

ROBERT AUTY MEMORIAL LECTURE
(Thank-Offering to Britain Fund)

LANGUAGE AND NATIONAL
CONSCIOUSNESS

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I AM deeply moved and honoured to be invited to give this lecture in memory of Robert Auty, a fine scholar and a good man, who was also my friend. As many of you know, he began his scholarly career as a Germanist, completed a doctor's degree at Münster University, got to know Germany and its people well, and played an active part in saving German scholars of Jewish faith from Hitlerian persecution. In the course of these activities he got to know Czechoslovakia, and the emphasis of his intellectual activities then moved from the Germanic to the Slav languages. He did not confine himself even to these, for during his post-war travels and studies he acquired a good knowledge not only of the relatively easily learned Romanian but also of the much more difficult Hungarian and Estonian.

I first met him, I think, in Prague just after the war, and common interests brought us together from time to time in his Cambridge years. In 1962 he was appointed Professor of Comparative Slavonic Philology at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, thus becoming my immediate colleague. I am bound to say that I look back, as to my halcyon days, to the years when he was there, and if it is not presumptuous to say so, to a kind of intellectual partnership which developed between us, and which meant a great deal to me.

Let me just mention two occasions, both in 1966, after he had left the School. One was our joint participation in a conference held not far from Bratislava on the Slovak linguist and political leader Ludovít Štúr, and the other was at the celebration of the centenary of the Yugoslav Academy in Zagreb. On the first occasion he had to make a speech in Slovak, and on the second I in Croatian. His was certainly excellent.

However, good things come to an end. Already in 1965,

Robert Auty was appointed to the Chair of Slavonic Philology in Oxford. His years with us at the School turned out to be only a mid-way pause in a pilgrimage from his old university to mine, where he soon won the same admiration and affection as he enjoyed wherever he went.

My subject of today was of great importance to us both, to him as a professional linguist seriously interested in history, and to me as a historian who has long dabbled in languages. Auty stressed the connection between the two disciplines in his inaugural lecture in London in 1963. Let me quote his words: 'If language is the supremely characteristic human attribute and thus merits the attention of an independent branch of scientific study, languages are intimately bound up with human societies, in particular national societies, and cannot be studied in isolation from the history of those societies.'¹ This is also my own view. The history of language is not just a subject for philologists, but forms a very important part of social history, and one which seems to me to be relatively neglected by most historians. Specialist historians of language seem to keep to themselves, and their problems to be ignored by other historians—whether social, economic, political, demographic, cliometric, or any of the other numerous sub-disciplines into which they divide themselves. I may perhaps be exaggerating, but of this at least I am strongly convinced, that there ought to be closer and more frequent co-operation on the middle ground between language and history, more putting of questions from one side to the other, than there is today.

The expression 'national consciousness' requires some explanation. Others may prefer a different terminology, but these seem to me the best words to describe a collective state of mind, a belief by members of a community that they, and others like them, form a single nation. The community of the nationally conscious may at one stage be much smaller than the community to which they ascribe the quality of nation. It is one of the aims of the nationally conscious élite to spread their consciousness downwards among all those who possess the characteristics—cultural, political, territorial, or other—which in their view constitute the nation. This is a political task, to be pursued until the nationally conscious are co-extensive with the whole population concerned. The aim can only be achieved by the creation of a nationalist movement.

We thus have three different concepts: national consciousness, nation and nationalism, and it is important not to confuse them with each other. Nationalism is a movement designed to further

¹ Printed in *Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 42, p. 272.

the interests of the nation, and also a doctrine about these interests. The nation is a community which either shares a national consciousness or accepts the political leadership of persons who have such consciousness. National consciousness is a state of mind. Not all members of the community, which the nationally conscious regard as a nation, need share this feeling; and not all nationally conscious persons need be nationalists. Whether they are or not will depend on the political and economic circumstances of the place and time.

The formation of national consciousness is a historical process, which may be protracted and unplanned, or short and artificial. Examples of both types abound. In those which I prefer to call the old continuous nations, a specific culture, way of life, sense of belonging to each other, grew gradually out of historical experience. No one took a decision to form these peoples into nations—though in periods of crisis or external danger appeals were made to their patriotism. The two most obvious examples of slow unplanned growth of national consciousness are the English and the French.

Sometimes a limited period of extreme danger and effort may transform an incipient national consciousness and push it in an unexpected direction. A specific national culture developed in the late Middle Ages in the Low Countries, but the religious divisions, the long struggle against Spain, the partition of the Netherlands by war, and the growth of the world-wide sea-borne trade and naval power of the northern provinces combined to create a Dutch nation, from which the southerners were excluded, and later excluded themselves.

However, in modern times the process of formation of national consciousness has been widespread, premeditated and much shorter. The proliferation of nationally conscious élites may in general terms be traced to the spread, in Central and Eastern Europe and then in other parts of the world, of the ideas of the European Enlightenment; and the French Revolution and Napoleonic era greatly stimulated the growth of national movements and doctrines.

Although we know a great deal about the history of nationalist movements, there is still plenty of confused thought, and I should like to hope that I could make some small contribution to clarifying it. First, a few words about the relation between nation and state. One of the main themes of late medieval and early modern history is, as we all well know, the rise of the sovereign state, whose ruler ignored the authority, at least nominally

recognized in earlier times, of those two universal powers, the Emperor and the Pope. Unfortunately, in English-speaking countries the rise of the sovereign state is often erroneously and harmfully described as the rise of the nation state. The error is harmful because these two things are not the same, and to equate the one with the other can lead to serious obfuscation of political thinking.

Some sovereign states were indeed nation states, in the sense that national consciousness grew and spread together with the rise of the state. The two most conspicuous examples were France and England. Beyond the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees this was not the case. Sovereign states indeed arose, but either they were multi-national or they encompassed much less than a whole nation. In these lands a different pattern occurred. Comparatively small cultural élites began to think of themselves, and of larger communities which they identified with their aspirations, as nations; they spread this national consciousness to increasing numbers of their compatriots; they convinced themselves, and increasing numbers of their compatriots, that such sufferings and discontents as afflicted them were due to the fact that they were ruled by foreigners, and would disappear when the foreigners went; and created nationalist movements, which in most cases resulted in the creation of more and more sovereign states. Thus we have two different patterns: for the old nations the state came first, then national consciousness, and then the nation; for the newer nations first came national consciousness, then the nation and the nationalist movement, and last the state. My subject today is the nation, and national consciousness, not nationalism or nationalist movements—though from time to time I shall be obliged to refer to the last too.

During the earlier stages of the process, the nationally conscious are a small minority, but they consider themselves to be the nation. The question, how large must the minority be in order that one may say that a nation exists, is unanswerable. It would be convenient if these things could be quantified, if we could say for example that if ten per cent of the population feel themselves to be a nation, then that nation exists, but that if only five per cent feel that way, it does not. But in fact such statements would be meaningless. Even in long established nations large numbers may long remain unaffected by national consciousness. There certainly was a French nation already in the time of Richelieu; but in his brilliant book *Peasants into Frenchmen*¹ Eugene Weber gives massive

¹ Chatto and Windus, 1977.

evidence from local archives to show that as late as 1870 the word Frenchman was meaningless to hundreds of thousands of persons living south of the Loire. The French nation existed in the south, but it was confined to the towns: the peasants were béarnais or auvergnats or whatever.

Another question with no precise answer is: what are the objective differences between national consciousness and tribal, or other nondescript regional solidarity? My own reply would be that the difference is not objective but subjective. A nationally conscious élite consists of persons who claim that they are a nation, that their cultural identity and solidarity are above the tribal or regional level. But who can decide whether they are right or not? Perhaps the only real test is whether or not they are able to mobilize their compatriots into an effective nationalist movement.

I have not hitherto used the adjective ethnic or the noun ethnies, both much used by sociologists to describe cultural communities. I doubt whether these words are really very helpful. Ethnies usually turn out to be more precisely identifiable units, such as religious groups, language groups, persons with common folklore and customs or the like. Wouldn't it be simpler to call them such? But whatever terminology we use, the problem remains, both in history and in the present. How does it come about that some of these cultural communities produce from their midst a nationally conscious élite, while others do not?

This question I cannot answer in general terms. I can say only that there are certain characteristics which often play a part in the process, such as language, religion, history, geographical features, and economic interests. I propose to devote myself today to the operation of only one of these, to the connection between language and national consciousness. This is not because I wish to discount the other factors, but because it was in the study of this connection, and in the region in which it can best be studied—Central and Eastern Europe—that my intellectual interests came close to those of Robert Auty, whom we are remembering today. Central and Eastern Europe will be the starting point, and the subject of the main part, of what I have to say today.

First I must introduce one more concept which is of importance to the subject. This is what I call 'historical mythology', a mixture of truth and fantasy, a simplified version of a nation's historical past offered to children in the home and in the school. Every nation has such a mythology, even the old continuous nations whose professional historians have long been accustomed to go a good deal more deeply into historical evidence. To take a few

examples, the English have King Alfred and the cakes, the Scots King Robert and the spider, the French St. Louis dispensing justice as he sat under the oak tree. To old nations, secure in their nationhood, their mythologies are not important; they are children's tales once learnt and then put out of mind. To new nations, recently emancipated and still threatened by powerful neighbours, they are very important, and they matter not just to intellectuals but to working men and women in factory and field.

Of the nations who live to the east of the Germans and Italians two may be described as old and continuous as regards national consciousness, though in both cases the continuity of their state was broken for long periods. These are the Poles and the Hungarians. In both, the bearers of national identity were the members of one legally defined class, the nobility, which in both cases formed, by comparison with West European societies, a rather large proportion of the population. In both cases also the national consciousness of the nobility was formed, as in Western Europe, over a long period, concomitant with the establishment of the medieval Polish and Hungarian states. During this process language too played its part, especially in Poland, where already in the sixteenth century there was a flourishing secular literature, and Polish culture attracted and absorbed many whose first language had been Ukrainian or Belorussian or Lithuanian. But in neither case can one say that language was the dominant factor. More important was religion. Both Poland and Hungary were Catholic countries, and in both Protestantism in its Calvinist form made rapid progress among the nobility. However, whereas the Counter-Reformation restored the Catholic faith among the nobility of Poland, with an almost complete absence of persecution, unique in Europe, the Hungarian nobility of Transylvania remained largely Calvinist, perhaps above all because Ottoman suzerainty obstructed the operation of the Counter-Reformation. Catholicism united the Poles in contrast to their Prussian and Russian neighbours, but Hungarians were divided by religion. After the partition of Hungary from 1526, and of Poland from 1795, there could be no doubt of the survival of both Hungarian and Polish national consciousness, but the development of nationalism, of the movement for independence and unity, raised new problems.

The history of five other peoples of the region contained periods of medieval independent kingdoms and flourishing culture, but had then been interrupted by conquest or by subjection to vassal status. In the process the former political class had been largely

destroyed or assimilated, and the peasant majorities retained only semi-mythical folk memories. Thus not only continuity of the state (as in the case of Poles and Hungarians) but continuity of national consciousness was interrupted. These five were Czechs, Croats, Serbs, Romanians, and Bulgarians. When small nationally conscious élites began to appear among them from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, their main efforts were directed to developing language and rewriting history. Two other peoples had no substantial history at all as independent communities. These were the Slovaks and Slovenes, similar names but quite different peoples, the one inhabiting the southern slopes of the north-western Carpathians, the other living between the south-eastern Alps and the head of the Adriatic.

The decisive factor in what became known as the national revivals is the appearance of the new cultural élites. The rise of national consciousness is the result of a social process. The social and cultural processes cannot be neatly separated, whatever doctrinaires may wish.

The story really begins with the development of a modern school system in the Habsburg Monarchy under Maria Theresa and Joseph II. The first to gain from this were the Czechs. In the mid-eighteenth century, Czech, once the language of the rulers and nobility of Bohemia before 1620, was spoken by the peasants and was unknown to the majority of the nobility. The language of government, business, and of intellectual intercourse was German. With the growth of the school system, increasing numbers of Czech-speaking peasant children became educated, and began to be influenced by the ideas of the European Enlightenment, which of course reached them in German. To develop Czech so that it could express modern ideas, to make these ideas known to the people, and to serve their people, became the aim of these pupils of the Enlightenment. And their people meant those who spoke their language. The language-group was made the basis of the nation. In place of the old Bohemian nation of before 1620, which had had two languages, there now appeared two nations in Bohemia, distinguished from each other by language, the Czechs and the Germans. In this process the key figure is Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829) whose researches produced the first systematic Czech grammar, as well as a history of the Czech language and early literature. A second key figure was the historian František Palacký (1798–1876), who reinterpreted Bohemian history, and especially the Hussite wars, stressing the struggles of Slavs against Germans. It is a historical irony, not

untypical of Habsburg culture, that both men—the founder of the modern Czech literary language and the creator of the Czech historical mythology—were enabled to achieve scholarly eminence thanks to material support received from German-speaking noble patrons.

The Slovaks were descended from the same distant ancestors as the Czechs, but for nine hundred years they had been ruled by Hungarian kings and landowners. In the late eighteenth century educated Slovaks were extremely few, confined to a section of the Catholic priesthood and a higher proportion of the less numerous Lutheran pastors. Slovak historians in recent times have been able, by studying the records of two societies with a few score members, one Catholic and one Protestant, and then of the Association of Lovers of Slovak Speech and Literature, founded in 1834, which had both Catholic and Protestant members, to trace fairly precisely the emergence of a Slovak intellectual élite. For these pioneers of national consciousness the language was far the most important issue. Some favoured the adoption of the language of the Czech Bible, others the dialect of the Vah valley in western Slovakia, and others the dialect of the central county of Turec. It was the third which prevailed, thanks to the efforts of the writer and schoolmaster Ludevít Štúr. On this basis a standardized literary Slovak language was formed, through the publication of books and especially of a periodical press whose readers grew steadily more numerous. It was defence of this language, and insistence on its use for public and private business in Slovakia first against the Hungarians in the last years of the Habsburg Monarchy, and then against the Czechs in the first Czechoslovak Republic, which formed the basis of modern Slovak nationalism.

Competition between different dialects was also a problem in the South Slav lands. There were three main dialects, known by the respective words used for the pronoun 'what'. The one man who more than any other single person deserves the credit for establishing one of these (the *štokaški* version) as the literary Serbo-Croatian language was Vuk Karadžić, who for many years studied popular speech and collected many of the epic poems, derived from the period of the Turkish conquest, which had been preserved by oral tradition. This Serbo-Croatian language was accepted and developed both within the Habsburg Monarchy and in the Kingdom of Serbia. However, though there was one language there were two historical mythologies, associated with the separate medieval kingdoms of Croatia and Serbia, the first

Catholic and the second Orthodox. Thus, though there was one language there were two nations, whose relations with each other in most of the nineteenth and still more the twentieth century were seldom good and sometimes murderous. As in the case of Anglo-Irish relations, the identifying mark of membership of either nation was religious, but the national conflicts were not, at least in modern times, mainly about religion.

The Serbo-Croat language was not accepted by the Slovenes of the Alpine valleys, who developed into a distinct nation. There again a grammarian and philologist was the key figure, Jernej Kopitar, active in the first decades of the nineteenth century. It was not until the middle of the century that there emerged, from competition between the dialects of Carniola, Carinthia and Styria, a standardized literary language.¹ The struggle for the assertion of Slovene national identity, in the next half century, was essentially fought out in the village church and village school, by priests and schoolmasters, against the claims for supremacy of the two great European languages of culture between whose territory the Slovenes were wedged—German and Italian.

In the early nineteenth century the pioneers of these languages were mostly inclined to the belief that there was one single language, one single nation, to which they all belonged, the Slav. In this view, there were a number of developed literary dialects, but there would eventually be one overarching Slav language. The reasons for this belief were not so much linguistic as political and psychological. Small nations, threatened by much bigger ones—Germans, Italians, Turks, Hungarians—needed a protector, and they imagined that they had found one in the most numerous nation of Slav speech and its powerful state—Russia. Pan Slavism was not a Russian but a west Slav invention. The small nations cast the Russians in the saviour role. The only large west Slav nation, the Poles, claimed the role for themselves and argued that the Russians were not Slavs at all but Tatars or Finns who had learnt a Slav tongue. Be that as it may, the history of the last 150 years has clearly shown that Pan Slavism is an illusion, and has shown the Russians to be rather different from the image created of them. The separate languages, and very distinct national cultures of Czechs, Poles, Slovaks, Croats, Slovenes, Serbs, and Bulgarians remain.

The combination of language and historical mythology may also be seen in the case of the Romanians. The Romanian

¹ See Robert Auty, 'The formation of the Slovene literary language against the background of the Slavonic national revival' in *SEER*, vol. 41, pp. 391–402.

language is Latin in structure and predominantly in vocabulary, though many Slav words have been brought into it—on a scale roughly comparable with the extent of French words in English—and some Greek, Hungarian and Turkish too. Since the earliest times for which concrete information is available, Romanians have formed a majority of the population in three principalities—Moldavia, Wallachia, and Transylvania. The first two were ruled by indigenous princes in the fifteenth century. Their successors became vassals of the Ottoman empire but remained sovereign in their territory until the eighteenth century, when Greeks were appointed to rule them. By this time Romanian national consciousness had grown very dim, and was confined to a very small number. The third principality, Transylvania, was ruled by Hungarians, first by the kings and after 1526 by princes who were vassals of the Sultan until 1699, after which Transylvania became a province of the Habsburg Monarchy. Romanians, unlike Hungarians and Germans, had no part in the representative institutions of Transylvania.

Modern Romanian nationalist doctrine was first formulated in Transylvania in the eighteenth century. The establishment by the Habsburg emperor Leopold I of a Uniate Church, into which the Romanian Orthodox church was officially merged, recognizing the authority of the Pope, made it possible for Romanians to have greater access to education. A Uniate bishop, Inocentiu Micu, who had studied in Rome, maintained that the Transylvanian Romanians were the direct descendants of the legions of the Roman Empire and the true indigenous people of the country. In the second half of the century a number of works on this subject were published. Transylvanian Romanians, being better educated than the Romanians of Moldavia and Wallachia, also made an important contribution to the school system of those lands. After the Greek rebellion of Ypsilanti in 1821, the Turks encouraged Romanian national feeling in opposition to Greek. Finally, as a result of the Crimean War, Moldavia and Wallachia became genuinely self-governing, were united with each other, and from 1866 were known as the Kingdom of Romania. In 1918, after the defeat and disintegration of Austria-Hungary, Transylvania and other territory to the west and south-west of it were united with Romania.

In the Romanian nationalist movement in the nineteenth century, and right up to the present, the historical mythology of descent from the Romans, and from the Dacians whom the Romans conquered, has played a central part, and it is firmly

based on the fact of the Latin character of the language. Whether Latin-speaking people have remained continuously in the Romanian lands, or on the contrary as the Hungarians claim, only came there in the fourteenth century, cannot be proved or disproved, though it seems likely that there was an element of continuity, even if the biological origins of the modern Romanian nation certainly include Slav, Turkish, Hungarian, Greek, and other constituents. But whatever the truth of that period—which we shall never know—it remains certain that the development of Romanian national consciousness, and the nationalist movement to which it gave rise, was based on a historical mythology founded on language.

In the original formation of Hungarian national consciousness I argued that language played only a secondary role. However, at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the situation was transformed. This was a period of great achievement in the study and the expansion of the language and the flowering of literature. Here the lexicographer and philologist Nicholas Revai and the writer Francis Kazinczy (1759–1831) were the leading figures.¹ In the following years Hungarians insisted that the rejuvenated Hungarian language should replace Latin as the language of official business and this was achieved in the 1830s and 1840s. Imperceptibly the meaning of the concept of Hungarian nation changed. In place of the traditional definition by class—only members of the nobility being included in the nation—arose a new definition by language. The Hungarian nation, in the view of the democrats who were gaining ground, and who came to power briefly in the revolution of 1848, consisted of all persons, whatever their class, whose language was Hungarian and who called themselves Hungarian (*Magyar*). However, half the population consisted of persons of a language other than Hungarian, and among these people—mainly Romanians, Slovaks, Serbs, and Ukrainians—the number of the nationally conscious was steadily increasing. After 1867, when Hungary obtained a great measure of sovereignty over its internal affairs, it became the policy of Hungarian governments, both by inducements and career opportunities and by administrative pressure, to turn Romanians, Slovaks, and Serbs into Hungarians. This policy, known as Magyarization, was pursued especially in the schools; and the extremely restricted parliamentary franchise made it difficult for the non-Magyars to defend their interests. The

¹ See article by G. F. Cushing, 'The birth of national literature in Hungary', in *SEER*, vol. 38, no. 91 (June 1960).

policy had some success, because Magyar culture certainly had its attractions, but it brought diminishing returns. Romanian, Slovak and Serbian nationalism grew, and in 1919 Greater Hungary disintegrated.

The pattern which I have described, of national consciousness based on a combination of language and historical mythology, with the first of these predominant, can be found also in many of the non-Russian peoples of the European portion of the Russian/Soviet empire, of whom Ukrainians, Estonians, Latvians, and Georgians may be mentioned as examples. Another similarity between Russian and Central European experience is the attempt of rulers to impose their language on other peoples. The policy known as Russification closely resembled the Hungarian policy of Magyarization.

With this pattern in mind, we may look at some other regions and in some cases other epochs, in which language played a less dominant, though in most cases a significant role in the formation of national consciousness. In Germany and Italy we see the same combination of language and historical mythology, but with the second probably more important than the first. In Western Europe language played its part, but the main factor was the development of the centralized monarchical state, which process of course had very important economic aspects. In the new overseas nations of America economics was still more important, and language features as an instrument for nation-building after independent statehood has been won. In the central and western Muslim lands, language and historical mythology are equalled, or more probably surpassed, in importance by the pervasive influence of Islam, in which the sacred and the secular are not, as in Christendom, sharply separated. In the new states of Africa it is perhaps arguable that the phenomenon of national consciousness has hardly appeared at all.

The examples which I shall now give are but a random selection, and are intended only to provide contrasts and to stimulate thought.

The formation of national consciousness in France seems to me to be connected above all with the rise of an effective central monarchical power, a process rather slower than the old clichés would have it, since not even Louis XIV or Napoleon succeeded in centralizing power to the extent that earlier historical clichés assumed. In the process of centralization language undoubtedly played its part. One thinks of the concern of the Académie Française, founded by Richelieu, for the creation of a uniform

language, and the encouragement given by both monarchical and republican rulers to French culture, right up to our own day. Even so, Weber shows that the effective triumph of French over other languages south of the Loire, through military service and universal education, is little over a hundred years old.¹ I would risk the assertion that in France language was an important instrument for spreading national consciousness rather than its cause.

The distinctive culture of the Low Countries in the late Middle Ages was very largely based on the emergence of the Dutch language with a literature of its own. This should be set alongside the other obvious factors of economic development and the rise of urban classes. However, in the three centuries which followed the partition of the Netherlands, though the language at least in its written form has remained the same on both sides of the frontier, the national consciousness of the Dutch has not extended to the southern portion of the language group. The quarrels within Belgium between Flemings and Walloons, based on language, have not led to the assertion that there exists a single Dutch nation of 20 millions, or to any significant demand for a single state.

The formation of English national consciousness is, like the French, mainly associated with the rise of the monarchy and with the inter-connected economic and social processes. However, language seems to me to have played a much greater part than in the case of either France or the Low Countries. The experts in the history of the English language speak of Old English and Middle English, the one derived from the other; but to a historian layman it seems that there was a somewhat different phenomenon—not so much that Anglo-Saxon acquired a massive influx of loan-words from French, as that two streams, the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman French, flowed together into a new language, English; and that the fourteenth century, in which this new language began to be adopted for official business, as well as being the vehicle of Chaucer, was the time when English national consciousness was formed, and the English nation born. This was not of course the end of the process. Surely pride in the English language, as used in the first translations of the Bible, as well as in the flowering secular literature of the sixteenth century, had a good deal to do with the Reformation, and with the militant assertion of English nationalism in the Elizabethan age? One may add that literature was also developing in northern English, spoken between the Humber and the Forth, and utter in passing the thought that if the court of Scotland, the source of patronage for

¹ Weber, *op. cit.*

literature as well as of government business, had remained in Scotland, and if, after the union of the crowns, the King of Scotland had not preferred the obviously greater attractions of England, the English and Scots might today have two different languages, as do the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes.

Language had nothing to do with the American wars of independence against England or Spain. It had much to do with the moulding of new nations from massive immigration, in the United States, Argentine, Chile, Uruguay, and southern Brazil. As for the indigenous peoples, in the north they were largely exterminated, and their remnant swamped by the advancing tide of immigrants; whereas in Central America and the northern Andean regions the conquered mixed with the conquerors, but Spanish became the language of nearly all, and remained a single language, despite differences of pronunciation and vocabulary, throughout the continent and islands. Indigenous languages remained, as also in north America, but did not form the basis of any national consciousness. Even the Quechua, of whom perhaps six millions live in a fairly compact territory divided between Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador, have not followed the example of Romanians, Greeks or Serbs in demanding a single state for those who speak their tongue.

In the central and western lands of Islam movements developed in the twentieth century which could reasonably be called 'nationalist'. At first their motivation was simply hostility to western rule or interference, and they were based essentially on religion. They had both traditionalist and modernizing elements, often in conflict with each other. It was the modernizers who took from the west an ideology of nationalism, and began to see their struggle as not only *against* the foreigners, but *for* the nation. The nation came to be defined by them in terms both of historical mythology and of language.

Of the three national consciousnesses which emerged, it was the Turkish which laid greatest emphasis on language. Influenced both by Balkan Christian nationalism and by the modernizing Muslim Tatar nationalists of the Volga valley, the Turkish nationalists insisted that the identifying mark of the Turks, separating them not only from Greeks, South Slavs and Russians but also from Arabs and Persians, was their language. The early nationalists developed a Pan-Turkic idea, analogous to Pan-slavism, to link all those who spoke a Turkic language, from Anatolia to Sinkiang, as a single Turkish family of nations, or even a single nation. This dimension was however specifically rejected

by Kemal Atatürk, who after his victory over the Greeks insisted that the Turkish fatherland was only the limited territory of the Turkish Republic. In the new nationalist ideology, language was the principal component, supported by historical mythology—including fantasies about a pre-Muslim Turkish culture deriving from Central Asia, and attempts to represent the Hittites as proto-Turks. Turkish nationalism was secular, and in practice if not in theory hostile to Islam. However, after sixty years the Muslim element remains strong, and the latent conflict between language and religion in Turkish national culture is an underlying factor in the troubles of contemporary Turkey.

The second national consciousness of this region, the Arab, has been based on a fluctuating combination of historical mythology, language, and religion. If the Arabic language could be made the essential common factor, then Arabic-speakers who were not Muslims could be included within the nation. Christian Arabs, more accessible to western ideas, including the western concept of the nation, at an earlier stage than their Muslim compatriots, played an important part in the formation of Arab nationalist doctrine, and in the shift of emphasis from Islam to Arab nation. Yet the historical mythology on which the modern Arab cultural identity had to be based, with its understandable emphasis on the glories of early medieval Arabic culture, was inextricably intertwined with Islam. Co-existence of Islam and nationalism was much closer in the Arab case than in the Turkish, and it seems hardly possible for an infidel, and perhaps even for an Arab, to say which is the dominant factor.

The third national consciousness, the Iranian, arose from the movement against western interference, in which two distinct trends, one constitutionalist and enamoured of western concepts of political liberty, the other militantly Muslim, at first fought together against the Qadjar monarchy and then came to blows with each other. At that historical stage it is perhaps premature to speak of an Iranian national consciousness. The elaboration of a Persian historical mythology, which was certainly an outstanding feature of the later attempt to create a national consciousness from above, was the work of the new dynasty founded by the Cossack serjeant Reza, who imitated Atatürk in stressing the pre-Islamic past, while at the same time trying forcibly to westernize and modernize Iranian society. These policies antagonised Muslim opinion, and fifty years later a massive Muslim revolt overthrew Reza's successor. In so far as Islam in Iran is Shi'i, and Iran the only substantial state in the world in which Shi'i form an

overwhelming majority, it can be argued either that the religious movement was essentially nationalist or that Iranian nationalism is essentially religious. This is an argument which no one can win. The truth is that, almost as much as in the Arab case, national consciousness and Islam are inseparable.

The problem of the relative importance of secular national consciousness and of Islam also arises, in very different circumstances, in the Soviet empire. In Central Asia the Bolshevik leaders deliberately attempted to accelerate the transformation of several Turkic dialects into distinct literary languages, and encouraged the formation of distinct national consciousnesses based on them. Fifty years of industrialization, urbanization, and education have created new social élites who express these national consciousnesses. During the same period, though the influence of the Muslim scriptures and the observance in daily life of Muslim rituals have diminished, the all-encompassing Muslim culture, embracing sacred and secular things alike, and divided by a great gulf from Russian Orthodox or post-Orthodox culture, remains untouched. Do these Central Asians view themselves first as Uzbek or Turkmen or Kirgiz, and secondarily only as Muslims, or is the priority of loyalty reversed? No certain answer is available.

If in the Muslim lands the extent of national consciousness and the rôle of language in its formation are difficult to estimate, though both are undoubtedly present, in the new states of Africa things are still more obscure. The anti-colonial movements which appeared in the African colonies of Britain, France, Belgium, and Portugal, led by intelligenzias influenced by western political ideas or at least by western catch-words, and mobilizing varying types of mass support of economic or social origin, are normally described as nationalist; but I am not sure that this is the right word. Essentially, what these anti-colonial leaders sought, and in most cases attained, with or without violence, was independence, that is to say, control over the sovereign state created, in most cases less than a hundred years previously, by European governments which had drawn arbitrary boundaries on maps in Berlin or other European capitals. Their struggles were *against* the foreign rulers, *for* possession of the *sovereign state*, but *not* on behalf of the *nation*. The sovereign states have existed under African rulers for some decades, but where are the nations?

There are two obvious examples of nations—the Amhara whose Ethiopian empire is almost two thousand years old, and who have been busily trying to Amharize their subject peoples much as the

Magyars and Russians busily tried to Magyarize or Russify theirs: and the Somalis who seek to unite all their compatriots in one state in opposition to the Amharizers, much as Romanians sought to unite their compatriots, in opposition to the Magyarizers. But elsewhere we see combinations of peoples with different languages and cultures, ruled by modernizing élites through a non-indigenous imperial language (Arabic in Southern Sudan), or an artificial *lingua franca* (Swahili in East Africa), or—in most sub-Saharan lands—through the language of the former colonial power. Nation-building is the term used for the efforts of these governments to mould their peoples into one community with a sense of national unity overriding their cultural differences. This, in the post-colonial conventional wisdom, is a good and desirable aim. Tribalism is the term used for those who put first the aspirations of their specific culture including its language. The conventional wisdom sees it as bad and undesirable. The tribe is a unit on a lower moral and political level than the nation, and fated to be absorbed in it. This of course is how the Magyarizers in Hungary saw it. In their terminology there was only one *nation* in Hungary, the Magyar; the other sub-cultures, or communities of lesser culture, were not nations but *nationalities*. This word was the Danubian equivalent of the tribe in colonial and post-colonial terminology. But the unanswerable question remains: who is qualified to say whether a community consciousness is 'lower' and 'tribal', or 'higher' and 'national'?

However, the Magyar language, culture and nation undoubtedly did exist. The allegedly higher culture into which the Romanians, Slovaks, Serbs and Ruthenes were to be absorbed was a reality. The same is true of the Amharic culture which is intended to swallow up the Somalis, Galla and the rest. But elsewhere things are less clear. None of the post-colonial states has a clearly recognized single national culture. It is striking that claims for language-based national identities within multi-cultural states are not a prominent feature of African states at present, though possibly that had something to do with the Nigerian civil war, with its more than a million casualties. It is striking that African peoples have produced no Dobrovskýs, no Štúrs, no Vuk Karadžićes. Is this because Africans are immune to some European intellectual maladies, that they have escaped for good the process to which eminent African politicians sometimes refer with a shudder—Balkanization? Or is it that the school systems have not yet created sufficiently numerous educated élites in the different language-groups for national consciousness to

appear, and claims to be made, and resisted, on behalf of the component languages and cultures, leading to mutual frustration and conflicting nationalisms?

Perhaps in the age of television it is possible to effect cultural mobilization from above so quickly that the processes which occurred in Central Europe can be avoided altogether. Perhaps this can be done through an ex-colonial European language. There is a historical example of this, in Hispanic America, where a single Spanish language, imported by the *conquistadores* four hundred years ago, has remained both dominant and uniform, even if there are regional differences in pronunciation and vocabulary. Alternatively, perhaps there will develop within the African states or groups of states several distinct English-derived, French-derived, and Portuguese-derived languages, which will become national languages of states. Perhaps modern technology can accelerate many times this process, which in the case of the Latin-derived Romance languages of the successor states of the Roman Empire required a thousand years or more to become established. Even so, one whose experience has been Danubian and not African may perhaps be permitted a certain benevolent scepticism. That ethnic diversity has not so far created much conflicting nationalism in Africa is cause for satisfaction. Perhaps African statesmen will be able to find new ways of institutionalizing the demands of ethnic diversity without endangering the fabric of the state or provoking disruptive nationalism. If they do, they will have done better than the Austrian socialists Renner and Bauer, who produced original and constructive plans for cultural autonomy at a time when it was too late, when mutually incompatible nationalisms were already deeply rooted, when even if in the place of Franz Josef I the House of Habsburg had produced a ruler with the reforming zeal of Joseph II he would still have found it too late. Perhaps the societies over which today's African enlightened despots rule can still be moulded into pre-nationalist, multi-cultural communities, undisturbed by conflicts between nations. Or perhaps these are not the problems which occupy the minds of African despots, whether enlightened or not.

The processes with which I have been concerned this evening cannot be quantified, and defy precise definition, yet they are realities of history and realities of the world in which we live. If my observations stimulate any of you to think about them, and in particular to encourage specialists in language and in social history to consult each other more frequently, then they will have served their purpose as a tribute to the memory of Robert Auty.