

**DEVELOPMENTS IN ASIAN NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS
INDIA & INDONESIA
A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY**

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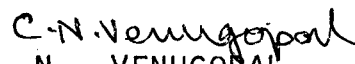
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C E R T I F I C A T E

Certified that the dissertation entitled, "DEVELOPMENTS IN ASIAN NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS - INDIA & INDONESIA : A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY" submitted by ANITA N. BISWAS in partial fulfilment of eight credits out of the total requirements of twenty-four for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M.Phil) of this University, is her original work and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this University or of any other University.


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PREFACE

This dissertation is an attempt towards understanding the developments in Asian national consciousness in India and Indonesia.

National consciousness implies the consciousness of one nationhood and its related sense of political identity which results from political consensus. Both nationalism and democracy as understood in the contemporary form are Western innovations. In the West, historical origins of democracy and nationalism emerged with the breakdown of the feudal hierararchical system of estates and rise of the philosophies of the Reformation and the Enlightenment.¹

The growth of nationalism in both India and Indonesia came into being in a different historical context. In both countries nationalism arose in response to colonial patronage and in the context of an alien tradition.

The purpose of this study is to review the process of growth in nationalism in India and Indonesia during the pre-independence period of both countries. The discussion is presented in the following manner —

In the first chapter some theoretical issues are spelt out. In the next two chapters, a survey of the developments in the growth of national consciousness in India and Indonesia are discussed. In the final chapter a comparative analysis is presented.

1. Singh, Yogendra, *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur 1986, p. 113.


In completing this dissertation, I owe a tremendous intellectual debt to my supervisor *Dr. C.N. Venugopal*, *Associate Professor* at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, without whose patience, consistent encouragement, able guidance, incisive criticisms and valuable suggestions it would not have been possible for me to complete this work. I am also deeply indebted to *Prof. Yogendra Singh*, *Chairman* of the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, and other faculty members who have contributed to my intellectual development.

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Chapter 1

The Colonial Experience and its Implications

INTRODUCTION

In the post second World War era, the world has witnessed the emergence of a number of nation-states. Many of these states, collectively bracketed under the nomenclature of Third World, had until that point of time been under colonial domination. This minimal similarity of experience of being under the yoke of Western metropolitan powers, and of the consequent attempt to free themselves of that domination has generated within these states a common awareness and common approach to the tasks inherent to the process of nation-building.

Most of these new states of Asia and Africa have been predominantly agricultural societies, and one of the major tasks confronting them in their post colonial phase is the

transformation of a stagnant economic order to a growth-oriented modern economic order.

These traditional societies consist of relatively discrete categories where loyalties are determined on the basis of ethnic, caste, religious or linguistic ties. These groups are sharply demarcated from one another on the basis of certain primordial sentiments, and the submergence of these separate identities in constituting the national whole is another task demanding immediate attention.¹

Another task assuming immense significance in the context of the new states is the creation of modern educational institutions. In most of these countries, the ruling elite has received a modern education whereas the bulk of the population has received practically no formal modern education. The gulf between the masses steeped in

1. Shils, Edward, "On the Comparative Study of the New States", in Geertz, Clifford (ed) *Old Societies and New States*, The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963 pp.20-21.

their traditional culture and the elite minority is a prominent discrepancy in the social structure of these societies.

Nearly all the new states face another interesting predicament: the language of the modern culture is the language of the former colonial power. In fact the languages of the indigenous culture are not universally understood throughout the territory. Yet the popularisation and active use of the indigenous languages has been a vital ingredient in the process of nation-building which has drawn serious attention in most of these new states.

The purpose of this study is to undertake a comparative analysis of two new states - India and Indonesia, both which have been conditioned by a minimal similarity of experience and which together face the dilemma of reconciling a rich traditional culture with the requisites of a modern nation state. Both countries acquired independence at about the same time; both underwent the experience of being under-colonial rule (one British, the other Dutch); and both can be understood as essentially plural societies whose essence can be captured by the phrase 'unity in diversity'.

J.S. Furnivall in his classic study of British and Dutch colonialism in southeast Asia presents a comparative analysis of British rule in Burma with Dutch rule in Indonesia or what was then known as Netherlands India. In his comparative analysis Furnivall emphasizes that British and Dutch colonial policy rest on different traditions. The twin principles of British colonial policy are the rule of law and economic freedom, whereas Dutch colonial policy has concentrated on strengthening personal authority and conserving the influence of traditional customs. The latter has also imposed restraints on economic forces. Thus, in the realm of colonial practice the British have relied essentially on Western principles of rule, whereas the Dutch have adapted to modern use the existing custom and authority. Another major difference to be noted is that the British in India and Burma adopted the system of direct rule, whilst the Dutch in Netherlands India preferred the system of indirect rule. Direct rule was more or less confined to British India. The princely states were internally autonomous.²

2. Furnivall, J.S. *Colonial Policy and Practice*, Cambridge University Press, p.10.

A comparative analysis of administrative practices in the two countries reveals that British rule in Burma led to the creation of one service divided into three grades. Europeans did not fill the lowest grade but were directly recruited to the higher grades. A few native inhabitants could also be recruited to the higher echelons. The Deputy Commissioner who headed the district fulfilled the functions of revenue collection and magistracy and was strictly bound by the rule of law. The pattern of hierarchy was as follows - an English civil servant at the beginning of his career became a magistrate of the first class authorized to impose prison sentences of two years. Within a period of four to five years, he became a district magistrate or deputy commissioner with increased judicial powers and was also entrusted with the charge of the treasury. Burma was developed essentially as a market for British goods and Furnivall believes that it was this orientation which required the introduction of direct rule on Western lines. The administrative system of India was organised on similar lines.

In Java, the Dutch system of indirect rule can be traced to the practices of the Dutch East India Company, whose primary concern was profitable trade. The Dutch themselves

had nothing to sell but the acquisition of tropical produce as cheaply as possible became their major preoccupation. This necessitated indirect rule through native chieftains to hand over the required produce and labour. With the gradual development of Dutch enterprise in Java, a dual system of administration evolved with the native chieftains under indirect rule and the Europeans under direct rule. The dual system of administration consisted of a European Resident responsible for the business of the company, and a native chieftain known as Regent accountable to the former only for the supply of produce, and otherwise autonomous in governing his people. Special officers known as *controleurs* (inspectors) were appointed who were not endowed with any particular authority but served as a link between the European and the native branches of the administration. Within this system, the relationship of the Resident to the Regent was that of an 'elder brother', whereas the latter's position was primarily that of an autonomous vassal chieftain. Even when the possessions of the company were taken over by the Dutch state, these two separate services one European and the other native, each with its own functions were maintained. A separate judicial and separate treasury service was established, and the

administration of justice and revenue collection did not fall within the purview of the administrative civil service but these tasks were performed by the former services. The European civil servant began his career as a cadet and when confirmed was known as *controleur*. His primary function was to keep the government in touch with the people and watch over the native civil servants; from there he rose to be an Assistant Resident and then finally Resident. In the native civil service the lowest grade was that of sub-district officer with charge of general administration over a few villages. Above him in the hierarchy came the District Officer and at the apex of the native civil servant stood the Regent. No Dutch or native civil servant performed magisterial functions as in India or Burma.³

In Java, administrative officials were not considered servants of the law but agents of policy, and were merely expected to maintain peace in the land. In congruence with this policy, the Dutch envisaged the preservation of

3. Furnivall, J.S., *op. cit.*, p.21.

the village community and village customary law, and supported the policy of retention of native land in native hands. In Burma, on the other hand, under the rule of law the policy of the British Government was to allow the people to pursue their individual interests within the parameters of legal procedures.

Furnivall's analysis also reveals certain inherent differences in Burma and Indonesia as a consequence of British and Dutch rule respectively.

In Burma, the village can be concerned as basically an administrative unit, whereas in Java despite Dutch rule the village still remains a social unit. This difference is strikingly typified in the appropriate legislation - the Village Act of Burma as designed as an instrument of social uplift. In India similar measures were undertaken by Lord Ripon, who initiated policies in rural self government but the Indian administration could not effectively implement them. However, Ripon's policy was put into good effect in urban centres in India. The institutions of local self-government in Java have been more successfully

organised than in Burma, and is attributed to differences in colonial policy. In Burma, the institutions of self-government have been constructed in accordance with Western ideas based on individual rights and as essentially alien in character. The institutions of local self-government established by the Dutch in Netherlands India, have on the contrary more indigenous roots being built on the basis of the village, regency and '*vergadering*' (gathering or assembly), and integrating these structures into organic relations with higher units of popular self-government.⁴

An interesting point to note is that in Netherlands India, under the Dutch colonial policy of indirect rule there was no need for the people to be educated on western lines, and therefore Western education made slow progress in Java as compared with India.⁵ It was only under the Japanese occupation that education received a stimulus in Indonesia.

4. Furnivall, J.S., *op.cit.*, pp.264-275.

5. Furnivall, J.S., *op.cit.*, p.287.

However, the development of Western enterprise in Java necessitated a large and active population, and in the area of medical facilities and hygiene, Java under Dutch rule was much ahead of India. Thus, Furnivall's comparative study of Dutch and British colonial policy in southeast Asia reveals that he found more merit in the Dutch approach than in the British.

Another approach of immense significance which has facilitated a comparative analysis of developing societies, particularly in attempting a perceptive understanding of their political systems, is the functional approach as propounded by a group of American social scientists.

The functional approach to the study of political systems as propounded by David Easton, Harold Lasswell, Gabriel Almond and James Coleman derives its theoretical relevance from Talcott Parsons' systems theory. These scholars have focussed attention upon the comparative studies of the functions of political processes rather than formally defined institutional structures in different societies.

David Easton has defined a political system as having three components. Firstly, the political system allocates values (by means of policies); these value allocations are authoritative; and these authoritative allocations are binding upon society as a whole.⁶

Easton also identified two broad categories of functions of a political system. These are input functions and output functions. Input functions are further classified into demands and supports. Output functions are seen as the political decisions reached and policies formulated as a result of the demands made or support shown. These inputs trigger off more demands to secure more support for the systems - this is called feedback. Easton has called that political system an open one when it responds to the pressures from the outside environment and then regulates its future behaviour and when necessary adapts to new circumstances in society and in the process if necessary transforms its goals.⁷

6. Easton, David, *The Political System : An Inquiry into the State of Political Science*, New York, 1953.

7. *ibid.*

Almond and Coleman have defined the political system as that system of interactions to be found in all independent societies, which performs the function of integration and adaptation by means of the employment or threat of employment of more or less legitimate physical coercion. Like Easton they analysed the political system as a mechanism consisting of input functions and output functions, though they further subdivided these into smaller units.⁸ Therefore, for Almond and Coleman input functions include -

- i) political socialisation and recruitment
- ii) interest articulation and
- iii) interest aggregation
- iv) political communication.

Output functions include -

- i) rule-making
- ii) rule-application
- iii) rule-adjudication.

8. Almond, Gabriel, Introduction: A Functional Approach to Comparative Politics in Coleman, James and Almond, Gabriel, *The Politics of the Developing Areas*, Princeton University Press, 1960, p.17.

[They have also emphasised the multi-functionality of political structures, and due to the culturally mixed character of political systems (i.e. the presence of both traditional and modern characteristics but in varying degrees) they believed that dualistic models are necessary to understand distinctions and comprehend the processes of political change.]

Almond and Coleman have also elaborated on the functions of the political system - i) *Political socialisation* - all political systems try to perpetuate their cultures and structures. This is achieved through the initiation of the younger generation to the political system through socialisation. This is carried out with the help of various institutions such as the family, school, work group, mass media, political parties and governmental institutions. The end product of this process is the formation of a set of attitudes, cognitions, value-orientations and feelings towards the political system. Political socialisation may be latent or manifest; similarly it can be either specific or diffuse - depending upon the extent of differentiation and specificity of the political structure.

ii) *Political recruitment* - takes place only after the completion of political socialisation. Through this function the political system recruits members from particular sub-cultures such as ethnic groups, classes, religious communities and allocates them specialized roles within the political system. The recruitment pattern is both structurally and culturally dualistic in both traditional and modern societies, though the degree of intermingling of ascriptive and achievement criteria may vary.

iii) *Interest articulation* - in every society there are various groups which seek to lay claim to power. Therefore, to maintain stability every political system has to evolve its own system of interest articulation. Interest articulation may be either manifest or latent, specific or diffuse, instrumental or affective in nature. Four major types of structures can be discussed when articulating interests. These are -

1. Institutional interest groups such as legislatures, armies and bureaucracies which despite performing

certain institutional functions formally represent the interests of such groups within a society.

2. Non-associational interest groups are those based on kinship and lineage, regional, religious and class basis. These groups articulate interests informally through individuals and cliques.
3. Associational interest groups are the specialised structures of interest articulation such as trade unions, ethnic associations and business organisations. Their major function is the explicit representation of the interests of a particular group.
4. Anomic interest groups refer to more or less spontaneous break-throughs into the political system from the society in the form of riots and demonstrations. They often have the tendency of flouting norms and disrupting or even changing the political system.
5. *Interest aggregation* - every political system has some mechanism for aggregating the interests, claims and demands which have been articulated by the interest groups of the polity. Aggregation may be achieved by

the formulation of general policies in which interests of various groups are combined, accommodated or absorbed.

6. *Political Communication* - all the functions performed in the political system such as political socialisation, recruitment, interest articulation are made possible by means of political communication. Political communication includes both the flow of information from the society to the political system and *vice versa*. This function is of vital importance as it inter-relates the different functions of the political system to each other. The output functions of a political system are known as governmental functions, as all the inputs are processed and turned into outputs by the administrative agency or government.

Rule making functions are carried out by the legislatures. It involves the formulation of broad policies or the formulation of legal statutes. Rule application functions are carried out by the executive organ of the political system or the governmental bureaucracy, and involves enforcement of rules formulated by the

legislatures. Rule adjudication refers to the judicial functions of the political system, and involves the imposition of sanctions against persons or groups who deviate from the normal political or social behaviour.

In attempting a comparative analysis of the political systems of India and Indonesia, the functional approach has yielded perceptive insights.

Marxist thought has also significantly contributed to the understanding of the colonial experience. From a Marxian perspective, and on the basis of Hobson's analysis, Lenin argued that economic expansion should be considered with respect to both economic and political factors. Thus, he expressed the view that imperialism is another expression of the capitalist mode of production - what he calls a 'higher stage' of Capitalism. Lenin argued that the capitalist economy in its later stages undergoes a change whereby the competitive market system is replaced by a monopolistic one. (This transformation takes place due to the ascendance

of the banking system whereby the fusion of industrial capital with financial capital under the influence of the latter greatly determines all aspects of political and economic relations among capitalist classes.) As a result of this development it became imperative that areas of external expansion had to be found for continuous reinvestment. Further, the rapid development of the forces of production under monopolistic control, combined with the need for raw materials greatly facilitated expansionist policies.⁹ These monopolist capitalist associations first divided the home market among themselves, and then a race began for the division of the world i.e. the countries of Asia and Africa among the European powers.

From a Marxian perspective, the colonial experience as a consequence of the forces released by European expansionism can be differentiated into three stages - a mercantile capitalist stage, a colonial stage and a

9. Lenin, V.I. - Imperialism - Highest Stage of Capitalism in *Selected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968.

neo-colonial stage.¹⁰ As a result of Europe's naval superiority and her desire for the acquisition of slaves, spices and gold, European traders journeyed to the continents of Asia, Africa and South America in search of trading prospects. Gradually they subjugated their overseas trading partners to an exploitative pattern of commerce. Wealth transferred from these continents resulted in a constant increase in the economic surplus of the European nations, which became concentrated in the hands of the capitalists who used it for purposes of industrial investment. Thus, the accumulation of mercantile capital in the European countries greatly helped in financing the industrial revolution. Consequently, this had a debilitating effect on the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America resulting in the halting of economic development, a decline in the level of political unity and a decrease in the local population.

10. Hoogvelt, Ankie M.M., *The Sociology of Developing Societies*, Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 1976.

The colonial period was characterised by the demand for controlled market outlets for European manufacturers, and the systematic transfer of raw materials from the colony to the mother country, this process came to be known as the drain of wealth. To ensure that this process, as a consequence of this policy, the socio-economic organisation of the colony was suitably adapted to the needs of the mother country. The Marxist view holds that European imperialist policies systematically exploited and impoverished these already disadvantaged countries. Features such as the introduction of a taxation system, organisation of market outlets for the finished goods from the mother country, systematic transferring of the colonies' raw materials and agricultural products, the production of cash crops which adversely affected the livelihood of the colonized people and finally the incorporation of the colonial economy with that of the mother country greatly enhanced Western capitalist expansion and consequently facilitated the rapid underdevelopment of the colonies.

The third stage- neo-colonialism was characterized by the process of de-colonization, which primarily occurred as

an aftermath of the Second World War. Despite this significant transformation, the ex-colonial powers maintained and even extended economic control over their previous colonies inspite of having relinquished political state power. This has been achieved through the mechanism of economic aid and the activities of multinational corporations.

Taking this background as a point of departure, it is the endeavour of this study to understand the developments in national consciousness in two newly independent countries - India and Indonesia.

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Chapter 2

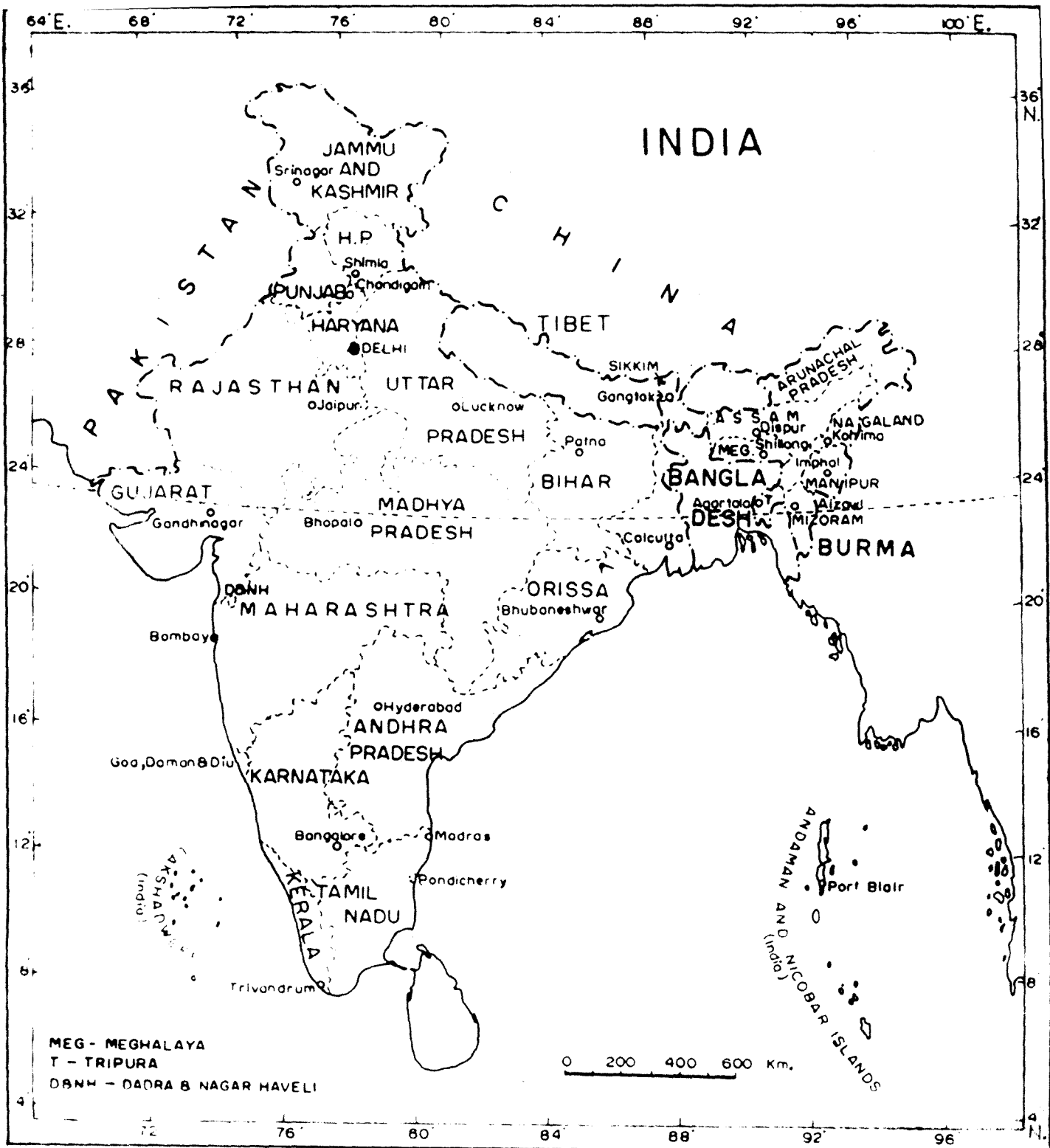
INDIA - A Survey of Developments in the Growth of National Consciousness

INTRODUCTION

India, the seventh largest country in the world occupies a predominant position in South Asia. As a country, India is massive in its area and population, prominent in its geographical position and overwhelming in its problems. It is a land characterised by tremendous diversity, though at the same time there are areas which promote unity.

The first area of diversity to note is that of religion. Indian society is characterised by tremendous religious diversity and apart from the majority Hindu community there are Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Jews and Zoroastrians in significant numbers.

Language is another area of much diversity. Fifteen hundred dialects are spoken in India, and there are



fourteen major languages enlisted in the Indian constitution, yet no one language is spoken by the majority of the population. Linguistic separatism has a strong emotional appeal and this led to the linguistic reorganisation of states in 1956.

In India there are tribal populations numbering about 30 million who have been isolated for centuries from the wider mainstream of society, and who still remain a major issue when considering national integration. The case of the Scheduled Castes or Harijans is also of major concern. Traditional Hindu Society was permeated with the inequalities of the worst kind. Apart from the hierarchical gradation of the four varnas into Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra - a separate category existed outside the scheme for whom the worst indignities were reserved. These were the Untouchables or as Gandhi named them 'Harijans'. They were scavengers, skinners of dead cattle or leather - workers and their life style was governed by the Hindu concept of pollution, whereby they were segregated from the rest of society. In post-

independence India the integration of these groups has been an issue of prominent concern.¹

On the other hand, there are elements of unity which India has inherited from the remote past. These are - the unity emerging from the politico-geographical setting and a cultural unity based on the Hindu civilization. Although it was only under British rule that India became one political entity, yet the idea of unity was implicit in the the traditional concepts of '*Chakravarti*' (emperor) and '*ashwamedhayajna*' (horse-sacrifice) popular in ancient India. Further the geographical unity of encircling mountains, the northern plains and peninsula have created a favourable setting for eventual political unity.

The second historic feature of India unity is the Hindu civilization. In the words of Sir Charles Eliot,

1. Mason, Philip, Unity and Diversity : An Introductory Review, in Mason, Philip (ed), *India and Ceylon: Unity and Diversity - A symposium*, Oxford University Press, 1967 London.

"Hinduism is not a religion which has moulded the national character, but the national character finding expression in religion".² Hinduism has shown a remarkable capacity to conquer those who attempt to conquer Hinduism. This inherent strength emerges in part from the philosophy of Hinduism with its emphasis upon consensus or holism which enables any creed to be absorbed into its all-embracing logic. In part its resilience emerges from the institution of caste as a technique of social organization which has penetrated and flourished even among non-Hindus. Caste as a pattern of social organization exists even among Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jews and Jains.³ Jawaharlal Nehru commenting on this phenomenon wrote, "powerful movements have arisen against them yet slowly imperceptibly almost, it seems as if it were the inevitable course of destiny, caste organization has grown and spread. Rebels against caste have drawn many followers,

2. Tinker, Hugh "Is there an Indian Nation", in Mason, Philip: India and Ceylon: Unity and Diversity.
3. Mandelhaum, David, *Society in India* Popular Prakashan, Bombay 1970. pp. 533-543.

and yet in the course of time their group has itself become a caste".⁴

The Antecedents

The Hindu period in India history crystallised between the fifteenth and tenth centuries before the Christian era, when Aryan settlers from Central Asia populated considerable parts of the north and the west of the Indian subcontinent. Over a period of time, they established their suzerainty over considerable parts of the land and empires such as the Mauryas, the Guptas and the Harshan dynasty arose in the north, and the Cholas and the Pallavas in the South. From the tenth century onwards, successive Muslim invasions led to the erosion of the political supremacy of the Hindus. The significance of the Hindu period of Hindu influence in Indian history lay in the fact that during the period of the nationalist

4. Nehru, Jawaharlal, *Discovery of India* John Day. 1946.

struggle the memory of a great past strengthened the resolve of the Indian people in their struggle for freedom.⁵

The social organisation of this period was structured along a hierarchy of four varnas - Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra which corresponded to the four functions of knowledge, defence, trade and labour respectively.

The Indian system has been a loose accommodation between a stable social order and an unstable political order. The former which was restricted to the village or a network of villages provided security and a sense of order. The latter though associated with the ruling authority made for disturbance and uncertainty. Looking retrospectively, it is seen that India's greatest failure

5. Kothari, Rajni, *Politics in India*. Orient Longman, 1970 p.28.

✓ has been its inability to evolve a unified political framework. This does not imply that politics in traditional India was absent, but simply that it was politics of a different order. It was politics of the locally dominant caste, of factions on the one hand, on the other the politics of managing external authority.⁶

✓ The impact of Muslim domination was to have a decisive influence on the Indian subcontinent. The early Muslim invaders came as raiders, such as Mahmud of Ghazni. This was followed by the founding of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206, culminating in the long rule of the Moghul dynasty from 1526 to 1707.

The Muslim period emphasised four main characteristics. Firstly the political organisation of Muslim rule was essentially militaristic in nature, though advances were made in civil administration. Secondly, the Muslims confronted the Hindus with quite a different religious and

6. Ibid.

social system. Muslim rule made religious conversion attractive and desirable especially for those subjected to the oppressive nature of the caste system, and this often created tension on both sides. Thirdly the Muslims were the first to develop an efficient administrative system in the country for the purpose of law enforcement and revenue collection. Fourthly, such a system of political dominance and administrative hierarchy had no significant impact on local institutions and village affairs. The general hiatus between local and central power continued, and local institutions remained autonomous in most of their social and civilian functions.⁷

During this period and just before the coming of the British, the Bhakti movement arose as a prominent force all over India. The Bhakti saints Mira, Kabir, Chaitanya sought to cleanse Hinduism of the rigidities and corrupting influences that had emerged due to the practices

7. Ibid.

of the priestly and ruling classes. The Bhakti movement by employing the medium of regional languages was able to communicate the tenets of sanskritic Hinduism to the masses in general.

The beginnings of European influence in India began with the voyages of Portuguese seamen who established trading settlements on the Western coast. They were followed by the Spanish, French and the British traders. The British, although they were the last to arrive, were able to establish their absolute supremacy firstly by eliminating the French and then by subjugating the already tottering Moghal empire. Over a period of time, British rule in India was able to integrate the Indian subcontinent for the first time under a single political authority endowing it with a measure of political and administrative unity.

The Setting

An understanding of British colonial policy is essential for understanding the growth and development of Indian nationalism. Scholars like A.R. Desai have argued

✓ that British rule released social forces vital to the development of Indian nationalism.

The earliest period of British rule was dominated by the East India Company, an English trading company which was motivated primarily by profit considerations. During this phase, the British followed a policy of strict non-interference in local customs. A change in this policy occurred during the early part of the nineteenth century whereby social reform was encouraged and attempts were made to spread modern education. In the aftermath of the 1857 revolt however, British policy towards India underwent a fundamental change. Political control of India passed from the East India Company to the British Crown, and the reformist zeal of the British rulers considerably diminished. Yet British rule in India unleashed social forces which were to have decisive significance for the development of Indian nationalism.

British rule in India radically altered the land system. Three types of land tenure systems came into existence - zamindari, ryotwari and mahalwari. This led to the system of individual land assessment and revenue payment. Fragmentation of land holdings, the introduction

of cash crops resulting in the commercialization of agriculture, the growing power of the moneylender all contributed to the deterioration of the position of the peasantry.

✓ The decline and decay of the handicraft industries due to the influx of cheap British machine-made goods into India was a major consequence of British rule. This combined with the destruction of the village artisan industry converted India into an industrial market for foreign goods. These traditional industries had provided substantial rural employment and their destruction resulted in the further deterioration of rural India.⁸

∪ The development of modern machine-based industries in India during the period of British rule played a major role in the establishment of the national economy of the country. It also released social forces which were

8. Desai, A.R. *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1948, pp 38-101.

instrumental in shaping the contours of Indian nationalism. The growth of modern industries brought into being modern industrial cities which became the centres of social, political and cultural life.⁹

The construction of the railways in India during the mid-nineteenth century gave a strong impetus to the growth of modern industries in India. The decision to construct railways was taken primarily to meet the raw material and market requirements of the British industries. The early British industries were mainly plantation industries like tea, indigo and coffee. By 1880, cotton and jute industries and coal mines were the three principal modern industries in India. The Swadeshi movement which acquired rapid popularity in the aftermath of the decision to partition Bengal gave tremendous encouragement to the expansion of Indian industries. In 1913-14, the number of

9. Ibid p 124.

cotton mills rose to 264 and that of jute mills to 264. Yet the progress of Indian industrial development was abysmally low even in 1914. Barring some amount of progress in the cotton and jute industries, heavy industries such as iron steel and engineering goods were conspicuous by their absence.¹⁰

✓ An important consequence of British rule in India was the establishment of a centralized state which brought about for the first time in Indian history a basic political and administrative unification of the country. Although a conception of unity existed in pre-British India, it was based on the religio-cultural unity of the Hindu civilization.

A new administrative and judicial system was introduced by the British and a new uniform legal system was established which was based on the conception of

10. Ibid pp.131-134.

equality of all citizens before the laws of the state. The former customary law which prevailed in the villages and was enforced by the caste panchayats was gradually replaced by the new system of law and tribunals.

It must also be mentioned that although British rule in India accomplished the political administrative and legal unification of the country, there were certain limitations to the unification carried out. The territories of the feudal princes were not incorporated into British India, but were retained as dependable allies of British supremacy in India. Although many of these states introduced corresponding changes in the administrative and legal spheres yet they remained distinct from British India and from one another.

The introduction of the printing press in India was an important event in the growth and development of national consciousness among the people. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the founder of the nationalist press in India. His *Sambad-Kaumudi* in Bengali and his *Mirat-ul-Akbar* in Persian were the first nationalist publications. The

press was a powerful weapon with the aid of which Indian nationalists could popularise the ideas of liberty, democratic institutions, Home Rule, Dominion Status and Independence, and simultaneously carry on consistent criticism against the repressive acts of the British government. Circulation of information through the press enabled all-India conferences of nationalist organisations to be organised and directed.

Newspapers like The Statesman, The Times of India generally defended the policies of the British Government. On the other hand The Hindu, The Indian Social Reformer reflected the views of the liberal school of nationalism. The vernacular Press also expanded rapidly and publications such as Ananda Bazar Patrika Kesari, Bombay Samachar were popular in their respective regions.¹¹

11. Ibid p.223-230.

Modern education played a significant role in the development of Indian nationalism. Education in pre-British India had an extremely elitist character. The Brahmin caste had the exclusive right to preach religious doctrines to officiate as priests and to function as teachers. Other castes were debarred access to all higher learning, though vernacular schools in villages and towns imparted rudimentary instruction in reading and writing. Among the Muslims in pre-British India, higher education was not the exclusive preserve of any particular section due to the democratic character of Islam yet the education imparted was strongly religious in content.

The introduction of modern education in India, based on a rational and scientific outlook was a significant act of British rule. Modern education was introduced in India to serve the political administrative and economic needs of the British Government. In order to consolidate its hold over Indian territory, the British organised an efficient state machinery to administer the conquered territory. The key posts in this

administrative set up were filled by Englishmen whereas the subordinate posts were filled by Indians. Modern education was able to fulfill the occupational demands of a modern nation. Educational institutions provided clerks for the Government and commercial offices, lawyers trained in the structure and processes of the new legal system, doctors trained in the modern medical science, technicians and teachers.

Imperialists like Cecil Rhodes, T.B. Macaulay and Montstuart Elphinstone believed that it was the destiny of Britain to civilize and unify the world through the medium of British culture. This belief encouraged the introduction of modern education in India.

Many enlightened Indians such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy supported the spread of progressive modern education in India. Individuals like Deshmukh, Chiplunkar, Agarkar, Phule, Tilak, Gokhale, Gandhi and others worked for the establishment of educational institutions both for men and women.

Modern education in India grew in several stages.

Before 1813, limited efforts were made by the East India Company and missionary groups. Under the Charter Act of 1813, the East India Company for the first time assumed State responsibility for education, and a definite sum of money was set aside for educational purposes. The educational policy of the Company was based on the Downward Filtration Theory which believed that knowledge would gradually percolate from the educated classes to the masses, and therefore there was no emphasis on mass education.

The next major stage was the Wood's Despatch on Education, 1854 which envisaged a scheme of future education in India. The Scheme outlined a coordinated system of education on an All-India basis. The growth of education gathered momentum after 1854. The three universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay came into existence in 1857. From 1880, rapid advance of education took place in India. The Education Department of the Government, the activities of missionary groups and progressive Indians contributed to the spread of education. Among these three agencies, Indian private

enterprise had the largest share. The Deccan Education Society established by Tilak and Agarkar was a striking example of nationalist initiative in the field of education.

A tremendous amount of educational expansion took place between 1880 and 1901. Lord Curzon and others argued that rapid expansion of educational facilities led to a decline in standards. The Indian nationalists on the other hand, emphasised the importance of quantitative expansion of education in the interests of the general upliftment of the Indian people. However, Lord Curzon still imposed the repressive Indian Universities Act, 1904 which made the conditions for affiliation of a college to a University stricter, and also vested the Government with greater powers in the sphere of education.

Under Dyarchy, education became a transferred subject and the Department of Education was placed under the direct control of Indian Ministers. A steady expansion of education took place between 1921 and 1937, despite limitations of financial resources. A rapid expansion of

mass education was a significant event during this period. A number of educational experiments were undertaken by a number of outstanding leaders of the Indian nationalist movement such as Vishwa-Bharati started by Tagore, SNDT Women's University begun by Karve, the Kashi Vidyapeeth, the Jamia Millia Islamia were the notable enterprises.

Modern education in India under British rule suffered from several shortcomings. Mass education had been seriously neglected, and the majority of the population remained illiterate. Technical education was hardly developed, and reflected the underdeveloped condition of the country.

The introduction of modern education had a dual effect. Introduced with the aim of meeting the political and administrative needs of British rule, it at the same time aided Indian nationalism in its struggle against that rule. The major contribution of modern education was that it gave a democratic orientation to Indian nationalism.

The knowledge of the English language had significant consequences. The educated Indian who studied English literature was influenced by its democratic principles and felt sufficiently inspired to rebel against his enslaved condition. The thought of Bacon, Darwin, Locke, Mill and others inculcated a scientific and rational outlook and enabled the educated Indian to reject the all pervasive influence of caste and authoritarian ideologies which had so far weakened his confidence and initiative. Knowledge of the English language also brought within the reach of an educated Indian the scientific, philosophical and literacy achievements of the non-English speaking peoples, and enabled him to broaden his horizons and develop a world outlook.

The English language served as a medium of communication for the educated Indians and enabled them to exchange views on a national scale. It also became a medium of expression at various gatherings and conferences particularly in the initial stages of the nationalist movement. The significant impact of modern education can be explained by the fact that practically all

leaders of the nationalist movement belonged to the English-educated intelligentsia.

The English-educated intelligentsia played a crucial role in the development of modern Indian nationalism. It was this group which provided leadership to all political national movements, and brought the ideas of nationalism and freedom to larger sections of the Indian people. It was this category, which founded the Indian National Congress in 1885, the first national political organisation in India.

The growth of modern education in India was not accompanied by a proportional economic development of the country. As a consequence of this, by the end of the nineteenth century unemployment among the educated class had assumed serious proportions. Political discontent emerging from economic suffering due to unemployment among the educated middle class led to the rise of militant nationalism of which Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipan Chandra Pal were the major leaders.¹²

12. Ibid p.139-164.

With the consolidation of British rule, a number of new social classes arose in India. The emergence of new social classes was the direct outcome of the establishment of a new social economy, a new type of a state system and administrative machinery and the spread of modern education. The new social classes which emerged in Indian society during British rule can be listed out as follows. In the agrarian areas, there were i) zamindars, ii) absentee landlords, iii) tenants, iv) class of peasant proprietors, v) agricultural labourers, vi) modern class of merchants, vii) modern class of moneylenders.¹³

In the urban areas, the following were the major classes - i) modern class of capitalists, ii) modern working class engaged in industrial transport, mining enterprises, iii) petty traders and shopkeepers, iv) professional classes like doctors, lawyers, journalists,

13. Ibid, p.176.

teachers, clerks and the educated middle class.¹⁴

The new social classes came into being as a consequence of the changed socio-economic conditions. The introduction of private property in land by the British in the form of zamindari and ryotwari brought into being the zamindars and peasant proprietors. The creation of the right to lease land brought into being such classes as tenants and sub-tenants. There also developed in the agrarian areas such groups as money-lenders, merchants who were intermediaries between the peasant and the market, and absentee landlords interested only in securing rent.

Under British rule, all production in India was related to the market. As a result of this fact, a large class of traders engaged in international trade grew. At

14. Ibid.

the same time India became intricately linked with the world market and this led to the growth of a large class of merchants who engaged in considerable external trade.

With the growth of modern industries in India such as iron and steel, mining, textiles, a new class of industrial capitalists came into existence and consequently a working class emerged.

The professional classes comprising modern lawyers, doctors, teachers who were associated with modern educational institutions, managers and clerks working in commercial enterprises, officials functioning in state administrative machinery were some of the groups which emerged during the British period.

It was from the ranks of the educated middle class that a nationalist elite emerged and which was to play a decisive role in the growth and development of Indian nationalism. The social structure of the nationalist elite which emerged was fundamentally urban-based,

rather than rural and usually belonged to the professions such as journalism, law or social work. The nationalist elite constituted a new middle class which grew in India as a result of English education and the development of administrative, judicial and teaching professions. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a journalist and scholar, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Keshub Chandra Sen were educationists and teachers. Dayananda Saraswati and Vivekananda were social and religious reformers, while Ranade and B.K. Gokhale were social workers and teachers. Tilak was a journalist and teacher. Gandhi, Nehru, Rajendra Prasad and Sardar Patel were trained in the legal profession.

The growth of a Westernised middle class in India along with the expansion of higher education facilitated the rise of the political elite. The upper castes were the major beneficiaries of the new educational opportunities and the upper castes, which dominated the elite positions were the Brahmins (Nagar and Anavil Brahmins in Gujarat, Chitpavan Brahmins in Maharashtra, Kashmiri Brahmins in the North, Bengali Brahmins in

Eastern India and various sub-castes of Brahmins in South India), Kayasthas, Parsis, Banias and other Muslim upper castes. In professional terms lawyers constituted a predominant part of the early social structure of the nationalist elite. The total of 13,899 delegates who attended the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress between 1892 and 1909, as many as 5,442 members or nearly 40 per cent were numbers of the legal profession. The other important groups were those of the landed gentry with 2,629 delegates and of the commercial classes with 2,901. The rest of the total was made up of the journalists, doctors and teachers.¹⁵

Social and religious reform movements of the nineteenth century gave definite expression to nationalist feelings, and had a crucial impact on the socio-cultural

15. Singh, Yogendra, *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur 1986, p. 134.

developments of the following century. The social and religious reform movements like the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Arya Samaj were swamped by a rising tide of revivalism, and were also bound up with the more extreme varieties of nationalism.

The Brahmo Samaj in Bengal founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a reformist movement which was supported by better class English educated Indians, particularly those in the higher employment of the government. They advocated legislative action as a means to social reform. Ram Mohan Roy greatly admired the liberal democratic culture of the West, and he cooperated with the British in the spread of Western education and in the abolition of social evils through legislative enactment. The Brahmo Samaj advocated a programme of social reform which included abolition of Sati, condemned idol-worship and child marriage, and other activities which aimed at the enhancement of the status of women in Indian society. However, the Brahmo Samaj had a narrow social base attracting the educated class of

Bengali Hindus and its membership never numbered more than a few thousands. This fact contributed to the declining influence of the Brahma Samaj after the 1870s.^{16,17}

Although the inspirational source of the Prarthana Samaj was not as strongly Western in emphasis as the Brahma Samaj, yet the former was a comparable movement in the Presidency of Bombay where the upper ranks of the educated classes favoured the idea of co-operation with the government as the best means of social reform. Leaders such as M.G. Ranade and K.T. Telang believed in pursuing social reform through legislative measures.

The Arya Samaj founded by Dayanand Saraswati acquired a wide social base, particularly in northern India (that is, Punjab and parts of western Uttar Pradesh).

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16. Misra, B.B. *The Indian Middle Classes*, Oxford University Press, London, 1978, p. 368.
17. Sarkar, Sumit *Modern India 1885-1947* MacMillan India Limited, 1983, p. 70.

The message of Dayanand represented an interesting combination of sharp criticism of many of the existing Hindu practices (such as idolatry and polytheism, child marriage etc.) and an aggressive assertion of the superiority of the Hindu faith over all other religious faiths and it was essentially revivalist in character. The Arya Samaj found instant popularity among the educated youth of northern India as it offered a doctrine more in harmony with the traditional culture, and also unconnected with an increasingly unpopular Bengali community which had occupied an undue portion of professional jobs due to its early lead in English education. The Arya Samajists also acquired a strong support base among the trading castes. Many of the important Punjab leaders like Guru Dutt, Lala Hans Raj, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Swami Shraddhanand all came from Khatri, Arora or Aggarwal families. From 1900 onwards, the Arya Samaj went in for large scale *Shuddhi* or mass purification and conversion of lower castes such as - Rahtias, Odhs, Meghs and Jats, and the Arya Samaj thus became a medium for 'Sanskritizing' processes. Membership also increased in an extremely rapid manner - from 40,000 in 1891 to

half a million by 1921. Other preoccupations of the Arya Samaj included the establishment of a chain of 'Dayanand Anglo-Vedic' schools and colleges, and a sustained involvement in *Swadeshi* enterprise.¹⁸

'Revivalism' thus contributed to the assertion of an aggressive Hindu identity. However, as Sumit Sarkar points out the difference between the 'reform' and 'revivalist' movements was of degree rather than kind. Not only had 'modernistic' trends like the Brahmo or Prarthana Samaj or the more secular movements of Young Bengal been entirely Hindu in composition, but they too operated with a conception of 'Muslim tyranny' from which British rule with its accompanying alleged 'renaissance' had been a deliverance. Such an ideological standpoint could never hope to appeal to Muslim intellectuals, and as similar movements were emerging at about the same time within Indian Islam too, the two communities became

18. Ibid. p. 74.

increasingly alienated and hostile both at the level of the elite and of the peasant masses.¹⁹

Political leaders such as Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bepin Chandra Pal carried religion into politics and thus early Indian nationalism had a strong revivalist character.

Reformist - revivalist movements in Indian Islam became visible towards the late nineteenth century and the two poles were represented by Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Aligarh movement and the Deoband Dar-ul-Ulum or seminary founded by two Mutiny veterans Muhammad Qasim Nanawtawi and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi. Sayyid Ahmed attempted to convert upper-class Muslims of western U.P. to the benefits of English education through a Scientific Society, a modernistic Urdu journal *Tahzib al-akhlaq* and the Aligarh Anglo-Muhammadan Oriental

19. Ibid.

College. The social basis for Sayyid Ahmed was provided by U.P. Muslim landlords and traditional service families - a privileged but slowly declining group.²⁰

The Deoband seminary on the other hand was rigidly orthodox, and attracted relatively poor students who could not afford Western education. It had a more clearly defined anti-British orientation, and was hostile to Sayyid Ahmed Khan both for his theological innovations and political loyalism.

It is the aim of this study to undertake a socialological analysis of certain variables, which are of significance in understanding the developments in Indian nationalism.

20. Ibid. p. 77.

In any significant understanding of the modernisation process in India and its consequent impact on the growth of national consciousness, the changes with respect to the caste structure is of considerable relevance. In India the social system has been organised around caste structures and caste identities and this factor also has had significant repercussions on the development of national consciousness.

The forces of modernisation gradually permeated the depths of Indian society. Liberal education, governmental patronage, adult franchise, and an expanding market economy have been the influences to make a significant impact on the caste system. The institutions and new social configurations offered economic opportunity, administrative patronage and positions of power which drew the articulate sections of society into the modernist network. As a consequence of this, the new political elite was able to organize castes for economic and political purposes. Thus in Indian society a new political organisation came into being which was articulated around particularistic divisions, yet at the same time acquiring

a secular and associational orientation.²¹

Accordingly to Rajni Kothari, three stages can be noted in this process. Initially it is seen that the struggle for power and benefits was at first limited to the 'entrenched' castes in the social hierarchy.²²

Leadership and access to governmental patronage accrued to a limited group of individuals who were the first to respond to new educational opportunities, and who were also endowed with pedagogic skills. This group consisted of persons from "higher" castes, did not rest upon any definite caste consciousness and was united on the basis of an overall common social idiom. A consequence

21. Kothari Rajni, *Politics in India*, Op.cit., p. 233-234.

22. Entrenched caste according to Rajni Kothari while it fulfills the chief criterion of economic and political power, and is usually "high" in terms of ritual status, may be numerically small and it usually is. The term "entrenched caste" is to be distinguished from "dominant caste" as used by M.N. Srinivas.

of this development was that it gave rise to a feeling of deprivation and discontent in other high castes, and resulted in the emergence of another political group again drawn largely from the higher castes. Thus the domination of an entrenched caste produced a corresponding response in the form of an '*ascendant*' caste. Thus the caste structure occasioned a bilateral structure of caste politics.

This was followed by a second stage where demand exceeded the availability of resources and competition began within the entrenched and more articulate sections of society. This has been called by Kothari the stage of caste fragmentation or "factionalism". The power structure of the caste system became more complicated, and new organisational forms such as caste associations and caste federations emerged. During the second stage there started a process of mobilisation of lower castes into politics for the purpose of adding to the support base of rival leaders. The third stage occurred when the weakening of older identities and the introduction of

politicized values coincided with other changes taking place in society through the impact of education, technology and changing status symbols.²³

M.N.Srinivas commenting upon the same changes writes²⁴

" the power and activity of caste has increased in proportion as political power passed increasingly to the people from the rulers. The transfer of power to the people began under the British and it finds its culmination in the constitution of the Republic of India, under which every adult has a vote which is exercised quinquennially at the elections".

Under British rule, Western education enabled the high castes which had a tradition of literacy such as the Brahmin, Vaishya and Kayastha to exploit the new opportunities than those which did not have such a

23. Ibid.

24. Srinivas, M.N. Caste in Modern India, Media Promoters and Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1962.

tradition. Members from these higher castes became clerks, schoolmasters, officials, lawyers and doctors. The Vaishyas or the Banias were in the forefront to take advantage of the new commercial opportunities offered by British rule. The major part of the intelligentsia arose from these three group of castes and the leadership of the nationalist movement rested largely in their hands. The leaders of the Brahmins and the other high caste were to be found in large numbers in the forefront of the nationalist movement. Later on, the British followed a policy of giving preference to the low castes, and this kind of patronage made the lower castes look to the British for protection. An important consequence of this policy was that a definite divide emerged between the higher and lower castes which was particularly prominent in peninsular India.

Looking at the situation from the point of view of a regionwise distribution, it is seen that in Maharashtra, three important castes - Brahmins, Marathas and Mahars have played a significant role in the growth

of political consciousness of that state. The Brahmins were the first to monopolise the benefits of western education in Maharashtra and they dominated in the new set-up. The early political leaders were mostly Konkanastha Brahmins. The Marathas are landowning castes in the rural areas, with no major advance in the area of education, who however, severely challenged the bases of Brahmin domination. The Mahars, who were traditionally village watchmen owned little or no land. They entered military service in the First World War, and this factor greatly contributed to the strengthening of political consciousness among the Mahars, along with the additional fact that large number of Mahars entered textile mills in Bombay as labourers.²⁵

In Maharashtra, the Congress was able to achieve a significant breakthrough in the 1936-37 elections as

25. Ibid pp. 26-32.

it was able to attract the support of the Marathas and other non-Brahmins to a large extent due to the fact that Mahatma Gandhi was not a Brahmin.

In Andhra Pradesh, the Brahmins were the first to be drawn into the national political process through the Indian National Congress. Over a period of time, the challenge to Brahmin domination came from two powerful non-Brahmin castes - the Kammas and the Reddis. While the Kammas dominated the Communist Party, the Reddi caste dominated the Congress. Both castes owned substantial quantities of land. Although both castes had a history of legendary rivalry, yet the two combined forcefully as members of the Justice Party in Madras to oust the Brahmins from positions of power in Andhra.

The social reform measures undertaken by Jyotirao Phule of Poona who founded the Satya Shodhak Samaj in 1873 with the aim of asserting the dignity of a human being irrespective of his birth in a particular caste, to a large extent anticipated the programme of the non-Brahmin movement which was to develop in peninsular India. In

Madras State, this movement took a particularly virulent turn. The radical non-Brahmins under the leadership of E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker joined the Dravida Kazhagam, a movement of a strongly militant character which was anti-Aryan, anti-North Indian, anti-Hindi and anti-Brahmin in nature. Later on, it became the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) which initially raised the cry for Dravidistan comprising the areas of Tamilnad, Kerala, Karnatak and Andhra - later it revised its stand and settled for Tamilnad.

In Karnataka, two leading peasant castes - Lingayat and Okkaliga have arisen as powerful groups with a major impact on the political process.

In Kerala, apart from the Nayars and an influential Christian population being the dominant groups, the Izhavas - a 'backward' caste with the traditional occupation of today - tapping, sanskritized their way of life under the leadership of Shri Narayana Guru and emerged as a powerful force in Kerala politics.

In Northern India the absence of powerful Brahmin groups prevented the emergence of any significant anti-Brahmin movement.²⁶ Certain castes such as the Rajputs, Thakurs, Bhumi-har and Kayastha have all been powerful participants in the political process of these areas.²⁷

GANDHI AND THE ROLE OF THE CONGRESS

Any discussion of Indian nationalism is incomplete without a mention of Gandhi. The greatest contribution of Gandhi's was that he gave to the nationalist movement depth and an indigenous base. He was quick to realise that the urbanised middle class by itself could not provide a sufficient basis for national awakening. The task was to penetrate the masses, arouse them from their state of submission and instil in them a sense of

26. Ibid. p. 36

27. Ibid, p. 36,37.

self-confidence so that they could effectively participate in a movement drawn from all over the country. He led powerful campaigns of non-violent non-cooperation with the government in 1921, 1930 and 1932. Gandhi's strategy was to keep these movements non-violent and launched them in the form of moral resistance to injustice rather than as violent agitations. This was the essence of '*Satyagraha*', a technique he had developed while dealing with the race issue in South Africa.

Gandhi was also a great pragmatist in that he was successful in providing to the Indian National Congress a new direction and a powerful organisational base. He instituted the Congress Working Committee turning it into a powerful body. He also set up various ancillary organisations of the Congress dealing with women, youth, labour and the backward classes. By constantly reinterpreting the traditional concepts of authority and hierarchy, consensus and unity, trusteeship - for modernist purposes, Gandhi was able to provide to the nationalist movement a symbolism that connected it to

India's great past, and succeeded in mobilising both the modernist and the traditionalist segments of Indian society.

The consolidation of all the major strands of political awakening in the Congress organisation generated a unity of allegiance of both organisation and personalities, of loyalty to an ideology as well as to a program of action. The constructive work which the Congress organisation carried out among the villagers the tribals and the Harijans, propagation of labour - intensive industries which brought jobs to the poor, educational activity designed to develop distinctive linguistic traditions and identities - all were involved in the Congress approach to the building of a nation. At the same time, the Congress had a distinctive ideology which included - anticolonialism and a solidarity with other colonial nations; participant democracy, equality and social justice (especially towards the underprivileged castes); communal harmony, tolerance of minorities and respect for diversity, linguistic states, planned economic

development and rejection of violence as a legitimate means for solving disputes were the main planks of this ideology. By displaying such a high degree of consensus in its ideology, the Congress was able to integrate all streams of ideological thought and all the most important social interests. It displayed a high degree of tolerance in the concerns of the national movement, and allowed dissent to become part of the consensual style of the Congress.²⁸

28. Kothari, Politics in India
Op. cit., p.80.

Chapter 3

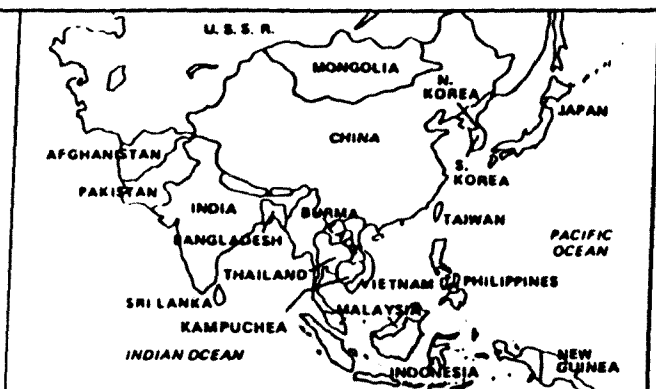
INDONESIA - A Survey of Developments in the Growth of National Consciousness

INTRODUCTION

"A girdle of emerald flung round the equator" is how the famous Indonesian writer Multatuli described Indonesia. As a country, Indonesia constitutes the world's largest archipelago lying between Malaya and Philippines to the north and Australia to the south. The Indonesian archipelago consists mainly of five large islands arranged in an irregular semicircle. These include Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), Irian Jaya, Sumatra, Sulawesi and Java. In addition, there are some 6000 islands which make up the total land area of the country.¹

1. Wertheim, W.F., *Indonesian Society in Transition*, W. van Hoeve Ltd., The Hague, Bandung, 1956, pp. 1-10.

Republic of Indonesia



Indonesian society is characterised by tremendous diversity though at the same time there are underlying elements which foster unity. The Indonesian national motto of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" meaning "Unity in Diversity" symbolises this situation appropriately. Ethnic diversity is a prominent feature of Indonesian society and 16 major ethnic groups can be found in the population. These include the Javanese who reside in Central and East Java, the Sundanese of West Java, the Madurese and the Coastal Malays, the Makassarese - Buginese of South Sulawesi; the Menangkabau of West Sumatra; the Balinese; the Batak and the Atjehnese both of North Sumatra; the Dayaks of Kalimantan, the Papuans of Irian Jaya are some of the important ethnic groups.²

Indonesian geography also contributes to this diversity. The innumerable islands scattered over an expansive sea surface promote cultural isolation, although the islands are characterised by a minimal amount of

2. *Ibid*

cultural homogeneity. There are at the same time several factors which promote unity in Indonesia.

Under the impact of Dutch colonialism, Indonesia acquired a more integrated social and political life - in fact, the boundaries of the former Netherlands Indies determined the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. The common origin of the Indonesian language, being mainly derived from the Malay stock, has facilitated the efforts to build an Indonesian national language. The Indonesian people possess a certain degree of unity in religion. Over eighty per cent of the population adheres to Islam. This factor has had important implications for the Indonesian nationalist movement.³

The Antecedents

Indonesian history is like an enormous palimpsest where despite successive layers being superimposed upon each other the influence of past events and incidents has never been completely erased.

3. *Ibid*

Over two thousand years ago, it is believed that the Indonesian peoples lived in small communities subsisting on activities such as rice-growing or fishing. Society was divided into tribes and ethnic groups, and permeated by animistic beliefs. In the third century, the seafaring activities of the merchants and priests from southern India brought the first waves of influence of Hindu civilization to the archipelago. From the fifth century A.D. onwards Buddhist influence started spreading. Over a period of time, the two religions merged into a Hindu-Buddhist complex and unequivocally conditioned the future course of events in the Indonesian islands. Early Indonesian history testifies to this. In the seventh century A.D., a Buddhist dynasty called Shrivijaya maintained a naval empire in the south of Sumatra. In Java, the Hindu rulers wielded power and Hindu temple architecture flourished in the central part of the island. In the same island, a magnificent monument dedicated to the Buddha - Borobudur was constructed by the Shailendra kings, a living relic expressing the spirit of a gentle kingdom. They in turn were displaced by the Hindu state of Mataram which erected the temple complex at Prambaban. This was followed by the Majapahit empire in the 14th century A.D.

representing the zenith of Javanese glory.⁴

Islam which penetrated the Indonesian archipelago at the end of the thirteenth century A.D. was introduced by Indian traders. Gradually, the religion struck deep roots and gave rise to several new states, the most important among them being the empire of Malacca on the Malay peninsula. Majapahit's hegemony also ended under a coalition of Muslim princes by 1528 and Islam became the dominant religion of the Indonesian Islands (Hindu Bali remained an important exception). However, this did not mean that the new converts in Java abandoned their past heritage of Hindu-Buddhist influence but on the contrary superimposed Islam on the existing layers of beliefs and practices. The Islamic faith as it was professed at the courts in the principalities of Central Java contained many elements adapted from Hinduism and animism. This syncretistic religion has been given a special name - *Agama Djawa*, the Javanese religion. The fact that the wayang or puppet plays depicting scenes

4. Palmier, L., "Introduction" in Palmier, L. (ed.), *Understanding Indonesia*, Gower Publishing Company Ltd., Hampshire, England, 1985, pp.2-3.

from the Mahabharata and the Ramayana still constitute an essential part of Javanese cultural consciousness is a further testimony to the strength of past influences.

Clifford Geertz in his classic study on the religion of Java writes that there are three main cultural types which reflect the moral organisation of Javanese culture. These are the *abangan*, *santri* and *prijaji*. These cultural types can be considered to correspond to three main social structural nuclei in Java - the village, the market and the government bureaucracy. The '*abangan*' religious tradition, which is the first subvariant within the general Javanese religious system can be associated with the Javanese village primarily the peasant sector of society and consists of a synthesis of animistic, Hinduistic and Islamic elements. The *abangan* variant consists primarily of a ritual feast called the '*Slametan*'. It also consists of a whole set of theories and practices related to sorcery and magic and also an intricate complex of spirit-beliefs.

The second religious tradition is the '*Santri*' and is derived from purer Islam. The *Santris* are mercantile Muslims living mainly in urban centres and

maintaining a puritanical profile. The '*Santri*' religious tradition consists of the regular performance of the basic rituals of Islam and has contributed to the rise of innumerable political or social voluntary associations. The religiously oriented *santri* class was able to provide leadership for any movement in which it took part. It was relatively prosperous and could assist in financing an association in which it was interested. The '*prijaji*' variant referred to the hereditary aristocracy. This white collar elite was rooted in the Hindu-Javanese court of pre-colonial times and surrounded itself with a culture of dance, drama, music, poetry and an all embracing Hindu-Buddhist mysticism. The '*prijaji*' religious tradition stressed the Hinduist aspects and was related to the bureaucratic element.⁵

The next event holding major significance for the Indonesian archipelago was the arrival of the Portuguese who came in search of spices and also to spread

5. Geertz, Clifford, *Religion of Java*, The Free Press, New York, 1960, pp. 4-7.

Christianity. They were followed by the Dutch, whose East India Company's ships entered the Indonesian waters motivated primarily by commercial considerations. Over a period of time, the Dutch strengthened their position in the archipelago by controlling the Indonesian waterways and consolidated their trading prospects over the next two centuries. Increasing maladministration and corruption drove the Company to bankruptcy and it was taken over by the Dutch government. Matters did not improve. The Dutch lost their trade during the Napoleonic wars and in 1811 the English East India Company took over Java. However, as part of a general settlement Java was returned to the Netherlands in 1816.⁶

The Setting

An assessment of Dutch colonial policy and practice is essential for an incisive understanding of Indonesian nationalism. Many of the policies pursued by the Dutch laid the seeds for the growth of Indonesian nationalist consciousness.

6. Palmier, L., *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

In a bid to recover their lost fortunes due to the Napoleonic wars, the Dutch put into effect a new policy called the 'Culture System', which aimed at reviving the Dutch economy by enhancing the quantity of profits accruing to Dutch merchants. The Culture System or Forced Cultivation System was in operation from 1830 to 1969, and was the invention of Governor-General Van den Bosch. In pursuit of this policy, the Dutch turned Java into a huge tropical estate producing a variety of cash crops like tea, coffee, rubber etc. for sale in the European market. Every Javanese farmer was compelled by law to set aside a part of his land to raise these crops. The essence of the Culture System was that the people in lieu of paying land revenue in cash should provide an equivalent amount of produce in the form of export crops as predetermined by the Dutch government. From the Dutch point of view, the Culture System proved to be a tremendous success as the profits extracted enabled them to pay off past debts, the expenses of the war with Belgium, and financed the development of railways and public works in the Netherlands.⁷

7. *Ibid.*

The Culture System declined in importance due to the rise of a powerful middle class in the Netherlands who demanded as a matter of right a share in the profits made in the Netherlands Indies.⁸ Laissez-faire, therefore became the new theme of colonial administration, and Liberalism became the next phase of colonial policy which lasted from 1870-1900.

The next important landmark in colonial administration was the Ethical policy. The earlier hopes generated by Liberalism had waned as a series of economic crises and famines gripped the Netherlands Indies from 1883-95. The inherent logic of this policy was that in an attempt at making amends for the drain of wealth which had occurred during the Culture System, the Dutch recognised a moral duty to the people of the Indies. This view was a variant of the doctrine of the White Man's Burden popular at that time. The Ethical policy had a two-fold dimension : economic and social. On the economic side it aimed at

8. Furnivall, J.S., *Colonial Policy and Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1948, pp. 220-21.

promoting development in the colony through Western enterprise. On the social side it aimed at bringing about social welfare by treating the village as the basic unit of development. In pursuit of this aim large sums of money were spent on health, education and agricultural extension services in an effort to transform Indonesian society.⁹

Unlike Liberalism, the Ethical policy represented the interventionist aspect of colonial policy. The Ethical policy believed that bringing Indonesians into administrative roles would contribute to its acceptability. As part of their policy from 1905 onwards the government introduced the policy of substitution of Indonesians for Europeans in the civil services. In 1918, the People's Council known as *Volksraad* was constituted. It was only a cosmetic move as the *Volksraad*'s powers were merely advisory and not binding upon the Governor-General. It was only with the onset of the Ethical policy that the Dutch made provisions to impart Western type education to

9. Furnivall, J.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 223-27.
Furnivall, J.S., *Netherlands India*, Cambridge University Press, 1936, p. 178.

Indonesians. Earlier the Dutch policy had been to maintain the local culture unchanged as far as possible. As a consequence of the Ethical policy, the number of Indonesian pupils in Dutch-medium government supported primary schools increased from 190,000 pupils in 1903, to 700,000 in 1923 and by 1940 there were 2 million pupils enrolled in schools throughout the Indies. The education provided was restricted to the primary and secondary stage. For higher education an Indonesian had to move to the alien environment of a Dutch school in order to be eligible for university admission in the Netherlands. Despite these efforts Indonesia continued to lag behind most of its neighbours in literacy.¹⁰ On the eve of the Japanese conquest there existed only a handful of Indonesian high-school graduates. Although the number of Western-educated students were few, there were even fewer opportunities for employment for them and they were mostly in government.¹¹

10. The Netherlands Indies of pre-war, in pursuit of its policy of maintaining native cultures, provided schooling that was both divided and stratified. There were several varieties of primary and secondary education, oriented to the European, Chinese, and Native population groups. It was also severely limited; according to the 1930 Census, only 6 per cent of the population were literate in any language. refer Furnivall, J.S., *Colonial Policy and Practice*, Cambridge University Press, p. 337.

11. Palmier, L., *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

The achievements of the Ethical policy were very modest. It failed to arrest the declining living standards and also failed to promote any agrarian revolution among the people. Population grew rapidly during this period and was directly responsible in reducing the efficacy of the Ethical policy. As one senior Dutch official put it "The welfare of the native population has not been noticeably raised, for higher production is counterbalanced by increase of population".¹² However, the Ethical policy released major forces of social change, and its shortcomings facilitated the emergence of a conscious nationalist movement.

The Dutch who initially came to the Indonesian archipelago in pursuit of trade had no intention of sinking their scanty resources for the purpose of acquiring political control over Javanese territory except to the extent that was required for maintaining trading privileges. Dutch colonial policy in Java was based on a

12. Furnivall, J.S., *Netherlands India, op. cit.*, pp. 229-31.

system of indirect rule. The essence of this system consisted in the utilization of the indigenous power structure for its own purposes. This involved the integration of the position and power of the Javanese aristocracy into the wider system of Dutch administration. The administrative pattern which emerged evolved out of the practices followed by the Dutch East India Company. The system consisted of a European *Resident* responsible for the business of the Company, and a native chieftain called *Regent* who was accountable to the Resident in matters of trade. Later, when the possessions of the Company were taken over by the Dutch government, two separate services emerged - one European and the other native, each with its own functions.¹³

The pattern of indirect rule which emerged rested on two pillars - the preservation of traditional values and customs, and an increasingly centralized bureaucracy. Many aspects of traditional law like *adat* or customary law, *desa* the rights of the family and the village were accommodated with Western legal concepts wherever possible.

13. Furnivall, J.S., *Colonial Policy and Practice*,
op. cit., p. 218.

Dutch colonial policy in the Indies, was essentially paternalistic and the general belief was that the Indonesians could not get along or even maintain their traditional customs, without the guidance of the Dutch. The popular saying was that, "A villager cannot scratch his head unless a district officer gives him permission and an expert shown him how to do it".¹⁴ It is a commonly held belief that during three centuries of Dutch rule in Indonesia, the basic policy of the Dutch was the preservation of the existing structure of native society. However, some scholars argue that this is essentially an erroneous view as Dutch rule has substantially altered the basic structure of Javanese social organisation. Javanese society whose political articulation had been moderately authoritarian became strongly authoritarian in character. A Javanese peasantry which had been able to force the indigenous nobility to respect its right became weakened in its relationship with this nobility, which was able to secure greater power over it.

14. Furnivall, J.S., *Colonial Policy and Practice*,
op. cit., p. 272.

Scholars like Lucien Pye are of the view that the Dutch system of indirect rule has left the Indonesian nation unsure of itself, with a highly ambiguous notion of the desirable qualities of political authority. Contrary to the view of scholars like J.S. Furnivall who found much more merit in the Dutch colonial approach than in the British, Pye feels that post-independent Indonesian society suffers from more uncertainty regarding its goal and standards of political conduct than any other South-east Asian nation.¹⁵

The economic role played by the Chinese in Indonesia is also of significance when appreciating the background of Indonesian nationalism. Before the arrival of the Dutch, Chinese merchants were active in Indonesia, and established trading settlements in the Javan coastal areas. With the consolidation of the Company's power over Java, the scope of activity of the Chinese considerably increased. The Dutch initially favoured the Chinese as

15. Pye, L.W., "The Politics of Southeast Asia" in Almond G.A. and Coleman, J.S. (eds.), *The Politics of the Developing Areas*, Princeton University Press, 1960, p. 94.

they firmly believed that their own exploitation of the Indies could be more efficiently conducted with the latter's help. The role of the Chinese in Java became transformed from that of intermediaries between the China-based merchants and the population of Java to that of intermediaries between the Company and the latter.¹⁶

Initially, the activities of the Chinese was restricted to the retailing of imports. Later on, they participated in the gathering of native produce for export by the Company and gradually acquired important positions earlier reserved only for members of the Indonesian aristocracy. The Company policy of favouring the Chinese helped to strengthen the latter's position. The Dutch granted the Chinese various monopolies such as the right to collect road tolls, levy *bazaar* fees, sell salt, collect customs duty, and this combined with the leasing of villages enabled the Chinese to acquire a predominant position. Through their control of the *bazaars* and their stronghold on the rice trade (arising out of

16. Kahin, G.M., *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Ithaca, New York, 1952, p. 41.

their control of the economies of their leased villages) the Chinese came to dominate almost the entire commerce of Java, the indigenous merchant class being nearly eliminated. With the abandonment of the Forced Cultivation System and the introduction of a *Laissez-faire* economy under Liberalism it was the already established aggressive Chinese merchant and not the Indonesian merchant who was able to exploit the new opportunities which emerged and which did not tempt most Netherlanders. Such a state of affairs led to much resentment among the Javanese.¹⁷

Thus, as a reaction to aggressive Chinese competition and in order to resist it, Javanese batik merchants in Surakarta in 1911 formed a co-operative association called Sarekat Dagang Islam (Islamic Trading Society) better known as Sarekat Islam. The orientation of this organisation soon switched from commerce to politics, and over a period of time it became the most important Indonesian nationalist organization. However,

17. Palmier, L., *op.cit.*, pp. 6-7.
Furnivall, J.S., *Colonial Policy and Practice*,
op. cit.

it met with limited success in attempting to stop Chinese penetration into the last preserves of Javanese trade, that is *Batik* and *Kretek* (Indonesian cigarettes). In many cases, though an Indonesian remained nominally the owner of such an enterprise, Chinese merchants inevitably came to control them. Some scholars are of the view that Indonesian and particularly Javanese hostility toward the Chinese cannot be perceived purely as commercial antagonism. What is often overlooked is that there had grown a strong attitude of 'Javanism' of the Javanese 'race' and history. Sarekat Islam's leaders soon recognised the importance of Javanese feelings of racial superiority for propaganda purposes.¹⁸

Indonesian nationalism of the twentieth century was largely the product of imperialism and was influenced by the wider currents of unrest affecting the colonial world. In Indonesia it was characterised not only by

18. von der Mehden, F.R., *Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1968.

anti-colonialism but also by new perceptions of nationhood embracing the ethnic diversity of the Indonesian archipelago. Indonesian nationalism was also nurtured in part by the economic exploitation and discrimination of colonial rule; from a new awareness of the oppressive nature of Dutch authority and the emergence of a new elite, who though educated, were denied adequate employment opportunities.

A major factor contributing to the growth of nationalism has been the high degree of religious homogeneity prevailing in Indonesia. Over 90 per cent of the population adhere to Islam, and the solidarity generated by adherence to a common religion has to a great extent counteracted the parochial tendencies that may have emerged among the dispersed islands of the archipelago. Another contributory factor to the development of national consciousness was the popularisation of *bazaar* Malaya into a national language called '*Bahasa Indonesia*' which served to dissolve linguistic barriers in Indonesian consciousness.

The establishment of the people's representative council by the Dutch, that is the *Volkraad* also substantially

contributed to the growth of Indonesian nationalism. By bringing together Indonesians from various parts of the archipelago and instilling in them awareness regarding their common problems and common relationship with the Dutch, this body inculcated within them a more manifest unity. The development of a vernacular press, radio and the increasing geographical mobility were other factors which promoted the spread and growth of nationalist consciousness.¹⁹

Indonesian nationalism had two sources of inspiration - internal and external. Internally, pan-Islam stimulated an awakening among the Indonesians and became instrumental in intensifying anti-colonialism. Externally, Japan's triumph over Russia in 1905 shattered the myth of the white man's invincibility. Of particular significance was the doctrine of self-determination which the Western powers propagated after the First World War, and this along with the promise of democracy, was acclaimed by nationalists all over the world as a doctrine of liberation.

19. Kahin, G.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 39-41.

Synoptic History of the Nationalist Movement Until 1942

Early Indonesian nationalism before 1912 was basically cultural in its orientation though political overtones were implicitly present. The most prominent figure of this period was Raden Adjeng Kartini, the daughter of a Javanese regent, who fervently believed that education, which was both Western as well as Indonesian in content, could be a powerful medium of social upliftment. In 1902 she founded a school for the daughters of Indonesian officials, and her activities stimulated the participation of Indonesian women in the nationalist movement in a major way.²⁰

The first organised cultural-nationalist organisation called *Budi Utomo* (Pure Endeavour) was founded by Dr. Mas Wahidm Soediro Hoesodo. Its program was essentially non-political and called for the development of traditional and Western education among the peoples of Java and Madura, and the advancement of agriculture,

20. von der Mehde, *op. cit.*, p.29.
Kahin, G.M., *op. cit.*, p.64

industry and commerce. Its support base consisted primarily of Indonesian civil servants and students above the sixth grade in Java and Madura. In particular, the *prijaji* class (aristocratic and administrative elite) predominated in such organisations as Budi Utomo. However, with the emergence of politically oriented nationalist organisations, Budi Utomo went into a period of stagnation and registered an overall decline from which it never fully recovered.²¹

The first pan-Indonesian mass movement *Sarekat Islam* suddenly emerged in 1912. *Sarekat Islam* came into being as an expression of the anxieties of Muslim merchants in central Java threatened with collapse in the face of mounting Chinese competition. Thus, *Sarekat Islam* started essentially as a union with middle class commercial leadership which was vulnerable to economic forces. But the strength of the organisation rapidly expanded beyond the shores of one island and the

21. Kahin, G.M., *op. cit.*, p.65

boundaries of a single social class. It was effectively able to exploit the general resentment against the Sino-Dutch partnership that came to acquire monopolistic control over most of the business of the archipelago. Sarekat Islam thus harnessed both the passions of those who feared the Chinese and those who championed progress along Western lines. The organisation had an enormous support base. From a membership of 360,000 members at the time of its founding, it rapidly rose to two and a half million in 1919. Its earlier political programme called for self-government which became transformed into a militant nationalist programme dedicated to complete independence to be attained by force if necessary.²²

Sarekat Islam's ability to reach the masses rested on its religious appeal. Of great importance was the impact of Modernist Islamic thought. This tended to find an enhanced receptivity among literate Indonesians due to the increasingly aggressive character of Christian missionary activity that developed during the first decade

22. *Ibid.*, p.67

of the twentieth century in Indonesia. General dissatisfaction of the local population with the old ways of the *prijaji* class and its hold on the native administration also enlarged the support base of Sarekat Islam. An article in ' *Indische Gids* ' in 1913 claimed that Sarekat Islam's struggle for power depended upon those interested in weakening the position of the *prijajis*.²³

The Nationale Indische Party (National Indies Party) represented an attempt to form a political party advocating social equality, socio-economic justice and independence, and was based upon Eurasian - Indonesian cooperation. Its motto was "The Indies for those who make their home there". Within a short period of time, the party was suppressed and its leaders exiled.

In the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, Indonesian Marxist-Leninists founded South-East Asia's first Communist party, the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party).

23. von der Mehden, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

The PKI had a considerable following among the urban workers who were denied the cost of living bonus, educated youths without employment, and middle-income persons burdened with taxes. The Dutch government took measures to curb the popularity of the PKI.²⁴

The decline of Sarekat Islam and the defeat of the Communists left the way open for a new organisation which emerged in 1927, the Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian Nationalist Party) or PNI was established by the members of the Bandung Study Club under the chairmanship of A. Sukarno. The party's aim was complete independence for Indonesia, economic as well political with a democratically elected government responsible to the people. Sukarno, who was a graduate of the Dutch Engineering College at Bandung, was ideally suited to rise to nationalist leadership. His personality represented an interesting synthesis of Javanese mysticism and Western technology. The PNI became the most powerful nationalist organisation in Indonesia and supported by the leaders of Sarekat Islam,

24. Kahin, G.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 70-74.

it was able to establish a loose federation of all the important existing nationalist organisations. This federation which was called the PPKI gave the nationalist movement a unity that it previously never possessed. The PPKI adopted the red and white flag as the national flag, 'Bahasa Indonesia' (Indonesian language) as the national language and the anthem 'Indonesia Raya' (Greater Indonesia) as the symbols of nation. Meanwhile, the Dutch being apprehensive of revised nationalist activity became more and more intransigent to Indonesian demands, and adopted a repressive policy, and arrested and exiled several nationalist leaders including Sukarno. Most of these leaders were not released till the Japanese conquest of Indonesia in 1942.²⁵

The Dutch power in Indonesia was destroyed in 1941-42 not by the power of native nationalism alone but by the Japanese conquest of Indonesia. The native nationalist

25. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

reaction to Japanese occupation was that the expulsion of the Dutch by the Japanese should be welcomed as a major step in the liberation of Indonesia from foreign rule. Although the Japanese did not encourage the independence movement, they did use Indonesian nationalists as cooperators. (There was a similar development in Burma the National leaders like U. Aung San, U. Thant and U. Ne Win cooperated with the Japanese occupation). They freed leaders like Sukarno, Hatta, Sjahrir and Sjarijuddin. These leaders decided to exploit the situation to promote the nationalist cause in a guarded fashion. While Sukarno and Hatta joined the Japanese government of Indonesia. Sjahrir and Sjarijuddin decided to organise an underground movement to hamper the Japanese war effort. The Japanese further indirectly strengthened the nationalist forces by making a complete break with the earlier educational system which they considered elitist, academic and impractical. Japanese training emphasised physical fitness, discipline and a spirit of sacrificial patriotism. The Japanese educational system, unlike the preceding Dutch system, was able to reach out to a large number of Indonesians. Significantly, a huge number of Indonesian youth during

the period of Japanese occupation experienced at least some form of military drilling and patriotic rhetoric. About half a million youth in Java were trained in the urban youth corps and over a million in the rural vigilance corps. All these developments contributed to the strengthening of Indonesian nationalism in a major way. Thus, Japanese occupation (despite its many exploitative aspects) significantly contributed to the growth of Indonesian nationalist consciousness.²⁶

It is the aim of this study to undertake a sociological analysis of certain variables which have contributed to the growth of nationalist consciousness in Indonesia.

A major influence in the development of national consciousness in Indonesia has been the unifying force of religion. Islam as a channel of mobilisation significantly contributed to the development of modern Indonesian nationalism. In the early twentieth century, an intense

26. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

renewal of interest arose in Islam as an educational, moral and political guide. The essential cause of this revival was the desire of many Indonesians for social security and solidarity.

Rapid changes ushered in by the introduction of a monetary economy, new legal order, technological progress and education confronted the individual with a series of challenges which greatly bewildered him. Islam became a medium by means of which to deal with this sudden transition.

The presence of a single faith was of great significance in areas where there was no other unifying factor such as language, culture or commonly shared territory. A foremost Dutch scholar on Indonesia W.F. Wertheim remarked that in Indonesia the significance of religion lay in the fact that people found a refuge in Islam. The major outward signs of the resurgence of Islam were the increase in the number of Muslim schools and in the number of pilgrims going to Mecca.

H.S. Tjokroaminoto leader of Sarekat Islam perceived Islam as a 'binding social factor and national symbol'.

The union of religion and nationalism was strengthened by the establishment of Islam as a symbol of differentiation between the indigenous population on the one hand and the white ruler on the other. The Indonesian Muslim flaunted his faith as a sign of his identification with the national community. Adherence to his religion was for the Muslim part of his expression of dislike for the economic dominance, racial superiority and political control imposed by the white man.

The influence of Islamic Modernism on the growth of nationalism is of some importance. Modernist Islamic teachings as they developed during the initial decades of the twentieth century in Cairo were particularly influential in shaping modern Indonesian nationalism. An important aspect of mercantile Islam is its rigid commitment to a puritanical way of life. Abstinence from liquor, regulation of conjugal life according to Islamic law, conservatism regarding the participation of women in social and occupational spheres, etc. the adjacent Malaysia also, a similar puritanical code is

help up as the ideal. Three principles of Modernism created an attitude among Indonesian Muslims which has inclined them to nationalist sentiment. These popular maxims are the belief in freedom, equality and brotherhood or in other words they may be understood as nationalism, equality of man under God, and opposition to traditional authority.²⁷

Modernist Islam inculcated two sets of attitudes - a dislike of mysticism, an emphasis on this worldliness, and a desire for knowledge were juxtaposed with values which revolted against gambling prostitution and luxurious living. This combination of attitudes had certain consequences which were of significance in preparing the way for nationalism. Firstly, it broke the traditional bonds of Islamic scholarship and made the study of Western science and ideology possible with their concomitants of liberalism, equality and democracy. These combined with Islamic social and religious ideas and

27. von der Mehden, *op. cit.*, p.15.

attitudes provided an interesting mixture in which Western liberal ends were accepted if they were in consonance with Islam. For example, Marxism became an accepted dogma among many Islamic leaders but under the guise of having been discovered by Muhammed and described in the Koran. Democracy was proved acceptable through the compilation and interpretation of the chapters in the Koran.²⁸

The second consequence was a growing emphasis on the individual. The Muslim no longer placed his reliance on the four schools of law and the consensus of the Muslim community, but scrutinized the world from a more rational perspective yet at the same time making use of the Koran and Hadith as his guides.

The social stratification system prevalent in Indonesia which may have hindered nationalism was further weakened by the Modernist insistence on the equality of man.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

The dangers implicit in the Islamic Modernist movement to Dutch colonial interests came to be recognised by the Dutch government and therefore the latter began adopting a repressive policy towards it. Snouck Hurgronje, the well-known Dutch scholar on Islam, speaking in 1911 gave an assessment of the problem. He observed that Indonesians studying in Mecca were absorbing Pan-Islamic ideas with astonishing rapidity, which could decisively bias them against Dutch colonial rule. Hurgronje advised that these Indonesians who acquired a Western education should be given positions in the service of the state worthy of their education. Although Hurgronje ideas were put into practice they only achieved partial results. The spread of Pan-Islamic ideas was substantially checked yet Modernist political and social ideas played a decisive role culminating in the first powerful Indonesian nationalist movement - Sarekat Islam.

Apart from Sarekat Islam, Islamic movements in Indonesia with a non-political orientation also significantly contributed to the development of nationalism. Four movements in particular are of sufficient importance

to merit close study.²⁹

The Muhammadiyah was the oldest, largest and most respected of the religious and educational organisations. It originated as an offshoot of the Egyptian Modernist influences which gave middle-class Indonesians the philosophy necessary to adopt their faith to the modern world. The activities of the movement included the spreading of Muslim religious teachings through the holding of meetings, formation and support of houses of worship, dissemination of information and the founding of educational organisations. Five facets of the Muhammadiyah ideology had their impact upon nationalist politics in Indonesia :

- i. an emphasis on rationalism and opposition to superstition;
- ii. the belief in an educated population as the basis for political development;

29. *Ibid.*, p. 196.

- iii. the middle class influence of a large number of *santris* who joined the movement;
- iv. an interest in Javanese culture; and
- v. an aversion to communism and Christianity.

It was especially in the field of education that the Muhammadiyah had a powerful influence on the nationalist movement. Educated in their own country, the Muhammadiyah students were staunch defenders of the people, particularly on the local level where they provided a large percentage of the non-*prijaji* leadership.³⁰

The close relationship between the Muhammadiyah and the middle-class *santris* led to many of its members to take part in municipal administration. H.J. Van Mook in his study of Kuta Geda, a town in Java, stated that the Muhammadiyah members composed an important part of the middle class industrialists and merchants, who

30. *Ibid.*, p. 196.

constituted the nucleus of municipal government.

The attempts of the Muhammadiyah movement to popularise Javanese history and art strengthened Indonesian nationalism. The organisation's efforts to promote 'Djawa-dipa' the low Javanese spoken by the peasants had important nationalist overtones, as language can prove to be a powerful means of separating oneself from the oppressor.

The Muhammadiyah movement was popular in the other Indonesian Islands such as Sumatra.

The *Nohdatul Ulama*, the *Ahmadiyah* and the *Young Islamic Union* were other religious associations which strengthened the growth of nationalism. The most effective proof that these organisations did affect nationalism may be found in the fact, that in contemporary Indonesia, *Nohdatul Ulama* is the nation's third largest party and the Muhammadiyah provided a large share of the Majumi party's membership and leadership.³¹

31. *Ibid.*, p. 205.

Analysing the impact of religion on nationalism, it is seen that Islam has been closely associated with politics. Wilfred Cantwell Smith emphasised this point when he wrote "In fact Islam is characterised among religions partly by the particular emphasis which it has from the beginning given to the social order. The Prophet Muhammad not only preached ethics, he organised a state". Islam also could apply the needed emotional basis for organisation. Whereas the Javanese may not be able to relate to the Atjehnese or Menangkabauan on the basis of race or nation, he would be emotionally stirred on hearing of assaults against a brother Muslim.³²

As a direct outcome of the Ethical Policy and the demand for cheap clerical help by the Dutch government in the Netherlands Indies, Western education was increasingly made available to Indonesians during the first four decades of the twentieth century. Although the expansion of educational facilities was limited, yet it significantly affected the growth of nationalist consciousness in Indonesia.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 208

The Indonesian student exposed to Western education utilized his knowledge of the Dutch language to gain access to the writings of Rousseau, Locke, Mazzini, Sorel and the Utopian and Marxist socialists.

Western political ideas combined with the political environment prevalent in Asia in the early part of the twentieth century created tremendous confidence in the average Indonesian and dispelled colonial induced ideas that the Indonesian was in any way inferior to the Netherlander and needed his guidance and protection. The activities of the Congress Party in India, the ideas disseminated by the emergence of Chinese nationalism particularly that represented by Sun Yat Sen, the rapid industrialization of Japan and its impressive victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905 - all combined to dispel any illusions of inferiority that the Indonesian may have earlier held. Further, the few Indonesian students who went to the Netherlands for higher studies were heavily influenced by the intellectual environment which they encountered.

The policy of social discrimination which the Dutch practised against the Indonesians created the resentment among the latter and aroused strong nationalist feelings.

Discrimination against Indonesians in the area of judicial administration and penal legislation was a major grievance. The courts provided for Indonesians were of much poorer quality than those to which the European population had access to. While legally trained judges set in the courts for Europeans, Indonesians had to content themselves with courts where members combined both executive and legal functions. Indonesians, unlike Europeans could be put in jail under "preventive detention" without trial.

Educated Indonesians also deeply resented the discriminatory employment practices of the Dutch which led to a scarcity of jobs and few good positions being open to them in the civil service. In the professional field, the Dutch actively tried to debar the entry of Indonesian aspirants. Proposed openings of a law school and medical school were constantly delayed, such schools being

established only in 1924 and 1926 respectively.³³ Discriminatory pay practices were also imposed on Indonesian government employees.³⁴

33. Kahin, G.M.,

34. In the Indonesian branch of the civil service those who passed the clerkship examination began on 25 guilders per month, while Europeans passing the same examination started at 60 guilders in the European branch. Similar practices were prevalent in the army. Indonesian privates were paid 15 guilders a month while their European counterparts received 60 guilders.

Chapter 4

Conclusion : A Comparative Analysis

It is the purpose of this study to undertake a comparative analysis of the developments in the growth of national consciousness in the two countries - India and Indonesia. Both countries underwent the experience of colonial rule, both faced the dilemma of reconciling a rich traditional culture with the requisites of a modern nation state and both can be understood as essentially plural societies.

In the case of Indonesia, it is seen that ethnic diversity is a prominent feature of Indonesian society and the integration of 16 major ethnic groups in the process of nation building has been an issue of some concern. As Selo Soemardjan writes, the general belief is that almost all ethnic groups have three characteristics in common¹ -

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1. Selo Soemardjan, "The Building of the Indonesian Nation", In Kothari, Rajni (ed) *State and Nation Building*, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi, 1976.

1. *Kekeluargaan* or the family structure and relationships which permeate all social institutions;
2. The *gotong-rojong*, which is an institutionalized system of mutual help and collective labour in public interest;
3. *Musjawarah dan mufakat* or the decision - making process which aims at a consensus through peaceful and friendly negotiations.

Whatever the nature of the three concepts in the culture of the ethnic groups, they have been continually emphasised in both the public and the private life and gradually accepted as national cultural elements.²

In the case of India, it is seen that religious diversity has been a feature of severe concern. The British policy of divide and rule substantially contributed to this state of affairs. It was on the basis of religion that partition of the Indian subcontinent took place in 1947, and it is the ugly manifestation of religious diversity in

2. *Ibid*

the form of communalism that has plagued the Indian nation even till the present day. India has tried to resolve this problem through its broad definition of secularism - implying equal respect for all religions - yet the problem is still far from resolved.

In Indonesia on the other hand, it is seen that a major factor contributing to the growth of nationalism has been the high degree of religious homogeneity prevalent. Over 90 per cent of the population adhere to Islam and the solidarity generated by adherence to a common religion has to a great extent counteracted the divisive tendencies that may have emerged as a consequence of intense ethnic diversity and geographic factors. The influence of Islamic Modernism on the growth of nationalism has already been pointed out earlier. Modernist Islamic teachings as they developed during the initial decades of the twentieth century in Cairo had a significant impact on modern Indonesian nationalism. In fact the first pan-Indonesian mass movement Sarekat Islam which emerged in 1912 was able to reach out to a wider audience due to the impact of Modernist Islamic thought.

In India, social and religious reform movements of the nineteenth century had a profound impact on society. The Arya Samaj in particular, acquired a wide social base in northern India. It drew its inspiration from the Hindu faith, but many of its activities such as largescale 'shuddhi' or mass purification and conversion of lower castes triggered off intense communal reactions. Even the reform movements like the Brahmo or Prarthana Samaj which displayed 'modernistic' trends were entirely Hindu in composition, and operated as if in opposition, to a conception of 'Muslim tyranny' from which British rule proved to be a deliverance. Such an ideological standpoint was antagonistic to Muslim intellectuals, and as similar movements were emerging within the Muslim community, the two communities became increasingly hostile towards one another.

The British policy of divide and rule also contributed to the strengthening of the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. In the aftermath of the Wahabi Movement and the 1857 Revolt, the British adopted a policy of disfavouing Muslims. The Muslims were mostly kept out of the ranks of the army, and this had a serious effect on the economic position of the upper class Muslims who had hitherto

mainly taken to the military profession. The British government introduced English education in India for administrative and other purposes which reduced the importance of Arabic and Persian, leading to impoverishment among the Muslim intelligentsia. Their deep resentment against the new policy of the British government made them stay aloof from the new education system introduced by the British. The Hindus on the other hand, took full advantage of the new educational opportunities, and among them an English-educated intelligentsia began to emerge. This resulted not only in the cultural backwardness of the Muslims but also in their exclusion from the administrative and legal positions. With the assimilation of the new education, the new Hindu educated class imbibed western ideas of democracy and freedom, and became the pioneers and leaders of the Indian nationalist movement.

With the rise of the nationalist movement, the British statesmen grew apprehensive about the stability of their empire in India. In the 1870's, there was a perceptible shift in British policy, and they decided to come out as 'champions' of the Muslims and to win over to their side Muslim zamindari and landlords. One of the first steps the

British took to rally the Muslims was to patronize the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College of Sayyid Ahmed Khan. This institution provided the impulse for the Aligarh Movement, which not only fostered a Muslim cultural renaissance, but also encouraged the sense of Muslim separatism. The British used the policy of divide and rule with great effectiveness. They introduced the communal principle in the constitutional machinery of the Indian state by introducing separate electorates for Hindus and Muslims, they attempted the Partition of Bengal in 1905 on communal lines, supported the two nation theory which ultimately led to the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947.

In the case of Indonesia, it is seen that the Dutch initially favoured the Chinese as they believed that their own exploitation of the Netherlands Indies could be more efficiently conducted with the latter's help. The role of the Chinese in Java became transformed from that of intermediaries between the China-based merchants and the population of Java, to that of intermediaries between the Company and the latter. The Dutch also granted the Chinese the right to various monopolies and this enabled

the Chinese to acquire a predominant position. In reaction to Chinese monopolisation, the Javanese merchants organised a trading association called Sarekat Islam. Thus the Dutch attempt at divide and rule was not as successful as the British.

An attempt to understand the social bases of the nationalist movement in the two countries reveals the following situation.

In India it is seen, that under British rule Western education enabled the high castes which had a tradition of literacy like the Brahmin, Vaishya and Kayastha to exploit the new opportunities. Members from these higher castes became clerks, schoolmasters, officials, lawyers and doctors. The social structure of the nationalist elite which emerged was fundamentally urban-based, rather than rural and usually belonged to the professions such as journalism, law or social work. The Brahmins in particular dominated many of the elite positions especially in the beginning. Later on the major part of the intelligentsia arose from these three group of castes and the leadership of the nationalist movement rested largely in their hands. Over a period of

however, several lower castes severely challenged the bases of Brahmin domination. The anti-Brahmin movement in peninsular India is a case in point.

In Indonesia, it is seen that in the initial stages of the nationalist movement, the '*prijaji*' or the hereditary aristocracy were in the forefront. The first organised cultural-nationalist organisation called *Budi Utomo* had a support base in which the *prijaji* class predominated. However, the rise of Sarekat Islam expressed the dissatisfaction of the local population with the old ways of the *prijaji* class, and the support base of Sarekat Islam was consequently enlarged by those interested in weakening the position of the *prijajis*. The emergence of Sarekat Islam also brought the *santri* class into the forefront of the nationalist struggle. The *santri* class was relatively prosperous and could assist in financing any association in which it was interested. Apart from Sarekat Islam, the *santri* provided leadership to other Islamic movements, though with not as strong a political orientation. The Muhammadiyah in particular was strongly supported by middle class industrialists and merchants, and many of its members took part in municipal administration.

Considering the organisational base of the national movement, it is seen that in India the Congress had an extremely crucial role to play. The Indian National Congress which was founded in 1885 arose as the culmination of considerable intellectual awakening and reform activity that took place throughout the nineteenth century. The movement was predominantly urban middle class to begin with, but then gradually it acquired a wider organisational base (particularly with the rise of Gandhi) and extended into the vast hinterlands of India. Further, the Congress displayed a high degree of consensus in its ideology and was able to integrate all streams of ideological thought and all the most important social interests within its framework.

In Indonesia, the Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian Nationalist Party) or PNI which emerged in 1927 under the leadership of Sukarno became the most powerful nationalist organisation and was able to establish a loose federation of all the important existing nationalist organisations. This federation which was called the PPPKI gave the nationalist movement a unity that it earlier never possessed. The PPPKI promoted '*Bahasa Indonesia*' as the national language (a link language made up of loan words from Malay, Dutch, Sanskrit and English), and the '*Indonesia Raya*' as the national anthem and

adopted the principle of *musjawarah dan mufakat* or the decision making process which aims at a consensus through peaceful and friendly negotiations.

Later political developments in the two countries however display a significant divergence. In post-independence Indonesia, the role of political parties during the formative years, that is between 1945 and 1965, in the blending of ethnic and other groups into one nation has been rather ambiguous. On the one hand, the excessive multiplicity of small political parties, many of them dominated by power-hungry leaders has not been exactly conducive to the unification of the nation. Inter and intra-party conflicts were responsible for a long period of political instability and insecurity all over the country. Ideological and political disagreements on the national level were reflected on the village level by many instances of social disruption.³

3. *Ibid.*, p. 272.

At the same time political parties made some contribution towards the welding of the new Indonesian nation. In their pursuit of national and democratic principles they organised themselves ignoring ethnic boundaries. Over and above the traditional local and ethnic loyalties, there developed a new sense of national belonging suffusing the structure and membership of the political parties and the declared goals of their activities.⁴ However, the growth and development of political parties in a democratic climate did not have a smooth career as in 1966 President Sukarno was forced to transfer power to military commanders led by Gen. Suharto.

In India on the other hand, the Congress party after independence emerged as the party of consensus. It acquired this position for itself due to its nationalist heritage acquired during the independence movement and in the post-independence period transformed itself into the dominant political party of the nation. According to Rajni Kothari such a party system displays the following features -

4. *Ibid.*

A plurality arises within the dominant party which makes it more representative, and enables it to absorb groups and movements from outside the party and thereby prevents other parties from gaining in strength.⁵

As the party system in India has been greatly dominated by the Congress system, certain characteristics of the latter can be spelt out - Firstly, the Congress being committed to a democratic ideology assigned a positive role to government and politics in the development of the nation. Secondly, it made the power of the central authority the major condition of national survival and made legitimacy the principal condition of politics. Thirdly, it made mobilisation and public cooperation a function of political participation.⁶

India's party system as it developed in the first two decades of independence was largely a system of one-party dominance being based on consensual authority and not on civil or military power. Such a system has allowed a comprehensive

5. Kothari, Rajni, *Politics in India*, Orient Longman Limited, New Delhi, 1970.

6. *Ibid.*

mechanism of change, a system of conflict articulation and resolution, and a system of communication between society and politics. Kothari also adds that such a system may well be of a transitional nature suited for the period of national growth and which would later transform itself into a more normal party system. Later developments in the Indian political system have to a large extent proved this prediction to be true.⁷

In most Third World countries the role of personality has tended to play a deeply crucial role. The cult of an individual leader has been highly effective in the unification of a people around the personality of an accepted and trusted leader.

The Indonesian people were ably guided by the leadership of Sukarno who laid many of the foundations of nationalism and unity. His exceptional oratorical talents and his skill to work on the sentiments of the masses made him supreme above all other political leaders. Sukarno gave definite expression to the philosophical foundation of an independent Indonesia through the *Pantja Sila* - the five basic principles

7. *Ibid.*

These include -

1. Belief in one God.
2. Humanity expressing justice and civilization
3. Unity of Indonesia
4. Democracy, guided by the essence of wisdom in discussion and representation
5. Social justice for the entire people of Indonesia.⁸



Due to its comprehensive nature, the *Pantja Sila* was successful as a unifying force at a time when the nation was still groping for meaningful ideological guidelines.

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In India it was Jawaharlal Nehru who played a crucial role in the process of nation-building. If Gandhi is considered the founder of the new Indian nation, then Nehru can be called the founder of the modern Indian state. Nehru's major contribution to the building of modern India lay in giving it a firm institutional basis, evolving a framework of consensus and laying down the operational ground rules of the system.⁹ Nehru was a staunch believer

8. Selo Soemardjan, *op. cit.*

9. Kothari, Rajni, 'Two Pivots of India's Model of Nation Building' In Kothari, Rajni (ed) *State and Nation Building* Centre for the study of Developing Societies, New Delhi, 1976.

in parliamentary democracy and also advocated a socialistic pattern of society. His passionate devotion to both democracy and socialism made him believe in the concept of democratic socialism and led him to accept the idea of welfare state as the most suited to Indian conditions.

The Congress under Nehru produced a consensus around socio-economic goals, the working of democratic politics and a spirit of nationalism which gave a basic identity to all Indians.

Thus it can be concluded that in both India and Indonesia it was the traditional elite who were first infused with the spirit of nationalist consciousness and who dominated the leadership positions in the nationalist movements of both these countries. Later on, national consciousness permeated other sections of society and they also rose to the forefront of the struggle. In both countries, the organisational base of the national movement had a significant role to play and in both the ideas of Western democracy and liberalism were influential. Further, the role of personality was of great importance in the two countries. Finally, it is seen that the task of nation building has drawn much from the indigenous tradition of the two countries.

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