



# **Principles of Political Science**

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8

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# Nationalism

- What is a nation?
- The difficulty of defining the term 'nation' springs from the fact that all nations comprise a mixture of objective and subjective features, a blend of cultural and political characteristics.

# What is a nation?

- In objective terms, nations are cultural entities: groups of people who speak the same language, have the same religion, are bound by a shared past, and so on.
- nations can only be defined subjectively by their members. In the final analysis, the nation is a psycho-political construct. What sets a nation apart from any other group or collectivity is that its members regard themselves as a nation. (Andrew Heywood, 2002, 107)

# Nations as cultural communities

- The difficulty of defining the term 'nation' springs from the fact that all nations comprise a mixture of objective and subjective features, a blend of cultural and political characteristics. In objective terms, nations are cultural entities: groups of people who speak the same language, have the same religion, are bound by a shared past, and so on. Such factors undoubtedly shape the politics of nationalism. (Andrew Heywood, 2002, 107)

# Nations as political communities

- The idea that nations are political, not ethnic, communities has been supported by a number of theories of nationalism. Eric Hobsbawm (1983), for instance, highlighted the degree to which nations are 'invented traditions'. Rather than accepting that modern nations have developed out of long-established ethnic communities, Hobsbawm argued that a belief in historical continuity and cultural purity was invariably a myth, and, what is more, a myth created by nationalism itself. In this view, nationalism creates nations, not the other way round. (Andrew Heywood, 2002, 109)



# Varieties of nationalism

- Liberal nationalism
- Conservative nationalism
- Expansionist nationalism
- Anticolonial nationalism

# Other ideological traditions

- Fascism
- Anarchism
- Feminism
- Environmentalism
- Religious fundamentalism