



- There has been a tendency in the literature on political development to focus upon national integration as a policy which seeks assimilation of the entire population of a state to a common identity & which recognizes only individual rights, privileges and duties.
- Such a policy is to be distinguished from one of political integration, which seeks to maintain the cohesion & territorial integrity of a political unit, but does not necessarily demand the cultural assimilation of diverse groups to either a dominant or composite culture.
- Today, one finds that on issues like language, religion, caste, tribe and region the divisive forces due to their vested interests are threatening to break the very fabric of Indian unity .

EVOLUTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

- Scholarly debate about the question whether the term India applies to an all encompassing civilization with clearly identifiable components that make for a political & cultural reality, or it refers merely to an application of the term multiplicity of distinctive political & cultural regions, within a defined geographical location.
- By the 1880's this debate had emerged clearly.
- John Strachey in his book 'India', mentioned that : "There is not & never was an India, or even a country of India, possessing, according to European ideas, my sort of unity : physical, political, social or religious".
- Vincent Smith in his 'Oxford History of India', mentioned, "India offers unity in diversity", a usage which was used by Jawaharlal Nehru to demonstrate the secular content of this unity.
- There is no denying the fact that in the modern sense of the term India as a nation had never existed before the establishment of British colonial rule, but India had a long history of religious toleration and cultural assimilation.
- After Mughals , British unified the region into a political unit with uniform laws - The introduction of modern means of communication like railways, telegraphs, a postal system, development of roads & motor transport produced the same unifying effect.
- The destruction of rural & local economic self-sufficiency, lead to emergence of economic nationalism.
- The growth of internal trade created conditions for the growth of a national consciousness, which could have become the basis for a unified Indian state.
- Colonial policy of 'divide & rule' & partition is still having impact on the society

IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION

- From 1757 the British used their control over India to promote their own interests. But the character of their rule did not remain the same throughout.
- In the first stage of the British rule, no basic changes were introduced in the administration, the judicial system, transport and communication, the methods of agriculture or industrial production or in the educational and intellectual fields.
- The second stage saw the transformation of Indian economy to cater to the interests of the British industrial capitalists.
- British Government after 1813, set out to transform Indian administration, economy and society to achieve exactly these ends.
- A new judicial system based on a new corpus of laws and legal codes - Indian Penal Code, and the Civil Procedure Code - was introduced.
- This period also saw the emergence of a liberal imperialist political ideology among British statesmen
- During the third stage of British rule in India there was the emergence of America, France, Germany, Russia and Japan as industrial powers, resulting in a worldwide competition for markets and colonies.
- They tried to put checks on the process of modernization in India, when they saw that such changes produced social forces that began to oppose imperialism.
- In the face of growing threat from the Indian National Movement, every conceivable effort was made to keep the people divided.
- Exploitative permanent settlement system followed by Mahalwari & ryotwari settlement system had a deep impact on the society.
- It destroyed trust level among rich zamindars & moneylenders as well as the peasants
- These measures resulted in the emergence of new social classes in the rural areas - landlords, intermediaries, money-lenders at the top and tenants-at-will, sharecroppers and agricultural labourers at the bottom
- British rule and the policy of commercialization of agriculture strengthened tendencies towards penetration of tribal areas by outsiders from the plains - money-lenders, traders, land grabbers and contractors. The tribal people greatly resented the intrusion of colonial administration
- These fragmentations which created wide disparities & imbalances were manifold in nature, regional, communal, tribal, non-tribal, high caste & low caste, educated, non-educated, etc. Such

fragmentation & imbalances created problems for a united national movement.

EDUCATION & REFORMS

- The link with the West also led to the entry of modern ideas into India and the intellectual life of Indians began to undergo revolutionary changes.
- However, if ideas of democracy, sovereignty of the people, rationalism and humanism developed in India, that was not the desired goals of the colonialists.
- Modern education introduced in India after 1813 was very limited. Primary and social education was neglected and later the British turned hostile to higher education, because the indirect carrier of nationalism.
- The structure and pattern, aims, method, curricula and content of the education system were all designed to serve colonialism
- There was a complete neglect of modern technical education, a basic necessity for the development of modern industry.
- There was the emphasis on English language as the medium of instruction in place of Indian languages.
- As a result, education could not spread to the masses creating a wide, social, linguistic and cultural gulf between the educated elites and the masses.
- Education became a virtual monopoly of the middle & upper classes in towns & cities.
- In the initial stages, the colonial government encouraged social reforms, but gradually, the conservative character & long term interests of colonialism led to a change of attitude.
- The British not only withdrew their support of the reformers, but buttressed the orthodox, reactionary and decadent elements of the Indian society, who willingly served as the bulwark of the British Raj.

CONCEPT OF MARTIAL RACE

- British policy of classifying Indians into martial and non-martial races, and basing their policy of army recruitments & division of regiments on regional lines, also went against the principles of national unity.
- For example, the Bengalis were especially singled out for their lack of manly courage.
- Based on such prejudices were formed the Sikh, Jat, Rajput and Maratha Regiments.
- Thus, the army instead of being a national force, emerged instead as a mere assemblage of units representing regional, sectarian or caste interests. Unfortunately, this process has continued even after independence
- The British encouraged provincialism, regionalism such as Bengali versus Bihari, or Punjabi versus Bengali, linguism, caste against caste, martial versus non-martial races

DISTORTION IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY

- The British tried to show that Indians had always been ruled by tyrants & despots, implying thereby that :
 - 1) As long as the British provided the Indians with the rule of law, the British too could afford to be autocratic.
 - 2) They tried to show that British rule had actually liberated the Hindus from the maltreatment they had suffered at the hands of the Muslims.
 - 3) They repeatedly asserted that the Hindus & the Muslims had always been divided into two mutually exclusive groups
 - The periodization of Indian history into the Hindu period, Muslim period and British period was deliberately done to underline this presumed division and separateness.
- Communal interpretation of Indian history was done first by writers and then by others. Thus, H.M. Elliot, referring to Muslim rule in India
- Elliot accepted that his motive in writing history was to make "Our native subjects more sensible of the immense advantages accruing to them under the mildness & equity of our rule", & to make the emerging nationalist intellectuals see the reality of pre-British India & stop their critique of British imperialism.
- Unfortunately, many Indian writers imbibed consciously or unconsciously these prejudices of the imperialist historians, and ignoring all historical evidence, went on to project their present into the past and came to view Muslim rule in a similar spirit, or glorified the attempts at empire building by the Hindus
- Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his "History of Aurangzeb", Vol. III" & A. L. Srivastava in his 'History of India' (1000-1707 A.D.) wrote history on British communal lines .
- Gandhiji wrote that communal harmony could not be permanently established in our country so long as highly distorted versions of history were being taught in schools and colleges through the history textbooks.
- In 1932, the "Foreword" to the Report of the Kanpur Riots Enquiry Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress pointed out : ""We consider, that an attempt to remove historical misconceptions is the first and the most indispensable step in the real solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem."
- Even more than the textbooks, the communal view of history was spread widely through poetry, dramas, historical novels and short stories, newspapers and popular magazines, pamphlets, and orally through public platforms and private discussions.

- It should be clearly understood that communalism was not a remnant of the past or a hangover of the medieval period.
- In the words of Prof. Bipan Chandra : “It was modern ideology that incorporated some aspects & element of the past ideologies and institutions and historical background to form a new ideological and political discourse or view”.

COMMUNAL TENSION

- The post 1857 period saw the development of politics & ideology resulting in widening the gulf between the Hindus & the Muslims.
- The major communal riots occurred in the first half of the 20th century (1906-07, 1918, 1926, 1930 and 1946).
- There is a conceptual distinction between communal tension & communal politics.
- According to Prof. Bipan Chandra, Communal tension, is episodic & usually involves the lower classes only.
- But communal politics is a long-term process which is rather continuous unlike the former.
- It mainly involves the middle classes, landlords and bureaucratic elements.
- Though, it would be incorrect to say that tension & differences had never existed under the 'Muslim' rule, these were not communal in nature, but reflected more the differences of class : the ruling class & the ruled, the producers & the consumers, the landlords & the tenants, & each of these groups was composed of both Hindus & Muslims.
- The existence of syncretistic cults such as those of Satya Pir, Manikpir, etc. show the veneration by Hindus & Muslims alike of holy men
- Muslim poets who wrote on Vaishnav themes : Sayed Martuja, Chand Kazi, Sahanur & Lal Mahmud.
- Nawab Mir Jafar, at the time of his death, offered to drink the water of liberation poured on the idol of Goddess Kiriteswari & a few drops were actually poured down his throat by Maharaja Nand Kumar

LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION

- The system of communal representation was an important feature in official policy. Here creation of communal electorates by the Act of 1909 was significant - . By this Act, Muslims could vote in Muslim constituencies for anyone, irrespective of their religion, though they could also vote along with the Hindus for general seats.
- After the Act of 1919, the situation worsened, with both the Muslims & the Hindus being permitted to vote members of their own community.
- The Simon Commission report presented in 1930, only reinforced such a view, with its emphasis on strengthening of communal representation in legislative bodies and communal reservation.
- There were two basic assumptions proving encouragement for such a system : i) The British believed that the political, social economic &

cultural interests of different communities were separate, and their respective interest could be best represented only by members of their own communities.

ii) A general electorate would open up the possibility of domination by the majority community, both in terms of representation in the legislature as well as by articulating their interests.

- Added to the system of separate electorates was the other restrictive system of property and educational qualifications. Thus, the elections were mostly confined to the middle classes and separate electorates meant institutionalisation of middle class needs & politics along communal lines.
- The communal award declared in early 1932 by Ramsay Macdonald provided for separate Hindu, Untouchable, and Muslim electorates for the new federal legislatures.
- It recognised untouchable section as a separate electoral community but it was contested by Gandhiji & later reservation scheme was offered by him instead of separate electorate under Poona-pact
- In the late 19th century, the differences between the two communities manifested in the form of conflict over jobs.
- A study conducted by Sofia Ahmad shows that in the province of Bengal in September 1907, the number of Muslims employed in the salary range of Rs. 15-1001 and upwards was only 1,235 as compared to the Hindu enjoyed a numerical superiority in all services and grades.
- Disputes between landlords & tenants was another area where the communal tensions were visible.
- This occurred particularly in East Bengal , where the majority of the zamindars were Hindus & the tenants Muslims.
- The 1901 census showed that of every 10,000 Muslims, 7,316 were cultivators. But, out of every 10,000 Hindus, there were only 5,555 cultivators.
- Thus, the proportion of landlords was 170 in 10,000 in the case of Muslims, and 217 in the case of Hindus.
- And this relationship between the landlords and the tenants was allowed by the British to worsen for obvious reasons.

SOCIETY & CULTURE

- English education portrayed the British as saviours of Hindus from Muslim tyranny.
- The caste divisions in the society were also highlighted. Caste solidarity was encouraged too.
- In pre-British India, the availability of land and the fluid political situation, had facilitated caste mobility through each migration.
- The colonial rule closed or reduced some of these avenues.
- The Governor of U.P. supported Hindu Communalism in that province. He increased the

number of Hindus in government employment and supported the advocates of Hindi and not Urdu, thus sowing deeper divisions between the two communities.

- From the first decade of the twentieth century, the principle of reserving posts & promotions in public services through fixed quotas for Hindus & Muslims was rigorously pursued in Bengal and Punjab.
- The principle was extended to all provincial and all India Services in 1934.
- It was also increasingly applied to admissions to professional and other government colleges.
- The Government also carefully managed educational development through municipal committees and district boards, colleges, universities and denominational schools, which only promoted rivalry between communities in the field of education.
- Communal rivalry was also created through contracts and conferment of titles, appointment of honorary magistrates and nomination to municipal and legislative bodies.
- From 1901 onwards, the British also made a direct contribution by undertaking a caste census, which classified castes on the basis of social precedence as recognised by native public opinion.
- Created the awareness among the caste about their poor representation in public employment and legislative bodies

GROWTH OF REGIONAL SENTIMENTS

- In the beginning of the 20th century was the growth of regional sentiments along linguistic lines.
- These sentiments were at times associated with the demand for more jobs for underprivileged groups of educated youth, but often these had deeper roots as they were bound up with the emergence of “powerful literary & cultural trends in different regional languages” (Sumit Sarkar, ‘Modern India’ Delhi, 1984)
- About 1911, a movement began demanding a separate province in the Andhra districts of Madras.
- From 1913 onwards, Andhra Maha Sabha were held, they demanded the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction.
- The development of regional languages led to the growth of various trends. For example, in Tamil Nadu, anti-Brahmin movements were closely associated with the formation of Tamil Sangams in various towns, which stimulated interest in ancient Tamil Classics

- Bengal had already exhibited a certain sense of regional unity and regional sentiments in 1905 in the wake of the then Viceroy Lord Curzon’s partition of Bengal.
- In Bihar, the demand for a separate province came under the leadership of Sachidanand Sinha, resulting in the formation of new provinces of Bihar and Orissa in 1911.
- Under Mughals, the process of centralization considered the existence of various entities such as Bijapur, Golkonda, Bihar, Orissa, Oudh, Allahabad, etc.
- But British govt created big Presidencies like Bombay, Madras & Calcutta, tried to bring various territorial & linguistic groups under one centralized control.
- In 1930, Simon Commission referred to the relationship between the Hindus & Muslims as that of “a basic opposition manifesting itself at every turn in social custom, economic competition & mutual religious antipathy.”
- So, it was believed that “representation of rival communities and different interests is the only principle, upon which, it has been found possible to constitute, by the method of direct election, the legislative bodies of India”.

EXCEPTIONS TO REGIONALISM

- Swadeshi movement against the Bengal partition started in Bengal and became a pan - India sentiment
- Protests all over the country after the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy when incident was regional
- Non-Cooperation Movement was a great success in the regions of coastal Andhra.
- Leadership as well as mass support for the national movement came from all the regions of the country.
- There is a need to bring about a balanced economic development of all parts of the country, so that there are no imbalances between far-flung small states and the more centrally located states.
- Equal opportunity for education should be given to all to remove social imbalances.
- Instead of imposing any one language, all languages should be given equal opportunity for their development. Thus, in Hindi speaking areas, languages from the south should be encouraged and vice-versa