CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The present chapter is devoted to examine the theory of nation-building and various studies conducted in relation to the third world countries and to see how far they help us in understanding the changes occurring in these newly emerging nations. In fact, one major concern of modern political theory has been the study of processes of nation building as a part of the general processes of political development. In most of these studies the problem of regionalism, is recognised as a part of the "Integration Crisis" or "Identity Crisis" which differ from one society to another depending upon their historical antecedents and goals to be pursued. To understand the problem in its proper perspective, it becomes necessary to define the various concepts like state, nation and nation-building, region, subregion, regionalism and subregionalism before we proceed to analyse the main themes proposed by various theorists.

A state may be defined as "a legal concept describing a social group that occupies a defined territory and is organised under a common political institution and an effective Government". A Nation on the other hand, is a "Social group which shares a common ideology, common institutions and customs and a sense of homogeniety..... A nation may

comprise part of state, be co-terminous or extend beyond it." Nation building is generally understood as the process of the integration of sub-national and regional groups, enthusing in them an unified identity so that they might think of themselves as a nation state.3

Regionalism is a multi-dimensional phenomenon at once psychological, geocultural and politico-economic in its nature and manifestation with negative and positive overtones.4 On the positive side regionalism means the urge of the people living in a particular territory for self identity and self fulfilment and on the negative side it represents real or perceived deprivation on the part of people of an area. It is this negative aspect which makes regionalism quite militant, agitational and even violent.

2. Ibid. This argument is fully applicable to political situation before French Revolution. The present political reality recognises that nation and state are coterminus. A cultural group within a state claiming to be a separate nation will start a separatist movement and if successful the end product will be another nation-State. Bangladesh is a case in point. On the other hand irredentist movements results is a situation where a social group is divided between different states like the Kurds in Iraq and Lebanon.


The term region and regionalism have been widely used in recent studies with reference to a great variety of problems. All demand, in one form or the other, the substitution of new geographical units for existing administrative units, which, as a legacy of the past, are quite unsuited to the requirements of a changing society. The term 'region' is undoubtedly one of the catchwords of our day among both popular and scientific writers. To the practical man of affairs a region is simply an area with certain characteristics, in virtue of which it is suitable unit for some particular purpose of business or administration. To a social scientist, a region is an area which is homogeneous in respect of some particular set of associated conditions, whether of land or of the people, such as industry, farming, the distribution of population, commence or the general sphere of influence of a city or town. Such an association is discovered to exist in terms of a single common factor or in terms of a variety of interdependent areal factors. For this, it becomes very important for any regional investigation to discover in what degree and over what areas selected phenomena are found to be homogeneous.

Therefore defining the region as a concept appears to be an essential prerequisite for the analysis of the phenomenon of regionalism or sub-regionalism. This is very difficult task because there is no particular definition of the term 'region'. A region may be defined in as many different ways as the objectives of enquiry or the questions under study. The choice of the definition of region is,
therefore, constrained by the purpose for which delineation of a set of regions is required, and by the overall structure and degree of the integration of the regional system considered as a whole.⁵

A region, however, can be described if not defined as an area that is usefully conceived as an entity for purpose of description, analysis, administration, planning or policy-making and which is recognisably different and distinctive from other areas. It logically follows that basic to the concept of region is a high degree of correlation of behaviour among its various constituent parts which together reflect either of the two quite distinct features of its internal structure—homogeneity and nodality. These according to most social scientists, are the basics even while political social, historical or other considerations are considerably involved in regional demarcation.⁶

Most of the time 'region' is wrongly confused with area and space which can not be called synonimous with region. Space has no structure or organisation and, as such, the concept of spatial structure or spatial organisation refers to the structure or the organisation of a given area. Spatial


⁶ See B. P. S. Bhadouria, Regional Economic Development (Delhi: Annual Publications, 1986), pp.34.
interaction involves the actual human relations between areas perceived as the discrete geographical entities of the earth's surface. Since all phenomena, including areas, are spread over space and can be located within it, the term 'spatial' generally refers to objects distributed in space rather than as attributes of space itself.

Whereas, there are many types of space like geographical or socio-economic, the basic sub-divisions of space are area, region or subregion. As concept 'area' stands for a system of interrelationships both between areas and among various phenomena in a territorial setting and thus considered as "human eco-systems with sizes, location, content, and boundaries or other territorial limits perceived or potential." Conceptually, 'region' can be distinguished from 'area' though all the types of area possess almost all the characteristics of 'region' including homogeneity and organisation. Region can be described as special type of area and "within a spatial structure (in fact areal of structure) the structure of a region is identified in terms of those elements out of which that region is formed".

10. B.P.S.Bhadouna, op.cit., p.36.
Hence the idea of the region is often so nebulous, and because of this, often so personal and peculiar to each scholar that Odum and Moore in their analysis of American regionalism collected forty definitions which together may give some idea of the region and certainly show how the idea has grown, varied, been adapted, distorted, and has always eluded satisfactory definition. Taking a common denominator in these definitions we can define region as a social unit devised for the integration of any society because without any such social unit, the social structure will never be securely built up. Hence a region is a homogeneous area with physical and cultural characteristics distinct from those of neighbouring areas. As a part of a national domain a region is sufficiently unified to have a consciousness of its customs and ideals and thus possesses a sense of identity distinct from the rest of the country.\(^{11}\)

Generally speaking, regionalism has been called a manifestation of "world federalism and an intermediate stage between administrative decentralization and federalism. It involves a wide range of problems of political and socio-cultural life" as that of minorities, administrative decentralization, local self governments and autonomy, the cult of homeland and earth and local patriotism.\(^{12}\)

The idea is thus closely related to particularism and may lead to separatism.\(^{13}\)


If we trace the history of territorial integration, more emphasis has been given to the cycle of conquest, aggression and empire building or its anti thesis of sectionalism, revolt, self-determination and movement for national independence. The vital issue of ethnically, socially and economically homogeneous regions was generally overlooked or underestimated by most of the historians. In the Hellenistic world and during the Pax Romana large empires were established by force and smaller political structures only appeared when nation states came into being after the interregnum of feudalism. Put differently, regions appeared in a situation of large size of national territories and further incorporation of new areas into it and the subsequent adoption of federal structure of administration. France can be cited as an example to show how the regionalism emerged as a movement toward decentralization in a country with historically demarcated provinces, held together by the strong central government. Similarity in Italy and Germany unification laid the basis for regionalism, in the case of USSR ethnic, economic and sectional differences, and in Great Britain localism became the major issue extending the regionalism to the sub-regional level.

Hence regionalism may be defined as a countermovement to any exaggerated or oppressive form of centralization. It cannot, however, be understood only from the view point of political control or governmental administration, but
regional problems are the outcome of the combination of two or more such factors as geographical isolation, independence historical tradition, racial, ethnic or religious peculiarities and local economic class interests.\(^\text{14}\)

It will not be out of place here to distinguish regionalism from nationalism, the terms which go along with it. Regionalism may thus, be understood as the extension of nationalism at the regional level or nationalism can be defined as the extension of regionalism at the national level. However, regionalism is distinguished from the nationalism in that it recognises a higher unity and superior national interests transcending the attachment to the local region. Regionalism also cannot be equated with the term 'sectionalism' because it is not merely based on regional economic or class interests but other ethnic factors like culture, religion or language are equally essential for the emergence and growth of regional consciousness.\(^\text{15}\)

What follows from the above argument is that "regionalism represents the regional idea in action as an ideology, as a social movement, or as the theoretical basis for regional planning; it is also applied to the scientific task of delimiting and analysing regions as entities lacking formal

\(^\text{14.}\) See Hedwig Hintze, \textit{op.cit.}, p.209.

\(^\text{15.}\) Regions which demand separation are called sections and sectionalism may result in self-determination, secession and independent nationalism as it did for the Irish Free State. Even if any such movement is crushed, the Section may re-emerge and assume the status of a constituent region as did the south after the American Civil War.
The term "subregion" is usually applied to the next unit in descending order which can be called tract, precinct, zone, district or province. The subregion lacks precise and definite definition because it can not be understood independently because it is integral part of the region. Moreover, the context in which we use this term is very important. For example south Asia is generally designated as sub-region of Asia, and similarly, India can be described as subregion of South Asian region and any state of India can be called sub-region if we take whole of India as a region and this argument can go so on. For our analysis, by subregionalism we mean a smaller area with a region which for economic, geographic, historical, and social reasons is aware of possessing a distinct identity.

In the Indian context and following Iqbal Narain's typology we can classify regionalism into three types. First, type, which he calls supra state regionalism refers to that manifestation of regionalism which cuts across state boundaries or in which states or parts are grouped together in term of regional identity. The conflict between north and south India and Jharkhand movement can be cited as example.

of supra-state regionalism. Second type of regionalism is called inter-state regionalism in which "the regional identity of one state is in competition with the regional identity of another state mostly for economic development, sharing of benefits and allied purposes". The various movements and agitation involving the issues such as river water disputes, boundary disputes etc. are some of the examples.

The third and final type of regionalism is characterised as intra-state regionalism which is the reflection of "a psychic deprivation on the part of a portion of the state which feels alienated from the whole". This intra-state regionalism has been defined as sub-regionalism by us for the present study. The sub-regionalism movements in the various states which we have already discussed in the earlier chapter of this study illustrate the point.

Most of the scholars of nation building concern themselves with the generic theme by the effective extension of nation-state system to all societies. Nation-building, according to these theorists will be automatically achieved after most of the traditional societies achieve the goals of

19. Ibid.,
20. Ibid., pp.84-85.
political modernization and political development. K. Deutch, believes that institutional changes as in the West will naturally bring the desired changes in the society and ethnic diversity will gradually disappear with the adoption of modern political and institutional structures. These arguments clearly show the cultural bias of the Western scholars while studying the national building problems in the 3rd world countries. This ethnocentric bias of most of these theorists is based on the assumption that Western European and American nation-states are complete and their interest is concentrated only on the non-western countries of the world. For them, non-Western states can emerge as viable nations only if they adopt culture, structures, institutions and path of development which was followed by the west.

Daniel Lerner recognised this bias and put forth his argument that rising expectations and frustrations of the people of these transitional underdeveloped states fashion not only the institutions capable of developmental but also their ideals and norms. Hence, nation building is not a


simple unilinear process and this replacement of older traditional structures does not necessarily mean aping the West, its structures and institutions.

Barrington Moore in his comparative analysis found that even in western Europe, modern democratic politics and industrialization did not follow identical paths.\(^\text{26}\) The tremendous development in socialist world proves the uselessness of unilinear argument and shows that processes of nation building follow different routes under different sociological conditions.

Almond and Coleman\(^\text{27}\) in their study of comparative Governments daviated from the traditional approach of comparing formal structure and institutions and followed structural-functional approach to understand the dynamics of changes in developing area. But the ethnocentrism can be seen in their approach which at the surface appears to be free of it, when they presume that western norms are naturally modern, democratic and scientific and this approach gets exposed when it has to deal with "imposed norms" of a kind which we find in many developing countries.

Most of the literature on nation-building published before and during the early 1960s either ignored the issue


of regional identities or assumed that they constituted a minor obstacle in the process of national integration. Perhaps one important reason for the neglect of this aspects was the pre-occupation of political scientists with social classes as the real structure of society and ideological formulations as the only legitimate form of modern politics. Also some scholars on the subject have pointed to a model of successive stages, each of them more depluralized than the preceding. They have tacitly assumed new states would ultimately move from one stage to another and that the older nations would also develop in a progressive sequence.

The emergence of sub-group identities and their political implication have challenged this optimism of the social scientists, who in their analytical models considered the cleavages based on language, religion, race or region as a transitional phenomenon which would disappear as a result of the impact of modernization when the tradition will give way to modernity.

28. On the criticism of this misplaced optimism, see, "Walker Connor, "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying", World Politics, XXIV, April, 1972, p.320.


Negative Impact of Modernization

Events of the last three decades point to the fact that modernization unleashes numerous new (hitherto suppressed and dormant) competing forces which instead of helping to create a homogeneous society, in fact, introduce highly fissiparous tendencies and often create the very conditions necessary for the incubation of strong regionally based religious, linguistic, tribal or caste identities, which might endanger whatever little unity the new states might have achieved in the course of the struggle for political independence. 32

The processes of modernization can be anti-thetical to the processes of nation building in a traditional societies where the modernization expands the psychological universe of individuals and groups which experience contacts with outsiders and this interaction leads to the emergence of a sense of distinctiveness and makes them aware of differences that divide them.33

Rayside argues on the basis of his study on Belgium and Canada that features of modernization process itself exacerbate rather than ameliorate tensions between different regional groups. Put differently, growing impact of modernization is likely to sharpen ethnic, regional or linguistic awareness. On the one hand modernization is likely to assimilate these groups to a common culture because modernization is likely to increase scarce resources. It is also likely to increase group competition due to increase in demands and changes in life style.34

According to Mancur Olson, Jr., rapid economic development, presumably increases the capacity of the society to satisfy the aspirations generated by social mobilization. But it has also a reverse effect as rapid economic growth disrupts traditional social groupings (family, class, caste),


and thus increases, "the number of individuals who are declassé produces "nouveaux riches", increases geographical mobility, and incomes of some people absolutely but not relatively, raises aspiration beyond the level of satisfaction, and also aggravates regional and ethnic conflicts over the distribution of investment and consumption. 35

According to Huntington, the processes of modernization which include social mobilization and economic development create higher rate of aspiration than the ability of a transitional society to satisfy them. It leads to social frustration and dissatisfaction which further increases political participation depending on the nature of social and economic structure. It depends upon the level of political institutionalization whether it can or not channelize, moderate and aggregate the frustration within the political system. Modernization also affects economic inequality which is accepted as a part of the natural pattern in the traditional societies, but social mobilization increases the awareness of inequality and the legitimacy of the distribution system is challenged. Because the groups which command the economic resources also command instruments of social mobilization and turn economic inequality into a stimulus to political action. All these factors combine to produce a political vacuum which is filled by divisive forces. 36


Clofford Geertz maintains that the process of modernization accelerate the reversion to primordial ties rather than attenuating them. The primordial sentiments become politically significant when colonial regime is replaced by "an independent, domestically anchored purposeful unitary state." The problem becomes alarming because with the impact of modernization an individual does not remain isolated from the overall polity and simultaneously he is reluctant to set aside the parochial attachments in favour of a commitment to broader civil state which is more or less alien to him. Primordial plurality is very dangerous. As Geertz puts it, "economic or class or intellectual disaffection threatens revolution but dissatisfaction based on race, language or culture threatens partition, irrendentism, or merger, a redrawing of the very limits of the state, a new definition of its domain." Therefore, the integrative process has to be one, that will reconcile primordial alliances and oppositions with the unfolding civil order.

David and Andrey Smock in their study of Lebanon and Ghana have refuted the notion that parochial attachment was only a transitional phenomenon. But in their model of national accommodation, argument is put forth that regional cleavages

38. Ibid., p.109.
39. Ibid., p.128.
can be managed by accommodating them within the framework of competitive political system. The goal of this model is the achievement of 'unity in diversity.' Therefore, nationalism and regionalism should not be considered as contradictory. The model of national accommodation they suggest, recognises that regional groups have "something positive to offer in the way of making life meaningful and secure as well as providing an infrastructure of political competition based on socially relevant cleavages."\(^\text{40}\) He further argues that "a sense of national citizenship can be imposed over existing networks of sub-national loyalties," and it depends upon "the nature of political structure, political processes and governmental policies" which seek not merely "a desire on the part of elite but "improve intergroup relations and greater national cohesion at the mass level as well."\(^\text{41}\)

Many theorists link the emergence of regionalism to the decline of legitimacy as a result of modernization. According to Chalemers Johnson, the absence or decline of legitimacy of the political system can lead to regional movements. The crisis of legitimacy frequently occurs during periods of rapid social and economic change and the periods of "social disequilibrium" when the mandate or charismatic


authority of an existing political leader is increasingly questioned. 42

John Herz has listed a number of causes for the current decline of legitimacy in modern state. The failure of the state to moderate the feeling of group identity is one of the major challenges to legitimacy. He puts forward the increasing centralization and bureaucratization of government as an explanation for increasing alienation, particularly for peripheral regions and groups inadequately represented at the centre. 43

But decentralization does not necessarily lead to integration because as Watts suggests, most of the decentralized states also face some divisive tendencies and the process of decentralization itself may reflect or produce a loss of the sense of legitimacy, which may help the regionalists or secessionists. 44

Communication theorists like Karl Deutsch consider that modernization process breaks the major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments rendering people availab


43. See John H. Herz, "Legitimacy: Can We Retrieve It?" Comparative Politics, 10(1978), pp.317-43.

for new patterns of socialization and behaviour. He further suggests that the process of nation-building implies an "alignment of a large number of individuals from the middle and lower classes linked to regional centres and leading social groups, by channels of social communications and economic intercourse, both indirectly from link to link and directly with the Centre." Nation-building, therefore, requires a communication revolution, supported by a developmental process. The communicational process, he argues, will be conditioned by "the extent to which the ruling class itself promotes this process," and "the extent to which the ruling class remains accessible to the members of other classes for communication, entry, alliance or alignment."  

Deutsch's social communication model of nation-building assumes that the network of social communication channels are utilized for integrative purposes. Put differently he argues that social mobilization leads to nation building. The experience of many new nation states contradicts this assumption. Social mobilization may lead to the mobilization of primordial groups and expanded communication network may be utilized to foster primordial loyalties and sentiments. The role of varnacular newspapers and prochial educational institutions in farming regional and communal sentiments in India is a case in point.  

46. Ibid., p. 89.  
Lucian Pye, also recognises that the major reason of
elite-mass gap lies in the flaw in the structure of national
network of communications, and the prospects of nation-
building will depend on how effectively the new channels of
communication are built so that smooth participation is
assumed and no group or region develops a sense of neglect
or suppression.48

Daniel Lerner views the problem of nation-building in
terms of "empathy," The forces of modernization and social
change create the "revolution of rising expectation,"
which, if not handled properly by maintaining a dynamic
equilibrium, may result in the tendencies contrary to the
processes of nation-building.49

Myron Weiner, identifies the 'crisis' of integration
with 'transitional' politics where the pressure on the system
is much more then the capacity of the system to bear. Since
in the new states, political development is linked with
economic development which was accelerated after independence,
the issues arising out of capital and investment allocation
and distribution, resulted in regional, linguistic, tribal
or sectarian claims. But Weiner suggests that elites can
manage or control conflicts through a national consensus or

48 See Lucian Pye, ed., Communication and Political
Development (Princeton, New Jersey, University Press,
1963), pp.3-20.

49 Daniel Lerner, Passing of the Traditional Society
through coercion. What he ignores however is the erosion of national consensus as a result of unfair and unequal distribution. There is also an increasing evidence of the low coercive potential.

Also what Weiner means by consensus is the consensus at the elite level. But how can the elite enforce unity without identifying the system with the aspirations of the masses? As Coleman and Rosberg point out bridging the gap between elite and mass on the vertical plane is not sufficient, but more important is the resolution of the cultural and regional conflicts on the horizontal plane by creating a homogeneous territorial community.

John Porter, in a well received study of Canadian political sociology, argues that regional conflicts are due to the absence of coherent class cleavages that might structure ideological polarization between conservative and progressive forces. There is "little conflict between those who have power and those who do not. It is not a question of conflict between the "ins" and the "outs," but rather of the conflict of those who are in."
Horowitz, has focused upon the conflicts between elites whose manipulation of public support is presumed to reflect the psychological primacy of regional or cultural rather than class identification on the part of individuals. He argues that ideological manipulation of regional cleavages and other questions related to national unity by the elites to prevent the consolidation of class conflict leads to regional movement.  

Aristide Zolberg, similarly points out that in the absence of a strong class consciousness or of political parties having a class or ideological base, regional groups naturally become the organising structure of competition for the goods created by modernization. The conflict is aggrevated by the fact that the unequal access and receptivity to the benefits by different groups create inequalities among various groups and reinforce conflict among them specially when these groups are regionally based.

Michael D. Ornstein and his associates have argued on the basis of their experience of regionalism in Canada that regional rather than class differences account for political party identification and voting choices. He implicitly


argues that ideologically oriented conflicts will be class rather than regionally based.\textsuperscript{55}

Peter Gourevitch has analysed the recent challenges to the unity of nation-states in advanced industrial societies in his centre and periphery model. He suggests that the location of critical political and economic activities within each country clearly has something to do with the emergence of regionalism. He also points out that purely economic grievances are not likely to give rise to regional movements unless some sense of ethnic or cultural distinctiveness is also present.\textsuperscript{56}

Michael Hechter, using the background of British experience explains the emergence of regional movements in his model of internal colonialism. The essence of his model is that the relationships between the members of the core community and members of the peripheral communities in a state are characterized by exploitation. The core community having acquired an advantage over the outlying communities in the period of state-building or in early period of modernization, uses its political and economic power to maintain its superior position. The cultural and ethnic differences between the communities which exist, in certain circumstances may form the basis of regional or separatist


agitations by members of the peripheral communities.\textsuperscript{57}

Hechter's model assumes that regional feelings appear in comparatively backward communities. However, Anthony H. Birch has challenged this model of internal colonialism which is essentially based on the British experience by arguing that there is no evidence of discrimination in any aspect in Britain and further argues that regionalism is also found in relatively prosperous regions. It is not reasonable to reduce the regional movements simply to economic variables.\textsuperscript{58} Birch has made a number of propositions on regionalism. First ethnic loyalties and cultural attachments should be regarded as independent rather than dependent variables. Second, the extent to which ethnic and cultural minorities are content with their situation of political integration in a large state depends on the balance of advantages in any particular period. Third since the Second World War, the balance of advantages between the sizeable multipurpose state and the small communities has changed to the disadvantage of former.\textsuperscript{59}


\textsuperscript{59} See \textit{Ibid.}, pp.333-35.
M.G. Smith in his conflict model based on the experience of West Indies which is more applicable to colonial order characterised by plantation economies controlled by a white minority and a preponderant coloured majority points out that cultural diversity and value variations preclude any form of co-operation or shared activities. With the total absence of common institution, only political domination by a cultural minority can hold the society together. 60

Lijphart on the basis of his research on Netherlands refutes the assumption of equilibrium model of nation building based on cross-cutting loyalties by arguing that in a fragmented society, self containment and mutual isolation, not the overlapping affiliations are conducive to stability and democracy. His model of "consociational democracy" emphasises co-operation at the elite level which can compensate for the weakness of contervailing loyalties at the mass level. 61

Zaman in his study of the tribal tracts of Barylade concludes that the crisis of the region stemmed primarily from the socioeconomic problems when industrial policy and resource appropriation for the benefit of national economy ignored the participation of local tribesmen. Such a situation


resulted in the politicization and ethnicization of the local population and led to disintegrative tendencies. According to Zaman, the problem can be solved by recognizing "ethnic identity and local autonomy" rather than by pursuing the policy of "detribalization." 62

Cynthia Enloe, argues that regional alienation springs from cultural heterogeneity, which produces intense consciousness of ethnicity, "a peculiar feeling among persons that causes them to consider themselves a group distinguishable from others." 63

The "new ethnicists" like Enloe regard ethnic loyalties and cultural attachments as independent variables in social and political change because they persist over long periods of time. 64 Logically and empirically, the key elements of ethnicity—race, language or religion—appear to be strongly related to regionalism, especially where cleavages between groups are clear cut and cumulative. But ethnicity is highly flexible as ethnic identities can be made and manipulated by ethnic leaders or governmental policy. 65


Regionally Based Ethnic Groups and Modernization

During periods of change in social relationships between territorially based ethnic groups, the potential for regionalism increases, especially where the impact of modernization and the benefits associated with it are unevenly distributed. This in turn tends to create awareness of difference among the regional groups which ultimately results in the perception of threat and/or opportunity. 66

Moreover, regional sentiments depend on the subjective drawing of boundaries between the one region or the other. Objective differences between the regions are deliberately translated by the actors, into patterns which are regarded important for the political purpose at that point of time. For the political purpose, "some cultural features are used by the actors as signals and emblems of differences, others are ignored, and in some relationships radical differences played down and denied." 67 This is a part of the process of rewriting history in the wake of sub-regionalism.


The awareness among competing groups of differential access to benefits of modernization suggests that an analysis of economic pre-conditions of regionalism on the basis of some variant of relative deprivation theory would be fruitful and provide insights into the phenomena of regionalism. This is one of our principal concerns.

Economic explanations based on preceptions of economic deprivation and comparative backwardness are important because they are loudly declaimed by regionalists and appear to be capable of quantitative verification. But this theory is unable to explain the situation when economically worst off people do not mobilize on regional issue and some economically better off groups become alienated and mobilized.\(^{68}\)

The bottom poor among the disadvantaged ethnics are not likely to be the loudest in proclaiming regional feelings. They are generally too poor, dispersed and disorganised to be politically vocal. The richest amongst the ethnics are intimately interviewen into the existing economic network and being beneficiaries of the existing system are not likely to champion regional causes. It is the members of the middle classes, especially those whose economic enterprise and aspirations are blocked by existing economic structure dominated by the majority ethnic groups that have a strong

incentive to favour regionalism as they are likely to be the main beneficiaries.  

Walter Korpi has argued that explanation of regional conflict based on preceptions of deprivation and the desire for improvement overlook the actual possibility for achieving the desired change, the latter being determined primarily by the differences in power resources between the parties concerned. Korpi's argument suggests the importance of including the relative distribution of power as an important variable in the analysis of regionalism.

Marguerite Barnett in her study of cultural nationalism in South India, refutes Geertz's dichotomy between "Primordial" and "civil" sentiments and politics as misleading and puts forth the argument that many contemporary cultural nationalist movements are not mere derivates of "primordial given ties," but are movements that create in new identities and transform old ones. Such movements, according to Barnett, are not necessarily incompatable with national integration in multiethnic states, provided national integration is not conceived as a process of creating homogeneous and monolithic nation-state, but one that is compatible with genuine


acceptance of cultural pluralism. 71

Claude Ake has put the argument that a political system driving for integration maximises its chances for achieving higher degree of integration and remaining stable, in spite of short run destabilizing effects as a result of this, if it is authoritarian, consensual, identific and paternal. Even if a single factor is missing, a political system is very likely to disintegrate. He recommends authoritarian solution for new states which lack the "mature" culture essential for democratic functioning of the system because "the quest for integration aggravates political instability" and demands for "social and economic adjustments" add to the "social confusion," which may breed alienation. 72

Weiner considers that economic growth on the one hand provides government with increased sources for satisfying the demands and on the other hand it also raises the "levels of aspiration" by the growing mobilization of the groups. By economic growth, Weiner means the growth along capitalist lines which is "likely to be somewhat unbalanced" even under the "best of circumstances." Such type of economic growth will result in uneven development or perception of unevenness which is psychologically as important as real differences


and it is not likely to diminish the "political repercussions of scarcity." 73 As a result of this new social groups are mobilized and primordial identities play increasingly important role in the development of such organisation. 74 Such a situation is exploited by self-seeking, ambitious politicians who achieve their interests by couching the demands "in terms of public interests" in an economic market where "politician will assess his market and produce those commodities (appeals) that yield the maximum return." 75 For him the solution lies beyond the sphere of economics in finding ways to progress and survival in a polity of scarcity." In a polity where the objective are both democracy and economic growth, the solution lies in solving the problem of implementation by bridging the gap between what is "willed" and what is actually "done." 76

According to Balraj Puri, regional or sub-regional consciousness is likely to grow with the process of modernization and democracy. He thinks that the "technological revolution," instead of wiping out smaller identities, has led to "rootlessness, alienation and atomization of the individual." The "vacuum" is filled by his urge for identity which he seeks in smaller culture, language, group, history

74. Ibid., p.232.
75. Ibid., p.235.
76. Ibid., p.257.
and region with which he identifies himself. Puri concludes that the enthusiasm and initiative unleashed by regional consciousness if channelized in the direction of overall national consciousness by providing political expression within the overall political framework, can strengthen nationalism.\textsuperscript{77}

Khalid B. Sayeed situates the problem of regionalism in the geopolitical context. Basing his arguments on Pathans in Western Pakistan he points out that a regional group that might otherwise be disposed to separatism will not be so disposed or limit its activity in that direction if its secession is likely to lead not to independence, but to incorporation in a neighbouring state, membership of which is viewed as even less desirable than membership in the original state. Separatism is such a case would amount to "jumping from frying pan into the fire."\textsuperscript{78}

Rounag Jahan, in her study of pre-1971 Pakistan, differentiates the problem of regionalism in the developing and the developed countries by arguing that most developing countries lack "pre-existing sovereign system," "national ideology," "national elite" and "national institutions," and simultaneously face the problem of


integrated of a multiplicity of groups into the newly created national system. In such a complex situation the problem can be solved by simultaneously performing the tasks of state-building and nation-building. But the problem with most of the countries of third world is that the question of state's "survival as an independent international entity" compelled the ruling elite to concentrate on state-building at the cost of nation-building. In the absence of adequate nation-building policies, in spite of the success in economic development, modernization and state-building, which resulted in the "social mobilization of other sub-national groups" as well and their exclusion from administrative, economic and political power by the dominant national elite, created the "disequilibrium in the national system". In the case of Pakistan it led to its break up. 79

In the Indian context, Lambert states that the social bases of primordial groups tend to change in significant ways depending on the degree of politicization of hitherto unmovilized groups. The political interests of such groups, the style of their leadership, and the nature of political system, determine group participation in politics and its consequences for political integration. It is essential for

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the political integration to balance the divisive tendencies which do not necessarily hinder political integration against the factors of cohesion. 80

Hardgrave, Jr., also argues that in plural societies "promordial sentiments" can be transformed under the impact of social mobilization and accommodation and contained within the democratic institutional framework. Cultural nationalism or regionalism, regarded as the seed of separation and destruction of national integrity, is in fact, "the most effective vehicle in the transference of loyalty from primary village and kinship groups to that of the larger community." 81 Viewed from a historical perspective, most of the problems related to national integration manifest in the processes of transformation from a colony to a nation.

Rupert Emerson in his analysis of non-western nationalism pointed out that for the people of newly emerged nations, nationalism meant the very essence of what they sought which implies that nationalism was not only the expression of anti-colonial tide overflowing into constructive politics but also "the determination of national units which forms the foundation of the (new) State system." 82


Non-European nationalism was therefore, not a "preversion of industrialism and democracy," but rather the resultant phenomena of the impact of the west on the emerging national entities. It is the "deep-running social fervent and change, which speed the process of social mobilization by destroying old order of society." 84

The problem which many colonial countries faced on the physical level was of doing away with the political boundaries, "which impinged erratically on the ethnic and political alignments" frequently cutting across the ethnic, tribal and racial lines. The more important aspect of the problem, Emerson argues, was the uneven impact of the doctrine of nationalism on the elite and the masses which resulted in the fact that the national consciousness developed only in a relatively small group of new elites and the traditional masses at large unevenly responded to the anti-colonial movement and a gap was created between those who had, "moved to a new kind of political participation or demanded it, and the larger mass of the people who lingered essentially within the confines of traditional communities." 85

84. Emerson, op. cit., p.215.
85. Ibid., p.268.
The integrational problem from the Emerson's point of view, is that of nation-building than of system-building for he does not recognise the fact that there may be a prior determination of the political or territorial consequences of nationalism. Moreover, on the one hand, Emerson equates nationalism with power conscious middle classes and on the other hand he perceives nationalism as a total and organised response of the entire society to the western colonialism. Also he ignores the complexities of the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies where the uneven impact of the western colonialism had some negative impact in the form of the growth of various sub-cultures and the processes of political development which ultimately challenged the basic unity and integrity of the new states.

Unlike Emerson, Leonard Binder maintains that the colonial experience was not restricted to the incorporation of western ideas and precepts into native systems; it also led to the rediscovery and reinterpretation of the "great" formalised traditions and the localised "small" traditions or sub-cultures. This lack of bridging the gap between these 'great' and 'small' traditions, ultimately lead to the degeneration of nationalist monuments into regional, sectional or tribal movements.


What follows from the whole arguments put forth by Binder is that there is a close relationship between nationalism and great tradition which is contrary to his own concept of the multiplicity of sub-cultures. He also ignores the gap between modernising elite and masses in a class divided society where the nationalism is an ideological weapon used by the elites who represent the dominant class interest.

Robert Scott takes a different position and tries to establish that the current problems in most of the new states cannot be understood by analysing the brief contact of colonial rule but by perceiving the 'differences in pre-colonial political behaviour and traditional culture.' According to Scott, pre-colonial society was characterised by "self sufficient rural economies," having "exchange of goods within the social framework" and identification of the large masses with primary groups such as the family, the tribe or the caste. Although this "self contained world" was disturbed by colonial rule the impact being partial and uneven, but beneath it, traditional particularist loyalties remained intact and even individual consciousness of cultural identity increased as the external forces--processes of "modernization" and "westernization"--only "affected" and did not completely destroy the traditional values and structures. Scott analyses the nationalism which emerged in

such a situation in two phases, the "anti colonial phase" and the "integrative phase." The first phase was not so difficult but once the nationalist movement had achieved independence, the inherent conflict of "separate and often competing groups" united under the banner of nationalism began to come to surface. 89

Edward Shils, in his study of the role of intellectuals in political development in new states accepts Binder's analysis in a slightly different way. His whole argument is about the transformation of "uncivil politics" to the "virtues of civility," by the emerging intellectuals who sought emancipation from "traditional collectivity" and were keen to find "some other more congenial collectivity." 90 Shils defines the virtues who make up the nation. It entails a sense of 'partness' of a whole, a sense of sharing a common substance. The feeling of being part of the whole is the basis of a sense of concern for its well being, a sense of responsibility to it, and for it. It transcends ineluctable divisions, softening them, and rendering them tolerable to civil orders, regarding them as less significant than the underlying community of those who form the nation." 91

89. Ibid., p.355.


91 Ibid., p.355.
Both Binder and Shils advocate that consensus on "new alternative collectivity" can lead to integration. But the question arises how this transformation will take place in a traditional society bound by primordial ties.

In his later analysis of post-independence nationalism in the context of south and south-east Asia Emerson described the pre-independence nationalism as a negative phenomenon mainly concerned with the attainment of independence.\(^92\) In the changed context of post-independence period, Emerson posed the question of the form nationalism will take in cases where there was no common enemy or common challenge to which it must respond. Hence for Emerson, in its post-independence context nationalism transformed itself into "new shapes and channels" by opening "the door to the emergence of potentially disruptive forces," which in the pre-independence era were "a working emotional and political reality."\(^93\) He underlines such a danger by arguing that in most of the new states, there was no "effective consciousness of national identity and dedication" among the large people of rural society who still were primarily attached to traditional groups. In the post-independence context the major issue was, "who was to govern whom." He argued that the subnationalism of "primordial societies" was not going to merge into the newly born state which had been superimposed upon them at least "in any presently calculable time."\(^94\)

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93. Ibid., pp.74-75

94. Ibid., p.192.
It is obvious from Emerson's argument that pre-independence nationalism in many post-colonial societies was a negative phenomenon and it logically follows from this argument that the fragmentation of such a nationalism was bound to take place when it had attained its main goal. But what is more important and which Emerson ignores, is the fact that nationalism emerged in the colonial context where colonialism provided the material base which survived in the post-independence period also.

Dipankar Gupta, while discussing the problem of nation-building in the context of developing countries argues that the existence of multiplicity of economic formations do not allow monolithic socio-political structures as happened in advance western European countries where socio-political institutions are integrated in a monolithic order of capitalistic economy. Therefore, the only way to solve this problem is to remove economic unevenness in the society without which regional and parochial sentiments are bound to be ignited.  

Radhey Mohan refutes the argument that economic development will lead to the withering away of the parochialism. In fact, "it is natural for groups of people to clamour in inverse proportion to the size of the cake."

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If this is so, "an era of heightened cultural tensions" is the logical result, because "in direct proportion to the pressures for larger slice of the economic cake will be the political pressures built around cultural groups."96

Most studies on post-colonial nation states as discussed above, try to establish that the process of transformation from colonial to national state is accompanied by many crisis situations and that the "identity crisis" and "integration crisis" are the by-product of this transitional process. Most of these studies also optimistically suggest that with the political development and impact of modernisation, these "crises of political development" will be resolved. That these crises might emerge or be accentuated as a consequence of modernization process, is not taken into account by most of these theorists.

What follows from the above analysis of developing countries is that the process of nation-building is never smooth or complete. In the present international environment the path is full of numerous obstacles. The transformation from an underdeveloped feudal economy to a modern economy takes place in the midst of upheavals. Progress presupposes change and every change disturbs the status quo- which in return evokes reaction. It is inevitable in all changing societies, and is a logical consequence of this process depending upon the complexities of a given society.

It is also pertinent to note that this lack of concern about ethnic cleavages and a preoccupation with the consensus model of nation building was also the result of a misplaced assumption that western industrialized societies have by and large achieved a satisfactory resolution of ethnic conflicts and have achieved a degree of national integration. The Civil Rights movement in the USA and the emergence of Scottish nationalist movement and separatism of Northern Irelanders in Great Britain invalidate this assumption and made it imperative for social scientist to re-examine the whole issue.

The current regional and sub-regional tensions and conflicts in Indian society should be seen in this historical perspective. While some conflicts are inevitable due to the continental character of India in terms of her large size and other factors associated with it, others aspects of the conflict are induced due to lack of comprehension or aggravated deliberately by forces with are inimical to change. Hence it becomes very important to briefly have look on the literature on India, identify the bases which exacerbate conflicts and tension within Indian polity.

Rajni Kothari, in his latest writings while analysing the present fragmentation of Indian nation argues that "two seemingly contradictory processes" namely "sharp and systematic increase in authoritarianism" on the one hand and "gradual decline in authority" on the other hand bound to go together in "a fundamentally diverse and federal society", are
responsible for the present state of affairs. The major reason for the decline of authority and cohesion according to Kothari has been the "erosion of intermediate institutions between centre and the localities", by centerizing tendencies and populist appeals in a situation where political process is not confined to elites only but had acquired a mass base. Undermining the old structure and failure to provide a new structure responsive to new reality, created a huge "vacuum," which is now being filled in by the regional, communal, caste and other lumpen elements.  

Paul Brass has characterized the Indian society as a "segmented one" consisting of a large number of ethnic groups based on caste, tribe, language and religion at the different levels of "self conscious awareness" of their identities. These groups exist parallel to one another, and are hierarchically divided within themselves and also compete with one another, not for the "dominance of entire system" but only for the dominance in their respective regions. He further argues that the problem of integration has been exaggerated and misinterpreted by ignoring the "dual" nature of Indian nationalism operating at two different levels by those who equates nationalism with patriotism. Such an approach can prove disastrous in the multinational states like India. The major issue is to recognise and cope with the "regional-national sentiments" and simultaneously


promote and develop "patriotic ties" to the larger country. 99

Selig Harrison has presented in a forceful way, the dangers of "balkanization" in his thesis that India comprises diverse cultural regions which in the past were held together by the dominance of Sanskrit and of a national Brahmin elite, and subsequently by the dominance of English and of a British or British educated administrative and political elite. Independence has changed the whole context and English no longer serves as a uniting force but on the other side there has been a tremendous upsurge of the regional languages and cultures. According to Harrison, these developments are potential source to create barriers between the linguistic regions, to impede mobility on a national scale, to intensify local loyalties and to provoke demands for greater autonomy. All these developments ultimately may give rise to regional or even separatist movements. 100

I.B.Bottomore has questioned the conclusion drawn by Harrison by arguing on the basis of historical fact that India has a more ancient and profound cultural unity and strong religious base than Eastern Europe after World War I. He considers it an exaggeration to glorify the imaginary unity in the past on the one hand and undermine the role

99. Ibid., p.15.

of administrative and political authority in pre and post independence era. Moreover, he observes, that the primary conflict in the Indian context is taking ideological form and other conflicts between "traditionalist and modernist" or between regions, are becoming of secondary importance. Hence, it depends upon the ability of the elite how they represent the aspiration of people and ensure overall economic development.

A.R. Desai in his analysis of Indian Nationalism from the class perspective looks at the problem of regionalism as a result of the peculiarities of the nationalist movement under the colonial rule which was "an uneven process, both regarding tempo and time." It resulted in the "rise of political and national consciousness" which unevenly matured among different regions and communities and demanded their territorial amalgamation, free development of their economic life, language and culture. But this demand did not conflict with their urge to unite with the broader national mainstream. The problem emerged only when the dominant classes among the awakened nationalities utilized the aroused mass consciousness to consolidate their own position viz-a-viz the dominant classes of their nationalities. Desai argues that unless capitalist


102. Ibid., p.253.

103. Ibid., pp.258-59.


105. Ibid., pp.388-89.
organisation of society based on competition and production for profit is not replaced by socialist society based on co-operation and collaboration between nationalities, problem will remain alive. 106

K. Seshadri endorses the view that "inner sense of national unity" was a "integral part of Indian political culture," at least at the national level in spite of the fact that India was ruled by many dynasties. Moreover, the uniformity of administration, the policy of centralization by the alien to perpetuate and consolidate their rule also resulted in the "feeling of common heritage and unity of nationhood." 107 But, as he argues, the incapacity of the present state which permits private ownership to maintain unity, because disparities in regional development is the natural consequence of such a policy which is bound to lead to "regional ill-feelings" and "regional chauvinism." 108 The only way to national unity is not to preserve the "existing order" and maintain "equilibrium and stability," but to substantially eliminate the "exploitative economy." 109

Norman Palmer also recognises the important problem of regionalism in the "multinational" context of the Indian nation without giving any solution. According to Palmar apart

106. Ibid., pp.427-29.
108. Ibid., p.156.
109. Ibid., p.162.
from the main regional division between the Hindi speaking
Aryan north and the non-Hindi speaking coast lands create
many sub-national loyalties at the cost of national
loyalty. 110

Sachchidanand Sinha in his analysis of internal
colonialism in the situation of India argues that in
most of the ex-colonial countries their still exist some
type of colonial relations between the people of various
regions and growing regional disparities are the logical
consequence of it. A general strategy of growth planning
for the entire country, as big as India, "even if there were
no vested interests to put a spoke in the wheel of progress,
would not build sufficient thrust to touch all the regions". 111

Therefore, the benefits with best of will shall go rather to
already developed regions. Moreover, the people who have
been associated with policy formulation at the highest
levels have tried to ignore both the basic colonial
nature of the economy of certain regions in the country
and also the internal tendency of stagnation in a backward,
region when formulating their policies. Hence, the
solution lies not in the centralization of the resources
but in the maximum amount of decentralisation and autonomy
for the regions, because this problem cannot be solved
through the independent operation of economic forces
which can only prolong the agony of depressed regions. 112

110. See Norman D.Palmar, The Indian Political System

111. Sachchidanand Sinha, The Internal Colony (New

112. Ibid., p.142.
R.N. Mishra in his study on regionalism and state politics in India concludes that the problem of integration and regionalism does not exist at the national level only but Indian states also faces this problem. Regionalism according to Mishra is basically a middle class phenomenon and the states where due to geographical and historical factors middle classes are concentrated in different regions of the state, regional conflict is bound to emerge. Backward classes are either divided or play only secondary role in the regional conflict. Moreover, in such a situation National parties can get foothold only if they capitalise on regional grievances and it becomes easily for the backward regions to get themselves politically organised than the backward classes.  

Morris Jones in his analysis of Indian politics through the concept of "idioms" or "language" which for him are the "styles," "manners" or "fashions" makes a point that the politics, at the state, district and local level, which covers the vast segment of Indian society, is carried through the "traditional" language, which he describes as "the language of a host of tiny worlds."  

There are a few studies which specifically deal with sub-regional or intra-state conflicts. The detailed


account of state politics by Myron Weiner, Iqbal Narain, Babulal Fadia and I.N.Tewary, can be described as the starting point to perceive the inner dynamics of the processes of interaction of various socio-economic and political forces at the state level. The study on sub-regionalism in the empirical setting of Orissa by Mrnal Ray and K.Banerjee emphasised how different sub-regional identities determine politics by influencing the voting behaviour. Duncan B.Forrester has tried to show that sub-regionalism in Telangana is the result of indigenization and democratization of politics. B.A.V.Sharma has also analysed the socioeconomic dimensions of sub-nationalism in the case of Telangana. A Study by R.N.Mishra on the Tribal politics in Orissa suggests that it is not the backward classes but the backward regions which have more regional consciousness.


121. Forrester, op.cit., pp.5-21.


The foregoing survey of literature shows that lot of work has been done on the problem of nation-building and political development, by western and Indian political scientists and the problem of regionalism has been placed by them under the broader crisis of ‘integration’ and ‘identity’ which is bound to emerge during the early phases of the transformation of traditional societies into modern one. They assume that modernisation will ultimately vanish these crisis which are only a passing phase. This type of optimism is however, not shared by other political and social scientists who challenged their thesis by giving concrete evidence not only from the third world countries but also from the modernised countries themselves which have not followed the set pattern assumed by the western scientists. Modernisation could not resolve the problems of many third world countries but has given rise to many of the problems by mobilising the hitherto unmobilised masses and groups into politics and created competition among them for the scarce resources. Hence, problem of regionalism can be seen as one dimension of the net results of the impact of modernisation.

After discussing literature on the problem, let us delineate upon the perspectives which would guide our study. This necessarily involves theoretical analysis and framing of tentative hypotheses which would guide us in the collection and correlation of data. However, unlike a lawyer’s brief we would not ignore data uncomfortable to our hypotheses.
Rather we would modify our original hypothesis to accommodate the uncomfortable data. We believe that sub-regional conflicts involve at least four broad variables, namely, political, psychological, social and economic.

Political conflict includes regionally based inter-party conflicts and intra-party factionalism and regionally based voting behaviour. The Indian political system is highly undistributive in terms of political power. Socially dominant groups come to acquire political power totally disproportionate to their number. The democratisation of political system after independence, however, led to the dominance of these groups being challenged by groups numerically dominant though socially weak. Where the dominant and the dominated groups belonged to different regions, the struggle for redistribution of political power led to the regionalism or


sub-regionalism. One of the interesting facts of the State politics in India since 1937, when provincial autonomy became operational, has been the political dominance of regionally based groups and the near or partial exclusion of some regions from a share in political power. The dominance of Tamil Brahmins in Madras, of Gujarati in Bombay, of western Punjabis in pre-partioned Punjab are a case in point. In the post independence period, such regional imbalances in the distribution of political power led to the movements for the creation of separate States on linguistic basis because language happened to be the basis for regional identification and mass mobilization.

Many States including India have sought solution to regionalism in a federal set up. As stated earlier, the reorganisation of States on linguistic basis in India resolved regional conflict to a large extent but not fully because many of the reorganised States are still culturally and linguistically heterogeneous and contain geographically

127. This was the case in Bombay; Punjab and Kashmir. This aspect has been dealt in detail in his study of Sri Lanka by Rupert N. Kearney, "Language and the Rise of Tamil Separation in Sri Lanka", Asian Survey, Vol. 18, No. 5, May 1978, pp. 521-34.


129. Canada, Yugoslavia and Soviet Union are important examples. The recent emergence of Scottish nationalism has led to the demand for the conversion of the U.K. into a federal State.
concentrated linguistic minorities. Sub-regional movements for further division of States have thus, not completely died down. The movement for a separate Vidarbha, Telengana, Jharkhand, Uttrakhand and recent movement for separate Gurkhaland are cases in point.

It is pertinent to note here that all sub-regional movements are not separatists. Apart from political considerations, size of the aggrieved region and its economic viability are important factors which may inhabit a group from demanding separation. In such cases, the State is likely to see perpetual sub-regional conflict. The above argument shows that political basis of sub-regionalism is important for our analysis because that is the behavioural and identifiable form of sub-regionalism and surfaces as a political phenomena.

130. When the boundaries were redrawn broadly on the basis of language differences and the concomitant tensions between dialects and economic imbalances in the same language group began to come to the surface because economic and cultural contours of a region unfortunately do not coincide in India. For details see K. Seshadri, "Language & Regionalism", Proceedings of the Seminar on Language and Society, 1967, (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1969).

131. Some of the regional movements demand separation from the country of which creation of Bangladesh and demand for separate Tamil Elam in Sri Lanka and demand for Khalistan in India are good examples. Some of regional movements stand for separate state within the country, such as Telangana, Jharkhand, etc. But most of these movements are primarily concerned with getting an adequate share in the economy and polity of the State. See Rajni Kothari, Politics in India, op.cit., pp.330-33, Also see Syeed B. Khalid, "Pathan Regionalism", South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 4. Autumn 1969, pp.478-566.

The psychological dimension of sub-regionalism involves conflict of identities shaped by perceptions of cultural solidarity. It may, however be reiterated here that whether political or economic discrimination is borne out empirically or not, it is the psychic feeling of relative deprivation which is important and which in turn is exploited by politicians. For example, it is generally alleged in almost all the states that the constituencies represented by the Chief Ministers and Ministers have been fed at the cost of other regions of the State. Regionalism or sub-regionalism thrives in the mind of men as its roots lie in a psychic deprivation which is easily cultivable in a situation of economic scarcity. Generally social, cultural or regional identities are shaped by history, however, identity is a subjective dimension and can be analysed only subjectively. This is to say that a social or a regional group on its way to build group identity, emphasises certain cultural commonalities and glosses over incogruities. Simultaneously, it also emphasises cultural distinctiveness to mobilize public opinion to protect and articulate its group interests. The result is a conflict of regional identities. The emergence or persistence of sub-regionalism is thus a case of identity conflict and of the failure to resolve such conflicts. 133

The social basis of sub-regionalism relate to the "givens of social existence" that is to say primordial mores and modes of life like language, caste, religion, dialect, food, dress and folk ways. It is our assumption that culture is the principal vehicle for identity formation and if a particular region exhibits a cultural distinctiveness, cultural identity is likely to be used as a vehicle for political and social mobilization in order to obtain a due share for the region in economic development and political power.

In the Indian context language and dialect are very important socio-cultural element in the formation of regional or sub-regional identities. Since the reorganisation of states on the basis of language, intra-state cohesion and homogeneity is on the increase, though the problem of minority groups continues to be vexing. Moreover, unity of different dialects within the same linguistic group can be exploited for imparting aggressive overtones to sub-regionalism when the linguistically dominant group is also imbued with some sort of psychic deprivation or its possibility. The Shiv Sena movement in Bombay would illustrate the former and the linguistic riots in Tamil Nadu exemplify the latter.


136. Iqbal Narain, op.cit., p.81.
Caste is another significant contributory factor in subregionalism. The regional caste structure leads to the formation of well knit regional identities. Of late, many regional caste associations have mushroomed on many parts of the country. These associations play a important role in politicizing and mobilising the unmobilized traditional masses on regional lines. In such a situation caste associations, however loose they may be, provide to the elites ready made structures to achieve their vested interests. Moreover in many cases, caste solidarities are also used by the dominant castes, which also happen to be dominant classes in India, to break the growing unity among the exploited masses to preserve and perpetuate their dominance. One could broadly identify two situations using caste as variables— the dominant-caste situation and multi-caste situation. One could also assume that dominant caste regionalism tends to be more aggressive than multi-caste regionalism. The cases of Maharashtra and Punjab can be cited as examples of dominant caste regionalism while that of U.P. and M.P. as of multi-caste regionalism.137

Religion is another factor in sub-regionalism though it plays a marginal role. It may be argued that

137. Ibid., pp.81-82.
regionalism and subregionalism cuts across religion and therefore play a secular role by creating different type of loyalty structures. But religious practices if not religion as such are part of the regional culture. When a religious group is concentrated in a particular region, and if that group is in majority as is the case of Sikhs in Punjab and Muslims in J & K, this group will try to mobilize itself by creating religious consciousness in order to dominate the regional politics. But in a situation where the religious groups are in minority, the feeling of insecurity will consolidate that group into a conscious regional community to protect its interests viz-a-viz majority group(s).

In fact, regionalism and subregionalism have played integrative role undermining the various primordial elements like religions caste at the state level in many southern states like, Tamilnadu, Andhra, Karnataka, Gujarat and Maharashtra, especially during the movement for the formation of linguistic states. The subsequent formation of regional parties and ultimate capturing of power by the DMK/AIDMK in Tamilnadu, the Telgu Desham in Andhra Pradesh support the above argument.

While many aspects of culture follow religious contours, culture also cuts across religion and imparts a regional touch to it. For instance, Muslim have adopted caste system, culture and language of Hindus in many Hindu dominated states specially in the south contributing to
the creation and/or consolidation of sub-regional identities.

Finally we can hypothesize that particular social or cultural distinctiveness or a combination of them that become(s) politically important depends upon the objective conditions. In Vidharbha, it is the language; in Jammu it is the combination of language and religion; in Jharkhand it is the tribal identity; in Western U.P. it is the caste; and in H.P. it is dialect and cultural distinctiveness.

While sub-regionalism may be political, we believe that unequal economic development is also at the root of sub-regionalism. There is a close connection between regional distribution of political power and economic development. A region which happens to dominate politics is also able to get the lion's share of developmental funds at the cost of politically weak regions. The resentment against neglect finds expression at the elections. The ruling party already entrenched in the dominant region strengthens or maintains its hold in the region but is gradually weakened in the underdeveloped region. The position of the opposition party(ies) is just the reverse. They fare better in the underdeveloped regions, cashing on the


139. R.K.G.Nair "The haves" have an Edge over the 'Have nots' in Sharing the National Cake", Yojana, Annual Number, 1970.
resentment against the ruling party but unable to establish a hold in the dominant region because the latter had been nursed by the ruling party. The result is that both ruling and opposition parties acquire regional character, in terms of electoral support and interests.\footnote{Because of the size of the country, Uneveness in the allocation of resources and levels and rates of development in different regions, India faces the problem of removing the disparity between the economically well off and backward regions. Here is a growing demand that new industrial units should be located in economically backward region to boost the economy overlooking the fact, that economically speaking, a particular project is more suited to a particular region. Thus, in a democratic set up where the things are decided by the strength of voters, unfortunately, democratic politics complicate, the situation by exploiting group and mass psychology. See K.C. Pande, "Regionalism and Problems of National Integration", \textit{Political Science Review}, Vol.10, No.1-7, pp.31-51.} The vicious circle can be broken by an enlightened and far-sighted leadership which can rise above the electoral pressures of their constituents and undertake definite steps to develop the underdeveloped region and redress the imbalances in development. There are short term risk of losing support in the home base in pursuing such a policy, but there are chances that risks will be more than counter-balanced by the gains through increased support in the under-developed region. But such a policy is very difficult to pursue because in a democratic country like India, regional pulls and pressures for greater plan-allocation, at times, even disproportionate to the requirement of the region, disturb the economic planning priorities and already imbalanced development— a backlog of colonial rule— is further perpetuated— giving new impetus
Moreover, uneven regional development is inevitable during the early stages of capitalism as is the case in India. This is because some regions because of the favourable locational factors such as climate, soil, easy communication or natural resources offer better opportunity for increasing production and profit than others. Maximization of production and profit being the principal motive, capitalist development patronizes actual or potential profit earning regions to the neglect of other regions.

Moreover, the sub-regional conflicts also come to fore as a result of the mixed economy we have adopted in India in which the private and public sectors are supposed to operate in a cooperative manner to promote the economic development of the country. Experience shows that unhealthy competition between them disturb the overall priority schemes for balanced growth.


142. Gunner Myrdal was among the first economists to point out that there is a tendency inherent in the free play of market forces to create regional inequalities and that this tendency becomes more dominant the poorer a country is. See Gunner Myrdal, Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions, (Bombay: Vora 1958) p.45. I.G. Williamson has presented an empirical verification of Myrdal's thesis. See J.G. Williamson, "Regional Inequality and Process of National Development: A Description of the Patterns", Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol.13, No.4, July, 1965, pp.14-17.

State planning geared to even development of all regions can redress the regional imbalances but in a democratic system the allocation of resources for economic development tends to be a function of the regional distribution of political power. Trends in the State politics in India indicate that the economically developed regions also happen to dominate the political structure of the State with the result that economically developed regions receive more development funds than the underdeveloped regions. The dominance of Kashmir in the politics of J and K, the dominance of apple belt of Shimla region and the consequent backwardness of other regions of Himachal Pradesh are the cases in the point.

We also believe that regional differences in the modes of production are also the cause of sub-regionalism. Unequal regional economic development as a result of emerging capitalism produces changes in the modes of production of the developed regions. Both in agriculture and industry, capitalization of the developed regions gradually gets grafted to the national market. For example, the mechanization of agriculture and availability of many


agricultural inputs can convert subsistence agriculture into market oriented capitalist agriculture. Similar changes take place when agro-industries are set up in rural areas or in the hinterlands towns. Such changes produce a new class which even if not directly interested in politics would attempt to control governmental policies, whereas prosperous land owning classes have successfully tried direct control by participation in elections and party politics. Perhaps rural basis of state politics and the role that caste solidarities play in it have enabled and encouraged economically dominant rural class to directly participate in politics.

The backward regions thus remain comparatively neglected by capitalist development and democratic state planning for reasons enumerated above. Their economies continue to remain subsistence economies. In the absence of economic transformation, especially in the modes of


149. In fact backward region may suffer economic regression and become comparatively more backward. See G. Myrdal, op.cit., pp.29-40.
production, only minor adjustments take place in social relations. The politics of the backward regions continue to be dominated by feudalistic elements. However, democratic urges and electoral pressure also have the potential for economic change. The desire for economic development is universal and under-developed regions also gradually begin to demand their due share. Such demands are opposed by the developed regions because developmental funds being limited, diversion of funds to underdeveloped regions can only be at the cost of developed regions. We thus see a sea-saw struggle for allocation for developmental funds and consequently for control of politics between the developed region(s) and the underdeveloped or backward regions.

In sum, sub-regionalism is not due to one but to several factors which are not mutually exclusive but work in conjunction with each other, so much so that sub-regionalism itself in the ultimate analysis becomes conjunctural phenomena - a web of inter-related relationships enmeshed in a manner that one factor can hardly be isolated from other. 150

In the chapters that follow we would put these hypotheses to test in the empirical setting of Himachal Pradesh which provides a very interesting case study for the analysis of sub-regional conflicts.