches of water could be perceived as part of the core. Even in the Spanish Empire overseas peripheries were not always clearly identified as different from the nation.

There are several other criteria which one can use to build such continuums. Take, for example, the proportion of modern and traditional elements in various aspects of empire. The Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires are usually seen as examples of traditional empires, while France and Britain are depicted as modern versions, thus creating a false impression that the category of modern coincides with maritime empires, while traditional empires were land-based. There are several caveats to this scheme. First, there are maritime empires which in many ways failed to modernize, e.g. Spain and Portugal. Secondly, some of the land-based empires in certain respects modernized rather effectively—Prussia/Germany in economic and military terms, Austro-Hungary in economic terms, and even Russia and the Ottoman Empires were partially successful in modernizing themselves. Finally, those empires usually referred to as modern very often contained many traditional elements, and, even more to the point, they used the imperial periphery to preserve these traditional elements in their own structure. In general, the European aristocracy proved to be very resilient and adoptive to new realities during the nineteenth century—losing influence, but still clinging on to power. Only the twentieth century brought about the more-or-less complete destruction of Europe’s aristocracy.

One of the important elements of political modernization was the gradual introduction of democratic representation in European core areas of empires, creating inevitable tensions. Jürgen Osterhammel’s definition of empire pinpoints exactly this conflict: “An empire is a large, hierarchical structure of domination of polyethnic and multireligious character, the coherence of which is secured by threats of violence, administration, indigenous collaboration, and the universalist programs and symbols of an imperial elite … but not by social and political homogenization and the idea of universal citizenship rights.” But was the idea of citizenship rights from the very beginning tailored to be universal? It excluded various groups of the metropolitan population, in fact the overwhelming majority, along criteria of gender, social status, and wealth. Was the concept of citizenship exclusively based on membership in a nation? Citizenship rights are most clearly represented by the right to participate in elections. From this perspective, Austria after 1867 and Russia after 1905 followed a different

30 Once again, the concept of multiple modernities is very helpful for conceptualizing these phenomena. See Shmuel Eisenstadt, “Multiple Modernities,” Daedalus 129 (2000): 1–29.
logic—participation in elections was granted to the population in the imperial peripheries, even if it was through the curia system, based on estates, and containing various other limitations. The Russian Empire after 1905 also extended access to State Duma elections far beyond ethnic Russians, no matter how broad was the interpretation of Russianness at that time.

These limitations and exclusions of various groups in the metropolis and in the periphery were debated in direct connection to each other and to the imperial issues. On balance, two different logics of exclusion operated within imperial cores and peripheries—in the former those tended to be exclusions of social status, wealth, gender and citizenship, while in the peripheries exclusions operated along lines of race, ethnicity, and civilization. However, in the French Empire at various times we also witness attempts to codify citizenship without recognizing the race barrier, and in the British Empire, a strong notion of imperial citizenship developed in the nineteenth century, which directly tied citizenship to belonging to a white-man’s empire. Although it ultimately failed in the twentieth-century, it is an intriguing example of the intricacies of the relationship between citizenship and empire.

Inter-Imperial Rivalries

Another possibility to locate empires at various points on a continuum would be their role in world politics. Dominic Lieven defines empire as “a very great power that has left its mark on the international [or, as we would prefer, inter-imperial] relations of the era.” Inter-imperial competition was directly linked to nation-building in more than one way. One of these connections is rather obvious—since warfare after Napoleon became more and more based on universal conscription and national armies, the empires faced the tricky task of controlling vast and heterogeneous territories and populations and mobilizing their resources in order to maintain the great power status while at the same time nationalizing the imperial core, which was also a requirement for inter-imperial competitiveness.

But the status and prospects of empires in the world system, as well as their perception, were also linked to scenarios of nation-building. We might want to distinguish between empires in decline and empires on the rise in nineteenth century Europe. Some empires were constantly shrinking, while some felt too vulnerable to think of further expansion, and others were still willing (or just beginning) to expand.

That would mean that nation-building in the core area in Spain, Denmark, Sweden, the Ottoman Empire, and, to some extent, the Habsburg Empire would be guided by the logic of cutting one’s losses. Turning imperial space(s) into national core space was made more difficult by imperial decline, particularly in cases where the core remained heterogeneous. Spain, for example, lost 85% of its overseas possessions in the early nineteenth century. But it was only defeat in the war against the USA in 1898 and the ensuing loss of Cuba and the Philippines which led to a crisis of national consciousness threatening the integration of continental peripheries such as Catalonia or the Basque country.\textsuperscript{37} The Ottoman Empire faced a whole range of challenges on the Balkans, starting from the Greek war of independence. Ultimately the Young Turks had to use the collateral effect of imperial decline, namely the massive influx of the Muslim population into Anatolia, in their successful attempt to salvage the previously neglected core area of the empire, transforming it into the Turkish state.

In the Habsburg Empire, which again was widely perceived to be in decline, German nationalism could not launch an expansionist nationalizing project as the German-speaking parts of the empire widely clung to the idea of a German nation, incorporating the German Empire to the north. But even here the program, adopted by German nationalists in Linz in 1882, called for autonomy for those lands which they claimed as German, and for the defense of their German character. The program suggested to transfer Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmacia, and possibly, Galicia and Bukovina to Transleitania, while the “German character” of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovenia, the transalpine regions of today’s Italy and the Silesian lands, which still remained under Habsburg rule, had to be strengthened.\textsuperscript{38}

In contrast to this “defensive” nation-building in the Habsburg Empire, imperial elites in Britain, Germany, France, and Russia were thinking in terms of expanding empire, and, at least in German and Russian cases, in terms of expanding the national core of their respective empires, perceiving imperial expansion, among other things, as a means of consolidating that core. A similar logic was to be adopted by a much newer and weaker Italian empire in the making. The construction of imperial heroes often aimed at establishing national legends and demonstrates the close interconnection between the imperial and the national.\textsuperscript{39} The recent historiographical boom in imperial biographies also underlines, by and large, to what extent imperial actors reflected both the national and the imperial as space for opportunities, experiences, and imaginings. Extremely mobile, imperial elites across diverse nineteenth-century empires were the

\textsuperscript{37} Angel Smith and Emma Aurora Davila Cox, eds., \textit{The Crisis of 1898: Colonial Redistribution and Nationalist Mobilization} (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 1999).


key hub for circulating specific forms of knowledge and practice that connected the national and the imperial. These elites frequently performed empire in a way that connected empire to nationalism and notions of Heimat.\footnote{See, for example, the special issue on imperial biographies in \textit{Geschichte und Gesellschaft} 40, no. 1 (2014), edited by Malte Rolf.}

When trying to construct a continuum based on inter-imperial competition and to locate empires on it we should also keep in mind the role of empires in producing international (or, rather, inter-imperial) order. Some empires belonged to the first league of great powers, as it was formally established at the congress of Vienna, where five empires (Britain, Russia, Prussia, Austria, and France) were represented in all the committees. Others belonged to the second-class powers, represented on some of the committees only. The Ottomans were not part of the European concert at all. This difference imposed certain very important imperatives on the ruling elites—maintaining their great-power status, or striving to win recognition in the system. Part of such a strategy in peripheral empires was the promotion (and sometimes imitation) of nation-building at the core, as well as of some patterns of imperial domination (“borrowed colonialism” or “borrowed Orientalism”), characteristic for those European powers who were among the most prestigious.\footnote{Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” \textit{The American Historical Review} 107, no. 3 (2002): 768–96.}

The impact of inter-imperial competition on nation-building within particular empires is extremely important. Inter-imperial competition was the incentive for a general politics of consolidation of the core as a means to increase the military potential and resilience of the empire. Nationalism in turn provided a new justification for imperialist contests over colonial possessions, as imperial space was now perceived as the space for implementing \textit{national} missions. Nationalist slogans and various irredentist ideologies were also employed in inter-imperial rivalry over certain contested borderlands in Europe. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, Russian nationalism claimed Eastern Galicia and some trans-Carpathian regions of Hungary (so-called Red Russia) as Russian lands inhabited by Russian people. In 1914, Petr Struve, formulating the tasks of the empire in the Great War, included the “liberation of Galicia” among the three most important aims, together with the unification of Poland under Russian control and the capture of the Bosporus. The Habsburg reaction was to promote a Ukrainian identity among local Ruthenians and, during the war, to implement the mass imprisonment of the Russofile population in the first concentration camps on European soil in Talerhof and Terezin. To give another example, after the unification of Germany, the Romanov Empire, acknowledging the danger of German claims over the Baltic littoral as national territory, had to change its nationality policy in these territories, promoting weak Latvian and Estonian nationalisms in order to undermine the domination of Baltic Germans, even in spite of their invariable loyalty to the dynasty. Alsace was annexed by the German Reich after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71, on the grounds that it had belonged for centuries to the Holy Roman Empire of the
German Nation before it became French in the seventeenth century. Its indigenous population spoke a German dialect and were allegedly ethnically German. Hence national arguments were pursued in the conflict between rival empires about a region of some geopolitical importance. Tens of thousands of French speakers, among them a good part of the administrative and political elite of the region, left for France, and the loss of Alsace (and Lorraine) remained a major sore on the national consciousness in France, keeping alive calls for revenge and the redrawing of boundaries into the First World War. The French also argued in national terms that the region was culturally French and that, in line with civic notions of Frenchness, the population felt an allegiance to France. When Alsace returned to France after the First World War, the French were careful to accommodate Alsatian regionalism. The strong interrelationship between regional and national belonging and the rival imperial aspirations of France and Germany were to continue with two more swaps (in 1940 it was re-incorporated into the German Reich before it returned to France in 1945) in the twentieth century.42

Locating Empires—Space, Economics, and Culture

It would also be possible to group empires according to their geographical location. Thus, we can describe Britain and Russia as “flank” empires in the geostrategic meaning of the word,43 while France and Germany can be seen as central powers with the potential to claim pan-European hegemony. While geographical location was important, economic correlations were also vital. Hence it mattered hugely whether the core area of empires lay in the area of traditional urban centers (parts of France and Austria, most of Germany, Britain, Belgium and the Low Countries), which became the powerhouse of capitalist development, or whether, like in the cases of the Russian, Spanish and Ottoman Empires, it came to lie in the periphery of the European economic space or semi-periphery of the world economic system, if we are to follow Wallerstein’s concept.44 Certainly, empires were increasingly networking the globe through people, goods, and capital that in turn allowed the differentiation of a core from diverse peripheries.45

42  Fischer, *Alsace to the Alsatians.*
And, quite apart from geography and economics, another important factor for the grouping of empires was the degree of cultural and linguistic homogeneity in their core areas, which empires inherited from the premodern period. Ethnic and linguistic divisions here would be very important for the trajectories of the nation-building process during the period of mass mobilization. As an understanding of the importance of linguistic unity for nation-building processes was growing throughout the nineteenth century, empires did not necessarily insist on mono-lingualism but rather on bilingualism, where the dominant language of the imperial core would supplement local languages and vernaculars rather than fully suppress them. France, with her aggressive politics of the suppression of vernaculars in the nineteenth century, is often taken for the norm, but it should be rather considered as one end of the extreme. Overall, there was a huge variety of politics aiming not at the total suppression of vernaculars in empires, but rather at achieving a situation of bilingualism in which local tongues would be supplemented with imperial language. This was typical for the Russian and Spanish empires as well as the Habsburg Empire. Such an approach gradually became a legal norm in the second half of the twentieth century for the majority of nation-states and in those states some political scientists now suggest to call “state-nations.”

Apart from language, ethnicity and race were seen as points of departure for the foundation of nations in nineteenth-century empires. However, as with language, ethnicity/race was not necessarily perceived as exclusive. Thus, the Habsburg idea of a federative multiethnic nation found some parallels in other empires. The fact that, in the end, it did not work, should not lead us to conclude that it could not have worked. In fact, a recent comparison of the way in which the Habsburg and British Empires dealt with ethnic heterogeneity comes to the conclusion that the principle of ethnic neutrality was far more developed in the Habsburg Empire, whereas ethnic differentiation and hierarchization characterized ethnic politics in the British Empire. Hence, in this perspective, the Habsburg Empire suddenly appears to be more “modern” than its British equivalent. Certain versions of understanding nationality in empires gained


prominence or lost appeal depending, to a very large extent, on the outcome of the competition between empires.

There are many possible continuums where we could locate empires based on various factors which are more or less directly linked to building imperial nations. Overall, we would suggest that it might be possible to group empires according to the combination of factors of imperial nation-building discussed above. We hope that our volume provides reliable foundations for such a classification, which should, among other things, help us avoid the traditional binary oppositions so typical for the existing classifications.

**Linking Nation and Empire**

As should be clear by now, it is our conviction that concepts of nation and empire were linked in a variety of ways during the long nineteenth century. These links reflected attempts of elites to make nation fit imperial plans and vice versa. As a matter of fact, the understanding of nation and empire was changing together, as these concepts were strongly entangled.

In Russia the concepts of nation and empire entered political discourse almost simultaneously during the second decade of the eighteenth century. During the whole eighteenth century there was no tension between these concepts—they were rather seen as supplementary. Nation referred to a sovereign polity, and was often used in diplomatic practice to refer to Russia. Paragraph 11 of the treaty of Kuchuk-Kainardzha (1774) with the Ottoman Empire spoke about the English, French, and other nations, using the term synonymously with empire. By the end of the eighteenth century the term nation (natsiia) became closely associated with the concept of popular political sovereignty and constitution. The draft of La charte constitutionelle

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50 See *Pod stiagom Rossi* (Moscow: Russkaia Kniga, 1992), 80, 81, 83, 84. The treaty was written in three languages. The French version speaks of “toutes les nations Tartar” where the Russian version speaks of “Tatar peoples.” The latter uses the term “natsiia” where the French speaks of “état politique et civil.” See Karl Strupp, ed., *Ausgewählte diplomatische Aktenstücke zur orientalischen Frage* (Gotha: F.A. Perthes, 1916).
Building Nations In and With Empires—A Reassessment

de l’Empire de Russie, prepared in 1818 by the order of Alexander I, stated in article 91: “La nation russe aura à perpétuité une représentation nationale.”51 The relationship between nation and empire became more complicated in the second third of the nineteenth century, when autocracy had abandoned the idea of introducing a constitution for the empire. Furthermore, the ethnic heterogeneity of empire had increased dramatically with multiple annexations, such as the ones of Poland, Finland, and Bessarabia around the turn of the nineteenth century. The Polish uprising of 1830–31 put into question the mechanisms by which peripheral elites were incorporated into managing empire. Between the 1830s and the 1850s the concept of nation was consciously replaced with a vague concept of nationality (narodnost’). But from the 1860s onwards the concept of nation made a comeback, first as part of a liberal vocabulary, but from the 1880s on as a key concept of general political discourse. The last two tsars consequently used nationalism as a source of legitimacy for the monarchy.52

In the British Isles the national discourse is much older than the discourse on empires. Some historians have traced a prominent discourse about nation to the middle ages.53 Certainly, by the early modern period, there was an established idea of an English nation.54 The discursive construction of Britishness and the British nation, however, is also, by and large, only a product of the eighteenth century. As Linda Colley has shown, it was forged in the struggles of a Protestant England, Scotland, and Wales against a Catholic France.55 In the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the discourse on Britishness came to eclipse the discourse on Englishness, and while the notion of a Scottish nation survived throughout and the discourse about a Welsh nation was revived towards the end of the nineteenth century,66 the English

nation seemed happy to dissolve into a wider Britishness, in which it was undoubtedly dominant. Protestant Ulster was desperate to belong to Britain and developed a sectarian and overly orthodox discourse on Britishness which ultimately only highlighted its difference from the English, Scottish, and Welsh core areas of Britishness. Catholic Ireland, before the establishment of the Free State in 1922, was only on occasion imagined as part of Britishness. And while there were attempts by J. R. Seeley and Froude, amongst others, to extend Britishness to the white settler societies of the empire and produce a discourse on a “Greater Britain,” such wider Britishness comprising large parts of the overseas empire remained the concern of a minority elite discourse. There is, in fact, some evidence that among the core British population, sentiments of empire were at times eclipsed by little England, Scottish, and Welsh sentiments which were not only bereft of but even skeptical of notions of empire. While describing the British as “absent-minded imperialists” might be overstating the case, it reflects the frustration of those, like Seeley, who wanted to move to a “Greater Britain.”

In Germany the national discourse can also be traced to the late Medieval and early modern periods. During the centuries of German humanism and the Reformation, the idea of Germany was closely intertwined with the notion of empire, and it is not by chance that the suffix “of the German nation” began to be added to the term “Holy Roman Empire” from the late fifteenth century onwards. The national imagination became deeply intertwined with notions of empire and led to an “imperial patriotism” (Reichspatriotismus) that flowered in the late eighteenth century. Recent arguments, directed against the Prussian view of the Holy Roman Empire as a monstrosity that prevented an earlier nation-state formation, have put forward the alternative view of

57 Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), explains this tendency of the English to dissolve into Britishness with the peculiar missionary nationalism of the English.


the Holy Roman Empire as first German nation-state. Several authors have severely criticized this point of view, and we share the prevailing view that the Holy Roman Empire cannot be described as a nation-state. However, both views seem to us to be beside the point, because it is precisely the interaction between the national and the imperial discourse which characterized the German situation. Even when the small-German Prussian camp won in 1871, the German nation-state that came into being was called an “empire” (Deutsches Reich), and over the next seven decades of its existence it demonstrated very clear imperial ambitions, not just overseas but also at its European, and especially East European, borders. It was arguably only after the Second World War that the close discursive link between nation and empire in Germany came to an end. The examples of Russia, Britain, and Germany demonstrate that in all three cases the pattern was different but that nation and empire were closely entangled.

Pan-ethnic ideologies could become important mediators between the imperial and the national, but one should keep in mind that nationalizing projects in imperial cores had very complex relations to such pan-ethnic ideologies, as Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, or Pan-Turkism. Pan-Germanism fitted well the program of German nation building. Pan-Slavism, dear to the heart of proponents of the romantic-conservative Slavophile version of Russian nationalism, was perceived by the more modernist and liberal nationalists as damaging, as it undermined their focus on unity of the Eastern Slavs as the core of the Russian nation. Pan-Turkism for a long time remained an export product, mostly for the Turkic groups in the Romanov Empire, but later was adopted by the Young Turks as a resource for their nation-building project in Anatolia.

Some less famous pan-ideologies also combined imperial and national motives. Iberianism could be utilized by Spanish nationalists to understand Portugal as an essential part of Spain. After all, not only did the two nations share mythical figures,
such as Viriato, the Hispanic shepherd who resisted the might of the Roman empire in the second century BC, but the annexation of Portugal by Spain in 1580 was portrayed as the end point of a century-old struggle for the reunification of the peninsula. However, Iberianism also had some followers in Portugal, who attributed a common spirit to all Iberian peoples. It originated in the Roman conquest and the joint efforts of the Reconquista against the Muslims. Iberians were quick to argue that the relative isolation of the Iberian peoples from the rest of Europe made for a more homogeneous Iberian civilization and culture, which found expression in a peculiar mixture of individualist thinking and mystic belief. But Iberians remained divided over whether or not such commonalities should result in common statehood. It was characteristic for the stronger all-inclusive Iberianism in Spain that cartographical representations of Spain tended to incorporate the whole of the peninsula whereas Portuguese maps showed only Portugal and not the entire Iberian peninsula.  

Scandinavianism was based on the assumption of a Nordic family of peoples, whose histories had been interrelated for centuries. These histories had a strong imperial dimension—Danes had ruled over Iceland and Norway, Swedes over Finland and Norway. Swedes and Danes had been major competitors in the North for power and influence. There has been a great deal of linguistic compatibility and proximity in Scandinavia, which allowed for the conceptualization of the differences between various peoples as more regional than national. This in turn opened the possibility of imagining Scandinavian space within the perspective of imperial nations.

The re-imagining of a part of imperial as national space necessitated the re-assessment of regionalisms. In empires, regional peculiarities were tolerated under the dynastic principle. The nationalist transformation was less tolerant of regionalisms which challenged the unity of the imagined nation, but it was willing to consider "unity in diversity," that is, regionalisms within the imagined national territory were acceptable and sometimes even encouraged as long as those regionalisms were willing to endorse the greater good of the nation. In the German case much scholarly attention has been focused on showing conclusively how the nation was made from regional building blocks. Over recent years, it has increasingly been recognized that

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70 The strong interrelationship between regionalism and the making of the nation is discussed in Maiken Umbach, ed., German Federalism: Past, Present, Future (Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002); Abigail Green, Fatherlands. State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth
this strong interrelationship between nationalism and regionalism was not a German peculiarity.\textsuperscript{71} As the chapters on Spain, France, Russia, and Italy, among others, show, the relationship between nationalism and regionalism within nations-in-the-making was always closely linked with the imperial contexts.

Thinking in terms of imperial nations had also changed the perception of regionalisms in the imperial peripheries, which were not seen as part of the national territory. Here empires could tolerate and even promote certain peripheral regionalisms with an explicit nationalist agenda, under the condition that they stopped short of separatist tendencies. Imperial elites, e.g. in the Habsburg Empire, often supported what they thought to be weaker local nationalisms in order to neutralize claims to contested territories from alternative powerful expansionist projects. In the Western borderland of the Romanov Empire the authorities supported Lithuanian nationalism (and sometimes even Little Russian and White Russian regionalisms) in the hope of undermining challenges from Polish nationalism, who claimed the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Since 1870 a similar tactic was pursued vis-à-vis Latvian and Estonian nationalisms in order to counterbalance German nationalist claims over the Baltic provinces. In Finland the empire supported the Finnish movement at the expense of Swedish elites. In Western Europe this phenomenon of the promotion of regionalist nationalisms was far less prominent, partly because borders in nineteenth-century Western Europe were far more stable than in Central and Eastern Europe.

Even loyal regional elites within empires came under pressure when their status within the empire changed. The Baltic Germans in Russia, the Poles in Prussia, and the Armenians and Greeks-Fanariots in the Ottoman Empire suddenly found themselves in much more hostile environments when the traditional logic of imperial rule was replaced or supplemented by nationalist perspectives.\textsuperscript{72} The transition from traditional to modern anti-Semitism, which happened all over Europe in the 1870s and 1880s, also reflected this trend. Jewish capital was now perceived not only as a rival of “national capital” both in the imperial core areas and peripheries, but also as an agent of rival nationalist projects. Nationalists in the peripheries saw Jews as agents of the


imperial nationalism, while nationalists in the center often saw Jews as an obstacle for imperial nationalizing projects at the core.73

Traditional elites of birth as well as new elites of capital and education were crucial for the remapping of imperial space into nationalized spaces that we discussed above.74 In some empires, the elites were extremely homogeneous and shared the same social and educational background. France would perhaps be the most prominent example. In others, notably Russia, the elites came from a great variety of ethnic and educational backgrounds. Having launched nationalizing projects, empires had to choose between different strategies towards peripheral elites. Traditional loyalty to the center was not sufficient any more. In peripheral areas, which were not claimed as national territory, empires were usually satisfied with a certain level of acculturation, which was necessary for the functioning of the modernizing state machine. But in peripheral regions which were supposed to belong to the nationalizing core, much effort was put into the integration or, in case of strong opposition, the replacement of local elites.75

Thus, the traditional imperial indirect rule was transformed into a new imperial politics, which was now informed by a nationalist agenda: in some cases it resulted in a new type of toleration or even promotion of regionalism, while in other cases it led to the more aggressive imposition of direct rule and a politics of assimilation. The concept of national space, later supplemented by Darwinist visions of nation, brought with it new expectations for the level of regional integration in linguistic and cultural terms compared with traditional empires that existed before the advent of modern nationalist thinking. This created additional tensions and problems for imperial politics. However, much of the existing literature on empires is focused exclusively on the


75 The move away from the ideal typical distinction between ethno-cultural and civic-political nationalisms is confirmed by the more recent literature on nationalism. See, for example, the contributions in Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewittson, eds., What is a Nation? Europe 1789–1914 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
centrifugal impact of these new developments in the imperial peripheries and is under-
estimating the success of empires in fostering such integration processes before the First
World War.

**Mapping the Imperial Nation**

Imagining national territories of imperial nations was inevitably linked to the concept
of the functional core of empires. However, these two concepts of mental mapping were
significantly different. National territory could reach far beyond the territories of the
functional core into the peripheries and sometimes even beyond the imperial borders.76
The functional core of empires, defined by such factors as economic development, com-
munications, elite integration, and homogeneity of legal space, was usually smaller than
the imagined national territory of imperial nations. However, the functional core of
empires sometimes would include territories that were not regarded as part of national
space, as exemplified by the Napoleonic and Habsburg Empires.77

Nationalist perspectives would gradually supplement the purely functional
rationale of military and economic factors. So, for example, the nationalist perspec-
tive was gaining in importance in the essentially imperial programs seeking to develop
systems of communications. In turn the results of these developments provided new
means for nationalist appropriations of imperial space.78

The overlapping of national and imperial symbolism in the representation of
institutions and the appropriation of space can be exemplified in many empires. Of
course, each empire had its peculiarities also in this respect. In Britain it was rather
national symbolism which was supplemented with vestiges of empire.79 In Russia the

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76 Eastern Galicia, which belonged to the Habsburg Empire, was claimed as a part of national ter-
ritory by Russian nationalists. Many parts of the Habsburg and Romanov empires were seen as
part of national territory by greater German and pan-German nationalists. Alsace and Lorraine,
part of the German Empire after 1871, were perceived as part of national territory by French na-
tionalists. Schleswig and Holstein, part of the German Confederation after 1864 and the German
Empire after 1871, were still reclaimed as national territory by Danish nationalists. The examples
could be multiplied here.

77 See the chapters by Michael Broers and Andrea Komlosy in this book.

78 On telecommunication and its global networks see Roland Wenzlhuemer, ed., *Telecommunica-
tion and Global Flows of Information in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century*, special

79 Queen Victoria in Britain was celebrated not only as head of the British state, but she was also
Empress of India. Oxford University did not only regard itself as the first university in Britain,
but also as an “imperial university.” See Richard Symonds, *Oxford and Empire* (Basingstoke:
Palgrave MacMillan, 1986). The river Thames “is consistently seen both as the embodiment of
British liberty, and as the umbilical link between the territorial island and commercial global-
ism” and, one might add, empire. See Geoff Quilley, “All Ocean is Her Own: the Image of the
Sea and the Identity of the Maritime Nation in Eighteenth-Century British Art,” in *Imagining
opposite is true—the imperial symbolism of the dynasty was gradually nationalized in the second half of the nineteenth century.80

Geographers were, of course, vital for the provision of images, above all, maps, which demonstrated spatial unity and defined national and imperial space. In Britain, Halford Mackinder was arguably the most important geographer to situate Britain centrally in global representations, moving it from Europe’s edge to the world’s center. In his geographical imagination, the British were an island race ideally qualified both to defend its rural English heartlands and to bring its values to all corners of the world.81 When the German Empire lost its colonies at the end of the First World War, it led to a re-mapping of the world which had repercussions not only on the tourist industry but also on the way that Germans came to visualize their own nation.82 In Russia, the geographer V.P. Semenov-Tianshanskii singled out a special “cultural-economic entity”—a “Russian Eurasia” (spanning the space between the Volga and the Enisei and from the Arctic Ocean to the empire’s southern borders on the Caspian sea) that must not be regarded as a borderland, but should be spoken of as a “native and fully equal Russian land.”83

Nationalist historical narratives were constructed in order to “prove” conclusively the belonging of certain imperial spaces to “national territory.” The German concept of “Kulturboden” (cultural territory), for example, gained wider currency as an attempt to move territorial claims of German nationalism as far to the east as possible. Even where the population was overwhelmingly non-German, it was argued that the superior cultural ambitions of German settlers, past or present, made that territory German. The German Empire thus developed imperialist concepts in order to further the extension of national space.84 Similar tactics were used when Siberia was appropriated as a Russian national territory in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the western borderlands of the Romanov Empire, the Russian national historical narrative was used to claim the eastern borderlands of the partitioned Polish Commonwealth as Russian national territory on the grounds that both the Medieval Kievan Rus’ and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were Russian states. In Britain, to take another example, Irish history became a battlefield between Tory and Whig Anglo-Irish conceptions of how the Irish story was to be related to a wider British one. Between Froude and Lecky, the conception of how to achieve such integration was

different and contested, but the historical narratives on both sides had a direct political purpose: to provide stability through historical discourse for an Ireland which was to remain closely allied to England, Scotland, and Wales.\textsuperscript{85}

The merging of national and imperial motifs was also evident in such domains as managing space in urban development. Metropolitan cities, such as London, Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, now became national capitals with architectural designs that combined imperial and national languages.\textsuperscript{86} In nineteenth century Britain, most architects saw architecture as an expression of national personality,\textsuperscript{87} and while much of English architecture reflected visions of Englishness, many of the public buildings, such as town halls and civic centers, also reflected the wider imperial ambitions of the island nation. Victorian cities were not only built in Britain, but also in the empire, the prime example perhaps being Melbourne.\textsuperscript{88} In other cases, urban spaces, constructed as imperial centers, were acquiring national meaning, e.g. St. Petersburg, where the classicist empire style in architecture was replaced with an often awkward mixture of Byzantine and pre-imperial Russian motives. One can easily see what we mean when looking at the peculiar mixture of neo-Moscovite and neo-Byzantine styles in the Church of the Resurrection of Christ (of the Savior on the Spilled Blood), erected in St. Petersburg in 1883–1907 on the place where Alexander II had been assassinated.\textsuperscript{89} The image of a capital was shaped by both imperial and national agendas. This was also true for Budapest as the capital of the sub-empire of Hungary, which was developed as an imperial and national city after the Constitutional Compromise of 1867. It was consciously borrowing from other imperial-national capitals, such as Budapest (Andrássy út), Vienna (the Ringstrasse; various public buildings, e.g. the Opera), and London (Parliament building). The whole Buda hill was reshaped in view of the coronation of the Austrian emperor as the Hungarian king and the construction of the new Königlich und Kaiserlich residence.


\textsuperscript{89} More than ten other churches in “new Russian style” in the capital were destroyed after 1917.
Opera gained central importance through all Europe precisely because it had both an imperial and at the same time national role. Churches were both imperial and national spaces. The rope ornaments that we find in much of neo-Manueline Portuguese as well as in Spanish architecture linked national space to maritime, that is, imperial adventures. Important second cities in imperial nations such as Liverpool, Hamburg, Barcelona, Marseille, or Porto (all ports) were very much tied into the imperial enterprise and into narratives of empire.

A new nationalizing agenda crept into imperial institutions such as schools, universities, learned societies, bureaucracies, armies, and churches. School curricula were rewritten in order to facilitate the nationalization of imperial space. In Russia, the author of an important national narrative, N. Ustrialov, was awarded the prize for the best textbook in history already in the 1830s. Books on geography for children in all empires followed the pattern of the French Le Tour de la France par deux enfants by Augustine Fouillée, telling the story of friends who traveled all over “our land” and admired its richness, beauty, and variety, but recognized its national unity. Diverse “geographies of empire” underpinned different practices of imperial rule and also helped to negotiate the relationship between the imperial and the national within empires.

Key institutions of the nationalizing empires (army, law courts, bureaucracies, and universities) were staffed by peripheral elites keen to take material and status advantage of the promised integration of peripheries. The prominence of Scots, Welsh, and Irishmen in the imperial administration and the colonial services of Britain has long been the focus of considerable attention. The officer corps (and military schools) worked as a unifying mechanism in many empires. In the Romanov Empire the officer corps proved to be the most efficient tool not only for the acculturation and consolidation of the imperial elite, but later for the Russification of numerous representatives of the Baltic German, Georgian, and even Polish nobility as well. The Prussian army and navy had a long-term influence on the German unification process in the 1860s and early 1870s, as its officer corps set many of the core values and norms that later informed the process of nation-building in Germany.

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90 Peter Stachel and Philipp Ther, **Wie europäisch ist die Oper? Die Geschichte des Musiktheaters als Zugang zu einer kulturellen Topographie Europas** (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2009).
92 First published in 1877 it had sold 6 million copies by 1900.
95 On the Habsburg army see Deák, *Beyond nationalism.*
ambitions which were prominent in Imperial Germany after 1871. Imperial armies, particularly after the introduction of universal conscription, also played a crucial role for the acculturation and sometimes the assimilation of the peasant populations of the empires. But, as the First World War shows clearly, anxieties to upset global racial hierarchies informed the warring nations’ attitudes towards colonial troops on all sides, indicating to what extent the army was a marker of cores and peripheries in all European empires.

State-centered elites, in particular state bureaucracies, had a vital impact on the interrelationship between nationalizing empires and their peripheries. The growth of bureaucracy provided, among other things, new positions (and incentives for loyalty) for the representatives of regional elites. The relatively small Cossack elite and the Baltic nobility could find enough attractive career opportunities in the Romanov Empire even in the eighteenth century, while later it proved impossible to accommodate a much more numerous Polish nobility, partly due to the comparative numerical weakness of the bureaucracy in the Romanov Empire. It was the imperial elites that produced the “cultures of empire” that also informed nation-building within empires.

The role of representatives of organized religion in the implementation of nationalizing projects varied significantly. Positioned both at the core of power in empires (at courts and close to government) and in the localities (through parish priests), they were vital interlocutors for nationalizing empires, as in Spain and France. Missionary activities of the Orthodox church were of crucial importance in the effort to Russify the population of the Volga-Kama region, which was gradually included into the nationalized core. At the same time, representatives of religion were also the backbone of the secessionist national movements defining their nation in religious terms against another religion or confession of the imperial oppressors. Polish Catholic priests, Muslim clergy in the Caucasus and Asian periphery of the Romanov Empire, and Orthodox priests in Bulgaria and Serbia were vital to the national resistance against Tsarism and Ottomanism alike.

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100 For the British example, see Catherine Hall, ed., *Cultures of Empire: A Reader* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).
101 For France see, for example, Owen White and James Patrick Daughton, eds., *In God’s Empire: French Missionaries and the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
The examples we have given above are tilted toward the Russian, British, and German Empires—the histories of which are most familiar to the authors of this introduction. However, the reader of this book will find many more examples in the diverse empire chapters in this book. The lengthy imperial case studies provided here will inevitably provoke comparative reflections in the minds of the readers. However, we also asked a number of renowned historians to write shorter comparative reflections on a number of those themes that feature prominently in almost every chapter on specific empires. What emerges from the empire chapters and the comparative commentaries on those chapters are three interrelated arguments, which also adequately summarize the editors' intentions with this volume: First, nations did not build empires—instead, nations emerged within empires and in the context of inter-imperial competition; secondly, nation-building cannot be understood without its imperial context—this is true for secessionist nation-building projects in imperial peripheries, but also for the nation-building processes in imperial cores; and thirdly, nation building and empire were very much entangled processes—nation-building in the core of empires was in fact one of the key instruments of empires to enhance and improve their competitiveness.