Chapter - I
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INTRODUCTION

Ethnic movements and identity conflicts have been the foundation of nationalism, and thus, the basis of the formation and collapse of state through history. In recent times, such movements have multiplied and the survival of many states has been threatened on this basis. The removal of authoritarian control of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of states based largely on their ethnic character. The process however clearly did not end here. The rise of small ethnic groups and sub-nationalism continues to question the new state structure. It is, therefore, necessary to examine this in theoretical and empirical perspective.

Conflict is defined as an outcome of incompatible goals between two or more entities. A reciprocal behaviour on the part of two actors designed to frustrate the aims and interest of each other results in a conflict. The prevalence of conflict reflects the inability of one actor to overcome the resistance of other, through persuasion, thereat or use of repressive force. Based on the levels of analysis, existing literature on inquiry of conflict can be classified into three categories:
1. **Essentialism:** This school of thought would project conflict as an essential and integral part of individual and social behaviour. Based on Thomas Hobbes, essentialists argue that human nature is essentially poor, nasty, brutish and selfish. This would invariably result in competition and conflict among individuals. A similar logic applies for the conflict among groups and social entities. The cooperative efforts of individuals shown in the form of group, society or state are just to enhance and protect their selfish interests cohesively.

   This approach shares some of the elements of "Realists" and "Human Need Theorists". The primary concern of the realist is power politics. Though their level of analysis stands at state as the dominant actor if we stretch this analysis down to individuals we find that they subscribe to the Hobbesian analysis of human nature. Morgenthau’s "Politics Among Nations", the Bible of realism, states that the "key concept" is "interest defined as power" which is indeed the essence of politics and is unaffected by the circumstances of time and place... Power may comprise anything that established and
maintains the control of man over man. Thus, international politics, like all politics is a struggle for power..."1

Another group of theorists who have considerable lineage on conflict are the Human Need Theorists. Drawing heavily from Darwin's theory of evolution they argue that there is a constant struggle among all species for survival and only the fittest survive on this earth. This also alludes to power struggle for survival, which can be both intra-species and inter-species.

The modern Human Need theorists argue that there are some fundamental universal needs of human being which cannot be denied. The maintenance of decent life requires physical needs as well as self actualization. Food, shelter, and other basic material necessities are needed for physical survival. Love, affection, security and self-esteem satisfy psychological needs.

However, once these needs are fulfilled human beings desire for more. Human brains always tend to compare their well being with the others. Hence, there prevails a subjective perception. If the perception is of deprivation, conflict arises. An intolerable gap between anticipated social conditions and

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actual achievements of these conditions can be a precondition for conflict.

Hence, we find that a very dominant group of scholars cutting across the disciplinary boundaries believe in selfish and competitive mode of human nature. This makes the conflict among individuals inevitable. The same logic can be stretched to explain the dynamics of the organizations at various level e.g., society, nation-state or even supra-national organization.

2. Structuralism: This paradigm puts emphasis on the whole structure since this has an impact greater than the sum of its parts and must therefore be taken into consideration in any empirical theory of behaviour at whatever level.² Richard Little explains this school's remarks on human nature as: Structuralists assume that human behaviour cannot be understood simply by examining individual motivation and intention because, when aggregated, human behaviour precipitates structure of which the individual may be unaware. By analogy, when people walk across a field they may unintentionally create a path. Others subsequently follow

the path and in doing so "reproduce" the path. The process of reproduction, however, is neither conscious nor international.\(^3\)

The crux of the structuralism is that structure influences the behaviour of individual and the society. And this process is very subtle and not easily discernible. Individuals and groups might find it difficult to overcome the constraints created by structure and it might require a revolution to create an alternative structure, if the Marxist views are to be subscribed.

Marxist scholars can be considered as one of the classical political philosophers who put excessive emphasis on structure. Hegel and Marx, followed by Lenin, gave emphasis to structure while explaining social evolution such as, feudalism, capitalism and socialism and the inherent contradictions in the respective society resulting in class-struggle. In the Marxist paradigm, power relation between different classes is determined by an exploitative economic structure.

The conflict and violence arising out of structure, though excessively stressed by the Marxist scholars, has now become a part of general understanding. In India, the caste conflict is put forward as the classical case of structural

conflict. Similarly, female suppression in a patriarchal society, minority neglects in a majoritarian-democracy and environmental damage in an industrial society are some of the examples of structural conflict. This cause-effect relationship may remain unnoticed and requires an astute macro-level analysis.

The realist and new-realist scholars, too, take into consideration the role of structure. Morgenthau, while formulating his 6 principles of political realism did consider the structure of the international diplomatic system, regretting the shift from multipolarity to bipolarity in the post-war period. Kenneth Waltz (neo-realist) claimed to have rediscovered the structuralist wheel and its significance. System thinker Wallerstein’s notion of a single world system that has emerged with capitalism, although the hegemon may have changed, has brought to the fore front not only structural factors, the unity of the world system and centre-periphery analysis but a heightened awareness of the need for historical depth- a trait he shares with Marx. System thinkers, thus, while stressing the role of units in a system have gradually conceded the role of the structure as a whole.

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4 Groom, Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution, p. 81.
Comparing and contrasting essentialists with structuralists, we find that while former consider conflict inevitable due to the pathological essential behaviour of the human nature, the latter underlines the significance to holistic structure which itself is a product of historical evolution of aggregate human behaviour. The problem with the essentialists is that they believe that biology determines the history. They do not see the sociological and social impact of behaviour. This is the base of critiques of essentialists. For them, for instance, men are essentially warrior while female are essentially peaceful. Realists accept essentialist arguments since they place too much emphasis on immediate power of the state. Further since they separate domestic from international politics they create artificial and mythical barrier between the two. Their levels of analysis are different but as seen above they share similar traits.

3. Instrumentalism: This approach considers conflict as an instrument in the hands of elites/political, social or economic. The logic beneath is that divide and rule is the policy pursued by the elites and politicians. The basis of division could be religious, linguistic, economic political or territorial. The elites emphasize the commonality of interests or factors that unite
the community or group. At the same time they also emphasize the divisive elements or exclusivity so that a distinctive, exclusive identity could be created. The elements of commonality or division may already exist or can be constructed by the elites. In fact, there is a good deal of debate among the primordialists (such as, Anthony D. Smith) and the constructivists (such as, Benedict Anderson and E.J. Hobsbawm) regarding the issue of whether elements to create an identity exist historically or are constructed according to the circumstances and convenience. Be that as it may, two inter-related assumptions can be safely put forward. First, elites play an important role in the identity formation. And secondly, if this identity formation is competitive (or directed against other), conflict often becomes the resource in the hands of elites and the politicians. For instance, the political parties in many developing countries have emerged on ethnic lines. If we take the case of India, the parties such as, Shiva Sena, the Bhartiya Janta Party, Muslim League etc. have clearly thrived by exploiting the existing faultiness/conflicts within the society. In Chechnya, the prevailing historical animosity among the Chechens towards the Soviet regime has been the most important factor in the mobilization of the masses against the Russian state. Thus, conflict becomes a
means to the achievements of certain ends. This can be observed at the various levels of analysis.

In this thesis, we are concerned with the ongoing conflict in Chechnya where the ethnic Chechen community has transformed itself into a nationality and there is a demand for the establishment of an independent nation-state. The next few pages will reflect upon the issues of ethnicity and nationalism.

**Ethnicity and Nationalism: Issues and Approaches**

The crisis in Chechnya cannot be understood without reflecting more closely on ethnicity and its ramifications. The phenomenon of ethnicity is an intrinsic component of the multi-ethnic states across the globe. A discussion on ethnicity needs to explain the following issues: How to explain the increasing incidences of ethnicity? What is ethnicity? What creates the conditions for ethnic mobilization? How does an ethnic community transform itself into a 'nation'? What is the role of international circumstances in spreading ethnic conflict? And finally what roles do political systems, such as, democracy and authoritarianism play in promoting or controlling an ethnic conflict?
At the onset of the 21st century, we can see two universal but contrasting phenomena at work. First, is the increasing global and political integration of the world ushered in by the technological revolution; and second, the resurgence of identity politics at regional and sub-national level in the form of ethnic and other movements—globalization of regional identity politics. This presents two challenges before an analyst: How do we find factors which can explain both globalization and regionalization? Can we establish a cause-effect relationship between these two variables? Further if we take globalization leading to the loss of identity, and hence, a virulent search for alternative identity, then how do we explain the absence of resurgence of ethnic movements in all the plural societies?

There is no consensus among scholars regarding the meaning and interpretation of the term ethnicity. A working definition of ethnicity has been provided by Rajat Ganguly and Urmila Phadnis as “either a large or small group of people, in either backward or advanced societies who are united by a common inherited culture (including language, music, food, dress and customs and practices) racial similarity, common religion and belief in common history and ancestry and who exhibit a strong psychological sentiments of
belonging to the group”.\(^7\) The demand of ethnic communities may vary from some minor socio-political rights to self-rule, territorial autonomy to secession and independent statehood. An ethnic group is distinguishable from a nation. Urmila Phadnis and Rajat Ganguly quote Ernest Barker for a holistic definition of nation which is “... a body of men inhabiting a definite territory who normally are drawn form different races, but posses a common stock of thoughts and feelings acquired and transmitted during the course of a common history; who on the whole and in the main, though more in the past than in the present include in that common stock a common religious belief; who generally and as a rule use a common language as the vehicle of their thoughts and feelings; and who, beside common thoughts and feelings also cherish a common will, and accordingly form, or lend to form, a separate state for the expression and realization of that will”\(^8\).

Nationalism has been an almost undisputed founder of world order, a key object of individual loyalties and the chief designer of people’s identity. It is far more significant for the individual and world security than any previous type of political and social organization. In short, nationalism is


\(^8\) Ibid.
important—both as a social and political phenomenon and as an object of sociological investigation. Ideological movements to sweep over nationalism either failed or had to adapt themselves to this force.

But before we processed, it is essential to trace out the historical course of nationalism; its evolution and finally, its transmogrification, into varieties of nations.

History shows that nationalism as an ideological movement arose in its most cohesive form in the West and received its classic doctrinal formulation in western countries like France, England and Germany. There has been a marked tendency to judge and explain non-classical nationalism by reference to this western criterion. But are we justified in adopting a Eurocentric standpoint? Or should we evolve a different methodology to explain nationalism in the East?

Most of the historians like Kohn and Kedourie adopt a broadly diffusionist outlook, which hold that the original ‘western’ or central European version of nationalism provides the criterion for subsequent types, even if they consider the differences between the western and Eastern varieties. A similar outlook informs Plamenatz’s distinction between

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10 Ibid., pp. 8-22.
nationalism that count on a high level of skills and cultural facilities, like the 19th century Germans and Italians, and those which could not like the Slavic movements of the last century and of the Africans and Asians in our century.\textsuperscript{11} Plamenatz openly assumes the primacy and priority of England and France as "peace-makers" inside the comity of nations that formed a consciously progressive civilization.\textsuperscript{12} He finds "Eastern Nationalism" imitative (and often illiberal) of the West, and also more competitive, and that the acquisition of linguistic and cultural resources to fit their peoples for the social revolution sweeping the world.\textsuperscript{13}

E.J. Hobsbawm has provided a brilliant historical account of nationalism, in his work, "Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Programme, Myth, and Reality".\textsuperscript{14} He argues that the word nation in its modern sense is no older than the 18th century. Attempts to establish objective criteria of nationhood or to explain why certain groups have become 'nations' and other not, have often been made, based on single criterion such as language or ethnicity or a combination of criteria such as, language, common territory, common history,

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  \item \textsuperscript{11} J. Armstrong, citing Palmenatz in, \textit{Nations before Nationalism} (Chapel Hill, 1982), pp.42-43.
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{14} E.J. Hobsbawm, \textit{Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Programme, Myth and Reality}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed., (California University Press, 1990).
\end{itemize}
cultural traits or whatever else. Stalin's definition is probably the best known among these, but by no means is the only one- "a nation a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture". All such objective definitions, argues Hobsbawm, failed for the obvious reason that since only some members of the large class of entities which fit such definitions can at any time be described as 'nations', exceptions are more frequent. The problem arises as we try to fit historically novel, changing, evolving and even today, a non-universal entity into a "framework of permanence and universality". Moreover, the criteria used for this purpose- language, ethnicity or whatever- are themselves fuzzy, shifting and ambiguous.

Then the alternative to an objective definition is a subjective one (i.e. consciousness, loyalty, will, imagination etc.). Hobsbawm argues that both the definitions are "attempts to escape from the constraints of a priori objectivism. In both the cases, though in a different manner by adapting the definition of 'nation' to territories in which persons of different languages or other objective criteria

16 Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 5-6.
coexist, as they did in France and the Habsburg Empire. Both are open to the objection that defining a nation by its member's consciousness of belonging to it is tautological and provides only a posteriori guide to what a nation is".\(^\text{17}\) This can also lead to suggest that what is needed to create or recreate a nation is the will to be one: if enough inhabitants of Chechnya wanted to be a separate nation, there would be one.

Hobsbawm argues that “to insist on consciousness or choice as the criterion of nationhood is insensibly to subordinate the complex and multiple ways in which human beings define and redefine themselves as members of groups, to a single option: the choice of belonging to a nation or nationality”.\(^\text{18}\) People can identify themselves as Jews even though they share neither religion, language, culture, tradition, historical background nor an attitude to the Jewish state. Nor does this imply a purely subjective definition of the nation. Thus, neither objective nor subjective definitions are satisfactory, and both are misleading.\(^\text{19}\)

In approaching "the national question" it is desirable to begin with the concept of nationalism than with the actual nation which can be recognized a posteriori. Hobsbawm uses

\(^\text{17}\) Ibid., p. 7.
\(^\text{18}\) Ibid., p. 8.
\(^\text{19}\) Ibid., p. 8.
the term nationalism in the sense defined by Gellner, namely to mean 'primarily a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent'. He does not regard the nation as a primary unchanging social entity. It belongs exclusively to particular, and historically, recent period. It is a social entity only in so far as it relates to a certain kind of modern territorial state, the 'nation state' and it is pointless to discuss nation and nationality except in so far as both relate to it.20

Moreover, like Gellner, Hobsbawm stresses the element of artifact, invention and social engineering which enters into the making of nations. "Nations as a natural, God -given way of classifying men, as an inherent... political destiny, are a myth: nationalism, which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes, invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: that is a reality".21 In short, for the purpose of analysis nationalism comes before nations. Nations do not make states and nationalism but the other way round i.e., state and nationalism make nation.

20 Ibid., pp. 9-10.
The national question as the traditional Marxists called it is situated at a point of intersection of politics, technology and social transformation. Nations exist not only as functions of a particular kind of territorial state or aspirations of citizens to establish one-but also in the context of particular stage of technological and economic development. Nations and their associated phenomena must therefore be analyzed in terms of political, technical administrative, economic and other conditions and requirements.

For this reason, Hobsbawm considers it a dual phenomena, constructed essentially from above, but which can not be understood unless also analyzed from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, languages and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessary national and still less nationalist. It is essential because: First, official ideologies of states and movements are not guides to what it is in the minds of even the most loyal citizens or supporters. Second and more specifically, we cannot assume that for most people national identification- when it exists- excludes or is always or ever superior to the remainder of the set of identifications which constitute the social being. Thirdly, national identification and what it is believed to

22 Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism, p. 10.
imply, can change and shift in time, even in the course of quite short periods.

Hroch's comparative studies of small European national movements point out two things—first, 'national consciousness' develops unevenly among the social groupings and regions of a country; this regional diversity and its reasons have in the past been notably neglected. In fact, national consciousness affects popular masses—workers, servants, peasants—at the last. Second, he divides the history of national movement into 3 phases. 23 In 19th century Europe, for which it was developed, phase A was purely cultural, literary and folkloric, and had no particular political or even national implications. In phase B we find a body of pioneers and militants of 'the national idea' and the beginning of political campaigning for this idea. Then there is phase C when national programmes acquire mass support. The transition from phase B to phase C sometimes occurs before the creation of a national state—as in Ireland; but more often it occurs afterwards, as a consequence of that creation. Sometimes, as in the so-called Third World, it does not happen even then.

23 Hroch quoted by Hobsbawm in Nations and Nationalism, p.4.
The liberal bourgeoisie ideology of 19th century saw the development of nations as unquestionably a phase in human evolution or progress from the small group to the larger, from family to tribe to region, to nation and in the last instance, to the unified world of the future in which to quote G. Lowes Dickson, "the barriers of nationality which belong to the infancy of the race will melt and dissolve in the sunshine of science and art." The 19th century liberal scholars stressed three criteria which allowed people to be classified as nation. The first was its historical association with a current state as one with fairly lengthy and recent past. The second criterion was the existence of long-established cultural elite, possessing a written national literary and administrative vernacular. This was the basis of German and Italian claims to nationhood, although respective people had no single state with which they could identify. The third criterion was a proven capacity for conquest. Thus, warfare made the population conscious of its collective existence. Hobsbawm argues that before 1880 it is the state which plays crucial role in making the nation but after 1880 it increasingly did matter how ordinary common men and women felt about nationality. It is therefore important to consider the feelings and attitudes among pre-

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24 Ibid., p.38.
industrial people of this kind, on which the novel appeal of political nationalism could build.

According to Hobsbawm, the nationalism of 1880-1914 differed in three major respects from the Mazzinian phase (i.e. 1830 to 1870s).25 First, it abandoned the ‘threshold principle’ which was central to nationalism in the liberal era. According to it, the ‘principle of nationality’ applied in practice only to nationalities of certain size. Hence, demand for independence of small states (e.g., Ireland, Sicilians, and Welsh). The word ‘Balkanization’ still retains its negative connotation. But in the era after 1880, any body of people considering themselves a ‘nation’ claimed the right to a separate sovereign independent state for their territory. Second, and in consequence of this multiplication of potential ‘unhistorical’ nations, ethnicity and language became the central, increasingly the decisive or even the only criteria of potential nationhood. The word was the proclamation of political rights among the established nations for which the term was invented in the last decade of the 19th century.

It was in the late second half of the 19th century that ethnic nationalism received enormous re-enforcement in practice. This ethno-linguistic nationalism of 1880 onwards

25 Ibid., p.31.
was the product of social and political changes, not to mention an international situation that provided plenty of pegs on which to hang manifesto of hostility to foreigners. Socially three developments gave considerably increased scope for the development of novel forms of inventing 'imagined' or even actual communities as nationalities: the resistance of traditional groups threatened by the onrush of modernity, the novel and quite non-traditional classes and strata now rapidly growing in the urbanizing societies of developed countries and the unprecedented migrations which distributed a multiple diaspora of peoples across the globe.

But too great an emphasis on nationalism being a modern and modernizing phenomenon, argues A.D. Smith, ignores the importance of its ethnic roots in the distant past. Another is the failure to appreciate the impact of a xenophobic neo-traditionalism on national sentiments and the uses to which religious leaders can put such feelings, as the recent resurgence of Islam underlines. We need to distinguish between two types of assertion; the purely historical one that as an ideological movement, nationalist emerged in late 18th century West Europe, and in that sense a

26 Ibid., p.109.
27 A.D. Smith, Theories of Nationalism, pp. 41-64.
modern phenomenon; and the sociologist thesis that nationalism is itself a modernizing force which can be explained solely in terms of anterior process of modernization. Thus, the study of nationalism needs to be reoriented to take into account not only the new forces associated with the French and industrial revolution but also of the retention of older ties and sentiments, often long antedating the modern era. Any study on nationalism while not neglecting modern factors like capitalism, urbanization, bureaucratism and science must take into account the new fields of study of ethnic revival and xenophobic nationalism which constructs the image of the "other" as enemy.

We are all witnessing, or at least scholars present us to believe, a resurgence of ethnicity in the modern world especially since the mid-1950s. For many ethnic revival is largely a Western concept (i.e. an imagination by Western scholars) and only its "mass" political support renders its worthy of special attention. Few equate its emergence to the uneven conditions created by industrialization and modernization. Two schools of thought on political role of ethnic ties and movements exists; on the one hand there is the primordialist approach, originally sponsored by Shills and Greetz, according to which ethnicity is something given and
persistent in social affairs, a primordial and perhaps sacred ties between the members of the group. Ethnic attachments are among several that appear 'natural' for individual being rooted in the non-rational foundation of personality. For fisherman and Van den Berghe, these attachments are grounded in man's biological and genetic make-up, and are based upon genealogical descent, or at any rate a belief in essential in much common ancestry. Against this primordialist view, the "instrumentalist" approach adopted by Glazes and Meynihan, Bark, Bell and Abner Cohen contend that such attachments are liable to considerable change over time, that people may come to view their linguistic religious, kinship and territorial attachments quite differently in our highly mobile societies, with some attachments falling by in wayside, and that even the belief in common descent, though powerful and widespread, may not encompass all culturally defined groups which lay claim to special rights or according to their affinities and features.29 Some ethnic communities are rich in historic ties and sentiments; others can draw on only shadowy past and ambiguous culture. Moreover, recent history has witnessed near-invention of ethnic categories and hence communities; in Europe, Ukrainians and Hutus and

Tutsis in Africa. It is quite possible to view ethnicity as a resource for interest groups, and a type of communal organizations open to manipulation by power elites or charismatic leaders in which an effective tie is combined with economic interests to heighten the utility and appeal of this particular type of collective base.

Although there is no historical continuity between modern revival of all ethnic resurgence with the old sentiments, a sociological continuity exits, in that ethnicity forms an elements of culture and social strategy which persists over time and reappears in every generation with varying force. Ties and sentiments which in one era remained latent and submerged begin in the next to grain force and become politically salient and divisive.\textsuperscript{30} Sometimes, if an ethnic community is economically backward or politically repressed it gets mobilized on national basis.

Nationalism cannot be understood without a theory of role of ethnic organization and sentiments in history. Only by placing modern ethnic revival, from later 18\textsuperscript{th} century onwards, in the context of more general historical theory, can we begin to understand ethnic revival. What was lacking in earlier revival was national self-determination and belief in

\textsuperscript{30} See A.D. Smith, \textit{Theories of Nationalisms}, pp. 41-64
popular national sovereignty. There are new ideas which gave present-day revival its revolutionary change-seeking and mass-mobilizing impetus.\textsuperscript{31} Modernization theories address themselves solely to the break with the past achieved during 18\textsuperscript{th} century in the West Europe. But this distorts the significance and shape of modern ethnic revival. They deal only with the novel elements, the new doctrine and organs but even the latter can be grouped in its entirety against the background of meaning, processes of cultural communities, their sentiments, beliefs and myths of ethnic origins and bonds which have persisted as an element of social strategy and culture in many areas of world today.

A good account of ethnicity and its process of transformation into demand for a ‘nation’ has been provided by Paul Brass in his book “Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theories and Comparison”\textsuperscript{32} He recognizes the variability of ethnic identities. Ethnic identity can transform itself into nationalism. The cultural forms, values and practices of ethnic groups become political resources for elites in competition for political power and economic advantages. They create such values into political symbols. He has also

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\item Ibid., pp. 41-64
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discussed the relationship between the state and the elite both as collaborators and opponents.

Brass has defined ethnic groups on the basis of their attribute: objective attributes – some distinguishing cultural feature that separates one group of people from other; subjective feeling i.e. self consciousness of ethnicity; behavioural attributes i.e., specific way in which ethnic groups behave or do not behave especially while interacting with other groups.

Ethnic groups can have demands – cultural, economic, and political. Ethnic group may aspire to national status and recognition. If it succeeds it has become a nation or a nationality. A nation therefore, may be known as particular type of ethnic community. Nations may be created by the transformation of an ethnic group in multi-ethnic state into a self-conscious political entity or by the amalgamation of diverse groups and the formation of an inter-ethnic, composite, national culture. In this case commonality of different cultures is highlighted.

Ethnic demand initially centres around symbols such as language, religion, territory dress codes and women also or colour. To make it more cohesive and present it effectively against rival groups, ethnic and nationalist elites stress the
commonality of the members of the group and how they are different from others: construction of the "other" versus "us" syndrome. In multi-ethnic nation formation the possibility of conflicts are lessened by the accommodation of each other. Why do some ethnic groups become communities or nationalities or pursue successfully their social, economic and political goals while others not? In the process of nationality formation objective differences between ethnic groups are translated into a consciousness of and a desire for group solidarity and become the basis for successful political demands. Brass has given two stages in the development of nationality: (1) movement from ethnic category to community. At this stage the effort to bring multiple symbols such as religion, language etc. in congruence begins; (2) the second stage in transformation of ethnic groups involves the articulation and acquisition of social, economic and political rights for members of the group or for the groups as a whole. This stage involves the cultural as well as political demands. Group rights are maintained through political action and political mobilization. If it is successful it has crossed the stage of ethnicity to establish itself as a nationality. The chain would be like this:

33 Ibid

What determines the merging of one group into other? Cultural heritage, languages, distinctiveness of its religious beliefs do not by themselves predetermine the internal solidarity of a community and explain the capacity to perpetuate itself through time. Ethnic communities are created and transformed by particular elites in modernizing and post-industrial society undergoing social change. There exists a competition between elites for political power, economic benefits and social status both within and among different ethnic categories.

Ethnic self-consciousness, ethnic demands and ethnic conflicts can occur only if there is a conflict between indigenous and external elites and authorities or between indigenous elites. Four sources of elite conflict may spur the development of ethnic communalism or separatism in pre-industrial or early modernizing society: (a) between local aristocracy and alien conqueror; (b) between competing religious elites of different ethnic groups; (c) between religious elites and native aristocracy within an ethnic group; (d) between native religious elites and an alien aristocracy.

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34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
Ethnic group once equipped with communal solidarity, go on to make major political demands and their success depends on four factors: perception of unequal distribution of resources; the extent of communal consciousness; response of government; general political context.

Nationalism arises in response to objective exploitation of an indigenous group by an alien group, or one social class by other. However, it has been argued that it is not objective inequality as such that precipitates nationalism but a feeling of frustration or relative deprivation from that they except they are rightfully entitled or they are capable to attain or maintain. For instance, Croatian nationalism in former Yugoslavia. Croats were genuinely advanced economically and there was no real inequality between Croats and Serbs, but Croats expected that attainment of economic well-being comparable to West European was not possible within Yugoslavia.\textsuperscript{36} But there is a problem in relative deprivation theory. There is no way of measuring the level of relative deprivation. Moreover, it can not explain the nationalism of privileged groups such as Afrikaaners in South Africa. The objective inequality or subjective perception of inequality is indispensable to justify nationalism, but it is not in itself an

explanation for it. Success of nationalist movement would depend upon both the character of internal social and political communication and organization and upon the political relations with the ethnic groups. Thus, it is not inequality as such or relative deprivation or status discrepancies that are critical percipients of nationalism in ethnic group, but the relative distribution of ethnic groups in the competition for valued resources and opportunities and in the division of labour in societies undergoing social mobilization and industrialization.

The policies of government are crucial in group capacity in survive an entity. The instruments of government in dealing with ethnic groups are: extermination or deportation; confinement in certain areas; policy of colonization through assimilation of dominant group and culture, e.g., Russification; institutional mechanism like federalism; accommodation short of secession e.g., granting autonomy and other political rights.

The prevailing political context is also important. Three aspects of political context are important. First is the possibility for realignment of political and social forces and organization. Second, the willingness of elites from dominant
groups to share power with aspiring ethnic leaders. And finally, the potential availability of alternative political arena.

According to Anthony D. Smith, four internal conditions are must for ethnic movement; \(^{37}\) ethnic category must have transformed into ethnic community; varieties of ethnic nationalism must have spread on the globe; the ethnic in question must have produced a stratum of intellectual; historically, these conditions have been met in varieties of ways-through war, revolutions and migrations as well as state actions.

Nationalism, nation-ness, etc. are cultural artifacts of particular kind. Benedict Anderson, in an anthropological spirit defines nation as an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. \(^{38}\) Imagined because even without knowing each other there exists the image of their communion. Anderson says that all communities are imagined as a particular style different from another. The nation is imagined as limited. No nation imagines itself coterminous with whole mankind. It is not like Christianity which once dreamed of a Christian planet. It is imagined as sovereign because concept was born in an age of

\(^{37}\) Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, pp. 230-256.

\(^{38}\) The nation as an imagined community has been popularised by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities* (London, 1983).
enlightenment and Revolution. Nations dream of being free from hierarchical dynastic realm. It dreams freedom. Finally, it is imaged as communities because in spite of divisions, inequality, exploitation, the nation is always conceived as deep horizontal comradeship. What makes peoples sacrifice their lives for nations is the cultural communion.

Nationalism has to be understood by aligning it not with self-censoriously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it out of which – as well as against which – it came into being. The two relevant cultural systems are the religious communities and the dynastic realm. Anderson talks of classical communities linked to each other by sacred cultures, sacred language and written script. But the crucial difference between the modern imagined community and the older community was the latter's confidence in the sacredness of language.

Imagined communities were not simply growing out of and replacing religious communities and dynastic realms. Anderson argues that the very possibility of imagining the nation arose historically when three fundamental cultural conceptions lost their grip on man's mind: the idea that particular script-language offered privileged access to

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39 Ibid.
ontological truth. It was this idea which brought transcontinental solidarities of Christians and the Islamic Ummah: the belief that society was organized around monarchs who ruled by divine dispensation; and the conception that cosmology and history is undistinguishable.

The slow and uneven decline of this conception first in Western Europe later elsewhere under the impact of economic change, discoveries, development of communication separated cosmology and history. The search began for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time. What precipitated this search was the print-capitalism which made people think about themselves and to relate themselves to others in a new way. So the question why nation became so popular, a strong case can be made of primacy of capitalism. What made new communities imaginable was interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism, a technology of communicators (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity.

Anderson sums up by saying that the convergence of capitalism and print technology on fatal diversity of human languages created the possibility for new form of imagined communities – which set the stage for new nations. Thus
search was limited and had relationship with the existing political boundaries.\textsuperscript{40}

\section*{Ethnic Mobilization in the Soviet Union}

After discussing major exponents on nationalism what is left is the issue of classifying Soviet system. J.A. Armstrong divided Soviet Union into four groups – 'station nations', 'colonials', 'younger brother' and 'mobilized Diaspora'.\textsuperscript{41} Its state nations were Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians of the Baltic and the Georgians. He also included Finns, Poles and Moldavians under this heading. These were nations with strong links to their language and territory. The 'colonials' were ethnic groups of Muslim background, namely the peoples of Central Asia with low educational attainment and low social mobilization. The 'younger brothers' were the Ukrainians and Byelorussians. Finally, the interesting concept of 'mobilized diasporas' was intended to cover not just the Jews but the Armenians and Germans. These were highly mobile, highly educated people spread over large parts of Soviet Union.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.

The problem with this approach is that it fixes on a set of allegedly permanent characteristics, whereas these are in fact subject to change over time. It also fails to take into account other non-titular nations, apart from the Germans and the Jews and it arbitrary separates Georgians from Americans, while associating such different nations as Moldavians and Estonians.

Another possible system of classification could be linguistic as has been done by V.I. Kzalov.\textsuperscript{42} He adopted four broad categories. Indo-European, Altaic, Caucasian and Uralic. One could also distinguish between significant and insignificant nations, the latter could then be called nationalities. Soviet scholars have sometime taken this view using the term nation to cover any ethnic groups which lent its name to a union republic or an autonomous republic, and nationality to cover those at autonomous region (oblast) or autonomous district (okrug) level or below. But this does not solve the problem; firstly, nation has been mis-equated with the administrative divisions and it is difficult to consider Gazauz and Abkhaz as nationality.

Hence, to avoid this difficulty, we will try to identify ethnic communities and explain their transformation into

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
nations. We have already discussed the process of transformation as viewed by P. Brass. A little more clarification can be possible with the help of A.D. Smith who has distinguished between an ethnic and nation. On his view, an ethnic is an ethnic community marked by a group of six defining characteristics, which must all be present. These are: a collective name; a common myth of descent; a shared history (or at least story without actual facts); a distinctive shared culture covering at least one of the following: language, religion, institutions and other cultural features; association, either mental or physical with a specific territory; and a sense of solidarity, i.e., recognition of each others as members of the same ethnie. But the existence of an ethnie at a given historical juncture is not a guarantee of its survival. The formation of a nation is dependent on historical contingency. An ethnie may vanish completely or remain at the pre-national level, or develop into a nation with claims to own state. Smith divides the ethnie into two broad categories, aristocratic/lateral (e.g., Georgians). He also distinguishes two routes an ethnie can follow to nationhood; from territorial state to nation (the Western routes), and from nation to state.

43 For detailed discussion on transformation of ethnic communities into nations see A.D. Smith, Ethnic Origins of Nations (Oxford, 1986).
‘on the basis of pre-existing *ethnies* and ethnic ties’ (the Western route).\(^4\)

If one applies Smith’s analysis to the Russian Empire and Soviet Union one can easily add up a list of *ethnies* which survived relatively unchanged; *ethnies* which disappeared; *ethnies* which continued to form nations and nations which attained the height of statehood. The western route is true only for Russians. The ‘Eastern route’ from nation to state on an ethnic basis, is represented by the Baltic nations, the Moldavians, the Armenians and the Georgians. It is no accident that they were standard-bearers in the struggle for independence in the late 1980s.

However, this is not to suggest that ‘historic nations’ existed from time immemorial (as suggested by German romanticists), and only needed the kiss of democratic freedom to awaken them, as in what has been called the ‘sleeping beauty’ theory of nationalism, or more technically ‘perennialism’ a theory which locates the origins of nations in the remote past. But the opposite view, that nations were created as by-products of the process of modernization also has its weaknesses. According to the latter view, as presented

\(^4\) Ibid.
by Benedict Anderson in 1983, nations were “invented” or “constructed” rather than primordially present.

Localist or universalities identities came first followed by nation. But if nations were invented or imagined, the imagination had already been substantially created in the Western part of the Russian empire by the end of the 19th century, much before the coming of capitalism. Historical identities, although not predetermined in the 18th century and before had been formed by 1917. Once national identity existed they were able to take the East European route, going from nation to state on an ethnic basis. Further east, however, in the Asiatic part of the Russian Empire, the other route was taken, from territorial state to nation. Although the circumstances were completely different, this route was formally the same as that route taken by Western European nations, where independent states existed even before a sense of nationality. Here the analysis put forward by Andersen is inappropriate. First came the other identities, localist and universalities than nation does not suit here because much of the construction or invention was the work of Soviet State itself. Anderson’s ‘print capitalism’ can be seen as ‘print socialism’ of Soviet State in this case.
Thus, there always existed a definite ethnic substratum, a pre-existing *ethnie*. Ethnic identities, or linguistic border guards, establishing boundaries between 'us and 'them' existed in many cases from medieval times onwards.\(^45\)

Soviet Policy towards larger ethnic, believes Ben Fowkes,\(^46\) was analogous to that of Western colonial powers in the office: a territorial conception of the state was imposed on exiting ethnic communities, ignoring cultural divisions which sometimes cut across ethnicity.

We do agree with Ben Fowkes to the extent that a territorial concept of state was imposed on existing ethnic communities ignoring cultural diversity, but it should not be equated with Western colonialism as relationship was not based on mere exploitation. No colonial powers wanted to forfeit their empire in Africa or Asia. While on our case Russia itself wanted to be independent. The Central Asian States were the last to seek such demand.

As we shall see forces of nationalism remained dormant under the threat of the use of force by Stalin. But during the post-Stalin period, in a context of liberal political atmosphere national feelings resurfaced in various forms. The emerging


national intelligentsias contributed to this development – working as “elites” of Paul Brass. The general decay of Soviet Marxism created a vacuum to be replaced by a more vibrant national ideology. The emergence of ethnic movement in Chechnya should be seen against this backdrop.