

Chapter 1: Understandings of Nation and Nationalism

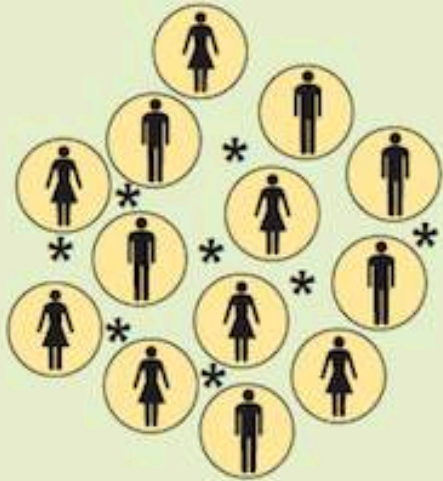
Social Studies 20-1

Ms.Gill

What is a nation?

- The concept of nation has many understandings. When we think of the term, we often define it as it relates to the people or citizens of a country. Although citizenship may be a key part of one understanding of nation, there are many other understandings of the concept.
- A nation can be defined as a group of people who feel connections to one another in some way. This feeling of belonging or connection is an important part of what it means to identify as a nation, as what unites people is often something intangible.

How Nations Can Develop

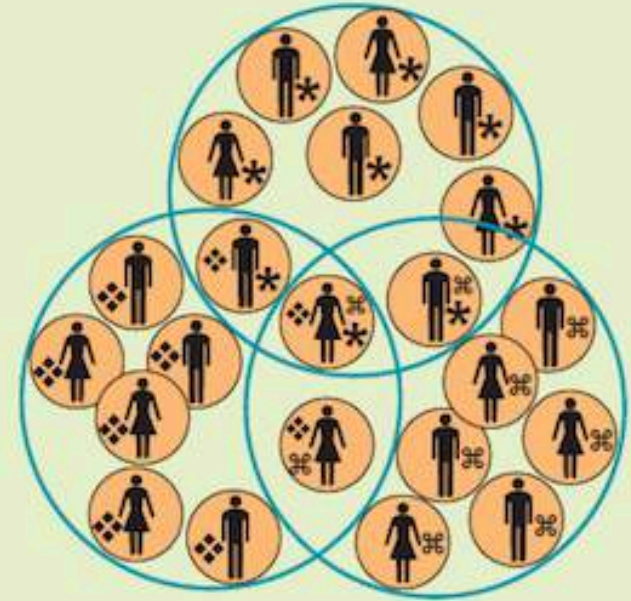


A group of people sense that they share something in common:

- ethnic background, ancestry, history
- cultural values and beliefs
- language(s) and communication
- religious or spiritual beliefs
- geography
- politics and citizenship



Some may internalize the feeling, which generates a sense of belonging and acceptance.



The people may then identify themselves as a **nation**.

Individuals may belong to multiple nations.

What is a nation?

- Nation, therefore, can be viewed as something found in the feelings and minds of people, an internal connection to others. One way to explore the many understandings of nation is by looking at what creates connections between individual members of a nation; for example, their shared experiences related to:
 - ethnic background and ancestry
 - cultural values and beliefs
 - history
 - language(s) and communication
 - religious or spiritual beliefs
 - geography
 - politics and citizenship
- There is often overlap between these shared experiences. For example, experiences related to ethnicity may include culture, language, and religion.

Nations can develop when a group of people sense that they share something in common and internalize that feeling. The resulting sense of belonging and acceptance may lead them to identify as a nation.



Critical Thinking...

- Nation can refer to your country or your connection to a group, and can be an important part of who you are.
- **What groups do you feel connected to? Can you think of any shared experiences you might have with the members of these groups?**



Perspectives

- Individuals will have different understandings of nation. That is to say, different people will place important on different aspects of their understanding of nation - for example...
- *“A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Only two things constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is the past ... One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of remembrances; the other is the consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold in common.”* - Ernest Renan (A 19th-century French philosopher)
- **What aspects of nation does Renan emphasize in his explanation of the concept?**

Perspectives

- *“Acadia needs to say what it is: that it is part of Canada, that it is part of America, that it is part of the international fraternity of Francophone nations, and that it therefore has its own place in the world—a place that is unique, just as each of the world’s peoples is unique.”* - Antonine Maillet (An Acadian writer)
- **What aspects of nation does Maillet emphasize in her explanation of the concept?**

What is the difference between a nation and a nation-state?

- Whereas the concept of nation relates to something in the **feelings and minds** of people or to an **internal connection** to others, the concept of nation-state is a more **concrete, external concept**. A nation-state is a **territory with internationally recognized boundaries** and a **politically organized** body of people under a **sovereign** government.
- Nation-states are considered sovereign because they are **recognized** by other nation-states as having the **right to govern themselves independently**. **Nation-states are often countries, and many different nations can exist within them.**

Nation-States

- Nation-states may or may not depend on people's linguistic, ethnic, or cultural connections. Citizens of a nation-state live in a politically defined territory that operates with common legal and moral beliefs. For example, some beliefs and values that connect the people of the nation-state of Canada are
 - a belief in democratic government
 - the protection of rights and freedoms described in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (for example, language rights, freedom of expression, and freedom of religion)
 - a belief in the principles of a mixed economy

Nation-States

- Belonging to a nation-state can also provide individuals with a sense of security because those who belong to the nation-state must abide by a common set of laws.
- Many nation-states around the world are made up of cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and other nations that live together within the same political framework. Examples include..
 - Belgium (the Flemish and Walloons)
 - China (the Han, Zhuang, Manchu, Tibetans, Mongols, and others)
- In geographically large countries with diverse nations— such as India, Russia, the People’s Republic of China, or Canada— why might the connections between members of the nation-state be challenged at certain times?

What is a nationalism?

- As with the concept of nation, there are diverse understandings of nationalism. Nationalism can be a belief in nation, a shared sense of kinship or belonging, or a shared consciousness of a collective identity. Generally speaking, it can be said that nationalism is the collective, shared sense of belonging of people who identify themselves as a nation.

Nation

Nation-State

Nationalism

- **Nation** = a group of people who feel connections to one another in some way = a group
- **Nation-State** = a territory with internationally recognized boundaries and a politically organized body of people under a sovereign government = a country
- **Nationalism** = the collective, shared sense of belonging of people who identify themselves as a nation = a feeling

Creating a Sense of Nationalism

- Geography, language, spirituality and religion, ethnicity, culture, and citizenship can all inspire a sense of nationalism among members of a nation. As you explore various factors that can create a sense of nationalism or belonging, consider the types of shared experiences that connect individual members of a nation and remember that **these experiences can overlap.**

Geography and Nationalism

- The land on which we live is a strong force in shaping our nations and in creating a sense of nationalism. A people's relationship to their land can play a key role in defining a nation and creating a sense of belonging among a group of people.
- Consider the the differences in connection to land of those individuals living in Alberta vs. in PEI



Geography and Nationalism

- In addition, natural features such as mountains, bodies of water, forests, plains, foothills, and valleys to which people feel a connection often inspire a sense of nationalism. Manmade places, such as Chichen Itza in Mexico, Stonehenge in England, and the Western Wall in Jerusalem, can also inspire nationalism and feelings of connection to the land.

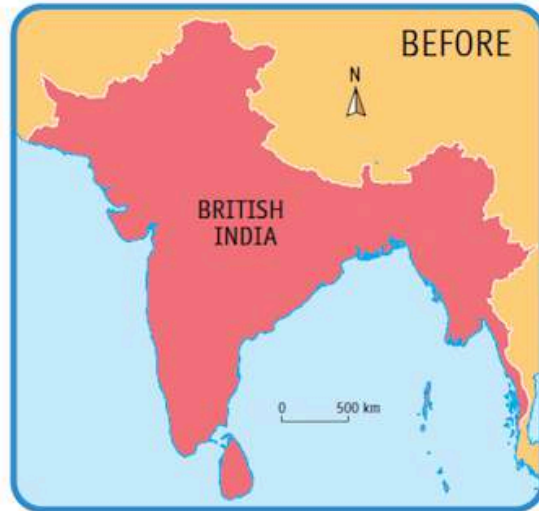


Geography and Nationalism – First Nations

- This is especially true for the people of Canada's First Nations.
- *“One of my Elders told me a situation. He said we can get rid of all the Dene people in Denendeh, we can all die off for some reason, but if there was another human being that came stumbling along and came to Denendeh, the environment would turn him into a Dene person. It's the environment and the land that makes us Dene people.”* – Roy Fabian



Geography and Nationalism – Ancestral Land



"I feel deeply that this land of India, that I was separated from because my relatives moved over, is my land as well. I feel deeply possessive of India, and I feel angry and bitter that my relatives had to move during Partition. I feel as if this country is a part of me as well as Pakistan ... For once I felt I was seeing a real part of my heritage. I felt connected to that place."

Geography isn't always limited only to current borders – what happens when territorial boundaries change? Does that connection change?

Language and Nationalism

- Through a common mode of communication, the people of a nation can share ideas, knowledge, and wisdom, and can make connections in a meaningful way. The language or languages of a nation can affect how it expresses itself and how its members communicate with one another.

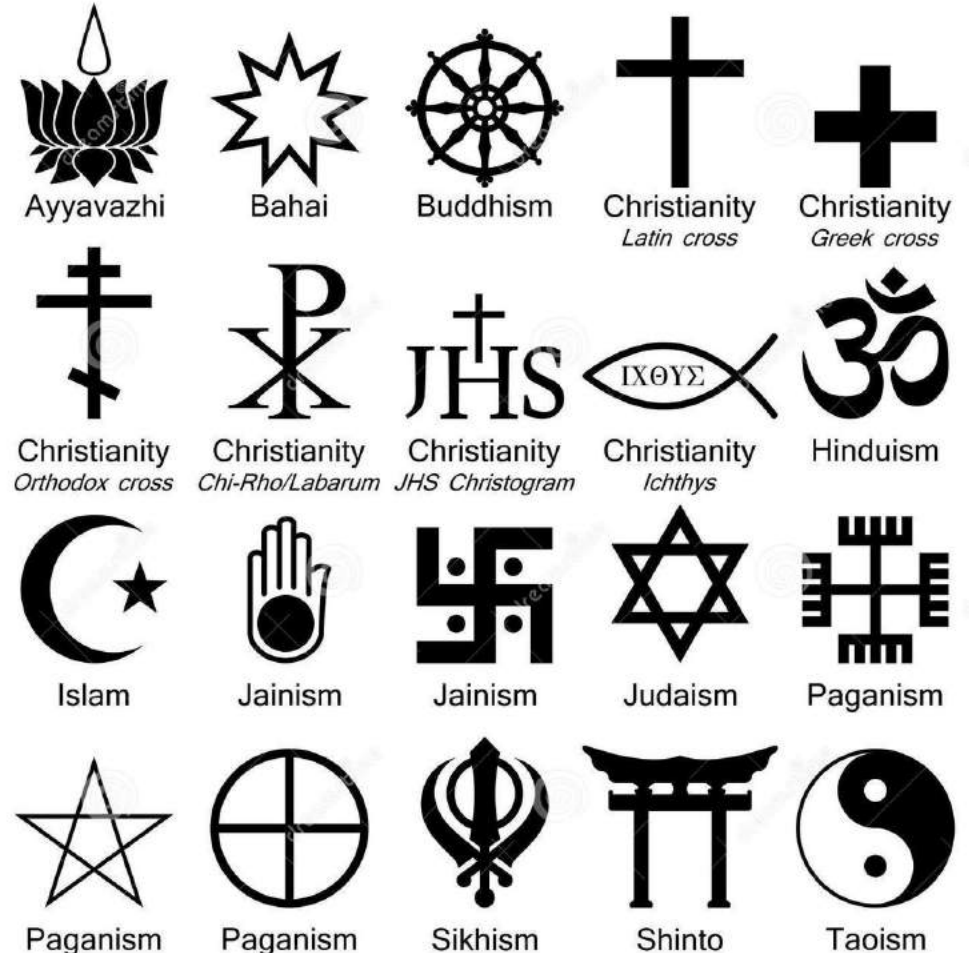


Spirituality, Religion, and Nationalism

- **Spirituality** is a very complex concept that can mean many different things depending on the beliefs, values, and culture of an individual or group of people. Beliefs in spirituality may center on finding the meaning of life, connecting with a spiritual being, or achieving individual potential.
- The **religious beliefs** of a group are based on understandings of one's place in the world and ideas about how the group will live. Members of the group share a system of beliefs and values based on those understandings.

Spirituality, Religion, and Nationalism

- These spiritual and religious understandings **can create a sense of nationalism by the sharing of common systems of beliefs and traditions among members of a group.** Spirituality and religion can be separate understandings for some individuals, while others may express spirituality and live by a religious belief system.



Ethnic Ties and Nationalism

- Members of a nation may share ethnic ties such as ancestry, characteristics, family ties, history, and language, as well as cultural values, beliefs, and traditions. Shared ethnic ties can create a sense of belonging or nationalism among the people of a nation because of their shared experiences. People may also feel connected due to a shared sense of pride or loyalty to an ethnicity.
- Many nation-states are composed of people of various ethnicities – for example, Canada.. This is due to migration as well as to the fact that political boundaries sometimes divide territories in which nations live.
 - For example, think back to SS10 when you learned about the *Scramble for Africa, Imperialism, and Colonialism*. In Africa, where the traditional lands of many ethnic nations were divided between several nation-states, many ethnic nations live within the same territory. The nation-state of Chad, for example, includes over 200 distinct ethnic groups.

Culture and Nationalism

- Culture is the unwritten way of knowing, being, and acting among the people of a nation based on their shared traditions, beliefs, and values.
- Shared cultural experiences can shape a person's identity. Individuals often identify with a variety of cultures; for example, those associated with their ethnicity, nation-state, language, region, or community.
- Culture can inspire a sense of nationalism among members of a nation through such things as shared values, beliefs, traditions, ways of life, oral stories, history, food, clothing, arts, TV, and film. Cultural representations can unite people by expressing the shared experiences of the nation.
- **Can you think of examples of culture in our school? How about in our country?**

Culture and Nationalism – Food

- Food can represent important beliefs and values associated with a culture, and the traditions related to preparing and eating particular foods can generate a sense of belonging and connection among the people of a nation.
- Do you share cultural experiences related to food with other people?



Citizenship and Nationalism

- Citizenship refers to the membership and participation of individuals in a political community, most times a nation-state. The citizenship of the people of a nation-state creates a sense of belonging in a very tangible way, through legal documentation such as laws, charters, passports, and birth certificates. The type of participation by citizens depends on the nation-state, but can include:

- paying taxes
- obeying the laws of the country
- serving in the country's armed forces
- voting in elections
- respecting the rights of others
- defending one's own rights and the rights of others



Citizenship vs Patriotism

A sense of nationalism inspired by the citizenship of a people is often confused with the concept of patriotism. **Patriotism is a love for a nation or nation-state, and relates to a pride in that nation or nation-state's culture and achievements.** Patriotism may also involve love and respect for national symbols, such as flags, landmarks, monuments, and cities. Some forms of patriotism involve the individual placing the interests of the nation or nation-state above his or her own personal or group interests.



Chapter 1 Review

- What is a nation?
 - What are different shared experiences of nation?
 - Be able to identify different perspectives of nation
- What is a nation-state?
 - What are some examples of nation-states?
- What is nationalism?
 - What factors can create a sense of nationalism?
 - Provide a definition and example for each factor
 - What is the difference between citizenship and patriotism?
- **What nations are you a part of?**