Nationalism

Nationalism is a political system that places your country above every other in the scale of the world. Learn more about the system and how it compares from the rest of history and with other political systems.

Nationalism Definition

Nationalism is defined as "loyalty and devotion to a nation, especially a sense of national consciousness," and "exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups."

Nationalism centers on a country's culture, language, and often race. It may also include shared literature, sports, or the arts, but is primarily driven by cultural associations. And, it promotes the nation at the expense of others. Nationalist countries maintain a superior view of themselves to the detriment of other nations. Nationalism has a positive view of conquering other nations as it sees itself as the ultimate nation. Any ideologies that undercut or contradict the nation are opposed.

Nationalism vs. Patriotism

Nationalism is not the same as patriotism. While patriotism is a bit more of a vague word to describe the love and devotion to a country, its ideals and values, nationalism is more the promotion of a nation's culture, language, and supremacy above others. In this sense, nationalism is often race or ethnicity-driven, which can have dangerous implications.It is far less ideologically destructive than nationalism and doesn't necessitate the same devotions.

Nationalism in the Past

Historically, nationalism has used the economic, political, and cultural spheres as a means to promote the wellbeing and superiority of a given nation over that of all others.

Nationalism was first used in the 18th century as a common way to define and promote a nation according to "ethnographic principles

Fascist regimes like those of Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler used the economic and political turmoil of the early 20th century to subjugate individualism to the needs of the nation by banking on national identity and tradition. Most notably perhaps is the nationalism exhibited during World War II by the Nazi party in Germany.

Hitler's Nazi party hinged on the ideals of the superiority of the Aryan race and the German peoples' supposed cultural, intellectual, and militaristic supremacy to all other nations. The Allied nations were ultimately successful in stamping out the nationalist threat from countries like Italy and Germany, but the rise of global organizations to combat nationalism, like the United Nations, have come with their own problems.

Nationalism in Politics

The effects of nationalism can be felt through the political sphere. Nationalism in political leadership is seemingly dominating many of the current major world players - becoming a sort of pseudo-platform disguised in catch phrases like "make America great again" that can easily be molded to the nationalistic intentions. Still, while the MAGA platform, to many, represents a patriotic (not nationalistic) sentiment, truly nationalistic policies are quickly coming into effect.

'America First'

President Trump's so-called "America First" campaign has been widely compared to a coined "new nationalism" seeking to restore a kind of pseudo-nationalism. But, the movement has its roots in the America First Committee (AFC), founded as far back as 1940. The president's recent support of the idea has been widely publicized.

Still, nationalism, new or not, is comprised of a desire to succeed over (and often at the expense of) others. This is evidenced in many of the recent policies regarding the "America First"

Nationalism and Expressive Forms

Nationalism is a complex, often problematic concept for social scientists. But among existing definitions of the term, one finds three critical areas of agreement. First, the rise of nationalism is historically specific. Nationalism emerged in the late eighteenth century, appearing first in Europe, then in North and South America.

In the twentieth century, nationalism spread to many Asian countries and to the new independent nations of Africa. Second, nationalism exemplifies an ideological movement, promoting the autonomy, unity, and sovereignty of those gathered in a single territory. A nation's citizens are believed to be joined not by ethnicity, but by a single public culture and a set of shared political goals. Finally, nationalism evokes a strong collective sentiment. While ruling elites may sow the first seeds of this fervor, it is argued that all citizens come to experience a shared collective identity and to embrace a common national purpose.

Nationalism, the ideology of the nation-state, stands for the sense of togetherness of a people in terms of ethnic, religious, linguistic, territorial, and other unities. It is generally considered a secular (nonreligious) concept of Western origin. Religious nationalism is therefore considered inimical to the secular state. Empirical evidence reveals, however, that the relationship is complex and varies from case to case. This complexity is illustrated by the situation in South Asia where secular and religious nationalisms have long been in conflict and where both secular and religious states exist today. Comparative perspectives from the West and the Middle East are cited in the article to help frame the argument.

Nationalism is a relatively modern concept which emerged in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries with arising of the nation-state. In modern times, the nation-state turned into a dominant form of societal organization. We refer both to doctrines and political movements that maintain that a nation (usually defined in terms of ethnicity or culture) is entitled to a sovereign or at least autonomous political community, rooted in a shared history, culture, religion, customs, and common destiny. Nationalism as such had an exclusive impact over the history. In modern times, the nation-state turned into a dominant form of societal organization.

Nationalism, Historical Aspects of: South Asia

Nationalism, which first developed in the West as a conscious political ideology, spread to other parts of the world in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It sustained political and social-cultural movements of great power in South Asia, i.e., the Indo-Pak subcontinent. The ethnic diversity of the region, the responses to colonial rule which subsumed and overlapped with reactions to the encounter with Western civilization, as well as the shifting definitions of national identity determined by the region's history both under colonial rule and after decolonization, gave nationalism in the area a very distinctive and at times highly idiosyncratic character. The purpose of this article is to identify these diversities, explain their nature and origin, and trace the outlines of their history over time. It will also discuss the wide variety of approaches to the phenomenon which will define and explain it in fundamentally different ways.

Muslim nationalism in South Asia is the political and cultural expression of nationalism, founded upon the religious tenets and identity of Islam, of the Muslims of South Asia.

The Muslims of South Asia into two categories during the era of the Indian independence movement: nationalist Muslims (individuals who opposed the partition of India) and Muslim nationalists (individuals who desired to create a separate country for Indian Muslims). The All India Azad Muslim Conference represented nationalist Muslims, while the All-India Muslim League represented the Muslim nationalists.

Historical foundations

During the Delhi Sultanate era, the Muslim kingdoms were among powerful military groups in India, and an Islamic society that descended from the Middle East and Central Asia and from areas which became modern day Afghanistan spread the religion amongst Indians.Ideological foundations

The first organized expressions began with Muslim scholars and reformers like Syed Ahmed Khan, Syed Ameer Ali and the Aga Khan who had an influential major hand in the Indian independence movement. Expression of Muslim separatism and nationhood emerged from modern Islam's pre-eminent poet and philosopher, Sir Allama Muhammad Iqbal and political activists like Choudhary Rahmat Ali.

Some prominent Muslims politically sought a base for themselves, separate from Hindus and other Indian nationalists, who espoused the Indian National Congress. Muslim scholars, religious leaders and politicians founded the All India Muslim League in 1906.

Muslims comprised 25% to 30% of pre-independence India's collective population. Some Muslim leaders felt that their cultural and economic contributions to India's heritage and life merited a significant role for Muslims in a future independent India's governance and politics.

A movement led by Allama Iqbal and ultimately Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who originally fought for Muslim rights within India, later felt a separate homeland must be obtained for India's Muslims in order to achieve prosperity. They espoused the Two-Nation Theory, that India was in fact home to the Muslim and Hindu nations, who were distinct in every way.

Another section of Muslim society, led by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari and Maulana Azad felt that participation in the Indian Independence Movement and the Indian National Congress was a patriotic duty of all Muslims.

The Deobandi strain of Islamic theology also advocated a notion of composite nationalism in which Hindus and Muslims were seen as one nation united in the struggle against British colonial rule in undivided India. In 1919, a large group of Deobandi scholars formed the political party Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and it maintained a position of opposing the partition of India. Deobandi Islamic scholar Maulana Syed Husain Ahmad Madani helped to spread these ideas through his text Muttahida Qaumiyat Aur Islam.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah led the Muslim League's call for Pakistan. As time went on, communal tensions rose and so partition won increasing support among many Muslims in Muslim-majority areas of the British India.

On 14 August 1947, Pakistan was created out of the Muslim majority provinces of British India, Sindh, the west of Punjab, Balochistan and the North West Frontier Province, and in formerly in the east with Bengal. Communal violence broke out and millions of people were forced to flee their homes and many lost their lives. Hindus and Sikhs fled from Pakistan to India and Muslims fled from India to Pakistan.

However, because Muslim communities existed throughout the South Asia, independence actually left tens of millions of Muslims within the boundaries of the secular Indian state. Currently, approximately 14.2% of the population of India is Muslim.

The Muslim League idea of a Muslim Nationalism encompassing all the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent seemed to lose out to ethnic nationalism in 1971, when East Pakistan, a Bengali dominated province, fought with support and the subsequent war with India helped them win their independence from Pakistan, and became the independent country of Bangladesh.

Muslim nationalism in India

According to official government statistics, the overwhelming Hindu-majority India has almost 14% Muslim population spread across all states with significant concentrations in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Telangana, Assam, West Bengal, Gujarat, Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir. It is the third-largest home to Muslims after Pakistan and Indonesia and the third-largest home to Shia Muslims. Since independence, there has been a great deal of conflict within the various Muslim communities as to how to best function within the complex political and cultural mosaic that defines Indian politics in India today.

All in all, Muslim perseverance in sustaining their continued advancement along with Government efforts to focus on Pakistan as the primary problem for Indian Muslims in achieving true minority rights has created a sometimes extreme support for Indian nationalism, giving the Indian State much-needed credibility in projecting a strong secular image throughout the rest of the world.

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, a leading Indian Islamic organization has propounded a theological basis for Indian Muslims' nationalistic philosophy. Their thesis is that Muslims and non-Muslims have entered upon a mutual contract in India since independence, to establish a secular state. The Constitution of India represents this contract. This is known in Urdu as a mu'ahadah. Accordingly, as the Muslim community's elected representatives supported and swore allegiance to this mu'ahadah so the specific duty of Muslims is to keep loyalty to the Constitution. This mu'ahadah is similar to a previous similar contract signed between the Muslims and the Jews in Medina.

**South Asian Muslim leaders**

**Reformers**

Syed Ahmed Khan, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Begum of Bhopal

**Freedom Fighters (primarily against the British**)

Badruddin Tyabji, Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, Maulana Azad, Saifuddin Kitchlew, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Abbas Tyabji, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Maulana Mehmud Hasan, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Hussain Ahmad Madani

**Pakistan Movement**

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Iqbal, Liaquat Ali Khan, Abdur Rab Nishtar, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, A.K. Fazlul Huq, Begum Jahanara Shahnawaz, Syed Ahmed Khan, Shamsul Haque Faridpuri .

**Pakistani nationalism**

Pakistani nationalism refers to the political, cultural, linguistic, historical, religious and geographical expression of patriotism by the people of Pakistan, of pride in the history, culture, identity, heritage and religious identity of Pakistan, and visions for its future. Pakistan nationalism is the direct outcome of Muslim nationalism, which emerged in India in the 19th century. Its intellectual pioneer was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Unlike the secular nationalism of other countries, Pakistani nationalism and the religion of Islam are not mutually exclusive and religion is a part of the Pakistani nationalist narrative. During the late years of British rule and leading up to independence, it had three distinct supporters: