

# Nationalism and Militarism

KS3 History-Lesson 5 of 6

Enquiry: Did the Assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand lead to the outbreak of WWI?

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# Defining Nationalism and Militarism

**Nationalism** is the belief that one's country or state is distinct from and superior to other nations. If a person or group of people are influenced by **Nationalism**, they are likely to hold **patriotic** views.

**Militarism** describes a culture in which emphasis and importance are placed on how powerful a nation's army is.

**Patriotism is when you are  
passionate for your nation**



# Why were Nationalism and Militarism on the rise in Europe?

The growth of European empires, for example the British Empire, fuelled the rise of **Nationalism**. Populations began to believe that their culture and nation were **superior** to others. New nations such as Germany, which had only been unified in 1871, were desperate to establish themselves as powerful well respected nations. **Militarism** was partly a product of **Nationalism**. In order to defend one's national borders and growing empire, or to encourage people to be **patriotic**, leaders such as the Kaiser invested heavily in their armed forces and made great displays of military power at home and abroad.



# What did Militarism and Nationalism look like?

A good example of the reality of **militarism** and **nationalism**, would be the **arms race** taking place in Europe prior to WWI. For example, eager to prove their navy was superior, the British had released a new type of war ship; **The Dreadnought** in 1906. Germany too began producing these ships and the two powers competed to see who could construct more in the years leading up to 1914.



# How did rising Nationalism and Militarism make a war in Europe more likely?

By 1914 the European Powers had large and powerful armies. Leaders and indeed many ordinary people, believed that their nation could win a war with another and that using the army to establish power and respect as a nation, was a desirable idea. Armies had significant power and influence over the way in which leaders thought and acted. The Kaiser saw himself as a military leader whose **authority** came from Germany's powerful army. These ideas and the reality that nations had such powerful and destructive forces, meant that small disputes or frustrations could rapidly turn into serious conflicts.



# Glossary

**Nationalism:** The belief that one's country or state is superior.

**Militarism:** A culture which emphasises the importance of a strong army.

**Superior:** Better than.

**Patriotic:** Love and passion for one's nation.

**Arms Race:** A competition between nations to improve their armies.

**The Dreadnought:** A new and powerful type of warship (in 1906).

**Authority:** Power or the right to control, order and lead.



# Comprehension Questions

1. Which nation, Britain or Germany, produced more 'dreadnoughts' 1906-14?
2. What term is used to describe a competition between nations to build up the more powerful military?
3. Can you define the word 'patriotic'?
4. How did nationalism make a war in Europe more likely?
5. How did militarism make a war in Europe more likely?

Sentence starter: One way in which nationalism made a war in Europe more likely was...



# Return to the Enquiry

What was the relationship between nationalism and militarism in Europe pre 1914?

Sentence starters:	Key words
<p><i>Nationalism led states to believe in the importance of...</i></p> <p><i>Militarism was an important feature of nationalism because...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Patriotism</li><li>-Arms-race</li><li>-Unification</li></ul>

