



The Growth of German Nationalism
1815-50

- 962 – 1806 Roman Empire
- 1806 – 1815 Napoleon
- Napoleon creates German Confederation
- 1815 Napoleon's forces expelled from Germany
- 1815 Congress of Vienna

Germany c.1815

see p25. McKichan



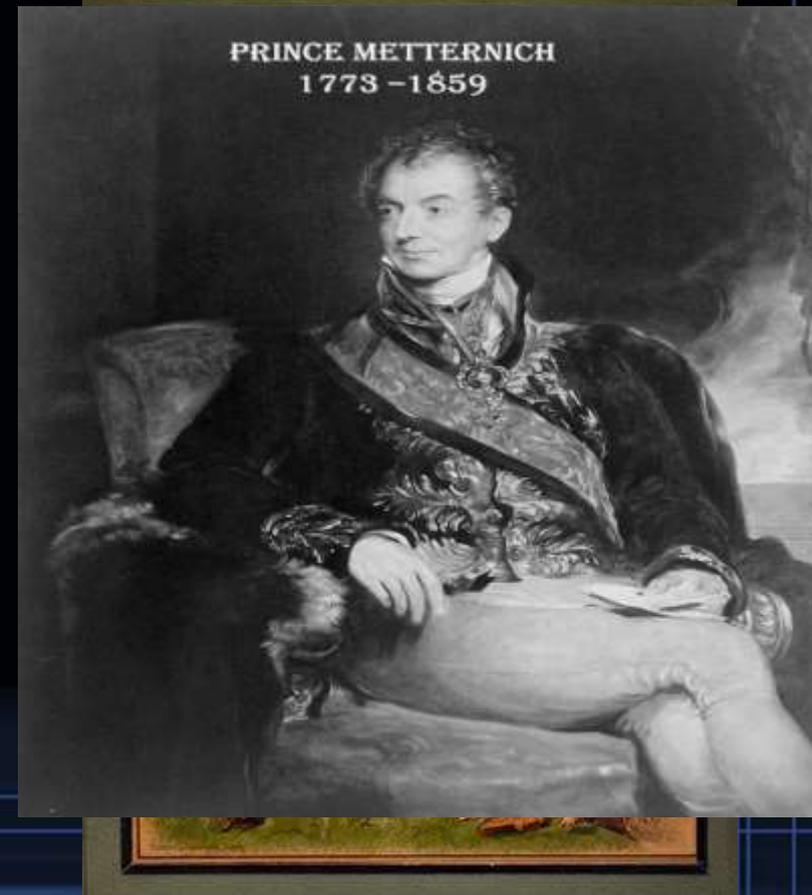
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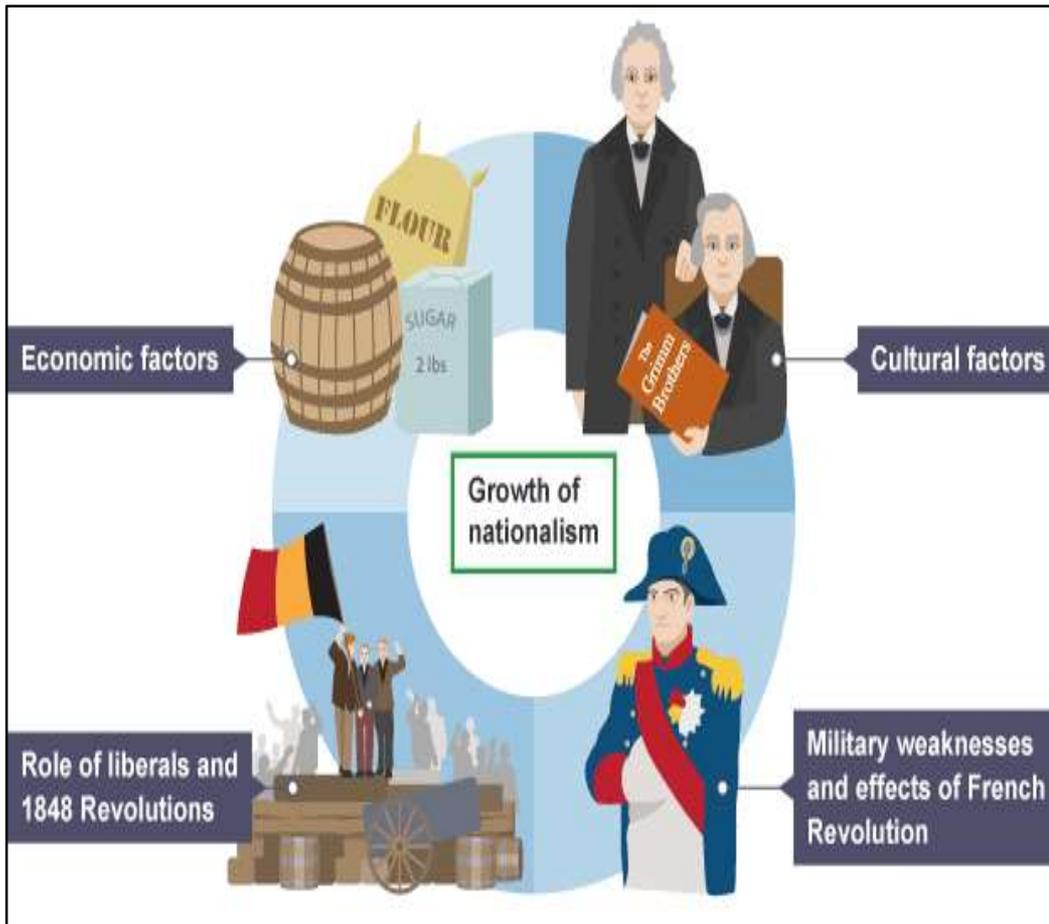
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The Growth of German Nationalism

- Cultural factors
 - Romantic Movement
 - Shared language and culture
 - Spread of nationalist ideas
- Economic factors
 - Zollverein Union
 - Prussian economic expansion
 - Industrialisation & population changes
 - Technology and transport improvements
- Political factors
 - Defeat of Napoleon
 - Hatred of Prince Metternich
 - Student societies
 - 1848 revolutions





Collect a copy of the 'Growth of Nationalism' starter image to stick in your jotter



Definition of Nationalism..

The desire of people sharing the same language and culture (heritage ,traditions, history) to be independent and ruled over by their own government, free from any control by other countries.



❖ Most countries were ruled by Autocratic rulers - there was little concept of democracy.

❖ Most people in Europe had no knowledge or understanding of nationalism.

❖ Society was still largely dominated by Feudalism – dominated by a small aristocracy ruling over a vast peasantry. Social class had a far greater significance than nationality.

❖ The peasants had no concept of the nation as they rarely moved out of their local area

❖ The aristocracy regarded themselves as an international elite who shared common values no matter which country they came from.





Impact of the French Revolution

- ❑ French Revolution was an explosive outburst against the old corrupt order of Autocracy.
- ❑ The cry of the revolution was ‘Liberty Equality Fraternity’ – promoting the ideas of Liberalism – the concept of greater individual liberty and social reform based on a system of democracy. However he inadvertently encouraged the spread of nationalism.
- ❑ Eventually the revolution was stabilised by Napoleon who carried these ideas across Europe sweeping away the old order of feudalism and introducing ‘Code Napoleon’.







Accidental Napoleon

- ✓ Napoleon inadvertently promoted the growth of nationalism in German states.
- ✓ The ease with which the French took over German states made them realise how divided and weak they were individually.
- ✓ National consciousness was aroused as the people of these states joined together in the struggle to throw off French domination.
- ✓ In his efforts to protect France he dissolved the Holy Roman Empire, united the 400+ states into 39 and on the French border created the 'Confederation of the Rhine' made up of 16 of the states.





Austrian Influence



- ❖ Austria had the most to lose from these new forces
- ❖ The Empire could collapse as the huge number of different nationalisms encouraged the huge number of different nationalities within its borders to break away and form their own countries.
- ❖ It would also lose its control over smaller German states if German nationalism was allowed to flourish.
- ❖ The German Confederation (Bund) set up by the Congress of Vienna was led by Austria but had little power and Metternich could dictate proceedings to ensure the nationalism debate stayed off the agenda



Cultural Factors



- ✓ Shared Language and Culture -the people of the German states shared a common identity in the form of language (25 million), race, heritage and culture.
- ✓ Romantic Movement
 - the leading cultural movement in 19th century Europe
 - romantics (artists, composers, authors, playwrights, musicians) encouraged people to think of their past greatness
 - literature, music and art were seen as a means of expressing a nation's soul.
 - examples would be Beethoven's symphonies, the folktales of the Brothers Grimm





However....



- ✓ Only the middle class had access to the work of the Romantic Movement
- ✓ 80% of the peasantry were illiterate so did not appreciate the benefits of nationalism nor did they seek it out as they had
 - loyalty to their landlord rather than any politician or middle class movement
 - other priorities in life like feeding their family and survival

“Few Germans looked up from their work when they heard about nationalism. It just wasn’t important in their lives.”

Golo Mann



Economic Factors



- **Development of Prussia**

- During the period 1815-1860 Prussia developed rapidly. Its population increased by over 70%.
- At the Congress of Vienna in 1815 they gained valuable land in the Rhineland that contained coal, iron and steel resources.
- Prussia rapidly developed its road and rail transport systems. By 1850, 5000km of railway tracks had been laid.

“Railways were of great political significance. They helped break down provincial barriers...and underlined the need for unification.” Carr



Economic Factors



'The mighty lever of German unification' William Carr

- Zollverein

- This was a virtually free trading customs union which started in 1818 within Prussia agreeing to get rid of all taxes and customs duties on all traded goods
- By 1836 25 of the 39 German states were members covering a free trade area of 26 million people with Austria excluded
- The success of the Zollverein increased Prussia's economic strength and furthered its challenge to Austria for control of the German states
- It highlighted the financial benefits of cooperation, helped to spread nationalistic ideas and gave a prototype of what a new united German state could achieve



German cartoon on customs prior to the Zollverein, 1834



However....

- ✓ 14 of the 39 states had not participated in the Zollverein therefore did not recognise the benefits of economic unity
- ✓ Despite their economic isolation from the Zollverein, Austria were still the political masters of the German states and used their existing wealth and influence to prevent any change
- ✓ The German peasantry did not travel extensively on the newly developed railway network therefore they did not experience the discovery of a shared language and culture or the benefits of trade.



Political Factors



- Defeat of Napoleon
 - The coalition of Germanic forces and European powers that defeated the French highlighted the desire for the German states to be independent of foreign rule
 - The subsequent failure of the Congress of Vienna in 1815 to encourage any nationalist hopes was an important reason for the support of nationalist causes
- Hatred of Prince Metternich
 - Nationalists used their hatred of Metternich's policies and his staunch conservative approach to galvanise support
- Student societies
 - The emergence of political support in universities was borne out in the formation of the Burschenschaften
- 1848 revolutions
 - A series of revolutions swept across Europe which encouraged the nationalists to demand a political voice



However....



- The Burschenschaften's enthusiasm was more romantic and passionate with no clear idea how to achieve their aims
- Metternich used the Carlsbad Decrees in 1819 to crack down on the nationalists and stifle their work (censorship of the press, banned the Burschenschaften, more police)
- The failure of the Frankfurt Parliament showed that there would always be political differences even amongst the nationalists themselves
- The Bund (with Metternich at its head) encouraged political division within the German states



Historiography

“The Bund was more a means to perpetuate the division of Germany” Ian Mitchell

“French intervention in Germany stirred into patriotism the natural resentment against the interference of foreigners” AJP Taylor

“Even in 1815 there were tens of thousands of people, especially among the young, the educated and the middle and upper classes, who felt passionately that Germans deserved to have fathered in the same way as the English and French already had” Andrina Stiles

“The Zollverein was a force for union in the 1840s and therefore a focal point for nationalist sentiments.”
Andrina Stiles

“Few Germans look up from their work when they hear about nationalism. It just wasn’t important in their lives.” Golo Mann

“It was a step forward which could never be undone completely” Erich Eyck (discussing the merits of the Frankfurt parliament)



“Laws such as the Carlsbad Decrees try to stop us being German but there are things that cannot die. We all Germans, joined by the same language, customs and ancestors. They cannot be taken from us” Karl Von Hase 1820

‘Railways were of great political significance. They helped to break down provincial barriers... and underlined the need for political unification’. William Carr (arguing that railways increase spread of ideology, liberalism and information, communication etc

‘Wherever a separate language is found, there is also a separate nation which has the right to manage its affairs independently and rule itself...’ Johann Fichte (arguing that a shared language creates sense of national identity)

“Certainly Prussia was not thinking in terms of political unification when she founded the Customs Union. Nor had the states joined it out of love for Prussia but simply and solely to escape from the financial and economic difficulties which beset them.”
William Carr

“The French spread Liberalism by intention, but created Nationalism by inadvertence” David Thomson

“The Germans are not bastardised by alien peoples. They have not become mongrels. They have remained more than other people in their original purity.” Ernst Arndt

‘The mighty lever of German unification’ William Carr (arguing that the Zollverein was the main reason for nationalism increasing and ultimately for unification)





