Nationalism, according to West Indian academic Hubert Devonish, has two objectives: the first is to secure a state for those who share a common identity; the second is to promote the interests of the state over all others. This self-determination is therefore associated with belonging to a community, most principally the nation. Whilst nationalism is predominantly a political movement, it ultimately thrives on a set of links to distinct cultural attitudes that challenge the established cultural logic. A national identity, therefore, refers not simply to an individual belonging to the nation, but sharing norms of behaviour, duties to others in the group, and a responsibility for the well-being of the nation.

In terms of studying cricket, the rise of an English national identity can be traced back to the printing press, the centralising of sovereign and bureaucratic power, the subsequent rise of a middle class, political maturity, and the need for a system of socialisation to bind nationals during industrialisation. Nationalism revealed itself in the Empire through opposition to English rule—both political and cultural—and as such inevitably necessitated a reformation of norms and values that better represented indigenous social groups and new ideals of nationhood.
Nationalism is not a unitary movement, and so appeared in many shapes and guises. For the Irish, Catalans, and the Welsh, it has involved the preservation of native language and customs; for South Africans, the search for something to unite a disparate population. In other cases, nationalism can be about the reinforcement of ‘traditional’ or dominant values. In England, the search for national identity has involved questions regarding loyalty to monarch, the European Union, and which cricket team ancestors of migrants should support.

Sport provides an ideal forum from which to observe nationalism in action. International competition usually takes precedence over domestic contests. One searches for national qualities in a Beckham or a Kohli, even more so with a Bradman or a Richards, with some justification. *International Who’s Who* named Don Bradman as one of only two Australians among the top 100 people who did most to shape the twentieth century, whereas Hilary Beckles described Viv Richards as someone ‘whom West Indians regard as the symbol of their success and the ideological icon of liberation cricket’.

Those who lack access to power develop alternative values that can challenge the status quo. The nationalism of the French Revolution, for instance, was linked to popular sovereignty, democracy, liberty, and equality of opportunity. Many of these ideals found themselves into cricket’s ethos, notably a sense of justice, fair play, and conducting oneself in the right way. Such qualities, though, also had the potential to form the basis of a nationalist consciousness. Beckles refers to a nationalism that is part of ‘the culture of resistance to colonial and race domination, and speaks to pride and identity within the context of deep oppositions in both the colonial and postcolonial worlds’. Furthermore, the denial of rights was simply ‘not cricket’, and so an elitist ethos became regarded as a bulwark to nationalist and democratic ambitions. This affected both how the sport was played and how it should be governed. Overall, resistance fell into two camps: the desire on the part of the oppressed to defeat their ‘masters’ at their own game, or simply the sport’s rejection, such as in Ireland and the United States. What emerged was a distinct set of attributes unique to a particular people, and a threat to the English hegemony based on class and tradition.
Taste for Revenge—The Rejection of Englishness

In the opening sentence of his *Essay on the study of literature*, Edward Gibbon noted that ‘the history of empires’ is ‘the history of human misery’.4 ‘A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised’, wrote the chronicler of the demise of the Roman Empire, ‘than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary domination of strangers’.5 Maybe inspired by such feelings, a victory against England at cricket symbolised much more than a sporting triumph; it provided an opportunity for those on the periphery of the colonial project to hit back at the centre. Darcus Howe, said that for the West Indies:

Race and nationalism is at the heart of this contest. The British ruled these islands, dominated the natives with the explicit belief that we deserve slavery and colonialism because we are an inferior people. The masters brought the game to the island, taught us its complexities and nuances and a victory over the English has always been savoured with that taste for revenge. It is so; it has always been so.6

An imperial power can hope to solidify its authority by imposing aspects of its own character onto subject lands. Russification, for example, involved the dual process of the promotion of Russian nationals to leading administrative positions in its sphere of influence, and then the elevation of its culture through the endorsement of the Russian language, at the expense of ‘national’ ones. This can only happen with the encouragement of migration. Between 1853 and 1920, 1.7 m Britons had emigrated to Australia and 670,000 to South Africa,7 and were expected to reinforce the British way of life. Not all, though, migrated out of choice. The first Australian settlers consisted of officials and guards, free settlers, and convicts. Many of these convicts were political prisoners, either Irish nationalists or early trade unionists, deported for organising against their rulers. Many new inhabitants had been forced out: casualties of industrialism on established trades, the poverty of the countryside and famine. These people owed no allegiance to the governing class in London, but
like the prospector, who arrived at the Victoria gold diggings in 1853, brought with them anti-establishment values of social equality and aversion to authority: ‘all aristocratic feelings and associations of the old country are at once annihilated.’

The Australians’ ability to outperform England at their chosen sport contributed to cricket’s popularity, and to the construction of a positive national identity. There were those who believed that Australians were in Australia because they were not wanted in England. The 1878 tourists had gone ‘home’ to prove a point, to advertise Australia, and subconsciously erode the deference given to England and English cricketers. Defeating the MCC by nine wickets meant the press were now satisfied that Australians possessed ‘the manhood and the muscle of their English sires’, and the number of references to colonial degeneration diminished. Political federation was still 23 years away, wrote Chris Harte, ‘but independence of the mind had possibly just occurred’.

The English hosiers who migrated to work the Philadelphian mills took with them favoured pastimes, including cricket. The sport spread throughout America as English migrants settled and it proved to be popular in the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, it was against the United States that England played its first international in 1859. Fifteen years before this, the then two leading New York sides challenged their neighbours in Canada to a contest in what is believed to be the first international sporting event. Most of the American clubs were made up of ex-patriots or first generation English settlers, and were hardly representative American teams, though by the end of the 1850s The Spirit estimated a thousand clubs in existence.

Early cricket thrived in New York and New Jersey, whilst there were sides in Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, and California. Cricketers played in at least 22 states and more than 125 cities and towns in the antebellum United States. Publications such as The cricket player’s pocket companion and Beadle’s dime book of cricket sold well, and in 1877 the American Cricketer was formed and produced weekly until the end of the century. It was most popular, though, in Philadelphia, who, through clubs such as the Young America Cricket Club (founded in 1855) attempted to infuse the sport with an ‘Americaness’. Sides were made up of players born in America and annual
contests between American and English teams would be played out during the Independence Day celebrations every July. The *American Cricketer* claimed in 1894 that the only place outside Philadelphia where ‘the growth of cricket has been more brilliant and phenomenal is Australia’. It was against the Aussies that 15,000 turned out per day to see Philadelphia get the better of a draw in 1878. Fred Lillywhite, who was on the tour, proclaimed that ‘cricket in Philadelphia has every chance of becoming a national game.’ The *New York Times* had already argued in 1860 that cricket there was ‘as popular with Americans as Base Ball is in New York; and no other reason than Americans have controlled it’.

There were thoughts that America could be the next Test side. That they did not was due, in part, to the associations with an English rather than American identity. Many of the clubs were social institutions, established to maintain an English way of life, in the same way as they were in India and other places where groups of upper-middle-class English settled. For these elites ‘cricket had become something precious, part of their heritage, an elite pastime more akin to ancestor worship than play.’ They alienated those who considered themselves to be American, and found it difficult to attract American members. The *American Cricketer* declared in 1877 that Americans and English ‘don’t mix well at cricket’ and following the Civil War, baseball surpassed cricket, and, except for Philadelphia, the English game declined to insignificance.

Cricket’s ethos was promoted by a leisured class. In England and India, the aristocrat found time to devote to sport, as leisure was an important indicator of one’s status. In the United States, this ‘leisure class’ did not exist in the same way; lacking the roots and tradition of the established English gentry. This meant that cricket became a trend rather than something embedded in social culture. It survived because men of wealth and status ensured that it did. Clubs with grandiose surroundings became popular stopping places for Australian and English tourists, and social aspects were often considered more important than actual playing. The Baltimore Cricket Club, for example, was known more ‘for the excellence of the lunch than the cricket’ it played, while Pelham Warner suggested that the club’s hospitality was such that it tempted several of the English tourists to get themselves out so that they could engage in the social intercourse on offer.
Another factor in the decline of American cricket was the character of European immigration that knew little of the sport. Differing cultural influences made it more difficult for British culture to establish a hegemonic position. The formation of the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909 put an end to any consideration of seriously developing cricket in America. Membership was open to the (white) colonies and allegiance to the monarch took precedence over the ability of the cricketers. Despite the Philadelphians enjoying victories against both visiting English and Australian sides, it was South Africa who was given Test status in 1889. America and Canada had invited England XIs to tour since 1859, but no such invitation came from South Africa until 30 years later. Cricket in the colony was less developed than in the United States; not, though, its importance to the imperial project. The triangular tournament in 1912—featuring England, Australia, and South Africa—designed to strengthen ‘the bonds of Union within the Empire’, notably excluded the United States.

*Porter’s Spirit* argued that America needed its own ‘native American game’ to attract the same national enthusiasm as cricket did for the English: America required something American. It fell to baseball to unite a divided country. It appealed to a wider range of social classes, encouraged the negation of status distinction and was played in the border and southern states and so had a role in reuniting the nation after the Civil War.

In contrast to America and Australia, New Zealand and South Africa maintained their attachment to England for much longer. Greg Ryan has suggested that this was because there was no convict transportation to New Zealand, nor dominant Irish population from which to ferment anti-British feeling. However, whilst there were many who saw in New Zealand a reincarnation of ‘old England’ there were many who saw a ‘new Great Britain’ of the future based on equality and disdain for snobbery and ethnic pride. There were parts of New Zealand, Otago for one, where the link with England was not strong, and where cricket struggled to maintain a foothold. Otago was populated by a Scottish working class, and a small landowner and peasant class, rooted in the ideals of the Scottish Presbyterian Free Church. Many of them had left remote rural communities that had not played cricket.
In its simplest form, a national identity consists of language, custom, religion, or territory, usually built around a common origin. It is something that is recent, having emerged with the rise of the nation-state, itself a consequence of a new economic and technological phase of history, and is therefore constructed. We can further say this because the idea of the nation varies according to history, political climate, and even geographical situation; we can see this through the symbols of nationhood—flags, uniforms, distinct animal emblems (wallaby, bulldog, and springbok), and so on, and we can hear this in anthems and language. There is a role for the historian, the educator, the politician, the journalist, and the clergy in determining what should be incorporated into this identity. ‘In order to move from a Europe of kings to a Europe of nations’, writes Anne-Marie Thiesse, ‘disparate population groups had to be convinced that despite their obvious differences they shared an identity that was the basis for a collective interest’.24

Looking at the West Indies, Australia, and South Africa, though, it is evident that what is acknowledged as something belonging to all is fraught with difficulty. The West Indies is a collection of 13 mainly small islands, each with their own unique characteristics and governments, yet for cricketing purposes they come together, and perform with a style and attitude that suggests a common cultural character. Australia and South Africa propagated a common identity that excluded indigenous populations, sharing territory (through conquest), but not custom, religion, or language, though they would be imposed on the native peoples as part of the national project. The reason these three ‘countries’ are cited is that cricket in each was a national phenomenon before they were political—and hence national—entities, thereby showing the fundamental importance of cultural influences for the nationalist project.

Economic concentration, especially in relation to the sugar industry, proved to be important in both the growth of cricket in the Caribbean, and in the development of a regional identity. European conquerors established sugar plantations which yielded not only huge profits for
their owners, but political power as well. In these slave societies, many of the familial, social, political, and economic relations were shaped by the extensive deprivation of slaves to all sorts of rights to decide for themselves. It is in this context that cricket has to be considered and understood.

Improvements in transport made the interiors of islands more accessible to commerce and enhanced relationships between islands via the interconnectedness of trade. However, the fluctuations in the price of sugar meant that less prosperous colonies found it difficult to sustain themselves on an individual basis. Planter-merchant interests shifted from a policy of cut-throat competition to one of co-operation in the interests of protecting their overall economic position. The concept of integration, then, was linked to the importance of the future efficiency of the sugar economy, though politically individual heads were unwilling to cede power to other islands. Some form of unification was also promoted by a black population who valued the necessity of liberation for all in the region. What emerged, thus, were two distinct forms of integration: political, economic, and administrative unity as advocated by the upper and middle class; and a lower-class West Indian cultural unity. By the late nineteenth century, cricket emerged as the principal mechanism for interaction as the economic elites visited each other to play the sport. The intercolonial championship between the larger islands allowed for contact to exist and intra-territorial links to develop. ‘West Indianisation’ as a cultural process first took form, then, within the world of cricket.

Both Australia and South Africa were divided into a series of separate colonies in the nineteenth century. Each of the Australian colonies had its own tariff regulations and system of government, as well as its own state cricket team. These became merged in a ‘national’ ‘Combined XI’ in 1874, and an ‘All-Australian XI’ in 1877 that would play in the first ever Test match. The symbols of nationality were also evident before political union. The South Africans wore greenish-bronze caps embroidered with the letters SA for their first Test against England in 1889 and dressed in the striped green and gold with Springbok emblem on their first visit to England in 1894. A cup presented to William ‘Billy’ Murdoch in 1880 had the Australian coat of arms inscribed on it; which also featured on the blazer and cap badge of the 1884 touring side. By 1895 the Australians
competed in the ‘national’ colours of green and gold of the gum tree and wattle, while as early as 1878 had carrier bags with the ‘Australian Eleven’ emblazoned on them. ‘It was the teams we sent to England in the 1870s’ wrote the novelist David Malouf, ‘that first established us, in British eyes, as a single nation, long before we had made the move to official nationhood’.28

Early Australian sympathies may well have been with England, but by the 1870s, as more white residents became native-born, this deference was gradually replaced with self-confidence about being Australian.29 This was further enhanced with victories in 1877 and 1878 against England. After the 1897–98 Test series, in which Australia beat England 4-1, *The Bulletin* wrote: ‘this ruthless rout of English cricket will do—and has done—more to enhance the cause of Australian nationality than could ever be achieved by miles of erudite essays and impassioned appeal.’30 Similarly in the Caribbean

It was …. only when they saw their cricket team in combat with that of their English colonial masters that Jamaicans, Barbadians, Trinidadians and Guyanese came to see themselves as West Indians possessing a common historical, cultural and political identity transcending the insularity, isolation and inter-territorial competitiveness that many West Indians see as among the most baleful legacies of British colonialism in the Caribbean.31

Cricket gave people the confidence to challenge English hegemony, and to consider themselves as something other than subjects, and whilst a strong allegiance to England remained in both South Africa and Australia it existed alongside an emerging national consciousness.

At the crux of the national identity question lies the assumption that identity is based on something that is supposedly held in common. Benedict Anderson argued that the printing press kick-started an English national identity, as it enabled people from widely spread parts of a relatively large island to communicate through understood words.32 In the sub-continent cricket assisted in the creation of identity as countries became more economically and technologically developed. As 85 per cent of the population of the newly created Pakistan was illiterate, any growth of newspapers did little to broaden cricket’s appeal. This would
change when early radio commentary which had tended to be in English, switched to Urdu, which although a minority language at partition, was promoted by the government as the national language. In Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese broadcasts, which started around 1967, of important matches were an effect of the democratising process of the 1956 socio-political transformation. In both cases, technology and the use of language opened cricket to a much wider audience, which was further enlarged by the spread of television, especially with the one-day game, which allowed for the symbols of nationhood to be brazenly displayed.

How Could You Refute Nehru? Cricket and the Liberation Movement

Despite seeming widespread popularity, Orlando Patterson has argued that deep down West Indians hate cricket because it is the game of colonisers and the old elites. It functions as a reminder of the economic and racial inferiority of the black masses. Similarly, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) party in Sri Lanka hold the view that cricket should not feature in a modern society because it does not teach freedom or egalitarianism. Cricket was enjoyed in many rural areas of Ireland, with the Phoenix Club being acknowledged as the first Irish team in 1830. In the mid-1860s the sport was gaining in popularity, especially in the north where the linen manufacturers encouraged it amongst their workers. By the early 1880s, however, it was in terminal decline, a result of a process of non-cooperation with the English. Cultural identity became part of the political process and associations with anything English were considered anathema to an Irish identity. ‘If any two purposes should go together they ought to be politics and athletics’, wrote the Irishman in 1884, ‘our politics being essentially national, so should our athletics’. Gaelic games were pushed to the forefront of the Irish resistance to the British presence. The Gaelic Athletic Association (formed in 1884) sought to resurrect the ancient games of Ireland, and banned cricket amongst its members. Whilst political forces argued for a boycott of cricket in Ireland, communal contests between Hindus and Europeans in India offered the prospect of political triumph. Victory for the Indians further reinforced
arguments for equal treatment with whites, and proved a stimulus to national aspirations. Impressive performances against the Europeans, it was argued:

proves only one thing, viz., that given equal opportunities, Indians would be more than a match to Europeans in any field. In the realms of science, law, literature, politics, art and oratory, individual Indians have excelled the Britishers. In the realm of sports also, they are proving as the equals or superiors of Europeans.37

The intensification of the campaign for self-rule in the 1930s meant a re-evaluation of what it meant to be an Indian, as distinct from a Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh. Communal cricket portrayed a nation divided along religious lines. In a country so large, loyalties tended to be local, regional, or religious; the concept of nationhood was a novel one. The campaign for political and national liberation emphasised the nation, and attacked cricket as quintessentially English and the communal form as divisive and reactionary. No quadrangular tournaments were held between 1930 and 1934; an English tour to India in 1930 was ruled out; and, players were asked not to present themselves for selection to England in 1932. Many Indian nationalists refused to have anything to do with the sport. In 1937, M.N.M. Badruddin wrote an essay in the Bombay Chronicle titled ‘India must give up cricket!’ It was condemned as an aristocratic game, meant for the English nobility who liked to waste their time at dinners and parades.38 Cricket was ‘in no way in keeping with our poverty, our political condition or national outlook and as such is highly detrimental to the complete realisation of our cherished hopes, ambitions, ideas and dreams’.39

Yet nationalists could use the sport’s ethos to their advantage when constructing a set of political ideals. There was something ‘terribly democratising about cricket’, claimed Beckles, seeing within its value system a place where civil rights and cultural assertion could be played out.40 Members of the liberal professions were likely to have acquired notions of fair play and justice from an English-style education and would inevitably question why they were denied these rights. Formal fair play, after all, required all parties to keep to the rules. As black intellectual Robert Love
argued: ‘self-government is the right of loyal Englishmen, and such are we.’ Cricket provided the opportunity to the black and Indian to show that when given the opportunity, he could be as good as his white counterpart. How could you refute someone like Nehru, who was educated at Harrow and Cambridge, and was a keen cricketer? It proved a mechanism that allowed the ruled to assess their rulers on terms of the morality advocated through the sport. It is what Dipesh Chakrabarty calls ‘returning the gaze’; where the coloniser becomes a subject of inquiry for the colonised. It surely then was ‘not cricket’ to deny an indigenous population the right to govern themselves.

The Creation of a Just Society—Promotion of Nation

Colin Tatz wrote at the beginning of his study on genocide that ‘nations in transition, from colonialism or from a war or from the domination of one tribe over another, need social consensus and ways of feeling good about themselves.’ South Africa has shown how important sport has been in the project of national reconciliation. Since its return from the sporting wilderness, it has hosted the football, cricket, and rugby World Cups. These occasions have provided a platform to display symbols of nationhood, in particular the flag and the anthem, but also in the reinvention of national emblems, with the Protea replacing the Springbok both as trademark and as nickname for the cricket team. These changes have helped to present South Africa as a multi-ethnic and democratic state.

National cricket authorities are inevitably bound in the promotion and success of the state. One of the functions of the Indian Board was ‘to improve or develop cricket … so that the cricketers enhance the nation’s prestige by their victories and give a sense of achievement and well-being to 800 million Indians’. Even more obvious is the United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa’s initial Statement of Intent that charged it with ‘contributing, through cricket, to the creation of a just society in South Africa where everybody democratically has a common say and a common destiny’.
From its outset, Pakistan confronted an identity crisis. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, its first leader, had campaigned for a separate state for Muslims rather than a Muslim state, and being created out of turmoil the state of Pakistan caught many unprepared. Few politicians had any experience in the affairs of state, and a territorial agreement saw East Bengal separated from the rest of the mainland by 1000 miles. Lawrence Ziring had described Pakistan as a country that ‘had been the outcome of a religious movement made political’. There was little that bound the new nation. Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans, and Balochis were urged to relinquish their historical identities to be Pakistani, ushering the new state into the modern world in which provincial division, feudalism, and tribal rule would be surpassed by a diffusion of people into a new project. Jinnah was a cricketing enthusiast, and a quadrangular tournament in Karachi was launched and the sport promoted from schools upwards. Cricket may have been beset by tribal conflicts and internecine feuds but it helped put Pakistan on the map. Leading batter Hanif Mohammad commented after their victory against England at the Oval in 1954: ‘It was a glorious moment for all of us … The win gave Pakistan a visible identity. Not many had known about Pakistan until then.’

Sport provides an opportunity for the emerging nation-state to achieve prestige on the world stage. ‘To lead in cricket gives us stature in the world,’ wrote Caribbean author Ian McDonald, about the West Indies side. ‘Pride and self-confidence grow as we prevail among the best anywhere. It is an important part of growing into nationhood.’ Yet the West Indies hardly qualify as a nation-state, but argues Beckles ‘within the global imagination the West Indies stand apart as a nation built around cricket’. Similarly, Boria Majumdar noted the importance of the sport to contemporary Indian national life: ‘This is because India … is a rather insignificant presence globally once we account for the export of software professionals to the Middle East and the West.’ To the foreign observer, India can be associated with poverty, filth, and corruption; through cricket, though, it relives a by-gone age of wealth and power.

As a domestic nation, India is divided according to region, ethnic group, and some 22 languages. There is no one factor that dictates what being an ‘Indian’ means; indeed, prior to colonisation it was not even a nation, being a collection of kingdoms. Indians seldom come together as Indians
having just a common enemy in Pakistan, its cinema, and cricket as a unifying denominator.\textsuperscript{52} Arjun Appadurai notes: ‘the extraordinary popularity of cricket in India is clearly tied up with nationalist sentiment.’\textsuperscript{53} It also allows for the politician to seek recognition through association with popular culture. After India’s first Test victory in England in 1971, the team diverted to Delhi on their way home to be congratulated by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Similarly, following their unexpected triumph at the 1983 World Cup, Gandhi forwarded a telegram to the players saying that ‘my slogan is India can do it. Thank you for living up to it.’\textsuperscript{54} This slogan adorned state-owned petrol stations throughout the land. The staged Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) welcoming of the Indian team ‘secretly’ arriving home after their 2004 tour to Pakistan, thrust India further into the age of the soundbite and the photo-opportunity. Due to its centrality to the nationalist project, cricket has been subsumed by politics, especially in the developing world, where sport provides the level playing field that economic and military might cannot.

**Justice Was Seen as More Important—Creation of an Alternative Ethos**

Nationalists characterise individual nations on certain criteria that can distinguish one from another. These can include a shared language, a shared culture and shared norms and values. This cultural nationalism is the most popular form of patriotism, exists to an extent in all states, helps to define the nation and is frequently subject to reinterpretation. Regardless of the type of hyperbole seen in Chap. 2, cricket does not have a supernatural in-built spirit, rather it provides a convenient vessel through which norms and values can be transmitted. Consider the shape and nature of cricket in Samoa, for example. Brian Stoddart has recorded how at the end of the nineteenth century, great village contests would involve processions to mark a match. Some games would last up to a week, and be an event that involved great feasting and celebration. They would involve whole villages, include many players per side, and the rules would have little in common with those written down by the MCC.\textsuperscript{55}
Whilst Samoa might be considered a remote example, the Muslims of the Cape again show how cricket is shaped by culture. Initially coming to South Africa as prisoners and slaves in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they established themselves as a community who built codes of behaviour based around their religion. Contests were held to celebrate the birth of Mohammed whilst the drinking culture that co-existed with other teams was shunned.56 ‘Black’ South Africans learned to play cricket on the poor pitches that were either allocated to them by segregation-approving authorities, or were adjoined to the deprived communities where they resided. These types of cricket square determined the manner of the game, ruling out defensive batting, and promoting the limited-overs format, a consequence of the dual pressure of time and space.

The struggle for freedom, rights, and democracy involved a struggle for ethos. The white Caribbean ruling-class witnessed slave uprisings in Barbados in 1816, in Jamaica in 1823, 1824 and 1830, and in British Guiana in 1823, in which widespread damage was inflicted on both the economy and the local power networks. In June 1816, a white visitor to Barbados noted that ‘we hold the West Indies by a very precarious tenure—that of military strength only.’57 Social control was reinforced through a combination of policing, the church and a developing educational system that attempted to stamp out customs such as obeah, native games, and folk music, in order to incorporate blacks into the ruling culture. The Anglican Church increased its numbers of schools in Barbados from eight in 1825 to 155 in 1834, though only five initially accepted blacks.58 Through these, European forms of entertainment gradually became adopted and adapted within the plantation villages, and clubs emerged according to colour, class, and occupation, from which cultural attitudes would be shaped. One such club, Lucas, was formed for ‘black artisans in Kingston’ and dominated Jamaican cricket up to the First World War. ‘There could be no pretence at forging camaraderie with the elites’, noted Brian Moore and Michele Johnson, ‘because the latter refused to socialise off the field with members of the Lucas team.’59

The rise of Garveyism in the early twentieth century represented the dual nationalist tenets of the injustice of racial rule and rising self-awareness. In December 1918, there was a mutiny at Taranto, Italy, of
West Indian soldiers who had volunteered to assist the British cause in the War. One Sergeant Baxter argued that blacks should have the freedom to govern themselves in the Caribbean and that if necessary, force and bloodshed should be used to attain it.\textsuperscript{60} By 1930s, cricketers Learie Constantine and George Headley were suggesting that the prospects of the West Indies lay with the African population. Cardus described Constantine’s cricket as ‘racial’ meaning that it spoke for his people.\textsuperscript{61} When Headley entered Australia for the 1930–31 tour he described himself as ‘African’ on his immigration form.\textsuperscript{62} It is no accident, argued Tim Hector, that Constantine and Headley came at the same time as the birth of West Indian literature, in the persons of C.L.R. James, Alfred Mendes, De Boissiere, and Vic Read. A nation was being shaped out of the myriad of islands, by an organised working class, who targeted the privilege and power that had made ‘wealth its aim’.\textsuperscript{63} The Barbados Cricket League (BCL), launched three months after the riots of 1937, created a setup for working-class blacks, and soon attracted the interest of the educated middle class. Within three years the BCL rivalled the older established Barbados Cricket Association for the number of affiliated cricketers. Gradually the national side came to reflect its social environment, and the black/white ratio started to change: in 1928, in the first West Indies Test series, there were ten black cricketers to five whites; and in 1933 nine black to four whites. Despite these developments, though, the white captain clung to his position of authority.

Further advances were made following the Second World War, and the resulting retreat of colonialism. On 29 June 1950, the West Indies beat England for the first time. For Hector, the 1950 victory represented ‘the proof that a people were coming of age’.\textsuperscript{64} The composition of the squad symbolised the strength of the game in the various territories. There were three players from Jamaica, one from British Guyana, and six apiece from Trinidad and Barbados. The names of some of the players reflected the side’s diverse composition: Gomez, Pierre, Christiani, and Ramadhin (the first man of East Indian descent to play for the West Indies). The captain, John Goddard and his vice-captain, Jeff Stollmeyer, were white men from wealthy backgrounds. The stars of the side were the three Ws: Worrell, Weeks, and Walcott, Barbadians of African descent; the first of which was from a working-class background. The victory, inspired by the
The spin-bowling duo Sonny Ramadhin and Alf Valentine, was an example of Afro-Indian unity, which for Hector was ‘vital to West Indian success in politics and in particular Federation. Cricket had shown the way.’

Many argued that a political and economic federation of the Caribbean islands was the best means through which the West Indies could make an impact in the world. A number of the islands were so small that they would struggle economically without the benefits of economies of scale that a unified body would provide. The cricket team had shown the benefits of utilising resources. However, there was still the problem of leadership. The demand for a black captain came to assume a wider anti-colonial and political struggle, and James made this struggle a priority. The Nation, the organ of the People’s National Movement of Trinidad, focused its energies on three interconnected issues: the politics of black nationalist decolonisation; movement towards the nation-state (singular or federated independence); and black leadership of the West Indies cricket team. These three factors were symbols of one process—the liberation of blacks from colonialism.

In 1960, Frank Worrell became the first black cricketer to be appointed captain for a series. According to Woodville Marshal, Worrell’s application had been initially suspended due to him daring to protest terms and conditions. Yet he could still be considered as a ‘safe’ choice—he had attended a leading school in Barbados and graduated from university in England. However, Worrell still represented a challenge to the status quo, for any kind of black leadership further threatened the declining white planter influence. It was not simply Worrell that white West Indians feared though; it was the wider democratic political process to which he was associated. The introduction of the vote in the 1950s returned organisations such as the People’s Progressive Party in British Guiana, the Labour Party in Barbados, and the National Party in Jamaica. These leftist organisations worked with trade unions, and sought to redesign an independent Caribbean in the interests of a wider electorate. Whites feared that they would be isolated and that the preference of a black captain in a traditional white terrain was a step too far. Many could no longer even support the West Indies against the likes of Australia and England, as became evident in the series against Australia in 1960 and England in 1963, especially in Barbados.
The nature of the old English game was transformed and given a make-over with distinct Caribbean characteristics. Gordon Rohlehr has suggested that at a deeper level, the West Indian presence has restored the sport to its original self as a folk activity. It is learned on the street and the beach and is characterised by inspiration over technique, and aggression: fluent, hard-hitting batting and very fast short-pitched bowling. Other qualities such as style, flair and cool, defiance, panache, and flamboyance are those acquired from the ‘street’. It is further characterised by notions of justice and confrontation. ‘How better to express our pent-up rage’, argued Orland Patterson, ‘than to acquire and master this culture, then use it to beat the group that forced us into acquiring it?’

Fast bowling is seen as a form of resistance to the plight of the poor and the society that created them. Patterson talks of ‘the beautiful sweet violence of the act’ where, so often, ‘it is “us” versus “them”. “Us” constitutes the black masses. “Them” is everything else—the privileged, the oppressor, the alien, dominant culture.’

An Australian counter-ethos developed against the inherent elitism in the English game. An Australian identity ridiculed snobbishness, as a man owed more to his ‘mates’ than he did in deference to his so-called social superiors. Russel Ward’s legend described a mythical national ‘type’ as someone who ‘believes that Jack is not only as good as his master but, at least in principle, probably a good deal better’. There was little initiative for the imitation of the social customs that accompanied the Anglo form. An attempt in the 1860s to replicate the Gentlemen versus Players matches, for example, was abandoned as unnecessary. The cricket writer, Frank Lever, noted that ‘the English custom of amateur cricketers entering the field from one gate, and professional cricketers from another seems, to all Australians, priggish and out of place.’ The 1884 Australian side visiting England refused to be labelled according to social status and asked to be regarded not as ‘amateur’ or ‘professional’ but as ‘cricketer’.

Cricket in England evolved over time, allowing for the nuances of taste and custom that differed between regions, countryside and town, and social class. A proletarian form of cricket placed a greater emphasis on winning and by doing so challenged many aspects of cricket’s ethos discussed earlier. In England, the professional northern leagues played a ‘harder’ game than the southern country-house tradition. That more pro-
professionals came from the north was largely due to the opportunities allowed them in the leagues. Once established, though, the professional had to continue to perform to make a living; he could not afford to play the sport for ‘fun’. Ex-England captain Mike Atherton spoke of ‘the northern club/league tradition, where the prevailing ethos was to do whatever you could, within the boundaries of what was regarded as acceptable’. This rejection of an ethos based on how the game is played further mirrored life. Deference, leave things as they are, trust authority and the natural order of things are worthy sentiments to a middle class who exclusively enjoyed the vote; they are of little value to an industrial proletariat, used to fighting for every concession in the workplace. To the Australian, an emphasis on winning, especially against England, provided a means through which he could challenge the lowly view he felt the English had of him. The native-born considered himself to be as good as any English ‘gentleman’ and adopted the mechanism of sport to prove it.

This Australian egalitarian attitude revealed itself in several ways that challenged English hegemony. On the question of authority, the umpire had no ‘God-given’ right to be always correct in his decisions. Authority may be the precursor to power, but its legitimacy stems from accountability, and thus democracy. Justice, seen as a fair dispenser of power, was considered more important, and the umpire’s decision was often contested. The belief in the ‘right sort’ to provide leadership was ‘unAustralian’ and both early state sides and the national eleven elected their own captain. Indeed, the captains of seven of the first eight Australian teams to England were selected by the players.

Australia’s physical environment further shaped the way that cricket evolved. Hard sun and baked pitches encouraged shots, and assistance for the bounce of pace and leg spin. They set more attacking fields than England, dispensing in 1878 with long-leg and long-slip, and popularising the silly mid-on position. Customs developed that were particularly Australian, including barracking, larger ovals, bigger scoreboards, the eight-ball over, and distinctive language. There was less infatuation with technique and even approaches to batting were different. England cricketer Jack Hobbs noted that when young, ‘Australians are taught first to hit the ball; we in England are taught defence.’ Australian fast-bowler Fred Spofforth said that: ‘in Australia, boys learn by watching each other
and any grown-up cricketers who they see. The result is individuality, and their natural ability is not dwarfed by other people’s ideas. Convention, then, is replaced by what is practical and works best. It has even been suggested that this attitude accounts for Australia having the highest number of left-handed batters, ideal for disrupting bowlers’ lines.

This distinct Australian interpretation on ethos ensured that their rivalry with England would be about more than leather on willow. The ‘challenge’ against England and Englishness became central to the game’s psyche in Australia. However, this inevitably led to conflict with those Australians who still looked to Britain for the ideals of leadership and civility. Despite an attempt to create something distinctly Australian, any national identity will have an English influence—the language, the heritage, the flag, and so on. This link is obviously political, and again shows how ethos is subject to wider persuasions. At an Australia Club dinner in 1959 attended by Robert Menzies and Harold Macmillan, for example, the two Conservative prime ministers made no less than 14 references to Test cricket during their after-dinner speeches. Menzies believed that cricket underpinned the positive values of British cultural life. In 1963, he remarked that it was ‘part of Australia’s rich British inheritance’ in which the two countries are part of the same blood and allegiance and history and instinctive mental process. This was at odds with an emerging nationalist discourse under Gough Whitlam’s Labour Party, whose government (1972–75) promoted *Advance Australia Fair* as the national anthem, inaugurated the Order of Australia, and changed the Queen’s title to ‘Queen of Australia’. Whitlam was convinced that Australia would soon become a republic. On the cricket field, the polite anglophilic style of Bradman was replaced by the rise of a more combative, ‘anti-pom’ attitude associated with the Chappell brothers in the 1970s and the aggressive bowling of Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thompson.

**Conclusion**

Once established, the role of cricket in shaping national identities is an obvious one. International sides allow for the prominent display of the symbols and the sounds of the nation-state. In some cases, sport assists in
the manufacture of these states, becoming a national entity before they are. This is an effect of identity being created out of an antipathy to what already existed. The Australian, West Indian, and Pakistani wanted to infuse cricket with a separate set of values not because it would be a novel thing to do, but because they rejected the code of values that was already familiar with the sport. They wanted to play the game in a different way, to provide its essence with something unique, something that reflected changing political, cultural, and even geographical ideas.

Those who yearned to provide the sport with a different moral code and an alternative way of playing the game were ultimately embroiled in a political challenge to the status quo. For the Irish and the American, cricket was so wrapped up in colonialism that it was rejected for something more akin to national culture. For the nationalist movements in India, South Africa, and the Caribbean, however, cricket afforded the opportunity to inflict injury on English prestige, and then to directly challenge it through the installation of national, as distinct to alien, codes of values.

On independence, these oppositional forces became the authority and were mandated to reinforce identity, and more importantly to provide recognition and prestige to the nation-state. Sport provides the opportunity for the developing world to compete with the Western countries, where politics and economic strength do not. This has the consequence, however, of sport assuming such an importance to the national idea that it becomes the plaything of political authorities, and so nationalism moves from being an opposition to alien norms and values, to an authority that regulates rather than just influences cultural phenomena. At worse nationalism can play on the worst aspects of patriotism, reinforce stereotypes and create tensions, often in the interest of commercial concerns.

Finally, the re-establishing of norms and values into a new distinct ethos ensures that cricket survives and maintains its nuisances and idiosyncrasies in many ways that ultimately enrich the sport. That these factors are determined by the wider social environment in which they are created by dominant political and economic forces is as relevant to post-colonial society as it was under the colonial project. The privileged position of English cricket would survive the early thrust for national
self-determination. By 1993, for example, England (and Australia) could still veto proposals of the International Cricket Council (ICC), through the MCC it nominated the chairman of the ICC and provided both the administration and the headquarters of cricket’s ruling body. This allowed England a greater say in the government of cricket than any of its rivals. The end of cricket’s latest chapter and the reshaping of what was meant by the spirit of the game would be made alongside the replacement of England as the dominant power.

Notes

3. Ibid., 99.
5. Cited ibid.


19. Ibid., 87.


34. Patterson, Orlando. 1995. The ritual of cricket. In Hilary Beckles and Brian Stoddart, 103.
38. Cited ibid., 256.


58. Ibd., 90.


65. Ibid.
68. Rohlehr, Gordon. 1994. Ibid. 56.
70. Patterson, Orlando. 1995. The ritual of cricket. In Hilary Beckles and Brian Stoddart, 144.
71. Ibid., 145.