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Sriram Madhusoodanan

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By

Sriram Madhusoodanan

Thesis Director:

Dr. Steven C. Roach, Department of Government and International Affairs,
University of South Florida

Thesis Committee:

Dr. Earl Conteh-Morgan, Professor, Department of Government and International
Affairs, University of South Florida

Dr. Georg Kleine, Professor Emeritus, Department of History; Associate Professor,
Honors College, University of South Florida

Dr. Naomi Yavneh, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and American
Studies; Associate Dean, Honors College, University of South Florida

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I. Problem – The Indian nation?

Narratives, particularly historical narratives, frame our identities: they tell the story of our origins and provide us with direction to guide future action. Considering the numerous movements they have fostered in past 200 years, few identities have been as powerful a motor for social change or emerged as loudly on the world stage as national identities. In this context, India presents a unique case. In attempting to classify it, India could be labeled a multi-nation state, due to the immense diversity of linguistic, cultural and ethnic groups that reside within it, each with its own particular historical narrative and myths of origin. Simultaneously, there exist overarching nationalities that possess respective historical narratives. In addition to the secular "Indian" nation, an idea originating from the Indian National Congress, one could argue (as some political groups have in modern history) the existence of a "Hindu" nation, a "Sikh" nation, the "Muslim" nation each distinct from the other in terms of its respective origin, values and political goals. Undoubtedly there exist numerous other identities overlapping along lines of language, culture, religion and caste in addition to those identities which have gained enough political traction to agitate effectively for their own version of the Hindu, Sikh or Muslim nation-state. This inherent diversity of the Indian people is apparent to observers sufficiently aware of extant linguistic, cultural and religious differences: the result of millennia of foreign invasions, cultural and linguistic growth and diversification based in part on the geographic and political separation. The political unification of these regions and their people into the entity of "India" is a modern phenomenon and an outcome influenced in numerous ways by colonial British rule. On the eve of its Independence from Britain the country had never before been united under a single civil administration bound together with the vision of a decidedly "Indian" civic and cultural identity. Swaraj, the democratic rule of the Indian people (of the Gujurati from Allahabad and the Bihari from Patna and the Tamillian from Coimbatore) by "the Indian people" had heretofore been absent from the subcontinent.

This thesis seeks to address two questions: 1) what were the historical forces that brought a united "India" into existence instead of numerous sub-states or independent princely provinces within it, and 2) to what extent can the origin of an imagined Indian political community and the popularization of this idea help understand the creation of this peculiar historical moment. I argue here that the form and ideals of the anticolonial national movement in India as represented by the Indian National Congress were inescapably modeled on European and American historical examples of nationalism by an the Indian educated middle class intelligentsia, which largely composed the Congress. Therefore in

explaining the nexus of historical forces that brought about the imagined community of the "Indian nation" as it was conceived by the intelligentsia, Benedict Anderson's theory[1] provides significant explanatory power.

The propagation and ultimate success of the nationalist project, however, lies only partially in the hands of this social group wherein the nation is imagined and propagated via avenues of print-culture. As the Indian case shows, its success depends significantly on older social systems and networks of communication still accessible to largely illiterate masses; most effectively through symbols of cultural, quite often religious, meaning and power, and stories often communicated by rumor. In this propagation and mass mobilization phase, the creative and fluid interpretation of the struggle by the masses led to deviations from the policies initially established by the middle-class leadership. Over time, as the rift grows a more imbricated imagined community of the Indian nation develops as evidenced by the evolution throughout the period of Indian national movements of numerous different movements with competing visions of what a future Indian state ought to look like.

This effectively suggests a tension in the context of Indian colonial resistance between the deterministic and limited modularity of the nation as envisioned by the Western-educated intelligentsia and the adaptability of these ideas and principles within the more traditional subaltern mindset and social structure of rural India. As the leadership of the national movement in India anticipated its inheritance of the organs of state power, it began to classify and consider the subaltern state subjects in much the same way as the colonial state once had. Such an urge for control, a newer "Official nationalism" in the words of Anderson, was not sudden but evolved over the 4 decades of the Indian anticolonial movement, and suggests that, in this case at least, the characterization of some of the constituent forces of Anderson's imagined community, namely the predominant focus on the roles of the educated intelligentsia, requires reassessment.

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[1] This theory was first put forward by Anderson in <u>Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</u>, first published by Verso in 1983. A Revised 2nd edition was published almost a quarter century later, in 2006, by which time, it had been translated into 24 languages. Many of its translations have come to be used as university-course texts in the respective universities of these countries. Benedict Anderson is the Aaron L. Binenkorb Professor of International Studies, Emeritus at Cornell University. Anderson's theory of nationalism emphasizes the role of historical forces like print-capitalism and colonial rule in fostering the development and spread of modular nationalism across the world.

Though the experience of the educated classes, formed greatly by the policies of the imperial colonial power, initially develops and spreads the idea of a sovereign "Indian" nation, the manner in which largely illiterate masses receive, interpret and accept (or reject) this idea of the nation is as necessary a condition for the success of any national independence struggle. It was the degree to which popular power was attributed to the moderate Independence movement of the Indian National Congress that grew it's legitimacy in the eyes of the British policymakers. While the political power and authorship in the synthesis of a new national culture and leadership of the national movement accrued to the leaders who hailed from these educated classes, the relationship between them and the masses was an interactive and dialectic process. Successful social movements needed to, as Partha Chatterjee suggests, operate simultaneously within both a material "outer" world of the colonizer and the spiritual "inner" world of the Indian people. Those that merely remained within the "outer" domain were seen by the Indian population as being mere puppets and pawns of the British empire, whereas those who only communicated (however effectively) within the "inner" domain were viewed by the colonial power as mere "rabble-rousers" and rebellious upstarts, to be quelled by force and whose demands ought not to be taken seriously.

The success of the Nehruvian Indian National Congress (INC) and Gandhian nationalism lay in the power of its ideas to gain legitimacy and the ability of its advocates to communicate effectively within both domains, but especially that of the inner spiritual domain. The ability to energize the masses, often to unintentional violent ends that diverged from Congress's main methodology of nonviolent protest and political reform, and at times beyond the control of the INC came from more than their mere bilingualism, as Anderson suggests; it came from their membership in imagined communities that shared symbols of cultural power. Similarly, the underlying cause of a significant failure of the Indian National Congress, its inability to prevent partition of British India into modern-day India and Pakistan, can be understood through its ineffective operation within the "inner" domains of educated Muslim communities which placed power other religious symbols and a very different sacred language than the largely Hindu symbols Gandhi and Congress clothed themselves in. The Indian nation today consists of a number intersecting imagined communities, the imagined "inner domains" of numerous groups along factors of common identification, the most powerful of which tends to be linguistic lines, within which is implied numerous local and regional variations in religion, culture and custom. The extent to which membership in this "inner domain", this common imagined community, consciously expresses itself through semiotic means depends on the extent to which the subject projects

self-identification onto the community and the extent to which both are cognizant of their state of

oppression.

II. Literature Review:

A grounded understanding of the theoretical dimensions of the concept of nation is necessary to understand nationalism as it is issues regarding the nation and its delineation that are at the crux of the nationalist project. The "nation-state" concept emerges historically at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 which established concrete boundaries among the states of Western Europe. Soon other European countries followed suit. The model spread in part because it was exported by the nation-states of Europe to their colonies all over the world. Most nation states in existence today are young in terms of their formal organization along these lines. They are a mixed result of self-determination efforts of native origin pushing for independence, and a gradual movement in colonial policies towards decolonization following World War II. National self-determination is the right of nations to be sovereign states in their own right; that is for a "clearly-defined 'people'" to have and exercise political control over the territories in which they reside, which in principle, "belong" to them: a simple extension of private property rights from individuals to governments and political entities. Who or what determines and delineates these nations, who decides who belongs inside and outside is left unsaid, but often arrived at through complex processes of popular expression and governmental practice (or lack thereof) within the newly created nation. The intriguing aspect of nations is that the lines are not as clear in reality as simplified categorization leads us to believe.

Decolonization led to the creation of states along the lines of old colonial territories. The manner in which the nation is delineated occurs in the minds of its member-citizens; the nationalist aims to delineate the nation in the minds of his fellow compatriots and to mobilize them towards the achievement of self-determination. Neither the program of the nationalist nor that of the decolonizer necessarily leads to a cookie-cutter nation-state: the declaration of the independence of one identity brings with it calls for the declaration of the independence, or at the very least calls for the recognition of the distinct nature of many identities once claimed to comprise the former. Such was the case in India. Operant within this dynamic is the belief that the full assertion of "the community's rights" will not occur without sovereignty, independence, Swaraj, or whatever else it may be called. While a contestable claim, what proves so intriguing about the national identity is its power over popular imagination. It is precisely such questions of how nationalism elicits such strong attachments (along with the social, economic and cultural roots that allow its rise) that theorists of nationalism attempt to answer.

A. Theories of Nationalism

The nation has been defined as ideational, existing only in the minds of its following, a result of the determination of individual will to belong to it and nationalism "a method of teaching the right determination of the will," (Kedourie 54). Often the strength of attachment to the idea of the nation is rationalized as arising from primordial attachments: attachments one is born into and has no volition in choosing. Following from an indescribable sense of what is natural these attachments, like kinship and blood connections, are often reinforced by socially determined racial distinctions, religious communities, social custom, and regional connections to certain lands (Geertz 32-33, Kedourie 49).. In this case, Nationalism is considered a more modern form of social organization, by tracing its rise to the breakdown of older social orders. As younger generations are exposed to "new learning and new philosophies of the Enlightenment and of Romanticism", ideas often transmitted to these younger generations through a Western education cause them "to despise their elders, and to hanker for the shining purity of a new order to sweep away the hypocrisy, the corruption, the decadence which the felt inexorably choking them and their society" (Kedourie 54-55). This intergenerational breakdown of social order and rebuking of the orthodoxy and social structure which once bound the society together, creates a void within the newer generation: the need to belong to a "coherent and stable community". While this need was usually met in such societies through local social communities like the family, the neighborhood and the religious community, following the breakdown of social order, this void comes to be filled by nationalism and the community of the nation.

In other cases theorists, like Ernest Gellner, place greater emphasis on the development of industrial society as a driving force behind the rise of nations and nationalism. Within this perspective, different forms of political organization and cultural expression are required as economies industrialize, making nationalism a condition of the shifting global industrial environment and not something that developed in the mind of Western intellectuals and came to be forced upon the rest of the world; it penetrated the East in tandem with the colonization and industrialization of that sphere of the world. As such, the development of nationalism is also facilitated by the changing structure of the state. The medieval state was inadequate from the economic growth which lay nascent within it. With the breakdown of the medieval state and the evolution of a strong, centralized bureaucratic polity also came a public education system through which a culturally homogenous population could be trained and provided increased mobility according to the needs of industry to create a nation of citizen-workers (Gellner in Kellas 41-44).

Differential development between core and periphery regions can potentially result national schisms as one ethnic group rising above other groups which remain or are held in more subordinate positions. Such is the case with Internal colonization theory which holds that contact between ethnic groups within a state will not necessarily bring about ethnic unity, but that the end result depends on a number of mitigating factors, including the level of inequality between core and peripheral regions within the state. A high degree of perceived inequality between the core and periphery resulting from a "cultural division of labor" in which social stratification of ethnic groups occurs creates class differences between those dominant in the core, while the peripheral groups occupy the more inferior positions, or a "segmental cultural division of labor" where different ethnic groups occupy distinct professional niches within a society, can lead nationalist movements (Hechter in Kellas 40-41).

The extent to which these center-periphery relationships are merely based on cultural differences, however, is a matter of some contention. Rokkan, for example, posits that while there are no clear or simple center periphery relationships within a state, conflict (especially regional conflict) can arise out of a primordial-incongruity between the political, cultural and economic roles of different groups (Rokkan in Kellas 41). To merely write off the strong emotional attachment nations elicit in the minds of their members to mere primordial attachments, belies a more in-depth analysis of how these attachments are created and in what manner they function within a society.

One of the few theorists to address the function of the nation was Karl Deutsch who defined a people or a nation as a "community of social communication" based on a common culture (Deutsch, qtd in Kellas, 38). Nationalism, in this case is a product of modernization (due to the manner in which modern communications technology revolutionized the means of communications) and the nation that results is a pattern of social transactions, based around custom and culture, which are unique to it and as such, mark it off from other nations. Language constitutes the means by which communication is accomplished and the efficiency of the communication that occurs (given mutually compatible ability to communicate) provides the means by which "peoples are held together 'from within'," (Deutsch 26-27). Correct also within Deutsch's concept is the political aspect of the nation, desiring power and also using nationalist as a means by which to regulate and standardize the behavior of its members. The achievement of control of state apparatus through which to express this power is what Deutsch claims is the criteria by which nationalities and nationalism transform themselves into "nations" (Deutsch 28). The concept of the nation as a community of social communication is further expanded by Benedict Anderson, but with important contributions. Anderson also addresses past theories of the role of the

breakdown of old social orders and the rise of modern industrial civilizations by addressing the national question in the context of the historical forces and events by which the nation emerged, what it replaces and on what it was modeled.

B. Benedict Anderson and *Imagined Communities*

In <u>Imagined Communities</u>, Benedict Anderson seeks to reveal the peculiar power that nations have come to hold over the imaginations of people the world over, by analyzing the roots of their origin. Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community that is both inherently limited and sovereign" (6). Nations are "imagined" as no individual member of a nation knows *all* their fellow members, but each member can (and does) conceptualize his or her fellow nationals. While "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face are imagined", nations are distinct because they are *political* communities that are both *limited* and *sovereign*" (Emph. added Anderson 6). It is the imagination of the nation as both "limited" and "sovereign" which brings into existence the nation as a political community. Nations are limited as they are bounded and finite entities; membership is limited. There are, in almost every case, distinguishing characteristics (physical or otherwise) of the nation that create for it an identity distinct from "Other" nations[2]. Nations are further imagined as "sovereign" entities because "the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm" (Anderson 7). Nations are "political" communities, as every nation declares its existence for the purpose of securing political goals (an end to foreign oppression, "Swaraj", etc.) that in some way or form, reasserts its own sovereign rights[3]. Most importantly, however, is the fact that nations are conceived of as "communities" based and founded on deep, fraternal bonds (Anderson 7). Whether or not the existence of deep, fraternal bonds among various socioeconomic classes and castes (considering stark realities of inequality, oppression and exploitation among classes) within the nation is myth or reality is another matter. The fact remains, that convincing appeals to this fraternal bond, and by extension to

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[2] Anderson poignantly indicates that nations must be limited, for if they were not, it would be possible to have a single human nation, "coterminus with mankind" which would contest the pluralistic nature of nations as presently conceived (7).

[3] "…nations dream of being free, and, if under God, directly so. The *gage* and *emblem* of freedom is the sovereign state," *Emph. added*. (Anderson 7)

the connection one has to the imagined community of the nation carries an inordinate amount of power[4].

While a clear definition of the nation is certainly key to deciphering Anderson's theory, one would be mistaken to reduce the power of the theory itself to just this definition. Using a decidedly anthropological perspective, Anderson reveals nations to be modern systems of social organization which have arisen through particular historical processes: through periods of global cultural revolution occurring in tandem with a global reorganization of modes of production. Specific historical trends which (through the Renaissance and Enlightenment) weakened these old cultural systems (the religious community and dynastic realms) also created the cultural vacuum the nation has come to fill (Anderson 11). The power of nations over the imaginations of people comes specifically from the ability for national narratives to address issues previously answered by the religions of the world, but which since their undermining by secular rationalist modes of thought left people with a deep sense of disillusionment at the utter arbitrary nature of their suffering. Nations answer these questions of life, death and immortality by bestowing membership within an eternal community whose existence is seemingly eternal. Thus nations engage in "a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, of contingency into meaning" (Anderson 11). It is, in fact, no mistake that the content of national narratives overwhelmingly draws upon mythological stories of great cultural antiquity.   This ancient well of stories, stretching back beyond living memory is what makes nations immortal in the truest sense: the perception that this nation, these people, has always and will always exist. Historically inaccurate though such conceptions may be, what matters is the grounding of identity of the individual within a larger story (one of his people, his nation); the individual plays a small part in a story which has been acting itself out (along certain themes) before the individual was born and will continue to act itself out after his or her tenure in this world passes.

The placement of the individual within this eternal historical narrative was dependent, however, on changing apprehensions of time, the integration of which into a theory of nationalism was a truly innovative contribution of Anderson. As Anderson notes, "the medieval Christian mind had no conception of history as an endless chain of cause and effect or of radical separations between past and

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[4] Anderson finds that it is the appeal to this core communal identity, this feeling of fraternity, "that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many people, not so much to kill, as willing to die for such limited imaginings." (7)

present," (23). Rather, to medieval Christians, it was Divine Providence that acted as the guiding hand of History (Anderson 24); "The here and now [was not] a mere link in an earthly chain of events, it [was] *simultaneously* something which [had] always been, and will be fulfilled in the future; and strictly, in the eyes of God…something already consummated in the realm of fragmentary earthly moment" (Auerbach, qtd in Anderson 24). This messianic perception of time came to be replaced by a 'homogenous, empty time', in which, simultaneity is, as it were, transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfillment, but by temporal coincidence and measured by clock and calendar" (Benjamin, qtd in Anderson 24). Homogenous, empty time, thus opened up the means for people to imagine the simultaneous existence of fellow members of their imagined community, most effectively, as Anderson shows, in the new emerging forms of print media: the novel and the newspaper (Anderson 24-25)[5]. This changing concept of time "more than anything else, made it possible to think the nation" (Anderson 22), most effectively by reinforcing the decline of the older cultural systems which nationalism came to replace.

Anderson further introduces the concept of nationalism as a modular concept. Modular nationalism means that concepts of nationalism, nation-ness and the nation are not merely limited to the specific historical context which they arise, but rather, due to the incredible growth and spread of communications technology brought about by the explorations of the world and the achievements of the industrial revolution, were capable of being transplanted into historical situations quite disparate from the ones in which they arose. Thus, for example, the concepts of citizenship, equality of all citizens, and democratic representation which evolved from the experiences of Creole Nationalisms in the Americas began to spread across the Atlantic and inspire decidedly European versions, the earliest incarnation being the French Revolution. This spread of modular Creole nationalism was powered by the growing reading markets created by print-capitalism (i.e. the exponential growth and spread of print-media markets across the world following the invention of the printing press) and began to create imagined communities centered on and limited around the growth of certain vernaculars, creating

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[5] Since the invention of novels and newspapers, newer forms of communications media, like radio, television and the internet (especially internet video interfaces) have added further tools through which the simultaneity of various imagined communities separated by time and space can be imagined. For an excellent analysis of how novels and newspapers convey and act on apprehensions of homogenous empty time, See Anderson, pp. 26-25

populist European nationalisms[6]. In response to the populism of vernacular nationalisms, and particularly to prevent further devolution of dynastic power, many dynastic rulers and European courts initiated policies of "Official Nationalism," significantly enlarging state bureaucracies and further encouraging large investments by the state in education systems. Beyond simple reaction, official nationalism also modeled itself on some aspects of the popular vernacular-based nationalisms within their borders in order to exploit these sentiments to promote national fervor such that it aligned itself with the ruling dynast, consolidating state power in the process. These policies and trends which began in the metropoles were soon extended to the colonial territories creating large, centrally controlled state bureaucracies. These colonial bureaucracies needed scores of Western-educated, bilingual natives to staff the bureaucracies in order to facilitate daily operation, but the ascension of these educated citizens to the highest echelons of the colonial bureaucracy was prevented by an all to tangible glass ceiling of racial discrimination. It was to meet such bureaucratic needs that the European powers began recruiting natives to centers within the colonial territory they could be educated and westernized to function within these bureaucracies on behalf of the Colonial State.

Anderson stresses that it was the shared experience within the education system that an emergent form of the new nations arose in the minds of the young natives bounded and limited by the territorial borders of the maps hanging in their classrooms, the logoization of the national concept onto which they could project an understanding of continuity of their present identity with the antiquity being uncovered by Western Oriental scholars and displayed in the museums of the colonial powers. From the print literacy obtained through Western education, these natives gained "access to models of nationalism, nation-ness, and the nation-state produced elsewhere in the course of the nineteenth century" upon which new imagined communities could be created (Anderson 116), The original imagined community in these colonial states, however was the result of the common pilgrimages undertaken by this emerging indigenous middle-class intelligentsia travelling around the territory of "India" as they ascended the various rungs of the colonial-state hierarchy, first through the "self-contained coherent universe of experience," that was the education system and then through posts in

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[6] If homogenous empty time created the space into which historical narratives of modern nations emerged, it was print-capitalism which created the space in which these historical narratives and shifting apprehensions of self, of the "imagined community" were written. Combined with homogenous empty time, print capitalism "made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways" (Anderson 36).

the civil service. Thus, this group of individuals drawn from different regional, linguistic, and religious communities begins to realize the basis of a common, shared identity (Anderson 121). No doubt, one of the most powerful binding factors that forged this shared identity were the policies of the colonial bureaucracy based on "racial" differences created by the colonial power itself. The extent to which natives could rise to positions of power in the Civil Service of their own lands, was purposefully limited by Official Nationalist policies of the colonial state, and often reinforced by the manner in which members of the colonial nation viewed the native subject. Anderson claims it was this knowledge of shared social status to others who possessed the same bilingualism, companions and westernized ideas (resulting from the European education system) coupled with the exclusion of a growing educated middle class that led this educated intelligensias to form imagined communities of their own, which were based on the models available to them from the American and European national experiences.

Anderson's theory is not predicated on any single "model" of nationalism, but on nationalism as a concept with modular tendencies. Each period of nationalist movements (Creole, Vernacular European, Official, and Afro-Asiatic) builds off and advances models which have emerged from preceding eras by adapting them to fit respective circumstances and needs. Further, it is to a specific imagined community within the population at-large (almost always limited to the literate classes or bilingual, educated classes, in the case of African and Asian nationalisms) that these models are initially made available. Thus, the spread of modular nationalism to native intelligentsias in the European colonies of Africa and Asia was almost always an unintentional product of colonial policies of Official Nationalism. The subsequent spread of the idea of the nation within the country, from the literate to the illiterate classes is not much discussed in Anderson's framework, outside of a cursory discussion of the fact that the native intelligentsia were bilingual facilitated this process (Anderson 133-134). Especially in the case of India, where so much of the legitimacy of the Indian National Congress to negotiate on behalf of the "Indian nation" came from its success in taking credit for, if not organizing periods of significant mass revolt, an analysis of the success of the nationalist movement in achieving its political goals, requires considerations of the dynamic between the literate classes and illiterate classes, the latter of whom constituted were engaged by the former to participate in the national movement, and whose contributions provided undisputable strength to the Indian national movement.

C. Partha Chatterjee - "Inner" and "Outer" Domains

In The Nation and Its Fragments Chatterjee criticizes Anderson's emphasis on models of nations that were already created in the West, leaving little to nothing for the nations of Asia and Africa to

imagine for themselves. From this position Chatterjee proposes another interpretation of the historical development of these postcolonial nationalist movements:

> Anticolonial nationalism creates its own domain of sovereignty within colonial society well before it begins its political battle with the imperial power. It does this by dividing the world of social institutions and practices into two domains – the material and the spiritual. The material is the domain of the "outside"…the spiritual, on the other hand, is an "inner" domain bearing the "essential marks of cultural identity… [This is] a fundamental feature of anticolonial nationalisms in Asia and Africa" (Chatterjee 1993).

Through this division of the material (outer) and spiritual (inner) domains nationalism essentially makes "the spiritual domain its sovereign territory and refuses to allow the colonial power to intervene in that domain…here nationalism launches its most powerful, creative, and historically significant project: to fashion a "modern" national culture that is nevertheless not Western," (Chatterjee 1993). By separating the material and the spiritual realms from one another, Chatterjee moves the creation of the imagined community of the nation from the material world (the domain of western social institutions and practices) and into the inner domain, making the Indian imagined community distinct from the imported Europe model and a product of native circumstances, an important aspect that rather eludes Anderson's discussion.

As the spiritual domain of native sovereignty was premised "upon a difference between the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized, 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" while "in the outer domain of the state, the supposedly "material" domain of law, administration, economy and statecraft, nationalism fought relentlessly to erase the marks of colonial difference" (Chatterjee 1993). The "spiritual" world's inherent cultural difference must maintain that difference in order to survive as something different, but the "material" world's liberal values push one to strive to fully obtain those political rights and to erase the difference that exists in this domain. The differences still exists, but it is compartmentalized into the "inner" domain.

According to Chatterjee the "inner" domain based on shared "inner" aspects of language and culture is where the imagined community of the nation is first born, while the "outer" domain is the location of the civic and political life and while this outer world cannot penetrate the inner sanctuary by its very nature of formality, the spiritual "inner" domain can profoundly influence it. In this manner, Chatterjee allows us to distinguish the desire of the Indian nation for independence and political integration as a single entity (a function of the outer domain) from the desire for cultural national integration (which relies on the overlapping of the inner domains of various imagined communities). While the former of these was successfully achieved with Indian independence and the creation of the Indian constitution, the latter (i.e. the inner domain of the Indian nation) still remains fractured.

III. Review of Indian History:

A. Methodology and Aims

This review of Indian history aims to 1) to draw out and explain the trends of Indian society as it underwent the fundamental changes which ultimately led to the emergence of an "imagined political community" of bilingual Indian intellectuals who sought to agitate for the establishment of an independent and uniquely "Indian" nation modeled off extant Western ones; and 2) to highlight how the message and methods evolved as the movement gradually grew larger, more complex and in some cases (increasingly towards the achievement of independence) decentralized, implying the emergence of numerous imagined communities intersecting at various levels of common symbolic identification. From this analysis, we seek to show how intersecting levels of identification across various horizontal imagined communities has come to characterize the subcommunities of the Indian nation.

To accomplish these aims, it is necessary to begin with changes brought about by British policy, leading to the creation of a class of Western educated nationalist leaders, and evaluate the extent to which these changes and policy fit into the Andersonian framework. The emergent bilingual, middle-class intelligentsia, undergoes an evolution of its platform as it interacts on the one hand with sectors of Indian society (e.g. business interests, established landlords and most interestingly with largely illiterate subaltern classes in urban and rural areas) who the nationalists must recruit to their cause, and on the other hand with the colonial British Government of India, from whom the nationalist movement seeks increased recognition of legitimacy for the practical reasons of initiating, negotiating and achieving a peaceful transfer of power. By studying the interaction among the literate classes and between literate and illiterate classes in three specific periods of national agitation, it is possible to tease out the evolution of the nationalist platform, and from this evolution the factors that brought into existence a uniquely "Indian" nation (and Pakistan) on August 15, 1947.

1. The "Subaltern" and Indian Historiography

A shortcoming of some historiography of the independence movement in India is the reduction a long complex historical evolution involving numerous actors with various motives to and from heterogeneous social groups to a simple narrative that focuses on individual political leaders of significant renown. This historical perspective reduces the masses to mere subjects and consumers of an ideology that originates within more dominant classes and is unable to reveal the complex effect of social and economic factors on the society. It is precisely this shortcoming and the need to fashion an alternative "History from Below" that is reflected in Ranajit Guha's critique of Colonial Historiography

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that appears in the maiden volume of Subaltern Studies. Guha's 16-point critique outlines the nature of colonial-nationalist historiography, particularly its inadequacies, and launches the mission of writing alternative discourses of Indian history to the dominant elite version which idealizes the role and effort of the indigenous elites. The use of the term indigenous elite in Subaltern writing, is clarified by Guha to mean a heterogeneous group of the "the biggest feudal magnates, the most important representatives of industrial and mercantile bourgeois, and native recruits to the uppermost levels of bureaucracy…[and those of socially inferior positions who] still acted in the interests of the latter and not in incomparable conformity to interests corresponding truly to their own social being (Guha 7).

The work of the Subaltern Studies collective, is in some sense a response to the effects an the "Official Nationalism" slant to the Historiography of Indian nationalism since Independence (often elevating the status and efforts of the leaders of the Indian National Congress party). The project was initially launched in 1982 by a group of South Asian scholars (Ranajit Guha, Gyanendra Pandey, Shahid Amin, David Arnold, Partha Chatterjee and David Hardiman) based in Britain who shared "a general dissatisfaction with historical interpretations of the 'Freedom Movement' in India which celebrated elite contributions in the making of the Indian nation," while largely subsuming into this writing, or all around ignoring the role and agency of "Subaltern" peoples in this movement (Chaturvedi vii-viii). Since its inception (and the publication of 11 more volumes and three Subaltern Studies Readers), the project has spawned a vast literature on Subaltern peoples and theoretical debate regarding the role of the Subaltern in history. Though the initial group and scholars were of a Marxist perspective and were influenced by Gramscian methodologies, a gradual shift in focus from the political acts of revolt and uprising by Subaltern people to a more hermeneutic, critical analysis of the nature of rhetoric and discourses of subalternity took place throughout the 1980s. The later Subaltern Studies volumes were increasingly heavily influence by schools of Deconstructionist and Postmodern thought, most notably by Derrida, Foucault and Edward Said. These later articles are not necessarily limited by region or discipline and showcase a rich variety of postcolonial and cultural studies.

This postmodern orientation, with a heavy use of discourse analysis is apparent in the scholarly contributions of Partha Chatterjee. These writings, in methodology, source material and scope differ starkly with those of historian Sumit Sarkar, a contributor to the early Subaltern School, whose aim is to expand the historical literature of India to include more effective social histories, as in the tradition of E.P. Thomson. Though rather different in historical approach and conclusion, both schools of thought have made considerable contributions to the literature of Indian history and political thought, and it is

upon the scholarly works of these schools that the historical review and analysis below draws heavily upon.

B. The British Raj and Colonial Rule - Effects of Official Nationalism

Devolution of Mughal power (and the British Conquest) resulted in the scheme of the British Raj with three main Presidencies administered from former British East India Company strongholds of Madras (in the Madras Presidency), Calcutta (in the Bengal Presidency), and Bombay (in the Bombay Presidency). Each of these regional Presidencies carved out its own region of influence in the subcontinent, and had under its political influence a number of territories ruled in name by local dynastic heads of state, but ultimately answerable to the British resident in the governing Presidency capital. Through the conquest of the Indian Subcontinent by the British East India Company, the Company controlled vast areas through subsidiary alliances with the ruling heads of these princely states. Such alliances with the British East India Company often came with involvement of the Company in internal affairs of the princely states, and especially over influence over tax collection and revenues and likely annexation into the presidencies when the dynasts died without an heir. After the 1857 Indian Mutiny, the remaining dynasties came under the control of the colonial government (known as the British Raj), ruled by the Viceroy and British Parliament.

Throughout colonial rule, the Indian people were ruled by distant foreign power, whose presence was manifested in the Anglo-Indian sahibs and memsahibs courted down the streets and removed from the eye of the people within the walls of the British garrisons and in numerous other symbolic representations of state power including the British-trained military (often recruited from tribes with specifically "aggressive" reputation[7]), the Union Jack flying over governmental buildings, and increasingly towards the end of the 19th century, the use of English by educated Indian civil servants and educated professionals (e.g. doctors, lawyers, educators and journalists), what came to be a mark of prestige and success in an increasingly westernizing India.

Following the 1857 Mutiny, the British crown abolished the British East India Company and transferred complete control of the Company's Indian territories to the Sovereign. At much the same time it also began a process of centralizing and further integrating the degree of control it held over its

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[7] Examples include the Sikhs of Punjab and the Gurkhas of Nepal. It is interesting to note that in line with British policies of "divide-and-rule" mercenaries often policed or were garrisoned in areas very foreign to them.

numerous global colonies. This process, modeled on official nationalism policies it was already familiar with within its borders, was facilitated by the communications revolution taking place within the British Empire towards the end of the nineteenth century. Key to this revolution were the completion of "the Suez canal…telegraph lines and submarine cables, replacement of sailboats with steamers, railway construction, and the spread of mechanical print," (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century,*197). Sarkar notes among the many effects of greater centralization and tightened control of a colony halfway around the world were tools to increase information on the subject being governed through "systematization of information-collection, through a hierarchy of official reports and an impressive battery of decennial census operations (from 1871)" (*India in the Long Twentieth Century* 197). Though the post-Mutiny period did not mark the first time British government had become entangled in the affairs of the Indian colony[8], it did mark the beginning of implementation of these policies on a larger scale. As the colonial-bureaucratic apparatus was grown, so did the need for the very class of bilingual, Western-educated civil servants Thomas Macaulay had called for earlier in the century. With the advent of Westernization, came also transformations analogous to those which occurred in Europe preceding the rise of nationalism: the decline of older cultural systems, the creation of vernacular reading publics through print-capitalism, participations in common pilgrimages, and exposure through the education system to mechanisms of census, map and museum which was the mechanism through which the nascent imagined community began to perceive itself, and based on which it began to also retell its own history, fundamentally shifting the story within which the community was operating and proceeding towards a future whose form came in part from extant models of nationalism and norms of democratic, nationally self-determined, sovereign statehood.

    1. Decline of Older Cultural Systems

    As argued by Anderson, it was the decline of older cultural systems of imagining that led to the rise of the imagined community of the secular nation in homogenous empty time. Extending the process of the growth and rise of imagined communities of nations from Europe to India, one would have to surmise that the changing apprehensions of time and decline of older cultural systems would, to

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[8] As early as the 1830s, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Law member of the Governor-General of India's Council had made strong recommendations to create "a class of persons Indian in color and blood, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect…who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern." (Treveleyan, qtd. In Keay, 431). At that time, however, funds were not available for large-scale growth of the bureaucracy.

some extent, at least, have to accompany the rise of the Indian nation. Discernable from the Indian

colonial experience is the transition from a mythically-based messianic time to homogenous empty-

time. With the introduction of European time-keeping devices also begins to shift the Indian's

understanding of history and his relation to it.

The introduction of clocks under colonial rule in India occurred at the turn of the 18th to the 19th

century. While pre-colonial, and pre-capitalistic, notions of time in India were qualitative or functionally

based, the introduction of standardized (homogenous) empty (clock) time began a process by which

time became increasingly measurable, individualized (through items like personal watches), and further

created the internalization of "time-discipline" within the colonial subject (Sarkar, *Beyond Nationalist

Frames,* 17). That a key function of the enforcement (and subsequent internalization) was the

Westernization of the colonial subject can hardly be doubted considering that the key areas for

enforcement of this time-discipline by the British were in the railways, Western schools and the

Government and Mercantile offices (Sarkar, *Beyond Nationalist Frames,* 22-23).

Evidence of changing apprehensions of time (from pre-colonial to post-colonial) is apparent in

the contrast of historical narratives that evidence two distinct apprehensions of time. Chatterjee, for

example, argues that a very "radical transformation" occurred in the manner in which historical

narratives of political events were recorded. Mrityunjay Vidyalankar's *Rajabali,*characteristic of histories

written prior to the introduction of Western scholarly norms, recounts time and political periods in

terms of the succession of various dynasts from mythical times (e.g. from the reign of King Yudhisthira in

the Mahabharata), through periods of Buddhist and Muslim rule and to the present British East India

company rulers (Chatterjee 77-84). The rise and fall of each dynasty is rationally explained as based on

the extent to which each ruler upheld dharma (the Hindu law of divine "duty") throughout their

respective reign. Thus, the success of the British over the Nawab Siraj-ud-daullah at the Battle of

Plassey is explained as a result of the Nawab's evil actions which violated dharma, and the benevolence

of the East Indian Company Commanders who adhere to it (Chatterjee 84-85). Thus, each succession of

kings and rulers is an event occurring by Divine Will, which in the Hindu cosmic perspective favors those

on the side of dharma[9]. More revealing that this apprehension of time was older than the homogenous

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[9] An interpretation supported by many verses in Hindu scripture like the following one from the Bhagavad Gita:

Yadha Yadha hi Dharmasya, Glanir Bhavati Bharatha; Abyuthanam-adarmasya Tadatmanam ShrJaamyaham

empty-time, which came with the introduction of European clock-time was that these older historical narratives often ended with the apocalyptic predictions of the coming of Kalki[10] (in the Hindu case) or the final Judgments (in the Muslim case) (Chatterjee 87), so characteristic of Messianic time[11]. As exposure to clock-time and Western conceptions of history based on calendrical times and dates increased , this "divine-ordained," messianic understanding of time gave way to historical narratives more in line with a homogenous, empty-time perspective. That is to say, the history of a people was seen as a singular history in the midst of numerous global histories occurring simultaneously and as a series of cause and effect relationships, the influencing factor of which was military, economic and political power rather than divine will (Chatterjee 91-92). By the 1870s, "modern European principles of social and political organization were now deeply implanted in [Bengali] minds. The English educated middle class of Bengal was…unanimous in its belief that the old institutions and practices of society needed to be fundamentally changed," (Chatterjee 92). Key to this shift was the common experience shared by those natives who undertook the pilgrimages through the colonial education system and came to compose the growing middle-class and intelligentsia.

   2. Print-Culture, Census, and Museum

   "During [the last quarter of the nineteenth century] there was a concerted attempt to create the institutional procedures for systematically objectifying and normalizing the colonized terrain, that is, the land and the people of India. Not only was the law codified and the bureaucracy rationalized, but a whole apparatus of specialized technical services was instituted in order to scientifically survey, classify, and enumerate the…archaeological, historical, anthropological, linguistic, economic, [and] demographic…characteristics of the people," (Chatterjee 20). The institution of census mechanisms by the British began in 1871 and "[sharpened previously more fluid] distinctions between ethnic, linguistic and religious communities (and within the latter in the case of Hindus, along lines of caste)…for enumeration demanded clear-cut definitions, assumptions of firmly bounded, rather than relatively

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(Translation by A.C. Bhakthivedanta Prabupada) **Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion--at that time I descend Myself.** . Bhagavad Gita, Chapter IV, Text 7 (http://www.asitis.com/4/7.html, 29 May 2009)

[10] The 10th avatar or incarnation of Vishnu, which according to Hindu mythology will come at the end of the last of the four yugas (periods of Hindu time) the Kali-yuga (in which we are currently living).

[11] "Bloch observes that people thought they must be near the end of time, in the sense that Christ's second coming could occur at any moment…" (Anderson 23)

fuzzy, communities," (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century*, 202). From the 1870s onwards, these identities gradually hardened and solidified, as evidenced by the emergence of a number of identity-based social organizations along lines of caste, linguistic, religious, women, and labor organizations between the 1870s and the 1920s through the 1930s. Since identities often intersected, these various organizations competed amongst one another to align the identities of the people by "building up powerful enemy images…[which] might be the British for nationalists, but Hindu or Muslim for the two main religious groups, as well as high and low castes, landlord and peasants, capitalists and workers," (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century*, 202-203). This fits well into Anderson's suggestion of the census as a source for rigorous categorization of the population of colonial states in the late-nineteenth century, a categorization of the population which both influenced the manner in which members of the population perceived themselves and later inherited by the nationalist successors to the European colonial rulers (Anderson 164-165)[12].

It was during the late nineteenth century as well that the communities of educated Indian intelligentsia, concentrated around the metropolitan areas of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, began to retell the stories of their origin, recasting their identities as an emergent class in a new form. It is also the first stake to claim of their own cultural history, which had been previously transmitted to them (at least by objective standards of history conveyed in homogenous empty-time) by Europeans, most notably by Orientalist scholars. That these stories of a glorious past contrasted starkly with the poverty that characterized the land surrounding them was impossible to escape. The material decline and decay of the power of Indian civilization needed to be explained to the Indian people, and more importantly, it needed to be explained by the Indian people. In some Hindu circles the rational explanation, which grew out of an understanding of history as a series of power struggles, was that Indian society (in this case clearly identified with Hindu society) had decayed due to the effects of the oppression of Muslim invasion and rule:

> The misfortunes and decline of this country began on the day the Yavana [i.e. Muslim] flag
> entered the territory of Bengal. The cruelty of Yavana rule turned this land to waste. Just as
> a storm wreaks destruction and disorder to a garden so did the unscrupulous and tyrannical

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[12] Anderson's evidence was previously based on studies by sociologist Charles Hirschman of colonial British census makers for the Straits Settlements and peninsular Malaya, later to be inherited by the successors of the British in colonial Malaysia (Anderson 164)

Yavana jāti destroy the happiness and good fortune of Bengal, this land of our birth.

Ravaged by endless wave of oppression, the people of Bengal became disabled and timid.

Their religion took distorted forms. The education of women was completely stopped. In

order to protect women from the attacks of Yavana, they were locked up inside their

homes. The country was reduced to such a state that the wealth of the prosperous, the

honor of the genteel and the chastity of the virtuous were in grave peril. (Bholanath

Chakravarti, qtd in Chatterjee 93)

Within this narrative Chakravarti is making a clear distinction between periods of wealth, power, virtue and learning that characterized a "Golden Age", when the civilization of Bengal (clearly implied as Hindu) had reached the pinnacle of culture and achievement and the roots of the current poverty and decay from these heights are clearly the Muslim invasion and subjugation of the nation to Muslim rule (Chatterjee 93-94).

Hindu revivalist movements also wrestled with the need to reform and regenerate Hindu society, whose "glorious ancient heritage" was at odds with the present poverty and decay of the country. Various revivalist groups and leaders offered their own explanations and solutions. In Bengal, the writer and playwright Bankimchandra Chattopadyay recast Krishna (the mythic 8th incarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu) as "ideal man, culture-hero and nation builder," the mystical Brahmo Samaj movement took root and attracted large gatherings as did the mystical Dakshineshwar saint Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and his disciple Swami Vivekananda who criticized social reform efforts as "elitist and inspired by alien models and [encouraged] replacing it [with] the ideal of social service," (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 72). The revivalism that took place in Maharashtra was specifically more Brahamanical and aimed at renewing and maintaining the old order, while areas of Punjab and the Western United Provinces were influenced by the Arya Samaj which combined critique of existing Hindu practices with a call for Hindu religious supremacy. The Arya Samaj and numerous other Hindu revivalist organizations that emerged during this period did espouse attitudes which were openly communal and anti-Muslim. They often drew upon claims of the Muslim tyranny of the past and a "medieval dark age" (similar to Chakrabarti's above) from which India had slowly emerged following British rule, and must continue emerging from. In response, "Muslim intellectuals were soon developing their own variety of vicarious nationalism, glorifying precisely the period and figures (like Aurangzeb) abused by the Hindus and evoking nostalgic feelings for the lost glories of Islam on a world scale" (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 84-85).

In tandem with the reform movements of the late 1800s, the libraries of modern Indian literature began to grow. These modern novels and plays drew upon Sanskrit and Western influences for form, but increasingly upon regional culture for content. The development of regional literatures caused a differential rise to prominence of linguistic vernaculars through regional literature and newspaper print culture, and often reinforced regional and communal differences among the population (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 84). Tamil literature, for example, began to develop an anti-Brahmanical note which had the potential to and was encouraged by some British officials to develop into anti-North Indian sentiment as well (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 85), sowing the seeds for Tamil regionalism at the same time. An example with more violent historical consequences was the gradual Sanskritization[13] and creation of literary Hindi, which was closely linked to the Hindu revivalist movements of the late 19th century, and often expressed overtly anti-Muslim sentiment (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 85). The campaign to replace Urdu with "Hindi" gradually succeeded. Prior to this campaign, however, Urdu was the traditional language of polite culture throughout north India (even across lines of religious identification) and maintained its dominance in newspaper circulation and print publishing, doubling that of Hindi as late as 1881-90. Though this "highly Sanskritized Hindi…later sought by some enthusiasts to be given the stature of the 'national' language, was really quite far removed from the various popular vernaculars of the region," it did have a certain populist, anti-elite appeal, and the "differences of script and language came to be progressively identified with differences in religion, embedding communalism at a very deep level in the popular consciousness" and increasingly through the semiotic power of the vernacular script to represent membership in two different imagined communities (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 85).

This period of growth in print-culture which reinforced regional, national and communal identities is marked by Indians using the very technology and new cultural forms which spread from Europe to begin retelling the stories of their origin in their own terms, a process which marks the dawn of national consciousness and the national movement itself in India. Common plots emerge in the Hindu intellectual community that praise the ancient Hindu glory of centuries ago, bemoan the dark ages of foreign rule, and appreciate deliverance by the British but still recognize that the achievement of

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[13] The intentional replacement of Arabic and Persian vocabulary in literary Hindi with Sanskrit terms, and use of the Sanskrit Devanagiri script in place of the Arab-Persian script of Urdu.

a glorious Hindu (and Indian) future required deliverance from the British themselves[14]. Needless to say, such historical narratives (which came to replace mythical narratives of history based on Divine grace accrued through dharma) were clearly alienating, if not offensive, to Muslim intellectuals as well as extant syncretist popular customs. A similar rise of fundamentalism occurred within Indian Islam (criticizing and ostracizing less dogmatic sects like Sufism), further demonstrating a growing rift between the two major religious communities. (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 76).

3. Growth of Bilingual "Middle-Class"

Sarkar estimates that the total number of English-educated Indians was approaching 50,000 by the 1880s based on matriculation statistics (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 65). Over the next two to three decades the number of Indians studying English would increase to "505,000 by 1907, while the circulation of English-language newspapers climbed from 90,000 in 1885 to 176,000 in 1905 (J.R. McLane, qtd. in *Modern India,* 65). These statistics were not without sharp regional disparities in terms of access to education, the high competition for which tended to exacerbate provincial tensions, especially as "English education increasingly became the sole path to good jobs" (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 66). Differential development was a fact of life as evidenced by a high concentration of "educated natives" around the old Presidency regions of Madras, Bengal and Bombay, in sharp contrast to other areas (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 66). Though this bilingual middle class was a small minority of the total Indian population, it managed to establish contacts across the country, a process facilitated by English-medium education, the growth of the railways, and the fact that Western educated professionals often found work outside their home regions (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 66), thus reinforcing their membership in a common imagined community through shared characteristics based on their participation in the same pilgrimages. These pilgrimages initially had slight regional variations as each Presidency possessed its own sphere of influence and institutions of higher learning. As time progressed, however, it became increasingly common for the education phase of the pilgrimage to occur in England, where many future Indian nationalists were sure to develop a feeling of common identity premised on characteristics that transcended regional, communal and religious differences.

As Anderson claims (118-119) Western education did serve to both expose Indians to a set of ideas and concepts (especially from the recent history of national revolutions) which were not otherwise

available and accessible to these groups, and alienate these middle-class groups from their own cultural roots as they were learning and operating via a foreign linguistic and cultural medium (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 66). As the middle-class intelligentsia made their pilgrimages together and saw the similarities among themselves, they began to formally express this shared membership in various imagined communities by creating associations. As mentioned earlier, the identities represented by various associations often overlapped and emphasized loyalties at various levels from caste and religious to regional and national identities. One of the earliest and by far the most politically successful of these organizations was the Indian National Congress, formed in 1885.

It is telling that analysis of the socioeconomic roots of the middle-class intelligentsia shows a disconnect "between broadly bourgeois ideals derived from…the West, and a predominantly non-bourgeois social base," (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 67). In Bengal, for example, the emerging middle class places itself between the landlords and the laborers and seeks its model and example in the myths of the European middle class that was so crucial (according to their Western education) in the movements that precipitated the modern age, yet themselves, being of the professional class, were often connected to intermediate land tenures, on whose revenue they partially depended for income. The middle class in other regions like Madras and Maharashtra showed, with some regional disparity in the details of the system itself, similar connections of the rising Western educated middle-class to landholding tenures and rent-collecting rights (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 68-69). This contradiction between bourgeois ideals and more traditional socioeconomic bases set limits on the extent to which this class of nationalist leaders would espouse more radical thought and action on issues of agrarian and land reform (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 68), as radical reform programs tended to contravene the interests of this group who, at least in part, depended on land revenues.

4. Seeds of Discontent - Racial Tensions, Economic Exploitation and the Initial Congress Platform

Racial attitudes, especially those which became enshrined and enforced by the colonial state, and the economic exploitation of the Indian subcontinent's resources to fuel the growth and development of Britain grew to be significant points of contention for the growing educated Indian middle-class which observed a stark disparity between the Western Enlightenment ideals and daily reality of racial inequality and exploitation under colonial rulers. Racially drawn distinctions between colonial and native were apparent in the practice of the law (what Chatterjee refers to as the "Rule of

Colonial Difference") as in the case of Illbert Bill Affair, which involve the issue of whether Indian judges could try Europeans in Indian courts[15] (Chatterjee 20-21). Racism towards Indians tends to have been worse coming from colonial and British government officials of more conservative leanings (liberal officials were often favored by the Indian National Congress for their inclination to be open to hearing and acknowledging Indian demands for greater representation and civil rights). The caving of the British Raj to the fury of the Anglo-Indian Community of planters, traders and lawyers during the Illbert Bill seems to have reinforced the sentiment among the Indian middle-class community that they did not yet hold the full rights of citizenship within their own native lands. Though the Anglo-Indian furor over the Illbert Bill represents a flash point of racial discrimination, Imperial policies and attitudes of discriminations had been institutionalized for quite some time: from the availability of the posts within the Indian civil service for educated Indians to the class of railway car even the most educated Indians were allowed to travel in (Sarkar, *Beyond Nationalist Frames*, 23-25)[16]. As Chatterjee notes:

> Several attempts were made in the 1870s to tamper with recruitment and service
> regulations [regarding entry into the civil service, which ought to have been through
> nonarbitrary competitive academic examinations] in order to first keep out Indians, and
> then to split the bureaucracy into an elite corps primarily reserved for the British and a
> subordinate service for Indians. (Chatterjee 20)

With British rule in came a number of Anglo-Indians (people of British origin born or residing in British India) to occupy the highest positions within the Government of the British Raj. The actions and attitudes of this community were highly consequential as they were the faction of British society that interacted with Indian society on a daily basis, often as agents enforcing racist policies and attitudes sanctioned by many British government officials, a tendency (whether written in by law or not) that interestingly arose from the peculiar identity Anglo-Indians themselves came to possess:

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[15] The Illbert Bill caused a significant uproar among the Anglo-Indian community in India, which acting on the commonly accepted racial attitudes of the day, would not stand for the possibility that Europeans could be tried by judges of native origin, no matter the merits of the individual judge (Chatterjee 20-21).

[16] Epitomized in the opening scene of Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*, in which the protagonist (played by Sir Ben Kingsley) is thrown out of a train for sitting in a first class seat (in spite of being in possession of a first class ticket) while travelling by train in South Africa. The insult of this moment (among many others) is said to have remained with Gandhi and motivated his civil rights work in South Africa, for which he gained the notoriety and respect that accompanied him back to India. (Parekh *12*)

Anglo-Indian society defined itself in opposition to the home country as well as in opposition to India…the community became a unit, increasingly separate from the mother country…To maintain the self-image which justified their possession of colonized lands, the Anglo-Indians needed to uphold the values of reason and civilization those values associated with British rule which differentiated them from their subjects. But to control their Indian dominions, to suppress insurrection and sustain the colonial order, they engaged in actions which would clearly be regarded by the home country as less than civilized. (Fhlathúin 68)

The perceived need to take such cruel, uncivilized actions in order to maintain order were no doubt reinforced by memories of the 1857 Mutiny, memories which maintained a sense of insecurity towards the rebellious potential residing within the subordinate Indian population. This insecurity and fear helped build personality cults around rulers like the Lawrence brothers (Governors of Punjab) and the Punjab style of government which combined control by force and the need to inspire fear within the native population with knowledge of Indian (or Oriental) ways and a clear assumption of moral right. All these themes, reflected and reinforced by the literature of such prominent Anglo-Indian writers as Rudyard Kipling show clear parallels in the worst civil and human rights abuses by agents of British rule, all which served to antagonize the Indian intelligentsia[17] (Fhlathúin 68).

In terms of the economic relations of India to Britain, there can be little doubt of the immense utility of Indian economic resources in ensuring British economic hegemony throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th century:

By the late nineteenth century, imperial control was certainly crucial for the effective integration of India into the capitalist world economy as supplier of foodstuff and raw materials to, and as a market for manufactured exports of, the industrialized West and, most notably, of Britain…India maintained a trade surplus with these other parts of the capitalist world…precisely with the country with which British deficits were increasing. (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century,* 198)

Furthermore, the "manpower resources of [India], extracted easily for military service through poverty, compensated for Britain's own deficiencies in terms of a big standing army. Maintained at the cost of

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[17] A prime example is the action of General Dyer who ordered the massacre of civilian Punjabi villagers in the enclosure of Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar as a way of "producing a moral effect" during the Rowlatt Satyagraha in 1919 (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 191).

Indian revenues, the British Indian army was repeatedly sent on colonial adventures far removed from Indian borders, and later participated on a very big scale in the two World Wars," (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century,* 198). Desire on behalf of the British to increasingly control forest resources led the colonial state to enclose what was previously held as the commons, "[imposing] a rigid regime of forest laws, by which age-old customary uses of forests for a variety of everyday purposes - by hunting-gathering, pastoral, and poorer sections of peasant communities - were suddenly blocked and transformed into 'crimes'," (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century,* 200-201) a key example where colonial avarice reinforced native oppression. Other cases of the exploitation of Indian resources included the construction of the Indian railroads where profits accrued in large part to British and European investors, while "railway costs…were met in significant part from Indian revenues, [which ensured base-level profits for British investors] at the expense of Indian taxpayer," (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century,* 199).

It was to some of these inequalities between colony and metropole that nationalists like Dadabhai Naoroji, M.G. Ranade, G.V. Joshi and R.C. Dutt were responding with the "Drain Theory," a systemic critique of the colonial economy which focused on the paradox of a its massive Indian export surplus in the midst of pervasive and persistent nature of mass poverty in India by claiming that this surplus was "continually 'drained' away to Britain through office and unofficial remittances," preventing adequate capital from being directed to address problems of poverty and underdevelopment in India. This, combined with the import of British manufactures (textiles, especially), commercialization of agriculture, and excessive taxation which characterized colonial economic policy, was destroying Indian rural village economies, thus miring the Indian people in poverty (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 80-81; *India in the Long Twentieth Century,* 199). These early nationalists and their students came to cross paths at various points along the routes of the pilgrimages that they participated in because of the peculiarity of their circumstances, as educated Indians[18], and it was they who came to form the nucleus of the first Indian National Congress.

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[18] Dadabhai Naoroji, who by the late 1860s and early 1870s had settled in England as a "businessman-cum-publicist" would influence and mentor a number of "fellow nationals" from Bombay and Calcutta in London for purposes of higher education (studying for law or the Indian Civil Service Exam). It is worthwhile to note this common pattern among many leaders of the nationalist movement (Gandhi, Nehru, Aurobindo Ghosh among them) who shared the common experience of having travelled to the colonial metropole for purposes of higher education.

It was to address grievances related to issues of racial discrimination and unjust material inequity that the Western-educated middle-class of India formed its initial platform asking the reform of economic policies (like "drain of wealth"), increased jobs for Indians in the Civil Service, and the implementation of more representative Institutions (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century*, 203). The entry of the Indian middle-class into political affairs in the form of the Indian National Congress (marking the first successful "all-India" meeting of this group) began a series of confrontations that evolved the nationalist platform and British policy towards nationalist agitation over the next 70 years. Over the next three generations, the nationalist platform and techniques would change from one based primarily on winning the support of public opinion, the British government, and officials in the Government of India (the same Dadabhai Naoroji mentioned above made regular trips between India and Britain and even held an MP seat in the British House of Commons) to one based increasingly on mass agitation in India. It is important to note that this entry into politics was not the first instance of confrontation or revolt against the British, but that before the formation of the Indian National Congress (with the debatable exception of the 1857 Rebellion) conflicts contesting British power were "localized, and often directed against the immediate oppressors, who in most cases would be other, more privileged Indians," (Sarkar, *India in the Long Twentieth Century*, 203 f.n.9).

C. Nationalist Evolution and Emergence

Throughout the Major Periods of Nationalist uprising it is possible to see a number of common patterns and themes emerge. First, the uprising of each period is instigated by British policy which is seen as an injustice by the middle-class of educated Indians often because the decision significantly affects Indians, but is made in the absence of Indian input into the decision-making process. In other words, the injustice is perceived as one of "legislation without representation", contradicting the bourgeois ideals which these middle class individuals were infused with during their Western-education and in many cases had come to admire about the West. Secondly, within the movement conflicts arose within it regarding methodology. In the Swadeshi movement this conflict is conspicuous and manifests in the conflict between the younger Extremist and older Moderate wings of the Indian National Congress. During Rowlatt Satyagraha and the Non-Cooperation Movement (NCM), conflict occurred over attempts to maintain largely nonviolent methods of protest and to conform the protests to a pre-established set of issues. At this point in the evolution of the nationalist movement, Congress's legitimacy was strong and uncontested, due in large part to the reputation of and also the rumors (often of magico-religious nature) that accompanied Gandhi. During Rowlatt and the NCM, Gandhi, wanting to

show as united a front as possible, reaffirmed his opposition to "no-revenue" campaigns time after time out of concern that it might alienate landlords. Regional variations of this protest by subaltern peoples show a more creative interpretation of Gandhi's message, often contradicting the carefully negotiated All-Indian Congress platform.

Within these movements, it is possible to see some degree of unity among the Indian people across the provinces of British India. During Swadeshi this unity was limited mostly to just the educated middle-class intelligentsias of the major urban areas, while the Non-Cooperation movements expanded the movement and shows significant popular participation. This contrast is significant as both involved the use of similar methodology (e.g. the boycott of British goods, the promotion of "constructive" programs to develop rural areas, and popular protest) and somewhat similar platforms, with the notable difference that Gandhi had not yet entered the arena at the time of the Swadeshi movement. In each case of nationalist uprising, violent tactics of repression employed by the British often lead to more violent retaliation on the part of Indian protestors. Quite often extreme cases of persecution and repression by the British, were often followed by periods of strong cross-communal unity in the recognition of a position of common oppression by the British rulers, as in the case of the massacre of Sikh civilians by British forces in Amritsar at Jallianwalla Bagh in 1921, which remained one of the key grievances a year later when the Non-Cooperation Movement was launched.

Finally, it is possible to see a growing gap between Congress and the subaltern classes of peasants or laborers (depending on the region). While an initial bridge was made by Gandhi, the understanding of the grievances of these groups came to be less understood by Congress Party leadership than by organizers working with peasants, thus revealing a key power dynamic between the educated elites and illiterate peasants and laborers (whose participation was crucial to building powerful movements) between who the message and vision of a new India was contested throughout the period of nationalist struggle. While the seeds of this gradual disenchantment are observable in the Non-Cooperation Movement which marks the first organized, large-scale anti-colonial movement, they are most apparent in the Quit India movement of 1942, and increasingly in the years leading up to independence in 1947.

1. Swadeshi Movement 1905-1908

The incident which precipitated the Swadeshi movement was the announcement in July 1905 of the Partition of the Bengal Presidency. Though evidence exists that the partition plan was pursued by

the Government of India for reasons of administrative convenience, its development behind closed doors in meetings about which Indians were completely unaware, led to its interpretation in nationalist circles as yet another example of British "divide and rule" policies. That the announcement came during a period of "strong regional unity and growing self-confidence and pride," (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 109) in the Bengali community signifies how much the notion of Bengali identity had evolved to develop an attachment to that area as a culturally unified whole (in spite of growing communal rifts). This partition plan seemed yet another example of the racial discrimination and white arrogance that had come to characterize their position of subordination under British rule, and in some eyes, the failures of the Moderate agitation of the last twenty years (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 106). The concurrent aggressive rise to power of Japan, an Oriental nation, to contest European power on its own terms, certainly made a strong impression on these young nationalists.

Bengal was the center of Swadeshi uprising with smaller movements inspired in other areas. Within Bengal, the Swadeshi movement was comprised of three distinct trends. First there were groups calling for "Constructive" Swadeshi: to reject the "mendicant politics" in favor of rebuilding villages through native industries, national schools and general improvements of village infrastructure. These policies would be mirrored in Gandhi's somewhat more successful Constructive program two decades later. A second trend was a growth of political "extremism" calling for constant agitation for Swaraj ("Self-rule") through boycotts of British goods and government posts as well as civil disobedience of unjust laws and potentially towards armed struggle if British repression went too far[19]. Except for a strict call for nonviolent techniques, the platform of this movement strongly reflects that of Gandhi's two decades later, which notably would also rule out moves to abolish or reform unjust taxes and rents so as to forestall losing the support of landowning zamindars (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 114). Third, was the strong infusion of Hindu revivalist overtones, largely centered on the religiosity and patriotism festivals and temple worship, into Swadeshi politics and rhetoric. This led to the couching of the Swadeshi struggle in terms of an aggressive Hindu revivalism and explains the lack of support by other sections of society, especially the Muslim community (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 114-115).

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[19] "If…the chowkidar, the constable, the deputy and the munsiff and the clerk, not to speak of the sepoy, all resign their respective functions, feringhee rule in the country may come to an end in a moment" (The *Sandhya* 21 November 1906, qtd. In Sarkar, *Modern India*, 114)

During the Swadeshi movement a new set of tools for nationalist agitation began to be used, but in many cases, their use did not last beyond the duration of the movement. For example, a volunteer movement of samitis began in Bengal, and while initially open societies, they began to disappear or transform into underground terrorist societies after the first round of repression by the British in 1908 and 1909 (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 120). Furthermore, there were a number of cases of intentional communal oppression facilitated through Swadeshi methods, as in the case Hindu landlords using boycotts to pressure Muslims vendors out of local markets. Far too common, unfortunately, was a rise in communal tension and outbreaks of violence, its target the immediate oppressor in the social hierarchy, and often catalyzed along lines of communal or socioeconomic distinction (e.g. Muslim attacking the local Hindu gentry, traders and moneylenders) (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature*, 281). British propaganda claiming more jobs for Muslims in a partitioned Bengal certainly heightened communal divisions in Bengal by further swaying upper and middle-class Muslims against the Swadeshi movement (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 121). The most crucial shortcoming of the Swadeshi movement, however, in contrast with to future Gandhian movements was its failure to create mass action, remaining limited to the educated and landholding classes on levels of identification across socioeconomic and religious lines:

> Despite much talk about the need for mass awakening, the Swadeshi movement of 1905-9 seldom got beyond the confines of Hindu upper caste bhadralok groups…The main centres of upsurge reveal a strong correlation with the presence of large number of educated upper caste Hindu gentry…the peasant seldom if ever appears in Swadeshi plays [even in village settings]…the strikes led of unions formed were mainly of white-collar employees of printing presses and railways or of Bengali workers in jute mills," (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature*, 278).

The plantations and mines of rural areas were left largely unaffected. Further evidence of this disconnect is apparent in an unpublished "Note on serious disturbances and political trouble in India from 1907 to 1917" of the Government of India itself which lists few incidents from the Swadeshi period of having a mass character (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature*, 283).

From a country-wide perspective, because the Swadeshi movement was not based on a nationally unified platform, the participation outside of Bengal depended on local and regional factors occurred most strongly in the South, in Bombay and in parts of Punjab. There was a significant amount of sympathy with Bengal in Madras, especially in areas of Andhra and Tirunelveli district in the South. In

Andra, this movement received a significant catalyst when Bipin Chandra Pal, a well known Bengali nationalist toured the area. Repressive measures against students for participation in the movement led to student strikes following the tour. The solidarity with the movement in Bengal "contributed heavily to a new interest in Telegu language, literature and history…and after the decline of Extremism…[leaders] began organizing the Andra Mahasabha to demand a separate linguistic state for the Telegu-speaking people," (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 130) a clear case of national solidarity intersecting with and reinforcing ties to a shared regional, linguistic and cultural community. Maharashtra and Punjab, under the influence of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Lai (of the Arya Samaj) also participated in varying capacities, with more extreme terrorist activities following British repression. On the other hand, parts of British India like the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa and Assam largely remained in cooperation with the British government.

The split in the Indian National Congress regarding methods of agitation reflected the conflicted soul of the nationalist movement, on the one hand frustrated by the lack of tangible changes achieved by 20 years of formal cooperation with the British government and on the other hand the fearing the potential loss of opportunities to gain further concessions from the British. In the meetings of Congress throughout this period, "Extremist" platforms were advanced and gained considerable support. In the April 1908 Allahabad Convention, however, the resulting constitution "fixed the Congress methods as 'strictly constitutional' and limited to bring about 'steady reform of the existing system of administration' and…restricted delegate election…[indicating every effort] to deliberately exclude Extremists from future sessions," (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 137). Part of the reason Moderate nationalists within Congress worked so hard to scuttle the Extremist platform and control was the expectations of coming reforms with the election of the Liberal party to power in England, from whom they expected the ability to negotiate better concessions. Divisions and growing rifts within the movement of factions willing to compromise and those steadfast in their opposition of the colonial power become apparent again towards the end of the Quit India movement and indicate distinct and competing visions of a new Indian nation among its members, a resistance of sorts to one simple, "official" vision largely developed in the minds of the moderate Western intelligentsia.

2. Rowlatt Satyagraha (1919) and Non-Cooperation Movement (1921-22)

    a. The Rowlatt Satyagraha

The Constitutional reforms of 1917 and 1918 had provided increased representation for the Indian intelligentsia. The administrative motives for these changes are revealing, however, as they often rose out of imperial difficulty of maintaining a large centralized bureaucracy and from a recognized "need for a wider circle of Indian collaborators," which would give Indians more input in the process, while at the same time retaining control of vital departments of law and order, and finance, instruments of state control, under British power (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 167). Throughout World War I, Britain drew heaving upon India for resources, both economically and militarily, reinforcing drain of wealth theories and perspectives held by nationalists and making increasingly apparent the contradictions between Indian and British interests. What sparked this period of nationalist action, however, was the passage of the Rowlatt Acts, which were rushed through the Imperial Legislative Council in early 1919 "against the unanimous opposition of all non-official Indian members…[making] war-time restrictions on civil rights permanent through a system of special courts and detention without trial for a maximum of two years (even for actions like mere possession of tracts declared to be seditious)," (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 187). The initial plan of a mass all-India protest, which Gandhi suggested and organized, consisted of intentionally courting arrest by publicly selling such "seditious" literature. Towards the end of March Gandhi expanded it to become an "all-India hartal," an act, which at the time, neither Congress nor Gandhi were organizationally prepared enough to conduct in the envisioned orderly fashion (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 187-188). It became increasingly difficult to keep the movement nonviolent, especially after hartals in Punjab led to the enforcement of martial law[20], the deportation of local leaders, and the escalation of violent acts which culminated in the massacre of a peaceful unarmed crowd in the enclosed ground of Jallianwalla Bagh in Amritsar (official estimates listed 379 killed). The crowds largely consisted of villagers from neighboring areas who had come into town for a fair and were unaware of the ban on public meetings[21]. As word of this brutal killing and the restraining orders placed on Gandhi's

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[20] Martial law was enacted in part because of the size of the hartals and the significant cross-communal unity among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, uncharacteristic of Punjab both before and after the Rowlatt Satyagraha (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 190).

[21] The injustice, racism and cruelty of this event have been seared into the Indian historical consciousness through numerous films: from Richard Attenborough's "Gandhi" to the more recent Bollywood film "The Legend of Bhagat Singh".

travel to Delhi and Punjab spread, violence across north India escalated leading to increasingly violent confrontations with police. This growing escalation of violence led Gandhi to call off the Rowlatt Satyagraha on April 18th, only 5 days after the massacre at Jallianwalla Bagh (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 191-194).

In terms of social composition, the anti-Rowlatt Acts movement was largely urban "with lower middle class groups and artisans…more important than industrial workers," (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 189). This indicates the ability for the heavily Gandhian-influenced Congress to expand the base of its popular movement and the popular protests were also notable, especially in Punjab, for the unity across communal lines. In the grander scheme of nationalist movements, the anti-Rowlatt Satyagraha proved a short, but powerful learning experience for the Indian National Congress revealing their lack of sufficient organization. It also revealed an uglier side to British military repression and British rule[22], marking a turning point for many who once identified themselves as "moderate" nationalists and were, to some extent, in support of British rule[23].

b. Non-Cooperation Movement

The Non-Cooperation Movement, which followed the anti-Rowlatt Act Satyagraha was arguably the largest and most successful civil disobedience movement of its time, and certainly the most effective nationalist agitation up until that point in time. For the two years that it lasted, it extended the issues and sprit behind the Rowlatt Satyagraha, and presented the British government with a clear platform of demands and conducted itself with significantly greater organization than before. Key to this success was the reorganization of the Indian National Congress along regional and linguistic lines (linguistic lines were more clear lines of common cultural identification and the reorganization of town committees allowed the Congress party to more effectively work within villages and districts), and the creation of a

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[22] In the aftermath of Rowlatt, Indian nationalists were enraged at the failure of the British Government to bring General Dyer to justice[22]. In fact, quite the contrary, he was rewarded £26,000 from Morning Post, presented a gilt sword and designated "Defender of the Empire," (Keay 476).

[23] John Keay describes the reaction of the previously pro-British Motilal Nehru (father of Jawaharlal Nehru) thus "…The British were no longer worthy of respect. Anand Bhawan, the NEhrus' palatial residence in Allahabad, was stripped of its European furniture. Motilal abandoned his Savile Row suits and took to wearing the homespun cottons recommended by Gandhi. A great bonfire of the dresses, ties, boas and homburgs discarded by the Nehru clan would be the earliest memory of granddaughter Indira, born in 1917…" (477).

small 15-member Working Committee to serve as the Party's executive head and improve its effectiveness.

The movement included a program of gradual boycott, beginning with government titles, civil service and government jobs (including that of the policy and army) and finally the nonpayment of government taxes. The middle-class intelligentsia of professionals, government workers and students were encouraged to give up all such work and instead take up the "Charkha", the traditional Indian spinning wheel, not only as a symbol of solidarity with artisans and swadeshi enterprise, but also to cultivate greater self-sufficiency (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 204). The Non-Cooperation Movement served to voice three major grievances of the Indian people against the British government: the cruel repression in Punjab (and lack of justice sought afterwards) during the Rowlatt Satyagraha, the "Khilafat issue"[24], and the need for "Swaraj". The last of these issues was voiced in the vaguest and most open-ended terms, merely with Gandhi's promise of "Swaraj within a year," a factor which would lead to differential interpreted by different communities (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 196-197). These issues were not simply grievances limited to the community of Indian nationalists, however, as "a kind of populist groundswell [was] virtually forcing more radical courses on both Khilafat and Congress leaders," (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 198). The period between the Rowlatt Satyagraha and the Non-Cooperation movement evidence a strong strike wave and the coalescence of some of the first trade unions in India. Interestingly, in the case of unions, the social roots of the leaders were middle class. General strikes were, however, not a part of the official Non-Cooperation movement tactics. Gandhi's emphasis on nationally unifying issues that cut across communal and class divisions, especially with incorporation of the Khilafat issue, and addressed current grievances of the Indian population against the British government brought in strong support for the movements.

Participation in the initial boycott was strong at first, especially with students leaving government schools and colleges (professionals and political office boycott was less comparable), but began declining after the first wave. As enthusiasm and involvement began to lag, the All-India

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[24]A grievance centered on the reneged promise by the British government to seek respectable terms of peace with the Ottoman Empire following World War I. This was a significant issue for many devout Indian Muslims as Istanbul and the reign of the Ottoman Turks there represented the supreme political and religious institution by Muslim law. With the defeat of the Ottomans in World War I, many Indian Muslims were visibly concerned about the future of the Muslim Caliphate, a fear which was confirmed with the humiliating and very harsh terms of the Treaty of Sevres in 1920 (Keay 479).

Congress Committee (AICC) in July extended the movement to include the boycott of foreign cloth (with public bonfires), the visit of the Prince of Wales, voluntary courting of arrest by the masses to flood the prisons (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 205). This point marked the significant shift (especially in the eyes of the British) in the target of Gandhi's appeals from the intelligentsia to the masses. This courting of the masses by Gandhi during the Non-Cooperation Movement turned out to be successful and proved the ability of the Indian National Congress to incite mass, country-wide unrest in the eyes of the British. Whereas news of Gandhi's appeal to the masses in 1921 brought with it a potential opportunity "of bringing intellectuals and persona of property more closely to us," (Viceroy Reading, qtd in Sarkar, *Modern India*, 205), by the 1940s, the British had come to fear the power of the Indian National Congress to incite public anger and revolt [25].

Incorporation of the masses grew the movement, but inclusion of the masses brought with it more volatile forms of rebellion, which while inspired by Gandhi, tended to deviate from the Congress platform. The violent outbreaks escalated until the shocking Chauri Chaura incident in February 1922 (where, following persecution of the local volunteers by the police, villages burnt alive 22 policemen), after which Gandhi abruptly called off the Non-Cooperation movement. The bulk of the masses followed suit, and reconciled the decision and abrupt abandoning of their cause within a millenarian framework, but numerous allies within Congress questioned the decision and the timing, creating a political rift within Congress. The Hindu-Muslim unity of the period quickly fell apart into communal riots. Within a month, the British arrested Gandhi and at his request for "the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is deliberate crime," (Gandhi, qtd in Sarkar, *Modern India,* 198) sentenced him to jail for six years.

c. Rumor and the Subaltern

The Non-Cooperation Movement was marked by significant unity and growth of the nationalist movement, extended and first incorporating the masses in an increasingly organized manner. New social group and methods were brought in and began the process of being refined to suit nationalist purposes, which were evolving to an increasingly strong call for complete independence from Britain. The intensity of the civil disobedience programs and, in many cases, revolts seriously challenged

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[25] During the Cabinet mission in 1946, Viceroy Lord Wavell writes in his journal about "the necessity to avoid the mass movement or revolution which it is in the power of the Congress to start," (qtd in Sarkar, *Modern India*, 428)

Britain's ability to maintain law and order within its colony. The Non-Cooperation movement truly was a national movement in both geographic extent and its transcendence of literate, educated circles past nationalist actions had largely been limited to. To understand the nature of this transcendence and its consequences, one must consider the manner and ways in which Subaltern groups interpreted the Gandhian message. More revealing is constant opposition from the General body of Congress to specific types of resistance (strikes and anti-revenue calls) and aggravation at the loss of control represented by the episodes of violent escalation. This indicates a nascent urge within the Congress to control the movement, and urge to control that fails to understanding motives and rationale behind acts of rebellion by subaltern peoples.

Gandhi's appeal to the masses incited a large scale revolt, as it communicated to and engaged peasants; it moved the membership of the national movement beyond the educated circles it had previously been confined to. Peasant and tribal movements, often millenarian in nature, proclaiming the coming of Swaraj and "Gandhi Raj" (inspiring forest incursions and non-payment of taxes) along with cross-communal unity (Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity in Punjab, Hindu-Muslim unity in Bengal) characterize "subaltern" India throughout the period of the Non-Cooperation movement. Active political awakening and inspiration of revolts in the south speak to the truly country-wide nature of the movement, and increasingly (with labor strikes and an increasingly anti-landlord tilt to peasant movements) to the decentralization of this movement from the control of any single figure or group.

Key to this process of creative re-interpretation was the symbolic value and manner of communication, as well as components of the Gandhian message itself which was couched in symbolic Hindu religious imagery and language. Sarkar's analysis in *Conditions and Nature of Subaltern Militancy in Bengal* shows that there was a strong combination of economic and religiously oriented factors which helped create "the multitude of mass initiatives in the immediate post-[World War I] years…bear[ing] ample witness to the success of the nationalists in breaking through to and effectively mobilizing the masses," (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 286). From Sarkar's analysis of Subaltern Militancy in Bengal, some of the strongest factors that figured into the militancy of peasant groups were rumors that spoke of a coming collapse of the British Raj and the beginning of Gandhi Raj (perhaps fuelled in some manner by Gandhi's declaration of "Swaraj within a year") and of the spiritual and magical powers and protection which Gandhi and his followers possessed. Sarkar categorizes three types of rumors of Gandhi which spread during this period: 1) that Gandhi and his close associates are superhuman and have magical powers, 2) that the magical power was passed on to Gandhi's followers and minor local

organizations, and 3) the millenarian vision of sudden total transformation which was on its way (Gandhi-Raj). Within this millenarian framework is the belief that the people must be ready and willing in order for the awaited change to come. Sarkar surmises that following the flashpoints of popular uprising, even after Gandhi had abruptly called off the movement, his legitimacy continued and survived in no small part due to the religious context within which these peasants viewed Gandhi and the movement he led:

> Part of the strength of a religious faith is derived from the kind of built-in explanation it tends to contain about failure. If the devotee does not obtain the specific benefits he has been praying for, the fault lies not in the deity but in himself. He has not observed the rites properly, or in the true spirit required of him. A millennial movement, once the flash-point of maximum hope in immediate deliverance has come and gone, can still survive therefore, though in a transformed 'introversionist' manner, emphasizing internal salvation through self-purification…Gandhi himself made ample and very effective use of this aspect of religious faith, fixing the responsibility for the retreats he so often ordered on the inadequacies of his followers with respect to issues like no-violence or untouchability," (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 316).

That Gandhi continually observed practices of self-purification like fasting to prepare himself spiritually for such tasks only served to reinforce this millenarian perspective (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 316).

Another crucial aspect to consider is the penetration of Gandhi into the inner domain of these subaltern classes, rather evident in the perception of Gandhi as one with magical power. The communication of this accessibility of Gandhi came not just from his message, but also from the symbols that Gandhi clothed himself him. With his homespun cloth and very simple manner of dress, Gandhi referenced the Hindu sanyasi or holy men who embodies the principles of "renunciation, austerity, and sacrifice," ones whose aura and blessings are open to all people and "devotion to whom cut across barriers of caste and creed" (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 315). This is a clear contrast with the Hindu imagery referenced in the earlier periods Swadeshi movement where the Hindu ritual and custom that was emphasized were the cults of temple worship, festivals and puja, in which non-Hindus likely did not participate and lower-castes were barred from participating for fears that they might pollute the ritual (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 315).

By the content of these rumors, one can suppose that the generation and use of these symbols, and the manner in which they were communicated across regional and linguistic boundaries was through a basis of commonly shared myths and religious symbols, and in the case of Gandhi conspicuously Hindu ones. Case in point is the fact that identical items can be interpreted to have different meanings dependent on context, as with the interpretation of the Gandhian cap by rural Santal peasants as an amulet of invincibility, contrasted with its use by labor movements to foster trade-union unity (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 319). Rural peasants were not always moved to action on the basis of mere economic grievances. Time and time again, their involvement in mass action during the Indian independence movement depended on gaining access to the inner spiritual domain and communication of a sense of the millenarian urgency of the present moment; that their revolt against the power structure would not be in tandem with the "breakdown of all authority" and with the rise of a new, more just regime, as with the case of rumors of the coming "Gandhi-raj" during the Non-Cooperation Movement (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 307). It was specifically the legitimacy of Gandhi, communicated with an infusion of millenarian religious ideas that allowed this message to be received.

A key example of religiously infused millenarianism combining with patriotism and collective union bargaining "Jute mill workers in the last week of December 1921 demanded an end to the common practice 'to keep three days wages in hand, while paying a week's wages…the workers are in the belief that they will get Swaraj on the 24th,'" (*Amrita Bazar Patrika,* qtd. In Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 296). Other examples where "rumor of imminent Swaraj" played a hand in collective mass action in Bengal include "the famous exodus of 6,000-7,000 coolies from Chargola tea estates in May 1921…the jailbreak of 669 prisoners from Rajshahi…[in March 1921, which had been]preceded by rumors that Gandhi was coming to Rajshahi on 25 March to end British Raj…[,and the] large scale disaffection among the police…A Hindi newspaper quoted a moving statement by one disaffected constable: 'We shall all go home giving up our service and till land and spin charkha and pass our days happily. Mahatmaji has opened out eyes'"(Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 297). In many areas throughout rural Bengal there were movements to abolish taxes and payments of rent, often choosing landed property and owners as the principle targets (300-301), in many cases the no-rent and no-tax movements gradually escaped the power of the Indian National Congress to prevent them. The popular actions in many cases bordered on what was considered "criminal" offenses, targeting oppressors-at-hand, outside of their communities. Sarkar claims that the ability for rumors to move people to action depended on the collective popular mentality towards the perceived breakdown of authority. If, as was

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the case with the Swadeshi movement, the conflict was viewed as simply between the ruling classes, it would likely not draw in masses of rural peasants. In contrast, if it were rumors of a collapse of the old power structure and shift to a new order (as is the case with many millenarian movements), peasant uprisings were likely to follow (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,*307). Popular outbursts continued to occur even after the Non-Cooperation Movement was officially called off. In some areas popular outbursts included reassertion of traditional forest rights. The first community groups appeared in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta after the Non-Cooperation Movement was called off abruptly (Sarkar, *Conditions and Nature,* 304). The result of the Non-Cooperation Movement was an active weakening of the legitimacy and hegemony of the ruling order (304-305). The key point to glean from the vast amounts of evidence is that the masses of India were not largely stirred to action merely by models of identity and nationalism of Western origin, but rather moved to act within a much more millenarian framework in a conflict whose story involved them in an intimate way as the victim of unjust oppression. This perception of Gandhi by vast numbers of peasants was distinct from his perception in circles of the educated intelligentsia; he was in fact operating as a link between two very distinct communities.

d. Conclusion – The Relevance of Gandhi

The Rowlatt Satyagraha and Non-Cooperation Movement differ significantly with the earlier periods of Swadeshi protest, perhaps most crucially because of the Entrance of Gandhi onto the nationalist scene. The entrance of Gandhi into this political landscape and his subsequent interplay among numerous actors is significant because of the reputation that in many ways preceded his return to India. Having worked in the Indian expatriate community in South Africa Gandhi had gained credibility on three levels which would serve his work in India well. First he had succeeded in organizing and running a very disciplined version of nonviolent campaigns (which he called "satyagraha," roughly translated as Truth-force). Secondly by working across communal lines with Muslim counterparts in South Africa he had gained a degree of currency and legitimacy in the eyes of Indian Muslims. Gandhi's partnership with the Khilafat movement and the inclusion of Khilafat grievances in the Non-Cooperation Movement platform served to further build this trust with the Muslim community. Finally, rumors of his reputation and power fighting the British spread throughout India among peasant communities. Having come to India he initially did not engage in nationalist politics at first, but rather began by helping peasants and poor rural communities, winning some victories along the way, which further grew his reputation (Sarkar, Modern India, 178-183). Perhaps a more consequential effect, however, were the very symbols in which he clothed himself and the saint-like discipline that he lived by, which encouraged

many rumors of supposed otherworldly powers that Gandhi and his lieutenants and representatives possessed, and in tellingly rumors of the power in wearing the same symbols as Gandhi. It is instructive to note that so elevated was his reputation among the masses that when "the Mahatma" called off a satyagraha, the bulk of the masses would follow his lead. Research by Sumit Sarkar into the views that many rural Bengali peasants held of Gandhi reveal highly millenarian and religiously infused overtones not just into their perception of him, but also into the movement itself; a factor somewhat goaded by proclamations of "Swaraj within a year" which Gandhi declared at the beginning of the Non-Cooperation Movement, but proclamations that nonetheless ushered in a millenarian mood over much of the country. Cases abound of peasants anticipating the coming "Gandhi Raj" and so reclaiming forest lands in protest of unjust forest laws, running anti-revenue and anti-tax calls (ironically in contradiction with Gandhi's platform) and revolting in myriad other ways. In the case of the Non-Cooperation and subsequent movements, one sees that as the struggles carry on, and the British target the nationalist leaders and "agitators" the movement begins to gradually decentralize with more protests and resistances of systemic injustices by peasants in rapture before the millenarian vision of the coming "Gandhi Raj"

Finally, the Non-cooperation movement exposes a strange dynamic interplay between the nationalist leadership on one hand and the popular masses who were gradually being recruited into the movement. The Pattern that arises, one which would repeat itself in future Gandhian uprisings, is that the people were inspired by the millenarian vision and message of freedom that Gandhi shares with them, but were also come to be deserted by Gandhi when, acting out their respective interpretations of Gandhi's message with respect the oppressive circumstances of their own lives positions, they begin to decentralize the control of the movement. Such was the veneration for Gandhi that when he called off the NCM following Chauri Chaura, much of the country obeyed.

3. Quit India 1942 – Official Nationalism Comes to Congress

By the time of the Quit India movement in 1942, much had changed and different parts of the country were in different stages of development along nationalist lines. Whereas the Swadeshi and Non-Cooperation Movement indicate phases of the initiation and mass mobilization within the evolution of the national movement, the Quit India movement represents the closing phases of the nationalist movement and as such it is possible to note fissures within the movement in this phase of nationalist history.

The strongest centers of conflict "lay in a wide arc across northern India," from areas that had experienced large amount of military activity because they lay directly in the path of a threatened Japanese advance, or because of a history of nationalist agitation in the area and strong organization on the behalf of Kisan Sabhas[26] and the Congress Socialist Party (CSP), which had been increasingly active since the 1930s (Pandey 2). There is further evidence of contention of the role of the Congress party as the umbrella organization that represented the voices and interests of the Indian people as that hegemonic position begins to be challenged by other emerging parties and groups. Not even all the members of the Congress Party supported the Quit India movement: Rajagopalachari, a prominent South Indian member of Congress largely opposed the Quit India movement as did the Communist Party. As a result, Madras and Kerala remain relatively quiet throughout the Quit India movement (Pandey 2). The growing disassociation of the country's Muslims from Congress was also evident in 1942, though this population remained neutral between the choices of Congress and the Muslim League. Even Dalit support was contentious due to splits among Congress and the leadership of the formal dalit community (B.R. Ambedkar), and hesitation at the grassroots level among dalit communities "about [the idea of] joining the rich peasants and small landlords, and the students from a rural or urban petty-bourgeois background who provided the spearhead of the nationalist uprising in 1942," (Pandey 2-3). Pandey characterizes Quit India in 1942 as throwing into the sharpest relief the reality of "Gandhi as the undisputed leader of a movement over which he had little command," a theme which had been foreshadowed during the previous Rowlatt, Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience campaigns(5).

In its Final phase, the Quit India movement transformed into guerilla operations. The outspoken Congress Socialist Party and Quit India leader Jayaprakash Narayan's shifting sentiments are evidence that this transformation of the movement was very much in line with Gandhi's initial message of "do or die" even if Gandhi contradicted himself later by calling off the movement and asking those underground to surrender: "We have declared ourselves independent, and also named the British as an aggressive power; we are, therefore, justified within the terms of the Bombay resolution itself to fight Britain with arms. If this does not accord with Gandhi's principles, that is not my fault," (Narayan, qtd in Pandey 12)[27]. Narayan's views are reflected organizationally in the initial support from the CSP and

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[26] Workers unions

[27] Contrast this with Narayan's earlier stance: "If a national struggle as opposed to sectional, factional or partial (struggles) can be launched by Mahatma Gandhi alone, it is suicidal to fight him. It is necessary to lend him our fullest cooperation and loyalty in everything that is preparatory for struggle," (Narayan, qtd in Pandey 5)

Kisan Sabhas for Congress leadership in the movement, but withdrawal of support as the campaign drew on due to Congress's lack of responsiveness and distance from local needs and sentiment (Pandey 8, 13-14). There was within these groups a simultaneous acceptance of Congress supremacy at a national level and a tacit understanding of the autonomy of their work at the local level (in response to local needs), a result of the uneven and incomplete integration of the Indian economy (and by implication in its culture and its nation-hood) and:

> [the] cultural [and social] divide between the elites and the masses, and not least in long-standing traditions of militant resistance to class and state oppression in one region and another…Developments in the 1930s had strengthened these traditions of local politics in many areas…if the 1920s was the decade of the ascendency of the Congress, the 1930s saw that ascendancy challenged in numerous ways –by the emergence of several new political forces and the resurgence of some older ones. (Pandey 9-10)

Younger generations of nationalists found more militant, radical ideologies appealing and were drawn more closely to work with the CSP or Kisan Sabhas wherein issues like land reform were being raised (Pandey 10-11). Yet again, we observe how the power of the initial message of freedom is internalized by the "people" and overrides later demands of loyalty by the "leaders" of the movement when there leaders themselves have betrayed the very principles they once laid out; what Pandey describes as "instances of different centers of political initiative that had emerged out of the preceding decades of militant nationalist activity," (Pandey 12).

The drive for Congress to maintain control foreshadowed future policies modeled on the Official Nationalism of European dynastic states. Congress retells the story of the 1942 Quit India movement thus:

> In some place the people forgot and fell away from the Congress method of peaceful and non-violent action, but [Congress] realizes that the provocative action of the Government in effecting sudden and widespread arrests of all well-known leaders, and brutal and ruthless repression of peaceful demonstrations, goaded them to rise spontaneously to resist the armed might of an alien Imperialist Power which was trying to crush the spirit of freedom and the passionate desire of the Indian people to gain Independence. (Mansergh, qtd in Pandey 13)

This growing disconnect between the nationalist leaders of Congress and the peasant masses are further evidenced in their personal writings and correspondences: "In his *Discovery of India (1946),* Jawaharlal Nehru wrote of the 'impromptu frenzy of the mob'…Pattabhi Sitaramayya…of how 'people grew insensate and were maddened with fury,'" (Nehru, Sitaramayya, qtd in Pandey 13-14). Pandey makes an astute observation that these descriptions of popular unrest are eerily similar to colonial descriptions of Indian peasant uprisings (Pandey 14). Undoubtedly, Congress made considerable effort to maintain control over the movement and hedge its position as a legitimate "umbrella" group of Indian nationalist interests. Nehru, for example, advises the Bihar Provincial Students Conference in 1945 to "have academic discussion on political matters, but warn you against taking the initiative in the political field. You must look for guidance from the *accepted political party which is the Congress*," (emph. Added, Nehru, qtd in Pandey 14).

Once in command, these positions and exertion of control was only made more clear by policies to censure what the Party, now preparing to become the new Government of India had come to decide was far too sensitive material. Thus, Vallabhbhai Patel, the soon-to-be Home Minister of India writes in 1947 to the Premier of the United Provinces that "the caricature of official activities in the manner reported in the Press at a time when we are in office is open to serious objection. This is likely to affect the morale of the police force which in the present emergency can hardly be considered proper," (Pandey 15). The "caricature" in question was the depiction of atrocities committed by the police in 1942 which had been displayed in Banaras as part of a Congress exhibition. As the implication of "official" turns from "British" to "Indian", so too does the need to preserve the reputation and legitimacy of the "official" government entity.

Furthermore, Congress was increasingly troubled by Communist-inspired uprisings of Punnapra-Vayalar and Telengana in the princely states of Travancore and Hyderabad, respectively, as these revolts sought to overthrow the old dynastic realms, but in a way that was perceived as counterproductive to Congress's efforts to inherit the vestiges of the colonial state and remake the Indian nation according to its own vision, rather than the Communist-inspired one, clear evidence of the emergence and acceptance within Congress circles of an Official nationalism model to remake the new Indian nation and secure its own historical legacy (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 441-446).

4. Towards Independence and Partition

In the post-World War II period popular uprisings across partisan lines occurred from Student movements to the 1946 Royal Indian Mutiny. In both cases, protestors tied or raised the flags of Congress, the Muslim League and the Communities party together as a symbol of unity. In these years, however, both Congress and the Muslim League showed increased opposition to mass actions which occurred outside of their direct purview and control. Part of the reason may have been legitimacy in the eyes of the British. By 1946, Congress had the reputation and the power in British eyes of being able to incite mass movements or revolutions within the country, something Britain, was unwilling to deal with[28]. This legitimacy and improved bargaining position from foreign rulers did not, however, lead Congress to exert or express a more populist platform, but rather encouraged it to condemn and oppose numerous strikes and popular actions occurring throughout the country. These positions were increasingly justified, in the mind of Congress, as facilitating a quick and easy transfer of power. Sarkar points out a key instance when Lord Mountbatten, appointed Viceroy of India to oversee a peaceful transition of power, abandoned a plan (code-name Plan Balkan) generally decentralizing the decision of partition and allowing the princely states to chose to join India, Pakistan or remain independent due to violent opposition by Nehru, "revealing the potential strength of the Congress position, which its leaders repeatedly, failed to use due to their desire for a quick and peaceful accession to power," (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 448-449). Though this point could certainly be debated, it reveals the limits of the idea and concept of an independent India as it had evolved in the mind of Nehru. Though willing to compromise on an India that was partitioned (as would happen with the acceptance of the VP Menon-Patel plan which became the basis for the Indian Independence Act of 1947), Nehru was not willing to see the territory of British become a series of "moth-eaten", multicolored Balkan entities.

Among the various reasons often listed for the partition of Pakistan and India are 1) the obstinate nature of Jinnah and the Muslim League in negotiations with Congress and British envoys, based on the argument that the Muslims were a separate nation in India, 2) the anti-Muslim attitudes of Congress leaders threatened Muslim civil rights in a Hindu-majority India (also central to the argument for separate electorates), and 3) that the Imperial British "divide-and-rule" tactics sought to divide the India they left behind. In truth all of these factors played some role. The British had pursued "divide-and-rule" tactics since they first entered the subcontinent as commercial traders. Separate electorate

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[28] See Footnote 20.

for Muslims and Hindus were created in Punjabi cities as early as the 1800s (Sarkar, *Modern India*, 21). The impetus to create nationwide separate electorates was a decision made by the British (the argument that Hindu and Muslim nations were reinforced in no small part by Britain's own classification and solidification of communal identities through the decenniel censuses which informed British policy) after considerable lobbying in favor of it by the Muslim League. The League's bargaining position was itself improved in no small part by the jailing of Congress Party leadership and MLAs (Members of the Legislative Assembly) during 1942 by the British.

As to whether or not success by Congress threatened the civil rights of Muslims in a Hindu-majority area, there can be little doubt that these fears emerged from almost 50 to 60 years, or more of building communal tensions between these groups which were reinforced through the perception within middle-class communities of each other and culturally and historically distinct entities, with different, often times conflicting historical perspectives on periods of Muslim and British rule. It is revealing that the Muslim League's significant success in the 1946 elections (it won outstanding majorities of electoral seats reserved for Muslim constituencies) is questionable. In spite of the fact that the Muslim League built support following the imprisonment of Congress leaders in 1942, there was:

> Extremely limited franchise (about 10% of the population in the provinces, less than 1% for the Central Assembly)…[Congress leaders] quietly accepted the election of the Constituent Assembly by the existing provincial legislatures base on limited voting rights. Much more was involved here than a question of abstract democratic principle. The League won its demand for Pakistan without its claim to represent the majority of Muslims being really tested, either in fully democratic elections or (as Congress claims had been) in sustained mass movements in the face of official repression. (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 426-427)

Sarkar's claim is all the more poignant when considering that the Muslim League was "routed in East Pakistan in the very first vote held on the basis of universal franchise," while Congress continued to win national elections for almost 30 years following Independence (*Modern India,* 427-428).

While a mixture of British policies, the political maneuvering of the Muslim League, and the contestable claim to representing the majority of Muslims in India were certainly factors, a deeper aspect of the tension between the Muslim League and the (largely Hindu) Congress party concerns the underlying Hindu revival motif of the major nationalist movements. From the ostensibly Hindu revival period which was significant and powerful in areas with large concentrations of Western-educated,

middle class Indians (and spawned a parallel, counterpoised Islamic revival in the form of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh School, from where would come major adherents and leaders of the Muslim League) to even the unified "All-India" message of the programs of Gandhian nationalism and the 1930s Congress, the symbols used were largely Hindu and Gandhi himself became one of the most powerful symbols of this revival (interpreted in millenarian terms at times) in the manner of his dress, conduct and linguistic imagery, replete with allusion to Hindu myths (e.g. his ideal future of Ram-Rajya). This largely Hindu chest of symbols and semiotic meaning alienated certain aspects of Muslim society whether they were ostensibly religious or not[29].   When it came down to the line, certain factional imagined communities, based along communal lines because of the history of British policy and middle-class response, simply were not intersecting based on perceptions and suspicions of "the other" arising from a tumultuous, but tragically shared (and equally oppressed) history.

The outbreak of violent communal riots in key parts of Bengal, Bihar and Punjab certainly put increased pressure upon the Congress develop a viable solution and compromise with the Muslim League, which led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was holding strong to its demand for the creation of Pakistan. During this period, it is revealing to see that some within the Congress leadership began to drift from the secular ideals they had claimed to represent for so long: "[Sardar Vallabhbhai] Patel sympathized with the hostile Hindu reactions to Nehru's condemnation of Bihar," and also to note that "the British, who as late as June 1946 had been making plans to bring five army divisions to India in the context of a possible Congress movement, made no such move while presiding over this awesome human tragedy," in fact, there was more an aura of "official passivity-if not deliberate connivance," with the violence (Sarkar, *Modern India,* 434-435).

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[29] Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, Pakistan's first Governor-General and Qaed-e-Azam (Great Leader) of Pakistan was not particularly observant of Islam and his vision in the creation of Pakistan was for a secular nation-state with a Muslim-majority.

IV. <u>Analysis:</u>

A. Indian History and the Andersonian Framework

There is a great deal of evidence that supports the claim that nationalist sentiment in India grew out of policies of the British Raj. A succession of British Viceroys did not forsee anti-imperial nationalism as a result of the creation of educated and bilingual intelligentsia to operate in the bureaucracy of their Indian Civil Service. In addressing how well the Indian case fits the Andersonian framework , it is crucial to note that Anderson's definition of the nation is dependent upon the understanding and analysis of national history as a series of processes motivated by certain historical forces. Anderson's theory provides significant flexibility and possesses considerable explanatory power in addressing the underlying shifts in society which created the space into which Indian nationalism could emerge. The modularity of nationalism is another key point, and emerges from the discussion of the historical context in which new nations were emerging. In the case of a heterogenous nation, as India, a number of different historical narratives framing various regional, communal, linguistic and national identities arise, some reinforcing the other. From these trends, one can observe not merely 1 Indian nation, not a single unified, anti-colonial identity that emerged but rather a number of intersecting identities based in a series of imagined communities intersecting and overlapping on different levels of identification.

The limits of Anderson's model exists in its inability to account for the recruitment of the masses to what is essentially an endeavor of the middle-class, and in the case of India a middle-class with social roots and close ties with landholding classes. Without the support of these masses, no colonial independence movement could be successful. In the Indian case mass participation was crucial to the success of the Non-Cooperation movement of early 1920s, the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930s and the Quit India Movement of 1942. The problem here is that the explanatory power of Anderson's framework is limited to specific segment of the population and at specific times. While the periods of middle-class emergence and the impacts of British colonial rule (the 1880s and early 1900s in India), and the absorption of policies of official nationalism (increasingly in the later 1940s in India) are well accounted for by Anderson's framework, there is a gap of some 40 years within which a significant amount of evolution occurs to the nationalist movement both in terms of platform (requesting reforms in the existing system to demanding independence) and methodology (a shift from working within the system of British government to mass agitation) which remains unaccounted.

B. Social Movements, Inner Domains and Carriers of Semiotic Meaning

Incorporating the evidence of Subaltern movements during the periods of nationalist uprising, one notes that the framing of the struggle was crucial to the effectiveness of the movement. These popular demonstrations, though only partially conceived by Congress and Gandhi in methods and purpose, are marked predominantly as acts of rebellion by Subaltern groups against their oppressors, and partially within the framework provided by the nationalist leadership. In order for the nationalist movement to get access to and begin to frame the struggle for these people it was necessary to gain access into inner, spiritual domains. While Anderson and Chatterjee are certainly correct that language holds a peculiar power due to its ability to access the inner domains of a collective people, it would be remiss to limit this semiotic power simply to just language. While language is certainly a very necessary facilitator of meaning, so also are the functions of rumor operating within rather millenarian and religiously-infused worldviews. In the Indian case, at least, this millenarian perspective was crucial to arousing mass popular support outside of the urban areas, perspectives often fuelled by rumors and belief that the existing authority structure would break down and be replaced by a more just one. By clothing himself (physically and metaphorically) in symbols of deep religious and cultural significance, Gandhi was able to access this inner spiritual domain and incite popular agitation on a number of occasions even if the support of these subaltern peoples were more with the spirit of his message (freedom, swaraj, the implied breakdown of the current power structure) rather than with the actual platforms (which on many occasions contained concessions to landed classes and business interests so as not to lose their support).

V. Conclusion

Before British rule, India was politically fragmented, into numerous dynastic principalities. This fragmentation was maintained to some extent during the British rule, as colonial policy of the Raj. Colonial policy was a seemingly paradoxical but well-orchestrated effort to both maintaining a sense of political fragmentation among the old political and social order of India through British "divide-and-rule" policies, but also to organize, centralizing and homogenizing its own civil, government apparatus to facilitate control over British India's vast, geopolitically diverse territories. The need to staff this vast bureaucratic apparatus with a Western-educated, bilingual elite would also create, quite unintentionally, the very middle-class which would come to effectively challenge British power on the terms of the very liberal ideas of democracy, popularly-elected representative government, nation, and nation-ness which they imbibed through the English-medium, government schools they attended.

The idea of the "Indian" nation was something which was built and created largely due to the efforts of the Indian middle class. Winston Churchill noted once that "India is merely a geographical location. It is no more a single country than the equator"(qtd. in Tharoor 1997). Though Churchill was incorrect in thinking that it could not become one country, that the Indian population could not be united in its desire to oust the British and achieve Swadesh, the thought of India as one nation or as one "imagined community" is something that was as difficult to see before Independence as it is now. India, under the leadership of the Indian National Congress was successful in a speedy political integration through the inheritance of Western forms of government and political institutions from British rule much of the groundwork for India to achieve a political integration had already been set down or developed by the Indian National Congress during the colonial period. Much of the evidence of this political integration is apparent in the work of the Constituent Assembly and its product the Indian constitution which outlines the government of India as a federal system with provinces but all provinces ultimately being loyal to the political center in New Delhi. National integration of the county was certainly also a goal of the leaders of the Indian nation before and after Independence. Nehru, for example said the following during a speech in Bangalore in 1955:

> We should not become parochial, narrow-minded, and communal and
> caste minded, because we have a great mission to perform. Let us, the
> citizens of the Republic of India…bring about this synthesis, this
> integration of the Indian people. Political integration has already taken
> place to some extent, but what I am after is something much deeper

than that – an emotional integration of the Indian people so that we

might be welded into one, and made into one strong national unit,

maintaining at the same time our wonderful diversity.(qtd. In R.K. Yadav

1974)

Now while the efforts of the Indian government since independence have certainly created an emotional integration, the imagined community remains complex: an amalgamation of numerous imagined communities that intersect along varying levels of identification but which have been brought together based on a common history, taught in the classrooms of the state's public education systems.

It be stressed enough, however, that the political victory, the transfer of power that took place on midnight August 15th, 1947 was facilitated only through the successful mobilization of the masses to join in nationalist agitation for the independence of India. This process was initiated by Gandhi, but control over the movement eluded the abilities of communications technology of the time. Transmission of information through social networks through rumor allowed for an adaptability of the interpretations and subsequent actions of the subaltern masses in response to Gandhi's call to action. Between the non-determinism of this adaptability and the deterministic nature of modular ideas of the nation lie the interaction between these two extreme which characterize the Indian case and which ultimately needs to be addressed in a comprehensive theory of the Indian nation. It is the conflict of parties from these two positions that has created the Indian nation as we understand it today. Different degrees of each are observable within the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, the Kisan Sabhas, the Congress Socialist parties, and the many other organizations that formalized imagined communities of their own based off stories of common origin and position in the social structure. It is the ultimate measure of these stories to strike a balance between being too broad and too narrow by which enough people relate to it that it is essentially given a "daily plebiscite" from which it may draw the power to rule and, in some cases, to rewrite its own history in order to consolidate power, as often happens in the processes of "Official Nationalism"

Of further consideration as well are the religious nature and power of the symbols and carriers of semiotic meaning which allow access in the spiritual inner domain. As evidenced by the symbols that Gandhi clothed himself in, from the simple homespun cotton to the Hindustani that he insisted on speaking, which used words common to both Hindi and Urdu Gandhi fit well into this mythological worldview which he did not always understand but within which he operated effectively if the goal was to marshal ever larger followings. The millenarian nature of many of the revolts and actions of subaltern

people during the Indian national movement point also to a need to re-evaluate the underlying forces Anderson describes as created fertile ground for the rise of the nation. Homogenous, empty time, for example may establish itself to some degree within a people without completely relationships of events and occurrences to Divine providence that exist before it in Messianic time. Of particular interest is the nexus of nationalism with the myth of origin of a people and the extent to which this myth itself draws upon religious imagery and content to bridge the old and the new.

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