

What is The Future of Nation State? Case Study of Pakistan

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Abstract: This paper discussed about the emergence of the nation-state, its historical background. This research mainly focused on the Renan philosophical concepts about the nation and nation state. According to Renan view, the soul with a common past and experience and the acceptance of its legacy is something which constructs a nation. This research enlightened the study of Pakistan as a nation, apart from Muslim nationalism the moderate political leaders have tried to develop this notion of oneness on the basis of the common struggle to receive this land and the admiration of the struggle by coming generations and accepting and embracing that legacy by new generations. This paper not only studied the Renan political thought about nation state but also explained the Geertz concept of Sovereignty, Wimplemann philosophical views about working of state institutions, Kachtan thoughts on ethnicity, division and conflicts of people on the basis of ethnicity, Habermas and Bennett ideas on civil disobedience. It has been analyzed that the future of nation state is shady if it will be left on its own; it is the different things which artificially keep the sense of nation and nation state alive.

Key words: Renan, Kachtan, Habermas, Bennett

INTRODUCTION

Nation States are believed to be emerged after the treaty of Westphalia. Nations have been existed for long; even in ancient times when the political and social settings were smaller but the sense of nation or the nationalistic touch of oneness of people did existed somewhere.

In this research some of the views of Renan about the nation and nation states and how looked at it was discussed. The ideas of Renan about Nation states and nations were further used to establish new view that how Renan clearly have drawn a line between different factors and have sidelined them completely is not so appropriate in the case of the development of the nature state and to think about its future. According to Renan the thing which is central in the development of the nation is the soul of a nation which develops this sense of oneness among the people, the idea is bit hard to understand and comprehend but as he talks about a common history and common experience of the people regarding a thing and connection of the present people with that past who with heart receive and mind receive the legacy of that past and accept it as their own. The soul with a common past and experience and the acceptance of its legacy is something which constructs a nation. Let's take example of Pakistan as a nation to understand it, apart from Muslim nationalism the moderate political leaders have tried to develop this notion of oneness on the basis of the common struggle to receive this land and the admiration of the struggle by coming generations and accepting and embracing that legacy by new generations is something which has kept the sense of nationalism alive, and celebrating days like independence day and republic day, defense day etc helps in retaining the importance of that legacy. Therefore, the idea of Renan that common struggle, soul, common history and the legacy of it plays role in the construction of a nation. But he completely negated the language, Religion, Race ethnicity and such things, because these things cannot be completely neglected. He talks about the involvement of soul and history in the building of a

nation but these things have to be started or created on some foundations and in many cases the language, culture, ethnicity, religion and race do play role in development of soul. So we cannot completely neglect them. Again we will take example of Pakistan as a nation at time of independence, we can observe that Islam played role in the construction of the soul of nationalism of Pakistan and then on basis of that collective struggle and historical events took place which later on was passed to the generations which they still celebrate and cherish. Similar to the religion we could find many examples in which ethnicity, language, culture or race will play similar role.

Similarly if we will observe the study and idea of Geertz we will find a different view from that of Renan which also involves some modern practical phenomenon like Colonization. We cannot ignore the role Colonization played in creating new nation states in many regions but we will stick to the study of Sub continental region as an example. The development of the soul of nation both for India and for Pakistan and for other popular ideas like Hindutva all were developed after colonization and it played major role in developing sense of nation here in Subcontinent for different nations and that resulted in two nation states India and Pakistan. So, the construction of a nation state lies in between the idea of Geertz and Renan or synthesis of both; The soul of nation which is constructed many outer factors acting upon it and which is constructed both by nature and manually fed by different factors to keep it alive.

BACKGROUND

Nation states in current time and in the previous times have emerged as a very strong reality of international politics. Different incidents at different times in International history and National history of different countries have played role in strengthening the idea of nation state. For example in World War 1 the identity of nation and the prestige related to being a nation played a major role in the development of the world war. The treaty of Westphalia had developed the sense of nation state. Later the formation of International organizations like League of Nations (LON) and UNO, how these platforms

were made to ensure the rights and development of every nation and state? If we talk about our region how colonization played role in developing the idea of one nation while previously India was divided into smaller princely states. Souls of different nations were born on different foundations, like some saw themselves as a nation just because they realized they were ruled by another race or different people, some saw them as a nation because they felt that they have to stand together because of their belonging to one religion, some assumed themselves as nation because of the culture or belonging to the soil of India which also vaguely resonates with the idea of hindutva of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (who is also known by Nationalist Hindus as Veer Savarkar or Savarkar the brave). All this shows that how diverse the idea of Nation or a nation state on basis of it is. We cannot encircle the idea of nation state in a parameter as different nation states have their own uniqueness in their personal sense and are complex in their own capacity. And the nation states and its concepts have evolved due to political atmosphere of their respective regions and sue to the intervention of new modes and new ideas all politically, technologically and socially. The evolution of nation states because of introduction and intervention of new modes, their formation and their fall and construction of more nation states form one as we see how Bangladesh emerged as another nation state from Pakistan which already claimed itself to be a nation state have raised question mark on the future of Nation states. Continuous evolution of Nation states compels our mind to think about what its next form will be, how it will be affected, how it will be changed. In this time when things are changing rapidly in all parameters, time when different ethical, social and humanitarian debates are opened on every front in different capacities, In this time when one can communicate with thousands of people in few seconds, in this time when technology is rapidly advancing and when societies are changing, What form Nation state will be in, will it retain its importance or will it be faded away. In short, What will be the future of nation state?

CLAIM

Nation state as it has developed its identity and

have grown its idea will be on decline in the coming time, this is what can speculate on the basis of the analysis of the readings and discussion we have done in class. I believe the nation state is something which is developed on the basis of a soul using different factors but we have to continuously feed it to keep it alive and working. For example if we will take example of Pakistan, the sense of nationalism is developed in the people by the help of the text books of curriculum which are necessary for most of the students to read. The Chapters in the books of literature, history and social studies are developed in such a way that they will enhance the nationalistic values in the children. How the poets, journalists and literature people like Iqbal, Johar brothers etc are celebrated who promote nationalism are celebrated. Celebrations of different national days to reinforce the spirit of nationalism and controlling on the news related to the movements which can produce sense of presence of anti-national or something against nationalism, like a year back there was this very big protest in Gilgit Baltistan against the unconstitutional taxes on Gilgit and Balti regions but it was not even shown on any of the national TV. All this shows that the sense of nation needs to be fed to keep it alive.

But now in the time when development is taking place and technological advancements have help in opening doors of new ideologies and new views towards humanitarian and ethical debates the future of the nation state is on the decline of the very idea of it. The concept of nation state will not lose its importance but its importance will surely fades away. By viewing and discussing one author each from the discussions and readings of Civil Society, Public Sphere, Development and social movements. By discussing their arguments and analyzing them they try to portray that how the very idea of nation state will lose its importance.

ANALYSIS

Throughout our time in our course doing the readings and discussions we discussed about different things which helps us to develop our thinking towards the concept of nation state, some of the topics directly helps us to understand and some indirectly shed light on it. Many of the readings not

directly but gives rough images about things in a nation state mainly focusing aspects of society which directly have no link with the nation state but indirectly have connection with it. In a nation state all the people living in that have to be part of nation and at least a bigger fraction of people should make them feel associated to each other as a nation but there were some cases in the readings in which some bodies are treated less equally than the other part of nation. For example the reading of Kachtan there was this divide in the army of Israel on the basis of ethnicity, two military groups which were on a divide one considered it superior and more organized and discipline while the other group was considered to be inferior and described themselves by the reference of the other group. Moreover in one reading we discussed about Ahmadies that how they are treated differently. Even if we observe the society on the normal days we will observe about Ahmadies in Pakistan are not recognized as equals. For instance, we have seen tags like “yehan ahmdiyon ko saman nhi deya jata, saman mang kr sharminda nah on” (Here we don’t deal with Ahmadies in our shops, please don’t embarrass yourself by asking for goods) in the different shops even some shops in Liberty market Lahore. Moreover we have also observed in the Abbas’ article about Blasphemy that how this religious rule have been used to develop a political writ over the non-Muslims and even on Muslims to maintain political hold.

All the examples mentioned above shows that even in a nation state many fragments are treated lesser than the other or at points are not considered to part of the nation, This directs towards the point that under such circumstances the very idea of nation has flaws within it and the stability of the idea of nation and that of the nation has to be enforced in light and hard ways.

In Wimplemann article we have seen how some institutions at some places of a state are working above the state for example about giving the judgment about the females the local jirga hold power to decide to even give severe punishment like stoning. If we look at it, from the perspective of Geertz that is such state actually sovereign? And if nation state is not sovereign than what strength and authority does it hold and what is the future of nation

state.

There are number of things in the readings which we discussed and which directs that the concept of the nation state is with every passing day losing its shine and strength.

In this paper four authors of four different topics to shed light on the argument about the future of the nation state, will be discussed.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Under this topic we have studied the readings of Habermas and Bennett in which the civil disobedience and skepticism towards the politics was discussed. In both the readings a formation of civil society was discussed which believed in the development of the society in the reading of the Habermas it was discussed that how the civil disobedient is actually a litmus test for democracy that how democracy is refined as a mode of government because Civil Disobedience actually directs towards the grievances of the people who are source of power in the democracy. It is a litmus test for democracy as it ensures that government works as an agent of the deliverance of the services and power to the people and if it does not happen the form of democracy is not refined. While in the other reading the skepticism towards the politics was discussed that in USA most of the people are skeptical towards politics and don't look at it nobly, but this skepticism and not having any position about politics is also a position of people. This leads to the formation of the Civil Society which raise their voice against the injustice done against the people of towards the government policies they are skeptical towards or which they think are not good enough for the people according to their lens. Now the question how a strong civil society and civil disobediences works against the concept of nation state, for this I will go back to our very idea of nation state and nation which we started that nation state is something which is developed by soul and collective efforts and collective history but here we observe that it is less about oneness or being one or accepting suffering or pain for each other but more about the rights and the delivery of the services and enjoying the basic necessities as a citizens.

As the time is passing in the current times the civil society is growing stronger in different nation states we will take example of Pakistan that how Civil Society works here, we have witnessed the time when civil society gathered against Molana Abdul Aziz after the APS incident and how they recorded their protest. We have also observed that how the Civil Society has played its role in the case of Missing persons which is a very sensitive matter. The activeness of civil society shows that they are growing stronger with time, modern modes of media have strengthen them and they are developing more with help of it. Formation of Civil Society is not just the skepticism towards the Politics but also towards the nation state as the prime concern is not just being one but to get the basic and valid rights.

PUBLIC SPHERE

Under this topic we read and discussed the reading of Partha Chatterjee about development of new public spheres. In this reading he talked about the formation of an illegal living locality along with the Railway lines. He talked that many people from Bengal migrated towards this area and have constructed their houses with the help of tin and metal sheets and with the passage of time more and more people migrated came into these localities and these localities grew a lot in number. These illegal living setups along with the railway lines also have a lot of diversity, some are from different party of Bengal, some are Hindus some are Muslims but they live in harmony not because they share a bond but it is their necessity to live together like a family they do break into disputes with each other but they have to live together as their houses are illegal and there is this constant fear that government will anytime ground their houses. They have their own leaders to negotiate with the Government. They using their huge number also have political influence on the basis of having votes they have developed their connection with the Communist party of India and vote them in order to save their houses. This example of a public sphere which Partha used can be also taken as development of a nation within a nation state, as people here are also gathering as one not because of soul but a collective goal, collective

struggle and collective effort is involved, the struggle to save their houses due to which they politically and socially move as one which shows them as one more small nation. This at the same time is negation of a nation state as there must be other such groups as well who have different agendas who have different collective goals and who are not part of the nation which makes the nation state. For example in India only there are other groups which have their own agendas and don't consider them as part of Indian nation, for example the Naxalites who are living and working in central India and are actually fighting for their land which comprises the forests of central India and have accepted Marxist ideology and are doing armed rebellion against the state. There are many other such groups and these shows there are many larger communities with their own agendas and goals who don't believe in the concept of the nation according to which the Indian nation state is constructed.

Another way to view this that the immigration of people who don't share same view of nationalism actually is danger and plays role in reducing the importance of the idea of nation and nation state, as they have different agenda and they to seek security and help make associations other than that of the nation which develops Nation State. Like there are many afghan refugees who are settled in Pakistan from decides but still many of them considers themselves as Afghans and gives Afghanistan more importance than Pakistan and associate them with Afghanistan.

DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

Under this heading we have discussed two articles one by Paul Brass and other by Calabrese which discussed the diverse political culture and how it is associated with the development and the expansion and politics behind the China funded development in other countries respectively. In Paul Brass article we saw that how there were different political cultures in india which was views by another article by Myron Weiner in 1963. Briefly getting on the basic idea of the article was that there was this elite political culture which was influenced by the west, which was secular and was

influenced by the western political and social culture and usually used English as language to communicate and there was this culture of mass which was closer to the people and the culture. Development was the focus of the Elite culture of Politics while the problems of the people were the agenda of the mass culture of the Politics. But most of the time in India this Elite Culture party Congress have ruled which according to the concept we are looking at don't resonates with the culture and the issues of the mass but are more concerned with the development and westernization of the political and social institution of country. Now the point is the nation state which has for a very long period has such government which does not resonates with the culture and the issues of masses, the masses which makes a nation. This also gives view that the domination of the political cultures which are pro development in the 3rd world nation states actually drives state away from the nation towards the development instead of resonating their policies with the masses that are the core of nation state. In the second article we discussed that how China is doing development in Pakistan for the sake of its own interest and both the countries are giving it name of the friendship. China has given Pakistan some aid to counter terrorism as well but that also has backing of their own interest as they also have issues with the Islamic terrorism as it is causing disturbances in some of its provinces and according to their reports the militants were trained in Pakistan. Development also can play role in the diminishing of the position of a nation state as the type of development China is doing it allows China to intervene in the country matters and will also allow many chines to come in our country and marry the natives and this will affect the culture and the notion of nation as well. There were many examples in which Chinese have married the Pakistanis and have also gained Pakistani Nationality. The question is with this type of development where you are allowing another nation to enter and work on a large scale in your nation how this will affect the national fabric of your nation state? Social Movements Under this topic we discussed the protest in Tiananmen Square this was an ethnographic work by

Craig Calhoun about the big protest which occurred in China in 1989. The protest was originally started by the students in the name of freedom of speech the movement also have agendas related to the economic oppression and many middle class and lower class people also joined protest later because of the reason it was also having the issue of economic oppression. The protests was headed by the students and many intellectuals of their time who were in China also started to take part in the protest and were major contributors of the protests. The protest grew large, many students and many ordinary people joined the protest. In the end after recording big protests and after the involvement of number of reasons movement failed as the leaders of the movement were not able to develop the consensus and there was lack of communication among the leaders and the Communist Party government also conducted a crackdown against the protesters.

The development of such Social movement in itself is a negation of the concept of nation state as the movement was to challenge the very ideas on the basis of which the whole nation is constructed and the freedom to freely talk was also demanded as they wanted to talk and critique the ideas on basis of which they were put forward as a nation. Social movements mostly raise because of the grievances of the people who are suffering and who don't consider themselves as part of the nation and demand reforms for the betterment of their community. For example let's take example of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, many Pashtuns of our country who are part of Pakistani nation do associate themselves with the PTM and the movement is for the rights and the betterment of the Pashtuns this also portrays them as another nation within a nation who have a different agenda and seek more unity in other group of people.

Plus the part where government did crackdown against the protestors also clears one thing that the evolution of the nation state is inevitable if it is not kept alive by feeding it like here also the incidents which are bringing the concept of nation state to its end and are moving to development of new concept is crushed with the force.

SYNTHESIS

In this paper tried to describe by using the readings, analyzing the evidences from them to prove the argument that the future of nation state is shady if it will be left on its own, it is the different things which artificially keep the sense of nation and nation state alive. Sometimes it is done by the force sometimes by making people emotional, sometimes by literature. But if we will leave the nation state on its spirit only and will let people to receive and accept its legacy as it is the nation state will soon be faded.

We also discussed that even after the feeling to the idea of nation state the idea will one day lose its charm and importance as in modern days the time is lesser about being a nation but more about the human rights and having equal rights as others. The concept of identity politics has also played role in making the concept of nation state weak as different groups do politics on the basis of their identities other than the collective identity as a nation.

Nation state is a concept which has prevailed from a long period and will not just simply end but will surely lose its importance as it is the time of the technological development and the advanced social media has provide people chance to have access to the information which previously was not available, the state has lesser control over social media and internet and people by one way or the other can have a view to the ideas related to their nation other than that which the government provides in such time it is very hard for the state to feed the idea of nation artificially and keep it alive.

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