

## **Patriotism**

Patriotism is loyalty to one's native country. The term and its implications date from the early modern period, when the nation-state first appeared formatively on the stage of European history. Naturally it was of high self-interest, to the emergent state, to develop an identity and to draw that identity to the attention (and admiration) of its citizens. Patriotism gained identity and supporting enthusiasm from the adoption of national and military flags, among the growing city states of Western Europe in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Indeed there was at this time a profusion of flags on land and sea, some of them representing political units, some commercial entrepreneurial maritime ventures, like the mercantile city states of Genoa or Venice.

The evolution of the national spirit and consciousness, which of course develops hand in hand with the commercial interests of the modern state, has generated efforts to 'transcend the state.' One wants to jump to those parastatal organizations like the United Nations, or before that and after the First World War, The League of Nations, both of which aspired to represent mankind and his or her interests. From concern for the rights of the nations of mankind one wanted to be careful to take the vast step toward the rights of mankind. For the sake of perspective we will want to remind ourselves that this fervor of interest for mankind had its roots in the European Enlightenment, thus in the foundational thinking of the founding thinkers of France and the United States.