



Political Science

**Paper: Political Institutions and Processes in
Comparative Perspective**

Lesson: 'Nation' and 'State' Meaning and Debates

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Table of contents

Chapter :- 'Nation' and 'States': Meaning and debates

- **Introduction**
- **Topic 1 : Nation**
 - **Primordialist Approach**
 - **Modernist Approach**
 - **Ethno-symbolist Approach**
- **Topic 2 : State**
 - **Evolution of the state**
 - **Theories of the state (Idealist, Liberal, Marxist and Feminist)**
- **Topic 3 : Debates**
 - **Imagined Communities: Single state or many nations?**
 - **Nation – state or state – nation?**
 - **Modern states are modern Nation-states:- issues of sovereignty, citizenship, national security and map- making.**
 - **Nationalism, ethnic cleansing and genocide**
 - **Future of the nation – state in the Globalized world**
- **Conclusion**
- **Glossary**
- **Exercises**
- **References**
- **Maps, diagrams and boxes**

INTRODUCTION:

In the present day world, nation-state is the idea that provides us with the prime logic of identity and a sense of belonging to a particular territory. This identity may also confer itself with other aspects of identity-making like religion, culture, language, history, race, food habits, etc.

Nation states are the most important institutions in the modern era. Modern nation states look after the citizens, their wants and concerns. The setting of the national goals and values is one of the prime purposes of the state. Modern nation states look after the national security and order to keep their people away from unwanted threats. People should be free to participate in the political processes. Strong states perform well and weak states fail in terms of these criteria because of certain constraints. Ethnic, religion, linguistic and inter-communal tensions; increased crime rates; poor infrastructure and rule of law, civil unrest add to the characteristics of the weak state.

Now, let us try to understand nation-state in a better way by splitting it and dealing the two words separately.

Nation

What constitutes a nation? The immediate terms which come to our minds are common pasts which include shared history, memories, heritage, joys, sacrifices, sufferings which comprise a collective social capital. This feeling of commonality is accompanied by present day consent to live together and a longing to perpetuate this solidarity, fixities and boundaries or the existing basis of political community in the future. Simultaneously, it has also been held by the scholars that the term nation also connotes the silencing of identities which do not fit the framework of the nation. Precisely, we are trying to say that that the term nation has been a contested terrain, which has acquired different meanings with the changing historical contexts.

Initially, the basic question that arises is - what are the factors that shape a nation?

To start with, we can say that there are basically three factors which shape a nation: cultural, political and psychological factors. Cultural factors like common language, religion, history, traditions bind people in the sense of a nation; politically when a group of people view themselves as a natural political community; and psychologically when a set of people distinguish themselves by a collective loyalty, then they are termed as a nation.

The literature surrounding the issue of the constituents of a nation is diverse. In the following pages we will try to comprehend the contestations about the term nation,

including what are its characteristics and how they are distinct from other social group or collective entity.

One of the ways to understand nation is through a blend of objective and subjective features. The objective factors like religion, language, shared past form the bases for nation and these objective factors also nurture the foundations of nationalism For instance, the Quebecs in Canada claim their national entity on the basis of language difference from predominantly English speaking Canada.

However, it should be noted that nation is also constructed subjectively by its members. The implication being that there might be cultural , racial diversity but still that group constitutes a nation, thus homogeneity is not a necessary condition, for example Swiss nation which comprise Italian, French and German groups. This kind of subjective feeling makes nation as a distinctive political community, which takes the shape of political aspirations in terms of political independence or statehood.

Value addition-know it more

What is political community

Political community could be defined as a place where individuals tend to associate and identify themselves, by exercising their sense of location, association and sense of belongingness. It is a place where they exercise their subjectivity and agency i.e. their capacity as a subject to work for a change and transformation.

Approaches to understand nation

In order to understand the debates around the term nation, we have taken three sets of literature, namely primordialists, modernists and ethno-symbolists. It should be noted that within each set we have myriad explanations and debates, thus there is no uniformity about the term nation.

a) Primordialist approach

To begin with we could say that the primordialist approach to study nation is based on the belief in the antiquity and naturalness of nations, in the sense that they have existed since time immemorial. Anthony Smith in his recent works identified three different strands within primordialism, namely naturalist, sociobiological and culturalist.

The naturalist approach scholars have been considered as the most extreme version of primordialism. Their basic premise is that nationality is a 'natural' part of human beings as akin to speech, smell or sight. This connotes that the nation to which one is born is 'naturally fixed'. They do not make a distinction between nations and ethnic groups. This kind of view has been influential in shaping the works of nationalist historians. Within the naturalist version of primordialists, a less radical version of this could be seen in the perennialists, for whom nations developed over the centuries based on ethnic ties, but they were not natural. As a result, for the perennialists nations and nationalisms produce modernity, and that the nations in their historical trajectory may face periods of degeneracy but the national 'essence' continues. We can place scholars like Josep R. Llobera and Adrian Hastings under this camp.

Now we will move on with the second variant of primordialism, called sociobiological approach.

This theory has been formulated by scholars like Pierre van den Berghe who treat the nation as an extension of kinship and thus the origin of ethnic and national ties in genetic instincts. Lastly, the culturalist strand within primordialism include scholars like Edward Shils and Clifford Geertz who focus on the perceptions and beliefs of the individuals. They hold the position that the primordial attachments are a priori, in the sense prior to all experiences and also overpowering, so the individual necessarily feels attachment to the group he or she belongs.

b) Modernist approach

In direct opposition to this, we have the modernist theory, where the emergence of the nations and nationalisms is seen in the lap of modernity. For them the nation is a distinct social category, a socio political community in modernity. The basic premise is that nation is essentially a modern phenomenon or we could say products of modern processes like capitalism, industrialism and so on. Starting with capitalism, Marxists like Eric J.F. **Hobbsbawm** understood nationalism as a symptom of capitalism. Nationalism served as a bourgeois ideology, by uniting the dominant classes and the masses in a community which was portrayed to be egalitarian. And in this process of 'social engineering' he talked about 'invented traditions' which meant " a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past". Thus, development of primary education, invention of public ceremonies, production of public monuments served the purpose.

Further, **Ernest Gellner** held that nationalism creates nations and that has a structural connection with the needs of a modern industrial society. He held that the needs of modern industrial economies could be catered in a modern nation-state and that is where workforce is trained in public education system integrated by a single language. Also nationalism unites the population. In this way he held that nationalism is intrinsic to both modernity and industrialization.

Linking the emergence of nations with modernity, Benedict Anderson held that nation was 'imagined' as the finite, sovereign political community with the rise of 'print capitalism'. This fused the new technology of printing with capitalist production to create a large reading public through the dissemination of books and newspapers in the vernacular. It was imagined because he held that even the people of smallest nations would not be able to see each other rather only imagine each other's existence through newspapers, literature and so on. Furthermore, this imagination was limited as the entire humanity can't be imagined within a nation. And lastly, the imagination was sovereign as there is no divinely ordained hierarchical dynastic realm. In these ways, print capitalism created resources which placed the nation in 'homogenous empty time' in the sense that people were made to share experiences in the same temporal and spatial framework.

c) Ethno-symbolist approach

A set of scholars called ethno-symbolists have challenged the understanding of modernists. They hold that nations are constructed but in addition they propose that pre-existing ethnic ties and sentiments also play an important role in the formation of modern nations. So memories, myths, symbols, values are also crucial. Thus scholars like John Armstrong, Anthony D. Smith, John **Hutchinson** take into consideration both the transformations brought about by modernity and also the continuity between 'traditional' and 'modern' eras.

'Cultural' and 'political' nation

One another way to comprehend nation could be seen in terms of 'cultural' and 'political' nations. This kind of understanding was given by German historian called Friedrich Meinecke. Cultural nations are seen to be characterized by an inherited ethnic identity and thus shaped by high level of ethnic homogeneity to the extent that national and ethnic identities overlap. Thus, the membership of community is not dependent on political adherences or civic loyalties. Meinecke gives the examples of the Greeks, Russians, Germans as cultural nations. We could say that this understanding overlaps with the primordialist approach to understand nation which have been discussed in the preceding paragraphs. The understanding of political nations intersects with those of the

modernist school of thought, which we also discussed before. Political nations could be understood as those which are formed primarily by shared citizenship, irrespective of cultural, ethnic and other loyalties.

Hitherto, we have laid down the myriad ways which could be employed to understand the term nation. With this we will move to the next section to analyze another contested term, state. Finally, the last segment takes both the terms nation and state together and try to place it in the present context with its various dimensions.

STATE

The term state has been derived from the Latin word *status* meaning social status, especially of the individual within a community. The understanding of the term has grown and developed with changing times. But the basic essence has remained the same that explains the state as an overarching and governing authority which intends to discipline the lives of the individuals and communities according to the said laws of the land. Legally, it has the power to take actions on behalf of the individuals even if the latter has not consented to it. However, at times, this may turn coercive against an individual or a group; but the state defends its stance by talking about the larger good. Then, it is difficult to challenge the authority and legitimacy of the state. Also, the state defends its offensive actions by pointing out the *raison d'être* of the state that is well-being and welfare of the people. This is also compensated by the impersonal character of the institution of the state.

Philosophers have given various conceptions of the state for reasoning out its origin and nature. For instance idealists, like Hegel, believe the state to be the march of god on earth. Hobbes calls the state as 'Leviathan' with all powers and rights of control given to it for maintaining social order and stability. This stability is like the defence system much like what Marxists believe that state act as a buffer system between different classes and avoids class conflict for the survival of capitalist system. State has the responsibility for the collective organization of social existence. It comprises of various institutions of the government- bureaucracy, military, police, courts etc. The key attributes associated with the state are sovereignty, public legitimacy, domination, territorial association. We will discover about the attributes in the future course of this chapter.

Value addition –Did you know

Defining the state

State can be defined as a political association with sovereign jurisdiction over a marked territory. It is an impersonal authority that works for the everlasting interests of the society. Government, on the other hand, is merely one of the parts of the state and it may represent partisan interests and sympathies of any group of politicians

EVOLUTION OF THE STATE

State has developed from a tribal state to a modern nation state with correspondence to changing societies and consequent industrialization and modernization. One can say that even though state is a political entity, it is best defined in social, cultural and economic terms. The nature of the state is produced by the society it represents.

According to David Held, there are mainly five types of state systems (in the European context) distinguished as the following:

1. Traditional tribute-taking empires;
2. Systems of divided authority between the church and the state where latter is represented by feudal relations, city states and urban alliances;
3. The polity of estates;
4. Absolutist states;
5. Modern nation-states, with constitutional, liberal democratic or single party polities locked progressively into a system of nation states.

Traditional tribute-taking empires: Empires have registered themselves in history over long periods with their notable war-making abilities to sustain and expand themselves. They endured themselves with huge military that defended their borders. Their top most priority was to maintain the military strength as then the borders were in a state of flux and not fixed. The maintaining of military strength required huge amounts of resources and money and these huge economic requirements were met by the exaction of tributes. As these empires spread over a large area, they did not have centralized administrative system and more than that they concentrated their energies on survival of their empires and maintaining or extending their boundaries. Roman Empire can be considered as a best example which existed from the eighth until the early nineteenth century.

Feudalism: period was between the 8th to 14th century when the political power was more local and personal. During this period, the warriors expressed their loyalty and homage to their lords in return for protection and privileges. In return, for the sake of administrative convenience, the rulers also transferred some of the land rights to the vassals called fiefs. The main source of subsistence was agriculture. The prime social relations were between the peasants and the feudal lords. These feudal lords dominated the means of production and were at the top of the hierarchy of social relations. Later, the political power and supremacy was shared by the religious power with the emergence of Christian church. The feudal lords were militarily powerful and supported the kings. As power is corruptive in nature, some political forces sought to centralize power and others aimed for autonomy leading to disintegrative forces. The rival power to the feudal system was the Catholic church. The church sought to place the spiritual above the secular. So, in the medieval Europe there was supremacy of the Pope and Holy Roman Empire until their power was challenged by the conflicts with the rise of nation-states and reformation when the idea of modern state was born.

Polity of estates: This was characterised by dualistic nature of power whereby power was split between rulers and estates. The estates claimed to be independent of the ruler and tried to seek more political prerogatives like rights of representation. They tried to create new types of political relations with the society and constituted various local bodies like assemblies of aristocrats, cities, corporate associations. With time, these estates enjoyed legitimacy and autonomy and formed estate-based assemblies, parliaments, diets and councils. So, a kind of dualism emerged between rulers and estates. But, this could not endure for long as this power dualism was contested by estates seeking more power and monarchs trying to concentrate it in their own hands.

Absolutist states: These states absorbed the smaller and weaker political units resulting in larger and stronger political structures. It was good for the administrative convenience as it unified the territorial area, maintained strict law and order, and the single head over the top could have a controlled rule as the sole sovereign power. So, it provided the ruler a unified territorial area with a more strict system of law and order. Power was concentrated in the hands of the ruler and latter claimed to be the legitimate authority. This legitimacy was based on the 'divine right' of king. Sovereign authority rested with the monarch - progressively centralized and anchored on a claim to supreme and indivisible power. Integrated the state system where the political units pursued their own interests supported by coercive power.

Value addition-did you know

Interesting fact

In the medieval period, absolute monarchies existed in France, Prussia, Austria, Spain, Sweden and Russia and Constitutional monarchies were present in England and Holland.

Absolutism paved way for the making of the modern nation state. It created new forms of state power. State exercised its authority and maintained its domination through surveillance. And, by the end of 17th century, there was development of state sovereignty whereby there was mutual recognition along with rights of jurisdiction when the states accepted the respective territories and communities of the other. In the international context, the state claimed sovereignty over its people and territory. And then, the states accepted the principle of sovereign equality of all states. The concept of international law also emerged depicting the emergence of world community giving rise to the model of Westphalia.

Value addition-peace of westphalia

In 1648, a conception of international law emerged that led to the formation of world community or international society where there are all sovereign states and no superior authority. Then, the basic assumption of the Westphalian system was that boundaries of the nation should coincide with boundaries of the state. There was a form of international law that aimed at forming minimal rule of co-existence. This was a common priority to ensure state's freedom.

Modern states: The centralized system of absolutist rule paved way for modern states with secular and national system of power. English revolution (1640-88) and French Revolution (1789) marked the transition from the absolutist to the modern state – give example of absolutist rule. The power of the modern state was explained and limited by the constitution. The state through the constitution enumerated the rights and liberties of citizens. The citizens also had a private sphere independent of the state away from the unnecessary political interference. Modern state was also liberal in nature where the state granted basic rights to the individual like life, liberty and property. Universal Adult Franchise was also exercised that provided the individuals with the rights to express themselves with regard to the state. Modern states were also characterised by

representative democracy whereby citizens of the state elect a group of representatives who take decisions on behalf of them. And this representation is often explained by party politics whereby in a country there is either one party or many.

Modern state aims at maintaining exact borders that are static. And, for this, they maintain huge military to keep the borders intact.

Value addition-know it more

Machiavelli and the Modern state

The modern state derives some of its features from the Machiavelli's *Prince*. In his book, Machiavelli gave a realistic account of politics whereby the end justifies the means. For him, the leader of the state was supposed to be both cunning and cruel who could manipulate during tough conditions. A leader should combine force with prudence and associate public morality with private morality to both obtain and maintain power.

Maintaining borders is not an easy task; a lot of force and coercion is required for this. Weber says that the state has the monopoly on force and means of coercion. The state has the supreme jurisdiction over the territory. The state gained legitimacy only when the divine right was challenged.

Authority and Legitimacy: Authority is defined as the power to issue orders, decisions and command obedience. legitimacy could be defined as having the acceptance from the masses to rule. We might say that all authorities do not have the legitimate backing.

Rival theories for the understanding of the state

Idealist theory:

According to the Idealist theory, the state is an ethical institution. Hegel said that the state is the march of god on earth. He believed in worshipping the state. Hegel believed that the state represents the collective will of all. The collective duty of the man is the

obedience of state laws through which true freedom is realized. It is the creator and the protector of the rights of the individual. Also, absolute power is vested in the state. Idealists believe that state possesses organic unity and this is same as possessed by human body.

Liberal theory:

For classical liberals, state is considered as a neutral arbiter among competing groups and individuals in society. It is thought of as an "umpire" or "referee" protecting the interests of all for common good. For liberals like Locke, the state is also a 'night watchman' or 'minimal' state whose function is the maintenance of domestic order. Modern writers have also developed a pluralist theory of the state as talked about by Robert Dahl who believes in polyarchy or rule of the many. Pluralists like him are of the opinion that some form of equality exists among these organized groups or interests that provide voice to all citizens. The government also pays heed to a certain extent. So, one may say that the state has an organizational function as well. The state has the responsibility of collective organization of social existence. It comprises of various institutions of the government like bureaucracy, military, police, courts etc.

Developmental State: Unlike a liberal state, developmental state is characterized by a strong state intervention, planning and regulation of the economy. The term developmental state was conceptualized by Chalmers Johnson. Some of the examples could be Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan.

Marxist theory:

The Marxist perspective believes that the state is an instrument of class oppression. It defends class system of the society and supports class domination and exploitation. So, they emphasize on the coercive role of the state. Modern Marxists talk about the relative autonomy of the state and believe that it is a committee for managing the bourgeoisie; Gramsci talks about the ideological control and says how bourgeoisie establishes hegemony i.e. ideological leadership or domination over the proletariat not only by coercion but also by elicitation of consent.

Collectivized State: These states could be seen as based on socialistic orientation where the economy including agriculture industry or any other enterprise is under state control or collectively owned by the people. This is in opposition to the private ownership of property. For instance USSR under Stalin from 1928 to 1940.

Feminist theory:

Feminist theory critiques the general and dominant understanding of the state. There are many perspectives within feminism for the understanding of the state. Liberal feminists believe that the state is biased in favour of men and legal and political equality to women. This inequality can be rectified by bringing about change in the laws of the state that favour men and ask for state's neutrality. Radical feminists talk about the patriarchal setup of the society and claim that state is the reflection of this set up. So, state's neutrality is a difficult question for radical feminists. They believe that the roots of sex/gender inequality arise from the level of the family and it is the male power that determines all the relations between men and women. It is the patriarchal gaze that defines the 'normal' status of women. So, state can never be impartial or neutral and is an instrument of patriarchy.

DEBATES

IMAGINED COMMUNITIES: SINGLE STATE OR MANY NATIONS?

It is very difficult to find territories where the state and the nation exist as a single congruent political unit. However, some places like Japan exist as exceptions where there is only one culture and religion in the state. On the world map, there are many single state units that exist as sovereign independent political territories. Within these political units, there are identities existing as groups which identify themselves with the state as a political unit. However, within this single political unit, there are certain centrifugal identities that either claim to be independent or demand a level of autonomy within the state. This is the central issue around which the debates between state and nation arise. Keeping this in mind, let us further study some of the debates and the notion of "imagined communities" which is central for the understanding of state and nation.

Nation-state or state nation?

The notion that every nation should be a state and every state should be a nation has been the normative vision. However the conformity to this norm is not only difficult but also dangerous in the present context of sociocultural diversity. Thus, in order to simplify the understanding about the nation and state debates we could classify polities as state-nation and nation-state.

Linz and Stepan introduced the concept of state nation. They were identified as such polities which are multinational, to the extent that in the name of self determination such groups also put forth assertion of independence. Nonetheless, state nations manage to produce political loyalties and commitments from them through various state tactics. For instance, Mizo and Naga struggles in northeast India; separatist Dravidian movement in Southern India; Khalistan movement in Punjab have given multinational dimension to India, yet these tensions have been managed at different times with differing techniques by the state leaders. Similar is the situation in Canada with the Quebec nationality and also in Spain with the Catalans and Basque nationalities. Thus, all of them could be placed under the term state-nation. Within this, diverse identities based on culture, language and region are recognized as well as mechanisms are made to accommodate their claims. Simultaneously, it should be noted that these multinational groups cannot be completely assimilated and the state faces resentment/resistance while trying to do so. Thus, in the words of Stepan and Linz state-nation policies 'craft a sense of belonging'.

Coming to the term nation-state, Stepan and Linz explained that in such polities political and cultural boundaries are more homogenous. Though there are ethnic minorities but they their self-determination is not politically vocal. Thus, the sociocultural cleavages in these polities are not politically assertive but they do exist. Countries like Japan, Portugal, Scandinavia could be placed under this term.

Value addition-Understanding it more

SELF-DETERMINATION : SECESSIONISM V/S AUTONOMY

Self-determination is the principle that explains that nations and states cannot always have congruent borders. When minorities do not identify themselves with the majorities, they claim onto the principle of self-determination and claim either to secede or demand some form of autonomy within the nation-state. For instance, in the context of India, (year) the demand for independence by forming Khalistan, the Sikhs in India claimed secessionist desires. But, their demands were suppressed by the homogenizing force of the Indian state. Another example is that of the people of Kashmir which is a muslim majority region within the Hindu majority country. They also claim independence

or merger with Pakistan. These secessionist desires are accommodated by the Indian state by providing them some form of autonomy within the nation state in the form of Article 370.

MODERN STATES ARE MODERN NATION-STATES:-ISSUES OF SOVEREIGNTY, CITIZENSHIP, NATIONAL SECURITY AND MAP-MAKING

Modern states are sovereign states and they claim to accommodate most of the identity group claiming themselves to be single nations; so, they are called modern nation states. Modern nation states are supreme and independent in all the affairs of the state. The head of the modern nation state control its territory, internal and external affairs and the very existence of the state. All other countries are kept away from the internal affairs of the state.

The modern nation states also seek to treat their people as equals by granting them citizenship rights that provides uniformity despite their varied cultures, identities and language. Citizenship is a form of identity that is associated with the modern nation state. Citizenship instils a form of solidarity and a shared sense of belonging among its citizens.

National security is the prime agenda for which the state comes into existence. Modern nation states maintains huge military for security of their citizens. Violence is used to suppress conflicts even if it is at the cost of the lives of the citizens. This is with regard to the legitimacy exercised by the modern nation state for using violence. Weber talks about the legitimate use of violence by the state.

CONFLICTS – NATIONALISM, ETHNIC CLEANISING AND GENOCIDE

Closely related to this issue of violence and conflict is the issue of **ethnic cleansing**.

Gellner believes that for nationalism to be in place, nation and political power should be congruent. The need for this congruence or ethno-political purity has led many nationalist attempts to go against ethnic distinctiveness by homogenizing the people. This intolerant nature has worked against many minorities and explains the assimilationist nature of modern state. In this process of homogenization and assimilation, the nation state has led genocide to complete the assimilation process against the minorities. For instance, Tutsi in Rwanda, Croats and Muslims in Bosnia etc.

Though theoretically it is still easy to establish the overlapping between people, territory and history, but reality offers a different picture. The conception of nation as a cultural and political homogenous entity has faced challenges from politics based on cultural identity which emphasize racial, ethnic or linguistic factors within the boundaries of the nation-state. In the present discourse of politics, multiculturalism has become the accepted norm of modern nation-states. For instance, with the Black movement in the 1960s, USA has been declared as a multicultural society, similarly with the recognition of Maori culture as a distinct national entity within New Zealand; Turks within Germany; indigenous Inuit peoples and French speaking Quebecs within Canada multiculturalism has become the official ideology of modern nation-states. Today political allegiance in terms of citizenship rather than cultural allegiance bind people together.

Nevertheless, this does not imply that multiculturalism and nationalism sit in a comfortable way completely. Nationalist traditions which thrive on 'undivided' and 'pure' notion of national identity emphasize cultural and political homogeneity. This kind of understanding thrives on violence as well. The best example could be seen in anti-Semitism, where notion of purity were employed to make German nation based on pure race. The genocide of Jews by Hitler in Germany was the worst manifestation of negative nationalist politics.

TAIWAN:

Taiwan is a developed country and one of the four east Asian Tigers. But, whether Taiwan is a nation – state or a province of China is still in question. For leaders in Beijing, it is China's territory and for some, it is a US protectorate. Taiwan's independence is met by the fear of an attack from China. This has strained the relationship between the two to the extent that till 2008, there was no direct flight between Taiwan and China.

Value addition-know it more

Stateless societies

In the present day world industrialization and urbanization, there even exist stateless societies where there are informal mechanisms of government and no clearly defined boundaries between state and society. The informal mechanism of government especially disposal of disputes and decision making is settled by family or kin groups, or by larger tribal structures headed by a chief and his team and officials holding certain positions. In the present day world, stateless communities are still existent in new Guinea highlands, south Sudan and east Africa such as the Jale people, the pastoral Nuer ,M'dendeuli and Arusha respectively.

Future of the nation-state in the globalized world

The ubiquitous nature of nation-state, has made it almost like an enduring political formation. However we need to understand that the nation-states are conjunctural formations and not eternal. This implies that there was a time when there was no concept of nation-state, and likewise there might be a world without nation-states, with a different kind of basis.

The nation-state in the present discourse is the most widely accepted form of political community, but the conflicts discussed in the preceding section show that it has to confront various challenges. Broadly speaking the nation-state faces contestation at two levels. Firstly, from the internal forces working within the boundaries of the nation-state and secondly from the external forces emerging outside the nation-state especially in the globalization era . The above section offers an explanation of the first level of challenges this section delves into the second level of challenges.

These emerge in the global arena. It has been argued by the scholars that the dynamics of nation-state has fragmented with the growth of transnational organizations like European Union, ASEAN, APEC international governmental and non-governmental organizations like Amnesty International along with social movements having transnational basis. As a result the exclusive link between territory and political power has weakened. Simultaneously, layers of governance have emerged both within and across nation-state boundaries. Scholars like Archibugi and Thompson hold that this has led to pluralization of political orientations apart from national loyalty.

Further, issues like pollution, drug trafficking, gender and class inequalities as a result of uneven development of capitalism unite people across national boundaries. Also with the massive growth in communications, technological advancements through increased use

of internet, satellite televisions, movies, literatures and songs have also led to reconfiguration in the meaning of national identity.

Nevertheless, all of these discussions do not imply that nation-state has become irrelevant in the present discourse. The crux of the discussion is that the understanding of nation-state as a form of political community has been constantly reprogrammed and reimagined with the changing time and factors.

Conclusion

The entire discussion very explicitly reveals the contested nature of the term nation state which is an expression of organised human living. In the present context, nation state also represents the contesting/conflicting nature of human society. We can say that thinking about nation state per se involves dealing with almost all aspects of human existence.

In the present day context, a lot of debate has revolved around re-theorizing nation – state and elaborating or questioning the core belief system. Furthermore, we need to realize that these political concepts are not 'natural' or 'given', rather they have assumed different forms and dimensions with the changing political, economic and cultural conditions. Thus, we can say they have been 'constructed' over a period of time. Precisely, we can say that the concept is in a state of constant flux, and nothing is 'permanent' in terms of its characterization.

Glossary

Community: A collection of people claiming collective identity on the basis of various forms of comradeship and loyalty.

Culture: A set of shared beliefs, attitudes, symbols and values by a group of people/collectives.

Globalization: It implies the interconnectedness of the nation states across the globe through integration of political, economic and cultural goods and services.

Nation: It derives its origin from the Latin word 'natio' which means to be born. It could be defined as a group of people who share common cultural inheritance.

Nation-state: A form of community where the political(citizenship) and cultural allegiance overlap.

Social capital: Cultural and moral resources of a society which facilitate socio-political cohesion and stability.

Sovereignty: Supreme power or authority of the state to govern itself without any external interference.

Raison d'être: The reason or purpose for which the organization exists.

Exercises:

I. Discuss the different approaches for understanding the term nation.

II. Explain the different theories about the origin of the state.

III. Write brief answers for the following questions.

1. What do you think is better – State-nation or Nation-state? Justify.
2. How has globalization brought about a change in the understanding of nation-state?
3. Modern states are modern nation states. Explain.
4. At times nation states justify violence as legitimate. Elucidate.
5. Do you think there is an end of the nation state? Explain.

IV. Write whether the following statements are true or false:

1. There is no difference between nation-state and state-nation
2. There was a period when there was no concept of nation state.
3. The social, economic and political dimensions of the nation state have changed in the globalization era.
4. All nation states have legitimate basis to rule its people.

Keys to the above questions of true or false

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. False

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