

## POLITICAL NATIONALISM IN BRITISH INDIA: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY SOCIAL SCIENTISTS IN RESEARCH is the lack of an adequate and unambiguous vocabulary. In political science, for instance, the meaning of concepts such as "modernization," "political development," "ideology," "integration" and "power," to mention only a few, vary according to the research foci and objectives of the scholars using them. This has given rise to a "diversity of definitions" of many concepts in social science and to a situation in which the users of certain terms are talking about different things when using the same words. The term "nationalism" is no exception. Its meaning has varied with each language, each nationalist, and with each period of time. Quite understandably, scholars, looking at it from different nations, at different times, and for different reasons, have defined it differently.

Some scholars have focused almost exclusively on the psychological aspects of the phenomenon of nationalism. Thus nationalism is referred to as "a condition of mind,"<sup>1</sup> "an ideological commitment,"<sup>2</sup> and "a consciousness"<sup>3</sup> of membership in a nation. Probably, the most well-known example of a definition of nationalism which contains language that is psychologically loaded is Hans Kohn's. He defines it as "a state of mind, in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due the nation-state."<sup>4</sup> The limited utility of definitions with a "psychology-bias" arises partly from the difficulties involved in measuring the psychological variable, "state of mind" or "consciousness".

In other psychological definitions, nationalism has been treated synonymously with "patriotism"<sup>5</sup> and ethnocentrism.<sup>6</sup> For example, Walter defines

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<sup>1</sup> Carlton J. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd A. Fallers, "Ideology and Culture in Uganda Nationalism," *American Anthropologist*, 63 (1961), p. 677.

<sup>3</sup> Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), xviii.

<sup>4</sup> Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History* (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1965), p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> According to Carlton Hayes, "Nationalism is a modern emotional fusion and exaggeration of two very old phenomena—nationality and patriotism". *Essays on Nationalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1926), p. 6. For an attempt by a psychologist to distinguish "nationalism" for "patriotism", see Leonard W. Doob, *Patriotism and Nationalism: Their Psychological Foundations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> According to Mostafa Rejai and Cynthia Enloe, nationalism is "a belief in the intrinsic superiority of one's own nation over all other nations," (emphasis mine). "Nation-states and State-nations," *International Quarterly*, 13:2 (June 1969), p. 142.

it as "loyalty to one's group, reinforced by a corollary disdain or hostility toward other groups."<sup>7</sup> While a sense of identification with a group is an essential component of nationalism, it does not *ipso facto* imply hostility toward other groups. It is theoretically possible to have positive or neutral orientations toward groups other than one's own.

In much of the "political development" and "social change" literature, definitions of nationalism revolve around political or sociological concepts which themselves require explication: "nation," "state," "community," "nationality". In most cases, scholars have attempted to overcome this by citing certain objective characteristics which are common to the individuals composing the "nation" and/or "state". These include territory, language, religion, shared historical experiences and memories, sovereign government, and the like. However, some of these characteristics do not seem to be necessary for nationalism to exist. According to Dankwart A. Rustow, the citing "objective" characteristics represent more or less "adequate attempts at *explanation*" rather than "genuine attempts at *definition*."<sup>8</sup> "For common language, common history, prolonged self-government and other circumstances are likely to promote feelings of nationality, but they are not among the defining characteristics of nation."<sup>9</sup> For example, in regard to the requirement of a common territory, a well known exception, though admittedly an extreme one, is that of the nationalist movement of Zionism which existed long before the creation of a sovereign state of Israel in 1948.

Deutsch has attempted a causal explanation of the emergence of nationality in terms of the spread of "social communication" and the impact of "social mobilization". His basic argument is that nationality is the consequence of habit forming and social learning and not a biological or inborn characteristic. In North America and Europe, the spread of a network of travel and trade links and the like ("social communication") over a long period of time provided a link between the urban ("core") areas and their respective regional hinterlands and the process of "social mobilization" helped to erode or break down parochial affiliations. The consequence of this was that a larger group of persons were linked by complementary habits and facilities of communication. Once this stage was attained, an external threat to this new way of life and the emergence of a new generation usually acted as catalysts in forging a political consciousness of nationality.<sup>10</sup> To the

<sup>7</sup> P. A. Walter, Jr., *Race and Culture Relations* (New York: McGraw-Hill series in Sociology and Anthropology, 1952), p. 28.

<sup>8</sup> Dankwart A. Rustow, "Nation" in David L. Sills, ed, *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 11 (USA: The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, 1968), p. 9. (emphasis mine).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1966).

author's knowledge, the relevance of Deutsch's formulation has yet to be systematically tested in the context of the emergence of nationalism in the "new states" of Asia and Africa.

In discussing the emergence of nationalism in Asia and Africa, we have to address ourselves to the important question of whether "non-Western" nationalism is fundamentally similar to, or different from, its Western counterpart. Kautsky and Hailey represent the latter viewpoint while Coleman is closer to the former. In discussing African nationalism, Lord Hailey, the British Africanist, argues that it differs so greatly from Western nationalism that "Africanism" would be a more appropriate description of it. In a somewhat similar fashion, Kautsky argues that the forces which produced nationalism in Europe and the underdeveloped areas are quite different and hopes that the use of a single term, "nationalism," to designate the two phenomena will not obscure the differences between them.<sup>11</sup>

Those who emphasize the *sui generis* character of European nationalism argue that a national consciousness preceded and created the state in 19th century Europe ("nation-state"). In some "new states," the process has been reversed in that political leaders in these states are trying to create a feeling of common nationality among divergent social groups found within their respective territories who often have very little in common ("state-nation"). Although Rajai and Enloe accept the validity of the above broad generalization, they point out that both sequences and formations are found in the West as well as in the less developed countries.<sup>12</sup> Coleman goes one step further when he argues that "nationalism" as a concept "has associations [with recent European nationalism] which makes it difficult for application in the conditions of Africa" but "if one goes far enough back into European history, one can find some very interesting parallels; and recurrent patterns are the lifeblood of the social scientist."<sup>13</sup> However, Coleman does not go further on the latter aspect.

Nationalism in many of the less developed countries cannot be understood apart from European colonialism. A significant number of the present sovereign states in the less developed world have had little or no historical continuity as a political community prior to the advent of European colonial rule and they were more accurately described as "cultural" or "geographical expressions". In most parts of South and Southeast Asia, partly through the exercise of force and largely through the acquiescence of the colonized, European powers proclaimed exclusive rights to delineated territories and their inhabitants. The introduction of a common legal and administrative system and the spread of western education and rapid communication net-

<sup>11</sup> Lord Hailey, *An African Survey Revised 1956* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 251 ff; and John K. Kautsky, *Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries: Nationalism and Communism* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1965), p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> Rajai and Enloe, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

<sup>13</sup> James S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965) p. 478, fn. 13.

works helped to erode old social, economic, and psychological commitments and more people became available for new patterns of socialization and behaviour. They, regardless of their specific origins and cultural traditions, became related to one another in terms of the imposed colonial power structure. On this aspect, Emerson's definition of nationalism as "the striving of a society threatened by the intrusion of alien forces to reconstitute itself in order to achieve a new place of dignity and equality in a changing world"<sup>14</sup> is somewhat misplaced because the "constituting" of most societies in Asia and Africa, in a political sense, was itself a function of colonial rule. However, in the process of consolidating the political framework, which they brought into existence, by introducing western ideas and institutions, the colonizers, paradoxically, also forged the instruments for the destruction of the colonial order.

As the developmental syndrome characteristic of nationalism in the less developed countries has been excellently described by James Coleman in a fairly comprehensive comparative summary on the politics of the developing areas,<sup>15</sup> it will not be detailed here. Briefly, in the initial phases, political groups, that were usually organized by members of the small "westernized" indigenous elite, pressed for increased political participation. In the later phases, these groups became the nuclei of comprehensive nationalist movements which agitated for independence from colonial rule.

## II

In this section, we will briefly examine the character of British rule in India and the nature of the nationalist response as viewed by the different schools of historiography.

British rule in India extended over a course of one to two hundred years, beginning from 1765 in Bengal when the British East India Company acquired *diwani* rights. The other parts of what was commonly referred to as British India came under British hegemony much later: Madras (1799), Bombay (1818), Sind (1843), Punjab (1848), and Oudh (1856). Thus, while Bengal experienced about two hundred years of British *raj*, Punjab and Sind were under British rule for less than one hundred years. These differences in time periods when the various territories came under British rule had important consequences in that they varied significantly in regard to the rates and levels of social, economic, and political mobilization. It was no accident that the earliest nationalist activity in India emerged in areas that were the first to come under British rule. In *Deutsch-ian* terminology, these could be seen as the "core" areas from which political penetration of the hinterlands took place.

<sup>14</sup> Rupert Emerson, "The Progress of Nationalism," in Philip W. Thayer, ed., *Nationalism and Progress in Free Asia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), pp. 72-73.

<sup>15</sup> James S. Coleman, "Conclusions: The Political Systems of the Developing Areas," in Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, eds., *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

The year 1858 represents an important watershed in the history of British rule in India. Until that year, colonial rule was technically exercised by the British East India Company. In 1858, as the most important consequence of the "Sepoy revolt" of 1857, the Company was replaced by direct British rule administered by the Queen-in-Parliament in Great Britain. In the pre-1858 period, the measures taken in land settlement, in social reform, in administration, in economic organization, and in the legal order undermined the traditional structure of authority, created newly privileged classes, and new political and administrative centres. In some cases, the consequences of these policies were diametrically opposed to their original intentions. This was particularly true in the area of social reform. For example, social reforms such as widow re-marriage and the abolition of *sati* which emanated from their "civilizing mission" often led to negative reactions in that they were interpreted as attempts to destroy Indian traditions and to "Christianize" India. Such dissatisfactions and the more immediate discontents in the army led to the "revolt" of 1857.

The post-1858 phase saw a radical change in the earlier British policies of trying to mould India into a "civilized" nation and Indians into Victorian gentlemen and rational men. The events of 1857 left a legacy of mutual distrust and British reformers were disillusioned about ever being able to "anglicize" India. The new conservatism that replaced the earlier reformist dynamism was marked by a policy of non-interference with local traditions and also support for loyal conservative groups such as the hereditary ruling families and landed classes. Various ideological justifications for continued colonial rule were also provided. Kipling saw the uplifting of countries like India as "the white man's burden". Similarly, Curzon justified British rule in India in terms of the superiority of British administration in a context of Indian "unfitness" for self-rule.

However, the "change of heart" and the new rationalizations failed to stop the emergence of various reformist and revivalist movements, both within Islam and Hinduism, which influenced greatly and, in most cases, dovetailed into, the politics of nationalism and communalism. In the political sphere, various regional associations emerged demanding greater Indian participation in government. From 1885 onwards, the Indian National Congress dominated the demand for political change and a separate communal organization, the All-India Muslim League, was formed in 1906 to safeguard and advance Muslim interests. In a series of constitutional reforms, the British acceded to the political pressures which ultimately led to the creation of two states, India and Pakistan, in 1947.

The nature of the nationalist response to British rule in India has been the focus of a great deal of scholarly writing. However, much of the literature suffers from varying degrees of "selective misperception" arising partly from the differences in intellectual socialization and political leanings of the various scholars. Until comparatively recent times, the history of

British India was almost the monopoly of British scholars. The underlying premise of many of their works was that the British in India had a "civilizing mission" whose purpose was to train Indians for self-government. The *Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India*<sup>16</sup> or what the British did and how these affected the Indians was the dominant intellectual concern of these scholars. Also, like traditional historiography, which was largely an account of kings and queens, British Viceroys in India received a great deal of scholarly coverage. The nationalist response to British rule was either de-emphasized or dismissed by resorting to catchy phrases such as "microscope minority," "unscrupulous agitation," "anarchism," and "murderous conspiracy".

As a strong reaction against the British histories of India, there came into existence many accounts by (Indian) "nationalist historians".<sup>17</sup> In contrast to the argument by many Britishers that India contained many "nations," *The Fundamental Unity of India*<sup>18</sup> was emphasized. The harmful consequences of British rule received voluminous treatment. The economic exploitation of India by the British formed the theme of laborious works by men like R. C. Dutt and Dadhabhai Naoroji. The nationalist struggle was glorified and most of the accounts were highly polemical in origin or in purpose. The "revolt" of 1857 was characterized as *The Indian War of Independence*.<sup>19</sup>

As a consequence of the nationalist belief that Hindu-Muslim unity was a *sine qua non* for success in the independence struggle, "the entire history of India during the Muslim period was accordingly re-interpreted in order to prove that the Hindus and Muslims always behaved towards each other like good brothers and formed one nation; that the Hindus were not a subject people during the so-called Muslim period, and that it is the British who for the first time imposed foreign rule upon India."<sup>20</sup> Such historical distortions are found in Lajpat Rai's *Young India*<sup>21</sup> and Tara Chand's *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*.<sup>22</sup>

Alongside the "nationalist" historiography should also be placed the writings of Marxist historians. Like the former, they emphasized the exploitative character of British rule. They differed, however, in their interpretation of the nationalist movement. In addition to over-emphasizing the activities of the Indian "working class" in the nationalist movement, the

<sup>16</sup> Edward Thompson and G. T. Garratt, *Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1935).

<sup>17</sup> R. C. Majumdar, "Nationalist Historians," in C. H. Philips, ed., *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 461-428.

<sup>18</sup> R. K. Mookerji, *The Fundamental Unity of India* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1954).

<sup>19</sup> Vinayak D. Savarkar, *The Indian War of Independence, 1857* (Bombay: Phoenix Publications, 1947).

<sup>20</sup> R. C. Majumdar, "Nationalist Historians," *op. cit.*, p. 425.

<sup>21</sup> Lajpat Rai, *Young India* (New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1916).

<sup>22</sup> Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* (Allahabad: Indian Press, 1963).

Marxist historians also saw the independence struggle partly in terms of a conflict between the British and Indian bourgeoisie.<sup>23</sup> An important contribution of Marxist historiography on British rule and the nationalist response was the conscious attempt to relate political and economic developments in India to conditions then prevailing in Britain.<sup>24</sup>

The Indian nationalist movement has also attracted the attention of many Muslim scholars. Muslim historiography, particularly in the last two decades, largely concerned itself with the major question of the preceding decades, the emergence of Muslim nationalism and the establishment of Pakistan. While some see the traces of a separate Muslim nationalism and the state of Pakistan visible as early as the eleventh century Ghaznavid Empire,<sup>25</sup> the majority relate it to the period of British rule, the development of self-government in India which gave rise to fears of Muslim subordination in a Hindu-dominated India, and some Congress activities which tended to confirm Muslim suspicion.<sup>26</sup> A greater part of the Muslim historiography dealing with the post-1857 period is devoted specifically to discussions about Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, the formation of the Muslim League, the award of separate electorates and partition. A significant gap in the Muslim historiography relating to this period is the inadequate attention given to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the *Quaid-e-Azam*, who from a staunch advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity and joint electorate became the architect of the separate state of Pakistan.<sup>27</sup> Many questions about the political career of Jinnah still remain to be answered satisfactorily. For example, when did Jinnah really decide in favour of Pakistan?<sup>28</sup> Also, what are the variables that explain the success of his political leadership in the Indian context, given his aloofness, arrogance, aristocratic conception of politics, and "western" life style?

It does not take much insight to suggest that each of these schools of historiography provide a "partial" account and that, when read together, they may provide a more "balanced" assessment of the general nature of Indian nationalism. They will provide a general rather than a comprehensive understanding of Indian nationalism because there are still many im-

<sup>23</sup> See R. Palme Dutt, *India: Today and Tomorrow* (Delhi: People's Publishing House Ltd., 1955).

<sup>24</sup> See R. Palme Dutt, *India Today* (Bombay: People's Publishing House, 1949).

<sup>25</sup> Ishtiaq H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent, 610-1947: a Brief Historical Analysis* (The Hague: Mouton, 1962); and Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1963).

<sup>26</sup> Sheikh M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore: Sh. M. Ashraf, 1965); K. K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1967); Khalil B. Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase 1857-1948* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); and Mohammed Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967).

<sup>27</sup> See Masood Ghaznavi, "Recent Muslim Historiography: The Problem of Perspective" (Paper presented at the conference on South Asian Historiography at the University of Minnesota, June 1969), p. 28.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

portant gaps in our knowledge of this phenomenon. Two important research gaps are as follows. Firstly, there is a real paucity of studies on regional nationalism. This is largely because of the dominance of the "all-India" perspective in most scholarly writings on modern India. According to Low:

It is only at a rather rarefied level that modern Indian history can be said to comprise a single all-India story. At other levels marked variations exist, and if we are to proceed to understanding it further, regional studies, within the orbit of an awareness of the overall story, are now of quite vital importance.<sup>29</sup>

Secondly, while a great deal has been written about the leading stalwarts of the nationalist movement such as Gandhi and Nehru, we know very little about what was said and done by many "middle level" nationalists who took part in spreading nationalist ideas in the vernacular and in mofussil areas. It is only very recently that many scholars, with a perspective which time and distance provide, have attempted to fill these gaps.

### III

In this section, we will examine some of the recent contributions to our understanding of Indian nationalism, which, in comparison with the various schools of historiography discussed above, could be considered more "value free".

One of the recent studies on Indian nationalism is *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism* by Anil Seal. The sub-title, "Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century," sums up well the main theme of the book.

In his preface, Seal sets out his chief task as the study of "the emergence of national political organization in India" by concentrating upon "Indians educated in the western mode."<sup>30</sup> The book, which covers the period 1870-1888, has four broad sections: the first is concerned with the social position and economic and political ambitions of the new English-educated indigenous elites in the 1870's in the three British presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras; the second with British policies toward these elites; the third with the formation of regional and all-India nationalist associations; and the fourth with "the Muslim breakaway".

Seal begins his study with a basic axiom that the history of any colonial system is a series of permutations between government and different sets of allies and enemies. The "cheaper" and "less embarrassing" form of government that the British maintained in India was not due solely to "the passivity of the majority". The collaborators (defined as those Indians whose actions fell into line with the purposes of the British) formed the backbone

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<sup>29</sup> D. A. Low, "Introduction," in D. A. Low, ed., *Soundings in Modern South Asian History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 5.

<sup>30</sup> Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), xiii.

of British rule in India. They comprised the landlords, businessmen in the great new port cities; above all the bureaucracy, which was almost wholly Indian beyond the thousand or so Britishers, and the new professionals created by western education in the fields of law, journalism, teaching and medicine.

Seal also describes the social groups from which this class of collaborators emerged. In Bengal, it was the *bhadralok* ("respectable people"), consisting of the Brahmins, Kayasths, and Baidyas, who came from the eastern and western districts of Bengal Proper and were concentrated in the metropolis of Calcutta. In Bombay and Madras, the important collaborators were the Brahmins of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu respectively.

However, for many of the newly educated, collaboration was a conditional bargain. "So long as working with government seemed to benefit their regional, caste or communal aspirations, then they would do so. But once the benefits lessened, then so too did their pliancy."<sup>31</sup> It was because the latter happened that the newly educated passed from being collaborators to competitors for power. In the initial phases, dissatisfactions with British rule were articulated through various regional associations which were formed first in Bengal and later in Bombay and Madras. These regional associations provided the basis for the later formation of India's first national political organization, the Indian National Congress (INC), in 1885. In discussing the events that led to the founding of the INC, Seal fairly effectively refutes the thesis put forward by the first president of the INC, W.C. Bannerjee, that Lord Dufferin supported A.O. Hume in bringing the Congress into existence. He also provides a more balanced account of the role of Hume in the formation of the INC.

Seal discusses the British responses to the Indian "awakening" from the perspective of the vice-royalties of Lytton, Ripon, and Dufferin. Their differing conceptions of the role of the British in India, disagreements between the British Cabinet and the India Council in London, Gladstone's preoccupation with the troubles in Ireland and Egypt and the consequent lack of time to support his Liberal Viceroy, Lord Ripon—these were some of the major factors that influenced the totality of the British response. In short, it was characterized by a great deal of ambiguity and lack of consistency. Seal also attributes the latter to the political style of the new professionals. While the autocratic rule of the British was adequately equipped to crush revolts organized on traditional lines, it found itself confused before a movement which proclaimed the divine dispensation of British rule in India and yet spoke of the "un-Britishness" of British rule in India.

In the final section, in a concise discussion of what he terms as "the Muslim breakaway," Seal analyses the economic position of the Muslims and their response to the founding of the INC. He points out that their economic position varied as between different areas and that it is "meaning-

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

less" to state that Muslims were backward throughout the country. For example, while the Muslims were generally backward in Bengal, they were in a much better position in the North-West provinces. According to Seal, this "unevenness" partly accounted for the non-emergence of "common interests" between Muslims at that time, despite the attempts to extoll them for tactical reasons.<sup>32</sup>

The lack of common interest between Muslims was clearly reflected in the lack of unanimity in their attitudes towards the INC. Badruddin Tyabji of Bombay and Syed Ahmad Khan of North-West Provinces and Oudh represented two extremely opposed viewpoints. Tyabji joined the INC out of the conviction that it could be used to articulate those grievances that were common to Hindus, Muslims, and other social groups. In contrast to this view, Syed Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh group challenged the credibility of the "national" character of the Congress and condemned it as "seditious". At that time, the Congress was demanding representative Legislative Councils and hinted at a parliament for India in the future. In voicing his strong opposition to these demands, Syed Ahmad Khan argued that in any such set-up, the Muslims would be in a permanent minority and they would always be outvoted as the Irish were at Westminster. In the rest of the chapter, Seal describes various interpretations regarding the growing rift between the Hindus and Muslims in the evolving politics, and argues their fair common assumptions that the Muslim community in India constituted a monolithic bloc "whose conditions were generally equal, whose interests were generally the same and whose solidarity was generally firm" were not true.

Seal's work is likely to be the most outstanding contribution to our understanding of the emergence of Indian nationalism in the later nineteenth century for a long time to come. His arguments are well-documented by much careful research of hitherto untapped sources and imaginative interweaving of research by other scholars. His ambitious study is so impressive that one hesitates to mention its shortcomings. Nevertheless, they exist. Some of these are as follows: Firstly, since collaboration is based on the extent of benefits such a relationship provides, one would expect some discussion of how the economic policies of the *raj* affected various social groups and were important for the particular results of collaboration and competition. This is not given enough attention in the book. Secondly, although he observes at one point that "educated men had many roles to play and several loyalties to preserve,"<sup>33</sup> he does not explore any role other than that of nationalist policies. Had he done so, he would have added much depth to our understanding of early Indian nationalism and also helped to answer a basic query, that is, whether there were other types of important political activity besides nationalist politics. Despite these short-

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 338-340.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 341-342.

comings, in my opinion, Seal's contribution is still one of the best to have appeared on this subject.

In its initial phase, the demands of the Congress were limited and mainly represented the immediate concerns of the "westernized" indigenous elite. The reforms demanded included the expansion of the legislative councils by admitting a considerable number of elected members, the conduct of competitive examinations simultaneously in England and in India, the raising of the maximum age of candidates for entrance into the coveted Civil Service to not less than 23 years, and the complete separation of judicial and executive functions. Self-government was not the goal of early Congressmen. Their political method was strictly constitutional, such as petitioning or making representations to the government of India and the British parliament. However, the failure of the Congress to attain many of its objectives in the first one and half decades of its existence led many to doubt the usefulness of constitutional methods. A significant number of Indians, both within and outside the Congress, were dissatisfied with the "gradualism" of the "moderates," demanded radical advances in the political and economic spheres, and also, in contrast to the support of the "moderates," strongly opposed the social and religious reforms introduced by the British. The latter group have been popularly dubbed both by the "moderates" then and in the literature as the "extremists".<sup>34</sup> The "ideological" controversies between these two groups and the political struggles for control of the Congress ultimately led to the open split of Congress at Surat in 1907. The "moderates" versus "extremists" struggle centered very much around the personalities of *Tilak and Gokhale*, who are the foci of Wolpert's "comparative biographical analysis."<sup>35</sup>

The two key phrases, "reform" and "revolution," in the sub-title of his book sum up Wolpert's assessment of Gokhale and Tilak respectively. G.K. Gokhale (1866-1915), the "political guru" of Mahatma Gandhi, is depicted by Wolpert as a complete antithesis of B.G. Tilak (1856-1920), "the father of Indian Unrest". While Gokhale believed in the divine providence of British rule, Tilak viewed British rule as "a predatory foreign incubus rather than a blessing". While Gokhale attributed India's "misery, poverty, and humiliation" mainly to "the inequities and inadequacies of Hindu society," Tilak placed the blame on "foreign rule" rather than on the "shortcomings" of Hindu society such as the disabilities of caste, the lack of a spirit of public service, and unhygienic practices and superstition.

<sup>34</sup> The struggle between the "moderates" and the "extremists" has generally been discussed in terms of ideological differences and very few have seen it in terms of a political struggle between the "ins" and the "outs". In this regard, Seal's comment is illuminating: "For all the disputes over tactics or over the principle of social reform, 'Extremism' was less an ideology than a technique. Its most conspicuous form was an all-India coalition of dissidents who having been outmaneuvered in their own provinces, tried to reverse at the top the defeats they had suffered in the localities". *Ibid.*, p. 347.

<sup>35</sup> Stanley A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962).

Both these Maratha Brahmins, according to Wolpert, differed not only in their diagnosis of India's problems but also in their prescriptions. Gokhale saw the remedy in education (defined broadly), in continued association with British democracy and justice, and in constitutional methods of political and administrative change. His eloquence made marked inroads into British official opinion, and his own memorandum to Lord Morley provided the basis of the Morley-Minto Reforms. Tilak, on the other hand, saw the solution in *swaraj* (self-rule) which was to be attained by agitating and organizing among the masses and by depicting British rule as "the single simple cause of India's multiple miseries". He found in the Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, the age of consent bill, Bengal's partition, the boycott, and *swadeshi* movements, issues and opportunities for furthering his cause. Wolpert provides a good descriptive analysis of how the diametrically opposed strategies of these two Chitpavans and their respective followers led to the growth of factionalism in the Congress and also in the *Poona Sarvajanik Sabha* and the Deccan Education Society.

The basic question that emerges from Wolpert's study is, how does one explain Tilak's and Gokhale's "differing responses to the historical environment which they imbibed," which, in some respects, was similar? For example, both were from the Chitpavan community, joined the Ferguson College, and belonged to the Deccan Education Society. Wolpert is quite evasive on this question. He states: "The ultimate explanation for the differing responses of Tilak and Gokhale to British rule must remain shrouded in the hidden wellsprings of their personalities and those unrecorded potent influences of heredity and early environment".<sup>36</sup> Although one does not expect a historian or a political scientist to provide explanations of individual attitudes and actions in terms of the influence of heredity, Wolpert could have, at least, explored the influence of early socialization as an explanatory variable.

The initial differences in Gokhale's and Tilak's responses to British rule, according to Wolpert, was later reinforced by the differing nature of their contacts with the colonial administration and rulers. Tilak's "most intimate and extensive contact with Western thought and Englishmen came from the Indian Penal Code, trial procedure, and British judges, magistrates, prosecutors, and police officers, who with the aid of their Indian counterparts, repeatedly compelled him to endure the hardships and humiliations of physical restraint".<sup>37</sup> Gokhale, on the other hand, was brought into warm personal contact with the leaders of English liberalism when he visited England, his "moderate" views gave him "access to rooms in British society which were forever closed to Tilak" and in contrast to the latter's experience, he never had to face the coercive apparatus of British rule.<sup>38</sup> "Little wonder

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

then if with such different portraits of the Western world and its representatives indelibly impressed upon the minds of Tilak and Gokhale they each staunchly (sic) adhered to their diverging views of how their nation's problems could best be solved."<sup>39</sup>

In the final chapter, which is the best chapter in the book, Wolpert states that the differing political philosophies and methods of political action of Tilak and Gokhale were "tenuously joined" by Gandhi with his "remarkable syncretic capacity,"<sup>40</sup> but fails to answer the important question of which of these two traditions had a greater influence on Gandhi's political style. Although Tilak and Gandhi had different ideas on the philosophical question of the relationship between "ends" and "means,"<sup>41</sup> Gandhi's methods of political mobilization and his emphasis on *swarajya* was closer to that of Tilak rather than to that of his "political guru," Gokhale.

The study of Gandhi's contributions to Indian nationalism has probably, and understandably, received more scholarly attention than that of any other nationalist leader. Gandhi as a subject of research has often been handled sentimentally, superficially, or, worse, without empirical support. A general exception to this is Joan V. Bondurant's *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict* which is "concerned with that part of the Gandhian impact which centers upon *satyagraha*, the premier Gandhian means".<sup>42</sup>

In the introductory chapter of the book, "Gandhian concepts" are categorized as follows: (i) objectives (*swaraj* and *sarvodaya*); (ii) principles (non-violence, adherence to truth, and dignity of labour); (iii) means (*satyagraha* and Bhoodan or "land gift"); and (iv) policies (prohibition, removal of untouchability, and the program for social and political decentralization). In the second chapter, the basic theories of *satyagraha* covering such principle as truth, non-violence, and self-suffering (*tapasya*) are analysed. The rules, disciplines, and procedural steps, that is, the essentials of applied *satyagraha* are discussed in the third chapter. To illustrate these, five historic campaigns are described and the extent of their success are analysed.<sup>43</sup> In the fourth chapter, Gandhi's "transformation or adaptation of Hindu tradition to develop a social and political technique" is discussed and the argument that Gandhi was a Hindu revivalist is dismissed as "superficial understanding".<sup>44</sup> In the remainder of the book,

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 305-306.

<sup>41</sup> In Tilak's ethical relativism it was the motive rather than the action itself which determined the guilt. From this it followed that a political murder with a higher motive was different from an ordinary murder. On this point he differed basically from Gandhi who believed that the means must be as noble as the ends.

<sup>42</sup> Joan V. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> The five were: Vykom, Bardoli, Ahmedabad, the Rowlatt Bills struggle, and the salt *satyagraha*.

<sup>44</sup> Bondurant, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

Gandhi's thought is considered in relation to conservatism, anarchism, and the "dialectics" of the Hegelian and Marxian systems.

Bondurant over-emphasizes Gandhi's contributions to the emergence of the Congress as a mass movement. In her words: "Gandhi did indeed transform it into a revolutionary organization which repudiated the existing government of India; he was responsible for transforming the Congress into a popular movement."<sup>45</sup> She fails to take into account many operative forces which were laying the basis for the emergence of "mass nationalism" before Gandhi's assumption of the leadership of the Congress. In the pre-Gandhi period of Indian nationalism, some degree of political mobilization was already taking place as a consequence of colonial rule, the activities of the INC during the period of Tilak's activism, and international developments. The introduction and expansion of education, communications, and other social and economic reforms by the British were having their impact in that more people were being brought into the political framework. Tilak's emphasis on the greatness of India's past, his working up of the Hindu religious tradition, his assertion that "Swaraj is my birth right and I will have it," his organization of great politico-religious festivals to honour the militant Shivaji and the Hindu deity, Ganesh—all these were certainly creating a sense of nationalist pride among a fairly large section of the Indian populace. Also, Japan's defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 created a new surge of confidence and optimism among Indians that European hegemony was not insurmountable. In short, the objective conditions for Indian "mass nationalism" were beginning to take shape. In Nehru's words: "There was an amazing psychological change. The time was ripe for it, of course, and circumstances and world conditions worked for this change. But a great leader is necessary to take advantage of circumstances and conditions. Gandhi was that leader."<sup>46</sup>

While Bondurant devotes a major portion of the book to comparing and contrasting Gandhi's thought in relation to Western thought and the Hindu religious tradition, there is not enough discussion of Gandhi's thought in relation to the mainstream of Muslim political thought in India, particularly Gandhi's failure to successfully incorporate the latter in his nationalist appeal. Aziz Ahmad has analysed the landmarks of religious and political thought of Muslims in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent in his recent book, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*.<sup>47</sup> Although Professor Ahmad has intended his book as an introduction to western students, one wonders if he has not assumed a greater knowledge and understanding of Islam than really exist among all but a very few of the advanced western students.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>46</sup> See Jawaharlal Nehru, "On Gandhi," in Martin D. Lewis, ed., *Gandhi: Maker of Modern India* (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1965), pp. 1-8.

<sup>47</sup> Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857-1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

He has chosen the period from 1857 to 1964 for presenting the "struggle between modernism and orthodoxy" in Muslim thought in the sub-continent. About two-thirds of the book deals with the period up to 1947 when India and Pakistan became two independent states; and the rest with post-independence developments. Professor Ahmad begins his analysis proper with Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh movement. Sayyid Ahmad Khan's modernizing role of interpreting Islam to show its compatibility with modern science and his policy of "loyalism in politics" to restore British confidence in the Muslim community and the consequences of the latter are discussed by Ahmad. While emphasizing the modernizing role of the Sayyid, he points out the ambivalence in Sayyid Ahmad Khan's thought between fundamentalism and rationalism.

In the chapter on "Approaches to Islamic History," Ahmad, in effect, shows how closely the self-identity of the Indo-Pakistani Muslim is related to their perception of the history of Islam. The thoughts of Shibli Nuamani, Amid Ali, and Hali are discussed in this chapter. In Ahmad's view, Shibli, who was probably the most important intellectual Indian Islam produced, was essentially a traditionalist who was "marginally influenced by modernism". While approving of the modernists' application of "the principle of rationalist analysis" to determine the authenticity of a *hadis*, Shibli pointed out that this principle is "modernistic but implicit in the Qu'ran itself."<sup>48</sup> Amir Ali, who was much more of a polemicist than Shibli, adopted the "offensive" tactic of asserting the superiority of Islam and Muhammad to Christianity and Jesus in his writings. In his polemics, he even went to the extent of asserting that world civilization was set back for centuries by the failure of the Arabs to conquer medieval Europe!

One chapter is devoted to Indian Islam's flirtation with the Caliphate and Pan-Islamism, which temporarily brought together the Congress and the Muslim League, but which received its psychological blow when the Caliphate was abolished by fellow Muslims of the Turkish National Assembly in 1924.

Probably, the most important discussion in the book is found in the four chapters dealing with the political and religious thoughts of Iqbal, the genesis of Pakistan, the religious ideas of Abu'l Kalam Azad and the theory of composite Hindu-Muslim nationalism championed by Azad and the Deoband group of *ulama*. Despite Iqbal's earlier Pan-Islamism, his theological rationalizations led directly to the "two nation" theory and the demand for a separate Muslim state which found its champion in Muhammad Ali Jinnah. In contrast, Azad took the term *umma*, used in the Prophet's covenant with the Jews and the Arab residents of Medina in the 7th century, to mean a nation encompassing different religious communities and thus reached the Muslim "nationalist" conclusion of co-existence with Hinduism.

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

Although Islamic scholars and Muslims may find some intriguing and unacceptable remarks in Ahmad's study, such as his distinction between "Islamic" states and "Muslim" states<sup>49</sup> and his concluding remark that "the west may eventually help" in the "real restoration of Islam,"<sup>50</sup> there is no doubt that his work is a major contribution to our understanding of the intimate interaction between Indian Islam and politics which decidedly affected the course of Indian nationalism.

Although the Hindu-Muslim cleavage dominated the course of nationalist politics in pre-partition India, there were also other cleavages, particularly at the regional level, which gave rise to regional movements that aimed at altering the inequities of the social structure at the regional level. Irschick's *Politics and Social Conflict in South India*<sup>51</sup> is concerned with one such movement, namely, the "Non-Brahmin Movement" of Madras and his study covers the period between 1916 and 1929.

In the first chapter, Irschick examines the complexities of Madras social structure, focusing mainly on the nature of Brahmin dominance in the social, educational, administrative and political life of Madras Presidency, despite the fact that they constituted only about three per cent of the population.

The Non-Brahmin reaction to this Brahmin dominance did not take long to organize itself. In Chapters two to seven, Irschick traces the evolution of the Non-Brahmin movement. The main themes discussed are: the Non-Brahmin opposition to theosophist Annie Besant's call for Home Rule; the formation of the Justice Party; the award of separate electorates to Non-Brahmins; the Justice Party's control of the legislature from 1921 to 1926 and its work for the Non-Brahmins (minus the untouchables and the Muslims) in the spheres of civil service and education; and then the party's gradual decline. Irschick has successfully weaved into his discussion the interests of the British in the Brahmin — Non-Brahmin conflict. He shows convincingly how British administrative and commercial interests in Madras were generally sympathetic to Non-Brahmin demands partly because they supported continued British rule.

By mid-1920's the Justice Party was in decline and even before then many Muslims and untouchables had drifted away from the party, mainly because it did not serve their interests. As the author remarks: "Very soon after taking office the Justice Party severed its connections with the untouchable groups"<sup>52</sup> and the party changed from "the idealistic reform association which Dr. Nair had intended it to be into a mere political mechanism, a broker for government jobs for a few select non-Brahmin caste Hindus."<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 264.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273.

<sup>51</sup> Eugene F. Irschick, *Politics and Social Conflict in South India: The Non-Brahman Movement and Tamil Separatism, 1916-1929* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.

The decline of the party was manifested in its failure to retain its majority in the council in the elections of 1926. Some disillusioned Justicites joined the Congress while others carried on the Non-Brahmin struggle, which now stood for Tamil separatism, in the Self-Respect Movement led by E.V. Ramaswami Naicker (popularly known as *Periyar*). The separatist theme was further developed by the DK and the DMK, the rise of which Irschick briefly summarizes.

Irschick's study is an important contribution to our understanding of regional developments in the Indian national movement. He has not only utilized previously neglected material such as the evidence to the Joint Select Committee on the Bill (Montagu-Chelmsford Report) but also Tamil sources and private documents which give insight to Non-Brahmin activities. However, there are some gaps in his study which probably could be filled by one or two articles. For example, while Irschick devotes a great deal of attention to a limited number of South Indian leaders, there is a relative lack of detailed discussion of the organizations (such as party and caste associations) which they led. Also, in his attempt (in the concluding chapter) to generalize about regionalism in pre-partition India, he could have attempted some comparisons with developments in other regions such as Bengal and Punjab which have received a great deal of scholarly attention.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our survey of the literature on nationalism and the historiography of Indian nationalism reveals a significant gap between the existing theoretical formulations and the empirical studies. If any single criticism can be made of any of the works on Indian nationalism, it is surely one of a failure to work with an explicit theoretical focus and a set of hypothesized relationships. This tends to limit the utility of many of the existing studies in regard to replicating them in other contexts with a view to arriving at a set of generalization that have cross-cultural applicability.

Among the existing theoretical formulations, Deutsch's "social communication" theory and his notion of the "core area" seems to be particularly rewarding for explaining the emergence of nationalism in India and elsewhere. However, Deutsch's formulations may have to be supplemented by incorporating other important variables. For example, while Deutsch's emphasis on the range of communications and transactions amongst different groups in society may be useful in regard to providing the infra-structure for the emergence of nationality, the forging of this consciousness is often a function of the political cognitions, motivations, and leadership styles of the important elites in society.