

Cosmopolitanism, Patriotism, Nationalism

SIEGFRIED WEICHLEIN

MODERN GERMAN MASTER-NARRATIVES OF HISTORIOGRAPHY love biblical language. Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Heinrich A. Winkler, and Thomas Nipperdey all start with a secular version of the first line of the gospel of St John:¹ 'In the beginning was no revolution' (Wehler); 'In the beginning was the Reich'; and, with a certain twist, 'At the beginning was Napoleon'.² The ironic twist is that the left liberal historians Wehler and Winkler use more biblical language than Nipperdey. Like St John they tell a story from its very principle: 'in principio' (John 1:1 Vulgata) should not be understood as 'in initio', the chronological beginning. Nipperdey, by contrast, seems to read 'in initio'. The beginning, for him, is a point in time, whereas Wehler and Winkler argue from a systematic standpoint. But the beginning of what? All three authors are interested in modern German national history, its origins, highlights, and its catastrophic climax. All three combine biblical language with national historiography.

With the French Revolution the 'nation' entered a new phase as a model for political order that replaced corporate societies and triggered a large-scale process of emancipation and modernisation in European societies. To be sure, the nation had already figured prominently in early modern German history. The humanist Ulrich von Hutten and others used the term 'nation' to convey the differences between various central European countries. Despite its growing importance, the nation remained a cultural concept. It was affiliated with cultural stereotypes and was used as a designation of origin, mostly for students at foreign universities. The

¹ John 1:1 is itself a variation on the first line of the Bible, Genesis 1:1.

² Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, 4 vols, 2nd edn (Munich, 1989), vol. 1, p. 35; Heinrich A. Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen: Deutsche Geschichte*, 2 vols (Munich, 2000), vol. 1, p. 5; Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800–1866: Bürgerwelt und starker Staat*, 6th edn (Munich, 1993), p. 11. In this text 'Reich' refers to a specific set of practices and institutions, identified with the 'Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation'.

concept of the 'nation' was rarely used for self-expression, and never to describe the political order. Until the eighteenth century the political order in central Europe was organised along other lines, such as the state, the Reich, the monarchy, or the republic.³

That changed dramatically between the Seven Years War and around 1800. Despite its thorough universalism, the German Enlightenment combined universalism with patriotism, a rather unlikely combination in the twentieth century. For most educated authors in the age of Enlightenment, cosmopolitanism and patriotism were not opposites, but complementary. How, then, did contemporaries in the late eighteenth century conceptualise cosmopolitanism, patriotism, and nationalism, and relate them? How did they explain the complicity of cosmopolitanism and patriotism?

This essay will outline different answers to these questions relating to the period between the Seven Years War and around 1800. The arguments for a collectively shared identity were divided not between cosmopolitanism and patriotism, but rather between different modes of argument and between the different political levels with which patriotic loyalty could be associated. Patriotism could be projected on to different political levels: the Reich, the states, and the local community. Cosmopolitanism and patriotism provided the rhetoric for the same social groups. They shared a civic moral code. The German debate on patriotism in the Old Reich centred around two concepts: first, the relatively modern and future-orientated doctrine of natural law and, second, a more historical and cultural approach positing a unity in the past based on imperial corporate institutions. Although differing in their approach, the two arguments had much in common. Patriotism was a way of enhancing the social role of the rising German educated bourgeoisie. Communications networks played a crucial role in the enhancement of social self-esteem and the dissemination of a civic moral code. Patriotic language articulated the enlightened concept of autonomy in the German political context. The French Revolution incriminated the combination of patriotism and cosmopolitanism, since patriotic loyalty was now directed to a

morally aggrandised state apparatus and its constitution. None the less, moral universalism was a key factor in nineteenth-century nationalism.

Enlightened Patriotism

A myriad of tiny states in the Old Reich made patriotism and cosmopolitanism attractive to the rising educated bourgeoisie. Both concepts offered external points of reference and emphasised anti-absolutist policies. It was not only the French Enlightenment that served the anti-absolutist needs of the rising middle classes, but also patriotism. Patriotism became part of the enlightened discourse and sounded progressive. After the Seven Years War, an enlightened civic patriotism was *de rigueur* for the upper bourgeoisie.⁴ Patriotism expanded the political imagination beyond the scope of small and medium-sized German states. It opened new dimensions of political legitimation and argument, thereby ideologically relieving the German bourgeoisie from the pressure of absolutist monarchism. Patriotism also incorporated a civic value system and underpinned the social role and self-esteem of the rising bourgeoisie. This civic patriotism centred around a vision of enlightened legislation that went along with a relatively modern moral code.

The nation was seen as a unit in which the standards of enlightened thought had been met. These standards encompassed progress, reform, mutual recognition, human rights, and the individual rights of every citizen.⁵ These standards went against absolutism, but not against forms of enlightened monarchical government; rather they reinforced 'reform monarchism', in which the enlightened sovereign was seen as the principal agent of reform. This civic patriotism had a strong anti-absolutist and anti-aristocratic touch. Citizens gained merit by serving the common weal. The absolutist state dominated by the aristocracy denied non-nobles this kind of service. Not only was this contrary to the concept of citizenship, but it also damaged the state itself. For Thomas Abbt, a

³ Wolfgang Hardtwig, 'Ulrich von Hutten: Zum Verhältnis von Individuum, Stand und Nation in der Reformationszeit', in idem, *Nationalismus und Bürgerkultur in Deutschland 1500–1914: Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (Göttingen, 1994), pp. 15–33; idem, 'Vom Elitebewußtsein zur Massenbewegung: Frühformen des Nationalismus in Deutschland 1500–1840', in *ibid.*, pp. 34–54; Herfried Münkler, Hans Grünberger, and Kathrin Meyer (eds), *Nationenbildung: Die Nationalisierung Europas im Diskurs humanistischer Intellektueller. Italien und Deutschland* (Berlin, 1998).

⁴ For enlightened patriotism, see Matthew Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism: The Transformation of Prussian Political Culture, 1806–1848* (Oxford, 2000); idem, 'The Prussian Reform Movement and the Rise of Enlightened Nationalism', in Philip G. Dwyer (ed.), *The Rise of Prussia, 1700–1830* (Harlow, 2000), pp. 259–77.

⁵ See Rudolf Vierhaus, '"Patriotismus"—Begriff und Realität einer moralisch-politischen Haltung', in idem (ed.), *Deutsche patriotische und gemeinnützige Gesellschaften* (Munich, 1980), pp. 9–29, at pp. 21ff.

modern citizenry and service for the fatherland became indistinguishable. Both were directed against the absolutist state.⁶

This kind of civic patriotism was not defined by birthplace. Its strong rationalism allowed patriotism to flourish wherever the individual saw fit. The influence of the rational doctrine of natural law and of the Enlightenment in general on the concept of the fatherland can be seen in Abbt's patriotic battle-cry of 1761: 'On Dying for the Fatherland'. He wrote this pamphlet in Frankfurt (Oder), a few miles from Kunersdorf, where two years previously Prussia had suffered a crushing defeat by the Russian army and was on the verge of extinction. Thomas Abbt, a lawyer and native of the southern imperial city of Ulm, opted for Prussia as his fatherland. The fatherland was for him not a question of birthplace, but rather the result of a decision made by a free citizen. 'If by accident of birth or of my own free will I am united with a state to whose healing laws I submit, laws that do not deprive me of any more of my freedom than is necessary for the good of the state as a whole, then I will call that state my fatherland.'⁷ For Abbt, Prussia, the kingdom of Frederick II, was the most favourable to free citizens; it provided freedom and had an enlightened king, setting it apart from the narrow-mindedness of the imperial cities in southern Germany and from absolutist rule in France. His mode of argument was based on universalist principles, not on historical institutions. Abbt and other enlightened patriots were lawyers. They favoured a rational collective identity based on equal treatment of every individual. Civic egalitarianism was the cornerstone of this kind of patriotism, which was directed towards the state.⁸

Prussia, not Austria or France, became the homeland of the modern reformers. Its monarchy and legislation were widely praised for having realised the principles of natural law jurisprudence and good government. Abbt and others saw unity as something in the future. Patriotic love for the fatherland did not only motivate people to die for their fatherland. It was also a perfect way to overcome one's own death. To die for the fatherland would eternalise the individual in collective memory. As the motto for his book Abbt chose a quotation from the British statesman

and essayist Joseph Addison: 'What pity is it that we can die but once to serve our country.'⁹ Dying for the fatherland was portrayed as a choice for progress. To die for Prussia would secure eternal remembrance for the individual.

Several things follow from this point. First, Abbt's construction of eternal memory and individual death for the fatherland reflected the intimate relationship between religion, pietism, and nationalism in the eighteenth century.¹⁰ Second, Abbt interpreted personal loyalty as subjective, not as objective. Although objectively born in Ulm, Abbt owed his patriotic loyalty not to his birthplace, but to a modern enlightened state. He loosened the ties between birthplace and patriotism. Abbt's patriotism was not an expression of regionalism. Nevertheless, he did not put forward an individual argument, but a structural one. The state became the object of loyalty. 'Dying for the fatherland' was to die for a unit that deserved his loyalty in principle. Abbt defended state patriotism, not so much national patriotism. A decade after Abbt wrote his pamphlet, Prussia took part in the partitions of Poland, depriving the Poles of their state and forcing many to submit to Prussian rule. The Prussian idea of the state was at the centre of a supranational loyalty that was not limited to a specific cultural, ethnic, or linguistic group. It informed the attitude of the Prussian monarchy towards its subjects throughout the nineteenth century. King Frederick William III began his proclamation 'To my people' on 17 March 1813 as follows:

Brandenburgers, Prussians, Silesians, Pomeranians, Lithuanians! You know what you have suffered for the past ten years; you know what your miserable fate will be, if we do not end the struggle that is now beginning with honour. Remember the time of antiquity, the great *Kurfürsten*, the great Frederick.¹¹

For Thomas Abbt state patriotism was a feature not only of the Prussian monarchy, but of monarchies in general. Love of the fatherland

⁶ See Thomas Abbt, *Vom Verdienst* (Goslar, 1766; reprint Königstein, 1978); also Johann Georg Heinrich Feder, *Untersuchungen über den menschlichen Willen* (Lemgo, 1782).

⁷ See Thomas Abbt, 'Vom Tode für das Vaterland (1761)', in Johannes Kunisch (ed.), *Aufklärung und Kriegserfahrung: Klassische Zeitzeugen zum Siebenjährigen Krieg* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), pp. 589–650, at pp. 600f.

⁸ For the enlightened rational and state-centred approach to patriotism, see Eugen Lemberg, *Nationalismus*, 2 vols (Reinbek, 1964), vol. 1, pp. 86–102.

⁹ See Abbt, 'Vom Tode für das Vaterland', p. 589 (Addison quotation); Christoph Prignitz, *Vaterlandsliebe und Freiheit: Deutscher Patriotismus von 1750 bis 1850* (Wiesbaden, 1981), pp. 7–38.

¹⁰ For the impact of pietism on patriotism and nationalism, see Gerhard Kaiser, *Pietismus und Patriotismus im literarischen Deutschland: Ein Beitrag zum Problem der Säkularisation*, 2nd edn (Frankfurt am Main, 1973).

¹¹ Proclamation 'To my people', quoted in Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism*, p. 64. For the tradition of Prussian state patriotism, see Ulrich Scheuner, 'Der Staatsgedanke Preußens (1965)', in Otto Büsch and Wolfgang Neugebauer (eds), *Moderne preußische Geschichte 1648–1947: Eine Anthologie*, 3 vols (Berlin, 1981), vol. 1, pp. 26–73; Ernst Rudolf Huber, 'Die friderizianische Staatsidee und das Vaterland', in idem, *Nationalstaat und Verfassungsstaat: Studien zur Geschichte der modernen Staatsidee* (Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 30–47.

characterised all monarchies. He linked patriotism to monarchies and broke with a long tradition in political theory that saw patriotism thriving only in republics. For Abbt's opponent, Johann Georg Zimmermann, patriotism required citizens, and citizens could be found only in republics.¹² For an enlightened state patriot like Abbt the monarch and the fatherland were mutually inclusive. This personalised the fatherland and depersonalised the monarch. People should honour the king in the fatherland and the fatherland in the king. The two were brought together by the rule of law.¹³

State patriotism was not restricted to Prussia. The Vienna professor of *Policeywissenschaft* (the science of government), Joseph von Sonnenfels, put forward the same argument for Austria. He came from a cameralistic tradition, conceptualising politics in purely secular and pragmatic terms. The welfare of its citizens was the state's principal political aim. Moral reform and moral progress were at the heart of his patriotism. Both could be achieved by enlightened state legislation. The people in turn owed loyalty to the state. Sonnenfels, like Abbt, equated fatherland, state, and legislation. For him the fatherland was:

- the country in which one had taken up permanent residence,
- the laws which the inhabitants of this country obey,
- the form of government which the laws prescribe,
- the other people who live in this country,
- the other people who enjoy the same rights.¹⁴

Nevertheless, the Habsburg dynasty and the Austrian government failed to foster state patriotism within its highly diverse population. People felt they were German, Czech, Polish, Hungarian, Croatian, etc., but not Austrian. Austrian state patriotism could be found in the upper echelons of the military, the bureaucracy, and the Catholic hierarchy. Its social reach was restricted to Habsburg state machinery and the dynasty.

Enlightened nationalism, with its focus on rational loyalty, legislation, and Prusso-centrism, had intellectual opponents. For Abbt's opponent, Friedrich Carl von Moser, the entire German people shared a common constitution, legal institutions, and an emperor who guaranteed freedom from absolutist rule. Imperial courts worked as a safeguard against absolutist rule. The problem was not how to get rid of these institutions, but rather how to revitalise them. For Moser these safeguards against absolutist rule had worked admirably in the past and deserved renewed attention. In his view, therefore, the national spirit lay in the past, not in the future. In his opening remarks on the German national spirit he linked national unity to the Reich and its institutions. Unity was preserved through the Reich, and unity secured freedom:

We are one people, with one name and language, under one common head, under common laws that determine our constitution, rights and duties, committed to a common great interest in freedom, unified to pursue this purpose in a National Assembly that is more than one hundred years old, Europe's premier empire in terms of internal power and strength, whose royal crowns gleam on German heads.¹⁵

This ideal lay in the past. Unlike Samuel von Pufendorf, who interpreted the imperial constitution as a monster ('monstro simile'), Moser saw it as a mystery ('ein Räthsel politischer Verfassung'). Admittedly the history of the Reich was a list of failures. He suggested that it was

the booty of the neighbours, the object of their scorn, distinguished in the history of the world, disunited among ourselves, powerless because of our divisions, strong enough to harm ourselves, unable to save ourselves, insensitive to the honour of our name, indifferent to the dignity of the law, jealous of our ruler, suspicious of each other, incoherent on principles, violent in their execution, a great but a despised people, one that is potentially happy, but in reality, pitiable.¹⁶

¹² See Johann Georg Zimmermann, 'Von dem Nationalstolze' (2nd edn 1760; 1st edn 1758), in Fritz Brüggemann (ed.), *Der Siebenjährige Krieg im Spiegel der zeitgenössischen Literatur* (Darmstadt, 1966), pp. 9–94.

¹³ See Abbt, 'Vom Tode für das Vaterland', p. 636.

¹⁴ '— das Land, worin man seinen beständigen Sitz genommen,—die Gesetze, welchen die Bewohner des Landes gehorchen,—die darin festgesetzte Regierungsform,—die Mitbewohner dieses Landes,—die Mitgenossen derselben Rechte'. See Joseph von Sonnenfels, *Über die Liebe des Vaterlandes* (1771; reprint Königstein, 1979).

¹⁵ 'Wir sind Ein Volk, von Einem Nahmen und Sprache, unter Einem gemeinsamen Oberhaupt, unter Einerley unsere Verfassung, Rechte und Pflichten bestimmenden Gesetzen, zu Einem gemeinschaftlichen grossen Interesse der Freyheit verbunden, auf Einer mehr als hundertjährigen Nationalversammlung zu diesem wichtigen Zweck vereint, an innerer Macht und Stärke das erste Reich in Europa, dessen Königscronen auf Deutschen Häuptern glänzen.' See Friedrich Carl von Moser, *Von dem deutschen Nationalgeist* (Frankfurt am Main, 1765), p. 5.

¹⁶ 'ein Raub der Nachbarn, ein Gegenstand ihrer Spötereien, ausgezeichnet in der Geschichte der Welt, uneinig unter uns selbst, kraftlos durch unsere Trennungen, stark genug, uns selbst zu schaden, ohnmächtig, uns zu retten, unempfindlich gegen die Ehre unseres Namens, gleichgültig gegen die Würde der Gesetze, eifersüchtig gegen unser Oberhaupt, mißtrauisch untereinander, unzusammenhängend in Grundsätzen, gewalthätig in deren Ausführung, ein grosses und

The miserable condition of his people was the result of a lack of institutional continuity. For the imperial lawyer Friedrich Carl von Moser, institutions like the Imperial Chamber Court (*Reichskammergericht*) in Wetzlar, the Court Tribunal (*Hofgericht*) in Vienna, and the Imperial Diet (*Reichstag*) in Regensburg stood for freedom and justice. These institutions visibly represented the national unity of the German people. For Moser the Seven Years War signified a dramatic decline in national identity. He deplored the rift in the imperial institutions caused by the recently established kingdom of Prussia. Moser and the more conservatively orientated writers of the late eighteenth century saw the structural unity of the body politic as under attack from a new sort of despotism whose strongholds lay particularly in Prussia. Military national law (*militärisches Staatsrecht*) saw military society, not national society or the imperial corporate institutions as the organising centre of state legislation. The bond between the Reich, the people, and legislation was thereby cut. The nation was a 'community of justice'.¹⁷ Under pressure from the military, historical institutions such as the imperial courts had been abandoned. The absolutism of strong states such as the Hohenzollern monarchy in particular endangered the historical equilibrium of the Reich that had always secured the common weal.¹⁸ Only the reawakening of the national spirit could bring about a change for the better. For Thomas Abbt, as for Friedrich Carl von Moser, individuals did not constitute the nation or the *patria*. Neither writer subscribed to the modern concept of the representation of individual citizens, *repraesentatio singulariter*. Both adhered to the tradition of *repraesentatio in toto*, either by the monarch or by imperial institutions.¹⁹

Historical continuity and patriotic loyalty could be associated with different political levels in the Old Reich: with the city, the state, and the Reich. Justus Möser, a lawyer from the northern town of Osnabrück,

refused to restrict the concept of patriotism to the supra-state level.²⁰ Instead, he fervently argued for loyalty to his home town of Osnabrück. He even wrote a multi-volume history of Osnabrück.²¹ Although often regarded as an adversary of the Enlightenment, Möser did not argue theologically. His political concepts were thoroughly secular, combining historical identity with modern loyalty towards legislation. He rejected the idea that reform would come from monarchist powers. Not a representative of anti-enlightened thought, Möser vehemently opposed rational universalism which, he believed, endangered liberty.²² The reach of historical patriotism went beyond the supra-state and the state level. It was a socially attractive idea for local elites to foster local loyalty and thereby make it competitive with state or even imperial loyalty.

The difference between enlightened and historical patriotism was not whether patriotism was rational or not. Indeed, patriotism was rational in both concepts. The difference lay in their notion of rationality. For historical patriotism, rationality meant continuity with the past, whereas for civic patriotism it was linked to natural law jurisprudence and universalism. Enlightened and historical patriotism did not argue for any kind of exclusiveness or for a hierarchical patriotism in which one *patria* ranked higher than another. Nevertheless the two concepts were profoundly different. In everyday life they were associated either with Prussia or with the Reich, either with the enlightened King Frederick II or with the Emperor in Vienna. This rift between the modern rational and the historical corporate concept of the nation divided the German bourgeoisie. Goethe's family in Frankfurt (Main) was one of those in which this antagonism divided family members. Young family members—the young Johann Wolfgang among them—thought *fritzisch* and were Prussia-orientated, whereas the older generation in the imperial city of Frankfurt were supporters of the old imperial institutions.²³

gleichwohl verachtetes, ein in der Möglichkeit glückliches, aber in der That bedauernswürdiges Volk'. Moser, *Von dem deutschen Nationalgeist*, p. 5.

¹⁷ See James Sheehan, *German History 1770–1866* (Oxford, 1989), p. 18.

¹⁸ See Matthias Bohlender, 'Metamorphosen des Gemeinwohls: Von der Herrschaft guter polizey zur Regierung durch Freiheit und Sicherheit', in Herfried Münkler and Harald Bluhm (eds), *Gemeinwohl und Gemeinsinn: Historische Semantiken politischer Leitbegriffe* (Berlin, 2001), pp. 247–74, at p. 258.

¹⁹ See Eberhard Schmitt, 'Repraesentatio in toto und repraesentatio singulariter: Zur Frage nach dem Zusammenbruch des französischen Ancien régime und der Durchsetzung moderner parlamentarischer Theorie und Praxis im Jahr 1789', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 213 (1971), 529–76.

²⁰ For Justus Möser, see Jonathan B. Knudsen, *Justus Möser and the German Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1986).

²¹ See Justus Möser, *Osnabrückische Geschichte* (1768), in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Akademie der Wissenschaften Göttingen, 12 vols (Oldenbourg, 1943), vol. 1.

²² See Justus Möser, 'Der jetzige Hang zu allgemeinen Gesetzen und Verordnungen ist der gemeinen Freiheit gefährlich (1772)', in Eckart Pankoke (ed.), *Gesellschaftslehre* (Frankfurt am Main, 1991), pp. 39–44; William F. Sheldon, 'Patriotismus bei Justus Möser', in Rudolf Vierhaus (ed.), *Deutsche patriotische und gemeinnützige Gesellschaften* (Munich, 1980), pp. 31–49.

²³ See Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit. Erster Teil. Zweites Buch*, in idem, *Werke*, Weimarer Ausgabe (Munich, 1987), vol. 26, p. 71.

What Enlightened and Historical Patriotism had in Common

Despite their hostile rhetoric, the two positions had much in common which typified German political culture on the brink of the French Revolution. The most important common feature was first that they both engaged in a moral discourse on politics that was characteristic of the German educated bourgeoisie. Their patriotism often went along with the Prussian *raison d'état*. The idea of a *Nationalerziehung*, a moral education of the German people, was common among German intellectuals in the second half of the eighteenth century. Second, the social ideas of the emergent bourgeoisie resonated well with the demand for improvement and education. Patriots of all sorts—state patriots and imperial patriots for the Reich as well—demanded political engagement. To serve the state and the monarchy reinforced the civic self-esteem of the middle classes. The universalist concept of patriotism helped to advance civic society where the influence of the rising middle classes could be felt. Conversely, civic state patriotism and cosmopolitanism shared the sense of being bourgeois. They both appealed to civic selflessness and public service, as Rudolf Vierhaus has pointed out.²⁴

Third, both concepts shared the view that reform was to be achieved from above, not below. Neither historical corporate patriotism nor the rational, state-centred version supported a real empowerment of the German bourgeoisie. Instead they buttressed its subservience to state authority. Intellectual patriotism did not demand participation in state affairs; rather, it legitimised bureaucratic demands on its citizens.²⁵ The primary aim of the patriotic citizen was not participation but freedom. 'Even in a state that is not in line with his ideas, the patriot behaves as if he were in his ideal fatherland.'²⁶ Patriotic loyalty, seen from this angle, meant especially a trust in the capacity of the state to guarantee freedom and individual property. This lack of participation explains the relatively small degree of politicisation among the broader German public. Without the demand for participation, the bourgeois patriot was a subject. German subjects did demand reform from their monarchs, but they

did not declare themselves to be the nation, as the French *Assemblée nationale* did in May 1789.

Patriotism calmed down the demand for political reform, regarding the monarchies as the principal agent of reform. The doctrine of natural law as taught by German cameralism and 'state sciences' (*Staatswissenschaften*) at the leading universities of the time, Göttingen and Halle, led thus to the further empowerment of the state, and not of the middle classes or the people in general. Moreover, the rationality of the state comprised the rationality of the monarch. Obedience to the state therefore meant loyalty to the monarch, although not on the basis of his 'divine right'. The monarch was no longer separate (*absolutus*) from society, society being the object of his reign. Rather, he incorporated the rational ideal of society. His obligation was to serve justice. But this did not entail any participation on the part of the people. Enlightened policies that deserved the loyalty of the state's citizens involved a host of other things: population policy, poor relief, the fight against idleness and vagrancy, the promotion of agriculture, trade, industry and mining, supervision of the banking and credit sectors, domestic and foreign trade, control of discipline, education, security, and protection against threats such as fire and water.²⁷ Hence the obedience of the citizens to bureaucratic demands was not a free decision, but an absolutely necessary consequence of the rational system of good government.

Patriotism, therefore, did not serve oppositional, critical, or even revolutionary purposes. It favoured a passive attitude towards the state above an active one. Participation meant being part of the state, being its object, not its subject. Natural law jurisprudence did not foster an active sense of citizenship. It required the loyalty of subjects, not of active citizens. An active citizenry developed neither from enlightened nor from historical patriotism, but from the market and early capitalism. German enlightened authors did not include individual freedom in the concept of the nation. The people proper did not constitute a relevant field of politics. Rather, it was a field for politics.²⁸ Participation was understood as a patriotic virtue. Citizens were to engage *for* the state, not *in* state affairs. In Germany, cosmopolitan patriotism of all sorts empowered the state and its bureaucracy through its moral code and rhetoric. It was reform

²⁴ See Vierhaus, 'Patriotismus', pp. 23f.

²⁵ Eckhart Hellmuth, *Naturrechtsphilosophie und bürokratischer Werthorizont: Studien zur preußischen Geistes- und Sozialgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1985).

²⁶ 'Der Patriot betätigt sich auch in dem seiner Vorstellung konträren Staat so, als ob er in seinem Idealvaterland wäre.' Kaiser, *Pietismus und Patriotismus*, p. 226; Georg Schmidt, *Geschichte des Alten Reiches: Staat und Nation in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1999), p. 311.

²⁷ See Ulrich Scheuner, 'Die Staatszwecke und die Entwicklung der Verwaltung im deutschen Staat des 18. Jahrhunderts', in Gerd Kleinheyer (ed.), *Beiträge zur Rechtsgeschichte: Gedächtnisschrift Hermann Conrad* (Paderborn, 1979), pp. 467–89, at p. 485.

²⁸ See Bohlender, 'Metamorphosen des Gemeinwohls', pp. 263 and 267.

orientated and had a conservative tendency to expect reform from the monarchies. Patriotism did not run against the state or the monarchies. Unlike the political function of the natural law doctrine in Western societies, eudaemonism and welfare patriotism served as powerful tools for securing state control over society in Germany, not as an opposition ideology for human rights and an active citizenry against state supervision.²⁹

But this was not the whole story. Although cosmopolitan patriotism constructed a strong connection between state and society in Germany, this did not mean that the state possessed full sovereignty over society. On the contrary, sovereignty as one of the key concepts of politics was no longer reserved for the monarch as an individual. It was transferred to the state and was thereby transformed into state sovereignty, a process we can trace back to the seventeenth century. Indeed, it was not the sovereign power of the monarch that ruled over people, but rather the 'spirit' (*Geist, esprit*) as the totality of all relations within society. Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois* was widely read and commented on. It triggered a debate on patriotism in 1763. The question asked was: who could represent this totality, the monarch, a constitution, or a parliament? In late eighteenth-century German political culture, it was the monarch who represented this totality, but no longer necessarily so. Before he could govern, he himself had to obey the rules of this social totality. The result was a clear loss of sovereignty for the monarch as a person (*Entsouveränisierung politischer Macht*). He had lost his control over social communication in society, which had moved a step further towards autonomy.³⁰ 'Wenn Souveränität höchste Gewaltübung ist, so gebührt sie weder dem Kaiser noch dem Reich, sondern dem Gesetz' (If sovereignty is the highest use of force, then it is the preserve neither of the Emperor nor the Reich, but of the law) was one of the arguments which the German *Fürstenbund* used against the Emperor in Vienna during the 1780s. People owed loyalty not so much to the monarch or the Reich as to the law.³¹ A loss of sovereignty for the monarch as an individual meant a relative increase in importance for society. The abstract concept of political sovereignty corresponded to a more abstract understanding of society. In 1760 Johann Heinrich von Justi was aware of two 'oberste Grundgewalten' (highest

fundamental powers): one was the 'tätige oberste Gewalt, welche durch die Grundverfassungen des Staats eingeführt ist' (active highest power, which is introduced by the fundamental constitutions of the state); the other was the 'Grundgewalt des gesamten Volkes, aus welcher jene entsteht' (the fundamental power of the whole people, which gives rise to the former).³²

Communication, Patriotism, and Cosmopolitanism

How did society fit into this understanding of patriotism? The *Policeystaat* was enlightened and communication flourished. The general public of readers and writers was a force of its own. It became the subject of political and philosophical discourses. Johann Gottfried Herder was the theoretician of the public as a communicative network. By re-evaluating communication he integrated patriotism into a cosmopolitan worldview. Herder based his definition of nationhood and fatherland on communication and the public audience. He argued that the nation was a community of shared communication based on a common language. Language and communication could work as an integrative force, but communication was restricted to a certain linguistic group. While uniting a people, communication could also set a people apart from others. It could be denounced as a divisive rather than a unifying force. Herder did not subscribe to any kind of trans-linguistic universalism. The cosmopolitan Herder defended the socialising quality of specific languages. Linguistic prejudice thereby acquired a new meaning:

If inclinations and circles of happiness touch upon each other in any two nations, it is called prejudice! Mob behaviour! Limited nationalism! Prejudice is good, in its time, for it makes people happy. It brings peoples together at their centre point, sets them more firmly on their stem, makes them more flourishing in their manner, more passionate and also happier in their inclinations and purposes. The most unknowing, prejudiced nation is, in this respect, often the first: the age of foreign wishful thinking and flights of fancy already indicates illness, flatulence, unhealthy bloating, premonition of death!³³

²⁹ See Ernst Troeltsch, 'Naturrecht und Humanität in der Weltpolitik', in idem, *Schriften zur Politik und Kulturphilosophie (1918–1923)*, ed. Gangolf Hübinger (Berlin, 2002), pp. 493–512.

³⁰ See Bohlender, 'Metamorphosen des Gemeinwohls', p. 256.

³¹ See *Darstellung des Fürstenbundes* (Leipzig, 1787), pp. 102 and 110; Schmidt, *Geschichte des Alten Reiches*, p. 312.

³² Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, *Natur und Wesen der Staaten als die Quelle aller Regierungswissenschaften und Gesezze* (1760) (Mittau, 1771; reprint Aalen, 1969), pp. 99f.; Hans Boldt, 'Souveränität', in Reinhart Koselleck, Otto Brunner, and Werner Conze (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, 8 vols (Stuttgart, 1990), vol. 6, pp. 1–154, at p. 126.

³³ 'So jede zwei Nationen, deren Neigungen und Kreise der Glückseligkeit sich stoßen—man nennt Vorurteil! Pöbele! eingeschränkten Nationalismus! Das Vorurteil ist gut, zu seiner Zeit:

To our ears this itself sounds nationalist. How could Herder simultaneously defend national prejudice and subscribe to enlightened cosmopolitanism? Three different aspects explain this *coincidentia oppositorum*:

1. Herder was a pastor and his model for the socialising impact of communication was the Bible. In his answer to the question 'Do we still have the public of the [biblical] Israelites?' he had in mind the socialising quality of a divine revelation to all mankind:

The ties of tongue and ear create a public. . . . Anyone who was brought up in the same language, who learned to pour out his heart and soul in it belongs to the *people of this language*. . . . By means of language, a nation is brought up and educated, by means of language it learns to love order and honour, it becomes obedient, polite, sociable, famous, hard-working, and powerful. Anyone who despises the language of his nation dishonours its noblest public; he becomes the most dangerous murderer of its spirit, its internal and external fame, its inventions, its finer points of politeness and diligence.³⁴

Taking religious community-building through divine revelation as a model, he maintained the relevance of human communication *a fortiori*. If God unites a religious community through his word and divine revelation, then human communication is to follow this example and unite through communication. Language embodied more than just particular propositions; it communicated ideas and the 'soul' of a particular people.

2. His defence of the specific community reflected the intensification of social communication in Germany in the decades before the French Revolution, the founding of new universities, and the rise

denn es macht glücklich. Es drängt Völker zu ihrem Mittel-Punkte zusammen, macht sie fester auf ihrem Stamme, blühender in ihrer Art, brünstiger und also auch glückseliger in ihren Neigungen und Zwecken. Die unwissendste, vorurteilendste Nation ist in solchem Betracht oft die erste: das Zeitalter fremder Wunschwanderungen und ausländischer Hoffnungsfahrten ist schon Krankheit, Blähung, ungesunde Fülle, Ahnung des Todes!' Johann Gottfried Herder, *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit*, ed. Hans-Georg Gadamer (Frankfurt am Main, 1967), p. 46.

³⁴ 'Das Band der Zunge und des Ohrs knüpft ein Publikum. . . . Wer in derselben Sprache erzogen ward, wer sein Herz in sie schütten, seine Seele in ihr ausdrücken lernte, der gehört zum *Volk dieser Sprache*. . . . mittelst der Sprache wird eine Nation erzogen und gebildet, mittelst der Sprache wird sie Ordnung- und Ehrliebend, folgsam, gesittet, umgänglich, berühmt, fleißig und mächtig. Wer die Sprache seiner Nation verachtet, entehrt ihr edelstes Publikum; er wird ihres Geistes, ihres inneren und äußeren Ruhms, ihrer Erfindungen, ihrer feineren Sittlichkeit und Betriebsamkeit gefährlichster Mörder.' Johann Gottfried Herder, *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität*, Fünfte Sammlung, 57. Brief, in idem, *Werke in Zehn Bänden*, ed. Hans Dietrich Irmscher, 10 vols (Frankfurt am Main, 1991), vol. 7, pp. 304f.

of print capitalism that favoured stronger communicative bonds within a linguistic group. In the first half of the eighteenth century, only 10 per cent of all Germans read journals and pamphlets. By the end of the century this group had more than doubled in size. In 1800 the community of readers (and writers) comprised about 25 per cent of all Germans.³⁵ The rise of a general audience was triggered by the unprecedented growth in the publishing of books, journals, and newspapers. Around 1780, Prussia was said to be run by the king, Frederick II, and the publisher Friedrich Nicolai.³⁶ The rise of a reading audience and the growth of newspapers and a literate public was seen as a characteristic of the Enlightenment.

3. German patriotism shared the mutual inclusiveness of cosmopolitanism and patriotism with Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* (1748). Unlike others, Montesquieu linked the national character not only to climate and geography, but also to politics and the constitutional development of a people. For him a nation did not arise out of the unambiguous nature of its constitutional system (monarchy, aristocracy, democracy). Its constitution resulted from natural preconditions, such as climate and geography on the one hand, and historical characteristics, such as religion, dress, conditions of labour, property, and legislation on the other. Montesquieu's credo was that if a people was unique, it would develop its proper political constitution.³⁷

For more than a century the German elite had looked westwards. The German aristocracy had imitated French culture. Montesquieu, a French enlightened *philosophe*, taught that Enlightenment in constitutional affairs meant having a specific congruence between cultural and political affairs. Seen from this perspective, Germans had been wrong all

³⁵ See Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 1, p. 303.

³⁶ Horst Möller, *Aufklärung in Preußen: Der Verleger, Publizist und Geschichtsschreiber Friedrich Nicolai* (Berlin, 1974).

³⁷ See Charles de Secondat Baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, with D'Alembert's analysis of the work, translated from the French by Thomas Nugent (Littleton, CO, 1991); Voltaire, *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations et sur les principaux faits de l'histoire depuis Charlemagne jusqu'à Louis XIII* (1756) (Paris, 1963); Rudolf Vierhaus, 'Montesquieu in Deutschland: Zur Geschichte seiner Wirkung als politischer Schriftsteller im 18. Jahrhundert', in *Collegium Philosophicum: Studien. Essays in Honour of Joachim Ritter* (Basle, 1965), pp. 403–37; Conrad Wiedemann, 'Zwischen Nationalgeist und Kosmopolitismus: Über die Schwierigkeiten der deutschen Klassiker, einen Nationalhelden zu finden', *Aufklärung*, 4 (1989), 75–101, at 87ff.

along when they had adopted French culture and its absolutist political system. The French *esprit des lois* could not be the German one. True Enlightenment required not the imitation, but rather the emulation of the French path to national unity and identity. German thinkers learned from Montesquieu that German identity was not the same as French identity. What Germans had to learn from the French was to be autonomous and to have a specific identity.

Whereas 'prejudice' was traditionally seen as the opposite of 'autonomy', a new understanding of 'prejudice' was now coming about. Prejudice came to be seen as complementary to autonomy, and not as contradictory to it. Autonomy was achieved by a positive attitude towards particular aspects that set a people apart from others: history, culture, religion, climate, and geography. For Herder, nations were therefore 'inexpressible'. Their cultural autonomy justified the patriotic claim that they could not be imitated. They had a soul of their own and were inexplicably different. Herder became the prophet of cultural particularity. To the present day he is still the favourite national theoretician in the 'small' eastern European nations such as the Czech and Baltic nations. A native of the Baltic himself, Herder did not disparage the neighbouring Slavic culture, but praised it as a distinctive culture of its own. The defender of Prussian legislation Thomas Abbt and the philosopher Georg Friedrich Meier from Halle shared his positive attitude towards prejudice.³⁸ The same held true for the philosopher Johann Georg Hamann, whose defence of prejudice made him one of the founders of modern linguistics.³⁹ Hamann taught that autonomy and identity could be achieved only through communication—individual as well as collective. Hamann famously coined the phrase: 'Speak, that I may see thee!'⁴⁰

German reformers understood this cultural autonomy not as a necessary break with patriotic cosmopolitanism, but as a consequence of the enlightened principle of autonomy. Johann Joachim Winckelmann,

³⁸ See Georg Friedrich Meier, *Beyträge zu der Lehre von den Vorurtheilen des menschlichen Geschlechts* (Halle, 1766); Thomas Abbt, 'Über die Vorurtheile', in idem, *Vermischte Werke* (Stettin, 1780), vol. 4, pp. 135–88. This text was Abbt's answer to the literary competition on the prize question by the Patriotic Society in Basle in 1763: 'Finden sich dergleichen Vorurtheile, die Ehrerbietung verdienen, und die ein guter Bürger öffentlich anzugreifen sich ein Bedenken machen soll?'

³⁹ See Karl Menges, 'Vom Nationalgeist und seinen Keimern: Zur Vorurteilsapologetik bei Herder, Hamann und anderen "Patrioten"', in Helmut Scheuer (ed.), *Dichter und ihre Nation* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), pp. 103–20, at pp. 109f.

⁴⁰ Johann Georg Hamann, 'Aesthetica in Nuce: A Rhapsody in Cabalistic Prose (1762)', in M. Bernstein (ed.), *Classic and Romantic German Aesthetics* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 1–20, at p. 4.

Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, Johann Gottfried Herder, and Justus Möser articulated their desire for a specific German identity as an expression of the general enlightened principle of autonomy.⁴¹ Cultural self-determination was therefore a consequence of Enlightenment, and did not run contrary to it. Patriotic authors could point to Montesquieu himself for their patriotic inspiration. For Montesquieu, the spirit of liberty came out of the Teutonic forests.⁴²

This general reappraisal of prejudice and cultural particularity must be qualified. Not every German intellectual cherished prejudice. Friedrich Schiller, for instance, saw himself as living in an age of the 'supremacy of prejudice' which was responsible for the rise of sinister and dark personalities—quite the contrary of Enlightenment!⁴³ He was joined by the Gotha publisher Rudolf Zacharias Becker. Becker argued for a liberation from prejudice which endangered Enlightenment, just as Immanuel Kant did in his answer to the question 'What is Enlightenment?'⁴⁴

Intentions are not identical with implications and certainly cannot be identified with their impact. What had been driven by the enlightened impulse for cultural autonomy soon turned into a drive for superiority. This shift is associated with the works of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock.⁴⁵ His drama *Arminius* inaugurated a tradition of anti-French and anti-Roman poetry which explicitly heralded German liberty and 'German virtues' against foreign cultural dominance. Klopstock became the 'poet of the fatherland'. Liberty had turned xenophobic.

Along with the re-evaluation of the concepts of *patria* and 'nation' a new understanding of history developed. In particular, the French tradition from Descartes to Voltaire saw history as unreliable for any operation intended to result in individual and collective reason and responsibility. History could provide only probabilities, no certainties. 'Les vérités historiques ne sont que des probabilités.'⁴⁶ Contemporaries in the second half

⁴¹ See Wiedemann, 'Zwischen Nationalgeist und Kosmopolitismus', p. 87.

⁴² Montesquieu praises the British political system for its liberty. 'Si on veut lire l'admirable ouvrage de Tacite sur les mœurs des Germains, on verra que c'est d'eux que les Anglais ont tiré l'idée de leur gouvernement politique. Ce beau système a été trouvé dans les bois.' Charles Louis des Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, ed. Victor Goldschmid, 2 vols (Paris, 1979), vol. 1, p. 304.

⁴³ See Friedrich Schiller, *Briefe*, ed. Fritz Jonas (Stuttgart, 1893), vol. 3, p. 370.

⁴⁴ See Rudolf Zacharias Becker, *Versuch über die Aufklärung des Landmannes* (Dessau, 1785), pp. 5ff., 13ff., 17.

⁴⁵ See Harro Zimmermann, 'Vom Freiheitsdichter zum Nazi-Idol: Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock unter den Deutschen', in Scheuer (ed.), *Dichter und ihre Nation*, pp. 68–87.

⁴⁶ Voltaire, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris, 1879), vol. 20, p. 560.

of the eighteenth century increasingly disagreed and no longer saw history in terms of the polarity of 'absolutely sure versus likely', but as a contemporary narrative, a medium of communication. History was no longer dependent on the master narratives of the churches and the monarchies. It was a way of expressing cultural autonomy through the narration of a specific history. The longer a people was autonomous, the more it was connected with specific historical narratives.⁴⁷

The French Revolution and German Nationalism

What impact did the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars have on the relationship between the cultural nation and state patriotism? A realignment occurred under the impact of the French occupation and the military defeat of 1806. State authority now had to find new ways of countering French domination. Whereas state diplomacy had tried to use eighteenth-century negotiating mechanisms to contain military conflicts, public opinion now violently turned against the French occupation, although it had welcomed the Revolution in its early stages. Cultural patriotism thereby lost the cosmopolitan framework in which it had been embedded. The mobilisation efforts of the anti-Napoleonic wars loosened the ties between universal and patriotic commitment. The change from patriotism to nationalism went along with the transformation of the horizontal egalitarian universalism of the Old Reich into a vertical hierarchy of nations after 1800. Under the influence of twenty years of war, German nationalists now saw the German national character not as one among equals, but as higher than others.

The patriotism of the Old Reich had been futile in the anti-Napoleonic war of 1806. The year 1806 was considered Prussia's nineteenth-century *Urkatastrophe* (primal catastrophe). The commitment of enlightened and historical patriotism had not been honoured by the political authorities. Instead the philosophically buttressed state authority had been proven wrong on the battlefield. The result of enlightened patriotism and reform absolutism was defeat and occupation. The bureaucratic state had not delivered on its promise that had been embedded in natural law jurisprudence. After all, patriotism and nationalism were secular

endeavours and went along with secular ethics. Patriotism demanded the fulfilment of its promises for its own legitimation, whereas religious ethics did not require innerworldly fulfilment to justify its demands on the faithful.⁴⁸ Patriotic commitment had to be met by success—otherwise it would sooner or later lose its legitimation.

Germany's political culture displayed three ways of reacting to the failure of the state to live up to its citizens' patriotic expectations: resignation, radicalisation, and spiritualisation.⁴⁹ Disappointment at Germany's political affairs made several authors sceptical about the prospects of a German patriotism. For the Leipzig scholar and writer Johann Adam Bergk, patriotism could develop only through a common cause that brought people together by its 'dignity, importance and magnitude'. In fact, he did not see such a common cause.⁵⁰ Instead a philosophical territory, namely, that of pure reason and justice, became his homeland. Resignation could also turn spiritual. Since no German state and very few common institutions existed in the Old Reich, the nation was more than ever to be found in the cultural area. The language constituted Germanness, argued the philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte in his *Addresses to the German Nation*. 'Wherever a separate language is found, there a separate nation exists.'⁵¹ And he went so far as to argue that the German language made the Germans an *Urvolk* which had an obligation to teach others what a people should be like. Fichte called for a spiritual regeneration of the German people. That mixture of radicalisation and spiritualisation, as is all too well known, became the signature of early German nationalism after 1800. The radical nationalism of the anti-Napoleonic wars realigned society and the state. Where the political mechanisms of state politics did not deliver, highly moralised nationalism urged state officials (and the king!) to go to war. The next disappointment came when the civic engagement of the Wars of Liberation did not result

⁴⁸ Friedrich-Wilhelm Graf, 'Die Nation—von Gott "erfunden"? Kritische Randnotizen zum Theologiebedarf der historischen Nationalismusforschung', in Gerd Krumeich and Hartmut Lehmann (eds), *'Gott mit uns': Nation, Religion und Gewalt im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2000), pp. 285–317.

⁴⁹ See Vierhaus, 'Patriotismus', p. 24.

⁵⁰ Johann Adam Bergk, *Untersuchungen aus dem Natur-, Staats- und Völkerrecht* (Kronberg im Taunus, 1975; reprint 1st edn 1796); Vierhaus, 'Patriotismus', pp. 24f.

⁵¹ Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation* (Chicago, IL, 1922), p. 215. On Fichte's nationalism, see Margaret Canovan, *Nationhood and Political Theory* (Cheltenham, 1996), pp. 52ff.

⁴⁷ Reinhart Koselleck, 'Geschichte', in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Stuttgart, 1979), vol. 2, pp. 647–58.

in a constitution. That disappointment would later be essential for the next phase of nationalist radicalisation.⁵²

Moral Universalism and Nationalism after 1800

The years around 1800 witnessed a shift from cosmopolitan patriotism to modern nationalism. The French Revolution was a turning point in the history of cosmopolitanism, patriotism, and nationalism. It produced new semantic dichotomies, reversed older ones, reconfigured them, and added new experiences. The war and the Terror of 1793–4 changed the relationship between nationalism and cosmopolitanism. The revolutionaries had seen themselves, first, as representatives of sovereignty in general and as the first self-determined nation in modern history. This was the *post factum* legitimation for the French troops robbing pieces of art from all over Europe and transferring them to Paris. These paintings and sculptures, it was argued, should belong to mankind as embodied by the French nation, and not by other states under absolutist rule. This hierarchy between France and the other states was common to the early revolutionaries. On 23 August 1789 Rabaut Saint-Etienne declared: 'French nation, you are not here to follow the example of others but to set an example of your own.'⁵³

Second, the dichotomies of 'us' and 'them', of 'friend' and 'foe', had been propelled to omnipresence by the revolutionary war since 1792. The revolutionaries had welcomed writers and intellectuals from foreign countries and naturalised them. The former Rhenish baron Anarcharsis Cloots had been known in France as the 'orator of mankind', as a 'citoyen de l'humanité' and—as a prominent anticleric—'a personal enemy of God'.⁵⁴ Sympathisers of the revolution from abroad founded the Club of Foreign Patriots. In December 1791 Pierre Proli, a Belgian writer, issued the first pacifist newspaper, *Le Cosmopolite*. After France declared war on the central European monarchies on 20 April 1792, these foreigners soon became objects of suspicion. Their loyalty to the

Revolution was constantly under question. Cloots, who was fervently anticlerical, was accused of treason, jailed, and guillotined on 22 March 1794. Cosmopolitanism and xenophilia, prominent ideas at the beginning of the French Revolution, were proscribed. Frenchmen with ties to foreigners and foreign customs were refused certificates of good citizenship. Cosmopolitanism was now believed to hamper the war effort. Cosmopolitans were not considered citizens of a particular country unless they recognised a particular government. Under the pressure of war, the French government and its legislation were seen as expressions of the general will of the people.⁵⁵

The combination of state-centred patriotism and moral universalism did not fade away with the French Revolution or the demise of the Old Reich.⁵⁶ The particular and the universal were not opposites at the same level, but complementary notions at different levels. Although the French Revolution represented a break in cosmopolitan patriotism, the combination of the two had considerable influence in nineteenth-century political culture in Germany and beyond. The Freemasons were a case in point. Their lodges were the classic institutions of moral universalism and nationalism in the nineteenth century and later. They favoured a combination of universalist moralism and national particularism, when nationalism had overcome its particularist opponents and encountered internationalism as its new enemy. Nationalists turned anti-international, but at the same time steadfastly clung to universalism. Before 1914 German lodges held that 'it is possible and indeed essential to be a world citizen without being international'.⁵⁷

The nation-state itself was then endowed with a moral mission. According to Johann Caspar Bluntschli, one of the key figures in the nineteenth-century debate on nationalism, cultural nations stood for civilisation, for 'progress for individuals, who now obtain a share in a higher

⁵² This was one of Ernst-Rudolf Huber's central observations in his *Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte*. In his opinion Germany took the wrong turn in 1821 after all constitutional promises had been broken.

⁵³ Virginie Guiraudon, 'Cosmopolitanism and National Priority: Attitudes Towards Foreigners in France between 1789 and 1794', *History of European Ideas*, 13 (1991), 591–604, at 594.

⁵⁴ Gilda Pasetzky, 'Ein revolutionärer Utopist: Bemerkungen zu Roland Mortiers Anarcharsis Cloots—Biographie', *Francia*, 24 (1997), 205ff.

⁵⁵ See Guiraudon, 'Cosmopolitanism and National Priority', 591, 593, 595; article VI of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 26 August 1789 substantiated the distinction which the French Revolution drew between man and citizen.

⁵⁶ See Otto Kallscheuer and Claus Leggewie, 'Deutsche Kulturnation versus französische Staatsnation? Eine ideengeschichtliche Stichprobe', in Helmut Berding (ed.), *Nationales Bewußtsein und kollektive Identität: Studien zur Entwicklung des kollektiven Bewußtseins in der Neuzeit*, 3 vols (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), vol. 2, pp. 112–62, at p. 127. Montesquieu had a profound impact on Zimmermann and Abbt.

⁵⁷ *Hamburger Logenblatt*, 47 (1913/14), 50; quoted in Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, 'Nationalism and the Quest for Moral Universalism: German Freemasonry, 1860–1914', in Martin H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann (eds), *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 259–84, at p. 280.

cultural life and [for] progress for mankind at large, whose destiny is not the preservation of all barbarism but rather civilisation'.⁵⁸ Thus nation and nationalism found a new mission: the culturally civilised nation was to civilise the uncivilised. Civilisation as the heir of eighteenth-century moral universalism became a national project. Particularism and universalism could reinforce and supplement each other. 'Universalism and particularism endorse each other's defect in order to conceal their own; they are intimately tied to each other in their accomplice.'⁵⁹ Although universalism and particularism constitute formal opposites, as essential elements of nationalism they are 'bound to affect the other from the inside'.⁶⁰ These universal missions of the European nation-states could not coexist peacefully. Emanuel Geibel's famous line of 1861, 'And the German character may heal the world one day', turned into a battle-cry during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–1.⁶¹ The moral argument made modern nation-states fight even harder and more brutally in the nineteenth century. German Freemasons were convinced that the war against France in 1870–1 was 'basically about safeguarding Western civilisation, the triumph of justice, education, and humanity'. Conversely, the French Freemasons believed 'that the function of France in the World was to develop the idea of human progress and that to love, to serve, and, if need be, to die for France was to love, to serve, and to die for humanity'.⁶²

German historiography in particular embedded the ideas of cosmopolitanism and moral universalism into the nation-state. Liberal historians such as Friedrich Meinecke saw the specific nation-state not as opposed to the cosmopolitanism of the eighteenth century, but rather as incorporating universalism.⁶³ After 1800, the universalist background of pre-revolutionary patriotism was invested in a civilising mission and in history. Time immemorial became the field in which nations unfolded and

were constituted. National identities were now seen as historically embedded. They could be universalised on the time scale. Ernest Renan reminds us that 'historical error is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation'.⁶⁴ To activate the nation retrospectively was the job of historians. The underlying themes of most German master-narratives were the nation and the nation-state. Historians tended to be more national than their subject.

⁵⁸ Johann Caspar Bluntschli, 'Nation und Volk, Nationalitätsprinzip', in idem and Karl Brater (eds), *Deutsches Staatswörterbuch* (Stuttgart, 1862), vol. 7, pp. 152–60, at p. 156; Hoffmann, 'Nationalism and the Quest for Moral Universalism', p. 261.

⁵⁹ N. Sakai, 'Modernity and Its Critique: The Problem of Universalism and Particularism', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 87 (1988), 475ff., at 487.

⁶⁰ Étienne Balibar, 'Racism as Universalism', in idem, *Masses, Classes, and Ideas* (London, 1994), pp. 191–204, at p. 198.

⁶¹ Quoted in Hoffmann, 'Nationalism and the Quest for Moral Universalism', p. 261: 'Und es mag am deutschen Wesen einmal noch die Welt genesen.'

⁶² *Die Bauhütte*, 14 (1871), 41; Hoffmann, 'Nationalism and the Quest for Moral Universalism', pp. 274, 276.

⁶³ Friedrich Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat: Studien zur Genesis des deutschen Nationalstaates* (Munich, 1907).

⁶⁴ Ernest Renan, 'What is a Nation?', in Homi Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and Narration* (London, 1990), pp. 8–22, at p. 11.