

## **NATION, NATION-STATE, AND NATIONALISM: EVALUATING ‘JANUS FACE’ OF NATIONALISM**

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***Abstract:** Nationalism has played a significant role in bringing people together and removing differences among them, but at the same time, it has also been used as an instrument of dividing the world in different camps and groups. It has helped create feelings of love and assimilation for the fellow beings, but at the same time, it has sowed the seeds of hatred, enmity, and intolerance among the people belonging to different races, religions, and sects. The article delineates this Janus Face of Nationalism. The article disambiguates polysemy attached with the term ‘nationalism’; traces its origin in political as well as cultural connotations; dissertates its historical perspective in eastern and western political thought; and analyzes its positive and negative instrumentalities.*

**Keywords:** Nationalism, Nation-State, Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, Globalization, Industrialization, Modernization

### **Introduction**

Present era is considered an era of globalization. The world is getting closer and closer by the process of migration and integration. In fact, due to increasing international trade, massive use of telecommunication, and global web of Multi National Corporations (MNCs), the state boundaries are diminishing. Nationalism somehow seems an out dated concept and a relic of colonialism, particularly in the third world countries. Apparently, nationalism does not have the charm and flare, it used to have in past. However, the expression of nationalistic sentiments in our daily routine matters seems quite evident. It is reflected in national anthems, songs, literature, arts, and sports. Iraqi resistance to America, Palestinian struggle against Israel, and Afghan war are

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manifestations of national consciousness to secure a separate identity. Before elaborating nationalism, it seems appropriate to know what is meant by ‘nation’. In this regard, Benedict Anderson writes:

Nation is an imagined political community because most of the members of even the smallest nation will never know, meet, and hear most of the members of their nation. Yet, they still feel themselves linked to each other.<sup>1</sup>

According to a report by Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, “Nation was formerly used in German in a cultural rather than in political sense of the word”.<sup>2</sup> While Craig Calhoun is of the opinion:

Recognition as a nation clearly requires social solidarity. Some level of integration among the members of the ostensible nation, and collective identity – the recognition of the whole by its members and a sense of individual self that includes membership in the whole.<sup>3</sup>

On the same topic, Eugene Kamenka writes:

Nations have arisen, most commonly, around a centralized state; the boundaries of that state have been the result of various, and often, unrelated factors. Language, territory, religion, economic ties,

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (New York: Verso publication, 1983), p. 7

<sup>2</sup> E. H. Carr, et al., *Nationalism: Report by a Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. xix

<sup>3</sup> Craig Calhoun, *Nationalism*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 4

political authority, and racial origin have all done their work and left their mark; but none of these can be treated as decisive. It is not true that ‘blood’ determines ideas, or that ‘race’ is unaffected by environment.<sup>4</sup>

For many writers, nation or nation-state is an old concept, but nationalism is relatively a new phenomenon and product of modern age. It is not easy to explain nationalism, in a concise and comprehensive manner, owing to diversity of this concept. Nationalism is not a product of single historical incident, but it has been shaped by different phases of history and contains cultural and ethnic orientations.

This is all the more so because, unlike most other political doctrines, nationalism has no clear founding theorists, no classical text which others can refer to, or argue about. It is what philosophers sometimes call a ‘cluster-concept’, i.e., an idea with several elements usually attached.<sup>5</sup>

In the words of Anderson, “it has not produced grand thinkers, ‘no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes, or Webers.’”<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, nationalism is generally associated with wars, conflicts, and freedom struggles. It goes without saying that nationalism is a broader term that encompasses many other aspects of our lives. Nationalism can be understood in terms of cultural distinctiveness of various nations, and also includes other features like language, religion, race, area, political system, public administration, and education system. In simple words, nationalism is that how people perceive themselves as part of this larger world community.

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<sup>4</sup> Eugene Kamenka, *Nationalism: the Nature and Evolution of an Idea*, (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1976), p. 12

<sup>5</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: an Introduction to International Relations*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 524

<sup>6</sup> Benedict Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 5

Nationalism makes people proud of their culture, traditions, and values; and inculcates feelings of loyalties towards the group they belonged to. Each one is part of a particular community or nation and owes loyalty to it. Fred Halliday points out:

An individual has three possible objects on to which to attach his or her primary loyalty: the nation state, some community that is larger than, or goes beyond, the state (religion, the working class, humanity as a whole, Europe), or a grouping that is smaller than, contained within, the state (the family, tribe, local community, business enterprise). Prior to the rise of nationalism, the choice was usually for some combination of the religious and the local or family unit.<sup>7</sup>

In this regard, Ernest Gellner has provided a concise definition: “nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that political and national should be congruent.”<sup>8</sup> Hans Kohn interprets nationalism:

(It) is a political creed that underlies the cohesion of modern societies and legitimizes their claim to authority. Nationalism centers the supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people upon the nation-state, either existing or desired.<sup>9</sup>

### **Nationalism in Historical Perspective**

If history of nationalism is to be traced, one can come across divergent views. According to Greenfield, “Some consider Napoleonic wars as crucial to sparking national consciousness or the

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<sup>7</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 533

<sup>8</sup> Richard Caplan and John Feffer, *Europe's New Nationalism: States and Minorities in Conflict*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 48

<sup>9</sup> Hans Kohn, et al., “Nationalism”, in, *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 11, (1968), p. 63

tensions that led to the English Civil War". Anderson finds nationalism "in Latin American independence movements." Similarly, Breuilly Kedouri and Calhoun claim, "German reaction to pragmatism was also because of nationalism".

However, some writers associate nationalism with the Colonization, Industrialization, and Modernization, which compelled a particular group of people to consider them as a part of the larger community and shun their loyalties towards their tribes and clans, predominantly for economic reasons. In Ernest Gellner's words:

Nationalism does not have any deep roots in the human psyche. Men have felt patriotic attachments to larger social groups for as long as these groups have existed, but it was not until the Industrial Revolution that these groups were defined as linguistically and culturally homogenous entities.<sup>10</sup>

While Anderson finds the rise of nationalism linked with the diminishing importance of religion in the Eighteenth Century. In his perception, it filled the gap created by religion in Western Europe. It was an outcome of Machiavelli's secular approach, which was later on nourished by Martin Luther and John Locke:

In Western Europe, the Eighteenth Century marks not only the dawn of the age of nationalism, but the dusk of religious modes of thought. The century of the Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism, brought with it its own modern darkness.<sup>11</sup>

Machiavelli is regarded as the first Political Scientist who supported the idea of secularism and nationalism, and stressed the separation of religion from politics. According to Ernst Cassirer, "Machiavelli developed a new political science, just as Galileo had

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<sup>10</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, (London: Penguin Books, 1992), pp. 268-269

<sup>11</sup> Benedict Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 11

founded a new science of nature".<sup>12</sup> Judd Harmon's opinion about Machiavelli corroborates the point:

Machiavelli's approach is purely temporal. Religion and Church are considered, but only insofar as they relate to the matter of the secular unity. Machiavelli rejects all those theological foundations for government that had been part and parcel of medieval thought.<sup>13</sup>

His ideas were considered "modern" because Machiavelli took politics out of religious context. This not only reduced the influence of clergy on politics, but also fostered the idea of a nation state. Martin Luther, another great supporter of secularism, also intended to separate the Church from the state. Instead of finding happiness in eternal life after death, he advocated finding happiness in this life. Similarly, according to John Locke, "Government exists to protect life, liberty, and property. Civil society has civil function; it does not exist to compel men to believe particular religious doctrines or to join religious groups."<sup>14</sup> Nationalism was based on a criterion that the entire world is divided into nations and groups, and all groups should be allowed to have their own national self government to be able to live peacefully. Fred Halliday has mentioned three important phases of history responsible for the emergence of the idea of nationalism:

The first phase of history is associated with the thinking of Enlightenment and in the thinking of Jean Jacques Rousseau and John Stuart Mill. This later led to the idea of self-determination of nations. The second phase was the French Revolution of 1789: the

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<sup>12</sup> Ernest Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1955), p. 163

<sup>13</sup> M. Judd Harmon, *Political Thought: from Plato to the Present*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964, Reprinted by Nizami Press, Lahore, 1988), p. 159

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 256

opponents of the monarch called themselves la nation, i.e., 'the nation'. French Revolution also raised the slogan of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. The third phase of democratic and political conception of 'nation' was the German romantic idea of the Volk or people, a community based not so much on political identity but on history, tradition, and culture.<sup>15</sup>

A section of scholars associate nationalism with the Industrialization. This phenomenon compelled people of different areas to gather at industrial hubs. So, they left their natives area and settled in industrial cities of different regions of the country. In fact, the Industrial Revolution ushered a new system of remuneration, in which workers began to get regular wages for their labor. In traditional agricultural economy, the 'barter system' was in practice, where a person would get commodities as reward for his labor. But this mechanism did not give purchasing power to the laboring people. Thus, in the Industrial Revolution, work was rewarded with money which attracted people to work in industries. Moreover, money gave them purchasing power and enabled them to improve their lives. Industrialization also generated rural-urban migration and mitigated the influence of feudalism socially, economically, and politically. Thus industrial towns and cities became centers of commercial activities. Consequently, the middle class assumed an important place in political order and became an instrument for some important revolutions. Therefore, revolutions in France and the America at the end of the 18th century enable common people to seek power sharing.

The Industrial Revolution brought infinite possibilities for the elevation of the standard of living and the promotion of the welfare of men; but it also

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<sup>15</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 524

evolved new opportunities for oppression and abuse.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, Industrialization led the era of an egalitarian and civilized society. This further paved the way for the emergence of a common language and common interests among them. Francis Fukuyama writes:

Rulers and Ruled had begun to speak the same language because both were intertwined in a national economy; peasants moving from the countryside had to be made literate in that language and given sufficient education to enable them to work in modern factories, and eventually, offices.<sup>17</sup>

It goes without saying that due to the Industrial Revolution, different societies were integrated by market forces and by modern and fast means of communications, like railways and roads. It further led to the emergence of the democratic, egalitarian societies, particularly in Europe. However, in the third world countries, it was the process of European colonization based on the centralized system that actually inspired and unified those divided and disintegrated societies.

Some scholars have contested this argument that nationalism was a new concept. They argue that, in history, it existed in the form of ethnic loyalties of people towards their clans or tribes, and that nationalism is just an extension of loyalties. They seem quite close to the very concept of '*Asabiyah*' (Active Group of Mind) of Ibn Khaldun, which emerges due to belongingness of an individual to his birth place, religion, culture, and society.

It is '*Asabiyah*' which makes the tribes of the desert retain their independence, which lasts only so long as it exists; in the same way a family can hold its own

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<sup>16</sup> UNESCO (ed.), *Human Rights Comments and Interpretations*, (London: Allan Wingate, 1948), p. 25

<sup>17</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 269

against others only so long as it retains its 'Asabiyah'. In the long run, heterogeneity may not be a bar to independent existence if the people have got that Group Mind apart from their consanguinity. He says that the active Group Mind produces the ability to defend oneself, to offer opposition to protect oneself, and to press one's claim.<sup>18</sup>

Sherwani compliments Ibn Khaldun in these words:

One of the great contributions of Ibn Khaldun is his theory of 'Asabiyah' or Group Mind. It is the active element which makes a group not merely to remain independent, but also to make other groups with a weaker group mind, subservient to it.

He (Ibn Khaldun) says that the state, daulat, is founded on two moral principles, the active Group Mind and religion.<sup>19</sup>

Before the modern times, nationalism meant only the people linked with their place of birth and culture, but did not have political connotations. Against this backdrop, Calhoun quotes Anthony Smith:

Nationalism has stronger roots in pre-modern ethnicity. He acknowledges it cannot be seen as primordial or natural, but nonetheless argues that they are rooted in relatively ancient histories and in ethnic consciousnesses.<sup>20</sup>

It is also noted that many nationalist movements refer to their ethnic origin and uniqueness of their culture. Even the kinship

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<sup>18</sup> Haroon Khan Sherwani, *Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration*, (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Publishers, 1942, reprinted 2007), p. 198

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197

<sup>20</sup> Craig Calhoun, *op. cit.*, p. 4

descent also played a vital role in nationalistic struggle, especially in the third world countries of Africa and Asia, where people were strongly tied to their clans, families, and other closely knit groups. Therefore, in such underdeveloped societies, nationhood is evoked through loyalties for tribe and clan. People consider themselves a part of a large family sharing same history and culture. Ibn Khaldun also presented same views, while explaining '*Asabiyah*':

The simplest form of a Group Mind would be based on consanguinity, either real as in the case of a family, or artificial as in the case of a whole tribe, but the essential thing is that there should be an active Group Mind, ready to hold its own against other groups.

The desideratum of '*Asabiyah*' is the sense of oneness, the resolve to work together for common purposes, and in no case to be dominated by other group.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, Anthony D. Smith attaches nationalism with Modernism:

At the outset, nationalism was an inclusive and liberating force. It broke down various localisms of region, dialect, custom, and clan, and helped to create large and powerful nation-states with centralized markets and systems of administration, taxation, and education. Its appeal was popular and democratic. It attacked feudal practices and oppressive imperial tyrannies, and proclaimed the sovereignty of the people and the right of all peoples to determine their own destinies in states of their own, if that was what they desired.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Haroon Khan Sherwani, *op. cit.*, p. 197

<sup>22</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 1

With the culmination of 20<sup>th</sup> Century, nationalism came across new dimensions, owing to globalization and consciousness of cultural identities. In this period, European nationalists stressed immigration control. This century also saw the horror of World War I and World War II, fought in the names of nations. The same also witnessed anti-Semitism based on nationalistic rhetoric. Calhoun interprets, “And it was in this period that nationalism became most conclusively identified, in the European context, with movements for secession rather than amalgamation of existing states.”<sup>23</sup> Gellner says in this regard: “Nationalism was understood as modern, and nations as effects rather than causes of nationalism.”<sup>24</sup> Nationalism again surfaced in late 1980s, with the breakup of the Soviet Union and during the civil war in former Yugoslavia, the fight between Armenians and Azeris, and the conflict in Chechnya. These incidents compelled scholars to focus the motivations behind these conflicts. Suddenly, the communities, who have been living together for centuries, were being forced by the majority to leave their homes in the name of ‘ethnic cleansing’. Even the former communist leaders like Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia used nationalist rhetoric to legitimize mass killing of civilian population.

The goal was not totally different from nationalism throughout the world – the attempt to control a territory, within which people were of a single ethnicity, spoke a single language, shared a single religion.<sup>25</sup>

### **Janus Face of Nationalism**

Much of literature written on nationalism highlighted the dualistic approaches towards nationalism. One section seems liberal and compassionate, the other reactionary and detrimental. One group of scholars perceive it as a new phenomenon emerged in the

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<sup>23</sup> Craig Calhoun, *op. cit.*, p. 18

<sup>24</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), p. xxxi

<sup>25</sup> Craig Calhoun, *op. cit.*, p. 62

aftermath of the Industrialization, while the other considers it as an extension of the old age kinship and group loyalties based on ethnicity. However, most of the scholars do not have consensus about the concept of nationalism.

As far as ‘Janus Face’ of the concept of nationalism is concerned, Spencer and Wollman have tried to distinguish between Western and Eastern, political and cultural, civic and ethnic, and liberal and conservative types of nationalisms. They are of the opinion:

Nationalism developed in the West was the product of Enlightenment, the age of reason, an essential expression of the confidence of rational (and especially) bourgeois individuals wishing to pursue their legitimate interests.<sup>26</sup>

Eastern nationalism by contrast, according to them, developed in a particular environment along different lines, and importantly, in reaction to accomplishments of the West. Such writers suggest that the eastern model of nationalistic struggle is inferior to the western model, because eastern nationalism is product of colonialism, and it has no comparison with the rationalistic western model. These scholars also distinguish it on the basis of political (western) and cultural (eastern) nationalism. These writers find western nationalism in the Enlightenment aiming at limiting governmental powers and securing civil rights of the people.

English and American nationalism was revolt against absolutism, while the cultural form of nationalism which emerged in the third world countries was primarily driven by political consciousness against non-participant feudal or imperial system of governance. Their movement was based “not in reason but in emotion, not in the present but in the

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<sup>26</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2002), p. 97

past, turning inwards, to the imagination, to tradition, to history and to nature.”<sup>27</sup>

The ‘anti’ element was quite strong in the eastern model, often directed against Europeans among the people of third world countries. But an important point, ignored by these writers, was that the most of the nationalistic struggles in Asia or other third world countries were mostly led by the people studied in western institutions. The western type of education promoted the ideals of liberty, equality, fraternity, and democracy. It gave inspiration to the down trodden people of colonies to struggle for the same. Therefore, in many parts of Asia, it influenced the people in the same way as it had influenced the people in the West.

Both English and continental European political philosophers and statesman influenced Asian nationalistic movements. John Stuart Mill was often quoted, especially in India. Locke and Rousseau were referred to and Mazzini had a political attraction.<sup>28</sup>

So it will not be out of context to say that a section of writers have misunderstood the nationalist struggles in developing countries. They have ignored that the same tendencies were also present in the Western societies, for example France, in movements such as “Action Francaise to defend French Culture”.<sup>29</sup> In fact, nationalism was very smartly used by many third world leaders to motivate and unite people on one platform against the nexus of local feudalistic system and foreign rule, which would not have been possible in such divided and backward societies. The people who were the torch bearers of such movements shaped their political future in Western universities.

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99

<sup>28</sup> J. Kennedy, *Asian Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Macmillan, 1968), p. 89

<sup>29</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *op. cit.*, p. 100

The story of individual relationships between Asians and Europeans provides at times fascinating and revealing glimpses of the personal background of Asian nationalist leaders. Tunku Abdul Rahman, the later Prime Minister of Malaya and Malaysia, did not take to politics early in life but he carried memories of his student days in Cambridge and London when, on occasion, he became deeply conscious of his race and country.<sup>30</sup>

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder, and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, the National Poet of Pakistan, also got their education from Europe. M. K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru of India also belonged to the same category.

Some writers also distinguish nationalism as civic and ethnic. "Civic nationalism maintains that the nation should be composed of all those – regardless of race, color, creed, gender, language or ethnicity – who ascribe to nation's political creed."<sup>31</sup> Thus, the civic nation is 'an association of citizens' with rights and obligations. Most of the Western nations now-a-days claim the same. In the ethnic model by contrast, the nation is first and foremost considered a community of common descent, determined by birth or blood. Arab nationalism is a classical example.

In 1919, King Faisal of Syria, in a reaction against Turkish nationalism, publically declared the Arabs to be one people living in a defined region, and went on to say of the Arab people that they Arabs before being Muslims and that Muhammad was an Arab before being a prophet.<sup>32</sup>

Many such political leaders used the rhetoric of nationalism to boost freedom struggle and to get mass support. Similarly, numerous democratic regimes in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century

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<sup>30</sup> J. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 85

<sup>31</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *op. cit.*, p. 101

<sup>32</sup> J. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 98

have used nationalism as a slogan to win peoples' support for success in elections. Calhoun says in this regard, "Nationalism is the rhetoric or discourse in which attempts are made to establish who the relevant people are".<sup>33</sup>

Nationalism, on one hand, played a very important role by bringing people together and removing petty differences among them. On the other hand, it is also used as an instrument for dividing the world in different camps and groups. On one side, it created the feelings of love and assimilation for its fellow beings, and at the same time, it also sowed the seeds of hatred, enmity, and intolerance among the people belonging to different races, religions, and sects. Israel-Palestine confrontation in Middle East and Tamil-Sinhalese conflict in Sri Lanka are examples of this. The Janus Face of Nationalism is obvious from the very fact that it both underpins and challenges the stability and security of states. The paradox is, therefore, that nationalism, the doctrine that stands for the separateness of peoples, was the product of international and globalizing trends.

Paradoxically, Industrialization and Modernization, on one hand, are responsible for bringing people closer and making them part of an integrated world than member of a small community. On the other hand, in a counter reaction, it aroused among people consciousness about the group they belong to. Therefore, arguments in favor of nationalism and against it carry weight. It can be described as a long historical development of people, and at the same time, a recent response to social change. Feminists are also very skeptical of the Janus Face of nationalism, as it has used gender in nationalist rhetoric.

They are seen as physical producers of the nation: they are 'nationalist wombs', they are also seen as social reproducer and cultural transmitters, and to raise a generation to fight against foreign aggression and onslaught.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Craig Calhoun, *op. cit.*, p. 123

<sup>34</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 680

In Indian culture '*Dharti Mata*' means 'Mother-land'. Nation is often represented as a female under threat of violation or domination, and it was the responsibility of males to protect her life and honor against foreign aggression. It shows that gender issue was always an overriding element in wars. Feminist writers have criticized the way nationalistic movements have used gender for their advantage. As the founder of modern nationalist theory, Mazzini made clear: "Nationalism was, above all, about obedience. The use made of nationalist and anti-imperialist arguments to discredit and silence feminist movements in recent years is indication enough of this".<sup>35</sup> Halliday quotes Virginia Woolf:

She will find that she has no good reason to ask her brother to fight on her behalf to protect 'our' country. "Our country", she will say, throughout the greater part of its history has treated me as a slave; .As a woman I have no country. As a woman my country is the whole world.<sup>36</sup>

Though national identity is a source of solidarity to bring people together despite their differences, yet it can be used as a 'trump card' to sharpen their differences. It is said that nationalism and democracy have been closely related since the French Revolution, but according to some scholars, there is inherently nothing democratic in nationalism. Fukuyama is of the opinion:

The dignity nationalists seek to have recognized is not universal human dignity, but dignity for their group. The demand for this kind of recognition leads potentially to conflict with other groups, seeking recognition for their particular dignity.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1994), pp. 161-162

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 266

According to Spencer and Wollman, “each oppressed nation, as soon as liberated (even before), considers its more urgent task to exercise an analogous oppression over its own national minorities.”<sup>38</sup> In a world of globalization, people began to demand not integration into larger states, but secession, independence, and access to the world market on their own terms. Similarly, the collapse of the Soviet Union also led to another form of nationalist drive – a drive for national unification, evident in Germany, Yemen, and Korea. “The link between globalization and nationalism in one case is fragmentation, through secession, while in the second case it was through unification, through fusion.”<sup>39</sup>

### **Positive and Negative Use of Nationalism**

From the time of the Glorious Revolution in Great Britain or the French Revolution up till 1848, liberalism and nationalism were closely entwined.

Kant and Mill, in a crucial way, lay the foundations for the rapprochement of liberalism and nationalism by emphasizing that nations should have the right to self-determination. And free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities.<sup>40</sup>

While Lord Acton vehemently rejected this notion as he saw nationality as a confutation of democracy. “The combination of different nations in one state is as necessary a condition of civilized society as the combination of men in society.”<sup>41</sup> Such writers condemn nationalism, and argue that all nationalisms, either positive or negative, based on patriotism or ethnicity, divide people on a ‘we-them’ criterion; in which ‘them’ are enemies, who generally pose potential military threats and have to be excluded from the claimed

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<sup>38</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *op. cit.*, p. 14

<sup>39</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 523

<sup>40</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *op. cit.*, p. 7

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

territory'. Such forms of nationalism are generally referred as negative nationalism, as it discriminates people on ethnic, cultural, regional, sectarian or religious bases. Various examples can be found in Eastern Europe, where people were distinguished on the basis of 'we' and 'them'. It is referred to the group of people belonging to same culture, generally known as 'ethnie', label acquired through birthright and not assimilation into that society. This rigid or negative form of nationalism forces people to kill their fellow human beings, living with them for centuries, in the name of 'Ethnic cleansing'. "Even the Western Europe had experienced such hostile nationalistic movements like 'the National Front in France, the Neo-fascists in Italy, or the Neo-Nazis in Germany".<sup>42</sup> Most of these nationalisms are characterized by their hostilities to foreigners. Such societies always suppressed the minorities and people belonging to other races, religions, or ideologies. Such examples can be seen in former Yugoslavia and even in democracies like India and Sri Lanka. Many liberals (such as Popper and Hayek) are of the view that "nationalism is 'a collectivist ideology threatening the freedoms, rights, and security of the individuals.'"<sup>43</sup>

Nationalism, many a time in history, proved a cause of conflicts, ethnic massacres, genocides, unending skirmishes, conflicts, and wars. By making irreconcilable claims to territory, nationalism has become a curse of modern age. It has a tendency to adopt extremist policies in order to achieve its objectives, for example, racial intolerance, hatred for foreigners, chauvinism, and ethnic cleansing. It also created a sense of superiority over other communities and nations, and a desire to rule them as Hitler undertook. Nationalism made people so introvert that they were not ready to listen any criticism, and considered it interference in their matters. It also invoked narrow mindedness on cultural front. At the same time, "nationalist rhetoric is also used 'to represent the opposing claims to autonomy on the part of subject peoples and

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<sup>42</sup> Richard Caplan and John Feffer, *op. cit.*, p. 48

<sup>43</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *op. cit.*, p. 8

those who refuse integration into growing nation-state".<sup>44</sup> Calhoun interprets in these words:

While forging unity people always resort to violence and brutality. He has largely treated nationalism as a kind of second-order political movement based on a false consciousness that ethnicity helps to produce.<sup>45</sup>

Nationalism is considered a major hindrance in the way of economic and social integration of various parts of the world. People are not ready to leave their identities for collective good, as India and Pakistan in South Asia. It looks strange that nationalism is undesirable on domestic grounds if it creates an environment of intolerance and dictatorship. Nationalist rhetoric is often exploited by state leaders to justify their illegitimate rules and actions, and to oppress minorities living in the same community. Spencer and Wollman quote Habermas that he has rejected the very concept of nation-state based on the concept of nationalism as an outdated concept, and preferred cosmopolitanism over nationalism. He favored a world citizenship as against people divided into different classes and groups. He argued that the framework of nation-state may have been necessary for the development of democracy, but a democratic country is not necessary to be homogeneous one. He suggested that "a constitutional polity be open to all, that commitment to the polity was to its rules not to a specific (national) community."<sup>46</sup> He favored universal human rights, looking for the development of agencies and organizations that can enforce such rights beyond and against nation-states. He intended to remove all barriers which are discriminatory and are hindrance in the way of equal opportunities for all citizens of the world. It is on the same grounds that world has ignored many genuine nationalistic movements, as according to some scholars, inclusion of more states will create disorder, overload, and indecision. Similar kind of opinion was given by the then British Foreign Secretary, Douglas

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<sup>44</sup> Craig Calhoun, *op. cit.*, p. 124

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54

<sup>46</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *op. cit.*, p. 191

Hurd, at a meeting at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London, in 1993: “I hope we do not see the creation of any more nation-state”.<sup>47</sup> They argue that if a community living in one country is allowed to secede then it would become impossible to deny the same right to other minorities living in that community. They are of the opinion that it would encourage other minorities demand for right of self determination. The international community is, therefore, hesitant to recognize various ongoing nationalistic movements in different parts of the world.

But the scholars of this opinion have ignored the positive influence of nationalism in many parts of the world. Nationalist rhetoric played an important role in the process of unification among those nations who were historically divided but are now maintaining successful federations. Moreover, nationalism contains an emotional power and calls for self-sacrifice in the common interest of a nation. What is distinctive about nationalist rhetoric is in times of crisis, the claims of the whole nation get priority over sectional and community attachments. Nationality, thus, becomes an established identity that overshadows various minor identities, for example, tribes, clans, religions, and ethnic groups. As Caplan and Feffer are of the view, “As an ideology, nationalism is a state building and state maintaining ideology; as politics, nationalism is the politics of the state, by the state and for the state.”<sup>48</sup> They criticize that it has become a cliché to consider nationalism the “plague” of the late twentieth century.

The most important and positive aspect of nationalism is that it binds people together. People become emotionally attached, as it gives a feeling of belonging to a land or a larger group of people. It not only moves people emotionally, but also provides them a sense of identity, recognition, and respect as a larger group, that is, nation in the comity of nations and complex world. Baylis and Smith quote four important factors given by Halliday in favor of nationalism:

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<sup>47</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 531

<sup>48</sup> Richard Caplan and John Feffer, *op. cit.*, p. 60

First, nationalism does provide a principle of legitimacy that underpins the modern state system. It suggests that states can, and should, represent their peoples, and hence they derive legitimacy from them. Second, nationalism is a realization of democratic principles. Third, nationalism serves a very important psychological function as it provides a sense of belonging, of where one is coming from, of a past and a future, and of what the appropriate forms of cultural expression should be. Fourth, nationalism has been and remains one of the great sources of human creativity and diversity—the explosion of nationalism has had enormous consequences for art, literature, music, language, sport, much else besides, not least gastronomy.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, combining different communities and areas in one political unit make it more economically viable and defendable. In fact, nationalism itself is not a bad concept if one uses it in a positive way. Feelings of belongingness to family, group, and clan are quite natural. Nationalistic movements during the last centuries helped people living in Asia and Africa to rise against foreign subjugations and oppression, and to fight for their right of self determination. Nationalism helped them to live with dignity and on equal footings in the comity of world. No doubt, sometimes such loyalties and emotional attachments are used by leaders, especially by some ideologues, for their vested interests. They even do not hesitate to use extremist ways and methods to materialize their objectives. People were misused and misled in the name of nationalism. But it does not mean that, on this pretext, one should out rightly reject all nationalistic movements under going in the world. People are still fighting in different parts of the world to get themselves emancipated from the sub-judications.

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<sup>49</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 532

## Conclusion

It is a fact that scholars have varying and conflicting opinions regarding the origin, nature, concept, and history of nationalism. Some trace it in the recent history; for them, it is relatively a new concept emerged during the process of industrialization and colonization. They are of the opinion that the development in the means of communication, media, vernacular, census, and map-making instigated and generated consciousness among people for their ethnic groups and identities. This consciousness and awareness about their identities and origins led to various conflicts and wars. Similarly, many countries emerged on the map on the basis of such linguistic, cultural, religious, and ideological differences. Many scholars consider it a transitional phase, and argue that with the political maturity and under the growing economic integration in different regions of the world – like European Union (EU), North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – this nationalistic rhetoric would not hold ground. As the world has become a global village, economic integration and regional associations have made the boundaries quite irrelevant. The concept of world citizenship, cosmopolitanism, and federalism has compelled people to shun their prejudices, and think in terms of a plural society. But the incidents of 9/11 have proved to be a shocking blow, making the concept of world cosmopolitanism and federalism quite difficult to materialize. It has sharpened differences among religions, particularly between Islam and Christianity. Many perceive that it is the similar atmosphere of intolerance that existed during the Crusades between the two great divine religions having the largest followings in the world. So it can be said that it is a new Crusades of 21<sup>st</sup> century. If such negative feelings and atmosphere of distrust continue to exist, it can bring about the ‘Clash of Civilizations’, and it would be an unprecedented disaster for the humanity. The current world scenario also strengthens the perception of those who consider that nationalism as a concept was always there and it will remain there in future with its Janus Face, having positive as well as negative aspects.

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