Lady Keane College, Shillong

welcomes you to a

Three Day National Seminar on "Nation, Culture and Patriotism:

Philosophical Debate on Nationalism in Contemporary India"

organised by the Department of Philosophy, Lady Keane College, Shillong

in collaboration with the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR), New Delhi, India

from 10th to 12th October, 2023

Day - 1: Inauguration Venue - College Auditorium
Day - 2: Technical Session ⎫
Day - 3: Technical Session ⎬ s Venue - College Seminar Hall (Blended Mode)

Contents

Nation, Culture and Patriotism:
Philosophical Debate on Nationalism in contemporary India.
(The theme notes)

What historically began with a denotative description of a group with common heritage, the concept nation travelled many centuries bringing in many ascriptions of a common elements such as language, history, ethnicity, culture, territory or society. Some nations are constructed around ethnicity (see ethnic nationalism) while others are bound by political constitutions - However, emotional attachment becomes an important factor thus considering nation as a felt emotion . However, in the 21 st century how you describe it ,the features the uniqueness of a group who are called to be a community, their narratives ,for eg.as in Jews as a nation is their beliefs .

Homi Bhabha makes a different description about nation. In Bhaba's account the nation emerges through narration .The national narratives are not singular ,they can be ingrained in the socio ,political ,economic and the cultural sphere. (Homi Bhabha,1990 , 1990 ,pp 2-3). While this had been the concern among many scholars who emphasised on the socio-politico aspects there were other who talked about the ethnic aspects too which specified on cultural elements of certain particular communities which necessarily a characteristic feature of nation . More Sophisticated, liberal pro-nationalists tend to stress cultural membership only and speak of 'nationality', and the 'ethno' part (Miller 1992, 2000; Tamir 1993,2013; Gans 2003). The elements such as language, history, ethnicity, culture, territory or society. Some nations are constructed around ethnicity (see ethnic nationalism) while others are bound by political constitutions

India as a Nation

Scholars in the post colonial era have argued that India was only a geographical expression and creation of the British Empire. It was not a single nation. There were many distinct nations within, composed of distinct languages, races and castes. The arguments such as it being a union of number of princely states had been well grounded.The 20 th century thinker Anderson was of the opinion that national imagining or construction in the colonies (inclusive of India) was facilitated by the colonial regime. This was done by the introduction of western forms of education and print capitalism which in turn created an intelligentsia that was essential to the process of imagining the nation.

They were under the influence of the institution of the colonial state such as cartographers who drew the boundaries, and census departments that solidified communities by enumeration. In consequence the colonial intelligentsia chose their version of nationalism from Europe and America and applied them to their own countries with improvements to suits their specific contexts. However, Anderson's idea of nationalism is worth a note, here. An influential contestation of Anderson's ideas has come from Partho Chatterjee. In his essay 'Whose Imagined community' Chatterjee argues that the model Anderson used was too heavily based on European and Western Hemisphere examples. The colonial revolts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Asia and Africa created an 'anti-colonial nationalism' that was significantly distinct from the western nations, with its enlightenment philosophies of social contract and constitution. Class and caste structures, gender relations and spiritual and historical traditions created forms of nationalism at variance with what was formed in Europe and America.

The Prithvi Suktha of Athara Veda has about sixty-three hymns to the motherland. The motherland is praised as the 'land girt by the sea and fertilized by the rivers that pour down

their bounty in streams of plenty, the land of hills and snowy mountains and forests giving protection to her sons, the all-producing mother of herbs, the land where our forefathers lived and worked…' Manu Smriti defines the motherland as the country fashioned by the very hands of the gods. Shaloka from the Vishnu Purana that the country that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains is called Bhratam there dwells the descendants of Bharata. A famous passage in the Vishnu Purana extolls Bharatavarsha "as the best of all lands," where " it is only after many thousand births, and the aggregation of much merit that living beings are sometimes born as men," about which the gods themselves exclaimed: "Happy are those who are born even from the condition of gods as men in Bharatavarsha as that is the way to the pleasures of Paradise, or the greater blessing of final liberation.

"The deification of the motherland and attribution to her of a divine making is characteristic of the Dharmic civilization of India. There is this saying in India: "Janani Janmabhumischa Swargadapi Gariyasi", meaning 'the mother, and motherland are higher than heaven itself." The 'River Hymn' in Rigveda deifies the rivers in the land thus: "O ye Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Satadru, and Parusni, receive ye my prayers." "Here patriotism itself is elevated and refined into religion. To think of the mother country, to adore her as the visible giver of all good becomes a religious duty; the fatherland is allotted its rightful place in the nation's daily prayers, the fatherland of which the most important manifestation is constituted by the river systems. Patriotism has thus to be cultivated as a religious emotion necessary for religious progress and not to be confined in its range within the limited horizon of a mere concern for the material interests of the country…The place of birth is sincerely regarded as the most important factor of emancipation itself.

 "Sare Jahan se Accha" , formally known as "Tarānah-e-Hindi" ("Anthem of the People of Hindustan"), is an Urdu language patriotic song for children written by poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal in the ghazal style of Urdu poetry. The poem was published in the weekly journal Ittehad on 16 August 1904. Publicly recited by Iqbal the following year at Government College, Lahore, British India (now in Pakistan) it quickly became an anthem of opposition to the British Raj. The song, an ode to Hindustan—the land comprising present-day Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, was later published in 1924 in the Urdu book Bang-i-Dara. By 1910, Iqbal's worldview had changed to become global and Islamic. In a new song for children, "Tarana-e-Milli," written in the same metre, he changed the homeland from "Hindustan" to the "whole world." In 1930, in his presidential address to the Muslim League annual conference in Allahabad, he supported a separate nation-state in the Muslim-majority areas of the subcontinent, an idea that inspired the creation of Pakistan. Saare Jahan se Accha has remained very popular patriotic song in India. An abridged version is sung and played frequently as a patriotic song and as a marching song of the Indian Armed Forces. However, the most popular musical composition is that of sitar maestro Ravi Shankar.

"It is doubtful whether in any other literature of the world, we can find similar expressions of patriotism under which the solid material earth becomes transfigured and deified into a spiritual ideal claiming the worship of the heart, for these expressions are characteristic of the Hindu mind, which alone can think of according to the motherland an honored place among the gods of their elaborate pantheon. Patriotism itself is thus Indianized, receiving a distinctive expression of its own under the peculiar idealizing and spiritualizing process of Hindu thought…" (Radhakumud Mukherji (1921) Nationalism in Hindu Culture, P.20)

Indian nationalism in a new perspective

Aditya Nigam has argued in his book The Insurrection of Little Selves: The Crisis of Secular-Nationalism in India that the whole project of Indian nationhood was and is an impossible

project. He argues that for nations to become true nations there is a requirement that a common homogeneous cultural identity to exist. (Aditya Nigam, 2006, p. 16) The self-structured understanding of the 'Hindu Nationalists' stood in contrast to this imagination: for them, 'India's national identity was summarized by Hinduism'; 'Indian culture was to be defined as Hindu culture, and the minorities were to be assimilated by their paying allegiance to the symbols and mainstays of the majority as those of the nation' (Jaffrelot, 2007: 5). This aspect of the what is described here as a demand of homogeneity in contemporary India needs further examination and also analysis. A philosophical basis has to be further reflected upon in this area of what is being treated and considered as here as nationalism in the contemporary India. The focal point of the proposed seminar would be a critical enquiry into the identity as aimed to be created and the characteristic features that holds within the structured 'unity'. When you put this in contrast to Keinichie Ohmaes' classic The Borderless World where he argued persuasively that national borders are less relevant in contemporary times. A Turkish author Ece Tumelkurans's words 'masses easily adapt to the new narratives of their victimhood this is translated into the rejection of the entre brew …cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism ,and secularism in the name of cultural rootedness ,religious or ethnic identity and nationalist authenticity '. Another element that David Goodhart points out in his 'Road to Somewhere' here the somewhere in contrast to 'any wheres' which identifies with the so called global citizens . He puts some advantage to those belonging somewhere as rooted in a place,a land ,an ethnicity ,a religion ,a local assumption and often traditional prejudices. He claims the somewhere had won.

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PROGRAMME OF THE THREE-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR
10-12 October, 2023

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Theme: Nation, Culture and Patriotism: Philosophical Debate on Nationalism in Contemporary India organized by the Department of Philosophy, Lady Keane College, Shillong

In collaboration with Indian Council of Philosophical Research(ICPR) New Delhi.

(Both on online and off line Mode)

Link for Day 1.10 October ,2023: https://meet.google.com/cop-znnx-wcd

Link for Day 2 .11 th October ,2023: https://meet.google.com/qfx-twys-ntk

Link for Day 3. 12 th October 2023: https://meet.google.com/yhe-zcpx-dha

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INAUGURAL FUNCTION

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DAY 1 (Tuesday): 10 October, 2023 *Time:* 10.00 a.m **Venue:** Auditorium, Lady Keane College, Shillong

Welcome Address: Dr D.K.B Mukhim, Principal, Lady Keane College

Welcome Song : Students of Khasi Traditional Music

Introducing the Theme: Dr. S Varghese, Academic Co-ordinator, National Seminar

A Book launch : Releasing of the Book

Address by Prof Vanlalghak, Dean, School of Humanities , NEHU, Shillong.

Keynote Presentation: Prof. Prasenjit Biswas, Department of Philosophy, NEHU,Shillong.

Address by Prof Xavier P Mao, Head, Department of Philosophy, NEHU,Shillong.

Lighting of the Traditional Lamp

Address by the Chief Guest: Shri Rakkam A. Sangma, Hon'ble Education Minister of Meghalaya

Vote of Thanks: Head of Philosophy Department, Lady Keane College, Shillong

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--- Tea Break ---

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Technical session I (12 . 30 p.m to 2.00 p.m)

Chairperson : Prof. Vanlalnghak, Dean , School of Humanities , NEHU, Shillong

Discussion on the keynote

Plenary Session: Professor Ananta Kumar Giri , Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai. "Rethinking and Transforming Philosophy, Patriotism and Nationalism: Cultivating Contemplative Civilizations of Love and Ahimsa and the Calling of Planetary Realizations".

Discussion

Lunch Break (2. 00 – 3.00 p.m)

Technical Session II : (3.00 p.m – 4.30 p.m)

Chairperson: Prof. Sebastian Velassery ,Former Professor ,Panjab University ,Chandigarh.

Speaker:

1. Dr. Agustine Pamplany, Director ,Inter- Disciplinary Section, Little Flower Seminary Aluva

Hinduness as Ekanishtata (One-Centredness):

Brahmabandhab Upadhyay's Vision of Hindu Nationalism as Cultural Pluralism

2. Prof. Xavier P Mao ,Head Department of Philosophy, NEHU ,Shillong.

 "Nationalism-Internationalism an interface".

 Cultural Programme by Students

    (4.30 – 5.30 p.m)

Technical Session III   **Time:** 9.00 -11 . 00 a.m   **Venue:** Seminar Hall

Chairperson: Prof. Prasenjit Biswas , Dept. of Philosophy,NEHU,Shillong .

Speakers:

1.Dr.Augustine Pamplany, Director, Inter Disciplinary Section , Little Flower Seminary Aluva, Kerala.

"Hinduness as Ekanishtata (One-Centredness): Brahmabandhab Upadhyay's Vision of Hindu Nationalism as Cultural Pluralism".

2.Dr. Pius V.Thomas, Head, Department of Philosophy, Assam University, Silchar.

"Nationalism and the Nation State: Understanding Indian Nationalism In a Cosmopolitan Way".

3. Dondor Khongtup ,Guest Faculty ,Department of Philosophy, NEHU, Shillong.

"Nation as a living form: a Heideggerian critique".

Technical Session IV (11 a.m. – 1.00 p.m)

Daya Krishna Memorial Session

Chairperson: Professor K.L.Sharma, President, Daya Krishna Academic Foundation (online chairing)

Speakers:

1.Professor Asha Mukherjee, Emeritus, Department of Philosophy & Religion, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, Bholpur, West Bengal (online address)

2.Dr. Alok Tandon,Scholar n author (On line address)

3.Professor Arvinder A Ansari Hony. Director (Centre for Study of Social Exclusion & Inclusive Policy) &

Professor Department of Sociology Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi (online address).

          --- Lunch Break – (1.00 – 2.00 p.m)

Technical Session V

(2.00 – 4.00 p.m.)

Chairperson: Dr. Augustine Pamplany, Director, Inter-Disciplinary Study Centre, Little Flower Seminary Aluva, Kerala.

Speakers:

   1. Professor Sukalpa Bhattachrjee, Professor Department of English, NEHU .

   "Gender and the nation: Bharatmata"

   2. Dr. Maya S ,Associate Professor ,Department of Philosophy,NEHU,Shillong.

   "Whose nation is it any way ? A Feminist critique."

           Discussion

Paper Presentation of Research Scholars (4.15 – 5.30 p.m)

Chairperson: Professor Sukalpa Bhattacharjee, Professor Department of English, NEHU

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1.Dipu Basumatary , Ph.D Scholar ,Department of Philosophy, NEHU, Shillong.

2.Deepak Kumar Shahi ,Ph.D Scholar, Department of History , NEHU ,Shillong.

       Cultural Programme (5.30 p.m – 6.00 p.m)

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DAY 3 (Thursday): Date: 12 October, 2023

Technical Session VI

(9.00 – 11 a.m)

Chairperson: Dr. Pius V Thomas, Head, Department of Philosophy, Assam University, Silchar
Speakers:
1.Prof. Sebastian Velassery, Emeritus, Panjab University, Chandigarh.
"Indian Nationalism and Religious Pluralism: A Philosophical Critique"
2.Prof. Binayak Dutta, Professor Department of History, NEHU, Shillong.
"Historical Tranformation in the inter cultural context of Assam"
3. Dr. Vanlalvenpuia, Asstt. Professor ,Department of Philosophy, Pachchunga University, Aizawl.
"Re-locating history in the Modern narrative of socio-political conflict"

Technical Session VII
(11 .00a.m – 1.00)
Chairperson: Prof. Xavier P Mao, Head, Department of Philosophy, NEHU
Ethnicity and ethno-nationalism in North-East India
1. Dr. Basil Pohlong, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, NEHU,Shillong.
"Nationalism as a lived experience in Khasi Hills of Meghalaya"
2. Prof. Vanlalnghak, Dean, School of Humanities , NEHU,Shillong.
"The Nature and Causes of Ethnic Conflict in Manipur: A Philosophical Analysis"

3. Prof. Prasenjit Biswas, Co-ordinator, OIA, NEHU and Professor of Philosophy, NEHU, Shillong.
"Ethics of Transition: North East India and the Lifeworld"
Discussion

--- Lunch Break (1.30 –3.00pm) **---**

Technical Session VIII
(3.00 – 5.00 p.m)
Chairperson : Professor Ananta Kumar Giri ,Madras School of Development Studies ,Chennai, Tamilnadu.
Speakers:
1.Dr. Thomas Menamparampil, author & scholar, Peace Centre, Guwahati, Assam.
"Nationalism Goes Awry If It Leans on Created Truth"
2.Dr. Man Bahadur Khattri, Associate Professor, Central Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal.
"Civic and Ethnic Nationalism in Nepal: Issues, Opportunities and Challenges in National Unity".
Discussion

Valedictory Function (4.00 pm onwards)
Welcome Address: Dr. D.K.B Mukhim, Principal, Lady Keane College
Song : Students of Lady keane College
Traditional Dance : Students of Lady Keane College
Prize Distribution
Report Presentation
Feedback by participants
Address: Prof Vanalnghak, Dean, School of Humanities, NEHU, Shillong .
Address: Professor Ananta Kumar Giri, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai.
Vote of Thanks : Dr. S Varughese, Academic Co-ordinator, National Seminar.

NATIONAL SEMINAR
ON
Nation, Culture and Patriotism:
Philosophical Debate on Nationalism in Contemporary India.

Venue: Lady Keane College, Shillong, Meghalaya, India

Organised by: Department of Philosophy, Lady Keane College, Shillong

RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

Submitted by Department of Philosophy
Lady Keane College
Shillong.

Inaugural Session:

The inaugural session was hosted by the co-cordinator of the National Seminar ,Ms. Jenika Kharlor.

The welcome speech was delivered by the Principal of the college, Dr. D. K. B. Mukhim .In his speech he expressed immense gratitude to ICPR ,New Delhi for sponsoring the event . He welcomed the Chief Guest,Shri Rakkam A Sangma ,the Minister of Education of Meghalaya . The keynote presenter Professor Prasenjit Biswas ,a Professor of the Department of Philosophy, NEHU Shillong talked at length about the notion of nationalism and also about the reasons   for the number of issues arising about nationalism in contemporary India. Prof. Biswas who takes keen interest in distinguishing philosophising from reading philosophy emphasised on the need of having elaborative discussions on secular aspects and also of the need of establishing India on such secular pillars.

The students of Lady Keane College presented a beautiful song for welcoming the Guests. *Dr. Saji Varughese .the academic Co-ordinator of the Seminar introduced the theme to the audience*.   He observed that we live in a national community, yet here is a process of undermining national community and strengthening ethnic communities. Unfortunately, he says, the concept of ethnicity has been misunderstood immensely. This, as we have seen in recent times, have generated numerous ethnic violence all over the country. We need to understand the limitations of categories such as ethnicity, citizenship and nationality. We take these words as nouns and this gives us a blunt understanding, rather these should also be understood as verbs, in a working platform.

Professor Xavier P Mao, in his address at the inaugural session pointed out about the need of making the move of national and the nationalism movements on secular lines. Professor Vanlalanghak, the Dean of Humanities ,NEHU Shillong in his inaugural address talked about the need of strengthening nation building initiatives that is gradual which would also need an approach which is largely secular throughout India.

The Chief Guest of the programme, Shri. Rakkam A Sangma, the Honourable Minister of education of Meghalaya delivered the Presidential address in which he addressed the problems that comes in such situations . According to him, globalisation is a process of economic unification of the world, a powerful movement against which the individual art and cultures have to fight vigorously to survive. Thus, it affects our livelihood, our social understanding of the quality of life, etc. It has much wider traditional implications. The idea of identity plays a vital role now. Cultures are vanishing in the wake of globalisation; the platform of socialising has shifted to the electronic media; value systems have changed immensely, thus its demoralising effect. She resorts to the Gandhian thought of a village republic, which holds that large states are not conducive for moral roots and that it is only within small communities that moral examples can be set.

Vote of Thanks: The vote of thanks was proposed by Smt. Savitri Nongsiej Head – incharge , Department of Philosophy, Lady Keane College. She extended gratitude to everyone involved in the making of the seminar a reality and a successful one.

Technical Session I
Chairperson: Prof. Vanlalnghak, Dean ,School of Humanities ,NEHU,Shillong.
Speaker:

Professor Ananta Kumar Giri , Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai. Theme: "Rethinking and Transforming Philosophy, Patriotism and Nationalism: Cultivating Contemplative Civilizations of Love and Ahimsa and the Calling of Planetary Realizations".

Professor Giri began with descriptions on a dogma which relate to globalisation which are that the world has become a small place where we experience a sense of congestion in space. The threshold in today's world gets lower. But the globe has not become a village in all aspects. The Globe is also a conglomeration of ghettos in an urban perspective. It is not signified by freedom of movement alone but also in restriction of movement. He claims that particular consumerist myths brought forward by marketing and advertising strategists of advanced economic corporations have an impact on indigenous identities and lifestyles. In the transformative process of globalisation marketing and advertising have become increasingly aggressive, intrusive and pervasive due to advanced economic competition. The myths employed in marketing and advertising successively permeate everyday culture, influencing lifestyles of individuals and entire social milieus. However, it is also true that these works do not take place in a vacuum. These moves of the nationalists are guiding principles for the theoreticians themselves . Many theories of nationalism already recognize that nations can pay dividends at different levels. At the personal level they can provide benefits via a secure sense of one's context and a feeling of belonging and esteem. These aspects have been recognized by different thinkers. There is considerable amount of support for them in the work of theorists like Will Kymlicka (1995) and Charles Taylor (1995, 1999). But often these accounts stop there, at the individual level, and this leaves out an important part of the picture. These above given theories reach to a position of no return when individuals are attached to different national origins, as in the case of immigrants. If nationalism is justified solely at a personal or individual level, then everyone has an equal claim to seeing his or her nationality politically or socially established. This would lead us to a certain situation, a moral stalemate, as everyone would have his own way of preferring one to the other .

Prof.Giri elucidates the phenomenon of nation building by explaining in terms of the processes of fragmentation and conglomeration both of which tendentially increase the vulnerability of less privileged groups and individuals. Further, he argues that what Zigmunt Bauman calls liquid modernity might be better described as gaseous or plasmatic age, which in turn is highly conducive for the narration of consumerist myths. This gaseous-plasmatic environment is less predictable and more flexible as compared to the solid age and it contains multiple identities.

The presentation was followed by a threadbare discussion on the theme, after which the Chairperson thanked the speaker and the audience. Lunch Break was from 2.00 p.m to 3.00 pm.

Technical Session II

The Chairperson of the session was Prof. Sebastian Velassery ,Former Professor ,Panjab University ,Chandigarh who introduced the speakers of the session to the audience .

The first speaker Dr. Agustine Pamplany, Director ,Inter- Disciplinary Section, Little Flower Seminary, Aluva, spoke on the theme 'Hinduness as Ekanishtata (One-Centredness):Brahmabandhab Upadhyay's Vision of Hindu Nationalism as Cultural Pluralism'.

He highlighted the pluralistic nationalism of India with its religious rootedness in Hinduism. The positive rapprochement between Hindu rootedness and social and religious pluralism is achieved by Upadhyay in his contentious view of caste system and the Hindu-Christian Dialogue. After explaining the notion of Ekanishtata, the paper tries to see how Upadhyay goes to question the regular criticism of caste system which according to him is an offshoot of the organic Hinduism. It further presents his views Hindu Catholicism as a model for a pluralistic Hindu nationalism.

The term cultural pluralism here, is coined as an implication of Upadhyay's vision of One-centredness – the pillar of Hindu's Hinduness. The paper argues that despite the strong religious Hindu identity of the Indian nationalism advocated by Upadhyay, this should not be conflated with the present-day parochial and monolithic view of religion and culture advocated by certain political and ideological outfits. Nor is his defence of caste system to be viewed as an endorsement of the rigid and exploitative aberrations of the organic vision of the caste. Revisiting Upadhyay in the present day would imply the restoration of the pristine universal and pluralistic ideals of Hinduism championed by Upadhyay.

Prof. Xavier P. Mao ,Head Department of Philosophy, NEHU ,Shillong in his presentation, entitled "Nationalism-Internationalism an interface" , spoke at length about the situation in contemporary India . The present day scenario, whether for joy or sorrow clearly points towards the inseparability of economic interdependence. All human beings form parts of a single unified society. Even the requirements and needs are interdependent ever more than any period in human history. This increasing interdependence is visibly discernible in economic sphere than in any other sphere. Modern culture is also increasingly going beyond the national boundaries. In the contemporary world different types of international organizations have emerged. As a result, connection, communication, contact and interdependence of different nations are visibly evident. The concept national security is gradually becoming out-dated. The security is either international or no security at all. The steady growth of international institutions along with the evolution of international law the relation among the different states is moving

towards collective cooperation rather than conflict. In this connection, I would like to quote the famous philosopher of history, Prof. Arnold Joseph Toynbee, "Fratricidal warfare of ever increasing violence between parochial sovereign states had been by far the commonest cause of mortality among civilizations of all three generations". To prevent and pre-empt such possible occurrence, the imperative need is to evolve a holistic vision whereby the peaceful co-existence of all variety of peoples and systems are ensured. In concrete terms this means that all nation-states must observe and promote a common code of civilized behaviour where the common interest and welfare are involved. This does not mean the abandonment of the cultural uniqueness and distinctiveness. On the contrary it is only shaking up the unwanted national arrogance and parochialism. In this sense, nationalism and internationalism can form a harmonious concentric circle extending farther to even animal kingdom and plant kingdom, nay healthy relationship with the soil itself. Viewing in this light nationalism and internationalism are not mutually exclusive but complementary. The creative and liberating forces of nationalism can logically strengthen internationalism. The Vedic seers have suggested the whole world is one family. Modern science and philosophy point towards one cosmic family if the cosmos is to survive. How to have protection and wellbeing of the universe? How to avoid evil and to promote good? How to eliminate vices and to multiply virtues? How to preserve and multiply natural resources? How to ensure a just and equitable distribution of natural resources? It is the duty of each and every nation-state ensures the above concerns. For effective and successful functioning of any nation-state or any organization there is a need for norm-prescription, norm-obedience, and norm-enforcement and there should be punitive measures for norm violators. Further, to ensure norm-conformity there is a necessity of an authority of law and also a person should be in authority. According to ancient Indian tradition an authority is an impersonal law but the person in authority is the ruler. The ruler here can mean a person or body of persons whose duty is to execute and ensure law-abidance. An authority being the impersonal law is autonomous whereas a person in authority is subject to rules, regulations and legislative law. The impersonal law or authority has intrinsic value or worth whereas the person in authority has instrumental value and his or her duty is to remove lawlessness and to ensure peace and justice. Political power can acquire moral legitimacy if and only if it refined by spirituality. The logic of such performance can lead to the teleology of cosmic well-being, then automatically the friction and conflict between nationalism and internationalism will vanish and the two will be a continuum.

There was a discussion on both the presentations and the Chairperson thanked both the resource persons and the audience .

The Cultural Programme (4,30-5.30 p.m) was an exhibition of the talents of the students of the college where there were 4 cultural dances of different tribes of North_East India.

Day II 11 th October .2023.

Technical Session III

The Chairperson of the first technical session on the second day was Prof. Prasenjit Biswas , Dept. of Philosophy,NEHU,Shillong . There were two speakers in this session . The first speaker Dr. Pius V.Thomas, Head, Department of Philosophy, Assam University, Silchar spoke on the theme "Nationalism and the Nation State: Understanding Indian Nationalism In a Cosmopolitan Way".

This concept of an imagined community as a nation emerges from Benedict Anderson's influential thesis (in his 1983 book Imagined communities) that nationalism is a cultural artefact and that it is "an imagined political community -and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign". There is, in particular, opposition to his central thesis; which maintains that once this modular form of nation emerged under specific historical conditions in the Western hemisphere at the end of the eighteenth century it spread to the Americas and Europe to the rest of the world. Partha Chatterjee has argued that "If other parts of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain "modular" forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine? (Chatterjee,1993:5)1

To define nations in terms of a shared culture, when there are and have been so many varied and rich cultural differences in the world, would not help us to determine political units on the basis of a shared particular culture . However , in modern age there are contexts where culture and politics are brought together (Gellner 1983: ch. 5). But what then is nationalism? For Gellner, it is a political principle, 'which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent'. It is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state…should not separate the power-holders from the rest. (ibid. 1)

National sentiment is the feeling of accommodation or of satisfaction aroused by fulfilment of this principle. The nationalist movements are ones actuated by this sentiment of acceptance or rejection. It is true that it is necessary to define the concept of the nation in terms of the age of nationalism. r We can define nations as the product of both will and culture only under certain conditions . But what then is nationalism? For Gellner, it is a political principle, 'which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent'(Gellner 1971). It is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state…should not separate the power-holders from the rest. (ibid.: 1) Indeed the Indian context gives evidence of a rejection of the "modular" forms of nation provided by the western experience. Rabindranath Tagore is a case in point. He famously rejects both the "nation of the West"(in his 1917 lectures) along with what he describes as "shallow cosmopolitanism". Amartya Sen speaks of Tagore's dual attitude to nationalism emphasizing self respect while rejecting cultural isolationism. Though much misunderstood, (for instance by Nussbaum who sees him as an advocate of a cosmopolitanism derived in a philosophical lineage from the stoics and Kant),Tagore becomes a proponent of elements of the earlier 'mechanical' type of solidarity

remain even in the most modern societies, above all, the cohesion and self-renewal required by every society .

Dr. Dondor Khongtup , Faculty ,Department of Philosophy, NEHU, Shillong was the second speaker of the session . He spoke on the theme "Nation as a living form: a Heideggerian critique". In the ongoing debate between realism and liberalism on the question of state violence, the nature of the nation-state itself is often overlooked. Realism holds that state behaviours are determined by structural determinations – states exist in an international system marked by anarchy, they engage in self-help activities and power differential in order to ensure their own security. This is what Morgenthau calls "politics among nations" (Morgenthau 1985). Liberalism argues that state behaviours are not determined by structural reasons because they have agency, they can engage in cooperation in order to ensure their security (Keohane, 1984). Russett's "democratic peace theory" would further suggest that the type of ideology that states have i.e. democratic institutions, tends to promote cooperation and result in international peace (Russett, 1993). One consequence of this liberal-democratic view is the demand to uproot non-democratic institutions and establish democratic ones. The realist critique of this liberal view is that the demand to establish more democracies in the name of peace would only result in perpetual war. This is what Mearsheimer calls the "false promise" of liberal institutions (Mearsheimer 1994, p. 5). While there are clear advantages and disadvantages to both views, they have both overlooked the fundamental nature of the nation-state itself. The realists have attributed the source of state violence in the international structure itself, while the liberals have attributed it to the ideology of the state itself, but could violence be intrinsic to the nation-state itself? This paper argues for a broadly constructivist view that violence cannot be attributed in the international structure nor in state ideology but is intrinsic to the nation-state itself. This paper will trace the ideas of three distinct thinkers Flusser, Agamben and Deleuze and Guattari, who have written significantly on the nature of the nation-state itself and who have arrived at a broad consensus that state violence cannot be blamed on structures or ideology but on the notion of state itself.

The Chairperson thanked both the speakers and the audience .

Technical Session IV   (11 a.m. – 1.00 p.m)   (On line Session)

Daya Krishna Memorial Session

The Chairperson of the session was Professor K.L.Sharma, President, Daya Krishna Academic Foundation

Speakers of this session were 1.Professor Asha Mukherjee, Emeritus, Department of Philosophy & Religion, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, Bholpur, West Bengal (online address).

After speaking about the values of Indian nation state and the society ,as envisaged by Daya Krishna Prof.Mukherjee talked about the comparative ideologies. Charles Taylor is of the opinion that nationalism needs to be tackled in this two –prolonged way, and he hopes that his account helps to clarify some of the "thorny issues" which impede our

vision of this absorbing, and disturbing, but seemingly inescapable features of our modern world."

He also argued that nationalism cannot be understood as an atavistic reaction or something ancient. What is modern would be the context of nationalist struggles. But why did Algerians not demand full French citizenship to which they were entitled instead of going for independence? Answering this basic question, Taylor makes a distinction between the two stages of the movement; from one point of view, modernity is like a wave, flowing over and engulfing one traditional culture after another which is irresistible. It can be called as a force for the onward march of modernity. However, modernity also has another side as it lived from the inside. The institutional changes alter the traditional culture or sometimes get destroyed. In this sense, modernity is not a single wave- these are alternative modernities such as Japan and India, and some Islamic modernities are not uniform. In this sense, modernity is seen as a threat to traditional culture. But the alternative modernities as against Western, do not refuse the changes; they are looking for creative adoption, drawing upon the cultural resources of their tradition, which would enable them to take on the new practices successfully. (Not just copying the West but to creatively inventing their own modernity). Thus there is a call for difference felt by the modernizing elites. Western modernity has been a conquering culture, using power to exercise – a relation of superiority and inferiority, an inbuilt challenge to dignity. The elites feel the challenge is related to their dignity. But in the process, the refusal may come from the elites regarding the incorporation of urban culture, and thus, first it involves modernizing elites. Threat to dignity is also related to conditions of dignity.

Dr. Alok Tandon,Scholar and author (On line address) emphasised upon the need of inculcating the values as pointed out by Daya Krishna. Daya Krishna gives a new plea for a new history of philosophy in India which is expressed in his books- "New Perspectives in Indian Philosophy, and Indian Philosophy: A Counter Perspective". In these works, he dealt with the most commonly accepted ideas about Indian philosophy and tried to radically uproot them. Daya Krishna tried to show that Indian philosophy is no less philosophical than its Western counterpart. The reduction of Indian philosophy into a "spiritual" or mokşa oriented endeavour simply not liked by him .He makes out a strong case against the claim that the central concern of Indian philosophy is spiritual liberation, pure and simple .According to him Indian philosophy is proclaimed to be dealing with the final and ultimate liberation of the spirit, which is known as Moksa, and it is in this perspective that Indian philosophy makes any sense at all Daya Krishna's creative criticism of the prevalent traditionalist interpretation of classical Indian philosophy is analytically stated and evaluated. Daya Krishna thought that need for a new history of India cannot be denied. A long-term plan consisting of diverse strategies at various levels would for him will yield a better result for creation of history of Indian philosophy .

Professor Arvinder A. Ansari, Hon. Director (Centre for Study of Social Exclusion & Inclusive Policy) Professor Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi (online address). We come across several illustrations in" The Nature of Philosophy"

(1955), Developments in Indian Philosophy from 18th century Onwards: Classical and Modern (2002) besides other writings like Indian Philosophy: a Counter Perspective (1991-96), New Perspectives in Indian Philosophy. Daya Krishna's creative criticism of the prevalent traditionalist interpretation of classical Indian philosophy is analytically stated and evaluated. His objections to classifying Indian philosophies into orthodox and heterodox systems, applying to a group of differing philosophies the common labels of vedānta or vedāntic, making these terms multi-referential, inappropriately titling some books as Nyāyasūtra, Sānkhayarikārika, etc., though they discuss a miscellany of themes, etc., are also discussed and assessed. His calling of these terms and some others of their like, or the practice of using them, mythical is examined. It is shown that they may not be accurate but their use has not become disutile. In their prevailing usage, seemingly misleading characters have become sterile and therefore they have ceased to be misleading and continue functioning as convenient classificatory terms. Enjoying his calling of the concept of puruṣārtha and the theory of puruṣārtha too mythical, it has been shown that the concept is not because it means any object of anyone's and there are many such objects; the theory is not because it is historically an important component of classical Indian value theory. It is not a logical elegant theory, but a fairly workable one can be carved out of the classical theory by linking together some elements of it in newer ways with the logical cement obtainable from modern value theorizing. Something similar has been done with Daya Krishna (DK)'s analysis of the traditionalist claim that Indian philosophy is spiritualist. DK links it with Indian culture through the concept of mokṣa. I have shown that it is the result of linking philosophy too tightly with religion, of course, through the doorway of the concept of mokṣa, by pointing out that mokṣa is a religious, and not an ethical, value.

After a threadbare discussion, the Chairperson thanked all the speakers of both the offline and online audience of the session .

Lunch Break 1.00 – 2. 00

Technical Session V

The Chairperson of the technical session was Dr. Augustine Pamplany, Director, Inter-Disciplinary Study Centre, Little Flower Seminary, Aluva, Kerala. The two speakers were from NEHU ,Shillong. Pofessor Sukalpa Bhattachrjee, Professor Department of English, NEHU spoke on the theme titled "Gender and the nation: Bharatmata" . When women encounter problems in our society, tackling them calls for not loud voices, but the processes of empowering them, not by law makers and enforcers alone but by every other woman and citizen. We have been seeing and hearing expressions like 'Women reservation bill', 'Nirbhaya fund', 'Special women safety programme' and so on being bandied about as part of political debates and talk shows. Politicians, as we all have seen, heard and known, are supposedly well- trained suitably qualified people who position themselves right at the centre of action with the explicit purpose of not putting anything into action and get away with anything in politics.

Countries that make real, visible progress in women safety and empowerment are those whose leaders and citizens have been able to confront the problems head on to find solutions. Men and women are different – biologically and psychologically. Women

play certain roles better than men and vice versa to complement one another, be it home or work place. Different does not mean unequal and no one gender needs to act dominant. In India, the governments that came and went made much noise about women's reservation, without being able to achieve anything practical in this direction. Rape storms batter our country, followed by the blow-by-blow breaking of news by the media. Guilt or innocence is presumed. Worse still, rapists continue raping, unmindful of reprisals which they know how to handle and sometimes adorn seats in legislative assemblies and Parliament too. Seems like it's not just 'United we loot' but 'United we molest and rape'.

Girl children are warned differently such as, "control your anger, you are a girl". Such social conditioning of girls in our society never needed any extra effort because religion is an important part of our country's culture. And all religions profess and practice male dominance directly or indirectly. All over our spiritual India, fasting is mostly meant only for women. We also know what widowhood means in a country like ours, don't we? For religious traditions have subjugated women. Sexism is intrinsic to Hinduism and Buddhism. The Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam have been worse. Manusmriti is way too primitive. The Bible's decree of male supremacy is known to the world. Most blessed mothers in The Bible are recorded to have given birth to sons only. The story of the adulteress who Jesus forgave and saved from being stoned is an example of how a combination of sex, a woman, public disgrace and double standards worked since biblical times. There was no mention of the man involved in the act. Without any mention, the uphill battle remains steep for Muslim women. It is indisputable that women are excluded from Judaism's most hallowed rituals and practices.The Sabarimala saga is a case in point. If discrimination to enter a temple is based on sexual orientation and caste, constitutional Articles related to freedom of religion and essential religious practices must be understood better to signal a new era of transformative constitutionalism. Freedom, rights and values embodied in our constitution should not be let to freeze in time, lest we see no possibility of positive change and progress as per changing societal needs. Places of male gods cite menstruation as the main reason for denying women their religious freedom. How come the normative descriptive imagery and pronouns for god are male, enabling people to sculpt them that way!

The second speaker ,Dr. Maya S ,Associate Professor ,Department of Philosophy,NEHU,Shillong spoke on the theme "Whose nation is it any way ? A Feminist critique.". The paper traces how feminist scholarship has worked on mainstreaming the category 'gender' as central to any discussion on both nations and nationalisms. It examines how the imaginary of the body-politic is almost always masculine, where only men can be citizens, and women are confined to their biological roles. It further seizes the contemporary moment as a historical juncture, which is witness to a heightened contradiction. On the one hand, there has been a resurgence of nationalism with the coming of a Right-wing government in 2014 that deploy images of women as nation-mother (Bharat Mata) to legitimize violence. On the other hand, we are increasingly seeing an assertion of rights, legal reforms, as well as an expanding

presence of young women in movements that demand changes in both cultural and political spheres. Thus, this introduction asks questions on the nature of the gap between the democratic modern state's commitment to gender equality, and in contradiction , the mediation of this relation by the family, community, and the market.

After the discussion the chairperson thanked the speakers and the audience.

Two Research Scholars from NEHU made presentation in the last session of the second day . (4.15 – 5.30 p.m) Chairperson of the session , Professor Sukalpa Bhattacharjee, Professor Department of English, NEHU welcomed the paper presenters .1.Dipu Basumatary , Ph.D Scholar ,Department of Philosophy, NEHU, Shillong. Mr. Basumatary spoke on the contemporary moves in India which is drastically different from how it had been n the past. Those social ideas are based on universal principles, which the Swami analysed and applied to the context of India in those days. The application of several of those principles are still valid, while some others are not, as the social situation of individuals and Indian society at large have drastically changed, especially during the last twenty years. But the universality of his basic concepts, which are found in the eternal philosophy of India, is intact. This paper aims to identify four of those universal social principles the Swami based his analyses during those lectures, to thus make them applicable to any society at any point in time, including present-day India. These principles are listed in the order of Vivekananda's emphasis and, as far as possible, relate them succinctly to the context of present-day India. The first and central point in Vivekananda's social ideas is that, before attempting any social uplifting in any field, one has to identify the main trait, the spontaneous and natural characteristic of the nation or race in which any social activity is intended to be effected. There may be more than one trait or tendency that characterize a people, but invariably, there will be one that is the most salient. In the words of the Swami:

Everyone born into this world has a bent, a direction towards which he must go, through which he must live, and what is true of the individual is equally true of the race. Each race, similarly, has a peculiar bent, each race has a peculiar raison d'être, each race has a peculiar mission to fulfil in the life of the world. Each race has to make its own result, to fulfil its own mission (CW, 3.108).

Each nation has its own part to play, and naturally, each nation has its own peculiarity and individuality with which it is born. Each represents, as it were, one peculiar note in this harmony of nations, and this is its very life, its vitality. In it is the backbone, the foundation, and the bed-rock of the national life, and here in this blessed land, the foundation, the backbone, the life-centre is religion and religion alone.

In today's deeply interconnected and interrelated world, it may appear not an easy task to identify the main trait of a nation. It is, however, easier to find it in ancient cultures like India, China, and Japan, which have characteristics much more accentuated than younger cultures like those of the Western Europe and the Islamic world. Cultures under formation, like those of South and North America, do not have that main trait fully developed yet, though some tendency may start to become visible. In cultures too diverse, which have fluctuated intensely during the last centuries, like the African or

Eastern European, will be still more difficult to identify the "peculiar note" of a race; in several of these cases the analysis may have to be fragmented into sub-cultures.

Mr.Deepak Kumar Shahi ,Ph.D Scholar, NEHU ,Shillong also spoke at length about the ideals of Vivekananda . The first and central point in Vivekananda's social ideas is that, before attempting any social uplifting in any field, one has to identify the main trait, the spontaneous and natural characteristic of the nation or race in which any social activity is intended to be effected. There may be more than one trait or tendency that characterize a people, but invariably, there will be one that is the most salient. In the words of the Swami:

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The chairperson made wonderful comments on the two papers presented by the scholars .

Cultural Programme (5.30 p.m – 6.00 p.m)

Day III .12 th October ,2023.

Technical Session VI
(9.00 – 11 a.m)
The Chairperson of the session was Dr. Pius V. Thomas, Head, Department of Philosophy, Assam University, Silchar . He welcomed the speakers and introduced them to the audience. Speakers in the session were 1.Prof. Sebastian Velassery, Emeritus, Panjab University, Chandigarh who spoke on the theme entitled "Indian Nationalism and Religious Pluralism: A Philosophical Critique". Prof. Sebastian Velassery thinks that emphasis on certain variants of economics as the essential element

of nationalism by most of the intellectuals and academicians is not enough. He said that we should look at nationalism and also global What is philosophically and socially questionable is the use of religion for the ulterior purpose of nationalism. One is convinced to assert that Bankim was capable of instilling a structure of nationalism which has many things to do with the Hindu religion and Gods. Following Sujoy Mondal, I would like to affirm that Bankimchandra tried to create national sentiment in India through the Hindu religion. Before doing so, he understood that the Hindu religion needed to be reformed, regenerated, and purified. Thus, he says we must find out the essence of Hinduism, the true religion, and follow it as a national creed. We must abjure whatever corrupt customs and traditions masquerading as religion have penetrated Hinduism. (Mondal, Sujoy. JICPR, December 21, 2019)

India had shaped its concept of Nationalism during the colonial period, which was predominantly enthused by the Western forms of Nationalism. The concepts such as Nation and nationalism were used to mobilize a maximum number of people in the anti-colonial resistance. However, the type of nationalism exhibited by the colonized countries during the colonial period was imperial, expansionist, and oppressive. (Muthumohan, N. 2008) The ideology of colonialism preached civilizational differences and hierarchy between the colonizer and the colonized.

In the Western understanding, Nation and State go together, mutually conditioning each other. It means that the ruling classes have always been involved in defining a Nation tying it up with political power. Many scholars indicate that Nationalism in countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America developed within the framework provided by Western colonialism. Nationalism, in some form, may be a universal phenomenon; but the association of nationalism with colonialism has its particulars pertinent to Asia, Africa, and Latin America. An essential point that I wish to make here is that Nationalism as anti-colonialism or as resistance to an outside power is not adequately rich in its content because it ignores and fails to work out the positive aspects of Nationalism. It fails to create a new political and social entity that adapts to the local environment and responds to the local structures. In this sense, anti-colonial nationalism was mostly elite without encompassing the real problems characteristic of the traditional societies. It was modern and abstract, more imaginary, and at times utopian. In his excellent work, "Nations and Its Fragments", Partha Chatterjee studies the emergence of the imagination of a Nation under colonial and nationalist conditions. (Chatterjee, Partha, 2006). This is not to argue that anti-colonialism was superfluous, but it alone was insufficient to encompass the internal problems and their historical complexities.

The second speaker Dr. Binayak Dutta, Associate Professor Department of History, NEHU, Shillong spoke about the conditions after the introduction of NRC. "Historical Tranformation in the inter cultural context of Assam"was the title of his presentation .

 Dr. Vanlalvenpuia, Asstt. Professor ,Department of Philosophy, Pachchunga University, Aizawl.

"This paper is an attempt to examine the necessity of historical narrative in contemporary debate on social conflict by examining social contract philosophy. The

concepts of human nature and property can serve as the points of entry for such a discussion because social contract philosophies presuppose them in the explanation for the legitimacy of political state. The paper explores how the exclusion of the historical sense of understanding human nature and property set limitation to the narrative of social conflict.

The idea that social disorder is a potential and an ever-present alternative has its theoretical grounding in the social contract philosophy of English philosophers, namely, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke who witnessed English civil wars (1642-1651). Even though social contract theory as an idea precedes Locke and Hobbes, these philosophers gave a modern impetus which carries modern rationality and scientific bend. (Ritchie, 1891,p.656) In political philosophy, Hobbes is known for his 1651 book Leviathan and John Locke for his work on The Two Treatises of Government published in 1689. Both of them have presented rational justifications and explanation for the origin of political power. They took a theoretical departure from the pre-modern way of political reasoning in which political theory was closely related to history and religion. It is by re-visiting their hypothetical pre-political state of nature that we shall discuss the narrative of modern social crisis. In this regard, the breakdown of social and political order in Manipur and the debates about it serves as an interesting case that can be examined in the light this theoretical exercise. A dialog between two ethnic communities namely the Meitei and Kuki-zo communities can be assisted by a theoretical exploration as this, which is a revisit of the origin of the political state as found in Modern political theory. It is in this context that the contractual philosophy remerges as an important theoretical enquiry worthy of a re-visitation.

In social contract philosophy, social disorder or violence is presented as something from which political society has moved on, and the occurrence of violence implies a return to what was the original, something that was potential in the very conception of the need for political state. So, it is not the case that we move towards social disorder when peace is disrupted, according to contractual theory, it is rather understood as a retraction to something that we have already passed on from. In this manner, in the liberal democratic discourse, violence and social disorder may be understood as a potential, ever awaiting alternative condition if the presence of a powerful state were to be absent. Thus, this potentiality of disorder is presented as a condition for the emergence and necessity of a political state in modern contractual philosophies. Re-locating history in the Modern narrative of socio-political conflict" was the title of his paper.

After a threadbare discussion, the Chairperson thanked the speakers and the audience.

Tea Break

Technical Session : VII (11.30 – 1.00 p.m)

The Chairperson : Professor Ananta Kumar Giri ,Madras School of Development Studies ,Chennai, Tamilnadu.

Speakers in this session were Dr. Thomas Menamparampil, author & scholar, Peace Centre, Guwahati, Assam and Dr. Man Bahadur Khattri, Associate Professor, Central Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal.

'Nationalism Goes Awry' was the title of the presentation of Thomas Menamparampil. He began with some questions about the contemporary India and tried to make the talk critique of the movements in the present era . He said the word "Post-truth" created a sensation when Oxford Dictionaries chose the word as the word of year in 2016, right before the US election. They noticed that objective facts in our days influence public opinion less than emotion and subjective belief. Leaders appeal more to emotions than present true facts. Post-truth may be presented as 'alternative facts;' in reality, it is clear deception.

Curiously, 'fake news' was chosen as the word of the year for 2017. Fake news is considered the main manifestation of post-truth. According to Cambridge Dictionary, fake news stands for "false stories that appear to be news, spread on the internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views or as a joke". And again, one of the top words during 2018 was 'misinformation.'

Overuse of the word "fake news" has made its meaning imprecise, but that it is an attempt to distort reality remains. Many have seen in this effort to manipulate truth a struggle for power: for those who have power, to maintain it; those who do not have it, to acquire it. Building up prejudices pave the way to power.

Dr. Man Bahadur Khattri, in his presentation under the title 'Civic and Ethnic Nationalism in Nepal: Issues, Opportunities and Challenges in National Unity' made a large description ofwhat is taking place in the Himalayan kingdom. The issue of nationalism in Nepal has evolved significantly since 1990. Initially rooted in the nation-building process, it shifted focus after the end of the partyless Panchayati rule towards cultural nationalism. Nepal's diversity, including its geography, people, culture, religion, and languages, presents both an opportunity and a challenge for national unity. In the 1990s, the People's Movement emphasized freedom, equality, democracy, and humanity, representing civic nationalism. Subsequently, a decade-long armed conflict led by the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) and regional people's movements and the 2006 People's Movement inspired civic and ethnic nationalism. This period saw rural armed conflict and urban peaceful movements for these forms of nationalism. Since 2006, there has been a strong demand for proper representation of citizens from various classes, castes, and ethnic groups in the state apparatus, recognizing their unique identities. The chapter aims to discuss the political, economic, and environmental world order in the context of Nepal and the globe after the 1990s. Internal factors such as failed state-centric nationalism, development issues, poverty, inequality, injustice, lack of freedom, and global influences of neoliberal economic policies played a significant role in shaping Nepal's national movement. These conflicts and movements challenged the spirit of harmony and co-existence among the people, resulting in loss of lives, displacement, and suffering. To address issues like inequality, injustice, and representation, Nepal adopted a federal republic governance system with three tiers (local, provincial, and federal), a secular state, and inclusive democracy. These reforms have partially addressed governance and representation issues and promoted diversity and mutual respect for culture, religion, identities, and language. Nepal's multi-party system has maintained national unity through the principles of unity in diversity and

diversity in unity. The nation has demonstrated tolerance, forgiveness, negotiation, and reconciliation to maintain harmony among its diverse population.

Both the papers were discussed thoroughly and the Chairperson made comments on both the papers .

Lunch Break (1.30 – 3.00 p.m)

Valedictory Function (3.00 pm onwards)

The Welcome Address was delivered by Dr. D.K.B. Mukhim, Principal, Lady Keane College. The welcome song was presented by Students of Lady Keane College . There was also a dance performance by Students of Lady Keane College . In his address, Prof. Sebastian Velasserry mentioned about the linkage that is taking place between different regions of India with the Lady Keane College in particular. He was appreciate of the efforts of the college and also NEHU. Cash awards and certificates were presented to the winners of paper presentation contests of both Graduate students and Post Graduate Students by the Chief Guest of the function. Report Presentation was done by the rapporteurs of the seminar. Feedback was expressed by some participants especially the students from NEHU and the teachers from different colleges of the town. Prof Vanalnghak, Dean, School of Humanities, NEHU, Shillong also addressed the participants with a request to carry forward the efforts for adopting the right strategy for nation building . Professor Ananta Kumar Giri, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai in his address made reference to the practice of traditional societies where the academic exchanges were in a cordial atmosphere and urged uupon the scholars to have such atmosphere in academic activities . The Vote of Thanks was proposed by Dr. S Varughese, Academic Co-ordinator of the national seminar .

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List of Resource Persons for the Three Day National Seminar:

1. Prof. Asha Mukherjee, Former Professor Emeritus ,Visvabharati University , Shantiniketan, West Bengal.
2. Prof. Sebastian Velasserry ,Professor Emeritus ,Panjab University ,Chandigarh.
3. Dr. Augustine Pamplany, Director, Institute of Advanced Interdisciplinary Studies, Kochi, Kerela.
4. Dr. Vanlalvenpuia, Assistant Professor,Pachhunga University, Aizawl,Mizoram.
5. Dr.Pius V Thomas, Associate Professor,Assam university ,Silchar ,Assam .
6. Prof. Arvinder A Ansari ,Hony. Director (Centre for Study of Social Exclusion & Inclusive Policy) Professor ,Department of Sociology,Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi 110025,
7. Dr.Alok Tandon ,Retired Professor
8. Dr.Lallan Singh Bhagal, Associate Professor ,Panjjab University,Chandigarh.
9. Dr.Man Bahadur Khattri,Associate Professor ,Tribhuvan Univeristy ,Kathmandu,Nepal.
10. Professor Ananta Kumar Giri,Professor ,Madras School of Development Studies,Chennai,Tamilnadu.
11. Professor Vanlalnghak,Dean ,School of Humanities ,NEHU ,Shillong.
12. Professor Xavier P Mao,Head,Department of Philosophy,NEHU,Shillong.
13. Profess Prasenjit Biswas,Department of Philosophy,NEHU,Shillong.
14. Dr.Basil Pohlong ,Associate Professor,Department of Philosophy NEHU ,Shillong.
15. Professor Sukalpa Bhattacharjee ,Department of English,NEHU,Shillong.
16. Dr. Binyak Dutta ,Associate Professor ,Department of History,NEHU,Shillong.

List of Participants:

Lady Keane College, Shillong
Three Day Seminar on "Nation, Culture and Patriotism: Philosophical Debate on Nationalism in Contemporary India"
Organised by Philosophy Department, Lady Keane College, Shillong in collaboration with the Indian Council of Philosophical Research(ICPR) New Delhi
Date: 10th – 12th October, 2023
Venue: College Auditorium
Day – 1

Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Balwanchi B. Sangma	Lady Keane College	Balgdn
2	Tania Paul	"	Paul
3	Ampita Charda	"	A. Charda
4	Laldingpuii	"	Dingpuii
5	Njanthoni Wangsawm	"	npotam
6	Phijing wanya	"	Phijing wanya
7	Lisiprissa Lyngdoh	"	L. Lyndoh
8	Anstai Lamin	"	Lain
9	Md Rezaul Islam	St. Anthony's College	
10	Gawrika Hynoti W Sohlya	"	
11	Wandashisha Mary Nongbri	St Anthony's College	W. Nongbri
12	Hemang Akshay Hewale	"	
13	Zaukhampaung Khaskim	St. Edmund's College	10/10/23
14	SHUBHANKAR SARMA	"	10/10/23
15	Ms. Finley K.J. Dyingai	"	10/10/23
16	Sanjana Kayastha	"	10/10/23

Lady Keane College, Shillong
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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Ria Saukau	Lady Keane College	
2	Tajkumi Langpoklakpam	Lady Keane College	Tajkumi J.
3	Riya Das	Lady Keane College	R. Das
4	Evana Binong	Lady Keane College	E. Binong
5	Rosemary Sohbar	Lady Keane College	R. Sohbar
6	Batemon Kurbah	Lady Keane College	B. Kurb
7	Janilang Ryntelriany	Lady Keane college	JLlela
8	Bablin Marwin	Lady Keane College	B. Marin
9	Riahro Nongpyung	Keely Keane Coliny	
10	Dalma Syiem Peh	Lady Kean College	
11	A. dody Maiyarung	Lady Keane College	A. dody Maiyarng
12	Phidaruli Mongstieng	Lady Keane College	Ph. Mongsteng
13	winitar Selshumi	Lemdy Keane college	L. Schishmi
14	Aikmary Nongkli	Lrady Keane college	A
15	Rynshoilinary Nongtoger	Lady Keane College	
16	Riya chanda	Leady Keane college	R chanda
17	Mithu Thapa	Lady Keane college	M. Thapa
18	Jyoti Das	lady Keane college	J. Das
19	Sammita Hajong	lady Keane college	S. Hajong
20	Finisha Nongrum	lady Keane college	F. Nongrum
21	Saphibawanhun L. Buam	Lady Keane College	S. Buam
22	Sylveen Snaitang	Lady Keane College	
23	Barikynti Reenbohin	lady Keane college	9. Reenbohn
24	Rosa Phiba Sutnga	lady Keane college	
25	Puli Hajong	Lady Keane college	P. Hajong

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Ibashengdor Mawniuh	Lady Keane college	S. Mawniuh
2	Sneha Paul	Lady Keane college	S. Paul
3	Ribhalang Nongsiej	Lady Keane College	R Nongsiej
4	Uma Kumari Sharma	Lady Keane College	UmaSharma
5	ARNOZY MOMIN	Lady Keane College	Arvozi
6	Hiraki Khyllep	Lady Keane College	H. Khyllep
7	Jyoti Rani	Lady Keane College	J. Rani
8	Erisakani Shullon	Lady Keane College	Eshullo
9	Ibaiahresdang Lyngdoh	Lady Keane college	I. dyngdoh
10	Nengambam Neiraa Chanu	Lady Keane College	Naraa
11	Sudha Kumari	Lady Keane college	Kory.
12	Puja Kumari	Lady Keane College	Puja
13	SUMITRA BARMAN	Lady Keane college	S. Barman 10/10/23
14	Enndarween Lyngdoh	Lady Keane college	Lyngdoh
15	Anne Wanri M. Sangma	Lady Keane College	Ann Sangma
16	Skengson Anemain	lady Keane college	Ingson
17	Silvina N Marak	Lady Keane college	Bank.
18	Chimita T. Sangma	Lady Keane college	C. Sangma
19	Konika Hajong	Lady Keane college	K. Hajong
20	Teyukuani Ch Marak	Lady Keane College	Marak
21	Chishmiangshisha Kyndiew	Lady Keane college	S. K. Synhew
22	Jibanlin Nongrum	Lady Keane college	J. Nongrum
23	Ibaiainei Ryndong	Lady Keane College	
24	Anjana Thapa	Lady Keane college	A. Thapa
25	Steffine Kharrangfang	Lady Keane college	S.

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Rita Chakrabarty	Lady Keane College	R. Ca.
2	Aimesta B. Khongrus	Lady Keane College	B. Khongrui
3	Aekuiy T. Sangma	Lady Keane College	
4	Ambika Kumari Sharma	Lady Keane College	A. Sharma
5	Tayuyul Sun	Lady Keane College	
6	Battinam Nongrang	Lady Keane College	B. Nongrang
7	Baniarhun Sohkhlet	Lady Keane college	B. Sohkhlet
8	Fresil Marak	Lady Keane College	F. Mak
9	Preety Subba	Lady Keane College	P. Subba
10	Niishali - T Yapthomi	Lady Keane college	N. Yapthomi
11	Diana Sasunat	Lady Keane college	Diana
12	Lablayphun Kharpdin	Lady Keane college	L. Kdin
13	Teaching land Pyntuh	Lady Keane College	T. Pyntuh
14	Sneha Mary Lyngdoh	Lady Keane College	S. Lyngdoh
15	Esha Khardangba	Lady Keane College	Esha
16	Mekam Tojo	Lady Keane College	
17	Eliza Shadap	Lady Keane College	E. Shadap.
18	Ianikordor Thabah	Lady Keane college	I. Thabah
19	Darinnero Lyngdoh	Lady Keane college	P. Lyngdoh
20	BIANCA G. MOMIN	Lady Keane college	Bianca G. M
21	Tensatchi R. Marak	LADY KEANE COLLEGE	T. Marak
22	Emika Shongni	Lady Keane college	E. Shongni
23	Jaimy Floureen Syiemlieh	Lady Keane college	F. Syiemlieh
24	Loktang Yadon	Lady Keane College	L. Yadon
25	Thulan Omnus	Lady Keane College	T. Omnus

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Cordelia Chetri	BA 4 Lady Keane college	Cdela
2	Tumpa Rani Das	BA 1st semister (RHC)	T.R.Das.
3	Khushi Sharma	BA 1st Semister (LKC)	Khushi Sharma
4	Medarisha Marbaniang	BA 1st semester (LHC)	M. Marbaniang
5	Delicia H Hynniewta	BA 1st Semester (LKC)	Hynniewta
6	Men Rai	BA 1st Sem Jer LKC	M Rai
7	Tathiaa H Sangma	B11 Semester (LC2)	T.H.Sangma
8	Pasang Drema	BA (LCK)	P. Drema
9	Padi Muni	Lady Keane College	Muni
10	Pennashree Ghosh	Lady Keane College	P. Ghosh
11	Rinki Das	Lady keane college	Riki
12	Ritu Kumari Thakur	Lady Keane College	Ritu
13	Sumitra Thakuri	Lady Keane college	Sumitra
14	Akrati Pradhan	Lady Keane college	Akrati.
15	Felicia Thangmint	Lady keane college	
16	Tania G Momin	BA 1st sem (LCK)	Gpa
17	Vathara Ch Momin	Lady Keane College	Momin
18	Aixisuta Nongroum	Lady keane College	A. Nongroum
19	Diya Lyngdoh	Lady Keane College	Lyngdoh
20		Lady Keane College	Mewe
21	Tina Kshetrimayum	Lady Kiane College	Tina
22	Ranashree Goswami	Lady Kiani College	shree
23	Baphan Sun	Lady Keane college	Sun.
24	Dinskhanveitiang Lyng Nhoi	Lady Keane college	
25	Siraldorilang Marwei	Lady Keane college	

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Sumitra Moshaniang	Lady Keane college	Moshaniang
2	Sandhya Kumari Shah	Lady Keane college	Sd
3	Sakshi S. Roy	Lady Keane College	Roy
4	Payal Paul	Lady Keane College	Payal Paul
5	Namika Shylla	lady Keane college	N. Shylla
6	Abhismita Das	Lady Kian College	A. Das
7	Manisha Human Rai	Lady Keane college	Rai
8	Dzamerine Wengwej	Lady Keane Lollege	Wengwej
9	Manta Paul	Lady Keane college	M. Paul
10	Sangeeta kumari	Lady keane college	Sani
11	Ananta Choudhury	Lady Keane College	Choudhury
12	Ram Chongom	Lady Keane college	R. Chongom
13	Philapynkynon Warjri	Lady Keane College	Rjri
14	Hinasha Nongpiur	Lady Keane college	H. nongspiurg.
15	Sorrabobis Lyngdoh	Lady Keane Colleges	S. Lyngdoh.
16	Nancy Lalngahawmi	Lady Kiane College	
17	Phumod Markaniang	Lady Keane College	Markaniang
18	Ioohlin Mauelong	Lady Keane college	I. Mauelong.
19	Joyful Mukhim	Lady keane college	J. Mukhim
20	Srimiya Sanchi M. Sangma	Lady Keane College	Sangma
21	Bifica Rynlalriang	Lady Kean College	B. Rynlalriang
22	Safina Pyndatliang	Lady Keane College	S. Pynatliang
23	Banita Mawsor	Lady Keane Colledge	L. Mawsor
24	Laurie M bai Kongor	Lady Keane college	L. M. Kongor
25	Indalin Jantmiaw	Lady Keane college	I. Jantmiaw

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Bianghun Binao	Lady Keane College	B. Binao
2	Prali Bhowmik	Lady Keane college	P. Bhowmick
3	Brijasha Rajali	Lady Keane College	P. Rajali
4	Prodipta Sarkar	Lady Keane college	P. Sarkar
5	Jumpi Ade	Lady Keane college	J. Ade.
6	Ditdha Rarkar	Lady Keane College	Rarkar
7	Clari L Warpi	Lady Keane college	L. warpi
8	Limdar S. Zhumomi	Lady Keane College	
9	Momla Ma.hoto	Lady Keane College	M. Mahoto
10	Pooja Gchash	Lady Keane college	P. Gchash
11	Thidan Chongom	Lady Keane college	T.chongom
12	Melinda Majaw	Lady Keane college	M. majaw
13	Abrobidin Kharsyntieo	Lady Keane college	Kharsyntieo
14	Sunita Madani	Lady Keane college	
15	Banijiagkmin Sara	"	
16	Binolia Rangdong	"	Rdo
17	Losmie Warjri	"	L. Warbah
18	Kalyani Kumari	"	
19	Fenella Nongsiej	"	F. Nongsiej
20	Misunam miyu	"	M. miyu
21	Mahamata Tamuli	"	Mahamut
22	Fildress L. Nongjait	"	F. L. Nongjait
23	Hamisha B. Sangma	"	H. B. Sangma
24	Jashriti nongthroh	"	I. Nyothroy
25	Nenisha R. Hanah	"	Hanah

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Padi Jumpi	Lady Keane College	Jumpi
2	Herkmon Thabah	Lady Keane college	H. Thabah
3	Saschina Sangma	Lady Keane college	S. Sangma
4	Priya Senase	"	P. Senase
5	Marisha Biswa	"	Biswa
6	Mena Rai	"	
7	Rabya Khatin	"	R. Khatin
8	Melanidiaya Mawthoh	"	M. Mawthoh
9	Kanchan Yadav	"	Yadav
10	Suneha Singh	"	Singh
11	Banshamin Boxo	"	Boxo
12	Meballalynh I Sun	"	Sun
13	Indarikha Khaimuti	"	I. Khaimuti
14	Balakmenshisha Nongkam	"	B.
15	Anjaly Gupta	"	A. Gupta
16	Shristi Singh	"	Singh
17	Dainitawan Marbaniang	"	Marbaniang
18	Lanisha Amawlang	"	L. Amawlang
19	Thailand Saio	"	I. Saio
20	Paltisha Marshiny	"	P. Marshiy
21	Daribun Lawai	"	D. Lawai
22	Shanisha Mawli	"	Mawli
23	Radha Kumari Jha	"	Radha
24	Ribodap Khongtani	"	R. Khtani
25	Tynsngewlang Dkhar	"	P. Dkhar.

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
26	Zumbi Sagma	Lady keane college	Sumpi
27	Sangla Chettri	"	S chettri
28	Taiba Gurdti	"	A Gurdti
29	Jambey Chaton	"	Jambey Chaton
30	Dungmai puying	"	mung puying
31	Ibadahun Kharbithai	"	Billia
32	Mailen S. phom	"	Mailen
33	Snika Bono	"	Snika Bono
	Baiadalang Nongrum	"	B. Nongrum
	Baiahunlang Snaitang	"	B. Snaitang
	Bandarisha Mawnie	"	B. Mawnie
	Dakangius Pariat	"	D. Pariat
	Ribashisha Khraishuing	"	R. Khraishuing
	Aimee Bonia	"	Aimee
	Ndlialang Rhongkhai	"	N. Rhongkhai
	Kadwily Khakrypgh	"	Khakrypgh
	Nilanca Hazweïn	"	Nilanca
	Kana Ruth Wahlang	"	Wahlang
	Nathi Tarak. G. Nongspish	"	Nongspish
	Clenghi Sagma	"	Sagma
	Halmuanrungi	"	Halmuanrungi
	Seshala Amihom	"	Seshala A
	Ibadahun Tumia	"	Tumia
	Deshibiang Shadap	"	D. Shadap
	Balamkuhi Kurbah	"	B. Kurbah

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Ashruela Dutta	St. Edmund's College	Dutta
2	Phurber Khardewan saw	St. Edmund's College	Ph.
3	Aipu Basu matarg	NEHU	B
4	Deepak Kr. shari	"	Deepak
5	S N Sagma	LKC	
6	Manisha Kumari Yadav	LKC	M.K. Yadav
7	Kwiram Roy	LKc	
8	Mich Yanew	LKC	
9	Smica Khaban	LKc	
10	Evangel Pohphet	LKC	

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Dweki Jlupa	Lady Keane college	Jlupa
2	Aphonita Chettri	"	Chettri
3	Ruth Lalrinruali Pachuau	Lady " "	R. L Pachuau
4	Supidong Ronghangpi	Lady "	
5	Hiyajala Baruah	Lady " "	Hiya
6	Esther Pegu	Lady " "	E. Pegu
7	Cicilia fownei	Lady " "	Cicilia
8	Tueda V.L Remzeli	Lady " "	
9	Binta Brown	Lady " "	Brown
10	Mighna Kanwar	Lady " "	
11	Mehak Poddar	Lady " "	

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Day – 1

Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
	Shintimary Lyngkhoi	Lady Keane college	S.Lyngkhoi
	Loptinnglang / Nongtait	Lady Keane college	
	Sayeeta chyia Farnay	Lady Keane college	
	Kitdor Snaitang	NEHU	Kati
	E dourbi chyira	NEHU	
	Pooja Chakraborty	NEHU	P. chakraborty
	Arena Rari	NEHU	A. Rai
	Lamonbahun Wannsing	NEHU	
	Nanisha Thongni	NEHU	Thongni
	Howani Hajong	NEHU	
	Churitngaseisha Rhongtaw	NEHU	
	Phelandontiew Lyngrope	NEHU	
	Batsly Syngkon	NEHU	Syngkon
	Ibanylla Nongsong	Lady Keane college	

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Belaoba Tabting	Lady keane collage	B.Tabting
2	Kimmawi Hmar	Lady keane college	Kimmawi
3	Jessy Lalhimawmi	Lady Keane colleg	Jessy Khawmawmy
4	Mayengbam Sushmita Devi	Lady Keane College	M.Sushmita Devi

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Day – 2

Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Fullingston Lhorgen	Nehu	Flhr
2	Pyniarkilad Suna	Nehu	Suna
3	Jessica Nongsiej	Nehu	Gsiej
4	Lucy Mary Lyngdoh	Nehu	Lyngdoh
5	Basanthun Lyngdoh Mawlot	Nehu	B.Lyngdoh
6	Rynshai Lyngdoh	Nehu	Lyngdoh
7	Edan Ibarinam Nongkhlaw	NEHU	E.Nongkhlaw
8	Daphishisha Sun	NEHU	Sun
9	Pearly Dara Kharmalki	NEHU	Pearli
10	Snenghun Lyngdoh	NEHU	S.Lyngdoh
11	Suretha Singh	Lady Keane college	Singh
12	Priya Sunar	Lady Keane college	Sunar
13	Manisha Biswa	Lady Keane college	M.Biswa
14	Chakchi M. Sangma	NEHU	Gm
15	Nisha Devi Hajong	NEHU	Hajong
16	Chimova Ch. Marak	NEHU	Chak
17	Sakmiklen A Sangma	NEHU	S.m
18	Silkarg P. Marak	NEHU	Sil
19	Melankyrshan Kurbah	NEHU	M.ki
20	Ethalira R. Marak	NEHU	R. Marak
21	Dolores A. M Blah	NEHU	Blah
22	Amina Rani	NEHU	A. Rani
23	Ria Sarkar	L. KC	S
24	Dayepshi Sayoo	NEHU	D. Sayoo
25	Chelsilchi Sangma	NEHU	Sangma

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Udhoy-Rabha	NEHU	U.Rabha
2	Dibangkar Rabha	NEHU	D.Rabha
3	Theppukvolie Khezhie	Nehu	Tepp.
4	Omeyabarshar Syienleh	NEHU	Syj
5	Stephenson Suja	NEHU	Syj
6	Ananita Roy	NEHU	Roy
7	Anne Wanri M. Sangma	Lady Keane College	Anu Sangma
8	Tania G. Momin	Lady Keane College	Gm
9	Thingjera Arenah	Lady Keane college	Areh
10	Silvina. N-Marak	Lady Keane college	Marak
11	Midashi D.Khar	NEHU	Khar
12	Pooja Crhash	Lady Keane college	P.crhash
13	Sangeeta Kumari	Lady Keane college	Seet
14	Phibankyntiew Pyngrope	NEHU	Pyngrope
15	Impiang Dolamai D. Sangma	NEHU	Tsangma
16	Wondersan Basaiawmoit	NEHU	
17	Danaiplang Myllemngap	NEHU	D.M.ngap
18	Carita. Khongjan	NEHU	C.Khongjan
19	Biamon Hahshah	NEHU	BB
20	Ialana Dkhar	NEHU	I.Dkhar
21	Lasten Suhiang	NEHU	Lee
22	Pooja Chakrabonty	NEHU	P.chakrabonty
23	Karitngenbiisha Bongtao	NEHU	Bongtao
24	Himani Hajong	NEHU	Homa

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Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Andreas Pohshna	Nehu	Pohshna
2	William Tawlamu	Nehu	W. Tawlamu
3	Kitdor Snaitang	NEHU	Kentang
4	Satish Syngkon	NEHU	Syngkon
5	Suikydoi S. Pathaw	NEHU	S.Pathaw
6	Phibanrisha Makhroh	NEHU	Ribae
7	Rita Chakrabarty	Lady Keane College	Rita
8	Ria Sankar	Lady Keane College	R.Sankar
9	Daphisha B Chen	NEHU	Chen
10	Tamenbahun Wanniang	NEHU	Wan
11	thied D. Syngkhon	NEHU	C.Syngkon
12	Eiphlong M.K Challa	NEHU	Challa
13	Nphala Jmoa	Nehu	
14	Gayatri Moni Narzary	NEHU	GoN.
15	Alok	NEHU	Alok
16	RHY THAM DAS	NEHU	Rhytham
17	Damila Passah	NEHU	Passah

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Day – 2

Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Richanlong Nongrum	NEHU	Rdayem
2.	Lorinia Marbaniang	NEHU	Durbaniang
3.	Daphisha Gorette Nonglywrih	NEHU	Fagn
4.	Jaipynmai Thabah	NEHU	Sthad
5.	Chesta Gabl Momin	NEHU	Olania
6.	Janice Khar Kongor	NEHU	J.K kongor
7.	Lipa Basumatary	NEHU	Sb
8.	Deepak Pr. shelli	"	Deepak
9.	SAMUEL THANGLUAI	''	
10	LIVVA J. SANGMA	ST. ANTHONY'S COLLEGE	
11.	EARIC W SOHTUN	ST. ANTHONY'S COLLEGE	
12.	WANDAKMEN H KHONGMEN	ST. ANTHONY'S COLLEGE	
13	PATTIASA R. MARAK	ST. ANTHONY'S COLLEGE	

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Day – 3

Sl. No.	Name of the Student	Institution	Signature
1	Richanlong Nongrum	NEHU	R.Nongrum
2	Folkngstar Klingkin	NEHU	Fkli
3	EBENEZER. L. MYRTHONG	NEHU	
4.	Pynshai Lyngdoh	Nehu	Rynghoh.
5.	Pynartulad Suno	Nehu	Suno
6	Rebeca Snaitang	NEHU	R.Snaitang
7.	Dahun Talang	NEHU	D. Julang
8.	Hakani Phawa	NEHU	Phawa
9.	Nakani yarol Khonglah	NEHU	Klonglah
10	Nisha Lamani	NEHU	Manani.
11	Faithfully Phlar.	NEHU	Phlar
12.	Iaisumar Bjang	NEHU	Bjang
13.	Liamon Hahshok	NEHU	
14.	Lambhami Pohbai	NEHU	
15	William Tiawlaw	NEHU	W. Tiawlaw
16.	Dakahipaya Suchiang	NEHU	
17.	Thei Lyngdoh	NEHU	Lyngdoh
18	Stephansen Suja	NEHU	Suja
19	Eden Thonirnam Nongkling	NEHU	E. Nongkling.
20.	Baiarihun Lyngdoh naw(oh	NEHU	B. Lyngdoh
21	THEFFUKUEUE KHEZHIE	NEHU	
22	Omginbonshan Syemlieh	NEHU	
23	Wansuiklong Wanniong	NEHU	W.Wanniong
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Lady Keane College, Shillong
Three Day Seminar on "Nation, Culture and Patriotism: Philosophical Debate on Nationalism in Contemporary India"
Organised by Philosophy Department, Lady Keane College, Shillong in collaboration with the
Indian Council of Philosophical Research(ICPR) New Delhi
Date: 10th – 12th October, 2023
Venue: College Auditorium
Day – 3

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Academic Papers

Nationalism-Internationalism an interface

Xavier P Mao

The etymological meaning of nation is derived from the Latin verb nasci which means to be born and its noun form is nation which means breed or race. However, its acquired meaning has many characteristics and aspects which are not congruent and homogenous in all cases. Its concept keeps on evolving and adding newer aspects. In general nationalism refers to group-feeling constituted by a set of values which the members of the group cherish and feel proud of. The nation-state has a definite territorial unit for the preservation and promotion of the set of values that the group considers valuable. The nation-state is used as an instrument for the emotional integration of a group of people based on ethnicity or same linguistic people or religion or culture or tradition. Nationalism and internationalism are not mutually exclusive. In fact, if nationalism is taken in the positive sense of a group of people's allegiance to a nation-state as a kind of ever expanding concentric circle to all human beings to all animals to finally even soil as they are all interconnected and interdependent. Historically speaking, liberal internationalism was born in the 19th century in Europe. Towards the end of nineteenth century the idea was crystalized into a recognizable school of thought. A distinctive cluster of ideas and agendas were drawn up for organizing international relations. This formal initiative was inspired by the Enlightenment period in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth-century during the democratic revolution. In certain sense nationalism and internationalism were ideological alternatives and competitors for the political and cultural allegiance of people. Nationalism, on the one hand, advocated for the division of peoples into religious, linguistic, ethnic, racial, geographic and cultural groupings. On the other hand, internationalism emphasized the overcoming of these differences and strongly advocates the oneness of humanity and the immense benefits of cooperative pursuits. Internationalism is logically dependent on the prior conception of nationalism. In this sense, nationalism and internationalism can be treated as the two sides of the same coin. As a matter of fact, internationalism emerged as a response to nationalism and the extreme crystallization of nation-states which led to hostilities and frequent wars. Internationalism in all its forms endeavours to forge cooperative ties and bonds of friendship and solidarity of peoples across the world embracing all nations and the states. I wish to make a distinction between nationalism and nation. Nationalism as a concept is a modern phenomenon directly associated with the emergence of the Enlightenment project and the political ideas of the French Revolution of 1789. Nations are not modern phenomena. But they are the continuation of the ancient forms of cultural and ethnic or tribal identities. According to Ernest Gellner in Nations and Nationalism says that "To put it in simplest terms: there is a large number of independent or autonomous political units". Thus according to him the nation becomes political only when it occupies a common territory or in the process of getting political authority. However a community possessing a common language, shared values or religion or common descent or common territory differentiated from other communities can be called ethnic community. Therefore, such a community without a sovereign political authority and common public culture cannot be considered as a nation. There is a different of thinking about collective identity from ethnicity. It is for this reason it is a clear mistake to consider the language of kinship and descent as to characterize as nations. By implication a nation can be characterized by a common belief in political self-determination on an autonomous territory for a homogenously imagined clusters of people possessing certain characteristics which can distinguished from other groups of people. In this connection it can be stated that the term nation cannot be confused with country or state. The reason being World War I gave rise to the League of Nations and World War II to the United Nations. These are conglomerates of states and not nations. Similarly, the term nationality does not mean membership of a nation, but a state. Nationality and citizenship are used synonymously. In the world there are many nations without states, for examples; Kurdish people, Palestinian people or even Jewish Zionist before the creation of Israel in 1948. It follows that not every nation has its own state. By reverse it is also true that not many states have a unitary and homogenous nation within their territorial boundaries. From the above it is clear that a nation is not same as state. Further, a nation is not same as an ethnic community. A nation is less than a state because it lacks important features of a state like sovereignty, polity and government. In the same way an ethnic community is less than a nation because it lacks political identity even though it possesses a collective cultural identity. Despite such distinctions, there is no consensus among the scholars as the boundaries are blurred and hazy.

Some scholars use nation and nationality synonymously. Yet there are other scholars who identify nation with state. According to Burgess a nation is: "a population of an ethnic unity, inhabiting a territory of a geographic unity". In a similar way Leacock defines a nation as having essential features like common descent and common language. Such definition given by both Burgess and Leacock conform to the etymology of nation but present day usage has acquired altogether rich and multiple meanings. Today nation has acquired distinctively political

meaning. In other words nation has come to mean state plus nationality. A state need not necessarily be a nation. There are several examples where a state was there but not a nation because different racial and religious groups do not constitute a culturally homogenous social group. Therefore, the precondition of a nation is the unity of psychic life and the instinctive expression of kinship with its own homogenous group. In addition to the psychic unity and cultural bond, a nation must be politically organized. A nation is a nationality which organized itself into a political body either independent from other sovereign political authority or aspiring to be Free State one day. The supporters of the principle of self-determination of nationalities have been subjected to searching criticism by many eminent scholars. According to them there is no historical or sociological record to show that a mono-national state is superior to poly-national state. To substantiate this point the opponents of ethnically homogenous population give the examples of Switzerland U.S.A, Australia, Canada, New Zealand etc. which are not in any way inferior to mono-national states. Lord Acton even goes to the extent of saying that mono-national state is necessarily and inherently weak and obstructive to genuine human progress and welfare. In other words, co-existence of a numerous nationalities will necessarily promote the vigour and vitality of a state, nay human progress and perfection. He forcefully argued that political boundary and national boundary should not coincide as that will lead to stagnation of that nation-state. Lord Acton stated, "The combination of different nations in one state is as necessary a condition of civilized life as the combination of men in society. Inferior races are raised by living in political union with races intellectually superior. Exhausted and decaying nations are revived by the contact of a younger vitality…… This fertilizing and regenerating process can only be obtained by living under one government. It is in the cauldron of the state that the fusion takes place by which the vigour, the knowledge, and the capacity of one portion of mankind may be communicated to another". Contrary to the view held by the protagonists of self-determination principle, the heterogeneous states around the world have worked much better like USA and Switzerland. Contrary to this view we witnessed the growth and fragmentation process around the world particularly in Europe, Asia and the Middle East on the principle of self-determination. The logical consequence of the political fragmentation is the proportionate increase in the number of international conflicts and frictions in the world. Another weak point of the multiplication of the nation-states is that most of the newly born states have been found to be economically weak and as such non-viable as an independent nation-state. As a consequence, for their safety and security they have to depend on the big powers, thereby smaller weak states are compelled to enter into alliance with some powerful states. In other words, the adoption of the principle of collective security becomes a necessity. The flip side of this is that in case of any serious conflict it can lead to collective warfare and highly explosive situation and may be possible world war.

Apparently the principle of self-determination in itself is a good moral and spiritual principle but from the concrete experience of different countries has revealed that nationalism has descended into narrow isolationism to the point of hatred of the other nations and hence tension and conflict surface frequently. So the question is how to balance a harmonious relationship among all nations of the world. The war among the nations is perhaps due to excessive display of unnecessary pride and arrogance when the citizens are filled with emotionally charged nationality coupled with greed and cheap populist politics. Under the pretext of national security and safety some nations commit military aggressions upon other nations in complete defiance of propriety and morality. Thus the noble principle of national self-determination can degenerate into imperialism or national-centric jingoism thereby ignoring humanity, justice and a better world for all. Further, the principle of national self-determination fundamentally aspire to political independence neglects other important matters like independent economic resources and other welfare measures of its citizens. Nationalist feelings are no doubt very potent but in the end useless without concurrent or parallel strong economic plan and visionary overall welfare policy. The newly born nation-states have strong tendency to sink into economic nationalism in their attempt to seek economic self-sufficiency. In the early twentieth century with the advent of welfare state and mass democracy largely influenced by Marxism, the nation-states in attempting to protect their economics from other nation- states overreacts resulting in excessive tariffs, discriminatory policies, trade barriers and restriction of foreign immigrants. From the above consideration it is amply clear that a blind excessive nationalist sentiment can naturally lead to the destruction of internationalism and the oneness of humanity.

The 21st century humankind has conquered the deep sea and the outer space with the unprecedented technology and skill. The different races and groups of people have ever come closer than never before. Trade and commerce have become more than ever inter-dependent and irrevocably inter-connected. At the practical level, the principle of political self-determination seems to promote the forces of division and friction rather than the forces of harmony, balance and human unity. In this context the scholar Joad appropriately points, "On the one side-the side of technology, economics and common sense-is a manifest drive in unity; and on the other-the side of politics, pugnacity and reaction-are the nation-states that impede and obstruct it…." (P-128, Political Theory, Ideas and Institutions by Amal Ray, Mohit Bhattacharya) The traditional problems of peaceful co-existence of multinational

states are to a great extent resolved through adoption of fair federal political system. A well-knit federation or equitable and just political and economic structure can go a long way to resolve the friction and tension of living together of diverse cultural, racial and religious nationalities. Despite such measures, nationalism has its own seeds of chaos and wars. Nationalism is another name for imperialism because the history of the British imperialism in Asia and Africa amply demonstrates that in the name of trade and commerce it transformed itself into a political power and domination over them. Thus the imperialist nation-state considers the foreign territories as its sources of exploitation ladder for prosperity and riches. In the initial period, the emergence of the nation-states was thought to be the creation a secure national boundary wall within which a homogenous group or population would lead an independent life. But this hope turns out to be an illusion because the dream of economic prosperity necessitates the nation-states to venture out for the occupation newer and newer territories in any vulnerable corner of the world. Moreover, in the light of the rapid development of science and technology the so called secure frontiers are not at all inviolable if an intercontinental ballistic missile is launched by pressing a button from any place several thousands of kilometres away from the target of attack. In other words, the supposed security system of the nation-states becomes completely meaningless. The question arises what is to be done about the safe boundaries of the nation-states? There is no satisfactory answer to this question. Therefore, the sanctity of national boundaries is illusory. What is the alternative? Perhaps, national security system is the beginning of the end. The present nation-state security system cannot guarantee protection and prosperity within its four walls. The process of equipping military forces for war can drain resources of a state. Even if nation-states enter into treaties and alliances for the build-up of collective security as they are witnessed today will be paradoxically give rise to collective insecurity. So what is the solution for stable and lasting safety and security for all humanity? The present day scenario whether for joy or sorrow clearly points towards the inseparability of economic interdependence? All human beings form parts of a single unified society. Even the requirements and needs are interdependent ever more than any period in human history. This increasing interdependence is visibly discernible in economic sphere than in any other sphere. Modern culture is also increasingly going beyond the national boundaries. In the contemporary world different types of international organizations have emerged. As a result, connection, communication, contact and interdependence of different nations are visibly evident. The concept national security is gradually becoming out-dated. The security is either international or no security at all. The steady growth of international institutions along with the evolution of international law the relation among the different states is moving towards collective cooperation rather than conflict. In this connection, I would like to quote the famous philosopher of history, Prof. Arnold Joseph Toynbee, "Fratricidal warfare of ever increasing violence between parochial sovereign states had been by far the commonest cause of mortality among civilizations of all three generations". To prevent and pre-empt such possible occurrence, the imperative need is to evolve a holistic vision whereby the peaceful co-existence of all variety of peoples and systems are ensured. In concrete terms this means that all nation-states must observe and promote a common code of civilized behaviour where the common interest and welfare are involved. This does not mean the abandonment of the cultural uniqueness and distinctiveness. On the contrary it is only shaking up the unwanted national arrogance and parochialism. In this sense, nationalism and internationalism can form a harmonious concentric circle extending farther to even animal kingdom and plant kingdom, nay healthy relationship with the soil itself. Viewing in this light nationalism and internationalism are not mutually exclusive but complementary. The creative and liberating forces of nationalism can logically strengthen internationalism. The Vedic seers have suggested the whole world is one family. Modern science and philosophy point towards one cosmic family if the cosmos is to survive. How to have protection and wellbeing of the universe? How to avoid evil and to promote good? How to eliminate vices and to multiply virtues? How to preserve and multiply natural resources? How to ensure a just and equitable distribution of natural resources? It is the duty of each and every nation-state ensures the above concerns. For effective and successful functioning of any nation-state or any organization there is a need for norm-prescription, norm-obedience, and norm-enforcement and there should be punitive measures for norm violators. Further, to ensure norm-conformity there is a necessity of an authority of law and also a person should be in authority. According to ancient Indian tradition an authority is an impersonal law but the person in authority is the ruler. The ruler here can mean a person or body of persons whose duty is to execute and ensure law-abidance. An authority being the impersonal law is autonomous whereas a person in authority is subject to rules, regulations and legislative law. The impersonal law or authority has intrinsic value or worth whereas the person in authority has instrumental value and his or her duty is to remove lawlessness and to ensure peace and justice. Political power can acquire moral legitimacy if and only if it refined by spirituality. The logic of such performance can lead to the teleology of cosmic well-being, then automatically the friction and conflict between nationalism and internationalism will vanish and the two will be a continuum.

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Re-locating history in the Modern narrative of socio-political conflict
Vanlalvenpuia

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to examine the necessity of historical narrative in contemporary debate on social conflict by examining social contract philosophy. The concepts of human nature and property can serve as the points of entry for such a discussion because social contract philosophies presuppose them in the explanation for the legitimacy of political state. The paper explores how the exclusion of the historical sense of understanding human nature and property set limitation to the narrative of social conflict.

The idea that social disorder is a potential and an ever-present alternative has its theoretical grounding in the social contract philosophy of English philosophers, namely, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke who witnessed English civil wars (1642-1651). Even though social contract theory as an idea precedes Locke and Hobbes, these philosophers gave a modern impetus which carries modern rationality and scientific bend. (Ritchie, 1891,p.656) In political philosophy, Hobbes is known for his 1651 book *Leviathan* and John Locke for his work on *The Two Treatises of Government* published in 1689. Both of them have presented rational justifications and explanation for the origin of political power. They took a theoretical departure from the pre-modern way of political reasoning in which political theory was closely related to history and religion. It is by re-visiting their hypothetical pre-political state of nature that we shall discuss the narrative of modern social crisis. In this regard, the breakdown of social and political order in Manipur and the debates about it serves as an interesting case that can be examined in the light this theoretical exercise. A dialog between two ethnic communities namely the Meitei and Kuki-zo communities can be assisted by a theoretical exploration as this, which is a revisit of the origin of the political state as found in Modern political theory. It is in this context that the contractual philosophy remerges as an important theoretical enquiry worthy of a re-visitation.

In social contract philosophy, social disorder or violence is presented as something from which political society has moved on, and the occurrence of violence implies a return to what was the original, something that was potential in the very conception of the need for political state. So, it is not the case that we move towards social disorder when peace is disrupted, according to contractual theory, it is rather understood as a retraction to something that we have already passed on from. In this manner, in the liberal democratic discourse, violence and social disorder may be understood as a potential, ever awaiting alternative condition if the presence of a powerful state were to be absent. Thus, this potentiality of disorder is presented as a condition for the emergence and necessity of a political state in modern contractual philosophies.

Hobbes and Locke in their social contract philosophy presented a certain kind of state of nature, a pre-political condition in which society was originally in. Their pre-political condition was supposed to give the natural conditions of mankind before the emergence of political power. Thus, the original condition serves as an important theoretical tool, a rational ground for the necessity of political power and for the emergence of political society. In both theories of the philosophers, the manner in which they characterize human nature is extremely important as it determines the nature of the necessity and origin of the political state. The significance of human nature in political philosophy is not something new, rather Raymond Plant suggests that from the classical to modern political philosophy we can find that the concept of human nature has always been closely related to the explanation of political theories. (Plant,1991,pp.23-71)

According to their characterization of pre-political condition that both the philosophers hypothesize, the nature of political authority that the philosophers propose also changes. However, they share something in common, in the argument they have set forth, both of them have excluded an important element that plays a significant role in binding pre-political society together, namely the historical narrative that serves as a sense of identity and a foundation for harmony. It is possible to see this exclusion in their characterization of the conflict which is based on a particular conception of human nature in the pre-political condition. In Hobbes, human nature is deeply animalistic. According to him, human nature is extremely volatile and prone to violence and this necessitates a very authoritarian political power. However, Locke presupposes human nature as social but also presented a volatile a state of nature. The nature of the problem that led to the creation of the contract in Locke is the limitation of property and natural resources and the inability of mankind to bring about justice in such a condition where there is no agreed authority. His conceptualization of the origin of private property will be exclusive of historical narrative. In this manner both Hobbes and Locke who represent modernity exclude historical sense of understanding human nature and society. This is important to note because they have subtracted an important

element of the political, something that contributes to the very existence and mutual understanding in a political society namely, history and culture.

Human nature and disorder:

Hobbes gave a scientific observation of human nature as an answer to the question, 'Is there a tendency in human nature to socialize and harmoniously live together?' His political foundation is laid on the idea that human nature tends towards violence and disorder, since the very nature of mankind is 'solitary, poor, brutish…' and due to the conflict of desires and interest there is always a danger for violence and war. He denies the possibility of a society in the pre-political state of nature as he considered that everyone will act out of self-interest. (Christman, 2002, pp. 29,30) Thus, mankind formed Leviathan, the Common Wealth or State to escape the state of nature.

Hobbes narrative of social disorder has been limited to his scientific explanation of human nature which he derived by observation. (Christman, 2002, pp. 28,29) Indeed, history of culture and civilizations suggests that there has always been conflict throughout all of human history. The nature and scale of conflict may be different. But the very fact that conflict, violence and war perpetuate human history invites a philosophical interest into the very nature of human beings. Hobbes seem to give a credible answer from his observation which answers the question, 'Does the problem with social disorder lie with human nature which cannot be changed and is human nature prone to conflict? If we follow Hobbes argument then we need to accept an unchangeable condition i.e. the chaotic human nature as the main reason as Christman observed,

> Hobbes was both a mechanist and a materialist, believing that natural phenomena were   made up(only) of physical elements that functioned according to deterministic law of   cause and effect. Human beings were no different… So, for Hobbes, the most   fundamental drive for all human beings was self-preservation, a drive that necessarily   outranked any other competing desire, such as the possible desire to advance another's   welfare.(Christman,2002, pp. 28,29)

Violence and disorder seem to have only one solution and it appears from his argument that the only possible guarantor of harmony is a powerful authority. From Hobbes concept of human nature, it is 'the fear' of this potential action from a powerful authority that keeps society in harmony. If one were to ask the question, 'What is at the core of social harmony?' The answer is the presence of a powerful state or political power that have the right to punish the offenders if we follow Hobbes's political thought. (Christman,2002, pp. 33,34)

Hobbes has taken up the aspect of human nature which is also agreeable to Christian theology. In the light of Hobbes, religion can be seen as giving theological answer as to the reason why conflict arises. In Christianity, the concept of the 'fall' of man from grace and the degraded nature of man is seen as the reason and also a problem that will not be solved in this world, and from that perspective the powerful state is the only solution in a troubled world.

Thus, from Hobbes theoretical standpoint, political power and political state is the only thing that prevents social disorder which is a potential ever awaiting, having its seed in the debased human nature. And if the present social disorder in Manipur is examined based on this theoretical grounding alone, and the function of political authority being understood from this reasoning alone, then the need for the solution will accordingly be a very strong action from the state. Hobbes concept of man and his nature would give an impression that the only solution to a violent society would be a forceful and powerful action from the political state.

Now, let us consider Locke's position. Unlike Hobbes, Locke in his *Two Treatises*, focus on human nature in relation to the problem of justice and the limited natural resources as the reasons for the chaos and disorder in pre-political society. Regarding the problem of justice, he says,

> To this strange doctrine, viz. That ''in the state of nature everyone has the executive power'' of the law of nature, I doubt not, but it will be objected, that it is unreasonable for men to be judges in their cases, that self-love will make men partial to themselves and their friends: and, on the other side, that ill-nature, passion, and revenge will carry them too far in punishing others; and hence nothing but confusion and disorder will follow: and that therefore God hath certainly appointed government to restrain the partiality and violence of men.(Locke, 1967, pp. 105)

He shares with Hobbes that the fundamental ill nature of man, passion and the desire for revenge as the root of social problem. Along with this, he also considers that the protection of private property as one of the main reasons for which pre-political society enters into political society. According to him every individual has the right to private property by virtue of labor from what the natural world offers in common. He says,

> Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his person: this nobody has any right to but himself. The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property.(Locke,1967,pp.111,112)

It is what is missing in Locke's concept of property that must be noted. His justification and conception of private property is individualistic and looks at the problem of politics as a problem that arises out of individual interest. Property in Locke's sense do not account for the sense in which a community may claim to have a common property. The political theory of Locke has abandoned this aspect of property and he has reduced the entire social-political stability to the desire for the security of private property. This is the theoretical limitation of modernity as it conceives of political state and its role as the guarantor of private property. Locke's conception and purpose of politics is the in service of his narrow conception of property. According to him,

> …political power is that power which every man having in the state of nature, has given up into the hands of the society, and therein to the governors, whom the society hath set over itself, with this express or tacit trust, that it shall be employed for their good, and the preservation of their property: now this power, which every man has in the state of nature, and which he parts with to the society in all such cases where the society can secure him, is to use such means for the preserving of his own property as he thinks good, and nature allows him; and to punish the breach of the law of nature in others, so as (according to the best of his reason) may most conduce to the preservation of himself and the rest of mankind (Locke,1967, pp.176)

Locke's argument is blind to the idea that the concept of property has its meaning in history and culture. It does not take into account that historical and cultural narrative can serve as the origin of contention for whose land and property it is. In other words, the limitation of Locke's conception of property is that he conceives of property as something that arises entirely out of labor and focus on individual property and accordingly conceives that if at all social order breaks down then it must be due to the property issue. He may be right to some extend but his idea of property is too narrow.

The debates on the issue of Manipur both in the newspaper and social media suggests that socio and political conflict is in another sense a conflict of narratives on identity and history. The violence between Meitei community and Kuki-zo community which erupted on May 3, 2023 has been examined and analyzed by experts and journalists from various corners. To ask for a solution is also to beg for a clarification of the reason and cause for this tension and conflict between the communities. It is in the process of the attempt to find out what exactly caused the violence that we may find an interesting case for examining the significance of historical narrative. Take for instance Shruti Rathore, a doctoral scholar from the Department of International Studies at Christ (Deemed to be University), Delhi NCR. in her article under the title, '*Navigating the Kuki-Meitei conflict in Inida's Manipur state'* acknowledges that the problem in Manipur is deeply rooted in historical and social dimensions. (Rathore, 2023) In other words, it is the historical sense of identifying the other as an outsider that contributes to the tension. It is only on the basis of this context that the idea of property and its security can come into the discourse. The comparison of the present social conflict and the two philosophers discussed shows how their concepts of property, the role of state and human nature are insufficient to understand the modern problem of the socio-political disorder.

The idea that historical narrative has been the center of the issue is also recognized in *Ukrul Times*, under the article, *'Manipur conflict: Ethos of History and perils of false narratives'* by Lalmin Kipgen, PhD, who is an Associate Lecturer at Arden University Berlin writes,

> In a revealing interview with "The Wire," Meitei MLA Nishikant Singh Sapam, Chairman of the Committee on Privileges and Ethics in the Manipur Legislative Assembly, stated that the conflict primarily revolves around land. It becomes evident that labeling Kukis as 'terrorists,' 'narcoterrorists,' 'illegal immigrants,' or 'foreigners' serves no purpose other than undermining their legitimacy, subjecting them to discrimination, and providing a justification for their dispossession from their rightful land. (Kipgen, 2023)

The philosophical interest in these debates is that one needs to realize that, a sense of property, ownership is intricately related to culture and history which serves as the ground of narrative. It is evident that there is a sense of belongingness and identity to land as a property which is in sharp contrast to Locke's conception of property which arises simply by virtue of labor. These ongoing debates from the news articles and various other debates in the social media testify modern theoretical limitation. They suggest that there is a complete division of the two ethnic communities due to difference in historical narrative which leads to the alienation of the other. In the attempt to find a point for dialog and solution, one needs to accept that the issue with property or land intricately involves historical and cultural sense of understanding each other and that this is first and foremost the essential point to consider.

To continue with the limitation of modern political theory, with their formulation of problems in theory state of nature, Locke and Hobbes have limited the nature of dispute and the discourse of dispute that leads to social disorder. What is unaccounted in both Hobbes's and Locke's theory is the nature human being, which is creative

and historical with a tendency to project future image. It is now clear that the cultural and historical sense of understanding each other and the subsequent perception of the world accordingly constitute an important factor in the possibility of political society.

Modernity and the nature of politics:

The discussion suggest that what is required for peace is a dialog between differences in understanding of property, between contending history and cultures. In other words, political stability and social harmony requires an acknowledgment of history as evolving and dynamic discourse which we must share and engage. The debates concerning Manipur violence is a testimony that humans are by nature historical beings. The debates have turned to be debates on history and this this further generates the issue of property and identity. There are opposing views of each other's history, of when and how the other has come to where they are. What is significantly of philosophical interest is that the historical sense of understanding oneself forms an important part of our understanding each other as well as our misunderstanding. But the question that one needs to ask at the moment is, 'What solution is there when there is a clash of historical narratives?' This question is important as our historical narrative is deeply related to one's sense of understanding of community and the extent to which people can coordinate as political society.

As far as the need for dialog is concerned modern political theories as we have discussed seem to lead us to a dead end. Hobbes concept of human nature do not contain the historical side of man but only the brutish, selfish and violent nature. If this is seen as the sole reason for the legitimacy of a state and its essentiality, the problem in Manipur can only be seen as something that the force of the state alone can solve. There is a possibility of dialog when there is shared values and culture and it is important to acknowledge the limitation of Hobbes's theory in this sense.

Therefore, if one agrees with the limitation of modern liberal theory of Locke and Hobbes's theory, then, the narrative of the social violence must be considered as something that arises due to something that the liberal paradigm do not account. It did not account history. One needs to recognize that the tendency to violence can be situated in the narratives of history and culture and not merely on the basic instinct of mankind as Hobbes and Locke would have us believe. In other words, social disorder does not simply arise out of animalistic and brutish self-interested individuals as Hobbes would suggest.

The task for a peace dialog will therefore need to begin with what we share as humans i.e in realizing the essentiality of a shared history, an understanding of property and land in a dynamic sense, as something that changes with time. It is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate or deal with the problem about which side has misinterpreted history. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the nature of the conflict is intertwined with differences in historical accounts. This invite a deeper reflection on the nature of history itself but the purpose of the paper is simply to justify that modern political philosophy as the ground for reflection on the present crisis is insufficient. It is insufficient as modernity has subtracted the significance of history and culture in the process of purifying political concepts.

So, the question, 'what is the nature of ethnic violence' is equivalent to the question, 'what narrative is given to violence'. Modernity fails to consider the human side of politics. Politics has been reduced to social order and have forgotten the aspirations and creative side of human beings. World view, values, identity and history plays a significant role in social harmony and when this is broken then it must be remade and rebuilt. There is a need to understand politics as a normative science which questions the most fundamental values of human life. (Strauss, 1988, pp. 3,4) Accordingly, the narrative of the debate in Manipur violence thus manifests the intricate relationship between property claim and history. It will be the narrative of history that has a very significant bearing in the progress towards peace. The progress towards peace entails the question, 'Is there a possibility of having a shared history?' and unless there is an agreement about this, then it might be very difficult for the two communities to come to normal terms again. Even if there is no violence, there will always be perpetual tension ever awaiting to blow up if there is historical tension. Only an account of the richness of the concern of politics can rescue us from the narrow simplification of political problem and help us understand that culture and identity play a crucial role in the political questions concerning social order.

Conclusion:

Thus, from the preceding discussion, we may conclude that the question that confronts a political theorist with the ethnic violence at hand should be the question about the very sense in which the present political paradigm namely, liberal democracy allows the possibility of socio-political disorder at the present scale. We would be asking ourselves a theoretical question reflecting on why modern liberal democratic system often fails in keeping order so that we can find the weakness in the theory and strengthen it. If modern political theory has conceptual and logical limitation as discussed in the case of Hobbes and Locke, then what is the way forward in a liberal democratic discourse towards a reconciliation and peace when there is violence? One might suggest from the

discussion that the answer is in the recognition of the need for philosophical reflection on the situatedness of political concepts in a history and culture, i.e in our understanding of the nature and necessity of political state. One also realizes that it is the difference in history, of what we share and how we have come about to where we are that offers a common interest which further stabilize a political society. It is in this regard that Locke and Hobbes are found wanting in their arguments and therefore implies that modern political discourse needs to circumscribe the problem of history and culture as its central topics.

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Indian Nationalism*: Dynamics and Challenges*

Asha Mukherjee

The world is divided into "state with religion" and "state without religion." India has no one dominant religion, yet we find some severe challenges to India's religious diversity and secularism in contemporary times. The questions that I address in this paper, going deep into the complexities of the Indian life of the people, is whether "responsible diversity," "respect for other religious communities, and religious expression in the public sphere," etc., are really present and experienced by Indian people today in India.

Nationality and Society:

The concepts of the "nation," "state," and "nationalism" are generally found interrelated and are a matter of serious study for about two centuries that are extremely complex. In Charles Taylor's words, "Nationalism continues to be a matter of serious concern, enormous power and inescapable." [1]

E. Hobsbaum talks of Citizen Nationalism[2], Hannah Arendt, Eric Voegelin, and Jenny Bourne have talked about various aspects such as 'human rights as persons', 'what we do is who we are', and Max Weber talks of a 'paradox in the notion of national identity. Some people also talk of ethno-cultural identity being different from national identity. I would not go into the details of the discussion on these authors but like to begin with a brief discussion on Nation-state –nationalism in the Indian context drawing insights primarily from Rabindranath Tagore and occasionally from some other thinkers around India's Independence and what they thought about past, present, and future of India and its distinct identity.

Nationality, according to Rabindranath Tagore[3], was "A Great Menace". For him, nationalism was an imported Western category that was not based on social cooperation but the spirit of conflict and conquest. According to him, imperialism was an outcome of nationalism; he was against imperialism and also of nationalism and worked for cosmopolitan internationalism. Tagore distinguished between state and society; Indian society was based on cooperation and the spirit of reconciliation between different opposing forces to form a harmonious whole. State, on the other hand, is an expression of greed and aggression, and lust for power. What is society? Society, as such, has no ulterior purpose. It is a natural regulation of human relationships so that men can develop ideals of life in cooperation with one another. It also has a political side, but that is for self-preservation. Over centuries, hordes of Mughals and Pathans have invaded India. But we knew them as human races coming with their Religion and customs and never known them as nations. But through colonialism, the British came as a Nation – to us who are no nation ourselves. What is a nation? A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of people, is that aspect that a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose. In the early days, it had its separate place in society, restricted to professionals but with the real nature of a nation, with the help of science

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[1] https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2016/01/20/a-lot-of-the-thinking-about-secularism-that-ive-done-has-grown-out-of-intensive-discussions-about-the-indian-situation-charles-taylor/ accessed on 26 April 2021

[2] Hobsbawm, E. Nations and Nationalism Since 1789, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

[3] Tagore, R. (1917) *Nationalism*, London: McMillan and Co. 111.

and the perfecting of organization, this power begins to grow, bringing in the harvest of wealth crosses its boundary with amazing rapidity, it goads its neighbouring societies with the greed of material prosperity, mutual jealousy because of each other's growth into powerfulness takes over soon, it can stop no longer for the competition grows keener, the organization grows vaster, selfishness attains supremacy, trading upon greed and fear of man, it occupies more and more space in society to become its ruling force.

From 1916-17 Tagore delivered lectures in Japan and America which were published as *Nationalism*. For him, Nationalism and nation-state distinction are extremely important. He had written the national anthem for not only India but for Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. He never wanted that India should be a nation where nation and state become more powerful than the society and culture of India. He said, 'in India, our problem is not political; it is social. This situation not only prevails in India but almost in every nation. I do not believe in an exclusive political interest. Politics in the West have dominated Western ideals, and we in India are trying to imitate you'. While addressing the problem of the race, he claims that in spite of the difficulties, India has been trying to adjust with races recognizing the differences and seeking some basis for unity which has come through our saints, "What India has been, the whole world is now, the whole world is becoming one country through scientific facility. And the moment is arriving when you also must find a basis of unity that is not political. If India can offer the world her solution, it will be a contribution to humanity. There is only one history- the history of man. All national histories are merely chapters in the larger one. And we are content in India to suffer for such a great cause."[4] He also wrote two essays, 'What is a nation?'[5] and '*Bharatbarshiyo Samaj*'[6] (Indian Society). His analysis of the nation is rooted in the idea of history. He believed in the interdependence of men and countries rather than their independence. He advised the West to share its wealth with other nations. Having full faith in the oneness of the world and the unity of man, Tagore said, "There is only one history- the history of man. All national histories are chapters in larger ones." Thus Tagore's internationalism is spiritualism- the unity of man and unity of nations without any boundaries, without nationalism. Gandhi differed from Tagore and believed that there could not be any internationalism without nationalism.

Thus, a nation becomes synonymous with the organization of politics and commerce. When this engine attains vast size, and who are mechanics are made into parts of the machine, then the personal man is eliminated into a phantom. Everything becomes a revolution of policy carried out by human parts that requires no twinge of pity or moral responsibility. This is the nation ruling India. Europen war of nations is the war of retribution. Each country is casting its net into the slimy bottom of the other, fishing for their secrets, the treacherous secrets brewing in the oozy depths of diplomacy. Each nation has a history of its lies and broken faith. International suspicion and jealousy rose to the level of the highest degree of ludicrousness. Tagore suggests an alternative is to get back to Man. Man in his natural surroundings, the fullness of his communal life with all his living associations, can save the civilization. So comes the question of the concept of man and community. Tagore conceived Man as surplus. It discloses itself through creation of harmony among the different contradictory aspects of life and the world. For Man, the world is not simply given – it is a creation. While creating the world, it is endlessly creating itself. This creation has no ulterior purpose. Around 1903, Tagore started thinking about the community of which the Indian village community is the model. In a community, a bond is formed out of surplus, and mutual relation rests on humanity. It is not a relation of commerce. Hence kinship is a relation of *atmashakti*, the strength of the soul.

Any problem, the race problem or the problem of caste, must be solved on the basis of this relation. Society is a conglomeration of communities and hence cannot have any ulterior purpose apart from pursuing the human Ideal. The guiding theme should be harmony; otherwise, the solution would be an illusion.

Tagore, following Renan's arguments in the article, "**What is a nation?**" asks the question, why France, England, Germany, Switzerland, and Russia have gained nationhood and Austria is only a state and not a Nation? Tagore, would argue against Kidhoriei's view[7] and tell that it is not due to dynasty, racial unity, or language. As, "People's will is stronger than the power of language…. Besides, it is not always true that a race is known by the language it speaks. Prussia speaks German today; a few centuries back, it used to speak Slavonic: Wales uses English, and Egypt speaks Arabic." Tagore argues it is not to the religious unity either, but it is undeniably due to the "the bond of material interest." The geographic or natural boundaries contribute crucially to the demarcation of nations. "But

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[4] Tagore, R. (1996) "Nationalism in India" in *English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, Ed. Sisir Kumar Das, Sahitya Akademy, New Delhi. 453.

[5] Tagore, R. "What is A Nation?" in Debarati Bandyopadhyay ed. Rabindranath Tagore Select Writings on Cosmopolitanism, 2019 Jayasree Press

[6] Tagore, R. 'Bharatbarshiyo Samaj'(1901). in *Rabindra-Rachnabali*, 1995 ed. 2.622-25. Calcutta: Visva-Bharati.

[7] Kidhoriei   p. 115.

the spirit of the nation is not dependent on the landmass. Individual human beings are the greatest component of the sacred entity called human community. Nation, which is a product of profound historical churning, is a mental construct; it is mental family which is not constrained by geographical limitations." And two things which are basically the same are vital for this mental construction- past and the present. Past are the foundations of national consciousness, collective pride, and a collective will of the present; the great collective achievements of the past and resolve to emulate the same in the present-these are the essential ingredients for the formation of communities. It a similar to the ancient Sparta song' what you were, we are: what we are; what you are, we will be.' This captures the national essence of the countries.' [8]

Further, Tagore says- "Nation, in this sense, is nothing but the unified and intense manifestation of sentiment brought about in people by collective sufferings and sacrifices of the past and the collective preparedness to brave the same again. Much important than the race and the boundaries created by custom -houses and the language. Collective suffering has been mentioned because the bond of sorrow is far more powerful than the bond of happiness."

However, if we are left with Peoples' will, then if it changes, what are we left with? We are left with human beings; people's will may also be uninformed and uncontrolled. If we leave such an ancient treasure-like nationality in the control of such a will, it runs the risk of total disintegration. This is what is happening in India. This only proves that Tagore could foresee this in this small but powerful essay. He argues that nations are not permanent entities; just as they had a beginning, they will have an end.[9]

Tagore advocated for *swadeshi samaj* in a constructive way by arguing that Indians should utilize their energies in constructive efforts such as spreading education and social reforms rather than destructive activities such as burning British goods. Such a destructive attitude did not make much sense either in terms of economic gain or in terms of nationalism or social commitment. Tagore was more sympathetic to modern technology and was in favor of assimilating the best of the West so as to create a self-reliant country that would ultimately be able to dispense with its dependence on the alien rule.[10] The novel *Gahare-Bahire*[11] Tagore deals with these issues. For Tagore, Western ideas, particularly science were vital for Indian development. Though he was critical of the use of machines like Gandhi, he sympathized with the rational spirit behind the development of the science of the West. Tagore wanted Indians to modernize their farming techniques, and with this intention, he started the rural reconstruction program at Sriniketan. Indians must take the best of the West and assimilate it with the best of India.

Tagore and Gandhi were both concerned with a universal sense of justice. Gandhi takes it as part of activism with migrant Indian labourers in South Africa, focusing on Indian tradition and opposing machinery; he writes in *Hind Swaraj*[12] "It is machinery that has impoverished India…. Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization; it represents a great sin," Gandhi rejected machinery altogether to the extent that he advocated charkha, a primitive hand spinning wheel. He romanticized the cottages in the villages and plow in agriculture, and "He wanted everyone to spin for thirty minutes every day as a sacrifice, seeing this as a way for people who are better off to identify themselves with the less fortunate."[13] Gandhi rejected anything which was British to the extent of burning British goods crux of the non-cooperation movement.

Gandhi and Tagore on Nationalism

Both were seriously concerned with nationalism throughout their lives, differed from each other, and yet had similar views on several points. Tagore as a poet and a literary writer presented his critique through his essays, novels, poems, songs, and paintings. Gandhi as an active political leader, wrote and led the nationalist movement-India's freedom movement. They looked at India almost the same way in terms of civilization and truth; they both recognized the truth of non-violence and the role of women in nation-building. The Tagore-Gandhi debates have manifested as well as hidden aspects, and the manifested part is only half of the story. These debates represent dialogues on the future of India's past. The dialogue presumed some basic agreements. "Both believed that the principles of modern state and nationalism and the theory of progress in its various incarnations had already established the new violence of our times as a significant cultural bridgehead within Indian civilization. Both believed that this new violence was framed in moral, rational, optimistic theories of progress and latent theory of

[8] Tagore, R. (1917) *Nationalism*, London: McMillan and Co. 1917, 116-17

[9] Ibid. 118

[10] Datta Krishna and Robinson Andrew, (1997). *Selected Letters of Rabindranath Tagore*, Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 62.

[11] Tagore, R. (1919). *Gahare-Bahire,in Rabindra-Rachnabali, 1995. Ed.4:473-574 Calcutta, Visva-Bharati*

[12] Gandhi, M. (1939) *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Home Rule). Navajivan Publishing House. Ahmedabad:

[13] Sen, Amartya. (2005). "Tagore and His India" in *Argumentative Indian*, Penguin Books. England. 89-119.

sacrifice. And therefore, resistance to that violence would have to self-consciously take a position against mainstream universalism and scientific-secular rationalism. It might even have to require a new language of faith."[14] For Tagore, in fact, the very foundation of his thought is spirituality- the ultimate unity- the truth in union and harmony- the unity of man and unity of nations without any boundaries. Note: Tagore and Gandhi differed on many points, such as the role of machinery and science, the basic education in India, and spirituality, but here I would restrict myself to their agreements.

Tagore also had an attachment to the past. Pre-British Indian society has a social structure quite unique and perhaps without parallel in history, sharply in contrast to the medieval societies of European countries. In his novel, Gora[15] Tagore deals with the contradictions of tradition and modernity.

Commenting on Tagore's commitments, Isaiah Berlin writes, "He condemned romantic over-attachment to the past, what he called the tying of India to the past 'like a sacrificial goat tethered to a post, and he accused men who displayed it they seemed to him reactionary-of not knowing what true political freedom was, pointing out that it is from English thinkers and English books that very notion of political liberty was derived. But against cosmopolitanism, he maintained that English stood on their own feet, and so must Indians. In 1917, he once more denounced the danger of "having everything to the unalterable will of the Master" be he Brahmin or Englishmen."[16] Tagore believed that India already had her unity as a nation in her tradition of working for an adjustment of races and acknowledging the real differences between them. But the Western notion of nationalism adopted in India has destroyed this unity. Gandhi saw both good and evil in the nationalism of the Indian National Congress. For him, nationalism is not evil in itself, but narrowness and exclusiveness make it evil. For Tagore, too, its narrowness was one of the reasons for rejection, but also nationalism was nothing but evil. Tagore said, "I am not against one nation in particular, but against the general idea of all nations."[17] Tagore was the first to recognize the dangers of the aggressive nationalism that raised the nation to the status of a demigod. He declared that the blind worship of nation–state contained the seed of disaster for man. Two world wars within the space of thirty years proved how tragically correct his reading was. He believed in the idea of harmonizing the ideas of the East and the West. That, according to him, was the cornerstone of internationalism. India, in her principle of unity in diversity based on adjustment of races rather than elimination and the distinction between the state and the society, has a lot to offer to the West.

Gandhi and Tagore offer important ways of looking at India and the world. Gandhi's ideas are quite well known and frequently discussed. His influence on Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela has made him appropriately popular in modern world politics. Tagore, too has many ideas which as relevant today as they were in his times and perhaps much more today. Tagore's critique of nationalism is extremely relevant in contemporary times as we face an increasingly separatist and fragmented India and the world. The "openness" that he valued the most is under threat these days. In India, we see the growth of Hindu fundamentalism, separatist movements in Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, North East, Bihar, and Terrorists in Kashmir, Eastern Europe, Ireland where national identity supersedes the human identity, and the most recent Ukraine-Russia war and the role of United Nations. The twenty-first century is facing even new problems of internationalism and cosmopolitanism, and the only solution can be with the help of ideas that require "some freedom from his immediate cultural context so that those outside his bewitched circle of admirers can re-contextualize him according to their needs[18]."

Tagore would say the problem lies elsewhere. These Governments are mechanical bodies formed by constitutional provisions, and once formed, they take over power and dominate society. The usual method of the election actually creates the next-door neighbor, a distant individual – part of the machine. Recent happenings suggest that we take Tagore's distinction of Nation vis-à-vis society seriously. Legal or constitutional correctness may not be and often is not good for humanity. It is the task of society to correct the course of governance. Overthrowing the ruling party once in five years is not the answer. For it would be replaced by another party with its own organization. Society will have to assert that the nation is for the society and not the other way round. Government is also my government. Hence, it is a relentless fight with myself.

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[14] Ashish Nandy, (2003)."Violence and Creativity in the Late Twentieth Century: Rabindranath Tagore and the problem of testimony" in *Rabindranath Tagore, Universality and Tradition.* Ed. Patrick Colm Hogan and Lalita Pandit. 272.

[15] Tagore, R. *Gora*, (1899) in *Rabindra-Rachnabali,* 1995 Ed. 3: 375-665, Visva-Bharati. Calcutta,

[16] Berlin, Isaiah. (1961) 'Rabindranath Tagore and Consciousness of Nationality' in Henry Hardy 9Ed. Rhe Sense of Reality: Studies in Ideas and Their History, New York: Farrar, Strauss And Giroux, 1999. 265.

[17] Moolchand, (1989), *Nationalism and Internationalism of Gandhi, Nehru and Tagore*, New Delhi, M.N. Publishers New Delhi. quoting Tagore, 166.

[18] Nandy Ashish, (1994). *The Illegitimacy of Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Based on the above discussion, perhaps we can relate Taylor's "open secularism" that he has developed in his long academic career that requires "to redefine secularism in an indefensible way. Instead of being the regime that defends everyone's freedom of conscience, whether religious or non-religious (what I call "open" secularism), it becomes secularism wary of Religion, and always ready to set limits to it. Non-religion becomes the common principle, although you tolerate Religion if it stays in its place….other kind of *laïcité* or secularism [that is, "open" secularism] you really have to be even-handed between all kinds of Religion, all kinds of non-religion; Religion and non-religion are treated the same. Some folks would maybe be confused by the notion of open secularism, because they just identify secularism with the closed, radical, aggressive sort. But open secularism actually is respect for difference that makes room for religious communities and religious expression in the public sphere as well."[19]

Nationalism and Modernity: Taylor

Charles Taylor "Nationalism and Modernity"[20] largely agrees with Gleaner's theory of nation and nationalism, Taylor tries to fill in the explanatory hole in his account using Anderson inspired considerations. Gellner's theory told us something about the context of modernist nationalist struggles, even though these struggles are virtually inevitable. Taylor tries to explain the missing thread by invoking the context of expanding modernity and the call to the difference which raises in people in the path of that expansion. Moreover, this call, in Taylor's opinion, which is similar to that of Liah Greenfield[21], is lived by elites in the register of dignity and can become the basis of a mass movement in a number of ways, including some rather sinister and destructive ones which have little to do with the call itself. This account proposed by Taylor is not to be homogeneous nor without any difficulties, and he discusses some of the difficulties at the end of the article. He presents nationalism on two levels: one, a description of the social and state context in which national struggles are played out and by which the stakes of these struggles are defined; and a second level, what gives rise to nationalist aspirations and national movements. And Taylor is of the opinion that nationalism needs to be tackled in this two –prolonged way, and he hopes that his account helps to clarify some of the "thorny issues" which impede our vision of this absorbing, and disturbing, but seemingly inescapable features of our modern world."

He also argued that nationalism cannot be understood as an atavistic reaction or something ancient. What is modern would be the context of nationalist struggles. But why did Algerians not demand full French citizenship to which they were entitled instead of going for independence? Answering this basic question, Taylor makes a distinction between the two stages of the movement; from one point of view, modernity is like a wave, flowing over and engulfing one traditional culture after another which is irresistible. It can be called as a force for the onward march of modernity. However, modernity also has another side as it lived from the inside. The institutional changes alter the traditional culture or sometimes get destroyed. In this sense, modernity is not a single wave- these are alternative modernities such as Japan and India, and some Islamic modernities are not uniform. In this sense, modernity is seen as a threat to traditional culture. But the alternative modernities as against Western, do not refuse the changes; they are looking for creative adoption, drawing upon the cultural resources of their tradition, which would enable them to take on the new practices successfully. (Not just copying the West but to creatively inventing their own modernity). Thus there is a call for difference felt by the modernizing elites. Western modernity has been a conquering culture, using power to exercise – a relation of superiority and inferiority, an inbuilt challenge to dignity. The elites feel the challenge is related to their dignity. But in the process, the refusal may come from the elites regarding the incorporation of urban culture, and thus, first it involves modernizing elites. Threat to dignity is also related to conditions of dignity. But, whose dignity, of the elite or of the marginalized group or of the individual, is not clarified here? The basic question is, how do we understand human dignity? Kant has talked about the dignity of all rational agents. But my own worth can no longer be based on my family, my clan, or my lineage; it is in some other categorical, universal identity. Taylor gives a very interesting example of categorical identity looking for dignity- Gandhi's protest march, 1857 Mutiny in India as

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[19] Taylor, Charles. Interview 2016. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2016/01/20/a-lot-of-the-thinking-about-secularism-that-ive-done-has-grown-out-of-intensive-discussions-about-the-indian-situation-charles-taylor/ accessed on 26 April 202.

[20] Taylor, Charles. (1998). "Nationalism and Modernity" in *Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism* Ed. John A. Hall, Cambridge University Press,.191- 218,

[21] Greenfield, Liah. (1993) "Transcending the Nation's Worth" in *Daedalus*, 122.3, Reconstructing Nations and States, 47-62.

an example of loss of dignity in a pre-modern context. (85 jailed refused to use cartridges that they believed to be against their religion, war broke out of prison by their Comrades, ransacked and killed the Europeans they found. I find a paradox of modernity – through modernity, we want to achieve human dignity and human well-being, but the more we are induced into modern society, the more this is far from the question of dignity for us. In the process of modernity after the two world wars, the words like developed, backward, /underdeveloped, and now developed/ developing as each society is in its own way, in the world of the public sphere. Modern nationalism thus turns out to be something perennial process.

Taylor asks, if it is a process, then how do we understand this process, and how does it breaks beyond elites? There does not seem to be a single mechanism, and it could be through charismatic leadership like Gandhi- Salt March, when the generalized transformation of the original high culture takes place (Gandhi is not an elite). Nationalism can become a mass movement[22].

Nationalism can and often is of a defensive kind. A response to the perceived threat of expulsion or genocide but usually at its origin is a minority nationalism of aspiration. Therefore, there are three stages; Original aspiration and defensive kind (Gandhi's salt march), modernity among the elites, and reforms in Hinduism and Islam as an unavoidable by-product of syncretism. (Note that Rajarammohan Roy, Arya Samaj, and Wahhabi all come from elites.) The second phase lies in between the pure-minded calls to renounce syncretism and the present communal violence and mistrust. India Pakistan partition, p. 212. Muslim league, Pakistan propagated itself as a defensive nationalism. And finally, it is granted that the kinds of nationalism Taylor discussed in this article are not homogeneous as the Islamic integrals rejects the West and America as "Great Satan," and there seems to be no difference between the conquerors and Islamic sense of "Providence."

Taylor on *Toward the Transcendent*:

Taylor while explaining the aspirations uses the term' social imaginaries' (Taylor 2007a, 171). Social imaginaries are ways in which large groups of ordinary people imagine their social surroundings, often expressed in images, stories, and legends. A social imaginary is a shared understanding which forms the basis for common practices. This understanding is both about how things usually go and how they actually ought to go concerning value changes. The social imaginary entails a new understanding of both the individual and society. Initially, the ideal social order in which each in advancing himself helps others was not seen as merely a human invention. It was seen as designed by God. To the best of our ability, we should strive to realize it. The ideal order should optimize human flourishing, and this flourishing has to be defined in accordance with the demands of the Modern Moral Order (MMO). A notion of the transcendent seems necessary to back up the demands of the Modern Moral Order: justice, equality, and non-domination.[23] Taylor sees the immanent frame as allowing for two equally possible spins, open or closed. Put, 'open' to transcendence corresponds to theism, and 'closed' corresponds to naturalism. Either way, we need to make a 'leap of faith. It requires a step beyond available reasons. The spin of closure is dominant in the academic world. Nature operates by fixed universal laws. Ethical norms can be expressed in rational codes like Kant's Categorical Imperative. By reason and discipline, we can construct a social order. In short, the immanent order seems self-contained. The scientific view from nowhere is valued above insights arising out of prayer or love relationships. But Taylor argues that living in this tilted frame gives rise to protest and various kinds of resistance so that we are not simply nudged in one direction but pulled both ways[24].

Let me get back to the basic issue that we started with. Are we as Indians are responsible citizens today? Are we not so much bogged down with narrow nationalism? Yes, perhaps we are. The basic reason is that we, as human beings, live a double life. We profess ourselves to be peace-loving, while in practice, we find brute lawless violence. Our divided existence issues utterly different conflicting morality. Radhakrishnan observed as far back as 1940:

"We have today to fight against not nature's death but man-made death. ... Religion has to fight against wars, military and economic, even though it may mean loss of dividends to a few individuals... Hate is spreading like a vast black cloud. Terror has become the technique of states. Freedom won by centuries of effort is lightly surrendered. Fear is over the world, and our hearts are failing us. We protest a little too much about our desire for

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[22] Taylor, Charles. (1998) "Nationalism and Modernity" in *Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism* Ed. John A. Hall, Cambridge University Press, 191- 218,

[23] Taylor, Charles (2007), *A Secular Age*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap. 146.
[24] Ibid. 148.

peace while preparing for war. It is like professing vegetarianism while running a butcher's shop." [25] Radhakrishnan's description is equally relevant today since the situation has not changed much. Morality is the worst casualty of the political uses of religious difference and of the unequal distribution of wealth.

Nationalism and the Nation State: Understanding Indian Nationalism In a Cosmopolitan Way
Pius V Thomas

Introduction: The Cosmopolitan Understanding

The discussion in the paper affirmatively intents to present is an architectonic of the concepts of Cosmopolitanism, Freedom, Nationalism and the Nation-State. Cosmopolitan imagination becomes one of the very demanding political and philosophical reflexive engagements of our times. It grounds the idea of freedom and political independence. Cosmopolitan Thought has been highlighted as the most important ethical, political and social ideal and principle, that guides us to a meaningful, peaceful and democratic coexistence[26]. Kwami Anthony Appiah, as he designates cosmopolitanism as 'the Ethics in the World of Strangers', takes his discussion to understand it as 'kindness to strangers', whereby we acquire 'intelligence and curiosity to engage with others', and "it (cosmopolitanism) begins with the simple idea that in the human community, as in national communities, we need to develop habits of coexistence"(Appiah 2006, p.xix)

The most important question that we face as we associate cosmopolitan imagination in understanding and theorizing the ethical and political philosophies and the principles of coexistence, is perhaps, how do they imply the 'sociogony' of nationalism and the nation-state. In other words, the inevitable reason that forces us to ground the principles of coexistence in the concepts of nationalism and the nation state is the ideological, political, religious, socio-cultural conflicts they include in their formative logic(s).

Indian Nationalism: Cosmopolitan Insignias

According to some thinkers and historians there were two concepts of nationalities in India's freedom movement or struggle for Independence. They were broadly 1. Cultural nationalism of based on the monolithic Hindu or Muslim (two nation theory which leads to the partition of India, Veer Savarkar and Jinna were supportive of this position) identity and 2. Political Nationalism which argued for a composite nationalism (we have Gandhi, Moulana, Nehru and Ambedkar arguing for this). While cultural nationalism affirmatively argued for the grounding of nationalism and the nation state India on the traditional and metaphysical understanding of religion and culture[27], the position of composite or political nationalism invoked an idea of ethical religiosity. As theologians like Sebastian Kappen observes the ethical religiosity was communitarian, since love is possible only in a community.

As Kappen says, "Gautama affirmed the centrality of friendliness (*maitri*) and compassion (*karuna)*, which, along with joy and equanimity, go to form four cardinal virtues of his religion. For him, the eternal law was not the cosmic order (*rta*) but the law of love: " Never in this world is hate appeased by hatred; it is only appeased by love – this is an eternal law (*sanaatanadamma*)". He extended the horizon of love to cosmic proportions to include all living creatures …"(Kappan 2002, p.33). It tells us that logically the religiosity that inspired political nationalism was mainly Buddhism. Nevertheless, political nationalism as composite nationalism also incorporated the ideas of Vedanta and the Vedantic experiential understanding of transcendental unity and oneness of human kind. Such an amalgamated and inclusive idea of Indian tradition and culture grows in history through the Bhakti Movement and Tagore, Gandhi and Ambedkar. For instance, the dominant tenor of Indian nationalism and the politico-cultural expression of religiosity that it upholds was nothing but secular and

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[25] Radhakrishnan, S. (1940) Eastern Religions and Western Thought, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 110-113

[26] Ashish Nandy (his Nelson Mandela lecture a month ago) has passionately reminded us that if we don't have a 'dialogue, democratic openness and transparency' idea of coexistence humanity would fall into the mobilizing logic of hate instead of love and compassion. He said, 'mobilising hate has become a game in large parts of the world and there are states which live in a haze of hate". He added to it that instead of the old saying that wars make nations, it is hate makes nations now. There are convivial, free or non-authoritarianism states, he says, which allow people to have personal ideologies. Authoritarian states on the other hand, are suspicious, narcissistic and afraid of dissent and rebellion''. https://theprint.in/feature/around-town/ /1682551

[27] Though the *"Hindu Dharma'' assertive understanding* of nationalism and its cultural endorsement tried to incorporate the ideas of Vedanta and the Vedantic experiential understanding of transcendental unity and oneness of human kind, it is argued against such a stance that instead of the Vedantic experiential understanding of unity and humanity, what it promoted was / is the Brahminical, ritualistic and caste hierarchical sanctions of Dharma.

secularism in India was nothing but ethical religiosity or in the language of Gandhi *Sarvadharma Samabhava*[28], in the context of religious place and role in democracy. Perhaps, we can see the semblance of *Sarvadharma Samabhava* in the socio-philosophical or religious projects of Rajaram Mohun Roy, Sree Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda, Keshab Chandra Sen, Brahma Bandho Upadyaya, Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi and Sri Narayana Guru, though they share diversified ethico -religious philosophies.

The above unique intercultural and dialogical understanding of different religious traditions as the core of ethical religiosity and democracy was the defining moment of nationalism and the nation-state in India. In Gandhi and Ambedkar, however, the concept of religion that animates Indian independence and democracy becomes more poised, concrete and the result of an intimate praxeological idea of nation, democracy and freedom. Gandhi and Ambedkar, both stood the ground of religion for defining their concepts of peace, not politics. They fought within or inside their own tradition. It is easy to create an ideologically safe secular space and play safely. The traditions which you want to critique will remain safely away from your interventions. But Gandhi and Ambedkar played inside the religious ideologies, perhaps quite dangerously, for which Gandhi had to pay the price for it. As historian Irfan Habib observes that Gandhi could stand against untouchability which was a natural order of the Hindu tradition, and could make to understand the majority of Hindus that it was an evil. It is interesting to note here what D.R Nagaraj shares with us. He writes, 'Untouchability was of the central concerns of Gandhiji. In all historical fairness it must be admitted that it was Bapu who made untouchability one of the crucial questions of Indian Politics, although there were many yogis and movements before him in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries whose contribution require a deeper grasp and analysis…Gandhiji's take off point was that the problem of untouchability was a problem of the self, in this case the collective Hindu self. He had transformed the notion of the Individual self and the necessity of clearing the cobwebs of caste ego was shifted to the level of the larger notion of the collective self (Nagraj 2006, pp. 361-368). Ambedkar's challenging of Brahmanical Hinduism and rediscovering Buddhism as Neo-Buddhism of proactive towards human equality and fraternity is of equal impact in determining the cosmopolitan core of ethically constituted religiosity.

Ethical Religiosity as an Enlarged Concept Nationality

Ethical religiosity as the substratum of nationalism ratifies a deep level understanding of freedom as an overarching value and reclaim the nation state in a radically humanitarian fashion. The nation-state was a major integrating and dominating imagery, along with industrialization, modernity, technologization of the civilization. But it became an exclusionary principle mainly and marginalized many communities. The major critics of nationalism were aware of such an inner dynamic of peripheralization of the nation state and seriously upheld the critique of nationalism. They highlighted the mechanism/evolute of the nation state as lesser than humanity[29]. Tagore declared that nationalism was the last resort/refuge of the coward. The legitimation crisis the nation state and the liberal democratic governmentality it faced and continues to face the world over was well predicted by them.

As Ramachandra Guha has pointed out in commenting on Denis Dalton's work *Indian Ideas of Freedom*, "the key thesis of this book is that Indian ideas of freedom drew on indigenous traditions of thought, especially religious thought. Dalton argues that these thinkers all saw the quest for freedom as both individual and political; as a deeply personal search for spiritual liberation that was linked to and, indeed, preceded the transformation of society as a whole. Their ideas of freedom are intimately connected with the ethical dimension of public life and non-violence Guha 2023). The key figures in the book are Vivekananda, Tagore, Aurobindo, Gandhi in the first group and the later added Ambedkar, MN Roy (Radical Humanism) and Jayaprakash Narayan (Total Revolution). The Ideal of freedom of all the above great thinkers and sages of India are not just ideas of the past. They are living with us as conceptual and ethical apparatus given to us for the present and powerful enough to travel to the future for the future of humanity.

Ethical Religiosity as an Enlarged Concept of Social Freedom

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[28] As quoted in The Making of Indian Secularism: Law Empire and Christianity, according to "Shabnum Tejani's opinion, secularism was the hall mark Political Nationalism which argued for a composite nationalism. She says that secularism was not just an ideology of nationalism. It was nationalism itself, whose constant Other was and remained the quest political recognition of religious difference". Chatterjee, Nandini, The Making of Indian Secularism: Law Empire and Christianity, Palgrave MacMillan, New York. 2011. 4. … I would emphatically add and argue along with the above observation that the Indian Secularism is fully grown when it identifies itself with ethical religiosity and it is most emphatically expressed in Gandhi's idea of *Sarva Dharma Samabhava.*

[29] All the great minds of the early twentieth Century like Tagore, Bernard Shaw, Charlie Chaplin, Bertrand Russel harshly criticized and rejected nationalism.

As Dalton observes, "According to Vivekananda, the spiritual renewal of the people is not possible without the social, economic and political regeneration of the country. Freedom in all matters, i.e., advance towards Mukti, is the worthiest gain of man. To advance oneself towards freedom, physical, mental and spiritual, and help others to do so, is the supreme prize of man. The first step of growth, Swamiji reminded, was freedom of both the soul and body" (Dalton 2023, pp. 179-180). Swami Vivekananda's dissensus is rooted in the practical Vedanta that he inherited from his Guru Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Radically disagreeing from the religious conservatives and orthodoxies, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa observed that the people forget the fact that 'Religion is just a path to God'. The reason for communal disharmony is that the people belonging to different religions view the path as the aim. Swami Vivekananda who internalized his divine Master, therefore, vehemently criticized untouchability, caste dominance, theocratic authority, and religious oppression. Once he declared that I wanted to see you as atheists firmly rooted in reason, not superstitious fools.

According to Swami Vivekananda, the spiritual renewal of the people is not possible without the social, economic and political regeneration of the country. He said, 'When people ask for food, we give them and treat them with religion'. It is absurd to teach the principles of religion the people who are in poverty. The first step of growth, Swamiji reminded, was freedom of both the soul and body.

The later Yogi Aurobindo's pronouncements of nationalism and the nation state are rooted in a larger concept of humanity. He says, 'Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of freedom; it will reach its perfection when, man having learned to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-man, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty"(Dalton 2023, p. 258). And Aurobindo continues, 'By liberty we mean the freedom to obey the law of our being' (Dalton 2023, p. 223).

When it comes to Tagore the concept of Freedom becomes more cosmopolitan in nature. Tagore enlightens us ardently that the real problem in India is not political. It is social. This is a condition not only prevailing in India, but among all nations. Therefore, political freedom does not give anyone freedom when our minds are not free. He writes, "A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose. Society as such has no ulterior purpose. It is an end in itself. It is a spontaneous self-expression of man as a social being. It is a natural regulation of human relationships, so that men can develop ideals of life in co-operation with one another. It has also a political side, but this is only for a special purpose. It , is for self-preservation. It is merely the side of power, not of human ideals" (Tagore 1918, p. 9). Nationalism is worshipping the Nation as God and he was horrified by the crimes committed by modern nation-states. Tagore's doctrine of universal humanity or humanism was to spread spiritual values among people and create a new world culture out of multicultural reality and diversity, and tolerance. When Gandhi took care of the political sector by essentially being and representing the everyman, Tagore served the spiritual and creative side of his countrymen, and possibly the whole world. Tagore declared that nationalism is the last resort of a coward and the last glorious and magnanimous goal of human beings is not nation state or patriotism, it is humanity and humanness. Beyond the narrow domestic walls, that is the prayer that the poet raises in his magnum opus Gitanjali.

As Amartya Sen, Nobel laureate says, "It is in the sovereignty of reasoning -- fearless reasoning in freedom -- that we can find Rabindranath Tagore's lasting voice". That is the reason why Tagore's 'freedom statement' becomes one of the all-time manifestos of freedom. Tagore writes:

Freedom from fear is the freedom
I claim for you my motherland!
Freedom from the burden of the ages, bending your head,
breaking your back, blinding your eyes to the beckoning call of the future;
Freedom from the shackles of slumber wherewith
you fasten yourself in night's stillness,
mistrusting the star that speaks of truth's adventurous paths;
freedom from the anarchy of destiny
whole sails are weakly yielded to the blind uncertain winds,
and the helm to a hand ever rigid and cold as death.
Freedom from the insult of dwelling in a puppet's world,
where movements are started through brainless wires,
repeated through mindless habits,
where figures wait with patience and obedience for the

master   of   show,
to be stirred into a mimicry of life.

Gandhi more than anybody else welds Indian Nationalism with freedom and the freedom to stand for the freedom, which is the main message of his defining principle of democracy and coexistence, that is, Ahimsa – non-violence. Gandhi says, 'It [Hind Swaraj] teaches the gospel of love in the place of that of hate. It replaces violence with self-sacrifice. It pits soul-force against brute force'[30]. 'Swaraj of a people,' Gandhi affirmed, 'means the sum total of the swaraj (self-rule) of individuals' (Dalton 2023, p.259). He argued that 'Civil Liberty consistent with the observance of non-violence is the first step towards swaraj' (Dalton 2023, p.250). Therefore, Gandhi integrates quite divinely the ethical religiosity with democracy and nationalism. As Rajeev Bhargava says, Given the inescapability of deep religious diversity, he argued, 'The need of the moment is not one religion for the whole of human kind, but mutual respect, equal regard and tolerance of the devotees of different religions. This moral–practical attitude of equal regard for all religions is entailed by an epistemic grasp of the deeper, more fundamental unity of all religions. 'The soul of religion is one, but encased in a multitude of forms. Wise men will ignore the outward crust and see the same soul living under a variety of crusts' (Bhargava 2022, p. 160).

Ambedkar's idea of nationalism, patriotism and democracy was based on a unique cosmopolitanism of the Constitution. He makes an unequivocal statement about freedom, "My ideal would be a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. He says this is not derived from ideologies but from the Buddhist religious tradition" (Dalton 2023, p.356). His creation of neo-Buddhism is to recreate India, as Ananaya Vajpeyi says 'Ambedkar does not simply appropriate the ancient religion of Buddhism of purposes of strengthening the political identity and self-respect of a modern community, the Untouchables… for Ambedkar , dukkha is not individual suffering rooted in Karma but rather social suffering, and it springs from the caste. The thread that keeps Ambedkar tied to India is his abiding commitment to solving the mystery of Duhkha, the suffering of the people-not just his people, the Untouchables, but all people, the people of India" (Vajpeyi 2012, p. 211). Consequently, Ambedkar argues for the idea of constitutional morality that which is rooted in the other-oriented ethical religiosity of (Neo) Buddhism and defines the Indian Constitution most importantly.

Concluding Observations

If we come to the more contemporary global thinkers like Hannah Arendt's main argument is that freedom is the human capacity to begin and create something new by virtue of our natality (the fact that we are born into the world). She viewed freedom as action among the plurality of others within the public sphere: It is the political or democratic freedom that creates a community, nation and finally humanity. Similarly, Habermas would enlighten us that the non-hierarchical, participatory virtues/ideals as origins of democracy are always suggestive of the constructive logical links that establish between freedom, dialogue, peace and justice. Freedom is moderated and radicalized at the same time, as choice, autonomy and participation in democracy. He has the following moral intuition to share with us in this regard, "Justice is …that instruct(s) us on how best to behave in situations where it is in our power to counteract the extreme vulnerability of others by being thoughtful and considerate" (Habermas 1992, p. 199).

Indian nationalism as an anti-colonial movement primarily imbibes, as we have seen above, the ideas of justice, freedom, equality and dialogue through a unique principle of ethical religiosity which highlights an Indian version of secularism (*Sarva Dharma Samabhava*) and democracy. It also installed in its Sanctum Sanctorum a demanding dissent against the colonial values and virtues and simultaneously a magnanimous dialogue with universal sources of religiosity and ethical principles. While Swami Vivekananda's opposition was against the tyranny of the impotent religious conservatism, Gandhiji's dissent was against both the colonial rule and the soulless individualistic liberal modernity and its values. Nehru rebelled against all kinds of ideological totalitarianism and authoritarianism. Ambedkar expressed his deep disagreements against the degenerated and dehumanizing pitfalls and ritualism of the world religions, like untouchability and casteism, which was prevalent particularly in some forms of the Hindu Religiosity. He was also nonconforming to the political forms of democracy without social and economic equality.

The discussion in the paper as it has reached its conclusive insights, pronounces that the cosmic and cultural/civilizational source of dissent and dialogue, that is pre-understood in the ethical religiosity as secularism/*Sarva Dharma Samabhava,* has its source and repository in the deep compassion, *Maha Karuna* in the language of Buddhism, and all-embracing love (*Maitri*), love for the neighbour and 'the self-giving out' fellowship of Jesus of Nazareth, which perhaps, all moral geniuses of the Axial age have expressed. Sree Narayana Guru, a great Neo- Advaitin, social reformer and anti-caste movement, one of the greatest sources of Kerala Renaissance and Enlightenment, known for his ideas of equality and fraternity, the oneness of religious

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[30] Young India, 26th Jan, 1921

principles and God, secular spirituality, exemplarily evokes this idea and source in his poem, ' Ten Verses on Compassion'[31], .

The firs and the second verses tell us,

Oh Sea of Mercy! Grant us such Compassion that even to an ant no harm be caused and also (grant) within us a mind which never wanders away from your Divine Form.

By kindliness comes joy.
To a heart devoid of love comes all sorrows.
Darkness (of heart) expels love and is the core of sorrow and seed to everything (all sufferings)

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Hinduness as *Ekanishtata* (One-Centredness):
Brahmabandhab Upadhyay's Vision of Hindu Nationalism as Cultural Pluralism
Augustine Pamplany

Introduction
This paper looks at the holistic view of nationalism rooted in the Hindu identity of One-centredness as advocated by the Bengali scholar Brahmabandhab Upadhyay. The paper highlights the pluralistic nationalism of India with its religious rootedness in Hinduism. The positive rapprochement between Hindu rootedness and social and religious pluralism is achieved by Upadhyay in his contentious view of caste system and the Hindu-Christian Dialogue. After explaining the notion of *Ekanishtata*, the paper tries to see how Upadhyay goes to question the regular criticism of caste system which according to him is an offshoot of the organic Hinduism. It further presents his views Hindu Catholicism as a model for a pluralistic Hindu nationalism.

The term cultural pluralism here is coined as an implication of Upadhyay's vision of One-centredness – the pillar of Hindu's Hinduness. The paper argues that despite the strong religious Hindu identity of the Indian nationalism advocated by Upadhyay, this should not be conflated with the present-day parochial and monolithic view of religion and culture advocated by certain political and ideological outfits. Nor is his defence of caste system to be viewed as an endorsement of the rigid and exploitative aberrations of the organic vision of the caste. Revisiting Upadhyay in the present day would imply the restoration of the pristine universal and pluralistic ideals of Hinduism championed by Upadhyay.

Brahmabandhab Upadhyay – A Short Biographical Sketch
Brahmabandhab Upadhyay was an influential Indian theologian, journalist, and freedom fighter. His original name was Bhavanicharan Bandyopadhyaya. He is considered to be a "a complicated, rebellious, and seemingly

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[31] Anukampa Dashakam (Ten verses on Compassion) By Sree Narayana Guru | (wordpress.com)

contradictory man in a turbulent period of colonial Bengali history."[32] The twists and turns of his personal life and the tumultuous change of convictions and ideas bestowed such sort of attributes to him.

Brahmabandhab Upadhyay was born on December 19, 1861, in a Hindu Brahmin family in the village of Kamlapur, near Kolkata, in present-day West Bengal, India. Due to his father's profession, which required frequent relocations, Bhavanicharan attended several English schools that were flourishing in India at the time. During his schooling, he encountered Jesus Christ and the Bible, but his primary interest remained firmly rooted in India's traditional culture. He made a conscious effort to acquire a strong foundation in Sanskrit, recognizing its significance for his future. Upadhyay initially pursued a traditional Hindu education and some reports say he also served as a priest in a temple.

He formed the conviction to abandon education and marriage at the age of seventeen. It was to commit himself to the freedom struggle of India. In Calcutta, Upadhyay became friends with Swami Vivekananda, and Keshab Chandra Sen, a prominent figure in the Brahma Samaj. Sen was pursuing the idea of an "Indian Church" based on Hindu Unitarianism and Vaishnava devotionalism, centered around the concept of the "Asiatic Christ" rather than the foreign Church's Christ.[33] This movement was both religiously syncretic and socially reformist, emphasizing equality. He was passionately attached to the teachings of Kesabcandra Sen. Sen believed in a sort of devotional theism which led Upadhyay to develop a personal passion and fervent love for Jesus Christ.

As he was baptized to Catholicism, he was keen to put on the saffron garment of the Hindy saints. He adopted name Brahmabandhab which is the Bengali version of Theophilus, meaning friend of God. Upadhyay was the simplification of his original name, meaning teacher. He was drawn to Catholicism by the universality implied in its name. He soon incorporated the classic "Catholic" distinction between natural and supernatural truths and the natural and supernatural order into his evolving theology of religions.[34]

During the initial days of his life as Catholic, he had been critical of the ideas of karma, polytheism and rebirth. Since 1987 his ideas and convictions capsized and he began to use the Hindu concepts which he had repudiated earlier. He used them to build bridges between Hinduism and Catholicism. He considered Advaita Vedanta to be the platform for the intersection between Catholicism and Hinduism. He even considered Vedanta far superior to neo-Thomism.[35]

Inspired by Swami Vivekananda, Brahmabandhab eventually returned to Hinduism and, in 1901. He ventured to England to deliver a series of lectures on Hinduism with the aim of promoting Vedanta in the Western world. In addition, he established the Sarasvata-Ayatana in Calcutta, following the Vedic tradition. He played an active role in supporting Rabindranath's vision of a Brahmavidyalaya and played a crucial role in its early organization. However, his strong political convictions eventually led him away from purely educational pursuits, and he parted ways with the school approximately a year after its inception.

Upadhyay could rightfully claim to be a Hindu Catholic, a title that his uncle had already embraced. "We are Hindu so far as our physical and mental constitution is concerned; but with regard to our mind and souls we are Catholic. We are Hindu Catholic."[36] Or in the other formulations, "Hindu by birth, Catholic by rebirth; Hindu by race and culture, Catholic by faith" It is said that he died in 1908 by uttering 'Oh, Thakur!' – Christian name for God in Bengali.

Upadhyay served as an editor for various publications during different periods of his life. From January 1894 to March 1899, he edited *Sophia*, a monthly Catholic Journal. He then took charge of *Sophia* again from June 16, 1900, to December 8, 1900, but this time as a weekly paper. Following that, he worked on *The Twentieth Century* from January 1901 to December 1901, a monthly magazine. These writings reflected his newfound religious

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[32] Rachel Fell McDermott, "Brahmabandhab Upadhyay: The Life and Thought of a Revolutionary," *Journal of the American Oriental Society; Ann Arbor,* Vol. 123, Iss. 1 (Jan-Mar 2003), pp. 226-228.
[33] Cf., G. Gispert-Sauch, Brahmabandhab Upadhyay (1861-1907) - Theologian of Inculturation. https://christianmusicologicalsocietyofindia.com/personalities/brahmabandhab-upadhyay. Last accessed Sept. 18, 2023.
[34] Cf., G. Gispert Sauch.
[35] Cf., G. Gispert Sauch.
[36] Julius Lipner and Gispert-Sauch, Eds, *The Writings of Brahmabandhab Upadhyay*, Vol. II (Bangalore: The United Theological College, 2002).

beliefs. However, Upadhyay faced significant discouragement from church authorities, which nearly led him to cease his theological writings. Consequently, he became deeply involved in the nationalist movement in Bengal.

He authored numerous theological works and articles, often exploring the intersection of Indian spirituality and Christianity. His writings sought to bridge the gap between Catholicism and Indian religious thought, emphasizing the compatibility of Christian faith with Indian culture and spirituality.

Less discussed is his contributions to the nationalize movement. Inspired by the freedom movement in India, Upadhyay became actively involved in the nationalist movement, particularly in Bengal. He used his journalistic skills to promote the cause of Indian independence and wrote extensively on political and social issues. In 1904, he founded the Bengali daily newspaper *Sandhya* and later started the Bengali weekly *Swaraj* in 1907, both of which played a significant role in advancing nationalist sentiments. For his involvement in the nationalist movement, in September 1907, he was arrested by the British colonial authorities. He passed away at the age of 45 one month after his imprisonment due to the hostile conditions during imprisonment.

Brahmabandhab Upadhyay is remembered for his contributions to the nationalist movement, Indian Christian theology and his efforts to promote interfaith dialogue. His Upadhyay's life and work continue to inspire those interested in the intersection of religion, spirituality, and social justice in India's history.

Ekanishtata (One-Centredness) – The Conceptual Ground of the Nationalist Ideology

As discussed above, during 1901 to 1907 Upadhyay underwent a shift towards Hindu nationalism or cultural nationalism. This transition into what could be termed as the Hindu nationalist phase of Brahmabandhab is evident from his writings in *Bangadarsan*, commencing in the middle of 1901.[37] A significant milestone in Upadhyay's embrace of Hindu nationalism is the launch of *Sandhya* in December 1904. As Sumit Sarkar has noted, the pages of Sandhya often intertwine radical politics with assertive Hinduism.[38] During this period, Upadhyay's interest in Catholicism gradually takes a backseat. Despite facing opposition from the Catholic hierarchy, Upadhyay continues to identify as a Catholic, but he increasingly distances himself from theological disputes.

Numerous articles and speeches from this period shed light on Upadhyay's evolving perspective on Hinduism. One of the most lucid expressions of Upadhyay's comprehension of Hinduism can be located in a significant essay titled "One-centredness of the Hindu Race," penned in 1901. In this essay, which appeared in *Bangadarsan*, he delineates the concept of 'Hinduness' or, as he terms it in Bengali, "Hindutva" among Hindus. The importance of this article lies in his attempt to consolidate his earlier writings on Hinduism and to bring into focus the essence of 'Hinduness' or Hindutva.[39] Lipner comments that the theme of this article is Hindu's preoccupation with the unity in diversity. Broadly understood, it tackles the problem of one and many. Lipner observes that this is a favorite theme of the later Upadhyay as he believed that India's nationhood is to be realized amidst its religious, political, and social diversity.[40]

Upadhyay does not regard any particular basis or particular religious belief upon which Hindu's Hinduness can be founded. In this essay, he continues to highlight several examples of the radical differences and even contradictory teaching in the Hindu tradition by which no particular belief system can be identified as the foundation of Hindu's Hinduness. This is true with regard to the diversity of language too. His emphasis on diversity as foundational to culture and nationality is evident as he cites Mahabharata, "the Vedas are varied, this smritis are varied: he is not a sage, whose belief is not (similarly) varied."[41]

He moves on to identify the Hinduness with the One-centred thinking that had been prevalent from the Vedic times. In the Vedic times, when the sacrificial fire consumes the oblation, the priest would proclaim, "I extol Agni, the priest!" Or when the mighty wins tosses waters of river Indus, they would pray, "O Vayu be favourable to us." It shows that the sages were able to see an invisible Golden Germ within the womb of every natural phenomenon. The seers always tended to find the agent of the phenomena within that, not a first a cause external to it as in the Western tradition. This tendency of the Hindu thinking, he calls as ekanishtata, or, One-centred thinking.

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[37] V. Sebastian, "Constructions of National Space: Tracing the Development of Upadhyay's Nationalist Thought," Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies, Jan-June 2008 (11/1), 38-55. In this essay, Dr Sebastian makes a scholarly analysis of the historical evolution of the nationalist vision of Upadhyay in four phases. My discussion of the caste system according to Upadhyay and his contributions to the interface between Hinduism and Catholicism relies significantly on Sebatian.

[38] Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947* (Madras: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 113-14.

[39] V. Sebastian, p. 49.

[40] Cf., Lipner, tr., Upadhyay 1981, footnote no. 2.

[41] Upadhyay 1981, pp. 416-417.

"Unconcerned with action and the result of action, the seers would behold in the womb of the visible object the completely invisible Golden Germ (Hiranyagarbha). This insight is called one-centredness…. The relation of non-difference between Agent and effect, the appearance in reflecting creation of a reflective Creator, the deceptive manifoldness of the One without a second, have (all) nourished the one-pointed intuitive vision of the seers."[42]

According to Upadhyay, *ekanishtata* (one-centredness) is the essence of the Hindu's Hinduness. "The tendency to one-centred thinking, the seeing into the thinghood of a thing (*bastur bastutvadarshan*), the experience of ultimate non-difference between Agent and effect, the knowledge of the deceptiveness (*mayikata*) of multiplicity, comprise the Hindu's Hinduness."[43]

In this essay, Upadhyay clearly distinguishes between the Indian and the Wester epistemologies for the pursuit after truth. Be it the Western rationalistic or scientific or the Eastern mystical or spiritual, the final outcome is an indescribable sense of wonder and silence at the face of a deep reality through the beautiful imageries of fish and the birds:

> "Two birds once lived in the same nest. One spreading its wings rose up high towards the expanseless (heavens). Leaving cloud and sky behind, it pierced the planet-and-star bedecked firmament and reached the Milky Way. Immersed in the depths of the bliss in this directionless void, it said: Profound, unalloyed bliss is founded in boundless, highest space. And the other bird traversed the compass-points, north, south, east and west, in search of the infinite's abode. How much beauty, how much correlation (*sambandha*), how much cause-and-effect-begotten splendour, did it see. Bemused at the vision of Nature's (*prakriti*) grace, it concluded: The infinite's indivisibility reposes in synthesis (*samanvaya*), on conjunction in union (*sangam*). The first (searcher) is the *Aryan* seer, the second the Ionian or Greek observer.
>
> Two fish made a sacred journey to determine the true nature (*svarup*) of the ocean. One dived deep, and penetrated from depth to depth. Finally, it came to the bottomless bottom and fell silent. The other gradually became obsessed with desire for catching sight of shore. Making light of the buffets of heaving swells with a strength that countered fierce currents, it swam about till it got lost in the boundless main. Bewildered, it came to the conclusion that the infinite lacked boundaries. The first is the oriental, the Hindu; the second the westerner, the German."[44]

He wants every Indian to take delight in its rich heritage and regrets that most Indians do no learn Indian heritage.

> "Our students, our historians, can accurately describe the battles of Marathon and Salamis and the exploits of the Greeks in their encounter with the Persians, but they have scarcely heard of the chivalrous deeds of Puru when he fought against the great Alexander. They know how the women of Carthage cut their hair for the purpose of supplying cordage for warships, but they do not know how Rajput women lighted up a funeral pyre and jumped into it, one by one, cheerfully and heroically, to save themselves from being violated by the Mlecchas. They will tell you how the Greeks died to a man in the pass of Thermopylae, but they are totally ignorant o f a similar incident in the siege of Chitor."[45]

His preoccupation with the preservation of the racial identity is so profound that nearly every piece authored by Brahmabandhab during this period revolves around the theme of Hindu identity and the imperative of 'racial self-preservation.'[46] According to Sumit Sarkar, Rabindranath Tagore, along with Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh, faced criticism and opposition from Brahmabandhab Upadhyay during this time, "for not being sufficiently enthusiastic over the amalgamation of politics with Hindu revivalism, and for his Universalist leanings which were felt to have a demoralizing effect."[47]

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[42] Upadhyay 1981, pp. 418-419.

[43] Brahmabandhab Upadhyay, "The One-Centredness of the Hindu Race," in J. J. Lipner, tr., *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflections,* 51 (1981), p. 421.

[44] Upadhyay, 1981, pp. 415-416.

[45] B. Upadhyay, "National Greatness," Sophia Monthly, August, 1896.

[46] V. Sebastian, p. 27

[47] B. Upadhyay, "Swadeshbhakti o biswaprem," Swaraj, 15 Baisakh 1314 (1904). Cf., Sumit Sarkar, The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 19031908, p. 61.

In July 1901, Upadhyay had expressed his distress regarding the loss of individual identity and the decline of what he referred to as the 'spirit of masculinity' due to colonialism.[48] In Brahmabandhab's interpretation, the adoption of Western education and cultural influences by Indians is accountable for undermining the traditional social structure. To exacerbate matters, Indian social reformers and open-minded individuals are challenging the fundamental underpinnings and legitimacy of the Hindu caste system. From Upadhyay's perspective, these two factors pose a severe threat to the survival of Hindu society itself.[49]

At the heart of constructing the national identity within the framework of nationalism lies the declaration of India's distinctiveness compared to other nations and cultures. The articulation of these distinctions involves a dual process of shaping both identity and dissimilarity. On one side, these distinctions delineate the unique character of India's national domain in contrast to other national territories.[50] On the other side, this strategy of differentiation played a central role in forging a collective identity within most nationalist narratives.

Upadhyay laments that orientalists presented an image of India as fundamentally unlike the West, and this image held significant importance in reconstructing the national identity in Indian nationalist discourse. The works of Max Muller, in particular, portrayed India as a land steeped in profound spirituality, embodying a primordial community whose very existence implied a subtle critique of the West, which represented the cultural 'other' in Europe. The concept of a spiritually-oriented India juxtaposed with a materialistically-driven West became an integral component of the nationalist imagination. The West, seen as materialistic, was also perceived as triumphant, robust, and masculine, while India, despite its spiritual superiority over the West, was viewed as frail, passive, and lacking in organization.[51]

Upadhyay distinguished the materialistic West with the 'spiritual' tradition of India.[52] He was extremely critical of the British attitude of conquest. "What's the point of conquering Nature for one's use, of enslaving her, if without her one loses one's peace of mind? Such victory - hardly victory, but defeat-is really to acknowledge abject servitude." Upadhyay points out the futility of such conquest and victory: " ...If, having shed blood through a rain of cannon balls, I amass gold from the very depth of the desert, and if I use that gold in terrible strife for my own ends, and if that gold then causes conflict, and I lose it, and suffer the gall of that loss, where is the difference between slavery and human prowess?"[53] While in Oxford, he wrote: "To tell the truth, I don't like the vain display of English civilization one little bit. All this manhandling of Nature is getting on my nerves."[54] Challenging the negative vision of nature of the West, Upadhyay hails the Indian vision: "He is the noblest of men for the Hindu who, having based himself on the most sublime, boundless, all-encompassing Unity, then wanders freely as a lord amidst the trifling manifestations of plurality. Nature serves such a one, no doubt, yet he himself is not caught up in Nature's ties."[55]

Beneath these comparisons lies the attempt to discern the distinct aspects of two contrasting perspectives held by the rulers and the ruled. According to Upadhyay's interpretation, the Englishman, representing the rulers, is entangled in the web of attachment and worldly obligations.[56] In contrast, the Hindu, representing the ruled, transcends such worldly attachments and experiences a sense of freedom. Through a clever reversal of preferences and values, Upadhyay demonstrates, on one hand, that despite being governed by the English, the Hindu possesses the potential for freedom due to their approach to reality. On the other hand, the English, as the rulers, are ensnared

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[48] B. Upadhyay, "Our Poverty," *The Twentieth Century,* 31 July, 1901.

[49] V. Sebastian, p. 47.

[50] Manu Goswami, *Producing India* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), p. 15.

[51] Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modem India* (Princeton University Press, 1999. Reprint, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004) p. 68.

[52] Cf., Julius Lipner and George Gispert-Sauch, Eds, *TWBU,* Vol. II (Bangalore: The United Theological College, 2002) p. 510.

[53] B. Upadhyay, "Letter From a Sannyasi Staying in England," 16 January, 1903. Lipner and Gispert-Sauch, Eds, *TWBU*, Vol. II, p. 511.

[54] B. Upadhyay, "Letter from a Sannyasi Staying in England," letter No. 6, Oxford, 6 March, 1903. Lipner and Gispert-Sauch, Eds, *TWBU*, Vol. II, p. 513.

[55] B. Upadhyay, "Letter From a Sannyasi Staying in England," Letter No. 5, Oxford, 16 January, 1903. J. Lipner and Gispert-Sauch, Eds, *TWBU,* Vol. II, p. 511.

[56] V. Sebastian, p. 50.

in a form of enslavement. Their desire for conquest, governance, and wealth accumulation constitutes their bondage. In Upadhyay's perspective, the Hindu worldview surpasses that of the English in its superiority.[57]

Upadhyay's cultural nationalism was more and more vociferous towards the final months of his life. According to his friend and colleague Animananda, "Upadhyay's Swadeshi was altogether different. He was the first man in our political history to suggest complete independence for India."[58] His nationalism even tended towards advocating violence and extremism. He wrote in *Sandhya*, "Know that the Hindu never dies, neither of a bullet, nor of decease and pain. A few worms like you and me may indeed die, but the Hindu race will not die out and cannot die out…"[59] The exhortation he gave on the eve of the Swadeshi movement is a striking example of his cultural nationalism: "In all that you hear, in all that you learn, in all that you do, remain a Hindu, remain a Bengali."[60]

Organic Hinduism and Caste System

Given Upadhyay's insights about the true spiritual nature of Hindu's Hinduness and One-centredness, he declined to subscribe to any views that would alter the traditional Indian social fabric.[61] This led him to his contentious defense of the caste system. "The caste system is a natural evolution of the social instinct. Far-sighted, learned men formulated it in consonance with the genius of the people. The greatness of the Hindu race was achieved largely through the regulating influence of caste. It was caste that preserved the Hindus from being transformed into hybrids of the Semitic stock. It is this social polity which still checks mammon-worship on the European scale."[62]

For him, Hindu society is an organic one with natural differences and distinctions. "Hindu society is an organism. It has its unity as well as its diversity, though the unity has been greatly disturbed by disintegrating influences consequent upon too much emphasis laid upon the principle of differentiation. The caste system which diversifies the principle of Hindu unity should be restored to its original salutary order of divisions."[63] This conviction led him to criticize certain social reformers of India who wanted to uproot the caste system. He writes,

> "Some of our Bengal reformers are uncontrollable. They will not rest until they see all old landmarks which go to constitute social variety clean washed off. They are seized with a sickly, sentimental idea of brotherhood. They have been tutored by certain European freelances that not to have uniform fellowship with anybody and everybody is unjust, immoral. They are chips of socialists. Social differences and divisions there must be."[64]

An essential aspect of his approach to Hinduism was his growing commitment to fortify Hindu identity. Somehow, Upadhyay was convinced that the revival of culture was a prerequisite for the potential revitalization of the nation.

Towards Hindu-Christian Interface

Another important facet of Upadhyay's expression of Hindu identity is related to his contributions to the dialogue between Hinduism and Catholicism. During 1897 to 1900, he actively participated in the establishment of a Catholic ashram located alongside the Narmada River. His primary objective was to remove European influences from Christianity in India.[65] During this period, Upadhyay was also deeply engaged in seeking theological and philosophical concepts that could effectively convey Catholic doctrines within the Hindu context. One of the most significant shifts in Upadhyay's approach to Hinduism during this phase was his embrace of Vedanta, a philosophy

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[57] Sebastian, pp. 50-51.

[58] B. Animananda, *The Blade*, p. 136.

[59] B. Upadhyay, *Sandhya*, 11 January 1907. Cf., Animananda, *The Blade*, p. 139.

[60] B. Upadhyay, *Sandhya*, November, 1904. Cf., Animananda, *The Blade*, p .131.

[61] V. Sebastian, p. 47.

[62] B. Upadhyay, "Question and Answers: Caste," in *Sophia*-Weekly, 15 September, 1900.

[63] B. Upadhyay, "Notes: Caste," in *Sophia*-Weekly, 27 October, 1900.

[64] B. Upadhyay, "Notes: Caste," in *Sophia*-Weekly, 27 October, 1900.

[65] V. Sebastian, p. 44.

he had previously criticized. Now, he viewed Vedanta as a suitable framework for conveying Catholic teachings. He believed that, just as Aristotelian philosophy had influenced Christian thought in the West, Hindu philosophy could play a similar role in shaping Christian thinking in India.[66]

During this period, Upadhyay developed the concept of the 'Hindu-Catholic' synthesis. This represented a novel form of 'hyphenated identity' introduced by Upadhyay.[67] He wrote, "By birth we are Hindu and shall remain Hindu till death. But as *dvija* (twice-born) by virtue of our sacramental rebirth, we are Catholic; we are members of an indefectible communion embracing all ages and climes…. We are Hindus so far as our physical and mental constitution is concerned, but in regard to our immortal souls we are Catholic. We are Hindu Catholic."[68] Upadhyay saw no contradiction between being a Christian and being a Hindu at the same time, a conviction which he seems to have carried till his death.

Although he faced resistance from the Catholic leadership, Upadhyay's preoccupations with Indian Catholicism had not completely dissipated. In the year 1900, we find several articles by Brahmabandhab aimed at establishing Hindu frameworks to convey Catholic truths. He persisted in examining topics like Vedic Theism and Vedanta within the pages of *Sophia*.

Between 1897 and 1900, he was concerned with presenting the Christian theological views through the lens of Hinduism. His critique of the Hindu doctrine of karma was largely influenced by his Catholic background. Upadhyay considered the law of karma to be the root cause for India's decline. He laments that doctrine of karma leaves no room for 'vicarious suffering' which can be a 'noble privilege of feeling and suffering for another.' This leads humans to be an unfeeling machine.' As there is no self-transcendence in karma, the virtues of responsibility are absent in India. He observes that "The cohesive power of moral relationship which hinds human society into an organic whole, has been destroyed." The wrong interpretation of karma is "a vampire sucking the very life-blood of India."[69]

Sebastian observes that a thorough examination of Upadhyay's writings between 1900 and 1901 indicates that he was deeply disheartened by the state of the church in India.[70] The Catholic Church's leadership did not approve of Upadhyay's fusion of Hinduism and Catholicism. Papal delegate Zaleski held reservations regarding Upadhyay's conception of Catholicism. Furthermore, Zaleski was not supportive of Brahmabandhab's Ashram initiative. In 1900, *Sophia* weekly ceased publication, and in March 1902, Catholic authorities imposed a ban on Upadhyay's journal, *The Twentieth Century*. Following these ecclesiastical sanctions, he turned to writing in *Bangadarsan* with a strong focus on issues related to Hindu society, almost with a sense of determination.

Conclusion

Numerous facets of Upadhyay's nationalist ideology are subject to critique. His form of nationalism arose in response to a circumstance in which the potential loss of individual identity was becoming increasingly apparent on the political and cultural landscape. His brand of nationalism was shaped by what he saw as the pressing necessity to strengthen and protect elements of culture and identity that were on the brink of falling apart.[71]

There are real difficulties in copying Upadhyay for our times. However, it should be noted that despite the strong Hindu religious fervor in his writings, his vision of Hindu identity is far from the parochialist vision of Hinduism advocated by some fundamentalist outfits. He predicted that the extremists and fundamentalists will only bow and scratch their heads in silence if questioned of the true meaning of Hinduism.[72] The major pick up from Upadhyay on nationhood for our current times, when static standardization and lethargic uniformity are idealized, is that

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[66] V. Sebastian, p. 42.

[67] V. Sebastian, p. 42.

[68] B. Upadhyay, "Are We Hindus," *Sophia-Monthly,* July 1898.

[69] B. Upadhyay, "Degeneracy of India," Sophia Monthly, July, 1897.

[70] V. Sebastian, p. 48.

[71] V. Sebastian, pp. 51-52.

[72] Upadhyay 1981.

"devotion to the many will nourish our nationhood."[73] Upadhyay had been critical against the pompous and presumptuous claims of the superficial understanding of the Aryan superiority. He writes, "In season and out of season, the greatness of the Hindu race continues to be proclaimed, in assembly-halls that resound with applause. Orators, craving adulation, pour the honey of such expressions as 'We are Hindus,' 'We are Aryans,' 'We are the best' into the ear of their listeners. But if you ask upon what basis is founded, by which incantation preserved, are the Hindu's Hinduness (Hindutva) and the Aryan's pride, you see nothing but silent head-scratching in reply."[74] Despite the signs of decline, Upadhyay saw a bright future for Indian identity: "We believe that India will rise again and be exalted in glory. We fondly cherish the hope that the day will come when she will bloom as a hundred-petalled lotus and madden the whole world with the fragrance of her virtue. Apart from this belief and hope in her future greatness we find it hard to explain the miraculous length of her life ."[75]

Indian Nationalism and ReligiousPluralism: A Philosophical Critique

Sebastian Velassery

Democracy and nationalism are known to be the two powerful movements in the history of world civilization. The concept of nationalism goes hand in hand with certain implicit notions like the Hebrew sense of distinctiveness, Aristotelian elucidations on the nature of people, the Greek understanding of the Polis, and the ancient Roman idea of "Pro Patria Mori', (means to die for the country) which is considered as the highest good. We may also take note of the inspiration that was provided by the University students during the medieval and renaissance times which was organized in the name of the nation according to language and region. Elizabethan poetry and Shakespearean players and some of the legal writings and dramas have shown evidence of certain distinctiveness of English and its people and also its sense of nationalism. We cannot just deny that they are merely sporadic incidents of proto-nationalism nor are they the pride of a section of people from France or the Elizabethan England who had been seeking to change the idea of state into nation. The fact is that the concepts like nation, nationalism, nation-state and the like are predominantly new concepts that derived from the aftermath of the renaissance and the movements that were linked with the renaissance.

The 18th century marked the initial starting pointof the concept of the modern nation-state in the West, which is regarded to be superior to the emperor and also thought to be the guarantor of rights. The central feature of the history of Europe from 1815 to 1900 is based on the concept of the materialization of a liberal nation-state. Political liberals campaigned not only for freedomof the press but also equally excitable about legal equality and religious toleration as part of the constitution. In addition, they advocated foran elected Government with limited powers and franchises grantedto adult males based on property and wealth. Economic liberals, on the one hand, desired open market systems. In contrast,the nationalists, on the other hand, wanted language, customs, andculture to replace monarchy as the source of political unity. During the last three decades of the 19th century, the model of the nation-state fully gained its general modern meaning and thus spearheaded the setting for political activity in Western Europe.

The French Revolution accelerated the development ofthe secular nation-state and provided a systematic shape; it declaredthe "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen" (1789) that allmen are 'born and remain free and have equal rights' and that the purposeof Government is to protect these natural and inalienable rightsof 'liberty, property, security, and resistance to the opposition. (Kevin Reilly, 1992, p. 109) Thenew nation-state subordinated religion to the State. The French National Constituent Assembly confiscated lands of the Catholic Church to meet a financial crisis and unsuccessfully attempted to make the Church part of the secular State.

The preceding explanation sufficiently clarifies that nation-states are a product of a specific historical reason that got emanated fromWestern Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. Until then, the primaryloyalty of states was not to a nation but a particular ruler or dynasty or sometimes to an oligarchy, army, Church, or tribal chieftain. Indeed, these forms of Government were legitimate and stable, but their stability was impermanent. We may also consider that the Holy Roman Empire was too fragile to prevent the formation of city-states in Northern Europe.

Nationalism: Initial Indian Response

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[73] Upadhyay 1981, p. 422.
[74] Upadhyay 1981, p. 413.
[75] B. Upadhyay, "Why we are Fallen," Sophia Monthly, January, 1898.

In this context, it is significant to explore and inquire whether Indians had a concept like nationalism before the 20th century. If so, what was it like? Is it the same way as European nationalism? Can we reasonably believe that our concept of nationalism is a byproduct of Indian sentiments against British rule? Before the independence movement, can we assertively claim that we had a theory like nationalism? With these preliminary remarks, let us systematically search for the concept of nationalism in India.

When we think about the concept of nationalism concerning India and its soil, it can be argued that such a concept had its vigour in Indian soil only after the independence movement. Indian intellectual and social theorists affirmed that India as a political entity gets its assertion only through nursing a concept like Indian nationalism. The thought that India could be reborn as a political and cultural entity provided many thinkers in those times with unusual enthusiasm. In the galaxy of personalities who addressed themselves to the Indian nationhoodand credo, a prominent name is Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. He was a nationalist hero and a revolutionary who createda sense of nationalism through his writings. His inspiring and instilling sense of nationalismwas centred on identifying Hindu religious consciousness. Moreover, Bankim could couple together the idea of Mother with the Nation; thus, Bankim had used the sensitivity of Indians, if not the Bengalis in particular, toward the fruition of such a result. His claim of *Durga, Lakshmi,* and *Saraswati,* the significant Indian Goddesses, are imageries splendidly mirrored in the classic song of '*Bandemataram*', which was incorporated in his novel '*Anandmath'.*

What is philosophically and socially questionable is the use of religion for the ulterior purpose of nationalism. One is convincedto assert that Bankim was capable of instilling a structureof nationalism which has many things to do with t h e Hindu religion and Gods. Following Sujoy Mondal, I would like to affirm that Bankimchandra tried to create national sentiment in India through the Hindu religion. Before doing so, he understood that the Hindureligion needed to be reformed, regenerated, and purified. Thus, he says we must find out the essence of Hinduism, the true religion, and follow it as a national creed. We must abjurewhatever corrupt customs and traditions masquerading as religionhave penetrated Hinduism. (Mondal, Sujoy. JICPR, December 21, 2019)

Nationalism and Identity Politics

India had shaped its concept of Nationalism during the colonial period, which was predominantlyenthused by the Western forms of Nationalism. The concepts such as Nation and nationalism were used to mobilize a maximum number of people in the anti-colonial resistance. However, the type of nationalism exhibited by the colonizedcountries during the colonial period was imperial, expansionist, andoppressive. (Muthumohan, N. 2008) The ideology of colonialism preached civilizationaldifferences and hierarchy between the colonizer and the colonized.

In the Western understanding, Nation and State go together, mutually conditioning each other. It means that the ruling classes have always been involved in defining a Nation tying it up with political power. Many scholars indicate that Nationalism in countries ofAsia, Africa, and Latin America developed within the framework provided by Western colonialism. Nationalism, in some form, may be a universal phenomenon; but the association of nationalism with colonialism has its particulars pertinent to Asia, Africa, and Latin America. An essential point that I wish to make here is that Nationalism as anti-colonialism or as resistance to an outside power is not adequately rich in its content because it ignores and fails to work out the positive aspects of Nationalism. It fails to create a new political and social entity that adapts to the local environment and responds to the local structures. In this sense,anti-colonial nationalism was mostly elite without encompassing the real problems characteristic of the traditional societies. It was modern and abstract, more imaginary, and at timesutopian. In his excellent work, "Nations and Its Fragments", Partha Chatterjee studies the emergence of the imagination of a Nation under colonial and nationalist conditions. (Chatterjee, Partha, 2006). This is not to argue that anti-colonialism was superfluous, but it alone was insufficient to encompass the internal problems and their historical complexities.

Even during the early phases of t h e anti- colonial movementin India, the traditional society was informing its inherent complexities asking for a response from the leaders of Nationalist thought and movement. In the realm of religion, the minority religions like Islam, Sikhism, and other regional and folk versionscame out with their reform and revitalization programs. They did not hesitate to offer their overwhelming support to the nationalist awakening but insisted upon their recognition, particular claims, interests, and identity issues. The minority religionsof India wanted that emerging Indian nationalism encompassesthe diversity of their identities. In the realm of languages, there were clear articulations among the developed regions such as Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu. They insisted that their languagesand exacting cultures be adequately represented in the national programme. The Dravidian and Akali movements in Tamil Nadu and Punjab are the earliest articulations of variations within the Nationalist politics of the Indian subcontinent.

Similarly, various caste articulations happened in different parts of India where the subaltern masses demanded to find themselvesin the nationalist movement. No lesser the gender issues, peasantquestions, workers'

representation, etc., came up for getting depicted in the nationalist program. Unfortunately, Indian nationalism was not sensitive enough to these societal differences. It imagined its nationalism in a flat and mosaic form. The imagined nationalism was not based on concrete unity but was an abstraction of various factors such as castes, peasants, minorities, and the like. It monotonously celebrated the slogan of one Nation, one country, one State, one religion, one language, one historical source, and one culture, knowing well that India has different cultures, religions, castes, creeds, and languages which were able to alienate its people. Regrettably, Indian Nationalism favoured walking off with the majority strength. The idea of Oneness that the nationalists have asserted was utopian and abstract.

On the other hand, the differences were seen as disturbing and thus complicated its ideal of Oneness. In other words, Indian nationalism was Unitarian. Writing about the limitations of Congress Nationalism, an Ambedkarite scholar maintains, "Theoretically, congress nationalism invoked western universal abstract categories and was insensitive to the peculiarities and grim Indian social contextualities. It did not recognize, at least in the colonial age, the reality of social difference or identity and treated the Indian population homogenously". (Preetam) Even the Indian Marxists were operating with similar abstract concepts of progressively marching modes of production, classes, and class struggle insensitive to the peculiarities of Indian society. The nationalists tried to suppress the differences in language, culture, religions, castes, etc., naming them parochial. To use a Freudian phrase, "return of the repressed" has eventually become the design of "identity politics" in India.

Apart from the Western type of colonial Nationalism, there are three pan-Indian Nationalism prominent in India: they are the Congress mode of Secular Indian Nationalism, the second is Hindu Nationalism, and the third, Left Nationalism. The failures of Western modernity and Pan-Indian Nationalism during the colonial and post-colonial periods have inevitably given birth to Resistance identities among the Sikhs, Tamils, Dalits, and other unattended and marginalized groups. Following the crude colonial and Asian models, the pan-Indian nationalisms have failed to represent the rich complexity and diversity of the country and to learn from the indigenous experiences of inter-group adjustments and mutual accommodations. Regrettably, the Indian-made nationalisms were dominated by power desires and upper caste supremacy.

Colonialism, Traditions and Identity Politics

As such, identity politics emerged in countries of South Asia as a response to colonialism and colonial modernization, articulating the cultural embeddedness of the traditional social structures and democratic aspirations of the multi-cultural groups of people. I take the term cultural embeddedness from the writings of the Hungarian economist Karl Polanyi who argues that all pre-modern societies are founded on moral economies or cultural economies where the economy was not thoroughly independent. Instead, they were administered and controlled by cultural factors. In recent times, James C. Scott writes that peasant societies work and live in terms of moral economy. (Scott. James, C, 1976) Thus identity politics is the response of the traditional socio-cultural structures of Asian, African, and Latin American countries to the economic and political colonialism of the European powers over the Eastern countries. It amounts to saying that identity politics emerges where tradition and colonialism meet.

The traditional patterns of these societies have long been noticed as differing fundamentally from the Western societies and their known chronological order, such as Primitive, Tribal society, Slavery, Feudalism, and Capitalism. On the other hand, the eastern societies are identified as belonging to pre-capitalist formations, pre-modern formations, primary formations, Asiatic Mode of Production, eastern despotism, Tributary feudalism, Lineage modes, Moral economy of the Peasants, cold societies, Delayed Capitalism, Uneven Structures, etc. Without debating the merits and demerits of these concepts, one can accept the existence of some fundamental differences between the Western and Eastern types of societies. Gyanendra Pandey, a subaltern historian, informs that "Colonial India saw the persistence of many pre-capitalist economic forms and the attendant social diversities. It contained a vast range of regional conditions, cultures, and interests". (Gyanendra Pandey, 2008, p. 3) As long as scholars look at Eastern societies with the Western categories, many of the complexities of such traditional structures are unrecognized, unidentified, and ununderstood even by historians. They come to light only during the most recent periods when we get rid of Western tools.

Consequently, identity politics is an expression of the continuation of the differences in social structures and behaviour between the East and the West. The communitarian pattern is one essential feature that is said to be deep-rooted in these societies and highly expressive when challenged. The community in India can be a caste, a particular religious group, a particular culture, language, nationality or region. Depending upon the conditions trying to colonize them, these communities go for articulating them explicitly. The communities articulate themselves in language, symbols, and deeds. Articulation is the explicit construction of identity, although it existed less explicitly earlier. The growth of capitalist relations and the ideology of Liberalism encourage the making of identities. A community or group consciousness is more and more individualized or

differentiated under capitalist relations. A moment of suppression becomes the moment that transforms the communitarian pattern into a resistance identity. Resistance identity automatically will not become aggressive against the adjacent identity. After all, the resistance identity is against the state power suppressing the particular identity group. Further, depending upon the quantity and quality of the oppression involved, resistance identity transforms into a nation and a nation always keeps an eye on transforming itself into a nation-state. Thus, every kind of identity becomes responsive to political power as much as the ruling class gets formatted in the identity group.

When we debate Indian nationalism, we must look back at our history, geography, sociology, and philosophy. There is not enough historical proof to suggest that India, as we have it now, was one sovereign country in the past, neither during the pre-historic period nor even when this piece of land was part of the ancient Lemuria continent. When Alexander the Great peeped in and was blocked by King *Purushottam*, India was not one country as it is today. The Maurias, the *Guptas*, or the *Mughals* could not and did not rule the whole of India. Even the British Empire could not win over the present Goa, Diu, Daman, and Pondicherry with all its might. Until the peak of the freedom movement, the *Hindustani* was deprived of one flag and one identity, and one thinking that enveloped one idea of India. The reasons are manifold. The Indian sub-continent is vast and has different climatic and geographical conditions. It includes various people from different races, castes, creeds, complexion, and languages. We might also note that the Indian culture depicted in the classical literature of India is half of the story. There were peoples whose identities were marginalized and were not accorded the minimum dignity to be regarded as human beings is also the historical offshoot and conditions of Indian classical literature. The paradox of the Hindu social order is that while the original *Varna* idea with its four categories, as found in the *Purusha Sukta*, embodied an organic view of society where unity is emphasized through the differences, most aspects of the caste system which was the social and philosophical product of Indian *Varna* system was capable of dividing the entire society in terms of colour and have provided an oppressive philosophy of exclusion on the lines of caste and prohibition on inter-marriage and inter-dining.

The nationalist movements, to a certain extent, are rooted and conditioned by the Indian cultural milieu, which was based on the unique concept of *dharma,* which, unfortunately, was interpreted in various forms and ways, including *Varnashrama dharma,* whose byproduct is caste consciousness. Therefore, we ought to understand that the answer to the question of Indian nationalism is over something that can be described not merely in terms of religious and theological upheavals; perhaps, it does have other considerations such as castes, creed, language, and ethnicity.

Pluralistic Nationhood and Nationalism

Pluralism has been one of the outstanding features of Hinduism at the metaphysical and socio-cultural levels. At the metaphysical level, the truth was considered pluralistic. For example, it is believed that if two philosophical traditions conflict, they are considered law. The inherently pluralistic ethos of Hinduism is reflected not only in the wide range of beliefs and ideas but also in stratification, customs, traditions, and behaviour patterns. Syncretism is conspicuously evident in the survival of non-Aryan deities, rituals, and ceremonies in villages that had been the heartland of Aryan expansion. The epic tradition, both in textual and folk forms, bears the imprint of pluralism. Thus, we find several variants or versions of Ramayana. It is also to be mentioned here that Indian thinkers generally reject not only a dualistic and dialectical but a positivistic and particularistic epistemology. For them, actual knowledge is not solely the knowledge of particulars. It is a vision of the parts, the whole, and the interrelations making the parts into a whole. In the words of Vivekananda, "I am the same as any other man, as any animal…It is one body, one mind, one soul throughout". (Vivekananda, Swami, Vol. 8, p. 129) It is the recognition of the entities uniting reality and realizing their more significant importance. Inclusiveness was a criterion of knowledge in this tradition and culture. The more inclusive one's knowledge, the higher it is.

Vivekananda and Interpretive Approach to Advaita

As a spiritual tradition, Advaita Vedanta has enough resources to interpret contemporary social and political ideals, and Swami Vivekananda has discovered that truth. He understood that such an interpretive outlook alone would bring the desired transformation in our society. Such a transformation can be called social and cultural liberation from the ills of casteism and other evils in our society. One of the practical outcomes of the worldview Vivekananda contributed to Advaita is the insight of Advaita with social reality, which can provide answers to contemporary times. As a philosophical system, Advaita does not uphold caste differences as it advocates the Oneness of reality.

Vivekananda did not advocate a caste revolution or the annihilation of castes. He only preached that caste

inhumanity is against the Advaitic principle of Oneness of existence. He believed that qualitative differences among people are bound to exist in a given society, but what was wrong with the Indian caste systems were the privileges attached to thebirth of someone in a particular caste. He has advocated for the rising of the lower castes to the Brahmin caste, which cannot happen by lowering the Brahmins. Thus he writes:"The plan in India is to make everybody a Brahmin, the Brahminbeing the ideal of humanity…We have only to raise them withoutbringing down anybody". (Rambachan, A, 1994, p. 3)

Vivekananda's social thought mainly rests on Vedanta's metaphysical teachings with its ideal of solidarity anddivinity of man. His desire for its practical application among all men is rightly revealed when he says: "That society is greatest where highest truth become practical. And of society is not forthe highest truth, make it so- the sooner, the better". (Adiswarananda, Swami, 2007, p. xvii.) Vivekanandawanted the realm of Vedanta to be extended to the daily practicallife of man. Following his master's teachings, he has turned the Vedantic ideals beneficial for humanity in satisfying spiritualas well as social needs of it. The conception of the Oneness ofthe divine spirit is also the case of his ideal of social morality.Following its ideal, he recommends universal selfhood rather than universal brotherhood. This will contribute to the view that every action will affect the organic unity of human life.In such a deeply integrated cosmic life vision, every action produces a significant impact, just likea wave in the ocean. This social morality reminds us that no otherpower except spiritual solidarity can produce such a robust application of social concern because it holds that we are thesame as any other person, as any animal. The philosophy speaks of one body, one mind andone soul throughout. It suggests that interrelatednessis the political and social philosophy that unites man in his societal and cultural life.

Vivekananda advocated the reconciliation of material and spiritualdevelopment not only for the future of India but also for an ideal society anywhere in the world. However, he always maintained the superiority of the Indian ideal of spirituality over any other ideal.He said that the oriental ideal is as necessary for the progress of the human race as is the occidental. (Vivekananda, Swami, Vol. 4, p. 155) In his own words: "All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within, and if these are strong and well adjusted, societywill arrange itself accordingly". (Chakravarti, Mohi, 2012. P. 39)

Oneness, Plurality, and Socio-spiritualism

India's philosophy and culture are based upon a thesis that the metaphysical concepts of Oneness and plurality view society as an organism. A society is not a collection of individuals looselyjoined by self-interest but an integral unit like an organism of many different but interrelated and mutually dependent parts. Their interests are ameliorative and not antagonistic because they have basic needs and goals in common. Interdependence andharmony are, therefore, natural in this culture. Each part or group contributes to and receives from the whole. The good of one is tied up with the good of all. In pursuing socio-spiritualism, Vivekananda has attempted to reorient traditional Indian spiritualism to meet the demands of modern society. Instead of preaching 'otherworldliness', this new spiritualism affirms life and discourages indifference to socio-political activities. It is the alertness of the inescapable entanglement of a man with his socio-cultural and economic-political surroundings. (Chattopadhyaya, D. P. 1989, p. 625) His socio-spiritualistic approach is based on the Vedanta conception of solidarity in theUniverse, which creates the feeling of Oneness that leads to social commitment. According to Vivekananda, Vedanta applied only on the spiritual plane, has to be extended to daily practical life. The Vedanta teachings that envisage no ultimate difference between man and man promote to foster of a humanistic and peaceful social living. It states that the same Omnipresent, omniscient soul resides in every man and every animal.

We may also observe that, unlike Sankara's quietism, Vivekananda preached an assertive and vibrant Advaita that undergirds the philosophy of self-realization that has a social calling in the sense of compassion to all beings. The inspiring rhetoric of Vivekananda provided a sense of optimism and self-worth worth which was otherwise kept in the margins in India for a longtime. The modern interpretation of Advaita Vedanta in ethical termsthat we find in the life and writings of Vivekananda (and certain other contemporary scholars) is also an attempt to break withthe traditional conservatism of Sankara Vedanta's social ethics. On the other hand, Vivekananda strives to move beyond them byinterpretively appropriating the spiritual core of the scriptures andleaving behind the social rulings of the scriptures. Sankara held onto the social hierarchy of his time by ruling that only the men of the first three twice-born castes were allowed to study the scriptures. (Rambachan, Anatanad. 1994, pp. 27-29)

Reconciliation of *Advaita, Visistadvaita* and *Dvaita*

The neo-Vedantic structure of Vivekananda has accommodated the three paths of non-dualism, qualified non-dualism, and dualism. According to him, these are the different stages toward reaching the

ultimate Reality. Though he was more inclined towards non-dualism, he had no repugnance towards qualified non-dualism and dualism. (Sharma, 1991, p. 96) Following his Master, Vivekananda upholds all systems as different stages of growth to realize divine power in the human self. Vivekananda considered *Advaita* as the higher philosophical thought and believed that other than Advaita, other thoughtsand philosophies are lower than *Advaita*. The kind of philosophy thatVivekananda advocates has a universal outlook, unifying thoughtsof varying places and races with its inherent vision of universal selfhood. Thus, he advocated his firm conviction in the Oneness of life, w h i c h   r e j e c t e d   other philosophies.He realized that a human philosophy could never be confined to dualism or non-dualism. Therefore, while accepting Advaita, he refuses to stop with it; he accepts duality; but refuses to remain limited to it.For him*, Dvaita*, *Visistadvaita,* and *Advaita* are just three phases inthe soul's development which reaches the highest goal with the perfection of Oneness.

The philosophy of Vedanta, particularly its Advaitic form, became famous as a symbol of emerging Indian Nationalism dueto this historical connection. Sankara's Advaita system proceeds from a straightforward assumption with some scripturalbacking. This is the thesis that there is a complete identity betweenthe self and the power sustaining the cosmos. It follows that the apparent multiplicity of selves is an illusion, and by extension, thewhole variegation of empirical existence is illusory. There is thenonly one Reality, and all else, as it gives an impressionof being a substantial and independent Reality, is productive ofa kind of bewitchment of the mind. The Brahman alone exists; in different terms, the self alone exists, and empirical existence is a delicate appearance. Once this has been realized existentially, there is the release that we call liberation. However, critics say that Advaita gained popularity among the nationalist elites notdue to its assimilative capacity but due to its abstract nature and thusto encompass the entire country. It is interesting to find Indian nationalists admiring the abstractness of Advaita as a successful model for Nationalism. However, there may be little truth in admitting that Advaitic nationalism excluded all differences. The Advaitic abstraction shows the weakness and inadequacy of Indian nationalism. Some modern critics claim that Advaitahas been insensitive to recognize the differences. Instead, it simplifiesthe complexities and richness of the country. It refuses to see the country's plurality of languages, religions, and cultures. It resists the emergence of federal politics in India and pretends Indian politics to be Unitarian which cannot be accepted as the ultimate truth.

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THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN MANIPUR:
A Philosophical Analysis
Vanlalnghak

The broad theme of the Seminar – **"Nation, Culture and Patriotism: Philosophical Interrogation on Nationalism in Contemporary India"** is not only a well chosen theme but also a much needed theme of conceptualization and academic debates. If intellectuals of today are to contribute something valuable and meaningful for the societies of the north east ethnic groups, this is one such area where meaningful debates are to be exercised. The saying – United we stand, divided we fall – should be the slogan of North East ethnic groups in general and ethnic group of Manipur in particular.

The purpose of this paper is purely an intellectual exercise and academic debates and therefore nobody should take academic exercise and debates on emotional ground. The sole objective is to have better understanding of the nature and causes of conflict and also to analyze and see the possibilities of conflict resolution. Trying to find the possibilities of conflict resolution will required to adequately addressing the causes of the conflicts. If all doors of open and creative debates are closed then ethnic communities will ever remain stagnated and be a closed society. If free unbiased debate on Nation, Culture and Patriotism are not allowed in North East India, then there will be no proper understanding of the nature and causes of ethnic conflict in Manipur and the consequence will be obvious and certain that there is no solution.

Let us begin by defining the term conflict. Conflict has been generally defined as stemming from the existence of irreconcilable differences between several actors, or caused by structural inequality, or injustice, potentially leading to violence at a local, regional, national or international level. In many structuralism accounts conflicts have been defined as the pursuit of incompatible goals by different groups. The structuralism approach broadly describes the social, political and economic factors that are purported to drive internal conflicts. There are different structural approaches. For instance, there is a booming quantitative literature that seeks to identify the economic, political and social determinants of civil war. Typically, these studies are large scale data sets and sophisticated statistical variables related to social divisions (ethno-linguistic divisions, religious diversity etc.) national attributes (population size, previous war/conflict experiences) levels of economic development and the type of political system (i.e. Democracy vs autocracy, political and civil rights, democratic transition etc) an international context (cold war, geographic region, neighbours at war).

Brown`s structural approach develops a more general framework of the causes of internal conflict and armed struggles identifying four main clusters of factors that can lead to violence such as structural factors which includes weak states, geography and security concerns, political factors such as discriminatory political institutions, exclusionary national ideologies, inter-group politics, and elite politics, economic factors that include discriminatory economic practices, underdevelopment, widespread economic problems due to modernization and development, and cultural and perceptual factors such as patterns of cultural discrimination and problematic group histories (Brown, 1996) 1. Furthermore, Brown divides internal conflicts along two dimensions, elite driven and mass driven conflicts, and internally triggered or externally triggered conflicts. Other observers of the internal conflict identify five different kinds of internal conflict based on the issues in dispute such as ideological conflicts, governance and authority conflicts, environmental conflicts and identity conflicts (Rupesinghe, 1992) 2.

North East India has a complex cultural mosaic but this cultural diversities and heterogeneity is not chaotic. North East India`s socio-cultural mosaic is the true picture of "unity in diversity" like a banquet of flowers or vegetables in a salad bowl, where every component, while retaining its specific identity, is a part of a larger whole. They have been living happily together for the last many years sharing the same space and land. It is important to note that in spite of the fact that there is a lot of differences among the ethnic communities in terms of socio-cultural diversities there is also a feeling of "regional unity/identity" that often collectively asserts its cultural distinctiveness vis-à-vis the rest of the Indian nation, especially during moments of collective bargaining for resources and resource sharing. Therefore, regardless of the internal differences and external ramification of the variety of identity based conflicts affecting the region, there is also a collective unity amongst them.

Most of these antagonisms and conflicts are focused towards the attainment of more power, land, cultural identity and other resources sharing. The constitutive conditions for claims-making are usually based on group identity, socio-cultural distinctiveness and socio-politico-culturally backwardness. In a post independent socio-liberal democratic India, many privileges, facilities and advantages are given on the basis of ethnic groups, language, economically backwardness etc. The different ethnic communities are sharing the same space and land for centuries together, but changes in the demographic scenario have created imbalances

amongst the ethnic communities. The size of the land cannot be increased whereas population is increasing day by day. In recent times, those communities who never have problem earlier and in good relation with their fellow ethnic groups have started competing and causing conflict on land ownership issue. So, the issue of land ownership is one very important factor of ethnic conflicts in North East India in general and Manipur in particular.

Modernization and modern liberal economic has created a lot of economic imbalances among the ethnic communities. This economic imbalance is seen between communities and also within a single community as well. In many traditional tribal communities land ownership was in the hand of the community. Modernization and modern economic introduces many liberal rules including private ownership of land and competition. This has created competition among communities for land ownership and domination. Ethnic conflict between Naga-Kuki, Kuki-Paite in the 1990s and also the most recent conflict between Meeteis and Kukis may be studied from this angle. This conflict and misunderstanding is big problem and issue not only between communities but also has created deeply rooted differences within a community. In a community separate group/category emerges out; economically well to do family and economically weak family. Those family who are sharing government facilities are becoming stronger economically day by day and also more powerful in all respect. And those who are not in a position to enjoy facilities and schemes created by government were marginalized and ignored. Again there are rivalry and competition in trying to get more and more opportunities amongst the different communities in grabbing either by fair means or unfair means. These has resulted in fighting within a community and expanded to inter-community rivalry and fighting.

Modern education and modernization have very strong impact on ethnic tribal communities in North East India. Broadly speaking, two groups emerge in the ethnic community. One group is known as Elite Group, and the other group is the non-elite/mass group. The elite group is the sub-group in the ethnic community who actually control the society. The so-called Elite group is usually that group of people who were having modern education and this education is their strength and dominant ground. They have both economic and political power and therefore they are very influential in the society. Among the elites there is competition and rivalry in the ethnic community and also with those elites in the other ethnic community. This elite competition and rivalry within and outside the community is one of the very important factors of conflicts and movements in North East India.

Post Independent Indian Democracy opens avenue for all citizens to participate in governance of the country. As Indian democracy is an indirect, certain people are sent to be the representative of the people. This opportunity is grabbed by the elites of the tribal community. In many cases where the community has a sizable population to sent representative from one single community, the competition is among elite members of the community. If one single community is not in a position to have a representative in that area, then the competition is among elite members of different ethnic community. In both cases elite conflict and rivalry causes ethnic conflicts of a kind to be called either intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic conflicts depending on the situation. In an intra-ethnic conflict the bottom line of claims-making is usually on a clan line. In an inter-ethnic conflict, the constitutive grounds may vary from place to place and also from situation to situation. It may be on identity, historical, cultural, economic and political grounds.

In an inter-ethnic conflict the elites formulated various ground of discontentment for the people to legitimize their own personal gain and also have created many narratives to influence the masses. One very important ground in this context is "cultural identity", they formulated identity in such a manner to include and exclude communities whoever they wanted to. Many ethnic communities in Chandel District were earlier not included in the nomenclature of the Naga. Similarly, many ethnic communities of Churachandpur District were also not included in the nomenclature of the term Kuki but an attept was made during Naga-Kuki ethnic conflict in 1990s. (Example Naga-isation and Kuki-isation). This new formulation of the concept of identity has strongly projected the concept of the "Other", and the **Other** is seen as a threat to them. This concept of the Other is widely extended not only to cover ethnic identity but also to exclude the other from sharing political and economic resources. This concept of the 'Other'is extended and employed in Meetei-Kuki recent conflict with additional narratives in their own respective favours.

According to Anshuman Behera 'The state government's demolition and eviction drives, the process of 'othering' by terming the Kukis as outsiders and foreigners, alleging the Kukis were responsible for the poppy cultivation and influx of 'illegal migrants from Myanmar, and the Meitei community's demand for the tribal status wrapped with the old wounds of ethnic strife have directly contributed to the revival of violent incidents in restive Manipur."3 This process of othering Kukis has created a clear-cut divide between the Kukis minority and the Meiteis majority not only geographically but also

emotionally. In the integration process, emotional integration is the most important aspect of integration. Geographical integration can be built up easily by government decision but emotional integration cannot be built in this way. If there is trust deficit between communities, it is really difficult to rebuild the trust between them and may take many years.

Coming back to conflict of the elite members of the community has led into an intra-ethnic conflict. Each one of them wants to have maximum economic, political power and social influences. They always tried to retain these powers either by fare or unfair means. Even when they are unable to retain by fare means they will resort to unfair means, may be, on clan line or resorting to raising private army which ultimately legitimize as a faction of insurgent group, or else they will manipulate to get the support of the underground. This has created multiplication and a lot of intricidal killings in the community among the different factions.

There are many constitutionally recognized ethnic tribes in North East India. In Manipur alone there are more than thirty tribes recognized by the constitution of India. Many other communities are not recognized and yet they claim to constitute separate tribe or ethnic groups. These communities who are recognizes by the constitution have many advantages in terms of job opportunities, power sharing and resource sharing. But these communities who are not recognized had nothing in comparison to the recognized communities. In a democratic set up society, the bigger, stronger and recognized communities have power, dominance and advantages over the smaller, weaker and unrecognized communities. They have been enjoying this facility for last many years and they are not ready to part with it at any cost and in any circumstances. When the smaller ethnic groups regroups and reformulate new identity to get better facilities, it is taken by the larger communities as a threat to them.

Larger community considering smaller community as a threat to them is exemplified in the violent incidents that recently erupted in Manipur. This violent incident is based on deep-rooted ethnic divide; especially between the majority valley based Meeteis and the hill based Kuki minorities. According to Binalakshmi Nepram;; " The most recent violence began after the Manipur High Court asked the state government to consider Scheduled Tribe status for the Meitei community, which is the majority population in Manipur. This status would ensure protection within the Indian Constitution and allow the Meitei expanded access to benefits, including reserved seats in government". Again "….another point of contention is the current land imbalance between Indigenous communities: Meiteis cannot buy lands in the previously mentioned hill regions, but Kukis and other tribal communities can buy lands in the valley".4

The majority Meitei community were of the opinion that in their own state many opportunities and facilities which were enjoyed by tribals is denied to them and felt that Scheduled Tribe status will give them many facilities such as access to land ownership in the tribal dominated Hill Districts and also reservation in government jobs and many more which are enjoyed by the tribals by virtue of being a tribal. Meeteis start demanding ST status recognition to the government of Indian. Binalakshmi Nepram, mentioned that Manipur High Court has instructed State Government to pursue in this line within stipulated time. The Meeteis demand of ST recognition has created fear psychosis and apprehension among the tribal communities that the majority Meeteis community who were advance in many respects will take away the Lion-Share and was strongly opposed by the trbals and held solidarity Rally on 3rd May 2023 and violent is erupted.

There is a possibility of conflict even among the recognized ethnic communities. Because the same space of land is shared by them to generate resources and powers. The issue involve here is that who will be the dominant community over the shared space. The larger community wants to monopolize the shared space in all respects. The smaller ethnic group realizing that so long as they are not in a position to claim part of the shared space belong to them their position will not be improved. Therefore, to legitimize their claim they started demanding recognition in various ways including Homeland.

Since the region is constituted by different groups of people having different cultures, identities and institutions in general and Manipur state in particular, political inequality and discrimination, economic inequality and discrimination, social inequality and discrimination are very common amongst the ethnic communities and so different communities are competing among themselves to acquire more and more and also smaller communities are increasingly asserting claims of recognition to have advantages in a fashion that engenders group antagonism and conflict

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Civic and Ethnic Nationalism in Nepal: Issues, Opportunities and Challenges in National Unity
Man Bahadur Khattri

Abstract

The issue of nationalism in Nepal has evolved significantly since 1990. Initially rooted in the nation-building process, it shifted focus after the end of the partyless Panchayati rule towards cultural nationalism. Nepal's diversity, including its geography, people, culture, religion, and languages, presents both an opportunity and a challenge for national unity. In the 1990s, the People's Movement emphasized freedom, equality, democracy, and humanity, representing civic nationalism. Subsequently, a decade-long armed conflict led by the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) and regional people's movements and the 2006 People's Movement inspired civic and ethnic nationalism. This period saw rural armed conflict and urban peaceful movements for these forms of nationalism. Since 2006, there has been a strong demand for proper representation of citizens from various classes, castes, and ethnic groups in the state apparatus, recognizing their unique identities. The chapter aims to discuss the political, economic, and environmental world order in the context of Nepal and the globe after the 1990s. Internal factors such as failed state-centric nationalism, development issues, poverty, inequality, injustice, lack of freedom, and global influences of neoliberal economic policies played a significant role in shaping Nepal's national movement. These conflicts and movements challenged the spirit of harmony and co-existence among the people, resulting in loss of lives, displacement, and suffering. To address issues like inequality, injustice, and representation, Nepal adopted a federal republic governance system with three tiers (local, provincial, and federal), a secular state, and inclusive democracy. These reforms have partially addressed governance and representation issues and promoted diversity and mutual respect for culture, religion, identities, and language. Nepal's multi-party system has maintained national unity through the principles of unity in diversity and diversity in unity. The nation has demonstrated tolerance, forgiveness, negotiation, and reconciliation to maintain harmony among its diverse population.

Keywords: cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, indigenous people, national unity of Nepal

Introduction

The issue of nationalism is deeply rooted in Nepal's history and its process of nation-building. This process has been influenced by the political-economic system developed around the world. After the 1990s, Nepal has passed a critical discourse of nationalism, national integration, and sovereignty (Singh, 2066 BS).

Nepal is situated in the middle of two big power countries India and China which are diverse geographically, linguistically, and religiously (Agrawal, 1996; Singh, 2008; Dincer & Wang, 2011). Geographically Nepal occupies 147,516 sq. km of land, the east-west and north-south distance is about 800 km and 150-250 km, respectively, in which plain, hills, and mountain regions cover and the altitude ranges from 60 m-8848 m above the sea level. Nepal represents a cultural mosaic. Plain Gangetic and Himalayan cultures are broadly practiced; however, several geographical and ethnic cultural variations exist. In Nepal, 142 ethnic/caste groups, 124 languages, and ten religions were reported in the 2021 census (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2023).

Patriotism in Nepali is strong. "We are brave Gurkhas", and "We are independent throughout history" are popular phrases even among the masses. Nepal's strategic location and abundant water resources make it of significant interest to several major global powers, including the United States, India, China, and Europe (Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012). The international agencies have contributed to raising the height of the civic and ethnic nationalism movement in Nepal (Pandey, 2012). The former General Secretary of Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) Om Gurung (2077 BS) has said that the role of Janajati Mahasangh, the federation of ethnic people was successful in bringing the issue national and international arena due to support from the World Bank, Department for International Development, (DFID, UK), European Union, Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), Norwegian Embassy, USAID. Janajati Empowerment Project (JEP) (2004-2008) is a well-known project funded by DFID, UK was launched under the NEFIN for institutional strengthening of capacity building of NEFIN, Indigenous People's Organizations (IPOs) and Highly Marginalized Janajatis (HMJS) (Subba et al. 2009).

Internal and external aspects shaped Nepali nationhood. The most important internal aspects lie in strong national integration with cohesion and harmonious co-existence with humanitarian sentiments among the Nepali nations respecting their equality and dignity, respecting variation in socio-economic and cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds. The external aspect of nationality includes mostly the protection of its national boundaries

from neighboring countries (Bhandari, 2016). Nepal nationhood has faced challenges on both dimensions as recent phenomena and the current tendency towards more fragility (Singh, 2066 BS).

Since the 1990s, there has been strong dissatisfaction, disagreements, demonstrations, and conflict and violence to establish equality and justice for the downtrodden class, ethnic groups, caste, and exploited and marginalized cultures, languages, religions, genders, and regions. Despite the mass Nepali citizen's aspiration for civic nationalism for the democratic social, and political system, peace, and prosperity, just before the end of the first constituent assembly (May 28, 2012), people were forced to be organized and divided disrespecting their political, social, cultural, religious identity for their proportional rights and privileges. This situation raised concerns about the potential for severe ethnic or communal violence in Nepal. Immediately following the dissolution of the first constituent assembly, the streets were eerily empty, with no one taking the initiative to protest against its dissolution. This reluctance to demonstrate could be attributed to a combination of factors, including the country's diverse ethnic and caste identities, the absence of international support, and the fear of possible repercussions. In the 1990s, Nepal experienced a series of political upheavals, government instability, the dissolution of parliament, armed conflict, the declaration of a state of emergency, autocratic rule, the proliferation of cultural violence, the royal massacre, and regional and communal conflicts.

Despite its richness in diversity among the people and their tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritages, its economic position is weak. Nepal is a developing country. India has become part of Nepal's political changes and development initiatives since the 1950s (Singh, 2066 BS). S. D. Muni (2012) has noted that India played a crucial political role in settling the issue of Maoist insurgency in Nepal. Complexities of foreign influence arise and Nepal's development relies on foreign aid and loans (Pandey, 2012). According to Pandey (2012), Nepali's failed development created several inequalities and lacked structural change that could not ensure equitable and sustained change, rather conflict and violence in Nepal. He further noted that the foreign aid-funded empowerment programs supported marginalized groups to formulate and claim their political and economic power (p. 95). The lower level of livelihood condition of the people and the taking into consideration of interest of groups played crucial roles in moving to the chases among the people.

Nepal has experienced development models including people participation, empowerment, and inclusion after 1950s. At the same time, it became a testing ground for the progressive opposition to the neoliberal crisis after 1990s through people's movements for fundamental democratic rights and socio-cultural privileges (Grugel & Riggirozzi, 2012). Political parties worked for decades to achieve freedom, sovereignty, and prosperity. They participated in different social movements. They strengthen participation by building federations of people of different sociocultural backgrounds, and professions that highlight their concerns and demands. The most important federations were for example *janajati,* dalit, women, forest users, trade unions, chamber of commerce, transport, journalists, and the professional alliance for peace and democracy (PAPAD). These federations resulted from neo-structuralism, post-neoliberalism, the rise of social inclusion, new left, and welfare (Grugel & Riggirozzi, 2012).

From the 1990s onwards, labor migration, brain drain, resettlement in foreign countries, and remittance became a major source of income for the country. Youth labor migration opted for peace and prosperity in their life and the welfare of family members. The rural hill area became the epicenter of conflict, forcing labor and rural-urban migration. Up to 36 percent of rural hill youth as foreign labor and women migrated to urban areas for security, education, and employment (Bossavie & Denisova, 2018). It has created a situation of absence of youth in the rural areas and remained remittance-dependent population. Changes in climate, livelihood, and expansion of capitalism, even in very remote areas, have brought challenges in food security, health problems, dependency, and changes in food habits (Khattri & Pandey, 2021) that further reinforced the economic and cultural pressure rooted age-old inequality and injustice in the society.

Despite these political turmoils, the deep interest of foreign power countries, the issue of ethnic/caste identity based exploitation, inequality, and injustice in culture, language, religion, and meaningful political participation settled with political negotiation. Expression of dissatisfaction, disagreements, demonstration, agitation, dialogue, negotiation, and reconciliation indigenous formal and informal conflict resolution mechanisms were adopted (Dahal,2014; Uprety, 2004). Nepal's sovereignty and national cohesion have been preserved thanks to its ingrained culture of conflict resolution. Currently, Nepal has effectively tackled the challenges of ethnicity-based nationalism by transitioning from its previous status as a kingdom with a unitary system and a Hindu state to become a federal democratic republic with secularism and an inclusive democratic framework.

The nationalism movement in Nepal is a part of the global political and economic system. Lin (1990) highlights the Global economic and political crisis during the 1990s decade which resulted as stated, "the genuine grassroots struggle for democratic pluralism for freedom of expression and movement, and against corruption and

privilege among the ruling bureaucratic class" (p. 47). Similarly, the Europeans were deeply concerned over ethnicity and nationalism as they observed in Balkan and East European countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union due to complexities of violent conflict rather than resolving it (de Silva, 1996). Likewise, the people of the Western world were experiencing environmental challenges brought on by the capitalist production system, which slowly grew as the environmental movement and establishment of green parties took positions during the early 1990s (Engel, 2014). Similarly, P.R. Sharma has pointed out that, "the change of 1990 was shaped by cumulative force of Nepal's continuing contacts and exposure to the rest of the world since 1951" (p. 472). These statements focused on the global relation of the phenomena which encourages people to raise their voices for their fundamental rights of expression, organization, equality, democracy, and their participation in development initiatives.

Nation and Nationalities in Nepal

The basic quality of a nation is the sovereignty of the people. In the multi-nations context, political centrals are regarded as nations (Gat, 2013). Besides these defining bases of a nation, others include its features, status, and elements. Different scholars have defined the nation as a form of morality by Ernest Renan; economy, language, and territory as elements of a nation excluding races and tribes by Joseph Stalin; prestige community by Max Weber (Hutchison & Smith, 1984). Joseph Stalin presents a comprehensive definition: "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture" (Stalin, 1994, p. 20).

The constitution of Nepal, 2015, regards every citizen as a nation despite their ethnic identity, language, religion, cultural and geographical diversities who hold "common aspirations and being united by a bond of allegiance to national independence, territorial integrity, national interest and prosperity of Nepal". Patriotism is a major element of a nation, and labeled *arastiya* anti-patriotic and sectarian are disregarded as Nepali nation. Nepali state differentiated nations and nationalities as the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities [NFDIN] Act of Nepal (2002) defined indigenous peoples or indigenous "nationalities" as "have their own mother tongue and traditional customs, distinct cultural identity, distinct social structure and written or oral history of their own", on the basis of the definition NFDIN listed 59 nationalities in the schedule.

Nepali nationalities are broadly categorized by scholars as ethnic people (Mongoloid) and caste people (Caucasoid of Khas stock) (Gurung et al. 2004, p.1), however, age-old hybridization process is occurring in Nepal (Nepal, 2079 BS). A strategy paper on the development of nationalities differentiates ethnic people outside of the Hindu religion and its caste hierarchical system as "most ethnic people as Mongoloid and caste people are Caucasoid of Khas stock" (Gurung et al. 2004, p.1). On the other hand caste people are categorized as divided based on caste and regional exploitation, inequality, and discrimination but ethnic people have been uniting despite their unequal privileges and opportunities. Ethnic people strongly advocate the injustice, inequality, and discrimination after its modern unification, which is summarized as, "Ethnic leaders of the 1990s allege that they have been subject to political oppression, economic exploitation, social subjugation, and cultural annexation by the Hindu state in the present and in the past" (Sharma, 1997, p. 474).

Nepali nationhood has evolved through historical events after its unification as modern Nepal. According to Hagen & Lawati, (2013) homogenization of Nepali nation started after the promulgation of *Muliki ain* in1854 by Prime Minister Janga Bahadur Rana. Burghart (1984) said that Nepali nationhood was formed after the unification of Nepal by Gorkha king Prithivi Narayan Shah (1723-1775). Burghart sees the development of the Nepali state in a similar process to Europe. He describes six major events that started in 1816 and continued to 1960s. The major events in 1816 and 1860 were territorial demarcation. In 1860, the interpretation of country in terms of species (*jat*) took place. Similarly, in 1930 Nepali state adopted Nepali as the official language; in 1960, Nepal differentiated state and kingship and built unique cultural polity (Burghart, 1984). This process of nationhood is criticized as internal colonization (Holmberg, 2000), Gorkha imperialism (Tamang, 2018); Hinduization, and ethnic homogenizing by imposing the concept of one nation, one culture, one language, one religion, and one national identity (Bhattachan, 2013; Gurung, 2022). However, during the last period of panchayat rule, a popular slogan chanted as *Hamro Raja Hamro Dhes, Hamro Bhasha Hamro Bhes* (Our King !!! Our Country !!! Our Language !!! Our Costume !!!). Here ethnic people of Nepal did not accept "our" means "their" but "our" means the "caste/dominant group", the ruling class of the Nepali state.

The processes of Nepalization (Bista, 1982) continued until the promulgation of the Interim Constitution of Nepal in 2007. The country's major shift was taken as it declared multi-party democracy with fundamental rights and a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual country after people's movement in 1990. After the second

people's movement 2006, Nepal adopted ethnic and civic nationalism following inclusive democracy, secularism, republic and federal system.

Nationalism is one of the influential ideologies and movements based on the great revolutions in France and the USA. According to Hutchinson and Smith (1994), ethnic identity and community are linked to nationality as well as nation and national state. Similarly, Nationalism is a political movement to enhance the quality of life, becoming an independent group.

Nationalism as a doctrine of popular freedom and sovereignty. The people must be liberated-that is, free from any external constraint; they must determine their own destiny and be masters in their own house; they must control their own resources; they must obey only their own 'inner' voice. But entailed fraternity. The people must be united; they must dissolve all internal divisions; they must be gathered together in a single historic territory, a homeland; and they must have legal equality and share a single public culture. (Hutchinson & Smith, 1994, p. 4)

This definition highlights the power of people of self-determination and self-rule for their internal structural adjustment, maintaining peace and security, solidarity and singular cultural practices in a place. The nationalism movement is 19th century product of France and the USA. The nature of its struggle varies from colonial states, independent states, multi-nation states, geo-political locations, economic development, and available natural resources. Nationalism is closely associated with sentiment and emotional affinity.

How nationalism movements are defined in the context of Nepal is very important. The nationalist movements are understood as the matter of the ethnic or indigenous people. One of the interesting phenomena is that the communist parties of Nepal mostly entertain ethnic or indigenous issues. This issue is highly politicized in their political programs and party organizations. However, the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) sees the issue of nationalism not only to the point of the socio-cultural, linguistic, religious, and class issues; without solving the class issues the dignity of nationalities/ethnic groups, equality, and freedom will not be achieved. Focusing only on sociocultural and linguistic aspects of inequality there is a chance that ethnic conflict and violence may occur in a devastating manner which is experienced elsewhere (Singh, 2066), which was foreseen by Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan (2000); who noted the possible ethnic revolution or insurgency in Nepal. He adds that Nepal has not yet experienced a peasant revolution; no other revolution might be an ethnic revolution.

The Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) had some issues of nationalism in their 40-point demand to the government before they launched an armed struggle in 1996. They have used ethnic identity for their political achievement in the country. They even declared ethnic-based autonomous regions during the armed conflict.

Nepal communist party (Maoist) and its armed struggle engaged in the issue of ethnic nationalism. Their armed struggle concentrated mostly in rural, *janajati* dominant areas of the Mid-western region. They declared nine autonomous regions based on ethnicity, regions and river basin civilization. The Magarat declared the Magars autonomous region on January 9, 2004; despite multiple ethnic/caste groups having been settled. Consecutively, Tamsaling, the Tamang autonomous region, Tharuwan, the Tharu autonomous region, Tamuwan, the Gurungs autonomous region, Kirat autonomous region on February 2, 2004. Newa, the Newars autonomous region, was not declared. Bheri-Karnali, and Seti-Mahakali regions were Chhetries dominant regions named after river civilization. A language-based province Madhesh declared where the majority of the Awadi, Bhojpuri, and Maithili language-speakers settled (Pokharel, 2062 BS). After signing the Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006, they quit armed struggle and negotiated with the government. Nepali Communist Party (Maoist) joined the government despite their political differences; collations in elections and the formation of the government have become priorities, to win the favor of ethnic people and threats to opposition, they use ethnic-based federalism and more ethnic sentimental slogans.

Despite their bitterness, on behalf of democratic forces, the Prime Minister and Leader of Nepali Congress, Girija Prasad Koirala, and leader of Maoists insurgents, Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" joined their hand to abolish King's autocracy and restore peace in the country in 2006. During the peace process, these actions were not taken seriously. The 40-points demand was submitted to Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, the prime minister of Nepal, in 1996 before they went underground for armed struggle. They aim to establish the people's democracy in Nepal, influenced by Mao Tse Tung of China. Their demand includes ending all discrimination based on race, language, and religion. They focus on the end of discrimination against downtrodden and backward people and untouchability. They have emphasized equal opportunity to all languages and dialects, secular state, equal right to parental property, and ethnic people should be allowed to practice autonomous governments in their dominant regions (Hutt, 2004). However, they left many of the issues when they were in the position of implementing their issues of nationalism; they are more beholden towards the power carter, which is dangerous for national sovereignty (Singh, 2066 BS).

Civic and ethnic nationalism in Nepal

Disregarding state-centric nationalism of the Partyless panchayat system (Hangen & Lawoti, 2013), ethnic nationalism movements began after 1990s in Nepal. Ethnicity is regarded as political (Gat, 2013). Huntington (1996), in his world-famous book "Clash of Civilization" noted that "fault lines between civilizations" are the "hot spots in world politics" (p. 1), are emotional aspect civilizations and clashed. A distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism is pointed out as traditional and modern, respectively. Ethnic nationalism has the social and economic structures of Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa, or with those of the pre-industrial West. In contrast, civic nationalism is entitled to the developed Western countries " (Lecours, 2000). Ethnic nationalism focuses on religion, language and ethnic criteria for membership. In contrast, civic nationalism holds on the value of "free will of the individual" (Lecours, 2000, p. 153). Roshwald (2015) defines civil nationalism as, "the common rights, duties, and values of citizenship, irrespective of any ethnic or cultural differences among the citizenry, are considered to constitute the foundation of peoplehood in this framework; in theory, statehood is the forge of nationhood" (Roshwald, 2015, p.1). This shows the scenario that west has adopted civic and rest to ethnic nationalism.

Ethnicity is basically developing from a primordial, instrumental and transactional point of view. Primordial ethnicity is basic as it is the situation of identifying oneself "who am I". Instrumental ethnicity is used by colonists, state, and activists that applied "to gain some political or economic advantages" (Gellner, 1997, p. 7). The transactional approach of ethnicity focuses dynamic or fluid natures contextually develops in relation with other ethnic group discussed by Barth (1981). Ethnicities are political and contextually evolved in relation to the state's socio-economic, political, and religious conditions associated with the demand and deserve special rights and privileges.

Since the 1990 constitution, Nepal has become a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-religious country. The country was declared a Hindu state and the cow was declared the national animal. Some argue that King Prithivi Narayan Shah in his divine suggestion to the nation Nepal is *char varna chhatis jat ko Phulbari ho*, Nepal is the garden of four castes and 36 ethnic nationalities; he was generous to grant ethnic autonomy right after geographical unification that lasted until the Rana rule. However, officially, the Constitution of Nepal 2015 holds the spirit of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-religious of the constitution of 1990, but Nepali became a secular state in 2015. These constitutions ensure equality among the different cultures, languages, and religions but discourage forceful religious conversion. According to census 2021, 142 caste/ethnic groups, 124 languages, and 10 major religions are reported in Nepal (CBS, 2023).

Dominant groups versus marginalized groups

All political parties of Nepal are facing challenges dealing with the problem of ethnic nationalism, which is growing higher day by day as they neglect class issues and fail to determine the dominant group. However, ethnic activists and scholars have treated this problem purely on socio-cultural, linguistic, and religious tone, disregarding economic class, access, opportunity, and privilege to state resources.

The categorization of dominant groups has become problematic as they lump together based on broad social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and regional belonging. One example is Hagen & Lawati (2013) use the abbreviated term CHHE for High Caste Hindu from the Hill, and the "ruling establishment" by Pandey (2012) for the dominant ruling class. This categorization overlooks the backwardness of CHHE of Karnali region which is also categorized as backward region dominant settlement of CHHE. This broad categorization serves to identify fault lines in the cultural practices and forcefully drag to a clash of civilizations (Huntinton,1996).

As the result of the people's movement 1990, the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities [NFDIN] Act of Nepal (2002) promulgated a total 59 *Adivasi Janajati* "indigenous peoples" or indigenous "nationalities." Their total population constitutes around 36 percent which excludes the caste people and the listed people as indigenous nationalities. The act has defined "indigenous peoples" or indigenous "nationalities" as "having their own mother tongue and traditional customs, distinct cultural identity, distinct social structure and written or oral history of their own." However, unlisted nationalities who are *Adivasi Janajati* and settled throughout the mountains, hills, and lowland regions expressed their dissatisfaction. To address the issue, a high-level commission for the revision of indigenous nationalities of Nepal was formed under the leadership of Professor Om Gurung on February 17, 2010, to revise the list. Among the 79 applicants, including 59 previously listed, the commission recommended 81 Indigenous nationalities. To differentiate the status of indigenous nationalities, a meeting of the council of the Federation of *Janajati* held on March 1, 2004 passed unanimously five categories of ethnic nationalities including endangered (10), highly marginalized (12), marginalized (20), disadvantaged (15), and developed (2). Despite this categorization, there is no justifiable provision of positive

discrimination while receiving state benefits except social security allowances. Most advanced and dominant families and individuals have been receiving most of the state privileges allocated to marginalized indigenous nationalities. On the other hand, Newars follow a complex hierarchical caste system of six strata (Gellner, 1997, pp. 159-160) and are included as an ethnic group.

A strategy paper for the development of nationalities (2004) pointed out several political, economic, and socio-cultural reasons for the backwardness, exploitation, and suppression of indigenous ethnic nationalities of Nepal. The strategy paper Gurung et al. (2004) provides solutions to the same conditions. Solutions emphasized secularism, equality of all languages, ending the monopoly of Brahmin-Chhtries in civil administration; reservation of quotas and should be fixed proportionately for political and administrative positions; protecting and promoting human rights and social justice, economic empowerment promoting indigenous skills, knowledge, access to markets, financial institutions, issue of displacement of indigenous people from nature conservation programs, protection of heritage sites and establish ethnic museums, allocate adequate budget for research and publication, authentic and realistic demographic data—these major issues addresses in the new constitution of Nepal (2015).

The constitution of Nepal (2015) respects the diversity of various religions and languages spoken in Nepal, be federalism, inclusive democracy ensuring proportionate political participation and engaging in government services of women, ethnic groups, Dalits, Madhesi, Muslims, differently-abled persons, *khas aryas* differently-abled persons. As per the constitution of Nepal (2015), the government of Nepal constituted National Indigenous Nationalities Commission (2017), Tharu Commission (2017), Madhesi Commission (2017), Women Commission (2007), National Dalit Commission (2017), National Inclusive Commission (2017), Language Commission (2017) aiming to document glorious history and culture, to protect and promote the rights and interests of indigenous nationalities, Dalits, Tharu, women, Madhesi and to empowering them.

Still, the ethnic organizations and leaders of ethnic activists are dissatisfied with this constitution (2015) as they argue it does not internalize the spirit of a multi-nationalities state, nor recognize the identity of ethnic people; rather, it maintains the exploitation and discrimination to the backward and marginalized people. Federalization did not recognize ethnic identity, nominal types of a secular state were declared as the cow became a national animal, and only 42 percent of the seats were allocated in the proportional election system. This constitution has protected the rights and privileges of Hindu ruling class people (Gurung, 2077 BS).

Federalization of Nepal

Nepal is a small but geographically diverse country where around 29.19 million reside (CBS, 2023). Nepal needs unity among the exploited, oppressed different caste/ethnic groups. But, they clash among themselves based on their differences in their ethnic/caste identity, religion, culture, norms and values, which weakens the national unity of Nepal (Singh, 2066 BS). Nepal Communists Party (Mashal) and its allied front led by Chitra Bahadur K.C., the National People's Front, continuously rejected the concept of federalization in Nepal. They argue that federalization causes the country's disintegration and divides the Nepali nations, financially burdening the government and supporting the imperialist and expansionist agendas. Regionalism, ethno-nationalism, and religious extremism are the most dangerous, which might be difficult to control in the federal structure. Any exploitation, injustice, or oppression of the norms, values, religion, and language should end all struggles for justice.

Federalization was also understood panacea for all types of social, economic, and political issues as the power delivery mechanism to the rural and marginalized at the doorstep. *Ghar Ghar ma Singha Darbar* (power of center reached a remote area) was a popular saying once it was promulgated. Federalization was not organic Nepali demand, as it is blamed as foreigner-induced and may turn into a Pandora box (Singh, 2066 BS). Discussion on federalism reached a deeper level and issues were needed for the country, financial viability, number, boundaries, and naming. "Ethnicity and Federalisation in Nepal" an international symposium, was held by Central Department of Sociology Anthropology, Tribhuvan University on 22-25 April, 2011. Ethnic identity, either "mono-ethnic" or "poly-ethnic" (Lawoti, 2012), autonomy and right to self-determination, one Madhes one province were other sensitive issues for those who were reluctant to accept the concept of federalization in Nepal. The political parties declared the constitution of Nepal (2015) having seven numerical provinces 1 to 7 from the east to the far west. All provinces are named despite all sorts of disagreements, arguments and disputes. Koshi province was named recently with disagreement. Hot debates still exist among political parties and discontent masses. The restructuring of the state adopted seven provinces, 77 districts, and 753 local units. Local units and provinces are named mostly based on local or regional cultural value, geographical landmarks, and river basin civilizations. Federal practice in Nepal is in the infant stage, however, questioning whether Nepal needs provinces

as it is having a big financial burden and becoming a means of corruption. Despite counter-arguments for federalism, it has provided opportunities to empower a large number of women of different caste/ethnic backgrounds, dalits, and marginalized people of different regions.

Inclusive democracy and issue of representation

Empowerment of women and backward, oppressed, discriminated communities of Nepal was one of the dominant development agendas in Nepal. Neupane (2005) has analyzed the state of inclusion and exclusion in Nepal in twenty-seven areas, including leadership, legal, constitutional commissions, officers, cabinet, parliaments, leadership in political parties, private sectors, science and technology, women leadership, civil society and others, where mostly *khas arya* and Newars have received most of the positions in the government bureaucracy. This analysis became one of the hard evidence to support inclusive democracy. They enable people to participate in state affairs to raise their voices against discrimination and exploitation. Government of Nepal, national and international government organizations and civil societies were working in Nepal. Nepal has adopted inclusive democracy as an instrument for equality, justice, and humanism. The inclusion principle was adopted based on demographic proportion. It is implemented in a multi-sectoral from the political position to civil services, military, police, and universities services as defined by the constitution and acts. A framework of political proportional representation for federal proportionate elections is listed as Dalit, indigenous ethnic groups, *khas-arya*, Madhesi, Tharu, and Muslim, whereas in the provincial proportionate election, minorities and backward regions are included in the federal framework. From any category, 50 percent of women are given a compulsory quota. Winning at least one seat in first-past the post (FPTP) and a threshold of three percent of valid votes is required for a party to get a proportional representation (PR) quota, disqualifying many small parties. PR quota for federal election is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Proportional representation (PR) quota in Federal Parliament

SN	Inclusive categories	Percentage
1	Dalit	13.8
2	Indigenous ethnic groups	28.7
3	Khas Arya	31.2
4	Madhesi	15.3
5	Tharu	6.6
6	Muslim	4.4

Source: Proportional election guidelines 2079(2022) for the House of Representatives

This system also created a hung parliament, however there is a chance of some seats from small parties and participation of different ethnic/caste based identity groups can participate in the political processes. This system has become corrupt from getting tickets for candidates, votes and to be nominated in ministries. The provincial quota for PR is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Proportional representation (PR) quota in Provincial Assembly election

SN	Dalit	Indigenous ethnic groups	Khas Arya	Madhesi	Tharu	Muslim	Minorities	Backward region	Women 50 %	Total seat
Koshi	10.06	46.79	27.84	7.57	4.15	3.59	17.53	0.44	11	37
Madhes Pradesh	17.29	6.61	4.89	54.36	5.27	11.28	25.17	2.11	8	43
Bagmati	5.84	53.17	37.09	1.57	1.66	0.67	7.77	1	20	44
Gandaki	17.44	42.37	37.24	0.52	1.72	0.71	6.02	0.08	13	24
Lumbini	15.11	19.58	28.84	14.35	15.18	6.9	8.4	1.17	23	35

Karnali	23.25	13.63	62.2	23.25	0.5	0.24	1.47	32.4	20	16
Far western	17.29	3.61	60.02	1.64	17.21	0.23	2.37	12.78	24	21
Total average percentage	15.18	26.53	36.87	14.75	6.52	3.37	9.81	7.14		220

Source: Proportional election guidelines 2079(2022) for Provincial Assembly.

There have been four elections (2008, 2013, 2017, and 2022) after constituting the inclusive system. I have further analyzed data based on JB Biswokarma, Dignity Initiative (2023). The representation of different categorized groups, only *Khas arya* has 3.79 % has been increasing and other categories (ethnic groups -1.44%, Madhisi -1.22 %, Dalits -0.78 %, Tharu, -0.42 %, Muslim by –0.14 %) have declined of total representation. One of the main reasons that election has been financially expensive. Another important fact is that politically influential persons of any group have a higher chance of being elected. The inclusion in administrative posts is 45 percent of total advertisement. From the inclusive quota, criteria are presented table 3.

Table 3: In the administrative inclusion

SN	Inclusive categories	Percentage
1	Women	33
2	Indigenous ethnic groups	27.7
3	Madhesi	22
4	Dalit	9
5	Disabled (Differently able)	5
6	Backward regions	4
5	Tharu	6.6
6	Muslim	4.4

Source: Election Commission, Nepal & Dignity Initiative

The women, indigenous nationalities, Madhesi and dalit have a high chance to participate in the civil services as per quota. Nowadays, it can be observed empirically.

Hinduism, sacred cow and issues of religious harmony

The country was once declared the only Hindu state in the world. However, since 2015, it has transformed into a secular state, meaning the government does not favor any particular religion. Nevertheless, numerous festivals, considered national, are officially recognized, and people are granted holidays to celebrate them. All government employees receive one month's equivalent financial benefits from the state during major festivals. Furthermore, the government has extended its recognition to several festivals from Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, and Kirat traditions, celebrating them nationally. Local festivals are also observed and marked as holidays. Nepal boasts a diverse religious landscape, with ten major religions being practiced in the country.

The Hindu religion constitutes 81.19 percent of the total population. The second largest population is the Buddhists constitute 8.21 percent, Islams constitute 5.05 percent, and Christians, 1.76 percent. On the basis of the mother tongue, 44.86 percent people have Nepali as their mother tongue and the second largest population is Miathili speakers which constitute 11.65 percent of the total population (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2023).

Declaring a Hindu State in Nepal is a political act. Those who argue for the need for Hindu state that protects and promotes the values of *sanatana dharma* (eternal religion), age-old development simultaneously with other beliefs and faiths of people. Purely from the spiritual practice of individuals, my understanding of Hinduism in Nepal encompasses different sects broadly categorized as Shaiva *margi* and Vaishnavism *margi*. Also incorporates the nature worshipers' panchayana in the form of the great five elements and worshiping plants, herbs, animals, birds, stone, rocks, soil, air, and water (river, lake, spring) are worshiped as the expression of gods and goddesses. Worship the human self as part of a supreme being and as the product of nature. Other practices such

as spirit possession, yoga, *tantra*, astrology, and meditation are incorporated and adopted. It contains ancient Vedic and Pauranic texts that contain stories and myths explaining social, cultural, economic, psychological, health, and welfare dimensions of the supreme being, human, and devil to maintain harmony, co-existence, tolerance, justice, pain and pleasure, rewards based on deeds of an individual. Based on color and culture, livelihood, and commensality, a typical hierarchical categorization and interaction is also observed which is known as *jat*. Belief in rebirth, emphasis on good deeds, paying visits to sacred places, seasonal feasts and festivals, dance and music in rituals, and public/private performance of rituals are other features of Hinduism. Inclusion and exclusion practices were also adopted. Religious fundamentalism or extremism, intolerance, impractical rigidity, and bureaucratization of every single act carried out knowingly or unknowingly might face unthoughtful, massive, violent consequences. These tendencies are growing which demand condemned by the mass level. Some of these acts have already been observed, but settled with ruptures,

Traditionally, Hindus respect the cow as a mother goddess for all wishes fulling. Constitutionally, a cow has been a national animal in Nepal for a long time. The constitution has banned slaughtering cows. During the insurgency, a period of lawlessness, cases were reported that Maoists rebels killed and consumed cows. It was one of the big criticisms of Maoists from the religious people, however, the state could not take any action against them. A recent case of Dharan, an eastern city of Nepal, took much attention from the people as those who claimed to have slaughtered a cow and posted it on social media created a tense situation of communal violence in the country.

Conclusion

Nepali people favor civic nationalism which the modern world has adopted. They are suspicious of violence and disintegration, a new form of exploitation and oppression, and ethnic nationalism. History has proven that ethnic nationalism caused fascism and genocide based upon ethnocentrisms, and a comparative perspective might be costly, as observed in Europe, Africa, Middle Eastern Countries, India, and Pakistan. In properly adopting civic nationalism, every citizen should be responsible while interacting with others. Every citizen should not hurt others or provoke and never exaggerate insignificant events and acts.

From 1990 onwards, Nepal adopted multi-party democratic system that allows raising issue of political, economic, and social-cultural ideologies. As the result of the popular movement of 1990 and 2006 the state has adopted positive discrimination to empower and change socio-economic and cultural status of ethnic people, especially the Dalits, women, minorities, marginalized and remote region people. For strong nationhood, unity among the exploited, oppressed people of different caste/ethnic groups of Nepal is a must. Fighting and violence among the people on the basis of their ethnic identity, religion, culture, norms and values differences weaken the national unity (Singh, 2066 BS). Nepali people must advocate against regionalism, ethno-nationalism, religious extremism, and sectarian secession of the country. At the same time, a collective struggle is required against any types of exploitation, injustice, or oppression to ethnic groups on the basis of their norms, values, religion, and language. This paper doubts how long this situation will be maintained in the context of global socio-political order, the development of new communication technologies, and their use. In an obsolete sense, every community has a dominant and marginalized group, and they may vary by their political power, affluence of resources, knowledge, skills, social networks, demographic features, education, and health condition. Marginalization and dominant groups are observed in a collective sense of broader ethnic identity, an epistemological problem.

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