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978-1-107-64287-4 - The Nationalities of Europe and the Growth of National Ideologies

H. Munro Chadwick

Frontmatter

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NATIONALITIES OF EUROPE

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TO MY WIFE  
NORA KERSHAW CHADWICK

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THE  
NATIONALITIES OF EUROPE  
AND  
THE GROWTH OF NATIONAL  
IDEOLOGIES

By

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CAMBRIDGE

*At the University Press*

1945

REPRINTED

1966

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**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107642874](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107642874)

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First published 1945

Reprinted 1966

First paperback edition 2014

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-1-107-64287-4 Paperback

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## PREFACE

THE question with which this book is concerned attracted little attention in this country until recently. There has been a general tendency, however, to regard nationalism as a kind of political disease which affects foreign nations and certain parts of our own islands—a disease which is due largely to economic causes, and capable of being cured by an improvement in economic conditions.

The events of the last few years have perhaps tended to cast some doubt upon this explanation of national movements and the remedy for them, as stated in this crude form. But on the whole they have probably strengthened the idea that nationalism is a disease. Has it not been responsible for the most brutal regime of which we have any record?

Yet it may be contended that this is a one-sided view. Nationalism is no doubt a vivifying and inspiring force. It makes for national unity and—when it is genuine, and not merely a cloak for political ambitions—it acts as a curb upon the selfish instincts of individuals, and of classes and professions. Its ugly side appears only when it is associated with aggression against neighbouring states, or with the coercion of alien or dissentient elements at home. And such aggression and coercion may of course arise from causes independent of nationalism.

I am not concerned, however, either to defend nationalism or to condemn it. My purpose is to call attention to the need for more knowledge, not only of national movements—their characteristics and causes, and the ideologies associated with them—but also, and more especially, for more knowledge of the nationalities themselves. I believe that the mistakes made by British policy in the past have been due in the main to ignorance of foreign peoples, including the non-British peoples within the empire. This ignorance and the negligence which accompanies it are themselves due in part to the fact that before the days of air warfare we believed our country to be comparatively safe from foreign aggression, but still more to an antiquated and defective system of education.

In democratic times it is essential that a knowledge of foreign peoples, including those of the empire, should be widespread and intimate. A knowledge of the political and economic conditions of the present day is of great value for certain purposes. But if we are to understand the characteristics and feelings, the ideologies, of

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## PREFACE

other peoples, we must pay attention also to their past history, both political and cultural, their institutions, and the conditions which gave rise to their special characteristics. It is for this purpose that I undertook the following brief survey of the peoples of Europe.

The survey has been limited to Europe, because I have not sufficient knowledge of other Continents. Similar movements, however, can be observed or traced in many parts of the world. Arab nationalism is now in process of taking shape before our eyes.

The reader may perhaps think that I have devoted too much space to the past, and especially to the far past. My reason for doing so is that the early history of Europe, apart from Greece and Rome, is little known in this country; its importance for the conditions and the ideologies of to-day has not been sufficiently recognized. An additional reason is that this side of the subject is more closely connected with the studies which have occupied my life.

It may also be observed that the 'present' conditions occasionally referred to, especially in Chapters I and IX, do not always correspond to the political situation which actually exists to-day. Since the book went to press, events have been moving very rapidly; and the difficulties which now attend publication give the author of a book of this kind little chance of keeping pace with them.

My thanks are due to the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press for undertaking the publication of the book, and to the staff for the care with which the work has been carried out. My friends Dr C. E. Wright and Mrs R. C. Wright have, as on previous occasions, most kindly read the proofs for me. For their generous help and kindly criticism I am very grateful. Above all, I am indebted to my wife, whose wide knowledge and willing help have constantly been at my disposal.

H. M. C.