

NATIONALISM

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ABSTRACT

"Nationalism is a sacred passion, a great moral and ethical belief, a social expression on a national plane, immense love for the country. It is an infrangibly notion to treat loyalty to one's nation superior to all other loyalties".

A true nationalist is one who regards his country as the cause of his existence and ready to abandon his own interests for its welfare. An avowed nationalist never minds sacrificing everything including his life for the cause of the nation. People adore and glorify him as an incarnation of super being. Poets compose verses in honor of his deeds and everyone pray for his immortality. After death he is treated as an eternal foundation of inspiration, an ideal to be followed by all, and a beacon light which shows right path even after his departure.

Key words: Nationalism

NATIONALISM

Nationalism is a modern movement. Throughout history people have been attached to their native soil, to the traditions of their parents, and to established territorial authorities, but it was not until the end of the 18th century that nationalism began to be a generally recognized sentiment molding public and private life and one of the great, if not the greatest, single determining factors of modern history. Because of its dynamic vitality and its all-pervading character, nationalism is often thought to be very old; sometimes it is mistakenly regarded as a permanent factor in political behavior. Actually, the American and French revolutions may be regarded as its first powerful manifestations. After penetrating the new countries of Latin America, it spread in the early 19th century to central Europe and from there, toward the middle of the century, to eastern and southeastern Europe. At the beginning of the 20th century, nationalism flowered in Asia and Africa. Thus, the 19th century has been called the age of nationalism in Europe, while the 20th century witnessed the rise and struggle of powerful national movements throughout Asia and Africa.

Nationalism is an idea and movement that holds that the nation should be congruent with the state. As a movement, nationalism tends to promote the interests of a particular nation (as in a group of people), especially with the aim of gaining and maintaining the nation's sovereignty (self-governance) over its homeland to create a nation-state. Nationalism holds that each nation should govern itself, free from outside interference (self-determination), that a nation is a natural and ideal basis for a polity, and that the nation is the only rightful source of political power. It further aims to build and maintain a single national identity, based on a combination of shared social characteristics such as culture, ethnicity, geographic location, language, politics (or the government), religion, traditions and belief in a shared singular history, and to promote national unity or solidarity. Nationalism, therefore, seeks to preserve and foster a nation's traditional culture. There are various definitions of a "nation", which leads to different types of nationalism. The two main divergent forms are ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism.

Nationalism can't be treated as a passive things or inconspicuous way of leading life. It is such an active and self motivated, inner emotion which urges him to do and dare any things for the history of our freedom struggle where for the cause of motherland, many suffered unimaginable hardships and many sacrificed their lives for the causes of nation. Shaheed Bhaget Singh, Bal Gandgadhhar Tilak, Subhash Chandra Bose, Bipin Chandra Pal, Chandra Shekhar, Mahatma Gandhi and so many, who had never cared for their own comfort and they lived for the cause of the Motherland and die, were the true nationalists.

The love and attachment to one's motherland is not unnatural, its root lies in the affection he receives since he born, plays, nurtures in that land. Everyone has the feeling of nationalism, love for his country. An unknown poet has beautifully coded the following lines that show the feeling of immense love for the motherland: "O for a glimpse of my Motherland so fair! O for a breath of its sweet scented air there let me live and oh, there let me die! There is sweet silence my dead body shall lay".

Evils of Nationalism:

Nothing is wrong in loving one's country, nothing is wrong in having loyalty to one's country, but if the love and loyalty becomes so strong, that it resulted into hatred for all other countrymen, and other nations it becomes an evil. Blind nationalism dwarfs the mind just as Chinese woman's unnatural shoes compress and distorts her feet. Nationalism, when outruns its reasonable limits, becomes organized hypocrisy, creates hatred for other nations. Extreme nationalism glorifies war. Nationalism when diverted from the path of reason and common good, quite often loses its sacred instincts and degenerates into aggressive attitude of nationalism. A nationalist without high moral and ethical considerations, adores his country blindly and treats all other people of the earth as downright barbarians, deserving for his countrymen no better treatment. Cecil Rhodes wrote in his will: "I contend that the British race is the finest which history has yet produced."

Many European nations carried out the mission of their dominance and tried to implant the same by force over other countries. Nationalism, if mixes with the unworthy motives, and self-centered greed for power and imperialistic motives, become the worst cause to destroy and destruct the existence of civilization in the

world. The foolishness of an irrational nationalism can well be seen in the writings of Rupert Brooke who wrote that when he died he wished to go to an English Heaven.

Owing to such parochial feelings, some of the eminent philanthropists and enlightened thinkers of present time has advocated the idea of cosmopolitanism that means the whole world is the nation of everyone. The theory of cosmopolitanism discards the boundaries of countries and everyone is the citizen of the world. It says that in the present age of globalization, scientific inventions, space research has brought the world closer wonderfully, so it shall be a folly to talk of nationalism. The ideals of nationalism are nothing but an orthodoxical narrow thinking concept, has no relevance in this world of scientific and technological advancement. If we honestly look the things in the present perspective, lacs of Indians are living well in various countries throughout the world, they have their allegiance with the respective country and emotionally attached with India, their motherland. Lacs of foreign nationals are visiting India, some settles here, many foreign companies and their employees are earning from our country, our companies have their employees and offices settled in foreign countries, the boundaries among the nations has just remained the boundaries for the sake of getting passport and visas. In such situation, talking of nationalism looks redundant. Now people have started thinking of good for all human races, for all the civilization of the earth. The idea of cosmopolitanism is, slowly and gradually started, getting recognition and acceptance now-a-days.

Conclusion:

Despite of various evils of nationalism, or extreme nationalism, it is a natural feeling acquired not by any technical means, but by birth and is a virtue by itself. As loving one's mother, father, can't be a bad, likewise loving one's country is also not bad, but hatred of other nations is indeed the worst of nationalism.

Loyalty and devotion to one's nation or country, especially as above loyalty to other groups or to individual interests. Before the era of the nation-state, the primary allegiance of most people was to their immediate locality or religious group. The rise of large, centralized states weakened local authority, and society's increasing secularization weakened loyalty to religious groups, though shared religion—along

with common ethnicity, political heritage, and history—is one of the factors that draw people together in nationalist movements. Early nationalist movements in 18th- and early 19th-century Europe were liberal and internationalist, but they gradually became more conservative and parochial. Nationalism is considered a major contributing cause of World War I, World War II, and many other wars of the modern era. In Africa and Asia in the 20th century, nationalist movements often arose in opposition to colonialism. After the fall of the Soviet Union, powerful nationalist sentiments in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics contributed to ethnic conflicts, such as those in the territories of the former Yugoslavia.

Critics of nationalism have argued that it is often unclear what constitutes a nation, or whether a nation is a legitimate unit of political rule. Nationalists hold that the boundaries of a nation and a state should coincide with one another, thus nationalism tends to oppose multiculturalism. It can also lead to conflict when more than one national group finds itself claiming rights to a particular territory or seeking to take control of the state.

Philosopher A. C. Grayling describes nations as artificial constructs, "their boundaries drawn in the blood of past wars". He argues that "there is no country on earth which is not home to more than one different but usually coexisting culture. Cultural heritage is not the same thing as national identity".

Nationalism is considered by its critics to be inherently divisive, as adherents may draw upon and highlight perceived differences between people, emphasizing an individual's identification with their own nation. They also consider the idea to be potentially oppressive, because it can submerge individual identity within a national whole and give elites or political leaders potential opportunities to manipulate or control the masses. Much of the early opposition to nationalism was related to its geopolitical ideal of a separate state for every nation. The classic nationalist movements of the 19th century rejected the very existence of the multi-ethnic empires in Europe. However, even in that early stage there was an ideological critique of nationalism which has developed into several forms

of internationalism and anti-nationalism. The Islamic revival of the 20th century also produced an Islamist critique of the nation-state. (see Pan-Islamism)

At the end of the 19th century, Marxists and other socialists and communists (such as Rosa Luxemburg) produced political analyses that were critical of the nationalist movements then active in Central and Eastern Europe, although a variety of other contemporary socialists and communists, from Vladimir Lenin (a communist) to [Józef Piłsudski](#) (a socialist), were more sympathetic to national self-determination.

In his classic essay on the topic, George Orwell distinguishes nationalism from patriotism which he defines as devotion to a particular place. More abstractly, nationalism is "power-hunger tempered by self-deception". For Orwell, the nationalist is more likely than not dominated by irrational negative impulses:

There are, for example, Trotskyists who have become simply enemies of the U.S.S.R. without developing a corresponding loyalty to any other unit. When one grasps the implications of this, the nature of what I mean by nationalism becomes a good deal clearer. A nationalist is one who thinks solely, or mainly, in terms of competitive prestige. He may be a positive or a negative nationalist—that is, he may use his mental energy either in boosting or in denigrating—but at any rate his thoughts always turn on victories, defeats, triumphs and humiliations. He sees history, especially contemporary history, as the endless rise and decline of great power units and every event that happens seems to him a demonstration that his own side is on the upgrade and some hated rival is on the downgrade. But finally, it is important not to confuse nationalism with mere worship of success. The nationalist does not go on the principle of simply ganging up with the strongest side. On the contrary, having picked his side, he persuades himself that it is the strongest and is able to stick to his belief even when the facts are overwhelmingly against him.

In the liberal political tradition there was mostly a negative attitude toward nationalism as a dangerous force and a cause of conflict and war between nation-states. The historian Lord Acton put the case for "nationalism as insanity" in 1862.

He argued that nationalism suppresses minorities, places country above moral principles and creates a dangerous individual attachment to the state. However, Acton opposed democracy and was trying to defend the pope from Italian nationalism. Since the late 20th century, liberals have been increasingly divided, with some philosophers such as Michael Walzer, Isaiah Berlin, Charles Taylor and David Miller emphasizing that a liberal society needs to be based in a stable nation state.

The pacifist critique of nationalism also concentrates on the violence of some nationalist movements, the associated militarism, and on conflicts between nations inspired by jingoism or chauvinism. National symbols and patriotic assertiveness are in some countries discredited by their historical link with past wars, especially in Germany. British pacifist Bertrand Russell criticized nationalism for diminishing the individual's capacity to judge his or her fatherland's foreign policy. Albert Einstein stated that "Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of mankind". [Jiddu Krishnamurti](#) stated that "Nationalism is merely the glorification of tribalism".

Transhumanists have also expressed their opposition to nationalism, to the extent that some transhumanists believe national identities should be dissolved entirely. The influential transhumanist FM-2030 refused to identify with any nationality, referring to himself as 'universal'. Furthermore, in *The Transhumanist Handbook*, Kate Levchuk stated that a transhumanist "doesn't believe in nationality".

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