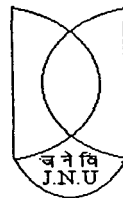# THEORIES OF NATIONALISM: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Submitted by
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CERTIFICATE

21 July 1999

It is certified that the dissertation entitled **"THEORIES OF NATIONALISM: A CRITICAL REVIEW"** submitted by **HOMAYOUN KHAJEHZADEH FINI** is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of this University, this dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree in this University or any other University and his own work.

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CONTENTS

Introduction:

Nationalism refers to the political belief that some of people representing a natural community should live under one political system. This political system should be independent of others and should have the right to demand equal standing in the world order with others. It refers also to any specific nationalist movements those which have not yet achieved statehood or have not achieved it as completely as they should. It is this link to incomplete statehood which distinguishes nationalism from patriotism, xenophobia, etc.

Historically modern nationalism can be traced back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was especially influenced by the French Revolution, Napoleonic conquest, and the nationalist revolutionary movement of the first half of the nineteenth century. The post-war settlements of 1918-19 with their emphasis on 'national self-determination' and the anti-colonial struggle of the period following the second world war were also influential in stimulating nationalist movements especially in areas of the world undergoing modernization, such as Africa and the Middle East.

Though, there is unanimity among writers about nationalism being a western construct, there exist wide variations regarding the understanding of the concept in its geographical growth. The concept carries different meanings when analyzed in the context of western and developing countries. This research is an attempt to critically analyze the ideas of some of the notable scholars of natinalism, who are known for their differing views. The attempt is not to provide any definition

for, what William Connolly in his book 'The Political Discourse' called, "an essentially contested concept". It is agreed that such an attempt will only lead to the creation of ungainly and internally self-contradictory mega-phenomenon that serve merely to depict a multitude of details that may or may not be logically related. The aim is to provide an understanding of the concept in two varying contexts – Western and developing societies. Developing societies, have their own national forms which are no mere reflection of the West. There is something specific about the formation of these nations. Just like the Western countries, they have their own individual character, not exactly identical to any other. It is true that nationalism emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century Western Europe. It was here that the principle of national sovereignty first developed with emphasis on representative institution, a centralized administration, fixed borders, popular identification with the state through education, national festivals, compulsory military service and a public jurisdiction. These general features characterize the modern principle of the nation state, a principle, which did indeed spread from Europe to rest of the world. As mentioned earlier just emulating what comes from the west, Western scholars from both the Right and Left fail to realize that utilizing the very categories of contemporary modern thought prevents the developing nations from constituting an autonomous discourse. They fail to ask why these nations have no alternative but to try to realize the Western project of modernity, despite the fact that the very realization of this project can only result in their continued subjugation.

Thus, this dissertation focuses itself on finding answers to the following questions.

(i) What is the nature of nationalism in the Western and in the developing societies?

(ii) How do the western scholars look at the nationalist movements in the developing countries? Is the vision necessarily blurred as the very tendency is to analyse nationalism and modernism together?

(iii) The developing countries being in their primary stage of industrialisation show distinct characteristics. How do we define nationalism in these countries? Are these features a blind copy of the West? Or are there any peculiar features associated with the nationalism of the developing countries?

In our work these questions are not confronted in a direct fashion. It is through the writings of the scholars such as Kedourie, Gellner, Anderson, Hobsbawm, Partha Chatterjee, Ashis Nandy that we have tried to address some of these questions in our work.

The first chapter examines the ideas of Elie Kedourie, a renowned scholar, who critically wrote about nationalism. Kedourie is skeptical about the imposition of fixed ideological patterns on the safety of the individual. His understanding of nationalism is articulated through a grid of anxiety and pathological concern. He defines nationalism as a doctrine, which claims to explain man, society and politics. The chapter deals with two streams of Kedourie's thought in two separate sections. The first section analyses his thought on nationalism in the Western countries. According to him, after the French Revolution, an ideological style of politics became attractive and popular and this ideological style was shared between nationalist movements to follow with other political movements. Further, that

political doctrines originating in Europe took hold in the rest of the world owing to the dominance of Europe. In particular, its technological power served to bring into intimate contact regions, which had for centuries, lived in relative isolation. To Kedourie it is the contact that prepared the ground for the development of nationalism in the colonies. Kedourie cites the example of Greek nationalism, which according to him is a very early instance of the diffusion of this ideology outside the West.

The second section examines his nationalist ideas in the developing societies. To him nationalism in Asia and Africa is intimately connected with the existence of European imperialism and colonialism. The connection exists because just as imperialism is the expression of finance Capitalism, so nationalism is on the one hand expression of industrial capitalism in Europe and on the other a reaction to European imperialism in the colonies and semi colonies, which finance capitalism has incited European states to establish. Kedourie's arguments get substantiated when he analyses them in the Indian context. He talks about the role of foreign language and the myth of the European superiority over the 'niggers'. He gives due credit to the eighteenth century Revolution of Western civilization for inspiring all revolution in Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia and nationalism in the context of developing countries.

The second chapter features the critical examination of three writers: Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm, who argue that the nationalism is a peculiarly modern phenomenon and that before nineteenth century the term nationalism in European culture had no political connotations. Since the rise of the nationalism as the global political norm has occurred only in he last two

centuries, it should be understood in terms of the great revolutions – industrial, democratic, rationalist - that are synonymous with the rise of modernity. While Gellner treat nationalism as a distinctly industrial principle of social evolution and social organization, Anderson considers it in the context of an 'Imagined community'. Modern nations are artefacts shaped by print capitalism whose new genres – the newspaper and the novel – make the nation imaginable. Gellner defines nationalism as "primarily a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent". To Gellner an agrarian society is marked by the absence of nationalism and the age of transition to industrialism was bound to be an age of nationalism. In his view, the economies of industrialized states depend upon a homogenizing high culture, mass literacy and an educational system controlled by the state. Benedict Anderson's treatment of nationalism in Asia and Africa under the title 'imagined community' evokes interest. For him there is nothing immanent or original about the nation. It is similar everywhere, though it uses different symbols. Anderson's insistence in his modular forms of New world creole and European nationalism which provides the basis for understanding anti-colonial nationalist movement. He argues that the historical experience of nationalism in western Europe, in the Americas, and in Russia had supplied for all subsequent nationalism a set of modular forms from which nationalist elites in Asia and Africa had chosen the ones they liked. Hobsbawm, on the other hand, does not regard the nation as a primary nor as an unchanging social entity. It belongs to a particular and historically recent period. While analyzing nationalism he insists on the view from below rather than the view from above. He relates the formation of nations to the requirement of capitalism

for large scale and centralized territorial and political units which will provide the necessary legal framework and market outlets. He makes a serious study of the concept by dividing the history of national movements into different phases.

The third and the last chapter is about interrogating nationalism, which analyses the ideas of two Indian writers: Partha Chatterjee and Ashis Nandy. It deals with non-western view of nationalism. Chatterjee presents a critique of the western theories of third world nationalism. He explores the central contradiction that nationalism in Africa and Asia has experienced: setting out to assert its freedom from European domination. However, it remained a prisoner of post-enlightenment. rationalist discourse. He places nationalist theory under the magnifying glass of discourse theory, which elucidates the links between power and knowledge, identifying how the very categories of social thought play an active role in domination and colonialism as brute military and economic strength. By doing so, Chatterjee is able to create a place for other voices, and to challenge the hegemony of orientalising categories which objectify and marginalise the history and ideas of the Other. Using the case of India, he goes on to show how Indian nationalism did effect significant displacements in the framework of modernist thinking imbibed from the west. Chatterjee argues for an independent approach to nationalism in the 'rest of the world'. He does not see India's nationalism as 'derived' form any of Anderson's modules. He pleads for freeing imaginations of the developing world from being colonized. Chatterjee demonstrates, what today is an essential eastern brand, the world of spiritualism. For him, anti-colonial nationalism crates its own domain of sovereignty within colonial society well before it begins its political battle with the

imperial power. It does this by dividing the world social institutions and practices into two domains – the material and the spiritual. The 'material' domain has been dominated by the west. However, the 'spiritual' domain remains a fundamental feature of anti-colonial nationalism in Asia and Africa. The position of woman attracted special attention from Chatterjee. Confining his discussion to Hindu middle-class Bengali women, Chatterjee tries to show that they were superior to western women. Ashis Nandy introduced a new stream of analysis by stressing upon the point that colonialism can not be identified with only economic gain and political power. Linking colonialism to psychology i.e. colonialism is a state in the colonizers and the colonized, he argues that in India a colonial political economy began to operate seventy - five years before the full-blown ideology of British imperialism became dominant. Nandy critically analyses the trends in Indian thoughts about nationaism. He notes the development of the idea of a monocultural nation state and that of nationalism in the early 1920's. Nandy analyses the contribution of noted Indians such as Bankim Chandra, Ram Moham Roy, Vivekanand etc. his excessive emphasis on Bengal is not because the Bengali culture is best illustrated and dramatized the colonial predicament in India's political, cultural and creative life, but also because it was in Bengal that the western intrusion was deepest and the colonial pressure longest. For Nandy, the idea of modern nation state entered Indian society in the second half of the 19th century along with the western ideology of nationalism. Most of the decolonised countries got the modern state before being constituted into a nation. And thus, problems still keep hunting them. He critically notes the shortfall of such a culture of imitation after fifty years of Indian independence. India presents a

picture of one of the most complex multi-ethnic societies in the world being governed by a modern state. It continues to grapple with two conception of histories, the civilization history of co-survival of communities and the political history of ethnic competition and concepts. Coming out of such a trap is a challenge that faces the country in the twenty first century.

This dissertation asserts that studying the concept of nationalism in the context of the developing societies requires an independent approach. This approach is not a blind copy of the western way of analysing it. It has its regional variations. To differentiate between 'good' and 'bad' nationalisms on the basis of the western model will be a setback to the whole process of studying it. The slide from patriotism to nationalism to chauvinism to jingoism is easy and often goes unsuspected. Thus, in the absence of a proper approach the very idea of analysing nationalism may go haywire.

Chapter I

NATIONALISM AS 'PATHOLOGY': UNDERSTANDING ELIE KEDOURIE

The spread of nationalism, or any other ideology, in a society can not be understood as a part of a historical teleology. To understand the spread, influence and operation of nationalism in a polity is to write a history of events, rather than merely of ideas. It is a matter of understanding a polity in its particular time, place and circumstances. It is also about following the activity of specific political agents acting in the context of their own specific and peculiar conditions. The coherence of contingent events is not the same as the coherence of contingent ideas, and the historian has to order his strategies accordingly. In light of this, the chapter critically examines the ideas of Elie Kedourie, a renowned scholar of nationalism.

Elie Kedourie, a former professor of Politics in the London School of Economics was always perplexed by the subtle shades within which great number of people classified themselves or were classified by others. Labels identifying the national affiliations of groups always worried him. His overriding concern was for the safety of the individual; he always saw clearly how this would be threatened by the imposition of ideological patterns. His understanding of nationalism is articulated through a grid of anxiety and pathological concern.

Nationalism in Western Countries:

In his book 'Nationalism', Kedourie explains how the spread of nationalism occurred in Europe and the rest of the world. According to him, after the French Revolution, an ideological style of politics became attractive and popular and this

ideological style was shared between nationalist movements to follow with other political movements. Further, that political doctrines originating in Europe took hold in the rest of the world owing to the dominance of Europe. In particular, its technological power served to bring into intimate contact regions, which had for centuries, lived in isolation.[1]

Kedourie defines nationalism as a doctrine, which claims to explain man, society and politics.[2] Nationalism is, also described by Kedourie as an ideology. He contrasts nationalism with constitutional politics. In constitutional politics, the object in view is to attend the common concerns of a particular society, to safeguard it against foreign assaults, to mediate disagreements and conflicts between various groups through political institutions, through legislation and the administration of justice. The constitutional politics also upholds the law as being above and beyond the sectional interests present in a society.

Ideological politics, on the contrary, is very different. Such a politics attempts to establish a state of affairs in society and state that satisfies everyone. Thus, the challenge for the ideologist is, to borrow Plato's analogy in the Republic, to look upon state and society as a canvas, which has to be wiped clean off all sorts of dirtiness, which obstructs justice, virtue and happiness.

The emergence of ideological politics in a modern and substantial sense can be traced to the time of French Revolution. It is always caught up in a perpetual disastrous and self – destructive tension between ends and means. Curiously enough, the

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1. Elie Kedourie, 'Nationalism', (Cambridge: Blackwell), 1994, pp.139-40.
2 Ibid., p.140.

ideological current in Western political thought was itself a response to a very unhappy state of humanity in modern Europe. There was a division between government and the governed. For the governed, government was an imposition from the outside, exerting an arbitrary force on its subjects. Subjects were seen by rulers as merely ciphers, only abstract numbers in the statistical tables on which remote and faceless bureaucrats based their policies. However, such policies, devised in a spirit of impersonal and all knowing benevolence, were in reality devoid of even the smallest spark of human sympathy or fellow – feeling. As a result, such a state operating on principles of this kind led to division and separation between its individual members who could have no feeling of community and solidarity with one another.[3]

Kedourie notes that division of this short led to a division of a different kind altogether. It was a division in the soul of each man – division between head and heart, between reason and feeling. Reason was a mere computing, classificatory faculty quite unable to speak to feelings. This led to frustration, to self stultification, and to a drying up of those imaginative powers – of that creativity which is man's glory distinguishing him from the rest of creation. Schiller's Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man, published in the 1790s – a key document in the annals of alienation indeed in many thinkers, whose thought became very influential in succeeding decades in Europe – contributed to the sense of alienation which the conditions of modern life created.[4]

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[3] Ibid, pp.xiv-xv.

[4] Ibid, p.xv.

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Accordingly, the ideologies of modern western political thought varied keeping in view the causes of such alienation. In the event, Kedourie notes the emergence of two quite powerful and prevalent, yet different ideologies in Europe, and later on in a wider world. One of these was nationalism, which, briefly, saw humanity naturally divided into nations, which were considered to be, the proper unit of political organization. In such a world, political organization did not follow this principle. Hence all the ills under which men suffered – oppression, alienation, and impoverishment of the spirit continued unabated. Nothing would go well with humanity unless each nation enjoyed an independent existence in its own state. Furthermore if each nation lived and fulfilled itself in its own state, then, as Mazzini argued, there would come about perpetual peace in the world. This ideological obsession worked itself out in European and in world politics in the hundreds years or so between 1848 and the end of the Second World War and its aftermath. This ideological obsession could not provide any remedy for the ills of alienation and oppression for which it purported to provide a cure.

All this confusion in the ideological front led to the birth of the concept of 'national self-determination', which emerged as the organizing principle of international order. Experience later revealed that contrary to the dreams of Mazzini and President Wilson, national self-determination was a principal of disorder, not of order, in international life. Kedourie tries to establish this argument in his work 'Nationalism'.

The philosophy of the Enlightenment prevalent in Europe in the eighteenth century held that the universe was governed by a uniform, unvarying law of nature. With reason man could discover and comprehend this law, and if society were ordered according to its provisions, it would attain ease and happiness. The law was universal, but

this did not mean that there were no differences between men; it meant rather that there was something common to them all, which was more important than the differences. It might be said that all men are born equal, that they have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, or, alternatively, that men are under two sovereign masters, 'pain' and 'pleasure', and that the best social arrangements are those which maximize pleasure and minimize pain. The state, on this philosophical view, is a collection of individuals who live together to secure their own welfare, and it is the duty of rulers so to rule as to bring about the greatest welfare for the inhabitants of their territory.[5]

According to this doctrine, the enlightened ruler regulated the economic activities of his subjects, provided them with education, looked after health and sanitation, supplied uniform and expeditious justice, and generally concerned himself with his subjects' welfare. The greatness of a state was the glory of its ruler, and a state could become great only in proportion to its population and to their prosperity.

On this view, then, the cohesion of the state, and loyalty to it, depend on its capacity to ensure the welfare of the individual, and in him, love of the fatherland is a function of benefits received. Such was the current opinion in Europe at the time when the French Revolution occurred.

For Kedourie, the French Revolution introduced new possibilities in the use of political power, and transformed the ends for which rulers might legitimately work. The Revolution meant that if the citizens of a state no longer approved of the political arrangements of their society, they had the right and the power to replace them by others

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[5] Ibid. p.2.

more satisfactory. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the Nation. With this argument in the background, Kedourie goes on to define Nation. Thus, the whole concept of nation is related to the citizens who are a part of it and their overall satisfaction.

A nation is a body of people to whom a government is responsible through their legislature; any body of people associating together and deciding on a scheme for their own government form a nation, and if, on this definition, all the people of the world decided on a common government, they would form one nation. But such an inference, though correct, is merely academic.

The new international law, then, could not abolish quarrels and wars. France was still France, a state among European states with ambitions and views, and possessing the power to enforce them on other weaker states. What the new principles did was to introduce a new style of politics in which the expression of will overrode treaties and compacts, dissolved allegiance, and, by mere declaration, made lawful any act whatever. By its very nature, this new style ran to extremes. It represented politics as a fight for principles, not the endless composition of claims in conflict. But since principles do not abolish interests, a pernicious confusion resulted. The ambitions of a state or the designs of a faction took on the purity of principle. Consciousness of right bred a righteousness which excesses could never destroy, but only confirm. Terrorism became the hallmark of purity: 'There is nothing', exclaimed St Just, 'which so much resembles virtue as a great crime.' It seemed, indeed, as though great crimes were the only way to ensure justice: 'There is something terrible', St Just also said, 'in the sacred love of the fatherland; it is so exclusive as to sacrifice everything to the public interest, without pity,

without fear, without respect for humanity What produces the general good is always terrible.'[6] This style, spread and established by a successful revolution, found increasing favour in Europe after 1789. Under its influence doctrines like nationalism were developed and perfected. But it was not the French Revolution only which tended to such a result. Another revolution, in the realm of ideas, worked powerfully to second its action. It was the idea about self-determination and other related ideas such as ethnicity and national identity.

Writers have concentrated on formulating ideas about ethnicity and national identity in course of their research on nationalism. According to Kedourie, the development of the idea of self–determination produced a major change in the way nationalism was perceived. For example Fichte's book 'The Close Commercial State' emphasised that the true individual freedom can be secured only in a state which regulates to the minute detail the life of its citizens. The individual leads a full, free, satisfactory life only if he and the state are one. Individuals, the theory says, merge their will in the will of the state, and in this merging they find freedom. They not only obey but give their active assent to the laws and actions of the state. Force in such a case is irrelevant. But this is the case of a perfect state. If, however, such a phraseology were applied to the less perfect state, the effect would be different. This phraseology would describe political matters in terms of development, fulfillment, self–determination, self–realization.[7]

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[6] Ibid, p.11.
[7] ibid, p.40.

Thus, freedom of man is realized by absorption within the state, because only through the state does he attain freedom and acquire reality. However, to Kedourie, this metaphysics will not come through a smooth and uneventful process. Rather, it will be the outcome of strife and struggle. It runs counter to the thought that the peculiarities, the idiosyncrasies, the differences, which distinguish individuals from one another need to be fostered and preserved. Universal harmony can only be obtained through each individual cultivating his own peculiarity, through each different species reaching the perfection of its mind.

For Kedourie, language is the means through which a man becomes conscious of his personality. Language is not only a vehicle for rational propositions, it is the outer expression of an inner experience, the outcome of a particular history, the legacy of a distinctive tradition. Every language is a particular mode of thought and what is cogitated in one language can never be repeated in the same way in another. Thus, language just like the church or the state, is an expression of a peculiar life, which contains within it and develops through it a common body of language.

From this, Kedourie draws two conclusions: first, that people who speak an original language are nations, and second that nations, must speak an original language. To speak an original language is to be true to one's character, to maintain one's identity.[8]

The test, then, by which a nation is known to exist is that of language. A group speaking the same language is known as a nation, and a nation ought to constitute a state. It is not merely that a group of people speaking a certain language may claim the

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[8] ibid.p.61.

right to preserve its language; rather, such a group, which is a nation, will cease to be one if it is not constituted into a state.

Kedourie explains this point in detail. Those who speak the same language are joined to each other by a multitude of invisible bonds by nature herself, long before any human art begins; they understand each other and have the power to make themselves understood more and more clearly and they belong together and are by nature one and inseparable whole. A nation, then, becomes a homogeneous linguistic mass which acts as a magnet for groups speaking the same language outside its boundaries, who are tempted to throw off allegiance to their state, and embark on sedition and civil war. Irredentism is a phenomenon, which appears following the propagation of nationalism. Again, if states must be formed of linguistically homogeneous nations, then in areas of mixed speech, the unity of the national state is definitely disturbed.

It is sometimes argued that there are two or more varieties of nationalism, the linguistic being only one of a number, and the Nazi doctrine of race is brought forward to illustrate the argument that there can be racial, religious, and other nationalism. But, to Kedourie, there is no definite clear-cut distinction between linguistic and racial nationalism.

In nationalist doctrine, language, race, culture, and sometimes even religion, constitute different aspects of the same primordial entity, the nation. The theory admits here of no great precision, and it is misplaced ingenuity to try and classify nationalism according to the particular aspect which they chose to emphasize. What is beyond doubt is that the doctrine divides humanity into separate and distinct nations. It

also claims that such nations must constitute sovereign state. It asserts that the members of a nation reach freedom and fulfillment by cultivating the peculiar identity of their own nation and by sinking their own persons in the greater whole of the nation.

Nationalism is also sometimes described as a new tribalism. The expression indicates that like the tribe, the nation excludes and is intolerant of outsiders. But such characteristics are common to all human groups, and cannot serve to define either tribe or nation.

Nationalist historiography operates, in fact, a subtle but unmistakable change in traditional conceptions. In Zionism[9], Judaism[10] ceases to be the raison d'être of the Jew, and becomes, instead, a product of Jewish national consciousness. In the doctrine of Pakistan, Islam is transformed into a political ideology and used in order to mobilize Muslims against Hindus. This transformation of religion into nationalist ideology is all the more convenient in that nationalists can thereby utilize the powerful and tenacious loyalties which a faith held in common for centuries creates. These loyalties can be utilized even when they are not explicitly spoken of.

Similarly, when nationalist historiography applies itself to the European past, it produces a picture of nations slowly emerging and asserting themselves in territorial sovereign states. It is, of course, undoubtedly the case that a number of territorial sovereignties succeeded in establishing themselves in Europe in modern times,

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[9] Zionism is a movement advocating the return of Jews to their homeland of Palestine. This movement assumed a political character, notably through Theodore Herzl's book Der Judenstaat(1896) and the establishment of the World Zionist Organisation(1897).

[10] Judaism is one of the world's major religions. When Zionism emerged in the late 19th century, both reformist and conservative Judaism supported it. A Jewish state was created in 1948.

and that gradually these sovereignties were strengthened and made durable by centralizing kings who were able to establish every where the authority of their agents and of their 'state'. But these sovereignties were far from being 'nations'.

How vital it is may be appreciated when we remember that France is a state not because the French constitute a nation, but rather that the French state is the outcome of dynastic ambitions, of circumstances, of lucky wars, of administrative and diplomatic skills. It is these which maintained order, enforced laws, and carried out policies; these which made possible at last the cohesive existence of Frenchmen within the French state. It is such things, which make possible the continuous existence of political communities, whether or not they are the 'nations' of nationalist theory. The matter becomes even clearer when nationalist historiography is made to deal, not with certain countries in modern Europe, where it has a kind of plausibility, but with countries in almost any other part of the world at almost any period of history.[11]

The inventors of the doctrine tried to prove that nations are obvious and natural divisions of the human race, by appealing to history, anthropology, and linguistics. But the attempt breaks down since, whatever ethnological or philological doctrine may be fashionable for the moment, there is no convincing reason why the fact that people speak the same language or belong to the same race should, by itself, entitle them to enjoy a government exclusively their own.

In the final analyses, Kedourie concludes, 'national self–determination' is a determination of the will and nationalism is a method of teaching the right determination

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[11] Elie Kedourie, op.cit. p.72.

of the will. Consequences of the spread of the doctrine, first among the intellectual and political classes of Europe, and then in other parts of the world can be dealt with.[12]

The first aim assumes that nationalism is not some inarticulate and powerful feeling, which is present always and everywhere; and that neither is it the 'reflection' of particular social and economic forces. Had it been either, there would have been no point in writing its history. The assumption, rather, is that nationalism is a doctrine, which is to say a complex of inter–related ideas about man, society and politics.

In the intellectual commerce of men, some idea or complex of ideas are formulated in response, or in opposition, to other ideas which are held to be inadequate, or obscure, or in some other way unsatisfactory or else, how an idea under stood in some particular manner comes, over time, to be understood in a very different, or even diametrically opposite, manner.

The argument is that the idea of self-determination, which is at the centre of Kant's ethical theory, became the governing notion in the moral and political discourse of his successors, notably Fichte. In Fichte's hands full self–determination for the individual came to require national self-determination.

In the modern world, with all its facilities for the diffusion of ideas and the indoctrination of masses, it is very often truer to say that national identity is the creation of a nationalist doctrine than that nationalist doctrine is the emanation or expression of national identity.

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[12] Ibid. p.76.

Marxism has purported to offer an explanation of nationalism, which makes it into an epiphenomenon, which appears at a particular stage of economic development, when the bourgeoisie and its capitalist mode of production are in the ascendant. Nationalism is an expression of bourgeois interests.

This is a manifest absurdity, since all the evidence shows that nationalism is not a 'reflection' of the capitalist mode of production, and that it can occur in societies which have the most varied social and economic structures. Marxists, of course, have come to see this and have ingeniously tried to accommodate nationalism within the Marxist scheme in a manner such as to avoid absurd and impossible conclusions. But these efforts have, not surprisingly, failed to carry conviction, since Marxism is impotent to break loose from the regimentation imposed by its founder's crude categories.[13]

Ernest Gellner's account is similar to Marxism in that it is a species of economism, i.e. of the belief that economic activity governs all other aspects of a society. Nationalism for it is a kind of force, or social movement which infallibly appears when a society is in the throes of industrialization.

Industrial societies are said to require mobility, literacy, and cultural standardization, and nationalism supplies these requisites. Nationalism is also said to be a movement which develops in the poorer parts of an empire in reaction to the wealth of the imperial rulers. Alternatively, it is said to be a response to, and a remedy for, the misery prevalent in the early phase of industrialism. Nationalism as a doctrine was articulated in German – speaking lands in which there was as yet hardly any

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[13] Ibid. p.142

industrialization, by writers who themselves were not aware that they were reacting to, or supplying a necessary requisite for industrialization.

A nation, again, becomes politically conscious and active when it is a class-nation or nation-class, 'a visible and unequally distributed category in an otherwise mobile system'. It is not very clear what this means. Is it perhaps similar to Frantz Fanon's argument, that the real class-struggle in the modern world is not that between capitalists and proletariat in an industrial society, but between oppressor-nations and the nations they oppress.

According to Anthony Smith, Kedourie aimed at a contextual understanding of European nationalism from its invention in early 19th century, the context, then, in which the example of French Revolution and the ideal of the German Romantics captured the imaginations of the frustrated youth, was specifically modern and European, and it involved a radical breakdown of traditional communities like the family and the Church, and their accompanying political habits. Here the social-psychological base is apparent: nationalist movement, he argues, are seemed to satisfy a need, to fulfill a want. Put it at its simplest, the need is to belong together in a coherent and stable community. [14]

Nationalism in the Developing Societies:

Elie Kedourie's ideas on the emergence of the ideas of the concept of nationalism in the developing countries can be discussed under the following sub headings.

1. Examination of the Existing Explanations :

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[14] Anthony D. Smith, 'Nation as Nationalist Consructs' in Gopal Balakrishnan, op.cit. p.185.

In the first instance Kedourie sets out to test the often repeated argument that nationalism in developing countries is a reaction against the European domination. Though there is almost unanimity among scholars about the validity of this argument, the nature of this domination, the precise manner in which it has elicited such a reaction, and the character of the reaction itself are issues on which the consensus is perhaps less general. Both the Marxists and the non-Marxists believe that the nationalism in the developing countries is the natural consequence of European exploitation of these areas, an exploitation, which took the form of imperialism. The central reason of imperialism is the extraction of profit from the labour of the indigenous people by whites by virtue of their control over the political machinery of the state. This notion of European or Western imperialism with its characteristic account of economic and political history, now looming so large in political controversy. [15]

Kedourie also examines the Marxist line of thought concerning the emergence of nationalism in colonial societies. He mentions, nationalism in Asia and Africa is intimately connected with the existence of European imperialism and colonialism. The connection exists because just as imperialism is the expression of finance capitalism, so nationalism is on the one hand the expression of industrial capitalism in Europe and on the other a reaction to European "Imperialism" in the colonies and "semicolonies" which finance capitalism has incited European states to establish. Nationalism is thus a phenomenon arising out of early capitalism, when the bourgeoisie in order to make sure of a large market for its capitalist operations works to establish a unified nation state. In an intelligent and stimulating easy on the sociology of imperialism

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[15] . Elie Kedourie (ed), 'Nationalism In Asia And Africa', (London: Weiden and Nicolson), 1971,p.3.

published in 1918-19 the economist Joseph Schumpeter has argued that the appetite of European ruling classes for conquest and overseas territories may be explained by the warlike traditions and antecedents of these ruling classes. And it is true that notwithstanding the industrial revolution, the foreign affairs of European states in the nineteen century were still in large measure being conducted either by a landed aristocracy unlikely to be much impressed with mercantile views and ambitions or by officials whose instinct and training led them to consider the state not as the representative of a particular class of society and of its interests, but rather as the somewhat remote arbiter, the ultimate judge between claims and pressures by different groups of subjects.

To substantiate his argument Kedourie cites the example of India. The British connection with India was at the outset governed by mercantile interest. The East India Company came to India in order to buy cheap and sell dear and make the largest possible profit for its shareholders. The decay of the Mughal power and European superiority in military and technical maters gave the company the opportunity to become a tax-farmer and ruler in Bengal, Madras, and elsewhere. The result of this contact did bring unsettlement and social disruption. However, it was not confined to Asia and Africa and was rather the consequence of modern economic activity everywhere. The bearing, therefore, of this argument on the question of European dominance is not obvious. Industrialization as it happened in Europe and North America, was very much a matter of individual inventiveness, initiative, and ambition, it is of course, reasonable to suppose

that public administration and state a activity in general may actively help or hinder the process.[16]

2. Negation of the Traditional Belief:

He concludes, that the notion that ' imperialism' conjures up nationalism in developing countries fails as an adequate explanation. It fails when "imperialism" is understood in the strict Hobsonian sense for reason set out above. But it has an even graver defect, since nationalism as a distinct political movement antedates "imperialism" as writers like Hobson, Lenin and Stalin describe it. It is generally agreed in fact that nationalism first appeared in Europe. England, where the new industrial system appeared early and where industrial organization went furthest in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, knew nothing of nationalist ideology. The nationalist ideology was formulated and proclaimed by numerous writers and political leaders in Germany, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans at a period when these areas had very little industry. The argument that there is a link between nationalism and economic conditions, particularly in areas like Asia and Africa and other developing countries sometimes appears an inarticulate form than that was envisaged by Hobson and Lenin. In this form it may usefully be described as a variant of economism i.e., of the view that political attitudes and activities are governed by economic conditions. If poverty contributes to the appearance or spread of nationalism, it does so only because poverty may rise, in certain circumstances, to insecurity and social strains making people open to a doctrine which purpose to provide for their distempers a sure diagnosis and a certain remedy. But the human condition being generally restless and

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[16] Ibid. p.17

insecure, poverty is only one of the innumerable justifications which men use when they break out in aggressiveness and destruction. Keeping this argument in the background Kedourie questions Professor Gellner point that it is the need for economic growth, which generates nationalism.[17]

According to Kedourie, the various theories and doctrines most frequently invoked to explain the origin and character of Asian and African nationalism seem then to be in some way or other inadequate and even misleading. This explanation holds that nationalism is simply a reaction to an alien rule. The explanation is indeed simple, but most defective. If it is taken seriously, it tends to make nonsense of world history, in which conquest has followed conquest and a ruler's nationality has been almost the last thing men have worried about. "If men had held their nationality and their language to be the most important fact of politics, there would have been no Roman Empire, no spread of Islam, no United States of America, no French or English language, and human groups would have been still frozen in their most primitive form."[18]

3. The impact of the European rule:

According to the writer, the European colonialism overseas particularly in the developing countries has been a point to be noted precisely because of the social disturbance it has created.

(a) The Economic Factor:

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[17] Ibid. p.17
[18] Ibid.

The destructive effect of European administrative methods where applied by European officials, as in India and Burma, or by native ones, as in the Ottoman Empire – was greatly magnified by the increasing involvement of these traditional societies with the world economy. These traditional societies were originally self-sufficient subsistence economies. Suddenly, they found themselves linked to a world market which brought them new and vast riches but which again was subject to speculation that remained completely outside their reach. It affected the rice cultivator of lower Burma or the cotton cultivator of the Egyptian Delta equally. Their remoteness and helplessness seemed generated a new and intense suffering.[19]

There is one significant aspect of this disturbance, which has to be particularly noticed. This disintegration of traditional societies, this bursting open of self sufficient economies could not fail to bring about in those who were subject to this process a serious and distressing psychological strain.

(b) Self-proclaimed superiority of the Europeans:

There is another peculiar characteristic of European influence that has to be noticed. Europe brought in its wake literacy as an ideal and as a technically feasible goal. Widespread or universal literacy, an indispensable concomitant of industrialism, was in Europe itself quite a recent phenomenon. But the very industrial system, which demanded it facilitated its spread far beyond the shores of Europe, since books and newspapers printed cheaply could now be as cheaply scattered by steamship and railway through out the colonies.

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[19] Ibid. p.24

For the colonial people, the new things which Europe brought, orderly and scientific administration, the new modes of economic endeavor, the literacy, proved that Europe was technically powerful and intellectually superior, while the traditional societies showed up so poorly in comparison. Literacy therefore generally meant discontent with existing conditions and a desire to adopt those European ' principles' which were thought to be the cause of European superiority.[20]

The introduction of education in the colonies was initially intended to fill up the bureaucracy with cheap 'clerks' as bringing their 'own' people for the same purpose from far away lands gradually proved to be very expensive. In turn the natives took it as an opportunity to come up in the social ladder. They expected equality with the imperialists after successfully completing the foreign mode of education. The racial discrimination continued as before in all walks of life. The revulsion, which educated natives felt at racial discrimination so opposed to the character of imperial rule, and so much at variance with what their European rulers had led them to expect, was gradually turned into disaffection. This disaffection was clothed in an ideology, which at once explained their confusion and restored their self-esteem.

For example, Gandhi in India rejected all European techniques, European institutions and European notions. It is the very backwardness of India, which constitutes its virtue. He said, "it was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre." It is this idea which Gandhi offered as the remedy of all ills.[21]

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[20] Ibid. p27
[21] Ibid. p.58

4. Comparison between Nationalism in Europe and in the Developing Countries:

Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It pretends to supply a criterion for the determination of the unit of population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate exercise of power in the state, and for the right organization of a society of states. According to Kedourie, "nothing more than this indicate the alien character of nationalism in Asia and Africa. It was neither something indigenous to these areas nor an irresistible tendency of the human spirit everywhere, but rather an importation from Europe clearly branded with the mark of its origin. Almost any Asian or African nationalism considered as a scheme of thought or a program of action, suffers from artificially, from seeming a laborious attempt to introduce outlandish standards and out of place categories, and nowhere do they seem more out of place than in trying to adopt the European category of the nation-state. Nationalist doctrine implicitly takes for granted and assimilates yet another feature of the European tradition. This is the prominent and abiding tendency of European politics to require and enforce uniformity of belief among the members of a body politic."[22]

Nationalist doctrine insisted that the individual has no identity apart from his nation, and that nations are known by their language, literature, culture etc. Nation by definition must have a past. The spread of nationalist doctrine in Europe has therefore evoked a lot of literary works. Historical in its form but apologetic in its substance, which claims to show the rise in remote times, the steady progress and development of this or

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[22] Ibid. p.36

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that nation, and the successive manifestations of its genius in religion, art, science and literature.

Kedourie cites the example of *Greek nationalism,* which according to him is a very early instance of the diffusion of this ideology outside the West. Their neighbors found in the nationalism of the Greeks an inspiration and a model which, because it was near at hand and seemed to have attained its goal, successfully mediated and powerfully reinforced the original European message. Again, not only is Greek nationalist ideology entirely derived from European sources, but it also followed, the changes in intellectual fashions, which took place in Europe. In this too it is a prototype of other nationalism. Kedourie illustrates this point by considering the transformations of Turkish nationalist ideology as it appears and spreads among the Greeks' Ottoman overlords. Here he elaborates a doctrine which substitutes for the traditional view which Ottoman society had of itself a novel account of the past. [23]

Kedourie observes the same problem being repeated in the case of Africa. The attempt to prove by history that Negroes are a people of ancient civilization and of great attainments exemplified this process. In the literature of African nationalism the imitation of passing European fashions is also observed.

The example of the Chinese people gives a new insight. They have only family and clan solidarity; no national spirit. Therefore, the great Chinese population can be compared with a reality of just a heap of loose sand. Why has China come to such a

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[23] Ibid. p.48

pass? "It is because of the loss of our nationalism", says Sun Yat-sen[24] in his fourth lecture, Therefore, if we go to the root of the matter, besides arousing a sense of national solidarity, we must recover and restore our characteristic, traditional morality. Only thus," he emphasized, "can we hope to attain again the distinctive position of our people." The same tendency of nationalist doctrine to assimilate a religion to the national folklore is observed in Zionism. The nationalist interpretation of the Bhagavad-Gita, arbitrary and ill-founded as it was, made it into a subversive book stocked by terrorist societies together with revolvers and sulfuric acid. A very good and apposite example of this process may be found in the writings of Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932). Pal goes so far as to make of the Gita a "messianic" document promising salvation by divine prodigies-a notion entirely alien to Indian thought. The masses, he says, had always believed in Krishna: "What they wanted was a practical application of the faith, not as a mere religious or spiritual force, but as a social, and, perhaps, even as a political, inspiration. Krishna stood too far away from the present. As God, he is no doubt present in spirit always and everywhere. The word 'Swaraj' is today commonly taken to mean political self-government and is inseparably associated with the struggle of the Congress Party to overthrow British rule. This word was originally a term of Hindu philosophy and meant the state of self-rule or self-control in which a man abstains from action and escapes from the painful and evil cycle of perpetual reincarnation. 'Swaraj' was borrowed by politics from the highest philosophical and religious literature of the people.

5. Power of the Marginal Men:

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[24] Founder of the Goumingdang. He was educated in missionaries and was for several years a US resident, trainaing as adoctor in Hong Kong. In 1895 he organised an unsuccessfull rising against the Qing dynasty in China and fled the country.

Kedourie observes that, when Europe came into extensive contact with Asia and Africa in the course of the last century, both the Europeans and those whom they came to dominate had a firm and profound belief in the superiority of Western culture and in its power to attract and assimilate alien bodies of people. Other cultures in the past had shown such qualities, had been found attractive by large numbers of conquered aliens, had evoked their devotion and loyalty.

For the writer, traditional domination brought oppression and devastation to India. But the devastation left the essentials of Indian life untouched, and the oppression did not penetrate into the soul. But once European rule was established and familiar, it did in fact begin to attract new classes of men who were convinced of the superiority of European civilization over the traditional ways of their own society, who rebelled against this society and wished to remake it in the likeness of Europe. This was the first impulse of the so-called "marginal" men. Such men were aware that they were deliberately breaking with the norms of their own society, but they did so in the belief that the European norms were superior ones. But the revulsion against Europe, the refusal to assimilate its civilization, the appeal to dark gods and their bloody rites, was not only the outcome of rebuffs and mortification suffered by those educated Asians and Africans who had asked for nothing better than to accept and be accepted by Europe. For not all Asians and Africans came under direct European rule, and not all those who came under this rule suffered these insults. There was the spectacle of Europe itself and the example and lessons which European powers provided for their overseas subjects.[25]

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[25] Elie Kedourie (ed), 'Nationalism In Asia And Africa', op.cit. pp86-92

In World War II the Japanese gave the people a surprise that was widespread and general. People had expected them to be quite different, stronger and more clever than the Netherlanders they had defeated. What people saw were barbarians who were often more stupid than they themselves. The old experienced Indonesian administrators of the colonial service felt only contempt for the political restrictions, which were placed over them. As a consequence, all layers of society came to see the past in another light. If these barbarians had been able to replace the old colonial authority, why had that authority been necessary at all?"

6. Illusion of Nationalism rooted in the past:

Nationalism rests on the assumption that a nation must have a past. It also rests on another assumption, no less fundamental, namely, that a nation must have future. This assumption is a variant of the idea of progress, which has been the dominant strand in modern European culture. Faith in progress has assumed many forms and variants, but essentially it is a belief that history will not let us down, that no catastrophe is final, no disaster irremediable. This is the prevailing note in modern culture. The appeal to the past, the idea that every nation is defined by its past and therefore must have a past to be defined by, underlies the doctrine of nationalism, and this strand of the European intellectual tradition was taken up by Asians and Africans.[26]

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[26] Ibid. p.93

All revolutions in Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa have taken inspiration from the eighteenth-century Revolution of Western Civilization. It may be true in strict logic that one revolution does not lead to another, that no revolution is inevitable, and that revolution need not be glorified as a social process.

CRITICAL ANALYSES OF KEDOURIE:

Gellner is highly critical of Kedourie whom he addresses as 'a declared enemy of nationalism'. He says, "it would be wrong to treat nationalism as a contingent, avoidable aberration, accidentally spawned by European thinkers. Rather nationalism is inherent in a certain set of social conditions; and those conditions, it so happens, are the conditions of our time. To deny this is at least a great mistake as to accept nationalism on its own terms."[27]

Arnold Hughes agrees with Kedourie that imperialism was not always a term of abuse and, certainly until the emergence of it in Africa at the beginning of this century, educated Africans considered it to be a beneficial and progressive force that would prepare African societies for eventual nationhood. However, according to him, Kedourie wrongly asserts that African nationalism appears only after World War II. Ideology of nationalism entered parts of Africa long before colonialism had carved out future colony states. As early as the end of the eighteenth century, black settlers from North America and the Caribbean in Freetown, Sierre Leone, were advocating rights to self-determination and displaying a form of racial nationalism, described as 'Africanism' at about the same time as nationalism was becoming a significant political force in

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[27] [27] Ernest Gellner, 'Nations and Nationalism', (New Delhi: Select Book Service),1986, p.125

Europe.[28]

Elie Kedourie has argued that religion and nationalism are incompatible. However, John Hutchinson argues that Kedourie oversimplifies the relationship between modern nationalism in at least three ways. Firstly, he neglects the close relationship between religion and pre-modern ethnic identities in many areas of the world. Secondly, he overlooks the religious as well as the secular roots of modern nationalism. Thirdly, he fails to do justice to the varieties of the world religions and their differential ability to accommodate or resist secular modernisation. Historically, ethnic and religious identities have been closely interwined, with the latter providing the former with origin myths, sacred symbols and rites, language, literature, diets and dress, heroes and heroines, and territorial sites of historical significance.[29]

Anthony Smith has criticized Kedourie on various grounds. Firstly, Kedourie argues that self-determination is the essence of nationalism. Smith asks "Is Kedourie's thesis an explanation at all, or merely an illuminating empirical tautology?" The general tenor of Kedourie's argument lacks any attachment with determinism of needs. Instead he gives a historical determinism of ideas, of the 'spirit of the age'.[30]

Secondly, Smith objects to the 'mechanism of imitation' of Kedourie and asks, "why is nationalism, form all that the 'west' has to offer, so affects the intelligentsia?" Close inspection of the 'imitation mechanism' in Kedourie reveals a curious uncertainty over the concept itself. It does not take into account the issue of

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[28] Ibid.pp.124-5
[29] John Hutchinson, 'Modern Nationalism', (London: Fontana Press), 1994, pp.69-71.
[30] Anthony D Smith, 'Theories of Nationalism', (London: Duckworth), 1983, p.35.

voluntarism. Thus, the need, therefore, is of a special explanation, over and above the 'imitation mechanism', for the addiction to nationalism.[31]

Smith objects to Kedourie's idealist methodology. According to the former, Kedourie's total account derives nationalism from the convergence of three contingent causal chains; the Kantian philosophical dualism, the exclusion of German intelligentsia form the affairs of the state and the breakdown of traditional ways and stable communities. In practice, however, it is the first chain bears the greatest weight, and the political and social chains become dependent on the intellectual.[32] The results, according to Smith, form a gulf between thought and action, between philosophy and politics.

Kedourie suggests an inverse connection between the success of doctrines like nationalism, and the degree of resilience and 'preparedness' of family, neighbourhood and religious community. Since, this is the only test he provides, the criteria for deciding the degree of these variables and the manner in which hey may be operationalized must be known. Kedourie does not make them clear. According to Smith, it is also possible that family and religious ties contribute to the strength and permanence of the nationalist venture.[33]

Smith critically analyses the ethics of nationalism by taking for granted Kedourie's portrait of nationalist doctrine as founded on the two ideas of language and the will of people. It assumes that the age preceding nationalism knew nothing of principles, and that its conflicts were simply motivated by territorial, economic or

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[31] Ibid. p.36.

[32] Ibid. p.37.

[33] Ibid. p.140.

political gain. This assumption cannot explain the wars of religion in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[34]

According to Smith, Kedourie overlooks completely the advantages and blessings of nationalist revivals. He selects those features of nationalism which stress the elements of secret conspiracy, terrorism, ruthless reprisals against collaborators, and above all, a restless nihilism and totalitarianism. Though, these are the features of some nationalisms, they must be discussed along with the extreme situations in which they operated.[35]

Kedourie forgets the uses of nationalism in developing countries, the way in which they can legitimate new regimes desirous of maintaining political stability and keeping a divided population under a single and viable harness. He forgets the example of nationalism providing an impetus to constitutional reform (India, Ottoman Turkey), and its uses in legitimating sweeping social change and modernization (Japan, China and Kemalist Turkey).[36]

According to Smith, Kedourie treated nationalism as the outcome of the spirit of an old age in which old communities and traditions had fallen to the onslaught of Enlightenment doctrines. In spite of this Kedourie extended this strictly 'modernist' analysis in two directions. The first was spatial and sociological. In attempting to explain why native elite in Africa and Asia adopted the Western ideals of nationalism, Kedourie developed a diffusionist model. In that model both western institutions and ideas were spread to other continents by the regimenting effects of modernizing colonialism and the

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[34] Ibid. p.12.
[35] Ibid. pp.13-4.
[36] Ibid. p.14

western education of indigenous intellectuals, who then suffered discrimination at the hands of colonials administration in their native lands. Secondly the original analysis is extended back in time. In returning to 'cult of the dark gods', African and Asian intelligentsia were nevertheless, imitating not only historicism of European intellectuals, but also their revolutionary chiliasm, the belief in the perfectibility of this world, which had its roots in visions of Christian millennialism.[37]

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[37] Gopal Balakrishnan, op.cit. p.186.

Chapter II

NATIONALISM AND MODERNITY: MULTIPLE 'HISTORIES' AND VARIED 'TRAJECTORIES'.

Few political phenomena have proved as confusing and difficult to comprehend as nationalism. There is no established consensus on its identity, genesis or future. So we are in a process of either being thrust back into a nineteenth century world of competitive and aggressive great powers and petty nationalism, or being flung headlong into a new globalised and supra-national millenium. It appears at times that the nation state has outlived its usefulness and exhausted its progressive and emancipatory role. At other times it appears as if nationalism always been implicated in an exclusivist ethnic and military logic.

The concept of 'nationalism' is a product of modern European history. It is difficult to divide the history of 'nationalism' between the old age and present day Europe. To understand nationalism and its role in general, we need to relate it to the recent history of Europe. 'Nationalism' preferably is an aspect of modernity, particularly when the relationship between nationalism and the development of the modern state is considered. It is also clear when the concept is examined in relation to the West and non-western countries.

In modern history, 'nationalism' is a movement in which the nation-state is regarded as paramount for the realization of social, economic, and cultural aspirations of a people. Nationalism is characterized principally by a feeling of community among a people, based on common descent, language, and religion. Before the 18th century, when nationalism emerged as a distinctive movement, states usually were based on religious or dynastic ties; citizens owed loyalty to their church

or ruling family. The beginnings of modern nationalism may be traced back to the disintegration of the social order in Europe, at the end of the Middle Ages, and of the cultural unity of the various European states. The cultural life of Europe was based on a common inheritance of ideas and attitudes transmitted in the West through Latin, the language of the educated classes. All Western Europeans adhered to a common religion, Catholic Christianity. The breakup of feudalism, the prevailing social and economic system, was accompanied by the development of larger communities, wider social interrelations, and dynasties that fostered feelings of nationality in order to win support for their rule. National feeling was strengthened in various countries during the Reformation, when the adoption of either Catholicism or Protestantism as a national religion became an added force for national cohesion.[1]

The great turning point in the history of nationalism in Europe was the *French Revolution.* Until then, National feeling in France had centered on the king. As a result of the revolution, loyalty to the king was replaced by loyalty to the *patrie* ("fatherland"). Thus, after that *"La Marseillaise,"* the anthem of the French Revolution became the national anthem. It begins with the words "March on, children of the fatherland". When in 1789 the medieval French Estates-General, consisting of separate bodies representing the clergy, the aristocracy, and the common people, was transformed into a National Assembly, France achieved a truly representative system of government. Regional divisions, with their separate traditions and rights, were abolished, and France became a uniform and united

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[1] Frederick Hertz, 'Nationality in History and Politics',(London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1966, p.31-4.

national territory, with common laws and institutions. French armies spread the new spirit of nationalism in other lands.[2]

The rise of nationalism coincided generally with the spread of the Industrial Revolution, which promoted national economic development, the growth of a middle class and popular demand for representative government. National literatures arose to express common traditions and the common spirit of each people. New emphasis was given to nationalist symbols of all kinds; for example, new holidays were introduced to commemorate various events in national history. The Revolution of 1848 in Central Europe marked the awakening of various peoples to national consciousness. In that year both the Germans and the Italians originated their movements for unification and for the creation of nation-states. Although the attempts at revolution failed in 1848, the movements gathered strength in subsequent years. After much political agitation and several wars, an Italian kingdom was created in 1861 and a German empire in 1871. Other Central European peoples who agitated for national independence in 1848 include the Poles, whose territory was divided among Russia, Germany, and Austria; the Czechs and the Hungarians, subjects of the Austrian monarchy; and the Christian peoples living in the Balkan Peninsula under the rule of the Turkish sultan. The events in Europe between 1878 and 1918 were shaped largely by the nationalist aspirations of these peoples and their desire to form nation-states independent of the empires of which they had been part. The war fulfilled the national aspirations of the Central European peoples.

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[2] Ibid. p.323.

When the U.S. entered the war, President Wilson proclaimed the principle of national self-determination as one of the major issues of the conflict. As a result of the war the rule of the dynasties in Turkey, Russia, Austria, and Germany was ended, and in Central and Eastern Europe a number of new nation-states arose, notably Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia), and Hungary. Others such as Romania were greatly enlarged. Nevertheless, nationalist problems continued to disturb Central and Eastern Europe. Many of the new nation-states contained national minorities who demanded independence or changes in frontiers. The conflicting claims of German and Polish nationalism became the immediate cause of the outbreak of *World War II*. The inflammation of nationalist passions during and after World War I led also to the rise of fascism and National Socialism. This system served as a means of destroying opposition and of integrating all the resources of the nation for the realization of a program of national aggrandizement. Because such a program conflicted with the vital interests and even the survival of other nations, a general war in Europe became inevitable.

The Soviet Union, although it had been established by means of a movement proclaiming international ideals, resorted to national aggrandizement in the 1940s. The anthem of international communism, "*The Internationale*," was replaced by a new Soviet national anthem, and the USSR sought to make the Communist parties of all nations serve the Soviet national interests. [3]

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[3] Ibid. p.262-70.

Another far-reaching effect of World War I was the rise of nationalism in Asia and Africa under the impact of Western ideas and industrialism. Asian nationalism was also inspired by the example of Japan, the first Far Eastern country to assume on its own initiative the form of a modern nation and to win, in 1905, a war against a Western power, the Russo-Japanese War. After World War I the Turks, under the national leader Mustafa Kemal (later Ataturk), defeated the Western allies and modernized their state in the spirit of nationalism after the European model. During the same period, in India, Gandhi deeply stirred the aspirations of the Indian masses for national independence. In China the leader of the *Kuomintang* (Nationalist People's Party), *Sun Yat-sen*[4], inspired a successful national revolution. Because all these movements were directed against the Western European powers, they were supported by Soviet communism. World War II hastened the growth of nationalism in the colonial countries. The British, French, and Dutch empires in eastern Asia were overrun by the Japanese, who widely disseminated the nationalistic slogan *"Asia for the Asians."*

The colonial powers were weakened further by the military and economic consequences of the war and by the expansion of Soviet power. In its propaganda, the Soviet Union emphasized mainly the right of the colonial countries to national self-determination and independence. Britain, influenced by the liberal tradition in politics, willingly granted independence to India, Pakistan, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Burma (now known as Myanmar), Malaya (now part of Malaysia), and the Gold Coast (now Ghana). Similarly, the U.S. granted independence to the

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[4] Peter Teed, 'Dictionary of Twentieth Century History (1914-1990), (New york: Oxford University Press), 1992, p.449.

Philippines. The Netherlands relinquished control of the Netherlands Indies, which became the Republic of Indonesia. France lost possession of its colonial empire in Indochina. By 1957 nationalism had asserted itself throughout Asia, and the colonial empires there, with the exception of that of the Soviet Union, ceased to exist. In the postwar period, nationalist movements developed and won many successes, particularly in Africa and in the Middle East. By 1958 newly established nation-states in those regions included Israel, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, the Sudan, Ghana, the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria), and Iraq. In the 1960s and '70s the Algerians, Libyans, and many formerly British, French, or Belgian colonies in black Africa became independent. As the 1990s began, nationalism remained a potent force in world affairs. Competing Jewish, Arab, and Palestinian nationalist aspirations continued to generate political instability in the Middle East. In Eastern Europe, where nationalist passions had largely been held in check since World War II, the decline of Communist rule unleashed separatist forces that contributed to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia and threatened the integrity of other countries.

This chapter examines three authors from a large gamut of writers on the concept of 'nationalism'. All of them have considered 'nationalism' as a modern project. They are Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric J. Hobsbawm.

INDUSTRIALIZATION, MOBILITY AND NATIONALISM: REFLECTION ON GELLNER'S IDEAS

Ernest Gellner in his argument defines 'nationalism' as "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent."[5] Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment. A nationalist movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind.[6] Existence of two parts, nation and state, is very important to Gellner. He defines nations as if they have a common culture, where culture is identified as a system of ideas and sign and association and way of behaving and communicating. The people described as belonging to the same nation if they recognize each other as members of the same nation. In relation to state, he refers to the discussion of Max Weber on the definition of state.[7] Most important aspect of modern state, by which he means the centralized western state, in his view constitutes one highly distinctive and important elaboration of social division of labour. Where there is no division of labour, one cannot even begin to speak of the state. So the problem of nationalism does not arise when there is no state. He argues nationalism is to be expected when both aspects are together. One without the other is incomplete and constitutes a tragedy.

Gellner's exposition on nationalism begins with the distinction between the agrarian and industrial stages of human history. He denies the existence of nationalism in agrarian societies.[8] He relates the nationalist project, as mentioned

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[5] Ernest Gellner, 'Nations and Nationalism', (New Delhi: SelectBook Service Syndicate),1986, p.1.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid. p.3.
[8] Ernest Gellner, 'The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation; The Myths of Nation and Class', in Gopal Balakrishnan(ed.), 'Mapping the Nation', (London & New York: Verso), 1996, p.100.

before, to the process of industrialization. He examines power and culture in agrarian societies. He says that power and culture are two potential partners in nationalism but neither has much inclination for the other in the conditions prevailing in the agrarian age. In agrarian societies, there was always a cultural gulf between the rulers and the ruled. High and low cultures existed at the same time with diversity of spoken languages.

Agrarian high culture use to be dominated by a minority of privileged specialists, and distinguished from the fragmented, majority low folk cultures. On the contrary, they tend and strive to be trans-ethnic and trans-political. They frequently employ a dead or old-fashioned idiom, and had no interest whatsoever in ensuring continuity between it and the idiom of daily and economic life. Minority in number and their political dominance were of their essence. The majority, constituted by the food-producers were excluded both from power and from the high culture. They were tied to a faith and church than to a state and widespread culture. The consequence of this situation is that an agro-literate society constitutes a system of stable statuses. The possession of a status, and access to its rights and privileges, is by far the most important consideration for a member of such a society. A man is defined by his rank. This is quite different from the society, which was to replace it, in which a man is defined by his culture, and or his wealth, and where rank is considered temporary. [9]

Gellner insisted that in agrarian society there is no consequence for the relationship between culture on the one hand and political legitimacy and boundaries

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[9] Ibid.

of states on the other. Generally there will be very little such connection between the two spheres. It constitutes a system of differentiated ranks and statuses. The cultural difference showed similar dramatic discontinuities of dress, speech, and consumption. Peasants are quite liable to speak a language literally different from that of the nobility, military or bureaucracy. In nineteen-century Russia, the upper strata of society differentiated themselves from the rest by an extensive use of French language. Gellner concludes that in such societies, shared culture is seldom a basis for the formation of political units. The term nation, if used at all, is more likely to denote a loose corporate body. People in this kind of society have plural and cross-cutting membership and loyalties, some of them perhaps vaguely related to what later came to be called nationality, but most of them bearing no relation to it. There is great cultural diversity, and there are complex political units and groupings but the two sets of linkages have no clear or important relationship to each other. Political hierarchies and cultural networks simply are not related and united by something called nationality.

Gellner argues that an industrial society, in contrast to an agrarian society, requires a homogeneous system of education that merges the high and low culture, either by imposing the high culture on the population or by upgrading a low culture to a high culture. It is during this homogenization process that nationalism is generated. Nature is no longer available as a source of legitimating principles of the social order. In fact economic growth is the first principle of legitimacy of this kind of society. Any regime, which fails to attain and maintain it, is in trouble.[10]

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[10] Ernest Gellner, 'Nations and Nationalism', op.cit. pp.19-38.

In Gellner's view, the age of transition to industrialism was bound to be an age of nationalism. It is bound to be a period of turbulent readjustment, in either political boundaries, or cultural ones, or both were being modified so as to satisfy the new imperative, which now, for the first time, was making itself recognized. Then he put forward models of the generic working of industrial society. In this regard he refers to Max Weber's famous essay (The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism). According to Weber the notion of rationality must be central and important. In Weber's notion of rationality, Gellner sees two elements: orderliness and efficiency. Industrial society is the only society ever to live by and relay on sustained and perpetual growth, on expected and continuous improvement. in the requirements of modern economy, which depend on mobility and communication between individual. So the economy needs both the new type of central state and central culture. Nationalism becomes pervasive and dominant only under these social conditions.

According to Gellner's view, economic change requires cultural homogeneity and the demand for cultural homogeneity, and the state apparatus to provide it is what provides impetus to nationalism. The argument runs as follows. Because industrial economies continually make and put into practice technical and organizational innovations, they continually change how they employ resources, especially human resources. Their occupational structures change significantly in a generation at most, and often more quickly, so no one can expect to follow in the family profession. In Agrarian society, training which are largely tacit and physical could be left to families or guilds. They are tied up with the rituals and social context

of the trade, and different parts of the same society could be almost unintelligible to one another. None of this will be relevant in an industrial society in which training must be much more explicit, be couched in a far more universal idiom, and emphasize understanding and manipulating nearly context-free symbols (even manual work increasingly becomes controlling a machine). It must, in short, take on the characteristics formerly associated with the literate High Cultures of Agrarian, and moreover, this training must be received by the entire economically effective population. (A rough definition of an industrial society might be: one where one can learn a trade from books, a society of reference manuals.) So far, such training on such a scale has always needed at least elementary literacy, and it hasn't been reliably provided by any institutions weaker and smaller than states. Moreover, the teachers employed by this system must themselves be trained in the same High Culture, and so on. They must quickly escalate to the point where the culture needs an entire university system, at the least, to be self-sustaining. States become the protectors of high cultures, of ``idioms''. Nationalism is the demand that each state support and contain one and only one nation, one idiom.[11]

To be without such an idiom is to be cut off from all prospects of a decent life. To have the *wrong* idiom, adds the constant humiliations of being a stranger, outcast, isolated, constantly doing ``the wrong thing''. Thus the passion behind nationalism derives, not from some atavistic feeling of tribal belonging, but from the hope of a tolerable life, or the fear of an intolerable one. Faced with a difference between one's own idiom and its utility for success, people either acquire

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[11] Ibid.

the latter, or see that their children do (assimilation); force their own idiom into prominence (successful nationalism); or fester. Thus industrialism begets nationalism, and nationalism begets nations. [12]

On the issue of language, Gellner argues that the Old World contained several thousand dialects, each of which could have been the basis of a formalized literary language. It can be put in a different set of words: industrialism demands a homogeneous High Culture. A homogeneous High Culture demands an educational system; an educational system demands a state to protect it and the demand for such a state is nationalism.

Gellner suggests a typology of nationalism built on a model combining three inputs: distribution of power, access to education, and ethnic division.[13] In the agrarian society, it is only the powerful, who have access to education. Thus, ethnic division does not present a problem. But the cultural homogenization required by industry sets in. It gives rise to the problem of uneven access to power and education between groups that lend themselves to ethnic demarcation. This, in turn, gives rise to nationalism and determines its form. If some groups have little access to both power and education, they will form their own nationalism in opposition to their rulers. This is Gellner's first model, called Habsburg or Balkan, which he finds has been copied in twentieth-century Africa, south of the Sahara. If the powerless get access to education and are able to unite into an ethnic majority within a culturally divided society, one gets the classical liberal Western nationalism of the Italian or German kind. This is

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[12] Stein Tonnesson & Hans Antlov (eds.), 'Asian Forms of the Nation', (Syrrey: Curzon),1998, p.4.

[13] Ibid. pp.88-109.

his second model. If the powerless are better educated than the powerful, but represent a minority without a specific homeland, one gets Gellner's third type, diaspora nationalism of the Jewish and overseas Chinese and the Indian kind.

CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF GELLNER'S THESIS

Gellner's work has been subjected to a lot of criticism by scholars. It is important to take note of those critical views in order to understand Gellner.

Authors point at the lack of precision in Gellner's work. They claim that it is not very clear as to when the transition from agrarian to industrial society took place in the various parts of the world. So there is the fear that his readers will be left with the assumption that twentieth century African and Asian nationalism is a kind of delayed repetition of what happened in Europe when it was industrialised. Thus, there is a little prospect of understanding of either Asia or the nationalist phenomenon with such a preconceived notion.

Gellner has virtually nothing to say about industry the needs of economic enterprise. His chapter on industrial society deals only with culture. He simply assumes that educational homogenisation reflect industrial need. Implicitly, he seems to define industrial society as a society with a standardized form of education. This identification of industry and school prevents him from taking into account the homogenising capacity of standardising system of education in pre- industrial China, Korea, Japan and Vietnam. It also prevents him from taking full account of how western style teaching in European colonies influenced local nationalism.

The application of Gellner's theory to the developing countries is limited by the inadequate recognition of the way in which the international state

system has compelled societies everywhere to seek integration through nationhood. It cares very little whether these nations are industrialised or not. Gellner's thesis is built on imbalances within each single industrialising society. International factors such as the role of European colonialism, American or Soviet inspiration, are not included in his model. He tends to forget that these are of tremendous importance to the developing countries. [14]

Anthony Smith argues against Gellner's model of an agrarian empire which he says, had no place, or at best a marginal place in the evolution of nationalism in the world. According to him, such sense of identity has encompassed different estates within a particular region. Instead he argues that the agrarian empire model does not comprehend all the features of agrarian societies. There are also more complex relations between different groups than can be allowed in the agrarian model. He goes on to classify different types of ethnie, for example distinguishing between lateral-aristocratic and vertical-demotic types. One can see how such a distinction could link closely between that made, for central Europe, between 'historic' and 'non-historic' nations, between dominant culture groups such as the Magyars and subordinate culture groups such as the Slavs.[15]

Another series of criticisms focus on the problem that arises when attempt is made to relate Gellner's argument of nationalism with industrialism. First,

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[14] Stein Tonnesson & Hans Antlov (eds.), op.cit. p.6.

[15] Ibid. pp.9-12.

many nationalist doctrines and many nationalist political movements developed in societies, which had yet to undergo this transformation to industrialism. Second, only parts of the world have undergone this transformation, yet one can find the development of broadly shared national sentiments in parts of the world, which have still not reached this stage. Commercial agriculture, mass education, and modern systems of communication can all produce many of the effects Gellner relates to industrialism. Even if dependent upon industrialism elsewhere (both as a model and as the provider of resources) this does weaken the relationships which are specified in Gellner's theory. So there are two points here: there are means of diffusing a national culture in non-industrial societies; and there are politically significant forms of nationalism in non-industrial societies. The third point is that, nationalism as a specific political movement is often quite weak in culturally homogeneous industrial societies in modern nation-states. Therefore, one has to separate a number of different things, in particular, the relationship between nationalism (as opposed to participation in a broadly shared national culture) and industrialism is no where near as strong as Gellner's account suggests.[16]

NATION AS AN IMAGINED COMMUNITY: UNDERSTANDING ANDERSON

In a fascinating study titled 'Imagined Communities, Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism', Benedict Anderson defines nation as an

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[16] Ernst B. Hass, 'What is Nationalism and Why Should We Study it?', International Organisation, vol.40, no.3, Summer 1986, pp.723-5.

'imagined political community' as both inherently limited and sovereign. According to him, "the aim of the book is to offer some tentative suggestions for a more satisfactory interpretation of the anomaly of nationalism"[17]./Anderson argues that the nation is a cultural construct, not in the sense of building on historical tradition but in that of being collectively imagined by all those viewing and listening to the same media, sharing the same mental idea about the nation and its surrounding world. Thus, there is nothing immanent or original about the nation. It is similar everywhere, though it uses different symbols. However, it always considers itself antique, imagining itself awakening from sleep. It is 'imagined' because "members of the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in minds of each lives the image of their communion."[18] Thus, in spite of this ignorance there exists a bond between people which holds them together. Describing this factor, he argues that, neither language, nor ethnicity nor religion is sufficiently held in common, to explain what a nation really is. Thus, nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness; it invents nations where they do not exist. Thus, shared symbols and exclusiveness mark the nation off other political constructs/This fascinating view holds the interest of the reader whose sole definition of nation revolved around the concept of commonality of culture, tradition and similar language.

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[17] Benedict Anderson, 'Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism', (London: Verso), 1991, p.4.

[18] Ibid. p.6.

"The author's purpose in writing the book is important for understanding the argument. He wishes to instruct his fellow Marxists by telling them that nationalism is not inconsistent with revolutionary commitment, is not a bourgeois anachronism, and ought therefore to be taken seriously as an omnipresent historical phenomenon with an uncertain half-life. His task is to explain how revolutionary Marxist states (China, Kampuchea, Vietnam) can fight old-fashioned imperialist wars against each other. This, to be sure, may not be news for the non-Marxists."[19]

He imagines the nation as imaginary as it is the largest of all communities. It encompasses a large number of human beings. It has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. The nation is also imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which the enlightenment and revolution was destroying the legitimacy of divinely ordained, hierarchical dynastic rule. The nation is also imagined as a community as, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in some of the nations, each of them is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.

Anderson uses the word 'imagine' as almost similar to 'see' or 'visualize' and he necessarily does not imply false-consciousness. It does not mean fabrication. His point is a much deeper than that of a simplistic conspiracy theorist. "In fact all communities larger than primordial villages of face to face contact are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style by which they are imagined."[20]

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[19] Ernst B. Hass, op. Cit. p.718

[20] Stein Tonnesson & Hans Antlov (eds.), op.cit. p.8.

These days it is perhaps more difficult to organise people into a world in which there is any respect for a sort of dynastic rule. A monarchy is fundamentally different from all modern concepts of political life. Kingship organises everything around a high centre. Its legitimacy derives from divinity, not from populations, who are its subjects not citizens. In contrast to this, the modern conception of state sovereignty is fully, flatly and evenly operative over the entire area of a demarcated territory. Earlier the borders of the states used to be porous and indistinct and in no period of time states merged into each other due to a variety of reasons. However, paradoxically, those kingdoms had a complete control over its immensely heterogeneous and non-contiguous population for a long period of time. These monarchical states expanded not only by warfare, but also by inter-marriages of royalty. Through the general principle of verticality, dynastic marriages brought together diverse populations under new rulers. Thus, with little in common to share between them, the population was generally bound by a sense of nationalism, which kept the kingdom together until it underwent change. That a community is 'imagined' does not mean it is "imaginary'. All communities larger than villages (where people meet face-to- face) are to be imagined. In pre- nationalist societies there were two main larger cultural systems: the religious community and the dynastic realm. The religious communities were not territorial but were held together by sacred languages, and the dynastic realm was linked to a dynasty, not to an ethnic group or nation. The prevailing concepts of time and space were concrete, complex and rooted in nature, and built around sacred or dynastic centres. At this juncture new and far more rigid concepts of time and space were disseminated. The idea emerged that history is a

chain of causes and effects, and people got histories attached to a designated homeland. A new consciousness linking an abstract, empty, homogeneous and chronological time to the fate of a people living within a rigidly demarcated, mapped geographical space, was spread through print capitalism: book publishing and newspapers. Where Gellner's focus was on education, that of Anderson is on the media. For Anderson, the great cultural-religious communities, from medieval Christendom to the Islamic Umma and the Middle Kingdom, were held together by elites who communicated through a medium of sacred languages: sacred because these communities of the elites were communities of signs nor sounds.[21]

Anderson turns into a poet while describing nationalism. "...The century of the Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism, brought with its own modern darkness. With the ebbing of religious belief, the suffering which belief in part composed did not disappear. Disintegration of Paradise: nothing makes fatality more arbitrary. Absurdity of salvation: nothing makes another style of continuity more necessary. What then was required was a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning. As we shall see, few things were better suited to this end than an idea of nation. If nation states are widely considered to be 'new' and 'historical', the nations to which they gave political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and still more important, glide into limitless future. It is the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny."[22] Like Gellner, Anderson offers three but different, types of nationalism: Creole Linguistic (or vernacular) and

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[21]Ullock J. Christopher, 'Imaginig Community: A Metaphysics of Being or Becoming?', Millennium: Journal of International Studies, vol.25,no2,1996. p.429.

[22] Benedict Anderson, op.cit. p.11.

Official. In his view, these were the three models shaped in America and Europe, and which became available to people in other places from about the second decade of the nineteenth century. Twentieth-century nationalism in Asia and Africa could draw on more than a century of human experience and three earlier models of nationalism. His terminology 'activates' those at the receiving end.

Anderson cites the example of the 'Creole Pioneers' of the North and South America and the early European nationalist movements to prove that nationalist communities are almost always spontaneous. There may be cases when they are not as in the case of parts of Europe in the latter part of the nineteenth century when an attempt was made to impose a national language and culture for imperialist purposes. However, in such cases also the express intention was a part of the deeper, and far less self-conscious, purpose of retaining the power of the old order. The very fact that rulers, who used this strategy, failed to grasp the potentially subversive implications of what they were doing is indicative of this.

According to Anderson, subsequent nationalisms differed from those of the 'Creole pioneers' in two important respects. First, while in America the geographical limitations on pilgrimages by the state functionaries were central to the formation of a fraternity of elites, nationalism in Europe was of a decidedly more populist character due to the promotion and amalgamation of spoken vernaculars to the level of 'national print-languages'. Second, Anderson links the phenomena of nationalism to the material interests of the literate middle classes of state functionaries, intellectuals and petty capitalists. He maintains that it is impossible to understand why appeals from the middle classes to the illiterate masses were so

powerful without understanding the major difference between American and European nationalism: namely, the emotional impact of both American and French revolutions on the popular imagination. Consequently with the advent of the print-capitalism and the rise of mass literacy, the experience of both revolutions immediately became a more recognizable thing which generated a host of new realities: popular sovereignty, democracy, nation states, and in due course became a model or blue print holding great mass appeal.[23]

When revising Imagined Communities in 1991, Anderson regretted that he had overestimated the emulative capacity of the local nationalists in the colonies and underestimated the active role of European colonial administrations in shaping the framework for the last-wave nations. But apparently he did not regret having disregarded the impact of pre-national conditions, or traditions, in the various parts of Asia and Africa on each national form. His emphasis on modern 'imagining' led him to downplay the limits as to what could be imagined by a significant number of people in each specific place. It is easier to imagine a new kind of community if it resembles one that has already been imagined by one's parents or teachers. Each nation therefore tends to become a mixture of borrowed models and local inherited imaginings. Together they firm what Benedict Anderson once described as a 'unique amalgam', which gives each nation its individuality. Admittedly, when Benedict Anderson used the term 'unique amalgam' which gives each nation its individuality. It was not about a national individuality but about Javanese conceptions of politics.

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[23] Ibid.p.432

He saw Javanese political culture as having its own distinctive character, radically different from the European one.

Anderson's Treatment of Nationalism in Asia and Africa:

Anderson deals with the rising of nationalism in the colonial territories of Asia and Africa. To him it was in response to the new style of global imperialism, which was made possible by the achievements of industrial capitalism. Capitalism also helped to create, popular and vernacular based, nationalism in Europe.

Anderson notes the development of nation states after the end the First World War. After the end of the World War II, the nation state tide reached its heights. A number of new nation states came into existence. According to him, the nation building process of the new states is marked by a genuine, popular nationalist enthusiasm and a systematic instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations etc.[24]

Anderson notes the importance of the concept of 'pilgrimage' or movement, undertaken by people to receive some education or training in the metropole. Initially these journeys were undertaken by few people. However, after the middle of the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century, these journeys involved huge and variegated crowds. This happened mainly because of three reasons.

1. The enormous increase in physical mobility made possible by astonishing achievements in the field of transport – railways, steamships etc.

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[24] Benedict Anderson, 'Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism', op.cit. pp. 113-4.

2. The bigger size of the European empires necessitated purely metropolitan or even Creole bureaucracies were neither recruitable not affordable. Thus, need was for bilingual clerks who world serve as mediators between metropolitan nation and the colonized people. Thus, pilgrims swelled.

3. The spread of modern style education the value of which began to be appreciated by the colonized population.[25]

Anderson states that the intelligentsia were central to the rise of nationalism in the colonial territories. The vanguard role of the intelligentsia was derived from their bilingual literacy. Their education in the foreign language gave them access to modern western culture. They gradually learnt about the models of nationalism, nation-ness, and nation-state.[26]

According to Anderson, a characteristic feature, that marked the emerging nationalist intelligentsia in the colonies off the European nationalists, was their youth. In the colonies, it is the young people who led the rise of nationalism. Youth meant 'schooled youth'. Thus, it emphasizes the unique role played by the colonial school-systems in promoting colonial nationalism. He cites the example of Indonesia where in complete contrast to traditional, indigenous schools, government schools formed a colossal, highly rationalized, tightly centralized hierarchy, structurally analogous to the state bureaucracy itself. In indo-china, the colonial masters followed an educational policy which,

(i) aimed to break existing politico-cultural ties between the colonized people and the immediate extra Indo-chines world,

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[25] Ibid. pp.114-6.
[26] Ibid, p.116.

(ii)   aimed to produce a carefully nurtured mass of French-speaking and French-writing Indo-chines to serve as a politically reliable, grateful and acculturated indigenous elite.[27]

To Anderson, it is the print-language that invents nationalism, not a particular language per se. It is always a mistake to treat language in the way certain nationalist ideologues treat them as emblems of nation-ness. Most important thing about language is its capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect particular solidarity. Anderson cites the example of Indonesia, where only after the language 'bahasa indonesia' adopted the Roman script, people started learning it.[28]

Anderson insists that the twentieth-century nationalism have a profoundly modular character. They receive inspiration from three earlier models of nationalism. The very idea of nation is nestled firmly in virtually all print- languages; and nation-ness is virtually inseparable from political consciousness. In a world in which the national state is over whelming norm, all of this means that nations can be imagined without linguistic communality.

As with increasing speed capitalism, transformed the means of physical and intellectual communication, the intelligentsia found ways to bypass print in propagating the imagined community, not merely to illiterate masses, but ever to literate masses reading different languages.[29]

CRITICAL ANALYSES OF ANDERSON'S VIEW

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[27] Ibid, pp.124-6.

[28] Ibid, p.134.

[29] ibid. p.140.

Benedict Anderson has dealt with the conceptions of space in his study of nationalism. The nation as he describes is much more a spatially unified entity than any organizational structure of culture preceding it. However, his model tends to downplay other impulses leading to conflicts between cultures and family groups as it prioritizes the nationalist distinction. [While his analysis provides a vast multiplicity of actual examples of the development of the nation and its consequences, it does not offer many solutions to questions about the conflicts erupting after the nation has established itself.]

Anderson insists that his "modular" forms of New World creole and European nationalism do provide the basis for understanding anti-colonial nationalists movements. From the perspective of the anti-colonial actors, Anderson is right, if not original; the precedent of modern national statehood in all its forms certainly inspired them and the New World "pioneers" were particularly exemplary as rebels against what appeared to be the same kind of distant European empire which they were facing. On the side of British rulers, New World decolonisation also provided a formal model of devolution from colony through "responsible" internal cabinet government, to virtually independent dominion status. This procedure was developed with regard to Canada to avoid another "American Revolution" in the 1830's and then applied to other white settler territories in Australasia and South Africa. And it would eventually provide the procedural basis for the 'moving Asians', Africans, and the peoples of he Caribbean and Pacific Islands to political autonomy. But from an analytic observer's stance, especially with the perspective of postcolonial

developments, these movements have a very different quality from those of European

lands, whether at home or overseas. [30]

The originality of Anderson's analyses is derived less from his set of

models.(It fails to account for the original colonizing nation-states of Britain) France

and Holland. But rather from his evocation of "print-capitalism" as the basis for

linking face-to face local communities with a larger whole sharing the same

constructed macro-culture. (On this basis, he argues that colonized peoples derived

their national identity from only one of the original three models, the "Russian " or

"official nationalism" imposed by an authoritarian state apparatus upon an initially .

passive population! In an appendix to the second edition of his book Anderson makes

an additional case for the role of modern inscriptive practices. These are represented

by colonial census-taking and map-making, in reifying the often arbitrary units of

land and population placed under particular colonial regimes (or just outside them in

the case of Thailand). (But what he fails to see is the lack of interest on the part of

these same colonial regimes, in imposing any homogeneous sense of cultural identity

upon the inhabitants of these newly defined spaces.[31])

The possibility of imagining the nation arises only when three ancient

cultural traits weaken: a particular script language loses its monopoly on conveying

the truth, monarchs lose the status of semi divinities, and conceptions of time cease to

confound cosmology and history. The one development most responsible for the

breakup of cultures based on these ideas was movable type in the hands of private

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[30] Ernst Hass, op.cit. p.718.

[31] ibid.

enterprise publishers seeking a mass market for their wares among people, who were not versed in the universal sacred language. Anderson continues with a conventional account of the independence movements of the late 18th century in the western hemisphere. He links incipient nationalism to discrimination against colonials by the metropolitan country, yet making little use of the neat proposition about language and "print-capitalism." But his language remains the core ingredient of the argument he makes for Eastern Europe. Here by the middle of the 19th century, "marginalized vernacular-based coalitions of the educated", looking westward, found a "model" to be emulated. The design of the nation-state was there to be seen and copied Rulers responded to the pressure by converting vernacular languages into official languages, which was the sole legitimate of public discourse in multiethnic stares. While this pleased some coalitions and alienated others, it had the effect of extending the scope of the political community by encouraging hitherto inert groups to participate politically, if only to protest. At this point two paths could be taken: the further development of the model into a democratic-populist one, or an alternate that Anderson labels "official nationalism," invented in Russia and England and widely copied everywhere since. Official nationalism deliberately selects key themes of nationhood and foists these of the population by appropriate policies of education, recruitment, reward, and punishment, always making use of the official language. Linked with notions of racism and appropriate economic incentives, official nationalism becomes the imperialism practiced by Europe after 1870. However, Anderson's argument is not a restatement of the about the "good" and "early" West European variety of nationalism as against the "bad" East European variety. This

argument has been made by Hans Kohn, Arnold Toynbee, and Elie Kedourie. When the intellectuals of Asia and Africa came into their own in the 20th century they chose official nationalism, especially the Marxist revolutionaries. Each newly independent intelligentsia, determined to builds its own state follows similar policies, including imperialism. The future is evoked but not clarified by Anderson; he implies that nationalism will be around as long the state remains with us, but he hedges his arguments. 'Imagined Communities' does not claim to offer a theory. It is more on highly subjective interpretations of nationalist poetry than on statistics of social mobilization. Some of the vignettes of Southeast Asian nationalists and their thoughts, are marvelous, as are tidbits of information on language policy. But the ensemble does not add up to a coherent argument. Next to nothing is said about nationalism in the countries that provided the first models –France, America, Britain, Germany. Only the imitators are treated, and Anderson fails to explain why certain features on the exemplar nations were chosen and not others. Pointing out historical continuities is a legitimate task, though it provides no legitimate warrant for focussing on nationalism.[32]

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF NATIONALISM: ANALYSING THE VIEWS OF ERIC HOBSBAWM

Renowned historian Eric Hobsbawm in his pioneering work 'Nations and Nationalism since 1780, Programmes, Myth, Reality' deals with the concept of 'nationalism' relating directly it to the politics of our time. He pointed out that as a

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[32] ibid. pp.718-9.

historian he has been interested in the development of nationalism.)"For historians are to nationalism what poppy-growers in Pakistan are to heroin addicts: we supply the essential raw material for the market.[Nations without a past are a contradiction in terms. What makes nation is the past; what justifies one nation against others is the past and historians are the people who produce it."]

He pointed out that the conflicting definitions of 'nation' are so pronounced that 'agnosticism is the best initial posture of a student in this field'. He asserts that his study of nationalism 'assumes no a priori definition of what constitutes a nation'. Nevertheless he does offer a tentative definition of the term 'nationalism', arguing that while it may be very difficult to define what the nation really is, it is less difficult to discover what nationalists believe it to be. His definition of nationalism follows Ernest Gellner's as 'primarily a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent'.[34] This is hardly an exhaustive, or even a very sympathetic, definition of the term, but he draws from it a most important inference. It follows from this definition, he claims, that obligation to the nation 'overrides all other public obligations, and in extreme cases (such as wars) all other obligations of whatever kind.'.[35]

Throughout the book he is highly critical of nationalism, arguing that the power of nationalist thought and sentiment has reached its zenith and is now in long-term decline. 'It would be absurd,' he acknowledges, 'to claim that we are

[33] Gopal Balakrishnan(ed.), op.cit. p.255.
[34] E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Nations and Nationalism since 1780',Programme, Myth and Reality', (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1997, p.9.
[35] Ibid.

anywhere near the day when this is universally accepted, but he holds out the hope that 'it can at least be envisaged.' Because nationalism is past its peak, he argues, '"nation" and "nationalism" are no longer adequate terms to describe, let alone to analyse, the political entities described as such, or even the sentiments once described by these words.'

Most people would find Hobsbawm's predictions premature, a point he himself willingly concedes. Nevertheless, one does not have to agree with these views to accept that the terms 'nation' and 'nationalism' are problematic. Moreover, the emphasis on the transitory nature of nationalist sentiment as well as thought does remind us, as Hobsbawm seeks to do regularly throughout Nations and Nationalism Since 1780, that nations are not permanent.

Hobsbawm does not regard the 'nation' as a primary nor as an unchanging social entity. It belongs to a particular, and historically recent, period. It is a social entity in so far as it relates to a certain kind of modern territorial state, the 'nation state'. Thus, he finds it pointless to discuss nation and nationality except so far as both relate to it. He readily agrees with Gellner who says, "Nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent...political destiny, are a myth. Nationalism which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: that is a reality."[36] Thus in short, for the purposes of analyses, nationalism comes before nations. Nations do not make states and nationalisms, but the other way round. In relation to this Hobsbawm develops the concept of 'invented tradition'. He defines

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[36] Ernest Gellner, 'Nations and Nationalism', op.cit. pp.48-9.

this concept as "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual and symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past."[37]

In Hobsbawm's account national cultures are inventions in both their content and form. Firstly, they form out of a creative process of selection and composition of the past, and although it is claimed they express continuities with ancient values and institutions, they evoke entirely novel meanings. Secondly, the symbols take on a different significance through the modern ritual and institutional, forms through which they are communicated that arise with industrialisation and the state centralisation. As a Marxist, Hobsbawm links the political invention of the nation to the needs of the capitalism and of a rising bourgeoisie seeking hegemony and coming in to competition with old established groups and religious belief systems.

Nationalism is a political programme, and in historic terms a fairly recent one. It holds that the groups defined as nations have the right to, and therefore ought to, form territorial states of the kind that have become standard since the French Revolution. Without this programme, nationalism is a meaningless term. In practice the programme usually means exercising sovereign control over a continuous stretch of territory with clearly defined borders inhabited by a homogenous population that forms its essential body of citizens.[38]

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[37] Yael Tamir, 'Liberal Nationalism', (New Jersey:Princeton University Press),1993, p.64.

[38] Gopal Balakrishnan, op.cit. p.256.

"Nationalism, or rather, to use the more lucid nineteenth century phrase, the 'principle of nationality', assumes 'the nation' as given, just as democracy assumes 'the people' as given. In itself it tells us nothing about what constitutes such a nation, although since the late nineteenth century... it has increasingly been defined in ethnic-lingustic terms."[39] Hobsbawm in his work 'Nations and Nationality since 1780' had talked about 'revolutionary-democratic' and 'liberal' versions of principles of nationality. However, they do not fit into the bases of the recent description although there are overlaps. "Neither language nor ethnicity are essential to the original revolutionary nationalism, of which the USA is the major surviving version. Classical nineteenth-century liberalism was the opposite of the current search for a definition of a group identity by separatism. It aims to extend the scale of human social, cultural, political units: to unify and expand rather than to restrict and separate." This is the reason why the third world national liberation movements found the nineteenth century traditions, both liberal and revolutionary-democratic, so congenial. "Anti-colonial nationalists dismissed, or at least subordinated, 'tribalism', 'communalism' or other sectional and regional identities as anti-national and serving the well-known imperialist interests of 'divide and rule'. Gandhi and Nehru, Mandela and Mugabe, or for that matter late Zulfikhar Bhutto who complained about the absence of a Pakistani nationhood, are or were not nationalists in the sense of Landsbergis or Tudjman. They were exactly in the same wavelength as Massimo d'Azeglio who said, after Italy had been politically unified: 'We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians', that is, out of the inhabitants of the peninsula who had

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[39] Ibid. p.257.

all sorts of identities, but not one based on a language they did not speak, and a state that had come into existence over their heads. There was nothing primordial about Italianness, just as there is not about the South Africanness of the ANC."[40]

For Hobsbawm, the 'national question' is situated at the point of intersection of politics, technology and social transformation. Nations exist not only as functions of a particular kind of territorial state or the aspiration to establish one, but also in the context of a particular stage of technological and economic development. Nations and their associated phenomena must be analysed in terms of political, technical, administrative, economic and other conditions and requirements. Thus, his importance is on the analyses from below. The assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people must be taken into account. Here, he chooses to criticize Gellner. "If I have a major criticism of Gellner's work it is that his preferred perspective of modernisation from above, makes it difficult to pay adequate attention to the view from below.[41]

He concedes that the view from below, i.e. the nation as seen not by governments and the spokesmen and activists of nationalist movements, but by the ordinary persons who are the objects of their action and propaganda, is exceedingly difficult to discover. "Fortunately, social historians have learned how to investigate the history of ideas, opinions and feelings at the sub-literary level, so that today, we are less likely to confuse, as historians once habitually did, editorials in select

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[40] Ibid.

[41] E.J. Hobsbawm,'Nations and Nationalism since 1780', op.cit.,p.11.

newspapers with public opinion. We do not much for certain. However, three things are clear.

First, official ideologies of states and movements are not guides to what it is in the minds of most loyal citizens or supporters. Second, and more specifically, we cannot assume that for most people national identification- when it exists- excludes or is always and ever superior to, the remainder of the set of identifications which constitutes the social being. In fact, it is always combined with identifications of other kind, even if it is felt to be superior to them. Thirdly, national identification and what it is believed to imply, can change and shift in time, even in the course of short periods." Thus, according to him this is the area of national studies in which thinking and research are most urgently needed today.[42]

The development of nations and nationalism within old established states such as Britain and France, has not been studied very intensively, though it is now attracting attention. The existence of this gap is illustrated by the neglect, in Britain of any problems connected with English nationalism, compared to the attention paid to Scots, Welch, not to mention Irish nationalism. On the other hand there have in recent years been major advances in the study of national movements aspiring to be states. "National consciousness" develops unevenly among the social groupings and regions of a country: this regional diversity and its reason have in the past been notably neglected. Most students would, incidentally, agree that, whatever the nature of the social groups first captured by 'national consciousness,' the popular masse-workers, secants, peasants are the last to be affected by it." He divides the

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[42] Ibid.

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history of national movements into three phases. "In nineteenth- century Europe, for which it was developed, phase A was purely cultural literary and folkloric, and had no particular political or even national implications, any more than researches of the Gypsy Lore Society have for the subjects of these inquires. In phase B we find a body of pioneers and militants of 'the national ides' and the beginnings of political campaigning for this idea." Phase C begins when- and mostly before-nationalist programs acquire mass support, or at least some of the mass support that nationalists always claim the represent. "The transition from phase B to phase C is evidently a crucial moment in the chronology of national movements sometimes, as in Ireland, it occurs before the creation of a national state; probably very much more often it occurs afterwards, as consequence of that creation. Sometimes, as in the so-called Third World, it does not happen even then." Nationalism requires too much belief in what is patently not so. "As Renan said: Getting its history wrong is part of being a nation. Historians are professionally obliged not to get it wrong, or at least to make an effort not to. To be Irish and proudly attached to Ireland- even to be proudly Catholic-Irish or Ulster Protestant Irish- is not in itself incompatible with the serious study of Irish history. To be a Fenian or an Orangeman, I Would judge, is not so compatible, any more than being a Zionist is compatible with writing a genuinely serious history of the Jews; unless the historian leaves his or her convictions behind when entering the library or the study. Some nationalist historians have been unable to do so."[43]

Habsbawm in a more recent article on Nationalism and Ethnicity in Europe, points out that, "If there is any standard criterion today of what constitutes

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[43] Ibid, pp.11-2.

nation with a claim to self-determination, that is, to setting up an independent territorial nation-state it is ethnic- linguistic, since language is taken, where ever possible, to express and symbolise ethnicity." There are times when ethnicity turns into separatist nationalism. This happens due to the same reason as colonial liberation movements established their states within the frontiers of the preceding colonial empires. They are the frontiers that exist. "Only more so, for the Soviet constitution itself had divided the country into theoretically ethnic territorial sub-units, ranging from autonomous areas to full federal republics. Supposing the Union fell to pieces, these were the fracture lines along which it would naturally break. It was a curious joke that it was Stalin who gave Lithuania its capital city, and Tito, who in order to weaken the great Serbian chauvinism, created a much larger Croatia with a much larger Serbian minority."[44]

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF HOBSBAWM:

For modernists like Hobsbawm, one of the core ideas of nationalism is the doctrine of popular sovereignty. The nation is equated with its masses. Hobsbawm admitted the existence of a popular identity of belonging to 'Holy Russia' developed in conflict with the Muslim Turk as expressed in the Cossack epic tales in the early seventeenth century. But according to, Hutchinson, there is little or no evidence that the masses before the nineteenth century were aware of a national identity. Some historians like Marc Blozh, Johan Huizinga trace the formation of a popular national consciousness in the European Middle Ages. But Walker Connor accuses them of relying on the evidence of a few members of the political and intellectual elite. In the

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[44] Gopal Balakrishnan, op.cit. p.262.

pre-modern societies literacy was confined to the privileged status groups. Even the existence of distinctive languages or other cultural traits can not be taken as indicators of national identity. It is the awareness of having a common culture on origins that constitutes nationality.[45]

Modernists like Hobsbawm agree that central to nation are the ideas of unmediated and equal membership deriving from the Enlightenment and embodied first in the French Republic, notably though citizenship rights. Thus, one criterion of nation of formation for societies avowedly wedded to the idea of popular sovereignty is the willingness of ruling elite to subordinate their class interests to their national allegiance by admitting the masses to the democratic franchise. Hobsbawm himself points to the strong challenge posed to national identity by class loyalties, particularly where – as in the case of Slovak Lithuanians, and Flemish – the latter had formed first. Thus the nation is continually challenged by other loyalties in the modern wold.[46]

Hobsbawm maintains that nations will disappear as political units as industrialization become international and global. They only had a transitional role in breaking down of localism. This assumption suffers from two drawbacks according to Hutchinson.

(a) Hobsbawm fails to understand that nationalism arises not just as means to achieve modernity, but rather to (re)create a sense of distinctive identity and autonomy that will enable populations to survive in a modern world in which unpredictable change is the norm.

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[45] John Hutchinson, 'Modern Nationalism', (London: Fontana Press), 1994, pp.11-2.
[46] Ibid, pp.13-5.

(b) To assume that the progress of industrial society will result in the triumphant formation of societies integrated by reason and socio–economic progress is curious in a century, which has witnessed global wars, mass murders and genocidal frenzies of Hitler and Stalin. It is this enhancement of threat produced by modernization that helps to explain the spread and deepening of ethnic politics, manifested in modern nationalism.[47]

Regarding the question of ethnicity, Hobsbawm sympathizes with Frederick Barth's boundary approach to ethnic groups. Barth treats ethnic groups as groups of self-ascription, which develop identities through dichotomization with others. Cultural symbols are proposed not to express a commitment to the fundamental values, but rather to effect a differentiation of the group from others. Thus they have a functional rather than an essential significance. Smith rejects this and argues that return to a golden past by nationalists motivated not just by ambition but by a quest for identity and direction at times of moral and social crisis created by the erosion of established belief systems and social structures by modernization. Since nationalism is a multi-class movement with a limited range of symbolic repertoires, themes must have a general resonance and cannot be explained in socially reductive terms.[48]

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[47] Ibid, pp.21-2.
[48] Ibid, pp.27-8.

Chapter III

INTERROGATING NATIONALISM IN NON-WESTERN SOCITIES

One approach to study nationalism can be in terms of viewing this concept in the background of the colonial rule. Nationalism can be a product of the reaction of the colonised people against their colonial masters. On the other hand the same concept can be said to have been developed in the colonised country as a result of the contact between the colonial and the colonised country. This chapter examines the ideas of two outstanding Indian scholars on nationalism: Ashis Nandy and Partha Chatterjee. Both of them agree that nationalism essentially is a western construct. However, there is lot of variation when the concept travels to non-western societies. This chapter critically evaluates the work of these authors.

NATIONALISM IN THE NON-WESTERN WORLD: DOMESTICATIONS 'ENLIGTENMENT'?

Partha Chatterjee, a leading Indian political philosopher has critically evaluated the Western theories on Third World nationalism - both liberal and marxist. He demonstrates how western theorists, with their emphasis on the power of reason, the primacy of the hard sciences and the dominance of the empirical method have assumed that their presuppositions are universally valid, and, through the impact of Western education, have imposed concepts of nationalism on non-Western peoples to the detriment, if not destruction, of their own world-views.

He argues that the field of discourse has to be approached as a battleground for political power. According to him, the Indian nationalist thought accepted defeat from the start by accepting the universality of the Western framework of

knowledge. This process involved the acceptance of the essentialist concepts of "East" and "West", which were a legacy of Enlightenment thinking. Chatterjee argues that Indian nationalism tried to articulate a sovereign discourse in the image of the Enlightenment and failed to do so.[1] The colonial encounter involved redefinitions of self and the other, and the nationalist discourse could not go further than producing the "reverse of Orientalism.[2]

The author explores the central contradiction that nationalism in Africa and Asia has consequently experienced: setting out to assert its freedom from European domination, yet it remained a prisoner of European post-Enlightenment rationalist discourse. According to the author, in the 1950's and 1960's, nationalism was still regarded as a feature of the anti-colonial struggle in Asia and Africa. However, by the 1970's nationalism had become a matter of ethnic politics, the reason why people in third world killed each other.

Nationalism in recent times, according to him, is viewed as a dark, elemental, unpredictable force of primordial nature threatening the orderly calm of civilized life. Like drugs, terrorism and illegal immigration, it is one more product of the third world that the West dislikes, but is powerless to prohibit. However, the author notes, not long ago, nationalism was considered to be Europe's most magnificent gifts to the rest of the world. He agrees that nationalism was entirely a product of the political history of Europe. Despite the subtitle of his first book being 'nationalism, a derivative discourse?', Chatterjee does not see India's nationalism as "derived" from any of Anderson's modules. It can be recalled that Anderson insisted that his modular forms of

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[1] Partha Chatterjee, 'Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse', (Delhi: Oxford University Press), 1986, p.17.

[2] ibid, p.34.

New World creole and European nationalism provided the basis for understanding anti-colonial nationalist movements. He had argued that the historical experience of nationalism in Western Europe, in the Americas, and in Russia had supplied for all subsequent nationalism a set of modular forms from which nationalist elites in Asia and Africa had chosen the ones they liked.[3]

Chatterjee objects to Anderson's arguments. "If nationalism in the rest of the World have to choose their imagined community from certain 'modular' forms already made available to them by Europe and the America's, what do they have left to imagine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the post-colonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europe and the America's, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anti-colonial resistance and post-colonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized.[4]

To Chatterjee, anti-colonial nationalism creates its own domain of sovereignty within colonial society well before it begins its political battle with the imperial power. It does this by dividing the world social institutions and practices into two domains- the material and the spiritual. The material is the domain of the."outside," of the economy and of state-craft, of science and technology, a domain where the West had proved its superiority and the east had succumbed. In this domain, then, Western superiority had to be acknowledged and its accomplishments carefully studied and replicated. The spiritual, on the other hand, is an "inner" domain bearing the "essential" marks of cultural identity. The greater ones success in maintaining Western skills in the material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of ones

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[3] Partha Chatterjee, 'The Nation and Its Fragments, Colonial and Postcolonial Histories', (Delhi: Oxford University Press), 1994, p.4.

[4] Gopal Balakrishnan, 'Mapping the Nation', (London & New York: Verso), p.216.

spiritual culture.[This formula is a fundamental feature of anti-colonial nationalism in Asia and Africa.[5]]

Chatterjee highlights several areas within the spiritual domain that nationalism transforms in the course of its journey, confining his illustrations to Bengal. First such area is that of language. He concedes that Anderson was right in his suggestion that it is print capitalism which provides the new institutional space for the development of the modern national language. However, he highlights the cases of Bengali books and drama to show that the specificities of the colonial situation do not allow simple transposition of european patterns of development.

Alongside the institutions of print capitalism, a new network of *secondary schools* was created. Once again, nationalism sought to bring this area under its jurisdiction long before the domain of the state had become a matter of contention. Another area in that inner domain of national culture was the *family*. The nationalists were not prepared to allow the colonial state to legislate reform of traditional society. They asserted that only the nation itself could have the right to intervene in such an essential aspect of its cultural identity. The domain of the family and the *position of women* underwent considerable change in the world of nationalist middle class.[6]

Nationalism and Women:

According to Partha Chatterjee, the women's question in the agenda of Indian social reform in the early nineteenth century was "not so much about the specific condition of women within a specific set of social relations as it was about the political encounter between a colonial state and the supposed 'tradition' of a conquered people, a tradition that was itself produced by colonialist discourse. Indian nationalism, in

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[5] Partha chatterjee, 'The Nation and Its Fragments', op.cit., p.6.
[6] Gopal balakrishnan, op.cit. pp.218-20.

demarcating a political position opposed to colonial rule, took up the woman's question as a problem already constituted for it: namely, as a problem of Indian tradition" [7].

One result was that the protection of Indian women from oppressive social practices became a litmus test for granting political concessions to Indians. The Anglo-Indian strategy of using women's subordination in India as a handy-stick with which to beat back Indian demands for political equality had converted the 'woman-question' into a battleground over the political rights of Indians. For Partha Chatterjee, the Indian nationalist project involved an ideological justification for the selective appropriation of western modernity, a process that continues even today. By focusing on practices such as sati, arranged marriages and purdah, colonization aimed to sympathise with the unfree and oppressed womanhood of India. Through this the colonial mind was able to transform this figure of the Indian woman into a sign of the inherently oppressive and unfree nature of the entire cultural tradition of a country [8]. The nationalists had to seek a specific site of resistance for Indian cultural identity while at the same time fighting for an independent nation-state. The constituted dichotomy of the world/home or the spiritual/material lay at the heart of this nationalist project. The colonial situation, and the ideological response of nationalism to the critique of Indian tradition, introduced an entirely new substance to these terms and effected their transformation. The material/ spiritual dichotomy, to which the world and home corresponded, had acquired a very special significance in the nationalist mind. The Europeans had, by virtue of their superior material culture, had subjugated the non-Europeans. But the nationalists asserted, it had failed to colonize the inner, essential identity of the East, which lay in its

[7] Partha Chatterjee, 'The Nation and Its Fragments', op.cit. p.119.
[8] Ibid. p.118.

distinctive, and superior spiritual culture. Here the East was not dominated and master of its own fate. In the world, imitation of and adaptation to Western norms was a necessity. However, at home, they were tantamount to annihilation of one's very identity. Chatterjee asserts, "once we match this new meaning of the home/world dichotomy to the identification of social roles by gender, we get the ideological framework within which nationalism answered the woman's question ... the nationalist paradigm ... supplied an ideological principle of selection. It was not a dismissal of modernity but an attempt to make modernity consistent with the nationalist project".[9]

To Chatterjee, the attitudes of Hindu middle-class Bengali women was towards 'modernity' different from their Western counterparts. Because, for the Western women it was believed education meant only the acquisition of material skills to compete with men in the outside world and hence a loss of feminine (spiritual) virtues; superiority over the preceding generation of women in their own homes who had been denied the opportunity of freedom by an oppressive and degenerate social tradition and superiority over the women of the lower classes who were culturally incapable of appreciating the virtues of freedom"[10]. In this project the category of woman itself could not be assumed to imply a universal signification as a specific type of woman came to represent the ideal. In relation to colonial India, the "age of decolonization" found its vocabulary through very particular constructions of Victorian and Indian womanhood. These were not articulated within the realm of history proper or as constructions mediated by the very process of differentiation but retained the symbolic and metaphoric role of women as the "innate nature" of a nation. This inner domain of women became invested with the urgency of preserving the sanctity of national culture. Under the guise of greater freedom, the "nationalist resolution" served to elide the problematic status of women as both

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[9] ibid. p.121.
[10] ibid. p.129.

participants in public contestation of colonial rule as well as their traditional roles as wives and mothers, demarcated under the auspices of Hinduism as *stridharma*. The potential effects of an independent women's voice were contained as a very part of the nationalist vocabulary of resistance.

And so the historical outcome generally has been the transformation of Third World nationalism by ruling classes into a state ideology legitimising their own rule, appropriating the life of the nation, and propelling it along the path of 'universal modernisation. But the spurious ideological unity proclaimed by these classes, and their failure to subsume completely the life of the nation in the life of their new states, raises the historical prospect that a critique of state nationalism will emerge. This profound exercise in political philosophy questions the legitimacy of the currently predominant formulations of nationalist ideology in the Third World. It anticipates a new generation of popular struggles that will redefine the content of Afro-Asian nationalism and the kinds of society people wish to build.

Using the case of India, Chatterjee goes on to show how Indian nationalism did effect significant displacements in the framework of modernist thinking imbibed from the West. Yet, despite constituting itself as a different discourse, it remained dominated by the very structure of power it sought to repudiate.

The British, like all other colonial powers, suffered from a sense of 'White man's burden'. Chatterjee notes the writings of historians propagating such a theory. "It was the aim of the greatest among the early British administrators in India to train the people of India to govern and protect themselves....rather than to establish the rule of a

British bureaucracy."[11] So the little concessions the British allowed the Indians in the field of self governance are prominently highlighted and all thoughts about racial policies and policies such as the Illbert Bill are quickly forgotten. 'The British indeed were under no obligation to fit such people for representative institutions. All they were expected to do was administer the country and look after the welfare of the people.'[12] Even this assumption was never proved right. The more the logic of a modern regime of power pushed the processes of government in the direction of a rationalization of administration and the normalization of its objects of its rule, the more insistently did the issue of race come up to emphasize the specifically colonial character of British dominance in India.

Chatterjee notes that, contrary to the earlier judgement of the imperialist, nationalist, and even Marxist historians, recent researches show that the economic and social institutions of pre-colonial India, far from impeding the growth of capitalism actually accommodated and encouraged most of the forms associated with the early modern capital. Not only did trading and banking capital grow as a result of long distance trade, but large scale exchange took place even in the subsistence structure. The legal-political institutions too acquired the characteristics of early modern forms of military fiscalism, centralisation of state authority, destruction of community practices, and the conversion of privileged entitlement into personal rights over property. Despite the cultural differences with Europe in the early capitalist era, India too produced institutions that were capable of supplying broadly similar economic functions.

Thus, the restructuring of the Indian economy in the period between 1820 and 1850, when all of the principal features of colonial underdevelopment emerged to

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[11] ibid. p.14.
[12] ibid. p.19.

preclude once and for all the possibilities of transition to modern industrialisation, must be seen not as a process carried out by an external extractive force but as one integral to the peculiar history of Indian capitalism. The colonial state, responding as it did to the historical demands of Indian capital, offered the necessary legal and political protection to the propertied classes and their attempts to enrich themselves.[13]

Chatterjee envisions two sources for achieving a more authentic fusion of community and nation: one is the peasant insurgency whose full potential is at least suggested by its mobilization by Gandhi. The other source is an Indian capacity to substitute for "bourgeois civil-social institutions a cultural domain-marked by the distinctions of the material and the spiritual, the outer and the inner."

Chatterjee's cultural argument is based, as he admits, not on India but on Hindu Bengal. In his account of vernacular Bengali modernization, Chatterjee draws upon Anderson's "print capitalism" argument but links it to his dualistic concept of Indian national identity by equating English-language culture with the outer/public/material sphere and Bengali with the inner/domestic/spiritual [14] The originality of Anderson's analyses derives from his evocation of 'print capitalism' as the basis for linking face to face local communities with a larger whole sharing the same constructed macro culture..

Partha Chatterjee has focussed Benedict Anderson, along with other scholars of nationalism, with the problems of 'Orientalism' in their treatment of Third

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[13] ibid. p.30.

[14] This chapter is entitled "The Nation and its Women" and draws upon another aspect of neo-Gandhian Indian nationalism which I cannot elaborate here: the equation of Europe (or at least Britain) with compulsive masculinity and India with a more fluid gender identity; see especially Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy : Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi : Oxford, 1983)

World nationalism. Chatterjee places nationalist theory under the magnifying glass of discourse theory which elucidates the links between power and knowledge, identifying how the very categories of social thought play as active a role in domination and colonisation as brute military and economic strength. By doing so, Chatterjee is able to create a place for other voices, and to challenge the hegemony of Orientalising categories which objectify and marginalise the history and ideas of the Other. More specifically, he argues that Northern scholars from both the Right and the Left fail to realise that utilising the very categories of contemporary 'modern' thought prevents the South from constituting an autonomous discourse. They fail to ask why the South has no alternative but to try to realise the Western project of modernity, despite the fact that the very realisation of this project can only result in their continued subjugation.

Scholars like Ernest Gellner and Anderson are correct that the very possibility of nationalism is inextricably linked to socio-economic modernity, the transformation from religious-agrarian empire to a profoundly different type of society. However, Chatterjee argues that their commitment to 'sociologism', constraints of modernity', that is, 'fitting nationalism to certain universal and inescapable sociological paradoxes of post-colonial nationalism to certain universal and inescapable sociological constraints of modernity', prevents them from grasping the nuances and paradoxes of post-colonial nationalisms. Specifically, Chatterjee argues that these theorists see Third World nationalisms as profoundly 'modular' in character, and leave little or no place for imagination and the 'intellectual process of creation'. By understanding third world nationalisms to be simply a result of the logic of modernity or of the 'pirating' of already-existing modular forms, theorists like Gellner and Anderson fail to appreciate that third world nationalisms are not simply replicas of Western experience. Not only are third

world nationalisms different from Western experience, but the vanguards of modernisation, to paraphrase Chatterjee, are not necessarily nationalistic, while ardent nationalists are not necessarily in favour of modernisation along Western lines.

One of the safeguards against the destabilization of foreign rule which characterized these colonies was the fact that only a relatively small element of the indigenous population had enough contact with the European regime so as to imagine itself on any terms as a "nation." Some of these minorities did develop a political consciousness of their new position and consequentially made demands on the colonial authorities for some combination of greater inclusion among their ranks and recognition as heirs of a separate culture which should be respected for its own modernizing achievements, or at least potential. But groups like this could easily be dealt with though minor reforms and, where necessary, repression as "babus" or "trousered niggers," who did not represent the vast majority of their fellow colonial subjects. More significantly for present purposes, these early visions of national identity, while of great historical interesting, did not generally find very wide audiences in their own time and provide little inspiration for contemporary seeker of an imaginary community.[15]

Chatterjee emphasizes the socio-economic base of these movements as a populist struggle against "a particular form of metropolitan capitalist development" embodied in the colonial state. The bourgeois leadership of the nationalist moment, made use of support from other classes only to wrest power from Britain, thus achieving what ultimately amounted to a "passive revolution" which kept capitalism in place.

The key strategy in effective anti-colonial politics was to undermine these elite nationalists with a mass base, drawn from precisely those peasant communities who

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[15]Chatterjee deals effectively with this "moment of Departure;" accounts of such "educated elites" are plentiful in African historiography, but generally written much closer to the era of independence and thus less self-critical.

were relatively isolated from the instruments and culture of the colonial state. In retrospect this feat seems less difficult than it appeared at the time. Peasants were sufficiently integrated into the economies of colonialism (which ultimately depended upon them) so that they harbored periodic grievances and even sometimes erupted into local revolts. Among the educated political classes, small as they were, there could always be found some capacity for tapping into this discontent, whether through charismatic major leaders such as Gandhi or Nkrumah or networks of more humble brokers between rural peripheries and urban centers. The critical issue, as Chatterjee reminds us, is the basis upon which this mobilization takes place.

Critical Analyses of Chatterjee:

Partha Chatterjee has made a powerful and impassioned intervention in our thinking about nationalism and colonialism. Arguing that nationalism in the context of India was neither tragedy nor farce, he brilliantly demonstrates how the derivative character of colonial discourses has produced both the power as well as the predicament of nationalism in the twentieth century provides critical insight into the character of the postcolonial condition.

He correctly points out the limitations of Anderson's argument. Anderson unwittingly condemns the South to remain forever colonised. The shift from a focus on the productivist and aesthetic underpinnings of the emergence of the national form to an emphasis on the circulationist character of the national idea paradoxically results in the removal of all imagination from the process of imagining community. At an even more elementary level, while Anderson's initial discussion of nationalism involves a metaphysics of becoming, sensitive to the effects of spatio-temporal change upon the imagination, by the end of the book, his discussion of nationalism is imbued with a

metaphysics of being, incapable of recognising how recent changes in communication and transportation technology might impact upon processes central to imagining community.

Unfortunately, Chatterjee is overzealous in his condemnation of all previous writings in the field, grouping Anderson with figures like Elie Kedourie and Hans Kohn in a perverse reverse Orientalism. More importantly, Chatterjee is sometimes guilty of misrepresenting Anderson. While Chatterjee's criticisms certainly hold for the first edition of Imagined Communities, many of them are simply untenable in light of the addition of 'Census, Map, Museum' in the second edition. For example, while Chatterjee berates Anderson for emphasising the history of colonial nationalism as a contest taking place in the arena of the state, Anderson quite clearly acknowledges that these nationalisms first sprouted outside the realm of the state for the very simple reason that the public spheres of economics and politics were controlled largely by the metropole.

Anderson refers to Chatterjee's criticism of Gellner when the latter refers to the question of imperialism and colonial domination. "The same enlightened industrial modernity which in Gellner's view had created nationalism was the basis for Europe's domination of the rest of the globe in the century and a half following the French Revolution. Nationalism had therefore to be understood as a part and parcel of that domination. Its appearance in the late colonial world, and afterwards, had to be read under the sign of inauthenticity, no matter how local leaders of the type of Nehru, Sukarno, and Nkrumah insisted on its integrity and autonomy. Nationalism was, outside Europe, necessarily a 'derivative discourse', blocking the way for authentic self-generated autonomous development among communities which remained dominated by

self-seeking, ultimately collaborationist 'nationalist' politicians, intellectuals, bureaucrats and capitalists."[16]

The primary problems with Chaterjee's concept of postcolonial nationalism are those he identifies himself: the failures of the new Indian regime to incorporate its subjects into any kind of community which coincides with the boundaries and the projects of the state and the "romantic" nature of his own alternative vision. From an historical viewpoint, however, the major shortcoming of the entire argument (which contains numerous insights of great value) is its facile identification of the colonial state with capitalism. The economic historiography of colonial India, especially the reasons for the sub-continent's decline from the world position won by the flourishing export economy of the pre-Raj seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is too complex to go into here. Chatterjee, however, simply refuses to come to serious terms with this historiography,[17] thus allowing himself, like many postcolonial theorists, to remain comfortable with a generic and unspecified notion of capitalism. Such an attitude elides the problems for both class formation and national integration raised by the very incomplete nature of both colonial and postcolonial India's integration into the mainstream of global capitalist development.

The major thrust of both the 'subaltern school' and current African social history has been less towards demonstrating the roots of corrupt and personalist postcolonial rule than towards recovering the visions of the local groups (both peasants and their urban lower-class kin) who formed the base of anti-colonial politics. This difficulty here, just as it was for early nationalist politicians, is to reformulate these very

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[16] Gopal balkrishnan, op.cit. p.11.

[17] He, like the rest of the subaltern school, draws heavily upon Antonio Gramsci's version of Marxism to define social conflicts within India, but he dismisses orthodox Marxist analysis of Indian underdevelopment as a variant on "colonial discourse."

particularist (and often quite conservative) visions into a revised "national" narrative. Chatterjee and other contemporary Indian scholars attempt to do this through the very powerful figure of Gandhi-- recognizing at the same time that Gandhi's historic stature derives equally from his successes and his failures: on the one hand, his inspiration of a unique style of political action in both India and the rest of the twentieth-century world; on the other hand, his tragic inability to shape Indian nationalism according to his own populist, non-violent, multi-religious principles.[18] But it is difficult to derive such a vision out of the monographic peasant-eye investigations, which are the main goal of subaltern studies. A prevalent theme in these works is to look for some element of class conflict. This strategy works better to emphasize the dependence of the Congress Party-- including Gandhi-- on Indian landed and industrial interests than it does to demonstrate an effective counter-force among the various insurgent groups whom Congress used- and not infrequently abandoned- to advance its own agenda.[19]

LEGITIMACY OF NATIONALISM? AN ANALYSES OF NANDY'S WORK:

Modern colonialism won its great victories not so much through its military and technological prowess as through its ability to create secular hierarchies incompatible with the traditional order. These hierarchies opened up new vistas for many, particularly for those exploited or cornered within the traditional order. To them the new order looked like-and here lay its psychological pull-the first step towards a more just and equal world. That was why some of the finest critical minds in Europe-and in the East-were to feel that

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[18]Chatterjee,; Nandy. "Final Encounter: the Politics of the Assassination of Gandhi" 'At the Edge of Psychology' (Delhi: OUP, 1980), 70-98).

[19]For examples see Gyanendra Pandy; ""Peasant Revolt and Indian Nationalism" in Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (eds), *Selected Subaltern Studies* (N.Y.: Oxford U., 1988), 233-87; also Hardiman, "Indian 'Faction.'"

colonialism, by introducing modern structures into the barbaric world, would open up the non-West to the modern critical-analytic sprit.[20]

Thus the negation of the belief that colonialism produced positive effects is evident in Nandy) He goes on to analyze the reasons as to why men try to master other men. "Many decades later, in the aftermath of that marvel of modern technology called the second World War and perhaps that modern encounter of cultures called Vietnam, it has become obvious that the drive for mastery over men is not merely a by-product of a faulty political economy but also of a world view which believes in the absolute superiority of the human over the nonhuman and the subhuman, the masculine over the feminine, the adult over the child, the historical over the a ahistorical, and the modern or progressive over the traditional or the savage.[21]

Thus colonialism can not be identified with only economic gain and political power. He argues that the first differential of colonialism is a state of mind in the colonizers and the colonized, a colonial consciousness which includes the sometimes unrealizable wish to make economic and political profits from the colonies, but other elements too. The political economy of colonization is of course important, but the crudity and inanity of colonialism are principally expressed in the sphere of psychology and, to the extent the variables used to describe the states of mind under colonialism have themselves become politicized since the entry of modern colonialism on the world scene, in the sphere of political psychology.

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[20] Ashis Nandy, "The Intimate Enemy, Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism", (Delhi: Oxford University Press), 1991, p.ix.
[21] Ibid, p.ix

Thus, linking colonialism to psychology, he argues that in India a colonial political economy began to operate seventy-five years before the full-blown ideology of British imperialism became dominant. Similarly years after the formal eroding of the British rule, the ideology of colonialism is still triumphant in many sectors of life.[22]

Colonialism, was congruent with the existing Western sexual stereotypes and the philosophy of life which they represented. It produced a cultural consensus in which political and socio-economic dominance symbolized the dominance of men and masculinity over women and femininity. This was present in India before the British came into India. Three concepts such as purustva, Naritva and Klibatva under line the polarity that was supplanted in the colonial culture of politics.

Nandy enumerates the basic features of the Indian society, which he thinks will be helpful to understand the concept of nationalism in India.

Features of the Indian system:[23]

(I) Features of the 'Indian system' is the traditional concept of politics as an amoral, ruthless statecraft, or a dispassionate pursuit of self-interest to which many of the norms of the nonpolitical sphere do not apply. The memory of the long period during which high politics in India remained the prerogative of alien rulers confirms the image of politics as far removed from day-to-day life. Moreover, Indian society is organized more around its culture than around its politics. It accepts political changes without being excessively defensive, without feeling that

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[22] Ibid, p.1
[23] Ashis Nandy, "At the Edge of Psychology, Essays in Politics and Culture", (Delhi: Oxford University Press), 1980, p.48.
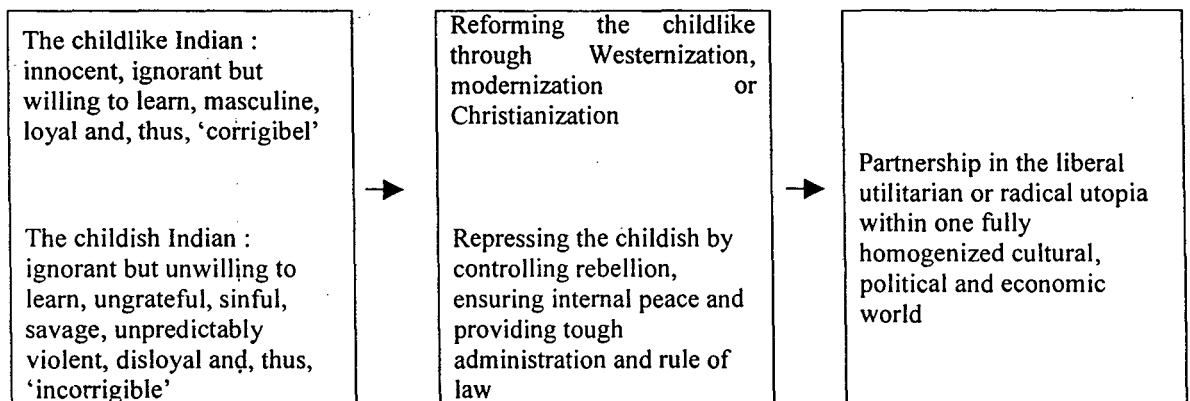
its very existence is being challenged, and with the confidence-often unjustified-that politics touches only its less important self.

(II)   The concept of dharma or piety specifies different sphaeres of life as different systems of ethics; it is taken for granted that the values governing politics would be largely inconsistent with those governing other areas of life. At critical moments, therefore, the anemic forces released by political changes do not easily percolate into other areas. When the political sector becomes threateningly disjunctive, or begins to negate some of the major assumptions of the society, the traditional lifestyle is not dramatically disoriented. It is this segmentation which allows Indian society to incorporate the new and the original, by containing them within small compartmentalized areas of behaviour.

(III)   Like the sinic and Islamic, Indian civilization considers other cultures inferior; but unlike the Sinic and Islamic, this attitude does not extend to the political sphere. Learning statecraft from others is never precluded, and exogenous political ideas never seem diabolical instruments of subversion.

(IV)   Though Indian society is organized around its culture, this culture lacks an authoritative centre; notwithstanding a priestly caste, there is not even an organized religion. At various times, this has allowed politics to have different functional links with certain primordial groups and elements of the great tradition. For instance, early in the nineteenth century, when politics most needed a new structure of legitimacy to give meaning to the relationship between the native elite and colonial rulers, and a capacity to redefine the concept of participation in the till then alien culture of the growing modern sector, certain caste-specific skills

(for example, Brahmanic skills) operating within certain institutionally more open regional subcultures (for example, Bengal) became immensely valuable assets. At a later time, these same skills and subcultural backgrounds became useless, and even liabilities. The sacred texts have also been used selectively by different groups at different times: the first generation of modernist reformers depended heavily on the Vedas and Upanishads; later, Gandhi and the nativists mainly drew support from the less universalist Gita. Such readjustments explain why politics in India often seems to underwrite the traditional cultural and social divisions. The point to remember is that the political process has underwritten different, and frequently antipodal, subcultures or strata at various times.

In the eyes of the European civilization the colonizers were not a group of self-seeking, rapacious, ethnocentric vandals and self-chosen carriers of a cultural pathology, but ill-intentioned, flawed instruments of history, who unconsciously worked for the upliftment of the underprivileged of the world.

The British followed a two-pronged strategy to master Indians of two types.[24]

| The childlike Indian : innocent, ignorant but willing to learn, masculine, loyal and, thus, 'corrigibel'

The childish Indian : ignorant but unwilling to learn, ungrateful, sinful, savage, unpredictably violent, disloyal and, thus, 'incorrigible' | → | Reforming the childlike through Westernization, modernization or Christianization

Repressing the childish by controlling rebellion, ensuring internal peace and providing tough administration and rule of law | → | Partnership in the liberal utilitarian or radical utopia within one fully homogenized cultural, political and economic world |

Response of Indians :

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[24] Ashis Nandy, "The Intimate Enemy", op.cit., p.16

The answer is provided by nearly in terns of few of the 19th century figures such as Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Ram Mohan Roy, Bankim Chandra, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand who revalued the traditional male and the female, and coped with the modern incepts of mature, adult normality as opposed to abnormal, immature, infertile primitivism. He uses examples mainly from Bengal, not nearly because the Bengali culture is best illustrated and dramatized-the colonial predicament in India's political, cultural and creative life, but also because it was in Bengal that the western intrusion was the deepest and the colonial presence the longest.

The most creative response to the perversion of Western culture, however, came as it must, from its victims. It was colonial India, still preserving something of its androgynous cosmology and style, which ultimately produced a transcultural protest against the hyper-masculine world view of colonialism, in the form of Gandhi. Gandhi's authenticity as an Indian should not blind us to the way his idiom cut across the cultural barriers between Britain and India, and Christianity and Hinduism. Albeit a non-Westerner, Gandhi always tried to be a living symbol of the other West. Not only id he sense and 'use' the fundamental predicament of British culture caught in the hinges of imperial responsibility and subjecthood in victory, but he implicitly defined his ultimate goal as the liberation of the British from the history and psychology of British colonialism. The moral and cultural superiority of the oppressed was not an empty slogan to him.[25]

Gandhi's position on history was based on three assumptions, two of them derived from the traditional Indian orientations to time. The first of these two was the salience given by Indian culture to myth as a structured fantasy which, in its dynamic of

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[25] Ibid. pp.48-9

the here-and-the-now, represents what in another culture would be called the dynamic of history. In other words, the diachronic relationships of history are mirrored in the synchronic relationship of myths and are fully reproducible from the latter if the rules of transformation are known. In Gandhi, the specific orientation to myth became a more general orientation to public consciousness.[26]

Nandy concedes that nationalism is a western concept. When South Asia started its independent journey as a collection of states in 1947, it was in one sense the continuation of the project South Asians had given themselves towards the middle of the nineteenth century. The project was the modernisation of the region. It had three clear components.

i)   They wanted to bulild nation states the way those who then ruled South Asia had already done in Europe;

ii)   they wanted 'development', even though the term had not yet come into vogue;

iii)   they had to inculcate in their generally 'superstitious', 'change resisting' people an appreciation of the principles of scientific and technological rationality.

Thus along with ensuring national security, the hopes and ambitions of millions of deprived people had to be carried forward.[27]

Trends in Indian thoughts about nationalism:

The idea of modern nation state entered Indian society in the second half of the 19th century, riding piggy-back on the western ideology of nationalism. Most

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[26] Ibid. pp.56-7
[27] Ashis Nandy, "Nation, State and Self-Hatred", Himal South Asia, July 1996, pp.16-17

nationalist leaders in India were then convinced that the absence of proper nation state and proper nationalist sentiments were major lacunae in Indian society and indices of its backwardness. To those leaders, India's earlier experiments with large indigenous state systems were irrelevant. To Nandy, such a view is the natural outcome from a subjugated society confronting a highly successful imperial power and trying to discover the secrets of its success.[28]

Nandy notes the development of the idea of a monocultural nation state and that of nationalism in the early 1920s. The earlier sceptics who never believed in the idea of nationalism, now began to associate nationalism with modern colonialism's record of violence. While they continued to view an anti imperialist stand as being almost a sacred responsibility, they refused to accept the western idea of nationalism as being the inevitable universal of our times.[29]

On the other hand, those who took a position against nationalism were themselves divided. To a majority of them, nationalism appeared to be a pre-modern concept that had re-appeared as a pathological by-product of global capitalism. They hoped that this form of nationalism will be replaced by the emergence of a new, enlightened, secular universalism, which will be the cultural basis of a future one world, free of ethnic and territorial loyalties. However, another school of thought regarded nationalism as a by-product of the western nation-state system and of the forces of homogenization let loose by the western world view. To them, a homogenized universalism, itself a product of the uprootedness and deculturation brought about by the British colonialism in India, could not provide an alternative to nationalism. Their

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[28] Asihis Nandy, "The Illegitimacy of Nationalism, Rabindranath Tagore and the Politics of self", (Delhi: Oxford University Prees), 1994, pp. ix-x
[29] Ibid. p.x

alternative was a distinctive civilisational concept of universalism embedded in the tolerance encoded in various traditional ways of life in a highly diverse, plural society.[30]

Problem with the decolonized nations:

Most of the decolonised countries got the modern territorial state without there being a politically constituted 'nation'. However, a modern state constituted democratically or otherwise, exists for or on behalf of a collectivity called the nation. Its identity as political authority is a representation of the will of a territorially marked and legally designated nationhood, which is only rarely a culturally homogenous entity. Such a state has to therefore strive constantly to create an economically and culturally homogenous 'nation' out of what was once a political order comprising diverse pluralities and multiple governances. The role of the state in such societies can not be confined to the field of governance only. Through constant legal and policy interventions the modern state turns into a welfare state fulfilling the national aspirations of its citizens. Thus the entire project of political governance has changed radically and irreversibly in all socities working with the modern form of the state. This new cultural base is sought to be created by recasting the national society in terms of the high culture of universal education and citizenship a la Ernest Gellner. It is, however, these two characteristics of the liberal state, promising national integration within societies and institutional integration and homogenization globally, that have created formidable problems for the 'receiving countries'.[31]

Fifty years after independence, it is obvious that there was something wrong in the way South Asia imported the concept of state, as if it were a talisman. It was

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[30] Ibid, pp.x-xi
[31] D.L. Sheth and Ashis Nandy, "The Multiverse of Democracy", (Delhi: Sage), 1996, pp.17-18

picked from the books, argues Nandy, not from life. As a result, the idea of the nation state was more purist than the colonial societies on which it was modelled. The South Asian elite was also oblivious of the fact that state formation and nation building usually had quasi-criminal antecedents. Everywhere, nation states were built on human suffering and disenfranchisement of large sections of the population. Emergence of open society in the West did not come with the state's benediction, or from constitutional changes introduced by an enlightened elite, or from texts. They came through political processes which the state did not control. Not learning from the example of the West, South Asia has merely telescoped the western model into its own societies. A kind of self-hatred is involved in the exercise of remodelling people according to someone else's history. That is the tragedy of virtually every society in this part of Asia.[32]

While analysing from the Indian point of view, Nandy seems to have been overwhelmed by unsurmountable problems the country is facing. After half a century of efforts to make liberal, representative democracy work, the institutions of the liberal state remain fragile and the society has descended into a sort of turmoil.

India presents a picture of one of the most complex multi-ethnic societies in the world being governed by a modern nation-state. There are over 3,000 communities differentiated by traditional occupations and/or identifiable socio-culturally as distinct entities called castes. Traditionally, these communities did not live in isolation. They shared a symbolic meaning system which ensured fluidity of cultural expressions, and while each entity by and evolved procedures for resolving conflicts, all were subject to a political governance that was limited to the maintenance of larger social and economic codes. The governing function was thus usually negatively defined, as one that prevented

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[32] Ashis Nandy, "Nation, State and Self-Hatred", op.cit., p.16

transgressions of social and economic codes by self- governing social entities or prevented them from such pursuits of collective self-interest that would threaten the principle of their co-survival. while numerous cultural and social entities were held together within a broad order of social hierarchies, the order provided for a great deal of fluidity and interaction among them. As a result, over time, an enormous expansion of the vertical hierarchical structure horizontally took place, allowing for a variety of new occupational and imigrant groupe to find place in the social structure and for many of them to also move vertically in the hierarchy. Such an order provided not only for cultural expression of pluralities but also for multiple and overlapping governances within its fold. Politically, the diverse social and cultural entities were thus held together not in a single state but in a single political-civilizational system.

Such a society was strait- jacketed into a single territorial state through colonial rule and into a nation-state after independence. For maintaining its own integrity, this new state, like any other modern state, has been relentlessly pursuing the project of homogenizing the diversities, in the process confronting not only the task imparting legal, constitutional and economic coherence to its governance but meeting with resistance, often violent, from several cultural- political entities representing their own forms of social governance. The use of coercive power of the state for effecting homogenization in the society and counter-violence by the political-cultural entities resisting such incursions of the state constitute the problem for the political system in India today. India continues to grapple with to competing histories, the civilizational history of co-survival of communities and the political history of ethnic competition and conflicts. The dialectic of containing these conflicting cultural-religious identities within the supra-identity of a

nation-state is informed by the memory of the national movement for independence as well as the partition of the country at the time of independence.[33]

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[33] Ibid. pp.19-21

CONCLUSION

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Nation-state today appears to be a dying institution. No doubt the world scene is marked by the spread of nationalist conflicts, more so after the end of bloc politics. However, notwithstanding such disputes a growing number of books and articles have predicted the decline of nation-state. The authors of such views point at the global economic organisations which are eclipsing the role of nation-states. However, this appears to be a limited view. In the discussion, it was found out that the value of nation-state and the corresponding nationalism is different for the west and the developing countries. Ernst B. Hass defined nation as "a socially mobilized body of individuals, believing themselves to be united by some set of characteristics that differentiate them (in their own mind) from outsiders, striving to create or maintain their own state". He defined nationalism as " a belief held by a group of people that they ought to constitute a nation, or that they already are one. It is a doctrine of social solidarity based on the characteristics and symbols of nationhood".[1]

Keeping these definitions in the background, if we accept nationalism as an ideology that goes hand in hand with a state building project, its relevance for developing countries is much more than its corresponding role in the west. In a recent article Partha Chatterjee referred to the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' nationalism. " Liberal often make the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' nationalism by separating the 'good' states from the 'bad'. American nationalism is good, they say, because the enabled the

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[1] Ernst B Hass, 'What is Nationalism and Why should we study it?', International Organisation, vol.40. no.3, Summer 1986, p.727.

creation of a tolerant and democratic state. The German nationalism of the Natzis was bad because it was the ideology of a racist, intolerant and authoritarian state. "Thus the west has its own way of analyzing nationalism. It is another factor altogether that when analyzed from the point of view of the developing countries, these 'good' nationalism show themselves in a different light. "It only requires a moderately critical historian to discover the underside of good liberal nationalism: tolerant and prosperous democracies were built at home in Britain, France, Holland and the United States at the same time, as and because of militarist, exploitative and racist imperialist expansion abroad."[2]

There is no denying the fact that 'nationalism as a modern concept came from the west. But it played a different role altogether in the developing countries. The contact which transmitted nationalism to the so-called 'third world' changed the nature of the concept itself. When people who had been subjected to colonial control or imperialist domination sought to free themselves from subjugation, they generally did so under the banner of national liberation, i.e. the right to create their own nation state. Often, they conducted these struggles and created new states according to the territorial boundaries drawn up by the colonial powers. Usually, the new nation-states so created correspond to no pre-colonial entities. Indonesia, for example, consists of about 3000 islands encompassing over 100 distinct groups. The most powerful thing uniting these territories is that they were once Dutch colonies. So vigorous are these 'imagined communities', so powerful their myths, that huge numbers of individuals can be mobilized during times of war with a willingness to die for the country.

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[2] Partha Chatterjee, 'Fragile Distinctions, Between good and Bad Natioanlisms', <u>Times of India</u>, 20 August 1999,

So powerful is the myth of the nation, so pervasive is the idea that each people ought to have their own nation –state that groups with no traditions of organizing themselves into nation-states have embarked such slogans. The aboroginal people inside Canada, for example, regularly refers to themselves as the 'First Nations', despite the fact that their societies were not organized around the notion of nation-states. And Lesbian and gay activists in the US and Canada a few years ago launched an organization with the name "Queer Nation', illustrating just how pervasive is the idea that nations are the entities that demand rights on behalf of people.

A basic commitment to democracy requires that one support the demands of historically oppressed people like the first nations, the Quebecois, or the Palestinians – to national self-determination. But such support should be coupled with a critique of the nation-state itself, with an understanding that national states are designed to dominate, control and oppress people and to divide one group from another. A central part about nation-states is that they regulate people. At the same time, nationalism is used to defeat social protest. In these circumstance, the traditional meaning of 'nationalism' undergoes a change, By appealing to the individuals identification with an 'imagined community', governments mobilize a rhetoric of 'us' and 'them', of 'natives' and 'foreigners' in which problems are said to be caused by strangers. Social decay at home is attributed to the impact of 'foreigners' whose values conflict with those once made 'our country' great and prosperous. Thus, the 'imagined community' and its racial and ethnic identity become a weapon to demonize visible minorities and others. Therefore, it is of very little surprise that virulent nationalism and racism have more and more become a part of the political scene. Whenever we are dealing with fascist type groups like National Front in

France, with religious right like the BJP in India and their extreme Hindu nationalism, with right-wind groups like the Northern League in Italy or the Reform Party in Canada, Facists-nationalist politics have come to the centre-stage of world politics, it might be considered as an aberration of nationalism, but it has become a fact of life.

Partha Chatterjee notes "today, nationalism is passe in the west. State-building at home is no longer on the agenda. The imperial project too has moves on. Now what stands in the way of western hegemony is third world nationalism. The obstacles to a liberal world order are atavistic, ethnic loyalties, autarchic economic regimes and corrupt and authoritarian third world states".[3]

This indeed is a dismal picture of the state of 'nationalism' in the developing countries. However, the resurgence of nationalism in the aftermath of the cold war has resulted in the creation of a number of new states. This is surely a dramatic evidence of the power of nationalism at the end of the second millenium. The assumption underlying this view is that nationalism had been suppressed inside the former empires and can now resume its interrupted course. This establishes clearly the popular will. To quote Chatterjee again, " if democratic institutions have fared better in India, it was not because of the greatest benevolence or wisdom of our political elite, but because various section of the Indian people were better able to fight for democratic rights and practices".[4]

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[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

Thus, as long as popular discontent continue to surface, the lamp of nationalism will keep on burning. It may acquire various forms, not to the liking of certain section of people. But it will be nationalism all the way. The distinction between 'good' and 'bad' nationalism is vague. Even the so called 'good nationalisms' are compelled to lower their guards in the time of crisis. It is necessary to appreciate the peculiar features of nationalism in the developing countries and to understand them keeping their history in background. Any attempt to analyze the same by using only the 'western standards' can produce bewildering results.

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