Theoretical Perspectives

Nationalist sentiment, which emerged in the 18th century and reached its zenith in the 19th and 20th Centuries, also gave birth to certain subnationalistic movements. As a result, the third world nation-states which started the process of nation building and integration, were confronted with fissiparous tendencies in the national political system along with other problems. These states faced the problem of integrating the disparate social groups within their boundaries into political communities. These social groups differ from each other in their cultural diversities representing different languages, religions and cultural patterns. These groups while pursuing particularistic interests and posing specific demands exerted pressure on national governments by different methods and in a variety of ways. These pluralistic identities have raised the importance of culture in recent years. In some respect, it is to be welcomed as it compensates for a neglect of cultural factor in the understanding. But the way in which the term has been co-opted for
strategic reasons by political parties and groups has caused worries. Generally, culture is the expression of organically with a linked community. But in the recent years, culture, religion and region have been closely linked, so, the religious and regional communities are also described as cultural communities, organised around common beliefs, value systems and modes of living and held together by interlinked structures and practices rather than by power. The specific identity of community is to be understood in terms of its culture, because the culture of each community is so unique that it can be fully understood only by natives.

In contemporary world, there is hardly any state which has socially and culturally homogeneous population. The minority community feels to lose its identity. So, the search for identity is a perennial problem for the minority community in today's world. This search however tends to develop into an identity crisis under the stresses and strains that go with rapidly developing and modernising world. Thus it has become imperative for a state to achieve unity and introduce common symbols of national

identity among various segments of its population. These group identities based on the 'givens' of social existence are stronger than allegiance to the nation-state. According to Lucian Pye, the identity crisis occurs when a state cannot perform as a fully effective national unit because significant elements of the population hold higher allegiance to sub-national groupings. Culture, language and religion which develop within the primordial groups are the most important basis of the political identity. But these are not the only ones. Some other factors which have influenced the outcome of political identity can be mentioned as the rate of urbanization, the progress of industrialization, the pressure of the government and even the international factors. Degner Bernstorff enlists three factors which translate identity into political action; the experience of inequality, an event to serve as spark and a leadership which channels a latent feeling into action and gives it organizational structure. So, whatever the


case may be, identity remains a vital component of human psyche. To preserve its identity, the members of a distinct category of the population in a larger society whose culture is usually different from that of the majority, form a distinctive group. The primary stage of this group formation on the basis of identity is the ethnic group. The concepts like nationality and nation can be stated as the higher stage in the historical development of the group formation. And finally this feeling of identity gives rise to a particular type of ideology called nationalism.

The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss the various perspectives so far adopted to analyse the dynamics of nationalism and also try to prepare a sort of my own framework in the specific context of the Tamils in India and Sri Lanka. But before proceeding to the main substance of the chapter, it would be relevant to clarify the concepts which will repeatedly figure in my study such as ethnic group, ethnicity, nationality, nation, nation-state, nationalism and minority nationalism.

As mentioned earlier, the smallest group formed on the basis of identity is ethnic group. In its strict meaning the word 'ethnic' denotes race, but when applied to communities in the nationality sense,
it is loosely used in the absence of any other comprehensive term, to cover the more general concept of culture. Ethnic groups are differentiated from other groups as they identify themselves with some distinct characteristics. "An ethnic group is a distinct category of the population in a larger society whose culture is usually different from others. The members of such a group feel themselves or are thought to be bound together by common ties of race or nationality," These smaller groups form a distinct community called ethnic community. Ethnic communities are groups bound together within an alien civilization but remaining culturally distinct. They may occupy a position of self sufficient isolation or they may have extensive dealings with the surrounding population while retaining a separate identity. The members of these communities are interlinked by primordial attachment. By the primordial, Geertz meant one that stems from the 'givens' or more precisely, as culture is inevitably involved in such matters, the assumed 'given' of social existence, immediate contiguity and kin connection mainly, but beyond them the givenness that stems from being born into a


particular religious community, speaking a particular language, and following particular social practices. These congruities of blood, speech, custom and so on are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves. These ethnic attachments constitute the 'given' of the human condition and are rooted in the non-rational foundations of personality.

With the passage of time, ethnic movements have emerged under a variety of circumstances and encompassed many forms. They have emerged among large minority groups and among small ones. Thus the primordial ties are not the only instrument to form ethnic group, though it serves the basic instrument for these groups. They encompass both cultural and economic components. Sometimes, ethnic group serve as a resource for interest groups and

10. As in Quebec and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh.)
11. As Frisians in Holland, Jurassians in Switzerland and Gorkhas in India.
12. For example in Wales and Scotland the issues are more economic while in Basque and Quebec they are more cultural.
becomes open to manipulation by political elite or charismatic leaders. The political elites create new cultural basis or given new values and meaning to the already existing cultural identities in order to mobilise the group.

A variety of cultural makers have provided the basis for ethnic mobilization, the use in skin colour in United States, language in Canada, tribal loyalties in much of Africa, religion in Sudan and Northern Ireland. Some movements demand outright secession, others aim at cultural autonomy, still others pursue equal rights within the prevailing political system. In all instances, the movements are powerful expressions of group identity and a desire for a more equitable distribution of political and economic resources.

Elaine Burgess has given an excellent working definition of the concept of ethnicity. "Ethnicity is the character, quality or condition of ethnic group membership, based on an identity and a consciousness of group belonging, that is differentiated from others by symbolic makers

(including cultural biological or territorial) and is rooted in the bonds of a shared past and perceived ethnic interest.

The political instability prevailing in many parts of the world, particularly in the third world can also be traced in large part to inter-ethnic conflicts. In Sri Lanka, for example, there is a deterioration of democracy mainly because of an explosion of ethnic conflict into violent insurgency. However, the effect of ethnic cleavages on prospects for peace and democracy vary with the pattern of cleavage and the way they articulate with political structures. In India, because major religious communities are split into many linguistic communities which in turn are stratified into caste and class formation...an eagerness to utilise one affinity by a political leadership that seeks an easy constituency of popular support may encourage other leaders to exploit the other affinities of the same individual. Thus for example the easier course of exclusive Hindu mobilization, by seizing upon the Hindi Language loyalty in northern India, created negative political

reaction among Hindus who spoke other languages. On the other hand ethnic cleavages in Sri Lanka are commulative.

In the context of multination states, different ethnic groups project their demands to the national government. When their problems are not solved, and instead they are aggravated, the ethnic groups form their movement. Ethnic groups of common racial descent identify themselves into a common nationality. Hayes defined nationality as "a cultural group of people who speak a common language (or closely related dialects) and who possess a community of historical traditions (religions, territorial, political, military, economic, artistic, and intellectual)." Max Hildebert Boehm subjected the concept to two interpretations. According to one, the tendency in national development has been to efface the boundaries between nation and state so,


16. With linguistic, religious, regional, racial, and class cleavages overlapping.


that at a certain stage in democratic development states automatically become transformed into nations. Nationality thus implies the formal adherence of an individual to the state. Polish nationality, in this sense includes all the subjects or citizens of the polish state irrespective of the language they speak or the ethnic group to which they belong. Concretely the term nationality is here used to designate an undeveloped and non-independent national group which has not yet attained to national sovereignty. In contrast to this political concept of nationality there is the view of the nation as a more ethnic and cultural phenomenon. Differences in language and culture as well as variations in religion, race and custom result in the formation of social groups which, independent of political boundaries, constitute fundamental national units. Nationality thus signifies adherence to a people rather than to a state. Whereas according to the first interpretation there is a definite Swiss nationality based on membership in the Swiss State, according to the other every Swiss individual is of the German, French or Italian nationality depending on his cultural and ethnic affiliation. Nationality in the concrete sense thus refers to a people or a group, which independent of its political aims form a totality, relatively wider
and more comprehensive in character.

For Hans Kohn, nationalities are fluctuating and not rigid. The factors like common descent, language, territory political entity, customs and traditions or religion are considered by him, as objective factors. And he was in the view that the most essential element for the formation of nationalities is a living and active corporate will. For him nationalities are the products of living forces of history.

Lord Acton, in his essay 'Nationality' intimated that in a multinational state, a nationality could become both a limit to the excessive power of the state as well as bulwark of self government. A nationality inside a multinational state, he believed when a state was based on freedom could counteract the worst effects of absolutism.

Thus, generally conceived by the social scientists, nationality means collectivity of people with common and distinctive cultural characteristics


like language customs, traditions and sometimes also racial traits and a definite geographical location.

When a nationality becomes politically conscious and linked with political aspirations, it starts acquiring the traits of a nation. The word 'Nation' stems from the Latin verb 'nasci' to be born, and originally meant a group of people born in the same place. Its meaning has changed in the course of time, different nations and different parties within a nation frequently do not connect the same ideas with it, and even the same politician or writer often changes its connotation according to the demand of certain interests which he or she defends.

In the European universities of the late middle ages 'nations' were groups of students who came from the same region or country. To French radical writers in the eighteenth century a nation means the people of a given country. And in nineteenth and twentieth century the word nation was profoundly affected by the revolutionary policies. The rise of modern capitalism, the industrial revolution, and the establishment of new system of government based on popular sovereignty shifted the emphasis from cultural to political standard of nation.
A modern usage identifies a nation with people constituted as a state. In this view every state forms a nation and every citizen is a member of the nation. This definition is a legal one. But it is important to realise that legal and social nationality form entirely different ideas, an individual may legally belong to a nation which he fiercely hates or which does not regard him as true national. This is particularly the case in states where an ethnical section of the people has a dominant position while the rest is more or less oppressed.

A nation is a human group bound together by common solidarity— a group whose numbers place loyalty to the group as a whole over any conflicting loyalties. "The nation," writes Rupert Emerson, "is a community of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of common heritage and

21. The Scots and Welsh regard themselves as nations though they live in a common state with the English. In the former Austro-Hungarian Empire twelve nationalities were living together. Loyalty to the Empire and to the constituent states and countries and patriotic emotions were not lacking. But nobody would ever have spoken of an Austro-Hungarian or of a Austrian nation.

that they have a common destiny for the future. L.W. Pye while talking about the boundary of a nation observes. "A nation is a social group which serves a common ideology, common institution and customs and a sense of homogeneity... may comprise part of State, be co-terminous or extend beyond it". It shows that nation is a psychological and cultural entity. According to Ernest Renan, a nation is a soul, a spiritual principle, only two things, actually constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other is in the present. One is the passion in common of a rich legacy of remembrances, and other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all held common.

In this context the termnation has been used to denote a human group with the following characteristics.

(a) The idea of a common government whether as a


reality in the present or past, or as an aspiration of the future.

(b) A certain size and closeness of contact between all the individual members.

(c) A more or less defined territory.

(d) Certain characteristics clearly distinguishing the nation from other nations and non-national groups.

(e) Certain interest common to the individual members.

A nation becomes a state or to be more precise a "nation-state," when it acquires political independence and sovereignty. There can be a multiplicity of nations within a state or many states may have the people of the same nation as their citizens. The term nation-state defines the character of the contemporary sovereign political unit. However, the term nation-state as understood in the traditional context means a complete submergence of the different loyalties in the over-arching mainstream and the formation of a "granite-like slab." But the modern and pragmatic reappraisal of the working of the nation-state has made it clear that the diversities do

27. Rajinder Kaur, op. cit., p. 4.
not completely come to an end. The basic attachments of the various groups might become latent but they still remain there and become the focal point of identification during periods of stress and strain within the nation-state. So as Paul R. Brass says, "the nation-state is a state in which either there is one national or nationality or in which one nation or nationality overwhelmingly dominates. Hence, the term nation-states in which, in spite of the diversities, a sense of unity forms the basis.

The feeling of belonging to the nation has given rise to another broad concept, nationalism. Nationalism is used generally of a consciousness, on the part of individuals or groups, of membership in a nation, or of a desire to forward the strength, liberty or prosperity of a nation, whether one's own or another.

Nationalism in its broader meaning refers to the attitude which ascribes to national individuality a high place in the hierarchy of values. In this sense it is a natural and indispensable

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condition and accompanying phenomenon of all national movements. On the other hand the term nationalism also connotes a tendency to place a particularly excessive, exaggerated and exclusive emphasis on the value of the nation, at the expense of other values, which leads to a vain and importunate overestimation of one's own nation and thus to a detraction of other. Nationalism of this sort stands in the same relation of national feeling or national consciousness as does chauvinism to genuine patriotism.

Hans Kohn lays stress on nationalism as a state of mind, "Nationalism is an attitude, a feeling, an emotion, as well as a doctrine or an ideology.

Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It pretends to supply a criterion for the determination of the unit of population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate exercise of power in the state, and for the right organisation of a society of State. Briefly the doctrine holds that humanity is divided naturally into nations, that nations are known by certain characteristics which

31. Kohn, op.cit p.44.
can be ascertained, and that the only legitimate type of government is national self government. Hayes observed that in simplest term, nationalism may be defined as a fusion of patriotism with a consciousness of nationality.

These all definitions of nationalism show a similar characteristic of the doctrine that national consciousness is based mainly on primordial characteristics. But, it is now agreed that nationalism as a phenomenon cannot be explained by a mere existence of relatively permanent socio-political factors. Walker Connor has given a working definition of the concept of nationalism "Nation usually means state, nation-state usually means multination state, nationalism usually means loyalty to the state, and ethnicity, primordialism, pluralism, tribalism, regionalism, communalism, parochialism and sub-nationalism usually mean loyalty to the group." However, this does not distinguish the State and the nation. Connor himself has referred to the definition of Jack C Plano and Roy Olton in this regard. According to them State is a legal concept describing


33 W. Connor, "A Nation is a nation is a state, is an ethnic group is a...." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.1, No.4, October1978, p.396.
a social group that occupies a defined territory and is organised under common political institution and an effective government. They defined the nation as a social group which shares common ideology, common institutions and customs and a sense of homogenity. Thus they distinguish the nation from the state and concede that the state can have many nations.

In our study we can describe nationalism as a doctrine demanding some measure of political autonomy for a socially homogeneous and cohesive group. Their aim differ according to the degree of political autonomy they seek. This may very from forms of partial internal self government to full sovereignty.

The phenomenon of cultural or socially distinct minority groups living in the midst of an 'alien' society is a familiar one, but what exactly is meant either by minority or ethnic group is something that scholars and politicians and those who take political action in social matters have seldom found easy to describe. Contemporary sociologists generally define a minority as a group of people


differentiated from others in the same society by race, nationality, religion or language who both think to themselves as a differentiated group and are thought of by the others as a differentiated group with negative connotation. Further, they are relatively lacking in power and hence are subjected to certain exclusion, discriminations and other differential treatment. The important elements in this definition are a set of attitude those of group identification from within the group and those of prejudice from without and a set of behaviours, those of self segregation from within the group and those of discrimination and exclusion from without. A minority group as an aggregate of people who are distinct in race, religion, language or nationality from other members of society in which they live and who think of themselves and are thought by others, as being separate and distinct. Separatism often implies that members of such a minority are excluded from taking a full share in the life of society.


because they differ in certain ways from the dominant group. This situation tends to develop attitudes of discrimination and prejudice towards minority in question, and generates group loyalty and forms of behaviour that help to segregate its members still farther from the rest of the society.

It is the process of modernisation, consisting of increased centralization of power in the State, differentiation and specialization of institutions, and expansion in the level of social mobilization which generates sufficient quantitative change in the life styles of people to effect a qualitative change in the level of organisation of groups to make demands at the societal level. Minority nationalism is a by-product of these multi-level changes.

Members of a minority group commonly live together, clustered in one region or concentrated in several separated towns or villages. They experience discrimination and frustration in specific and concrete ways. Hence their protests generally aim at

amelioration rather than abstract transformation. Some minority groups are prone to riots and rebellion. Members of a religious minority group, more than members of other social groups have an explicit ingroup and outgroup sense.

After having made an attempt to clarify the various concepts frequently used in the study, a persual of the different theoretical perspectives of the problem is being made. The question arises, is it possible to construct a general theory of a phenomenon as complex and varied as nationalism? Colin Williams concludes that it is impossible to get unity of explanation in a field which spans the development of nation states since the sixteenth century, the diffusion of nationalist ideology to the universal audience by the twentieth century, and the recent resurgence of autonomist movement within some Western democracies. Colin Williams may be right in suggesting that all the different historical forms of nationalism cannot be explained by a single theory, but there is still considerable scope for progress towards unity of explanation. It may be that a unifying theoretical framework which links a number

of related theories dealing with particular forms and aspects of nationalism is a more realistic goal than a single monolithic theory.

I shall discuss the various perspectives together on the basis of their similarities. This will enable me to undertake the critical analysis of the various theories and approaches in depth.

The most persuasive attempted theories of nationalism are either liberal or Marxist. In Ernest Gellner's Weberian theory of nationalism, culture is communication, and its significance for national solidarity stems from the fact that in modern society where many social encounters are non-local, impersonal and ephemeral in character, people have to share means of communication, hence a common identity which is also non-local, non-sectional and non-class. A shared cultural identity, an ability to speak the same language is central to the inter-class solidarity of nationalism. On the other hand, Marxists have traditionally tended to underestimate the importance of culture to nationalism and partly because of this way have also tended to underestimate


nationalism's emotional and political power. To Lenin nationalism and imperialism were merely of the capitalist world which had to be changed. In his 'Critical Remarks on the National Question', which he wrote in 1913, Lenin attacked nationalism as inevitable in bourgeois society. In his view all liberal bourgeois nationalism causes the greatest corruption among the workers, which causes immense harm to the cause of the proletarian class struggle. In the name of national culture the bourgeoisie of all nations do their reactionary and dirty work.

According to the Marxists theory, the ego-identity is a by-product of private property. The equality, prosperity and harmony as a result of socialist reconstruction will vanish primordial group identities. Both Marxist or non-Marxists generally overemphasise, either the economic or the cultural aspect of nationalism respectively and typically they cover only some historical forms of nationalism and not other.

However, there was considerable consensus among many Marxist and liberal scholars that ethnicity reflected the conditions of traditional ----------------------------------------

46. Rajinder Singh Chauhan,op.cit,p.25.
society, in which mass communications and transportation were limited. Many expected that industrialization, urbanization, and the spread of education would reduce ethnic consciousness and that universalism would replace particularism. Marxists were certain that socialism would mean the end of the ethnic tensions and consciousness that existed in pre-socialist societies. Liberal sociologists in Western countries assured that industrialization and modernization would do the same. Assimilation of minorities into a large integrated whole was viewed as the inevitable future. But it did not happen.

Historical theories of nationalism are predominantly diffusionist. They treat nationalism as an ideology with specific roots in the past and trace its development from small beginnings to its present position as one of the dominant forces in the world. In their search for meaning of nationalism, historians think immediately of its many connotations. Calton J.H. Hyes distinguishes four shades of meaning. Max Hildebert Boehm distinguishes between a broad and

47. Jalali and Lipset, op. cit., p. 585.

48. The four shades are (a) Nationalism is an actual historical process, (b) Nationalism is a theory, (c) Nationalism concerns political activities and (d) Nationalism is a sentiment.
narrow meaning. Herbert Adams Gibbons makes the distinction between a concrete and abstract meaning of nationalism. After due deliberation on these various approaches to the meaning of nationalism, Hans Kohn titled his major work on the subject: *The Idea of Nationalism.* He feels that nationalism is "first and foremost a state of mind an act of consciousness".

The more established theory of nationalism is assimilation theory. Assimilationists give emphasis on the assimilation of all 'parochial', 'primordial' or 'ethnic loyalties' in the mainstream of the loyalty towards the nation-state. Assimilationists such as Karl W Deutsch, Clifford Greetz, Claude Ake and Repert Emerson treat all other loyalties except those to the nation state, as parochial or primordial loyalties. However, the

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Nationalism in its broader sense refers to the attitude that ascribes to national individuality a high place in hierarchy of values. On the other hand nationalism in the narrow sense also connotes a tendency to place a particularly excessive, exaggerated, and exclusive emphasis on the value of the nation at the expense of other values, resulting in a vain overestimation of one's own nation and the criticism of other.

Nationalism in the concrete sense may be taken to mean some particular ways of manifesting national spirit, in abstract sense the ideas controlling the life and actions of a nation would be its nationalism.

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Kohn, *op.cit.* p.44

52. For details, see Clifford Greetz, *op.cit* pp 105-160.
process of assimilation are useful for explaining the phenomenon of group crystallisation, but they do not suggest the cause for the presence of group demands for a better share of the distributive system. Karl W. Deutsch has concentrated his analysis on quantitative factors rather than qualitative. He argued that social mobilization is a process where in major clusters of old social economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people are available for new pattern of socialization and behaviour. His model is based on the element of modernization and assimilation. It can and has been adequately used to explain the growth of nations in many areas, but little has been said about areas where nation building is not the case, but the maintenance of ethnic identity vis-à-vis national identity.

On the other hand pluralists such as Nathan Glazer, Walker Connor, Daniel Moynihan and Cynthia Enloe assume that kinship, linguistic regional and religious ties are natural to human


beings. In their views nationalism is the fullest expression of human desires.

To be brief, in the pluralistic approach the emphasis is not on the old eliches of modernisation such as centralization and assimilation. On the contrary decentralization, enhanced ethnic identities are part of, what Cynthia Enloe terms as the “structural-formula,” evolving out of accommodation process.

The two theories (assimilation and Pluralist) are not mutually exclusive. Many scholars incorporated elements from both theories. As Emerson views nationalism in the context of social class conflict, yet, he also recognises integrative tendencies among groups within a society.

It is now clearly established that the assimilationist assumptions are not valid. Most parts of the world have been touched by ethnic conflicts. While the post colonial countries continue to experience the effects of ethnic palarization,


ethnic passions have now engulfed regions of the world that until recently were thought to have solved the 'nationality' problem. Ethnic conflict now threatens most former communist countries and has led to the political fragmentation of Yugoslavia and Soviet Union. From the movements for autonomy in Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain and the France to the strivings for a more formally pluralistic society in the United States, ethnic and racial cleavages have become a part of the political landscape of many of the western industrialized countries.

Whether assimilationist or pluralist, the overall emphasis of the two perspectives seems to have ignored the role of the economic factors. The left oriented scholars feel that these social scientists follow a particular concept of society and state which undermines the fact of class-divisions, of the economic basis of political power and the role of dominant economic class as the ruling class and the manipulation of the system to perpetuate exploitation and inequality.

From the above discussion we can observe that most theorists who attempted to define the concept

of a nation have pointed out objective factors as the decisive criteria i.e. language, religion, civilization, race, ethnicity etc. All definitions given by them however, based on one or several of these factors, are inadequate. None of them fits all cases of recognised nations and none explain the typical aspirations called national. All these objectivist theories moreover, were often used by nationalists for justifying annexations without consulting the people which they wished to annex. The obvious inadequacy of all objectivist theories has induced many political theorists to define nationality as a community formed by the will to be a nation.

Amongst others, John Stuart Mill saw the essence of nationality in the mutual sympathy of its adherents and in their desire to be united under a government of their own, which donot exist between them and any others and which make them co-operative with each other more willingly than with other people, produced through a community of history and politics and through feelings of pride and shame, joy and grief connected with experiences of the past. Ernest Renan


expatiated upon the same idea in a famous lecture in 1882. It is not race, religion, language, state, civilization or economic interests, he says, that make a nation. The national idea is founded on a heroic past, greatmen, true glory, common experiences lead to the formation of a community of will. More than anything else it is common grief that binds a nation together, more than triumphs. A nation therefore, is a great solidarity founded on the consciousness of sacrifices made in the past and on willingness to make further ones in the future. Renan's view was in accordance with the principle of self determination.

On the other side the subjectivist definition of a nation is essentially correct, but it needs a careful formulation. National aspirations are neither always, nor merely, a striving to be united under a national government, nor do they always simply the cult of traditions. The Scott and the Welsh for example, claim to be nations, though they do not aim at independent national government. The subjectivist theory must not be stretched so far as to obliterate the significance of the objective factors. The mere will does not make a nation. A nation cannot be found like a company or a club. It is a community of fate,

61. Renan, op. cit p.2.
to a large extent brought together and moulded by historical events and national factors, and the individual has practically little opportunity of choosing his nationality or changing its fundamental traits. An emigrant may legally give up the citizenship of his native country and after sometime acquire that of the country where he has founded a new home. But this is not enough for being a real member of the nation. He must also assimilate its social outlook and its national traditions, and even if he, or his children, succeed in this task, it is not yet sure whether they will be accepted by the national community as real nationals.

The phenomenon which we are going to examine is partly objective like the national language, territory, state, civilization and history, and partly subjective like national consciousness or sentiment. The objective factors, of course can be ascertained with a much greater degree of accuracy than the subjective. One can explore the growth and the rules of a national language or the institutions of a nation-state with considerable exactness, and without interrogating members of that nation. National consciousness or national sentiment, however, is

63. Ibid
an exceedingly elusive thing. Its manifestations can be studied in political literature public speeches or national institutions, but the interpretation of such documents or objects in regard to the underlying national spirit is always more or less insecure.

Framework for the present study.

What is primarily wanted as a starting point of the study is a clear notion of the spirit of nationality. Though there is no claim of evolving an altogether new or original approach, yet an humble attempt has been made to apply simultaneously, what is applicable, from the already existing frameworks to analyse the complex problem of nationality. Question. My submission is that though the socio-cultural factors in which an individual lives influence his attitudes and behaviour and the primordial attachments play a significant role, yet, other factors like economy, development, modernization and the scope of manipulation by political elites in reshaping or changing political identities cannot be ruled out. To analyse the problem we divide the factors on which the nationality can be derived into two broad categories; primary and secondary factors. Primary factors are of much importance such as language, common descent, culture, historical traditions, region, religion, a
sense of homogeniety and common institutions and customs. These factors can be called as primordial factors. Nationality of a particular community can be analysed mainly by these factors. But in twentieth century and particularly after the emergence of new countries, some other factors also affected the sentiments of nationality. We can call these factors as secondary factors. These are urbanization, industrialization, economic development, definite geographical location and the role of the government.

The main issues to be investigated in the context of my research problem are mainly four. Firstly, what are the socio-economic and political factors which have resulted in the emergence and growth of Tamil nationality in India and Sri Lanka? Secondly, is it rooted in the developmental processes or, can its roots be traced in ethnicity or, does it owe its origin to human psyche? Thirdly, what are the causes of emergence of Tamil militant organizations in Sri Lanka? and to what extent these militant organizations have been successful in raising the national question? Fourthly, what are the roles and perceptions of Indian and Sri Lankan governments towards the problem?