CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalisation it is a paradox that nationalism is gaining ascendency worldwide. From the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the fragmentation of Yugoslavia to the persistence of the Irish question, nationalism has been an important phenomenon guiding world event. Also the growing self-confidence of many states in Asia, the resurgence of Hindu nationalism and the discussion on 'Asian Values' all seem to contradict the trend towards globalisation. In China nationalism has emerged as a dominant phenomenon, particularly when Communism is no longer a rallying ideology and the Chinese people resort increasingly to the appeals of nationalism. If we add to this the Chinese government's more assertive nationalism, the conduct of its foreign policy takes on greater significance. This resurgence of Chinese nationalism in the post-Tiananmen and in the post-Cold War era engenders an important area of research about the nature of Chinese nationalism and the manner in which the Chinese state defines the concepts of nation, nationalities and nationalism in the context of globalisation and regional integration.

Nationalism is a contested issue and as Benjamin Akzin has pointed out, "to understand nationalism is to enter into a terminological jungle in which one easily gets lost."¹ Beginning with Joseph R. Levenson Chinese scholars have extended the culturalism-to-nationalism thesis to explain the notion of nationalism in China.

The basic proposition of the thesis is that the "set of ideas called 'culturalism' that explained traditional China was incompatible with modern nationalism, and yielded only under the assault of imperialism and Western ideas to a new nationalist way of thinking."² This thesis provides an important guideline to the study of nationalism today but it "is conceptually imprecise and empirically oversimplified in its vision of the historical change in question."³ How the term nation is defined is important since it clarifies the core idea of nationalism. This is not dealt within the culturalism to nationalism thesis. The problem of the thesis also lies in opposing culturalism to nationalism and by arguing that culturalism had to dissipate for nationalism to rise.⁴ Culturalism was actually an assertion of Chinese ethnicity, as it emphasised the cultural distinctions separating the Chinese from others and the importance of maintaining those distinctions.⁵ Culturalism therefore, though different from nationalism, was not incompatible. In other words, nationalism did not replace culturalism but culturalism has permeated the notion of nationalism in China today.

This study on Chinese nationalism will reveal an essential continuation between the culturalism of the imperial period and contemporary Chinese nationalism. How this culturalism has determined Chinese nationalism in the context of sweeping changes like the collapse of the Soviet state, the introduction of post-Mao reforms in China, the Tiananmen movement and China's growing integration with the world economy needs to be critically examined.

³ Ibid., p.2
⁴ Ibid., p. 11
⁵ Ibid.
Therefore, a broader identification of the Chinese state with culture and civilization, rather than merely with political ideology, should provide us with a set of different definitions of nation, nationalism and nationalities as these concepts relate to China.

The use of the term 'civilizational state' in fact, opens more avenues in understanding the Chinese State. This Chinese state, retained its Chinese identity in the form of a geopolitical entity and as the consciousness of a specific culture. Tu Wei-ming, writing about Chinese identity maintains that “the impression that geopolitical China evolved through a long process centering around a definable core remains deep-rooted.” Coupled with this is the notion of Chinese culture as a symbol of a historical living presence that makes the sense of being Chinese even more pronounced. Since China retained this kind of cultural identity, its development and existence as a state cannot be premised upon the European sense of the term nation and nationalism. In fact, a more important question is whether the notion of nation state can be comfortably applied to China at all. The evolution of the Chinese state differed; therefore, the concept of nation also differed. The modern Chinese state emerged in response to a perceived threat to China’s survival. This stands in contrast to the European nation states that emerged in the aftermath of the disintegration of larger units into subunits.

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8 Ibid., p. 3

The notion of the civilizational state stands in contrast to the Western state, which had fixed boundaries and specific national characteristics. The Chinese civilizational state was in fact, based on two prime elements. One was Confucianism, whose perspective was universally applicable and which transcended the political entity of China and was applicable also to neighbouring areas. The second, was the assumption of the superiority of Chinese culture as evidenced in the rich development of its institutions, system of thought, language and culture so much so that the neighbouring powers acknowledged Chinese supremacy, accommodated themselves to it and in some cases, voluntarily assimilated it. When these two elements fused together they gave a distinctive identity to the Chinese state. The culturalism-to-nationalism thesis holds that this edifice of civilizational state collapsed on confronting Western imperialism and that China shifted "from a cultural entity to a political entity as the Confucian idea of the state was replaced by an imported nationalism."

It was Joseph Levenson who first advocated the idea of a shift from culturalism to nationalism thesis and noted that "nationalism invades the Chinese scene as culturalism helplessly gives way". But this is too simplistic a conclusion. Rather than culturalism replacing nationalism, the study will argue that culturalism has permeated the modern Chinese notions of nation and nationalism and this has rendered the predominance of cultural nationalism in China today. The culturalism of the imperial Chinese state represented an ideology of the imperial state, which imparted a cultural rather than political identity to the state. This became the defining characteristic of the Chinese community and confined

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membership to those who adhered to it. Therefore, apart from the Han Chinese, the Mongols, and the Manchus also became part of this community by virtue of accepting the norms of culturalism. Also the legitimacy of the rulers depended on the adherence to these principles. Coupled with the membership criteria, culturalism also marked the boundaries of the Chinese state which was not fixed except in that the omnipotence of the Chinese state spread wherever the norm of 'culturalism' were accepted. Therefore, the Chinese state represented not a political state with fixed boundaries, but a civilizational state with culture as the defining characteristic of its existence.

The ideology of 'culturalism', however, had two characteristics that are traceable to modern day China.\(^\text{12}\) First, culturalism served as an ideology of empire, justifying Chinese rule over the non-Chinese. It was a set of universal principles, applicable to all parts of the known Chinese world transcending regional specificities. The 'barbarians' who accepted this culturalism in effect accepted the superiority of the Han-Chinese and thus represented the Han culture as universal culture. This kind of universal culture also prevailed in India as identified by Prasenjit Duara in the notion of 'Brahmanic Universalism'. In India 'Brahmanic' texts became the source of social and political legitimacy for the Hindu rulers since the first century B.C.\(^\text{13}\) In China culturalism permeated the modern idea of nationalism as represented in the concept of state nationalism. State nationalism implies that "the state represents the true interest of its people as a

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\(^{13}\) Prasenjit Duara, "On Theories of Nationalism for India and China", [http://ignca.nic.in/ks_40032.htm](http://ignca.nic.in/ks_40032.htm)
whole, who constitute a nation in being or becoming, whatever their past cultural and political differences.\footnote{14}

The second characteristic feature of Culturalism was that it was shaped and defined by the dominant ethnic group, that of the Han Chinese. Thus culture of culturalism was Han Chinese.\footnote{15} It represented the legitimate inclusion of Han exclusiveness and ethnic differences within the Chinese state. Han exclusiveness persisted in China despite the fact that non-Han ruling elites held power at different times/periods in imperial China. Thus although the Qing became legitimate rulers (Sons of Heaven), they could not suppress the ethnocentric opposition to their rule either at a popular level or among the scholarly elite.\footnote{16} Anti-Manchu sentiments that had simmered for two centuries surfaced during the Taiping rebellion (1851-69) and during the later Chinese nationalist movement. We find one anti-Mongol thinker, Fang Xiaoren (1357-1402) who made a clear racialist distinction between the Mongols, whom he linked to animals and Han Chinese.\footnote{17} James Townsend thus writes, “culturalism emphasized and extolled Han ethnicity, permitting an easy shift to cultural and ethnic nationalism- that is, political defence of Chinese culture and insistence that the Han Chinese must have their own unified state”.\footnote{18} In contemporary China the idea of state nationalism carried the same implications. The PRC comprises of 56 nationalities, out of which 55 or 8.24% are minority ethnic groups and the rest or 91.76% belong to the dominant Han race. Thus the state nationalism like culturalism recognizes ethnic differences but insists that all are members of the nation in spite of their ethnic differences. Therefore, Townsend

\footnote{14}{James Townsend, \textit{Chinese Nationalism}, p.15}
\footnote{15}{Ibid.}
\footnote{16}{Prasenjit Duara, “On Theories of Nationalism for India and China”, \url{http://ignca.nic.in/ks_40032.htm}}
\footnote{17}{Ibid.}
\footnote{18}{James Townsend, \textit{Chinese Nationalism}, p. 15.}
writes, "just as culturalism had never really settled questions of ethnicity within empire, so acceptance of modern nationalism did not resolve the possible contradiction between the state and ethnic nationalism. Therefore, in present day China, ambiguity over ethnic relations exists.

Hence culturalism neither collapsed under the onslaught of Western imperialism, nor was it replaced by nationalism. In fact, Chinese nationalism as it emerged in the nineteenth century was imbued with Chinese Culturalism. The so-called ti-yong dilemma-Chinese learning for cultural identity and Western learning for practical utility-- became an essential feature in the Chinese state's search for identity and survival. In their search for identity, Chinese intellectuals initially groped with various options to nation building. The basic dilemma they faced was a conflict between 'imitation' and 'identity'. Imitation as Edward Wang writes, "was the imitation of Western scientific history. Identity was the Chinese cultural heritage, which was a source of strength in sustaining their identity and defining their nationalistic aims". The solution to this dilemma was initially sought in the revival of Chinese culture by adopting Western methods that would lead to the regeneration of the Chinese state. This spirit was epitomized in the Self-Strengthening Movement (Ziqiang Yundong) from 1861 until 1895. The basic aim as harped on by one Chinese scholar, Wei Yuan, was "learning the superior techniques of the barbarians to control the barbarians." In effect, the Self-Strengtheners believed that the growth of national power depended on acquiring

19 James Townsend, *Chinese Nationalism*, p. 16.
21 Ibid.
Western technology such as that of ships and guns. This underscored the *ti-yong* dichotomy. "*Ti*” meant substance and “*Yong*” stood for function. As Levenson described it “...the way to stay Chinese was to stay Chinese in all aspects of culture (the *ti*) whereas the utility of Western learning (the *Yong*) would be used for Chinese development.” The Self – Strengtheners thus found culturalism as a solution to national salvation. This spirit was strongly reflected in Yan Fu, the most outstanding among the Self-Strengtheners.

Yan Fu went to England to study naval science and took a deep interest in Western political theory. He translated important works by Adam Smith, Huxley, Spencer and Darwin and thus introduced Western learning in China with the avowed purpose to make China wealthy and powerful (*Fu Qiang*). Yan Fu argued that ‘modernization’ must be based on preserving the ‘national character’. In fact, ‘national character’ was the most important concept in Yan Fu’s thinking about modernization. He pointed out:

> The establishment of a country must be built on its national character. National character differs with each nation and derives its origin from a particular culture and teaching. It usually takes thousands of years of gradual moulding and immersing before it becomes prominent and distinctive. So long as its national character exists, a nation will not be totally lost, even when temporarily under the subjugation of another country.  

From this perspective Yan Fu felt that Confucianism, which represented Chinese mainstream culture, was the carrier of the Chinese ‘national character’. In effect, to

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26 Quoted from ibid., p. 69.
him preserving culturalism was the way to make China rich, strong and self-reliant.27

The Self-Strengthening movement captured this philosophy of making China strong by introducing Western technology and weaponry. The movement ushered in under the auspices of the imperial government to strengthen military forces, economic sector, education and diplomatic machinery. However, the Self-Strengthening movement failed for the reforms came too late and was too slow. It was limited by the resurgence of traditional practices in education, government finance and administration. The hollowness of the Self-Strengthening movement was exposed with the Chinese defeat in the war against Japan in 1895 and gave China the sobriquet of “the sick man of Asia”.

The Sino-Japanese War made the Chinese realize that mere tinkering at reforms would not lead to a Chinese revival. Instead, “major structural reforms” were needed from above to “save China from permanent international humiliation or even colonial domination”.28 Thus the Reform movement of 1898, called the ‘Hundred Days Reform’, introduced from June 11 and continued till September 20, 1898, entailed, in addition to scientific learning, remodelling of Chinese laws and political institutions and a revision of economic and educational policy after that of the West. All these steps were not only meant to strengthen the state but also, as M. Hunt has pointed out, there emerged for the first time in the writings of the intellectuals “a general agreement on the importance of ‘the people’, perhaps a

27 Ibid., p. 70.
notion of popular sovereignty with Chinese characteristics."\(^{29}\) A strong state therefore, not only called for institutional reforms but also acquired a popular base for state sovereignty. Kan Youwei had already presented the justification for this when he argued that, "If we cannot think how to foster those people, then we ourselves destroy our own foundation."\(^{30}\) Two things emerged from Kang Youwei's writings, the importance of the people and the survival of the state. Both factors reinforced characteristics of Chinese identity. The significance of the people gained further prominence in the writings of radical reformist Liang Qichao (1873-1929) who viewed the "group" as an important criterion for human survival. According to him "of all the groups, the nation was the most perfect, for only through it could men defend themselves in wars and share their lives in peace."\(^{31}\) Liang's most influential articles titled "On the New Citizen", suggested that the success of a nation depended on the consciousness of the citizens about their rights and obligations to the state. He opined that since the imperial government lacked such a notion of civil rights, it was vulnerable to foreign attacks. He therefore, called for the creation of consciousness of the citizenry among the Chinese to construct a true nation.\(^{32}\) Therefore, what steered the new political arrangement was the creation and saving of the nation.\(^{33}\) The idea behind saving the nation was


\(^{33}\) The idea of the survival of the nation in fact, was influenced by the Darwinian concept of the 'survival of the fittest'. It was Yan Fu who in his 'Yuan Qiang' (On the Origin of Power) expounded the Darwinian idea of 'grouping' as the only means by which people are able to
that it would preserve the Chinese Confucian civilization and add in new foreign elements to strengthen the nation.

The Reform Movement of 1898, however, was a failure. The failure was basically due to an enfeebled Qing government who could not control the conservative forces opposed to political reforms for fear of losing power and privilege. Finally, though the Qing government initiated reforms, it was too late to preserve the political order even with the reform. In fact, as a result of the failure of the Hundred Days Reform, the ultra conservatives, represented by the Boxers or the "Fists of Righteous Harmony" unleashed a violently xenophobic movement. The movement was the first one that was not only anti-Manchu but also anti-imperialist. The Christian missionaries and their churches thus came under attack. The Boxers were seen as "patriots as they fought for their land against foreign intruders" but few of them actually had any sense of nationhood. The suppression of the Boxer Movement by the Western international expeditionary force and the Boxer Protocol of 1901 that imposed a huge indemnity on China created a consensus "among leaders and elites on the need to preserve, or recover national sovereignty and to modernize not only China's production apparatus but also its institutional system". However, the Xin Zhengce (New Policy) that launched reforms was doomed to fail, for it came too late, the central government was weak and, above all, anti-Manchu feeling was on the rise. Marie-Claire Berger

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34 See, Ssu-Yu Teng and John K. Fairbank, China's Response To The West. Also see, Maria Hsia Chang, Return of the Dragon. See, Ssu-Yu Teng and John K. Fairbank, China's Response To The West. Also see, Mary Clabaugh Wright (ed.), China in Revolution: The First Phase 1900-1913 (London: Yale University Press, 1968).


points out that by 1903 the equivalence between nationalism and anti-Manchu feeling was already accepted. A more significant consequence of the Xin Zhengce was the emergence of new social groups - the Western style intelligentsia - most of whom were trained in Japan. These were the groups that precipitated revolutionary radicalism.\(^{37}\)

The years 1903 to 1905 witnessed two developments in student radicalism. As Chinese militant students returned from Japan to China to organize revolutionary groups, "direct action" became a preferred strategy transforming anti-imperialist nationalism into anti-Manchu nationalism.\(^{38}\) While the revolutionary students whipped up anti-Manchu sentiment, it was left to scholars like Zhang Binglin to produce a theory that would take anti-Manchuism sentiments and "turn dynastic opposition into an ideology."\(^{39}\) Zhang linked Chinese culture to blood (descent from the yellow emperor), land and language. He therefore, condemned incompetence of the Manchu to defend China against foreign powers and advocated the Chinese revolution to be directed against the incompetent Qing power. Until 1911, when the Republic was established, nationalism (Minzu Zhuyi) implied opposition to the Manchu dynasty. The intellectuals of the period, therefore, defined nationalism as racial nationalism and the foremost task as preserving the Chinese race.\(^{40}\) Anti-Manchuism was institutionalised with the establishment of the Revolutionary alliance of Sun Yatsen. Sun Yatsen's *The Three Principles of the People* (Sanmin Zhuyi) published in 1924 became the

\(^{37}\) Ibid.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., p. 105.

\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. 109

\(^{40}\) Ibid., p. 357. See Frank Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (London: C. Hurst, 1992). To John Hutchinson's typologies of nationalism - political nationalism and cultural nationalism - Dikotter added the typology of racial nationalism. He views Chinese nationalism is rooted in racial nationalism. He therefore, viewed the term 'minzu' as signifying both a descent group and a cultural community.
charter for the Revolutionary Alliance. The Alliance’s manifesto expressed modern Chinese nationalism for the first time. At the outset the Manifesto declared “the need for a national revolution (guoming geming), to be undertaken by all members of the nation (yi guo zhiren) and to unfold in two stages, with stage one focussing on the expulsion of the Manchus, and stage two, the restoration of Chinese sovereignty”.\footnote{Ibid., p. 157. It may be noted that though anti-Manchuisn, anti-Manchuism occupied a central place in China revolutionary thought before 1911, most historians prefer to consider it more a strategic choice than a true ideological position.} Sun Yatsen’s anti-Manchuism was based on the idea that “the continuation of the Manchu rule would mean continuation of national oppression”\footnote{Ibid., p. 64.}. Since the Han race constituted the majority group in China, Sun Yatsen argued that only it could possess “collective interests” for Han well being. The notion of “well-being” and “collective interests” had direct links with minquan (right to democracy) and minsheng (right to livelihood). The objective of minquan was to eliminate the national oppression of the Manchus and external oppression of foreign influence. The objective of minsheng was to eliminate national inequality and ensure equalization of income and living standards.\footnote{Discussed in Michael Twohey, Authority and Welfare in China: Modern Debates in Historical Perspective (Great Britain: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1999).} Both minquan and minsheng were geared to the cause of building a strong unified state that was capable of sustaining the wealth and welfare of all the people. Thus Sun Yatsen’s Sanmin Zhuyi served to build up a strong Chinese state. As Marie-Claire Bergere writes, “Sun Yatsen’s nationalism was purely to save China and to do so without betraying the past that gave meaning to its quest for its identity”.\footnote{Ssu-yu Teng and John K. Fairbank, p. 231.} Thus, Sun
Yatsen's *minzu* established the foundation for modern Chinese nationalism\(^{45}\) with anti-Manchuism actually serving the cause of building a strong Chinese state.

The republican experiment that ushered in much hope among the intellectuals, however, failed and a weakening centre meant that warlords soon held sway. Nevertheless, subsequent events ushered in a new era of Chinese history. Within a period of six years a young generation of Chinese students and scholars witnessed the failure of their political hopes and domestic political unrest, the appropriation and distribution of China's territories without China's concurrence and the rise of an alternative model of government with the Russian Revolution of 1917. The student protests that erupted in 1919 in Beijing over a decision at Versailles at the end of the First World War to give Germany's concession in China to Japan ended up in the cultural rejuvenation in China.\(^ {46}\) This came to be called the *May Fourth* movement in Chinese history which was actually a culmination of New Culture movement that emerged before 1919.\(^ {47}\)

The New Culture movement originated in the publication of the cultural critics magazine *New Youth (Xinqingnian)* in 1915. Penned by Chen Duxiu, Hu Shih, and others, the *New Youth* advocated the liberation of Chinese people from the yoke of Confucianism and the adoption of Western culture, especially Mr. *Science* and Mr. *Democracy*.\(^ {47}\) These messages prepared the ground for the *May Fourth* demonstration. The *May Fourth* movement brought the "Chinese-Western cultural conflict to an unprecedented climax" in two very salient ways: the first was

\(^{45}\) Michael Twohey, *Authority and Welfare in China*. Twohey has traced Sun Yatsen's ideas to the ancient doctrines of Xun Zi.


wholesale repudiation of China’s traditional culture and the second was embracing Western culture.\textsuperscript{48} Though the \textit{May Fourth} apparently seemed to attack Chinese tradition, it was not, in fact, a challenge to tradition. It was, as Edward Wang argued, “an attempt to recreate the past...since tradition- perception of one’s cultural origin could never totally be discarded in any socio-cultural transformation.”\textsuperscript{49} Thus the goal of the \textit{May Fourth} Movement was to transform Chinese culture as a means of national regeneration.

The significance of the movement, however, lay in its message of nationalism. The movement demonstrated the existence of a vigorous public debate on national issues and led students, intellectuals and commercial groups to join in the debate.\textsuperscript{50} From the May Fourth generation also emerged the founding members of the Communist Party, notably Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu. Both of them were deeply concerned with China’s future and this quest carried them from the classical curriculum to Marxism, a faith in the power of social revolution and an alliance with the Soviet Union to restore greatness of China.\textsuperscript{51} Around this time, Mao Zedong was also influenced by the \textit{May Fourth} patriotic spirit. He was primarily concerned with the perilous state of China and the need to save it. Stuart R. Schram assessed Mao as first a radical revolutionary and then a committed Marxist. It was nationalism that led Mao to accept Marxism, to cooperate with the Guomindang, a nationalist party and then to break with Jiang Jieshi (Chang Kaishek) when Jiang betrayed revolutionary nationalism. Eventually in the war of resistance against

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Japan, nationalism together with agrarian reforms guided Mao to the road to power. 52

It may be noted that in Marxist thought, nationalism is inimical to Marxism. In fact, nationalism as the ideology of the bourgeoisie would naturally pass with the downfall of the bourgeoisie itself. Nationalism cannot exist in a communist society where there would be no ethnicity and no state. 53 However, nationalism in the twentieth century did not decline as was predicted by Marx. In fact, there was surge of nationalism all over the world during the 1914 War and nationalism proved to be more powerful force than class consciousness. In this context, Lenin came out with his thesis on imperialism where he envisaged an alliance of socialism with anti-colonial nationalism to fight the capitalist forces. Since the bourgeoisie in the colonies led anti-colonial nationalism, he advocated alliance with the anti-colonial bourgeoisie revolutionaries. His thesis on imperialism mainly emphasised the division of the world into oppressed and oppressor nations, rather than classes within nations. 54 Implicit in this thesis was his concept of self-determination granted to the oppressed colonised people. 55 This self-determination, in effect, granted the right to secession to the various nationalities in the soviet system. Initially the CCP under influence of the Comintern accepted the right to self-determination, supporting Lenin’s the right to

55 Michael Lowy, “Marxist and the National Question”, New Left Review, No. 96, March-April 1976, 8-100. On the National Question most Marxists viewed economic, cultural or psychological dimension of the problem, but Lenin avoided economies in his analysis of the National Question. He stated that the question of self-determination belonged to the sphere of political democracy. His aim was democracy and the international unity of the proletariat and to achieve this, right of self-determination was prerequisite. Basically Lenin accepted self-determination as a means, not an end, to the unity of proletariat.
secession. Soon Mao realised the dangerous implications of Lenin's right to self-determination for the unity of China and declined to follow the Soviet model of self-determination. Mao's choices grew out of the painful developments that China had to confront. Within his own lifetime, he saw the loss of Korea and Taiwan, the occupation of Beijing, and the repeated payments of indemnities to foreign powers and slicing of "Chinese melon". Therefore, in Mao's political thought the idea of a strong united state acquired pre-eminence and it was because central to the survival of the nation. Stuart Schram noted that if the class concept had certain priority in Mao's thinking, on the "level of sentiment and instinctive reactions", it was always Mao's attachment to the nation that predominated.56

In fact, Maoism's distinctive characteristics were different from Marxism-Leninism for it evolved from China's historical context and Mao's personality. Therefore, after 1949 as well, nationalism again found expression in Mao's cultural policies, his relations with Moscow and the under-developed and developing countries. The preoccupation with saving the nation and acquiring great power status was evident under Deng Xiaoping too. However, there was difference in Deng's thinking from Mao. Mao emphasised on the productive relations and the superstructure in bringing about socio-economic changes. Mao believed that superstructural elements like revolutionary commitments, political enthusiasm, and dedication would usher in socialism in China.57 Contrary to Mao, Deng emphasised on forces of production and that China's escape from poverty and decline depended upon economic development. Therefore, reform and modernization were prerequisites for national salvation. As Maria Hsia Chang has pointed out, "however, much of a Marxist, Deng had always been a nationalist

56 See Stuart Schram, The Political thought of Mao Tse-tung.
57 Maria Hsia Chang, Return of the Dragon, p. 152.
committed to the restoration of China’s power, integrity and prestige.” 58 In his quest, his dream was identical to those of the reformers and revolutionaries who preceded him, from Zeng Guofan to Sun Yatsen. Sun Yatsen, neither indiscriminately accepted Western ideas nor did he accept Marxism uncritically. He envisioned a programme of economic and political modernisation for China which Maria Hsia Chang calls ‘developmental nationalist ideology’. 59 Sun believed China could develop from open door policy toward foreign capital and technology. This conception of development was adopted by Deng in what has been termed ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’ where Deng mainly aimed at accepting Western technology, Western capital in nation’s development, yet retaining authoritarian Communist party rule. Therefore, he harped on Chinese adherence to socialism and the support to the leadership of the Communist party for “only socialism can save China” and also it was only under the CPC that “the will of the Americans, or of the people in other developed countries” could be averted. 60

While the leaders in the post-Mao era were primarily concerned with the acquisition of ‘wealth and power’ (Fu qiang) to reassert China’s place as a great power, the intellectuals of the period also indulged in discussion for ways and means to make the nation strong. In fact, the era of the late 1980s witnessed what is called ‘cultural fever’ (wenhua re) among Chinese intellectuals. It emerged out of their concern over the threat of social disorder and even disintegration following

59 See the chapter on “The Developmental Nationalist Ideology of Sun Yatsen in Ibid., p.107-139.
the path of the former Soviet Union. It had two basic themes: criticism of traditional Chinese culture and criticism of Chinese national character.

In a way the intellectuals of the 1980s picked up where the May Fourth generation of intellectuals had left off. The intellectuals, in fact, had the same concern that affected the May Fourth scholars: why did reforms not develop more quickly than they had and should China preserve its traditions or accept Westernisation and modernization in its dream of Qiang Guomeng (the dream of a strong China). Therefore, anti-traditionalism (Fan Chuan tong Zhuyi) became the dominant discourse among the Chinese intellectuals of the 1980s. One of the intellectuals representing ‘cultural fever’ was Li Zehou, a philosopher at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) who called for upholding the enlightenment project that was left incomplete in the May Fourth decade. A similar theme resonated in the influential book series, Culture: China and the World (Wenhua: ZhongGuo Yu Shijie Conshu). The editor Gan Yang, argued for ‘modernization of Chinese culture, which is “the logical necessity of the great historical take-off of contemporary China.”’

The ‘cultural fever’ culminated in the 1988, six part television series, River Elegy (He Shang). In this television series, “the dry, arid and exhausted soil and culture of the north-west (the cradle of Chinese civilization) is contrasted with the

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64 Joseph Fewsmith, China Since Tiananmen, P. 96
65 Ibid.
fertility, dynamism and openness of the blue sea.\textsuperscript{66} The moot point was that if China hoped to regain its world power status, it must accept the West wholeheartedly. Joseph Fewsmith, however, argues that River Elegy was quite nationalistic. The film pointedly asked questions such as, “why did China fail to maintain the great lead it used to have? Why did China fail to maintain its cultural and political domination over the world?”\textsuperscript{67} These questions, in effect, echo the mood of the post-Opium War era in Chinese history. But the serial received fierce criticism from the CPC and the government regarded it as a dangerous example of “Spiritual Pollution”. In fact, anti-traditionalism did not last long for it was “over cynical about Chinese tradition and over-enthusiastic about Western culture.”\textsuperscript{68}

The 1989 Tiananmen movement marked a turning point in the growth of anti-traditionalism. The 1990s witnessed a general disenchantment with the West and the growth of new debates among the intellectuals and the party. Roger Des Forges and Luo Xu enumerate various reasons that ushered in a change in the political and intellectual climate in the 1990s.\textsuperscript{69} The US imposition of economic sanctions on China following the Tiananmen massacre came to be seen as a policy to contain China. Further, the translation of two important works: Edward Said’s ‘Culture and Imperialism’ and Samuel Huntington’s ‘the Clash of Civilization’ provided a “potent stimuli to Chinese determination to resist American domination”.\textsuperscript{70} The blocking of the Chinese bid to host the 2000 Olympics, linking human rights with the granting of MFN status and opposing China’s entry to the

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{68} Suisheng Zhao, “Chinese Intellectuals Quest for National Greatness and Nationalistic Writings in the 1980s”, p.730
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid
WTO, selling of 150 F-16s to Taiwan by the US all evoked a fierce nationalistic feeling and anti-American sentiments among Chinese intellectuals and the foreign policy establishment.71

However, the more serious reason behind the growth of the new debates in the 1990s were the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. These developments “confronted Chinese policy makers and intellectuals alike with the spectre of an unpleasant third alternative: social and political collapse.”72 Coupled with this, was the threat stemming from the social forces unleashed by the economic reforms. These fears lay behind the publication of Realistic Responses and Strategic Options for China after the Soviet Upheaval (Sulian Jubian Yu Zhanlue Xuanze).73 Written in 1991 and brought to the public in 1995, it represented China’s rising nationalism of the 1990s. The main theme was built around the differences between China and the then Soviet Union, causes of Soviet’s fall, and the lessons to be drawn for China.74 The answer to avert Soviet’s predicament was sought in strengthening of the CPC.75 It also called for party control of national assets and strong measure to control present and future threats emanating from the social dislocation caused due the economic reforms.

The decade of the 1990s thus witnessed the reaffirmation of a more statist approach to reform. This new approach came to be referred to as neo-

71 Ibid.
72 Joseph Fewsmith, China Since Tiananmen, p. 79.
75 Ibid.
conservatism.\textsuperscript{76} Joseph Fewsmith, however, cautions that neo-conservatism in Chinese should be understood as a “loose term” rather than “developed and consistent body of thought. It basically indicated a middle path between the traditional conservatism of the Old Left as exemplified ideologically by more orthodox Marxist-Leninist such as Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun and economically by such traditional planners as Chen Yun, and radical reformers as epitomized culturally by the film the \textit{River Elegy} and economically by advocates of privatisation.\textsuperscript{77} Thus neo-conservatism emphasised centralised state authority, stability and order, economic development and above all restoration of moral values based on the conservative elements of Confucianism.

According to Joseph Fewsmith \textit{Realistic responses and strategic choices of China after the disintegration of the Soviet Union} argued that China’s future lay in rejecting both Marxism-Leninism and Western capitalism and adopting a “third way”- an assertion of nationalism.\textsuperscript{78} It implied that with the decline of Maoism the CPC should employ the tool of nationalism for political legitimacy and enlisting people’s support. In fact, the document asserts that the legitimacy of socialism rested upon two sources: one the success of Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the second was Mao’s peasant-based, Sinicized Marxism-Leninism. The first source is invalidated with the Soviet’s collapse. Therefore, the second source had to be strengthened through “creative reinterpretation”.\textsuperscript{79} The document suggested, that

\textsuperscript{76} Neo- Conservatism was in fact, an outgrowth of new authoritarianism (Xin Quanweij Zhuyi) that emerged in 1980s decade. At the first national Symposium on Modernization Theories held in Beijing in November 1988, new authoritarianism was defined as an “enlightened autocracy” to enforce economic development. Before the Tiananmen incident new authoritarianism remained a debated topic. But after Tiananmen at dominated both intellectuals and political circles.

\textsuperscript{77} Fewsmith, \textit{China Since Tiananmen}, p. 80.

\textsuperscript{78} Fewsmith, \textit{China Since Tiananmen}, p. 101.

emphasising China's size, poverty, overpopulation and its century of humiliation “is the most effective means of persuading the people at present”. This meant using the tool of nationalism to wield the diverse forces in the society.

This article also reflected the growth of popular nationalism, quite independent of the state in China. This populist expression of nationalism was further exemplified in Wang Shan’s book *Looking at China Through a Third Eye (Disanzhi Yanjing Kan Zhong guo)* 1994. The book attacked Deng’s reforms, which had eroded faith in Marxism-Leninism, undermined state power and unleashed a host of social problems. Wang Shan advocated stronger state power in the interest of the stability of the nation. But it was Song Qiang and others’ book- *China Can Say No (Zhongguo Keyi Shuo bu)* in 1996 that marked a culmination of the populist nationalistic outburst of the 1990s. The book emerged in the background of rising anti-American sentiments in the wake of the 1995-95 Taiwan Straits crisis, opposition to China’s WTO bid and American support for Tibet. The book struck at US hegemonic intentions and its systematic efforts to contain China from becoming wealthy and powerful (*Fu Qiang*). The writers invoked the Chinese past to describe China’s past greatness and its rightful place in the world. The writers also quite indirectly referred to cultural experiences that helped to shape their concepts of what it was (and is) to be a Chinese. The ultimate message of the book was to maintain China’s unity and integrity.

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80 Quoted from Ibid.
81 Joseph Fewsmith, *China Since Tiananmen*, p. 101
83 Ibid., p. 497.
84 Ibid.
The height of anti-American sentiment in China was witnessed in the 1999 bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. This event unleashed an explosion of nationalistic emotion by students marching to the US Embassy. While this emotional outburst was directed and controlled by the state, the note of populist expression could not be ignored.

A survey of the growth of nationalism in China from the late Qing period to the present reveals that Chinese intellectuals, scholars and officials have been pre-eminently occupied with their search for qiang guomeng (dream for a strong China). The second feature that emerges from this survey is that there is a continuing debate between tradition and modernity, and between Westernisation and modernization in Chinese. This debate primarily harks back to the ti-yong dilemma in Chinese tradition. China still seems to be groping for a solution to this dilemma with the avowed aim to modernize China without falling in the trap of Westernisation and retaining Chinese identity and Chineseness. What it seems to imply is that China seeks to build nationalism with Chinese characteristic. Hence, China defines the nation, nationalities and nationalism from the perspective of Chinese tradition and Chinese experiences.

Samuel Kim and Lowell Dittmer have argued that to fight fire with fire, the Chinese were forced to accept Western concepts like nation, sovereignty, race, citizenship and identity, although these concepts were not identical with those of

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85 In a Politburo meeting on the day of Belgrade bombing, Saturday, May 8, 1999, statements were issued as counter measures to the incident. One of the measures clearly indicates the State's control on mass movement. It read, "send out a circular to the whole nation immediately and guide the broad masses nationwide in conducting a variety of organised activities, such as convening symposiums, holding rallies, and issuing letters of protest". Quoted from Zong Hairen, Zhu Rongji Zai 1999 (Zhu Rongji in 1999), Carle Place: Mingjing Chubanshe, 2001. Translated in Chinese Law and Government, Vol. 35, No. 1 (January/February 2002), p. 74.

the West. Rather, the Chinese nation state redefined itself in the process of confronting internal and external threats. Since the question of saving the nation was the primary goal, it meant, in effect saving Chinese identity or Chineseness. Hence the notion of China as a civilizational state or a cultural entity remained intact. Instead of looking at nation, nationalities and nationalism from the Western perspective, the study of nationalism in the Chinese context could be best understood by applying the “theory of a civilizational state”.

However, the decisive factor influencing the study of China as a civilizational state is its relationship with the West. It may be noted that in pre-modern times, “there was never any question of using Chinese identity to legitimise the existence of a Chinese state.” In modern times the self-conscious quest for national identity gained momentum in response to the internal and external threat to the Chinese identity as a civilizational state. As Michael Howard has observed, “no nation, in the true sense of the word, could be born without war,” and “no self-conscious community could establish itself as a new and independent actor on the world scene without an armed conflict or the threat of one.” In the same manner the Chinese quest for identity was initiated by the Western intrusion. Therefore, nationalism in China is also inter-woven with the term modernization. However, in China modernization cannot be equated with Westernisation although it follows the trajectory of industrialization, science and technology and economic growth. In fact, from the time of the 1898 reforms through the May Fourth Movement down to the Four Modernizations of the post- 

87 Stein Tonnesson and Hans Antlov (eds), Asian Forms of the Nation (Great Britain: Curzon, 1996), p.29
Mao period, a constant theme has been the importance of science and technology as base for creating China’s wealth and power. This led to China’s policy of opening its door to the outside world thereby integrating its economy with the world economy. But the Chinese involvement in the world economy is distinct in that it was for long characterised by a limited and cautious approach. This cautious approach is evidenced in China’s adoption of “confident nationalism.” 90 As pointed out by Michel Oksenberg, “it is a patient and moderate nationalism rooted in the confidence that overtime China can regain its former greatness through economic growth based on the import of foreign technology and ideas. It is also a determined and resolute nationalism flexible in tactics, subtle in strategy, but deeply committed to the preservation of national independence, the reunification of China and the attainment of national wealth and power.” 91 The same quest for wealth and power underlie the drive for modernization in the post-Deng era. Hence there is no dichotomy between modernization and nationalism in China.

There has been a plethora of scholarly works on nationalism in general and Chinese nationalism in particular that serve as an important guide to our understanding of the issues and the concerns raised above. However, since nationalism is a contested issue, there exists a major debate on the question of the origin and character of the terms nation and nationalism in current scholarship. A survey of this existing debate may be looked at in order to locate the place of Chinese nationalism.

The debate is between ‘primordialists’ versus ‘modernists’ and ‘essentialists’ versus ‘instrumentalists’. The primordialist’s approach is to hold


91 Ibid.
nationality as a ‘natural’ part of human experience and to argue that nations have existed since time immemorial. Both E.Shils and Clifford Geertz use the term ‘primordial’ to describe the nature of ethnic attachments. Also Earl Kedourie stresses the primordial roots of particular nation. Prasenjit Duara’s article on “Bifurcating Linear History: Nation and histories in China and India” is a significant study where he has used Chinese and Indian history to attack the modernist theory of nationalism. He argues that historical memory and causality shape nations and nationalist thought. He sees China as a cultural state, which indicates “the wide-spread presence of common cultural ideas that linked the state to communities and sustained the polity”. Further, he notes there are “narratives of community with which they may continue to identify with the modern nation”.

The modernists hold that nationalism is a cultural and political ideology that grew out of modern process like capitalism, industrialism, the emergence of the bureaucratic state, urbanization and secularism. The major proponents of the modernist approach include Ernest Gellner, Karl Deutsch, Benedict Anderson and E.J. Hobsbawm. Ernest Gellner argues that industrialisation led to the rise of nationalism. Pre-industrial society was segmented, isolated and inaccessible, thus precluding the growth of the economy. A mobile work force, uniform education to

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93 E.Shils, *Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties*, *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1957), 130-45
train workers and a homogeneous society were pre-requisites for industrialization. The changed structure of society became the basis for the nation state. Gellner's theory suited the industrial development of Europe, but had little relevance for Third World Nations that emerged out of the throes of colonial subjugation.

Karl Deutsch, the American political scientist, emphasised the 'social communication' that emerged out of industrialism, growth of markets and mass communication, as the chief factor for modernization and the consequent rise of nationalism.100

Unlike Gellner, Benedict Anderson101 explores the psychological appeal to nationalism with the striking question "what makes people love and die for nations? He, however, does not explain this through primordial interpretations. To him the principal preconditioning factor for nationalism was 'print capitalism' - "the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language, created the possibility of a new form of imagined community which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation." E.J. Hobsbawm in his revised edition reflects on Third World nationalism that arose in response to European imperialism.102 However, he considered that this Third World nationalism, while it has succeeded in liberation movements modelled on the European experience, failed to establish nation states. Reflecting the modernist approach, John Fitzgerald's study on nationalism in China focuses on the early decades of the twentieth century. It describes how a self conscious sense of Chinese nationalism came into being and was moulded by a significant player like

100 Karl Deutsch, Nationalism and Social Communication (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953).
Sun Yatsen during the critical period of change.\textsuperscript{103} In one of the recent books on nationalism in China comes from Yongnian Zheng.\textsuperscript{104} He viewed that nationalism can be successfully expressed only through the modern state.

He addresses the problem of identity crisis in the post-reform era and says that Chinese understanding of Chinese nationalism in the present times is contingent on ‘strong state complex’. Statism is, thus, the major theme in Chinese nationalism today. He treats nationalism as a tool that can invigorate a sense of self-confidence and Chineseness without being xenophobic. Contrary to Yongnian Zheng’s view Maria Hsia Chang views Chinese patriotic nationalism as decidedly xenophobic with a propensity toward collective violence.\textsuperscript{105}

Between the two poles, primordialism and modernism, there emerged a group of scholars who represent a mid-way between the two approaches and are called the ethno-symbolists, like John Armstrong, Anthony D. Smith and John Hutchinson. According to them, “the formation of nations should be examined in ‘a time dimension of many centuries’, for the emergence of today’s cannot be understood properly without taking their ethnic forebears into account. In other words, the rise of nations needs to be contextualised within the larger phenomenon of ethnicity which shaped them.”\textsuperscript{106} John Armstrong writes that contemporary nationalism is nothing but the final stage of a larger cycle of ethnic consciousness reaching back to the earliest forms of collective organisation.\textsuperscript{107}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{105} Maria Hsia Chang, \textit{Return of the Dragon: China’s Wounded Nationalism} (Boulder: West view Press, 2001).
\end{thebibliography}
exponent of ethno-symbolism, Anthony D. Smith focuses on ethnicity as the precursor of nationalism. Like Anderson and Gellner he views the decline of religion, the rise of the centralized state and industrial economy as preconditions for crystallizing 'ethnie' as nations. But unlike them he does not collate these preconditions as creating a new consciousness, since this consciousness according to him, prevailed in pre-national communities. Hence for Smith "there is a remarkable continuity between nations and ethnie, nationalism and ethnicism, continuity but not identity."

This brief outline of the three major approaches to the study of nationalism in general serve as crucial guidelines in understanding Chinese nationalism. In this spectrum of contending approaches, where one positions Chinese nationalism is important to our understanding of nationalism in China. In fact, the validity of the Culturalism to nationalism thesis can be critically explored within these debates. One may comfortably categorise Chinese nationalism under the ethno-symbolist perspective. However, since the 1980s the growth of cultural studies has greatly influenced and ushered in new approaches to the study of nationalism. The cultural studies literature used a wide range of theories from Gramsci to psychoanalytic approaches and incorporated post-modern, post-colonial and feminist perspectives in their studies. This new approach to the study of nationalism brought fresh understanding of nationalism in mainly two ways. First, it attacked the Eurocentric bias present in the mainstream literature on nationalism. It may be noted that even the Marxist and neo-Marxist scholars fell prey to Eurocentrism and ignored the experience of the former colonies in Asia and Africa. In this

110 Ibid.
context the subaltern studies group represented by scholars like Partha Chatterji and Ranajit Guha studied how the hegemonic discourses of the West served to suppress the voices of the ‘subalterns’. In fact, P. Chatterji is particularly critical of Anderson and Gellner for downplaying the experience of colonialism. He maintains that post-colonial nationalism although a derivative discourse was never totally dominated by the Western models of nationhood. Instead, he argues: “The more nationalism engaged in its contest with the colonial power in the outer domain of politics, the more it insisted on displaying the marks of “essential” cultural difference so as to keep out the colonizer from that inner domain of national life and to proclaim its sovereignty over it”.

Partha Chatterji claims that the essential or inner domain of culture was never colonized. Though the inner domain developed in response to Western imperialism, it was never Western, but Indian and it was in the inner domain that the nation was already sovereign. Further, he also says that the nation is not a homogenous body but different voices coexist each with their separate discourse. Thus, nation and its discourse is essentially a fragmented one.

Second, cultural studies brought in issues like migration, race, multiculturalism, gender and diaspora to the study of nationalism. These issues gave fresh direction to the post-modern studies on nationalism. In post-modernist analysis of nationalism, two themes come to the forefront. First, post-modernism pointed to the production and reproduction of national identities through popular culture. In this context, identities are never fixed. Second, was the focus of the role

111 Ibid., p. 194
of the people, that is ethnic minorities, immigrants etc. in the definition of national identities.\textsuperscript{114} Post-modernist like Homi Bhabha explained the role of the people on the national margins', that is ethnic minorities, immigrants in the process of definition of national identities.\textsuperscript{115} According to him, the hybrid groups in society contest the dominant discourse on nation by producing their own counter-narratives. These counter-narratives produce multiple identities on nation. The competing narratives, in effect, produce an ambivalent notion of nation. The post modernist approach is reflected in Jonathan Unger's edited work focussing on the resultant multi-layered complexity of Chinese perceptions of nationhood.\textsuperscript{116} The volume is an attempt to understand the present and potential ramifications of Chinese nationalism. This volume, therefore, serves as an important guide to further research on concepts of nation and nationalism in China. A major post modernist edited book by Tu Wei-ming is a brilliant collection of essays that considers various aspects of the meaning of being Chinese in modern times and deals with several issues pertinent to Chinese nationalism and Chinese nationhood.\textsuperscript{117} Six of the eleven chapters deal with the problems of contemporary Chinese identity, especially among Chinese on the periphery of Chinese culture and civilization. Joseph Fewsmith in his brilliant book weaves together the threads of elite struggle, fierce debate among intellectuals and the passion of popular nationalism into a detailed analysis of Chinese politics since the Tiananmen

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 197.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Jonathan Unger (ed.), \textit{Chinese Nationalism} (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1996).
\item \textsuperscript{117} Tu Wei-ming, Ed. \textit{The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today} (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).
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incident. On Chinese identity, one of the exceptional works has come from Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim. The authors here showed China’s search for national identity that has been unusually tumultuous because of the vast gap between capabilities and commitments.

These works on Chinese nationalism, thus, add crucial perspectives to the discussion on nationalism in China. In fact, in the context of new approaches to the study of nationalism, the Chinese experience can be positioned to arrive at a meaningful understanding of the Chinese concepts of nation, nationalism and nationalities. A broader identification of the Chinese state with culture and civilization, rather than with political ideology, could provide us with a set of different definitions. According to Hugh Seton Watson, “the decline of state power during the nineteenth century ... had little effect on the stability and integrity of Chinese cultural and civilizational identity because the Chinese people continued to identify themselves as representations and transmitters of a grand civilization, irrespective of political changes.”

Chinese nationalism essentially follows the paradigm of cultural nationalism. Cultural nationalism imagines the nation to have a distinctive civilization based on a unique history, culture and territory. Its primary concern is the regeneration of a nation as a distinctive cultural and moral entity. It is also

“characterised by a politically motivated (re)essentialization of Chinese culture—very often with the help of ‘post-modern theory- in order to resist Western cultural hegemonism’.” ¹²³ Wang Gungwu argued that among various kinds of nationalism—ideological, religious, multinational, cultural, historical, revolutionary—none sustained for long in China except cultural and historical nationalisms, which have been persistent and widespread.¹²⁴ Wang Gungwu calls this particular nationalism in China as ‘restoration nationalism’. China’s ‘restoration nationalism’, according to Wang, “combined elements of both preservation and renewal, but ties in the faith in a glorious past more directly with a vision of a great future”.¹²⁵ This study based on the paradigm of cultural nationalism seeks to explore what is the nature of Chinese nationalism today. Second, how far is Culturalism to nationalism debate tenable? Third, Does the ‘civilizational nation’ concept apply to the Chinese State identity? Fourth, if Chinese nationalism is not Westernization, then does any dichotomy exist between understanding nationalism and modernization? Fifth, what are the Chinese characteristics of Chinese nationalism? Sixth, how does China use nationalism in its domestic and external policies?

Chinese nationalism is the product of its own experience. Various influences worked upon it to produce varied nature of Chinese nationalism. It has several manifestations today: political, cultural, economic, diplomatic and transnational. The politico-cultural manifestation of Chinese nationalism is rooted in the Chinese sense of long historical tradition, an independent, highly sophisticated self-sufficient civilization, and a rich cultural heritage. Coupled with

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 114.
this historical consciousness is the Chinese memory of a “century of humiliation” that the West had inflicted upon her. These factors, past heritage and past humiliation fuelled the need for the dream of a strong China (Qiangguomeng). This has manifested in the reiteration of sovereignty in Chinese foreign policy as reflected in China’s position on Tibet. This has also manifested in the upholding of Chinese values as evidenced in China’s position on human rights. Finally, this politico-cultural nationalism is reflected in China’s stand on reunification of Taiwan and reoccupation of lost territories in the South China Sea. These concerns are all linked with China’s avowed goal of political integration and oppose forces causing national separation (minzu fenlie) and national splittism (minzu fenlie Zhuyi).

The diplomatic manifestation of Chinese nationalism is seen in China’s strong demonstration of nationalistic spirits at the time of international conflicts, such as the failure of China’s Olympic bid, the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait’s crisis, the May 1999 bombing of the Chinese Embassy and the EP-3 plane accident of April 1, 2001. During these international conflicts, Chinese critiques resonated strongly with popular nationalism. These events in fact, heightened emotions behind a nationalism that has been built up in the context of American criticism of China and American adoption of ‘peaceful evolution’ (heping yanbian)- a strategy as viewed by the Chinese foreign establishment to weaken China and win a war without firing a single shot and thus arrest China’s march to the great power status. Therefore, diplomatic manifestation of Chinese nationalism essentially implied opposing hegemonism and power politics.

The economic manifestation of Chinese nationalism is evident in China’s deliberations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) whether to accept a WTO
agreement with the US. In fact, a considerable controversy surrounded the decision to join the WTO. 126 This controversy had ideological roots that tracked the classic debate over liberalism versus mercantilism, although for both sides the goal of strengthening China was the key incentive. However, the liberal forces supported by Jiang Zemin understood the importance of gaining entrance to the WTO for reforming the economy and projecting China as one of the major powers in the world. Therefore, the government ignored the rising tide of social criticism from the New Left and said ‘yes’ to the US and to the global economy. 127

Apart from these manifestations, Chinese nationalism also has a transnational manifestation as pointed out by Wang Gungwu. He argued that Chinese nationalism has a symbolic face that is found among the Chinese diasporic populations, “whose well-being and even survival is perceived as being dependent on the restoration of China’s wealth and power” 128 Thus Chinese nationalism has several strands today and the underlying principle behind these is to achieve the great power status of China.

To understand the Chinese notions on nation, nationalism, and nationalities, I will use the historical analytical tool. This tool will enable to probe into the Chinese concepts and help critically analyse the prevailing texts on this subject. This decoding of the Chinese concepts will then lead to analyse how the concepts impinge on the policy making of China pertaining to human rights, Islamic radicalism and Chinese movement of people across borders.

The study at the outset will focus on the prevailing Chinese domestic debates on the three terms- nation, nationalities and nationalism in opposition to

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126 Joseph Fewsmith, *China Since Tiananmen*, p.221-232
127 Ibid., p. 223.
the Western debates on these terms. By understanding the intricacies of the debate the study would attempt to move away from the Euro-centric definitions and thereby deal with Chinese experiences of the terms and concepts. By conceptualising itself as a civilizational state, China overcame the problem of defining nationalities in China. The use of the prism of the civilizational state facilitates the accommodation of all nationalities within itself without raising the question of the principle of national self-determination, an issue that emerges out of the notion of European identity.

This unravelling of the Chinese meanings of nation, nationalities, and nationalism would finally be applied to understand the Chinese idea and problems related to Islamic fundamentalism, human rights and diasporic populations. The three issues will be dealt in the three case studies in this work. The three case studies will focus on the influence of Chinese nationalism on policy making with regard to the handling of Xinjiang separatist tendencies, evaluating the Tibet issue and understanding China's position on the Chinese diaspora in the South East Asia.

Given that nationalism is one of the important forces in the post-Cold War era, the need to study and understand it is even more necessary. Also given the rising aspirations of China to superpower status, the study of Chinese nationalism in the background of post-Cold war, post-Tiananmen crisis, post-WTO Chinese membership acquires particular significance. In fact, it would be interesting to probe how far Chinese nationalism is an integrative force. In fact, nationalism in China could be viewed not only as a tool for modernization but it also quells the voices of dissent and separatism and subsumes the notion of China as a paternalistic welfare state. It thus promotes political integration (Zhengzhi Zhenhe) internally and world peace (Shijie Heping) externally.