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MHI-109

Indian National Movement

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By: Gaurav Sahni



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**Sample Preview
of the
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Papers**

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Sample

QUESTION PAPER - 1

(Solved)

INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

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Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks : 100

Note: Attempt any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. What is economic nationalism? Discuss the views of its earliest proponents.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 42, Q. No. 1.

Q. 2. Evaluate the impact of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact on the Civil Disobedience Movement. Was it a strategic victory or a compromise for the Indian nationalist movement?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 99, Q. No. 3.

Q. 3. Discuss the achievements of the Congress ministries.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-19, Page No. 126, Q. No. 3.

Q. 4. How did the experiences of the Second World War and its immediate aftermath shape the political consciousness and mobilization strategies of various Indian communities?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-23, Page No. 147, Q. No. 1.

Q. 5. Explain the Constitution as a means of democratic transformation.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-35, Page No. 212, Q. No. 2.

Q. 6. Why did the Congress accept the partition of India?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-25, Page No. 156, Q. No. 1.

Q. 7. Considering the dual objectives of Indian capitalists—economic prosperity and political

influence—how effectively were they able to leverage their economic power to gain political concessions from both the British and post-independence Indian governments?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-28, Page No. 173, Q. No. 5.

Q. 8. What are the basic points of the Marxist historiography on Indian nationalism?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 19, Q. No. 2.

Q. 9. How did the divergent strategies within the Indian National Movement influence its effectiveness at different historical junctures?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-33, Page No. 201, Q. No. 1.

Q. 10. Write short notes on any two of the following:

(a) Reasons for the Revolt.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 30, 'Reasons for the Revolt'.

(b) The Dandi March.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-17, Page No. 110, 'The Dandi March'.

(c) Congress, the Left and the Position of Land Lords.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-29, Page No. 176, 'Congress, the Left and the Position of Land Lords'.

(d) Promotion of Civil Liberties.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-36, Page No. 216, 'Promotion of Liberties'.



Sample

QUESTION PAPER - 2

(Solved)

INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

MHI-109

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks : 100

Note: Attempt any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. Discuss the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935. Why did the Congress criticise it?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-16, Page No. 104, Q. No. 3.

Q. 2. Discuss the intellectual and social origins of nations in Asia and Africa.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 11, Q. No. 2.

Q. 3. Evaluate the impact of the British decision to wind up their rule post-World War-II on the political manoeuvres of Indian political parties and the acceleration towards independence.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-24, Page No. 153, Q. No. 4.

Q. 4. What were the ideological and strategic conflicts between nationalist leaders and the working class during the independence movement, and how were these resolved?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-27, Page No. 167, Q. No. 2.

Q. 5. What was the background to the formation of Swaraj Party?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 88, Q. No. 1.

Q. 6. What do you know about the extinction of the princely order?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-18, Page No. 119, Q. No. 2.

Q. 7. How did the socio-political ideologies of various Dalit leaders during the national movement

differ, and what impact did these differences have on the Dalit community's overall strategy towards achieving social and political emancipation?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-31, Page No. 188, Q. No. 1.

Q. 8. Discuss the role played by the Indian nationalist movement in emphasizing the principles of democracy and secularism in independent India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-36, Page No. 218, Q. No. 1.

Q. 9. How did the individual satyagraha and other non-violent movements influence public opinion and British policies during the period leading up to the Quit India Movement?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-20, Page No. 132, Q. No. 3.

Q. 10. Write short notes on the any two of the following:

(a) The Subaltern Studies.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 23, 'The Subaltern Studies'.

(b) Fight for Indian Freedom.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-22, Page No. 140, 'Fight for Indian Freedom'.

(c) The Civil Disobedience Movement.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-30, Page No. 181, 'The Civil Disobedience Movement'.

(d) An Appraisal of the Congress Approach.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-34, Page No. 204, 'An Appraisal of the Congress Approach'.



Sample Preview of The Chapter

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INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Nation and Nationalism

INTRODUCTION

Indian nationalism during the freedom struggle had two major ideas: anti-imperialism and national unity. Any person, movement or organisation that practised and upheld these two ideas, was called a nationalist. Nationalism, however, was not confined only to India. Nationalism has been a global phenomenon and the most powerful political force in the modern world. It has manifested itself as politics, ideology, movement, belief system, a sentiment and a passion. Poems, novels and various literature have been written on nationalism. Both the developed and under-developed societies came under the spell of nationalism. In this chapter, we will explain some of the general theories of nationalism.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

UNDERSTANDING NATION, NATIONALISM AND NATION-STATE

We will discuss here:

- (i) Some major debates and controversies related to nationalism;
- (ii) The various theories offered by social scientists; and
- (iii) The relevance of these theories for India.

The Question of Nationalism

Between 18th and 20th century, a large number of small, local communities transformed into a small number of large communities. The new communities had new ties and impersonal and yet very powerful solidarities. Groups and individuals looked upon themselves as members of this newly created large invisible community called the Nation. In this process, a new type of imagination was involved. They were getting created above all through an “imagination”. Communities were not constituted by reciprocity, common sharing of resources, or familiarity. Most communities in the past were based on familiarity, but the new communities were based on unfamiliarity and anonymity. The new communities were brought together by a kind of imagination. In this sense, Benedict Anderson, a leading theorist on nationalism, called nations as “Imagined Communities”.

These new communities wanted that they should have their own representative state. They felt state systems should emanate from the communities and should be representative of them. It became the defining features of nation, nationalism and nation-state. Ernest Gellner, another important theorist of nationalism, defined nationalism as “Primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment.”

Defining Nation and Nation-State

A nation is not a natural human community, but a historical category. It is a product of certain historical conditions. In the late 18th and 20th centuries, the word “nation” was used in different ways. It was used either in the sense of a race (a biological category) or in the sense of a clan (a social category larger than the family and connected through ties).

- (i) A nation is formed through the forces of history and it not *a priori* reality existing in a natural kind of way.
- (ii) A nation is formed by subjective factors like will and consciousness and not by natural boundaries such as rivers, mountains and oceans.

It considered nations as contingencies brought about by human will. Nations could be formed and dissolved. Renan said: “Nations are not something eternal. They have begun; they will end. They will be replaced in all probability, by a European confederation. At the present time the existence of nations happens to be good, even necessary. Their existence is a guarantee of liberty, which would be lost if the world had only one law and only one master.”

A major problem in Renan’s definition is that it focused only on Europe and categories such as will, memory and consciousness that could give as a clue to nations were so general in nature that they could be found in most communities. How to then distinguish nation as a unique and distinctive human community from other kinds of human communities. Renan’s definition captured the generic part of nations but neglected their distinctive part.

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Stalin and Renan were opposite in their understanding, but they shared the basic digits that nations were formed and did not exist as an a priori reality. Renan defined nations from the generic side of the scale, while Stalin defined nations from the specific side. If we take the example of European Jews in the twentieth century, the Jewish nation is not adequately covered by Stalin's definition, but it is covered by Renan's.

However, Stalin and Renan missed some elements of nations. Ernest Gellner provided the missing elements in 1983 in his book *Nations and Nationalism*. He said "It is not the case that already formed nations create their own justification through the ideology of nationalism; but rather that nations are made by nationalism."

Three elements together – subjective, objective, and ideological — can thus complete the definition of nation. Therefore, nation means a large, anonymous human community that is brought together by subjective features such as will, consciousness and memory; objective features such as historic continuity, common language, territory, economic life and common culture; and ideological features such as nationalism.

CHALLENGES BEFORE A THEORY OF NATIONALISM

Ernest Gellner explained in his theory how the emergence of nationalism was the product of this transformation and was deeply implicated in it. Many others also agreed with him on this point. They agreed that the creation of nations was inherent in the process of industrialism. Some of the features of the industrial society were such that the raw material of diverse human communities transformed into neat, standardized, homogenized, large national communities.

A major trouble with the theory that linked nationalism to industrialism is industrialism and nationalism may have started at around the same time in late 18th-19th centuries, but after that their trajectories became very dissimilar. Nationalism spread to large parts of the world, but industrialism was confined to small pockets of European countries. There are also different explanations for the emergence of nationalism. Benedict Andersons agreed on this.

THEORIES OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism cannot be explained only by specific or endogenous factors or factors operative within the society. It can be explained by external or exogenous factors, or factors from outside the society. Tom Nairn, a leading scholar on nationalism, explained this by giving the example of Welsh nationalism. Theorists of nationalism differ in the identification of these external factors. Some consider nationalism as a necessary stage of human development that all societies must go through, while some others take it in more general terms as the unfolding of the "human spirit", or a great social and psychological need for identity, or for identifying with a larger whole. Nationalism has a broad, trans-country, generic explanation. Some general explanations for nationalism can be made if it is identified on the basis of some common traits, experienced by different societies broadly during 18th-20th centuries.

Non-Modernist Theories

Non-modernists look at the larger spread of time. They say that nationalism must have evolved over a long stretch of time. All modernists agree with each and share little in common except for being modernists. Non-modernists can be

divided between evolutionists, naturalists and perennialists. Naturalists look at nation as something natural and rooted in human mind. They take it as a very natural human sentiment. Naturalists do not use expressions like rise or growth or emergence of nationalism. They only talk about a permanent, timeless presence of nationalist feeling in the minds and hearts of people. For example, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the ideologue and propagator of Pakistani nationalism, said that a Muslim nation was not a product of recent political developments, but that a Muslim nation existed in a fully finished form in the medieval past. When Jinnah was asked about the exact location of his Muslim nation and when it came into being, he gave an interesting answer: Pakistan already existed for a long time; it was not created in the recent past. The perennialist position has been understood and described as an "invented tradition". The idea of "invented tradition" has the following connotation:

- (i) Nationalists tend to use and invoke the past and traditions as a legitimizing device to validate their nationalist projects.
- (ii) They also claim legitimacy for their nation by claiming its presence in the past, history and traditions, or as a continuation of the past.
- (iii) The tradition is not presented as it was, but rather it is invented or manufactured.

Modernist Theories

One of the earliest modernist Elie Kedouri looked at nationalism primarily as a doctrine and saw it as rooted in the intellectual history of modern Europe. This was a non-structural explanation of nationalism. It takes nationalism as rooted, not in concrete structures and specific conditions, but only in ideas and doctrines of some European thinkers. Ernest Gellner provided the structural explanation.

Gellner believed nationalism as the integral part of the transformation of the world from agrarian to industrial. His theory is both structural and materialist. It is structural since he does not see it as the result of the activities of a few groups and individual but as the unfolding of new economic and productive forces creating new interplays of power and culture. It is materialist since it looks not as ideas and doctrines as the basic motor in the emergence of nationalist. The theory recognizes the primacy of economic forces in creating new conditions. The essence of Gellner's theory of nationalism is given below:

- (i) Industrial economy which emerged in Europe in late 18th and the beginning of the 19th century was based on perpetual growth. It needed to grow and kept growing for its survival. It dismantled the stability of the old order.
- (ii) Full or substantial literacy is needed for its functioning. This literacy had to be of a homogenous type so that a large number of anonymous people, unfamiliar with one another, could communicate with one another.
- (iii) it is marked by remarkable mobility, both occupation and spatial. Large numbers of people were uprooted from their traditional occupations, locations and cultures.
- (iv) it was also based on egalitarianism and like a hurricane or a huge tidal wave, it destroyed the earlier hierarchies based on rank and status. The

mobility and anonymity of the new order created conditions for egalitarianism.

- (v) The preservation of the old, elite high-culture became incompatible with the new economy. The high culture of the elites did not stay confined to the few and had to become shared and pervasive. So, both the multiple local folk cultures and an exclusive high culture were replaced and transformed into a pervasive and a shared high culture. The earlier faultlines in the European society were replaced by new boundaries based on new cultures.
- (vi) The role of the state became very important. The new economic apparatus became so large that it could be effectively managed only by the state. The state had to maintain it only if it enjoyed the support and the allegiance of the people.

In all these processes, nationalism becomes the inevitable and inescapable consequence. The modern economy, the modern state and the society require nationalism. This is the crux of Gellner's explanation for nationalism.

It was a credible theory of nationalism, but a major problem with it was that it did not seem to correspond to developments in India or indeed in other colonies. Gellner's theory captured the global nature of the phenomenon very well, but it did not adequately cover the nationalist experiences of the colonial societies of Asia and Africa. This theory was developed almost entirely on the basis of Western European experiences and then universalised as valid for all of mankind.

Tom Nairn, in his book, *Break-Up of Great Britain*, explained nationalism as having emanated not from the industrialized European societies but from the colonial societies. Tom Nairn is both modernist and universalist. He is modernist because he sees nationalism as a product of the last two centuries. He is universalist since he looks at nationalism as a specific feature of the general historical development of modern world. He believed nationalism as an inevitable and integral outcome of a particular stage of human development. Nairn sees nationalism as a consequence of the capitalist transformation of the world and of the uneven under-development inherent in capitalism.

Capitalism created a system of imperialism and colonialism. Humanity's forward march became synonymous with 'Westernization'. In the colonial societies, the elites discovered that they were being excluded from the new system and that their full incorporation in it was just not possible. A large majority of the people in the colonies were exploited in the new system.

INDIAN NATIONALISM

The two components of the Indian experience are the Indian component (specific) and the nationalist (generic) one.

In the generic component, the modernity of the Indian nation can be highlighted. India has long continuous history of many centuries, but Indian nation is a modern phenomenon. India was ruled by many large empires in the past, but a national community of Indian people did not exist. An Indian nation was made in the 19th and the 20th centuries by the ideology of Indian nationalism in the context of British imperialism.

Indian nationalism was territorial and not ethnic or religious. The Indianness claim was put forward on the basis of

territory. It was not the common culture or a common language that went into the making of the national community, but the common economic exploitation under British imperialism united Indians.

Indian nationalism also had some distinctive features. In the second half of the 19th century, British scholars, bureaucrats and ethnographers told the Indian intelligentsia that there was not, nor could ever be, an Indian nation. British scholars John Strachey and John Seeley wrote in their books that India did not mark the territory of a nation and a language, but the territories of many nations and many languages. British colonial discourses on India pointed out India's cultural, linguistic and religious diversity and looked upon it as a barrier to the development of Indian nationhood.

The majority of Indian intellectuals refrained from replying to the "no nation" charge with an "always a nation" assertion. Bipan Chandra wrote the initiators of the Indian National Movement, the 19th century intellectuals, agreed with the British assertion that India was not yet a nation. They accepted that India was not yet a formed nation despite common history, geography and the elements of a common culture. They also accepted that nation and nationalism had not existed in India earlier. They accepted the incoherence of India as also the existence of multiplicity of identities in it. They also accepted that nation was not a natural or inevitable phenomenon but was a historical creation, but they denied that India could not become a nation.

Indians said historical forces were gradually bringing the Indian people together and that India had now entered the process of becoming a nation. They said India was a nation-in-the-making. The 19th century Indian thinkers made a distinction between nation and civilization and highlighted the novelty of the Indian nation. They argued that India was old civilization, but a new nation. Swami Vivekanand said in 1896: "A nation is being made out of India's different races. They are no less various than the different peoples of Europe."

Indian leaders made references to "new nation", new India, "new national spirit", "development of nationhood". Hence, 'invention of tradition' as a standard nationalist device was not resorted to by the 19th century Indian nationalists. However, in the late 20th century, some leaders considered Indian nation to be perennial and always present in Indian history. They glorified India's past and traditions and projected them on India's present.

Besides, Indian nationalism was plural, non-coercive and civil. Indian nationalist leaders promoted the idea of the Indian nation as being based on cultural plurality rather than cultural monism. Mahatma Gandhi wrote in his weekly journal *Harijan* in 1940: "India is a big country, a big nation, composed of different cultures which are tending to blend with one another, each complementing the rest."

The Indian nationalist leaders recognized that nation making for India was a long process and far from accomplished. And that India's diversity was no obstacle in India's nationhood. After independence, the Constitution makers refused to recognize any single language as the national language. Rather, they enlisted 14 important Indian languages and designated all of them as official languages. Indian has now 22 official languages.

EXERCISES

Q. 1. Discuss the modernist theories about the emergence of nations and nationalism.

Ans. Elie Kedouri, who have one of the earliest modernist theories, considered nationalism primarily as a doctrine and saw it as rooted in the intellectual history of modern Europe. He gave a non-structural explanation of nationalism. He believed nationalism was rooted, not in concrete structures and specific conditions, but only in ideas and doctrines of some European thinkers.

Ernest Gellner, a later modernist, provided the structural explanation. He believed nationalism as the integral part of the transformation of the world from agrarian to industrial. His theory is both structural and materialist. He did not see it as the result of the activities of a few groups and individual but as the unfolding of new economic and productive forces creating new interplays of power and culture. His theory recognized the primacy of economic forces in creating new conditions. The essence of Gellner’s theory of nationalism include the following:

- Industrial economy of Europe in late 18th and the beginning of the 19th century was based on perpetual growth. It dismantled the stability of the old order. It needed to grow and kept growing for its survival.
- Full or substantial literacy is needed for its functioning. This literacy had to be of a homogenous type so that a large number of anonymous people, unfamiliar with one another, could communicate with one another.
- It is featured by mobility, both occupation and spatial. Large numbers of people were uprooted from their traditional occupations, locations and cultures.
- It was also based on egalitarianism and like a hurricane or a huge tidal wave, it destroyed the earlier hierarchies based on rank and status. The mobility and anonymity of the new order created conditions for egalitarianism.
- The preservation of the old, elite high-culture became incompatible with the new economy. The high culture of the elites did not stay confined to the few and had to become shared and pervasive. So, both the multiple local folk cultures and an exclusive high culture were replaced and transformed into a pervasive and a shared high culture.
- The role of the state became very important. The new economic apparatus became so large that it could be effectively managed only by the state. The state had to maintain it only if it enjoyed the support and the allegiance of the people.

All these called for a new type of arrangement:

- Ordinary people could now aspire to live with dignity. The new high culture could be promoted and protected only by the state. Hence, the necessity of a state as representative of the people emerged.
- The new economy became so large that it needed participation of a large number of people for its

effective functioning. People were trained for the new jobs and roles. Education became necessary and had to be uniformly imparted across different categories and was effectively provided only by the state. Thus, state became very important.

- The state could not carry out its task till it had the support and allegiance of the people. It was necessary that people ‘belong’ to the state and that this belonging should be direct without being mediated by any other ties of kinship and community.

In all these processes, nationalism becomes the inevitable and inescapable consequence. The modern economy, the modern state and the society require nationalism. This is the crux of Gellner’s explanation for nationalism.

Tom Nairn, a modernist and universalist, explained nationalism as having emanated not from the industrialized European societies but from the colonial societies. He saw nationalism as a product of the last two centuries. He also considered nationalism as a specific feature of the general historical development of modern world. He believed nationalism as an inevitable and integral outcome of a particular stage of human development. Nairn took nationalism as a consequence of the capitalist transformation of the world and of the uneven underdevelopment inherent in capitalism.

Q. 2. Critically discuss the various definitions of nations and nation-states.

Ans. In the late 18th and 20th centuries, the term “nation” was defined in different ways. It was used either in the sense of a race (a biological category) or in the sense of a clan (a social category larger than the family and connected through ties).

Towards the last decades of the nineteenth century, a new element was imparted to this understanding. French scholar Ernest Renan rejected both the racial/biological and the natural definitions of nation. He defined nation on the basis of “will, memory and consciousness”. According to Renan, nation has the following characteristics: (i) A nation is formed through the forces of history and it not *a priori* reality existing in a natural kind of way. (ii) A nation is formed by subjective factors like will and consciousness and not by natural boundaries like rivers, mountains and oceans.

Renan said “Nations are not something eternal. They have begun; they will end. They will be replaced in all probability, by a European confederation. At the present time the existence of nations happens to be good, even necessary. Their existence is a guarantee of liberty, which would be lost if the world had only one law and only one master.”

According to Joseph Stalin, nation is “A historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.” According to this definition, five main features of a nation are historic continuity, common language, territory, common grid of economic life and a common culture.

Ernest Gellner provided some missing elements in earlier definitions. In 1983 in his book *Nations and Nationalism*, he said “It is not the case that already formed nations create their own justification through the ideology of nationalism; but rather that nations are made by nationalism.”