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Problems of nationalism : a philosophical and a historical perspective

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**Problems of Nationalism:
A Philosophical and a Historical Perspective**

A Thesis

Presented to

**The Faculty of The Department of Philosophy
San Jose State University**

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Abdella Nebi Amino

May 1997

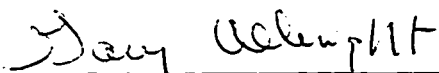
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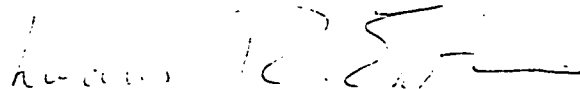
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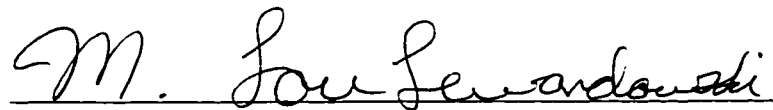


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Abstract

PROBLEMS OF NATIONALISM: A PHILOSOPHICAL AND A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Abdella Nebi Amino

This thesis explores problems of Nationalism. The thesis shows that problems of nationalism are complex because nationalism is related to many aspects of people's lives; and, to deal with the problems of nationalism, understanding its complexity is critical. Understanding how nationalism manifests itself in many aspects of social lives helps promote cooperative life. The thesis shows that categorizing nationalism as a phenomenon of a particular social system or a particular historical epoch, is not justified. Moreover the thesis argues that accepting nationalism in all its forms will lead to radical relativism. Radical relativism may lead lives to denying human rationality altogether. The thesis suggests that the best way to look into nationalism and national questions is to look into the background philosophy they adhere to, to promote their particular political demands.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The thesis of this paper is that *nationalism* may not plausibly be justified within the context of modern philosophy.¹ If at all justified, nationalism is only rational when its claims are subordinated to the principles of universal human dignity and freedom. Nationalism, as defined by many scholars, depends on the existence of a nation, a group, or a community that holds the nationalist sentiment. There are different conceptions of nationalism and different definitions of nationalism even among social scientists. As a sentiment, nationalism appeals more to human passion than to reason. The idea of nationalism emphasizes the prominence of interests of a particular nation, race, political system, religious persuasion, culture, or group. Nationalism is a political doctrine as well as a cultural and moral ideal. As a political ideal, nationalism is a belief that the world's people are divided into nations, and that each nation has the right of self-determination. As a cultural ideal, nationalism claims that while people have many identities, it is the nation that provides them with their primary form of belonging. As a moral ideal, nationalism is an ethic of heroic sacrifice that justifies the use of violence in the defense of one's nation against enemies, internal or external. However, other than taking these beliefs as self-evident, the assumptions underlying these claims cannot be justified plausibly. Nationalism as a concept appears to be irrational, at least within the context of modern

¹In this thesis, modern philosophy refers to the philosophy of Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Locke and Hume. See Appendix for a discussion of these philosophers' thinking.

philosophy's definition of rationality. Nationalism is epistemologically and morally a relativist idea because, according to all versions of its definitions, the rationality of nationalism depends upon particular political demands it raises. In some cases of its definitions, for nationalism to exist as a concept, a nation must exist. What constitutes a nation and is thus given the rights and the privileges accorded to a nation, however, is disputed by many political theorists on the topic.

An argument will be made to show that nationalism presents conceptual problems as well as problems of definition in at least two ways. First, epistemologically, nationalism is a *relativist*² view—a view that holds that a person cannot transcend a partial point of view to see truths and treat other people fairly, and judge people's beliefs objectively. Second, morally, nationalism approves the thesis that value judgments and moral obligations vary from culture to culture and from one historical period to another. Contrary to this view that a person is destined to see truths from a partial or particularistic point of view,³ modern philosophy's conception of rationality is *objective*⁴—a view that

²Relativism holds that the concepts of rationality, truth, reality, right, wrong, and the norms humankind are forced to recognize must be understood in relation to a specific conceptual scheme, theoretical framework, paradigm, form of life, society or culture. Relativists argue that the differences in conceptual schemes are nonreducible to one standard. Humankind cannot escape the predicament of speaking of *our* and *their* standard of rationality. Relativism also holds that cultural conventions are the measure of right and wrong. Another related concept of relativism is subjectivism.

³Subjectivism, as applied to epistemology, holds that all knowledge has its source and validity in the person's (knower's) subjective mental states. Subjectivism also holds that knowledge of anything objective or externally real is hypothesized or based on inference from a person's subjective mental states. Furthermore, subjectivism holds that everything that is known is a product selectively structured and created by the knower; and it cannot be said that there is an externally real world to which it corresponds.

holds that a person can transcend his or her national identity or particularity to pass judgment from a universal viewpoint. Without an objective viewpoint, modern philosophy argues, claims to know anything and the subsequent actions are arbitrary rather than calculated and deliberate. Because the concept of nationalism presents such philosophical problems between objectivism and relativism, it is one of practical issues that have lacked adequate theoretical and practical explanations in modern philosophy. The attempt in this thesis is to show that nationalism is conceptually problematic. Nationalism is problematic because neither objectivism nor relativism alone is plausible as a justification of nationalistic views. This seems to be the case because of the narrow definition and restrictive assumptions as to what it counts as certain for knowledge claims.

The first chapter presents the larger background for the problem of nationalism. It will be argued that there are certain inherently contradictory aspects to being human,

Subjectivism as applied to value theory holds that: (a) values are dependent on and relative to the modes of human experience; (b) values are reflections of the feelings, attitudes, and responses of the individual, and have no independent objective or external reality or source; (c) objects or activities are valuable or good just in the case they are desirable and pleasurable to the states of consciousness, feelings or subjective experiences.

⁴Objectivism as applied to epistemological theory holds (1) that a world exists in itself, independent of and external to human comprehension of it, and that humans come to know the world independently of any subjective viewpoint; (2) that knowledge is based on factual evidence which is discovered by unbiased methods of science and reasoning and describes things as they are; (3) that the only meaningful (true) knowledge is that which is derived from and/or confirmed by sensory experience.

Objectivism as applied to value theory contends: (1) Values exist in the external world independently of, and external to, human comprehension of them, but they can be discovered and known. (2) Discovered values must be used as a principle for human judgment and conduct because they are neutral of personal psychology which may bias judgment and conduct. (3) Objects or activities are valuable or right because of a mind-independent quality in them that, when perceived or experienced, makes them desirable.

and will show that the effort humans make to cope with this challenge manifests itself in social problems. Moreover, this chapter shows the scope of the problem and why it is important to understand problems of nationalism. This chapter argues that nationalism is one of the causes of some brutal wars in the twentieth century and argues that there is no rationality to war.

The second chapter discusses the problem of defining nationalism and why it is important to seek a common definition of nationalism. This chapter will show how several versions of nationalism contributed to different philosophical views that underlie the problem of nationalism.

Chapter three discusses classifications of nationalism and shows whether the view each type of nationalism promotes is rational or irrational. This chapter also shows the point that nationalism should be judged case by case, based on the philosophies carried at the background of each nation's political demands.

The fourth chapter shows how modern philosophy's model of thinking influenced views about society, the justifications of social arrangements, and their implication on nationalism. This chapter will show that the concept of nationalism undermines the assumption of modern philosophy that human nature is universal, and thus the notions of truth and justice are also applicable universally by promoting radical relativism. Relativism is a problematic philosophical position to adjudicate social conflicts and to uphold plausible ethical standards. Moreover, this chapter will also show that radical objectivism is as problematic as relativism. Radical objectivism means giving reason a metaphysical status and/or seeing reason as a non-human idea. Furthermore, the chapter will also

explore some aspects of the postmodernist philosophy and its implication to national questions. In this chapter it will be suggested that in order to think clearly about nationalism and devise possible solutions to the problems it poses, the philosophical impasse between objectivism and relativism must be overcome. Once this problem is put into reconcilable context, it is possible to see that the impartiality of nationalism is partly exaggerated patriotism and partly a struggle for justice and equality. To see what type of nationalism is irrational and what type of nationalism is rational, one must look at each nationalist question case by case. It is not possible or rational to label nationalism as rational or irrational without case analysis and looking at the types of philosophies they use to promote their political demands.

Chapter five will show that internationalism is not necessarily a solution for problems that nationalism presents. Two ideas of internationalism will be discussed using examples from Kant's argument in the essay "Perpetual Peace" and using the Bolshevik party's idea of proletarian internationalism. In the first case, the idea of internationalism as a solution for the problems of nationalism is based on the assumption that a federation of nation-states would overcome narrow interests by creating a world federal government that would promote the interests of all nation-states. In the second case, there is an assumption that eventually the nation-state would wither away; but in the interim there must be a socialist state which represents the interests of all citizens. This chapter will show that in both cases there are problems that stem from different philosophical assumptions. It is also suggested in this chapter that individual loyalty to all humanity is a possible alternative to these philosophical problems.

Chapter six argues against political distortions about human differences and will explore ways of understanding human difference. This chapter will argue that what ultimately matters about human difference are differences of beliefs and values, but not differences of race or nationality. The chapter will also show that the importance of understanding nationalism in terms of differences in beliefs and values will help better understand the problems.

Chapter seven makes concluding remarks based on the discussions presented in all previous chapters. Moreover, in this chapter a possible solution for conflicts arising from nationalism will be suggested.

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEMS OF NATIONALISM

At the background of all political problems are questions regarding human existence. People want to live an unthreatened life. A threat, perceived or real, to one's life or livelihood, can cause some forms of human aggression, including wars. In addition to the desire to live in safety and security, human beings are challenged by nature and culture. It appears that nature and culture are inherently incompatible. Where nature is what people find themselves in, culture is their construction through interactions among themselves. Culture in return overshadows, and sometimes threatens, individual identity, which is the basis for legal, ethical, and social responsibility. Since culture is a product of social interaction, it is difficult to assign responsibility for the good and bad things that happen in a society. If responsibility cannot be assigned for a good or bad result, justice may be undermined. For example, culture may promote a war of aggression due to exaggerated patriotism and/or nationalism. This may in turn lead to fascistic acts against the targeted people or community. In such cases, it is difficult to assign guilt. One of the difficulties for international organizations such as the United Nations in finding and punishing guilty parties for war crimes, for example in the cases of W.W.II, Bosnia and Rwanda, is that it is problematic to locate the guilty party or parties. To assign guilt to all people may undermine the notion of justice; on the other hand, to leave the culprit unpunished also results in abrogation of justice. Furthermore, to assign responsibility to the states for which people commit war crimes cannot plausibly be defended. For

example, to say that every German, Rwandan and Bosnian is guilty and therefore should be punished does not fit the reality that, usually, a small number of people are guilty of crimes such as ethnic cleansing or other types of crimes against humanity.

Whether human beings learned to cooperate or nature endowed them with sociability is debatable, but it seems that one has to develop a culture of cooperation to live a meaningful life. However, the tension between individual identity and culture seems to influence, negatively and positively, how a person cooperates with others. When a person is in his or her mother's womb he or she is in a natural state. He or she does not claim his or her own identity. Human identity seems to begin at birth. It is at birth that one is separated from his or her mother. A fetus is not required to do anything in order to survive. However, after birth a child has to cooperate with his or her mother to survive. For example, a child has to cooperate when his or her mother attempts to feed him or her. Similarly, as an adult, a person must cooperate with the society at large to fulfill his or her needs. The fact that no one person owns the world requires people to share space and limited economic resources with other human beings. Philosophers have argued for the need of cooperation among people for centuries. For example, the medieval philosopher, Al-Farabi, remarked, "Man cannot provide for the satisfaction of all his needs by himself. Therefore to attain his *highest perfection* he must engage in cooperative behavior."⁵ Cooperation includes recognizing people as persons, acknowledging equal legitimacy of their interests, and granting them access to the natural resources of the world.

⁵Andrew Schoedinger, Reading in Medieval Philosophy, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) p. 339.

Most human conflicts seem to arise from casting doubt on people's equal legitimacy to have access to world resources, and failing to recognize the equality of human beings. Moreover, scarcity seem to have exacerbated this problem. Ironically, natural similarities among human beings seem to have forced them to compete for the same economic and psychological resources. When the economic and psychological resources are scarce, deciding whose needs should be fulfilled first becomes a political and ethical dilemma. If X and Y are similar species, they necessarily live in the same environment since what makes life possible for X is also what makes life possible for Y. If there are limited resources in the environment, competition for these limited resources leads to some of the vicious wars, similar to animal conflicts. If human beings are better than animals at all, then what makes them better must be in the rationality of allocating scarce resources fairly and equitably. Otherwise, the claim that human beings are rational animals seem to be questionable. In this regard, Grotius argued that sociability is what distinguishes humankind from other kinds of animals, and asserted that the necessity of preservation of social order is valued for its own sake because human life is meaningful only within the context of social relations. Therefore, conditions required for the purpose of maintaining social relations are intrinsically good in themselves. Grotius writes:

Man is to be sure, an animal, but an animal of superior kind, much farther removed from all other animals. . . . But among the traits characteristic of man is an impelling of desire for society, that is, for the social life- not of any and every sort, but peaceful, and organized among to the measure of his intelligence, with those who are of his own kind.⁶

⁶George A Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, History of Political Theory, 4th ed. (Harcourt Brace Publisher, 1989), p. 316.

As these assertions indicate, for Grotius, cooperative life by itself is the measure of people's rationality. He argued that social life is a deliberate endeavor to avoid injustices. Moreover, Grotius asserts that justice is a virtue, a good in and of itself.⁷

Rationality necessarily requires transcending self-interest and understanding that other persons also have needs to be fulfilled. Human beings require some self-reflection to curb their unlimited wants. Self-reflection, comparing and understanding conditions of life around oneself may lead to rational decisions that one needs to curb his or her appetite for economic resources, power and privilege. The hope for peace among people of different nations, races, sexes and political persuasions lies in the understanding of the fact that members of the same species cannot live peacefully unless they transcend self-interest and learn ways of accommodating others' interests. Granted all that, however, the basis of human cooperation is complex, and in many cases not obvious.

Political philosophers have recognized this complexity and have suggested that there must be some form of social contract and binding legal system to control brutality among people. Almost all political philosophers seem to agree on the need of some form of social contract. However, philosophers disagree on the underlying assumptions about human nature itself. Because of the different assumptions about human nature, political theorists recommend different social organizations and different ways of conflict resolution. For example, Thomas Hobbes argued that human nature is made up of desire and aversion, from which all impulses, emotions and reason arise. These impulses,

⁷Joseph Cropsey and Leo Strauss, History of Political Philosophy (Chicago, 1963, Rand McNally College Publishing Company), p. 374.

emotions and reasons enable people to preserve themselves rationally. Hobbes suggests that humankind should be understood in terms of the mechanistic psychology of its passions. He argues that the objects of passion and desire or aversion are relative to each person. "Every living organism obeys laws of individual survival; therefore, all human acts are motivated by self-interest and the quest for power. Altruism is not just a bad idea; it is impossible."⁸ Hobbes argued that people are forced to live socially. In a state of nature, where there is no justice, people could not have reconciled their conflicting interests. In order to reconcile their conflicting self-interests, people have to create a civil society by agreement, because without doing so they cannot survive the brutish state of nature. According to Hobbes, competition, distrust and seeking glory are the causes of conflict among people.⁹ Despite the pessimistic view of human nature, Hobbes' insight seems to be far reaching, for he recognized that the social contract is not the best of all better alternatives, rather, it is the only way people in a society can constrain themselves from conflicts in their social interactions. They know that they give up certain rights when they enter into a social contract. A social contract gives one the promise of safety and security; it also restricts one's behavior. Hobbes seems to have understood the dichotomy between liberty and obligation. Human beings understand that they may not be fully rational all the time in all situations. Hobbes argued that people instituted laws to curb their irrational behavior and agreed to accept punishment if they acted irrationally and unjustly.

⁸Donald Palmer, Looking at Philosophy, 2nd ed. (Mt. View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1994), p. 148-149.

⁹Cropsey and Strauss, History of Political Philosophy, p. 361.

Contrary to Hobbes' view, John Locke assumes that human beings are created equal in an orderly world, where nature has endowed them with morality and bound them to cooperate with little imperfection. According to Locke's social contract theory, political community is formed to overcome such imperfections with the help of civil government. Imperfection in human beings, according to Locke, seems to originate in different ways of understanding liberty and the subsequent diverse uses of it. Locke argued that, though in the state of Nature *man* is absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest and subject to no control of any other power, still the enjoyment of liberty is very uncertain and unsecure. He says, "For all being kings as much as he, every man his equal, and the greater part no strict observers of equity and justice, the enjoyment of property he has in this state is very unsafe, very unsecure. This makes him willing to quit this condition, which, however, free, is full of fears and continual dangers . . ." and for this reason man is "willing to join in society with others, . . . for the mutual preservation of their lives, liberties, and . . . property."¹⁰ For Locke, cooperation among people seems to be a matter of voluntary action, whereas for Hobbes, cooperation among people is a necessity to attain meaningful life. Both positions can be argued further, but the attempt here is just to show the background and the complexity of the main topic of this thesis—Nationalism. Nowhere else as in nationalism are the complexity and the basis of social cooperation so clearly manifest.

¹⁰Isaac Kramnick, The Portable Enlightenment Reader (New York: Penguin Books USA, Inc., 1995), p. 402-403.

Nationalism is reflected in many forms of social organizations and human activities. For example, nationalism is mixed with religion in Ireland (the war between Protestants and Catholics), and in Palestine (between Jews and Moslems). Nationalism is mixed with race as in South Africa, in the United States and Germany—where the African National Congress has fought with the white minority government, and in the United States where African Americans want to assert their African heritage but are limited by official state, or institutional racism. In Germany, neo-Nazi groups are burning the apartments of immigrants, because they believe that immigrants will contaminate the purity of the German people contribute to Germany's economic and social problems. Nationalism is mixed with ethnicity in wars in Bosnia, Somalia and Ethiopia. Nationalism is revered even in sports, as in the Olympics, where everyone cheers for his or her own nation, and in local sports where many people seem to cheer for their localities, cities and towns. Nationalism is complex because it sits at the heart of the ecology of human existence itself. Subsequently, the discussion of the phenomenon of nationalism requires the use of almost all scholarly disciplines. For example, economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology and philosophy would have to be used to adequately understand the multifaceted phenomenon of nationalism. Nonetheless, the intention of this thesis is not to present a grand new theory but to analyze some of the theories from philosophical perspectives based on historical evidence.

The history of nationalism contains the good, the bad and the ugly. In Ethiopia, where the author of this thesis was born and raised, the problem of nationalism is more than familiar. Nationalism has forced many to undermine their personal friendships and

shoot at each other, split some families who happen to have been born from a mix of different ethnic groups, forced some neighbors to wage war against each other and forced people to migrate in search of peace. On the other hand, nationalism has played an important role in liberating and assuring the dignity of many people around the world. Many world leaders used nationalism as an instrument to fight against the tyranny of imperialism and feudalism. For example, Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam against the French, Gamal Abdul-Nasser in Egypt against the British, Menelik in Ethiopia against Italy and Jomo Kenyatta against the British: all have used nationalism to rally their people against colonial powers. Moreover, nationalism has brought about the treatment of people as full human beings and transformed their status from being subjects of feudal lords to the status of citizenship. For example, one of the accomplishments of the French Revolution was the promotion of the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, which was a victory for many people over the feudal system that denied them full citizenship of their nation.

Although nationalism granted freedom for many people of different nations, it never solved the problems between individual persons and the state, conflicts among nations and conflicts between ethnic groups. Nationalism seems to have left at least three types of potential problems which are bases for conflicts among people, nations and states. First, nationalism promotes the idea that each nation is a divine design, and, in some cases, that each nation has a particular mission in the world. This idea, however, leaves the potential for conflicts of interests among nations. Second, nationalism leaves the interests of minority nationalities within a nation untouched. Nationalism, declares the sovereignty of a nation, but does not establish public institutions to promote the interest of civil society

or to facilitate public discourse. Third, although nationalism somewhat promotes equal citizenship, it does not provide solutions for the conflict between individual interests and the interests of the State.

Problems of nationalism seem also to emanate from the fact that a person is divided among triple commitments. A person has to show loyalty to the interests of a nation or a community, to himself, and to humanity at large. But these multiple levels of interest are not always compatible. Loyalty, by definition, is a commitment to an ideology, a nation, a community, without necessarily requiring a justification of why such devotion is warranted. For this reason, loyalty is in most cases unreasoned allegiance to a particular nation's, community's, or group's interests. A loyal nationalist does not have to justify why he or she is devoted to a nation's interests. Moreover, nationalism encourages the belief that one's nation's, race's or community's values are better or superior without a plausible justification of why this is so.

Nationalism is a sentiment that expresses group loyalty to a nation or a community. Loyalty depends more on emotional attachments than on reason. A loyal person seems to sacrifice his or her life for the love of a nation with no requirement of justification. Although loyalty does not always pertain to nationalism, the unreasoned allegiance to a nation seems to be the basis for atrocities that are caused by some form of nationalism. For example, Hitler and Mussolini appealed to their nations and were able to manipulate their public to commit atrocities against the Jews and Ethiopians, respectively.

People generally love their countries because they are a "stage" where their existence as human beings can be expressed. People seem to romanticize their country—its

mountains, valleys, rivers, plateaus and plains—because their livelihood depends on this ecology. For example, the patriotic sentiment seems to stem from the realization of this symbiotic relationship between them and the environment. However, some forms of nationalism distort this reality and turn it into a myth by focusing on the emotional aspects of the relation between a people and its government by down-playing objective aspects of people's lives. The reality is that when the symbiotic relationships between people and their countries are interrupted by a repressive state, the relationships also change. If citizens of a country are, for example, persecuted because of their political beliefs, the loyalty may go away. Loyalty to a nation must be earned by the nation-state through its respect on the liberty of its citizens. It appears, then, that loyalty to a nation is contingent upon the way states and governments treat their citizens. A nation's interests may or may not represent individuals' interests. A nation's interests are collective. When a person grants priority of interests of a particular nation or community without due consideration to another nation's or community's interests, he or she may undermine fairness and justice that must exist among people in order to live cooperatively. This partial attitude of nationalism is the core of the problem. The question is: is it possible for a person or a group to transcend this partial point of view and treat other people in the same way he or she would like to be treated? This is an old philosophical question which will not be adequately answered at this point, but will be discussed in more detail later. For now, it is sufficient to say that an adequate theory of nationalism seems to depend upon the answer to this philosophical question.

The Scope of Problems of Nationalism

The eighteenth century enlightenment has been thought of as a sign of human emergence from barbarism. The enlightened public is assumed to have overcome barbaric behavior and to have seen the world clearly, using reason as a torch to illuminate the dark and barbaric world of irrationality. However, historical evidence contradicts this assumption. The evidence shows that the same passion that prevailed over reason in the middle ages still dominates human affairs. Voltaire observed that people are more inclined toward cruelty and the propensity to war than toward rationality.¹¹ When one examines human history, one finds that irrationality has dominated the past. But the most disturbing concern is that the violence of human history seems to repeat itself. The human "appetite" for war appears to be an enduring passion. The primordial passion is especially prevalent in human conflicts rooted in nationalism.

In 1389 the Turks, during the Ottoman empire, invaded the Orthodox Christian Serbs who had lived in the area for two hundred years, forced many to convert to Islam and ruled them for five hundred years until the end of nineteenth century. A nationalistic or ethnic type of war has been fought from 1991 to 1995 in the same region. Two hundred thousand people have lost their lives, this time mostly Muslims; and nearly three million people have been displaced. Ethnic nationalism such as that in Bosnia appeals to blood loyalty and sacrifice. Killing and sacrifice require overwhelming justification.

¹¹Voltaire, Portable Voltaire (New York: Viking Penguin, 1949), pp. 547-548.

However, many civil wars that are destroying humanity seem to have no compelling reason.

Violence and war have marked most of humankind's history. The result of war has always been destruction. Bertrand Russell observed that war has always been "wicked and usually foolish."¹² War seems even more foolish in the present day. In the past, the human race survived, not because people lacked the will to annihilate each other, but because people did not have the technology to produce weapons of mass destruction. Families, clans, tribes, and nations have fought for centuries, but with ordinary weapons, spears, guns and so forth.

The influences of the violent heritage of the human race seem to grow with the growth of societies. The culture of violence appears to progress faster than technological progress. The science that has helped humankind to overcome some of the deadly diseases has at the same time provided technology to develop more destructive weapons to commit violent acts "efficiently." In this post-modern era, nuclear weapon producing technology is broadly available—even to technologically unsophisticated countries. This wide availability of destructive weapons technology makes the threat to human existence even greater. Therefore, there is good reason to be concerned about the well-being of humanity.

There is a common assumption that a person's life has complete meaning only within the context of society. However, as a person joins bigger human groups and shares

¹²Bertrand Russell, Fact and Fiction (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1963), p. 308.

his or her beliefs and values, and learns others' beliefs and values, individual identity and individual beliefs and values seem to dilute. When collective values and beliefs dominate individual beliefs and values, a person appears to be susceptible to unreasoned allegiance to group beliefs and values. When a person gives up reasoning for himself or herself, he or she becomes susceptible to manipulation and to making unworthy sacrifices in the name of loyalty to a group. The identity of the individual and loyalty to a group are almost always in conflict. A person draws meaning from life by interacting with other people. As the person shares with other people it is likely that he or she is modified by these others. Group phenomena such as nationalism take advantage of individuals who cannot sustain their beliefs and values by themselves. One of the reasons for the persistence of atrocities that stem from nationalism, tribalism, or racism may be accounted for by looking at this human search for meaning and value of life in social groups. A person may make constant efforts to balance his or her beliefs and values with group beliefs and values. It seems that when collective beliefs and values become dominant, sometimes just from sheer fear of the group, some people may undermine their own beliefs and values for the sake of group beliefs and values. Moreover, there seem to be inherent dichotomies between individual and social values. For example, Albert Einstein writes:

[A] person is, at one and the same time, a solitary being and a social being. As a solitary being he attempts to protect his own existence and that of those who are closest to him, to satisfy his personal desires and to develop his innate abilities. As a social being, he seeks to gain the recognition and affection of his fellow human beings, to share his pleasures, to comfort them in their sorrows and to improve their condition of life. . . . The individual is able to think, feel, strive, and work by himself; but he depends so much upon society—

in his physical, intellectual, and emotional existence—that it is impossible to think of him, or to understand him, outside the framework of society.¹³

Again, this problem is rooted in two larger philosophical questions, namely, whether beliefs and values are individually constructed or socially constructed, and whether knowledge itself is a social construction or a reality that people discover as they continue to live. This thesis will not get into this complex subject. But, if a person's life can only have complete meaning within the context of human society, it is imperative that one seek ways of achieving a cooperative life. By "cooperative life" is meant living in a society in a peaceful and productive way. The need for cooperation among people is profound. However, the progress towards cooperative life is not impressive when compared with the technological advances. If human civilization is measured by how much progress is made in understanding the physical environment, it can be said that significant progress has been made. If the level of civilization is measured in terms of human relations, however, there is very little evidence of progress.

Medical advances, such as the ability to artificially support life for a longer time, the discovery of cures for epidemics such as typhoid, polio, and tuberculosis, are areas where people have made significant progress. Meteorologists can predict weather better today because of technological innovations. Accurate weather predictions have helped agronomists to assist farmers in making better farming decisions. Increased productivity in farm products has supported increasing populations continuously, most notably in most of the Western countries. On the other hand, humans have not made significant progress

¹³ Albert Einstein, Essays in Humanism, (Crown Publishers Inc., 1954), pp. 3-4.

in understanding and managing behavior that may promote cooperative life. Robert Muller's remark may summarize what can be said in this regard. Muller states:

The human species has extended prodigiously its knowledge of the surrounding world and universe. . . . Science, as self-engendered extension of our senses and mind, is probing deeper and deeper into the infinite complexity of reality. . . . It reaches in a majestic Copernican pattern from the universe to the atom. . . . Knowledge of human Species itself, of its natural characteristics, conditions and subdivisions has also made dramatic progress: we know our numbers, our distribution, our age composition, our fertility, our morbidity, including projection for the future. We know about our nutrition, health, literacy, employment, housing and other conditions on a world wide basis. Children, youth, women, the handicapped, old age, racial discriminations are all subjects of major world concern. But much less progress has been made with regard to the man-made social cosmos, i.e., the various groupings of humans. The human species today is an ocean of competitive groups among which nations are the most important because they are armed. . . . Grouping is dividing humans among themselves: religions, races, languages, ideologies, businesses, professions, cultures, economic levels, and geography.¹⁴

War between nations and nationalities is still destroying many innocent lives and livelihoods. In many places, greed, nepotism, racism, tribalism, nationalism, arrogance and avarice of the elite increasingly endanger the stability of civil society. Leaders in government and private sectors have often undermined the ideals of civil society—the ideals that promote public participation of citizens in the management of their lives. Arrogant and corrupt leaders have made it impossible for citizens of many countries to make economic and social progress. People are dissatisfied with their social conditions. One possible reason for the current rise of nationalism may be accounted for by looking at how states are abusing their power. Nationalism, because it is an idea that evokes passion

¹⁴Robert Muller, Capsules on nationalism in an independent world, Philosophy Forum 16 (1979), p. 5.

across class and gender, is a weapon politicians can use for good or for evil. Some of the campaign rhetoric for the 1996 American presidential election may exemplify how nationalists appeal to public passion. Presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan, for example, used phrases like "Let us get our country back," and, "let us protect our borders from an invading immigrant population." This type of passion for a nation has been used by many nationalists in the past. An Irish nationalist, Robert Emmet (1778-1803), said:

My lord, I acted as an Irish man, to deliver my country from the yoke of a foreign tyranny, and the more galling of the domestic faction. It is the wish of my heart to extricate from this doubly riveted despotism, to place her independence beyond the reach of any power on earth, to exalt her to that proud station in the world which providence has fitted her to fill.¹⁵

The reason for the rise of nationalistic sentiment is not limited to lack of rights, nor is nationalism the only cause of violence in the world, for many wars have been started for religious, economic, or class reasons. Nonetheless, nationalism seems to be manifested in all wars; and the human misery resulting from nationalistic wars should not be minimized, either.

It is a fact that nationalism remains a persistent global threat to peace and to the stability of people and nations. Nationalistic wars have caused destruction of many lives and environments. The dislocations of many innocent people from their places of birth have put many lives through unbearable trauma. Adjusting to new ways of life and rebuilding lives becomes a nightmare. In the twentieth century alone, humans have experienced the horror of W.W.I, W.W.II, the Korean war, the Vietnam war, and

¹⁵Louis Snyder, ed., The Dynamics of Nationalism: Readings in Its Meaning and Development (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1964), pp. 227-228.

nationalistic armed struggles in Ireland, Afghanistan, India, Sri Lanka, Spain, the West Sahara, Angola, The Sudan, Latin America, the Middle East, Ethiopia, and Somalia, to name only a few. Obviously, war involves destruction of life and livelihood; nonetheless, people seem to repeat the destruction of war. Knowing that war is destruction while still waging war seems irrational. Witnessing and studying history of what people have destroyed by waging wars may lead one to legitimately question the scope of human rationality. Traditionally, philosophers have claimed there is much rationality in human nature. The claim that humans are rational, however, conflicts with what history tells about humankind.

Nationalism appears to defy logical assumptions; and nationalism seems, more or less, to be a natural phenomenon. One would hope that as advances in communication technology facilitate interaction of people of different nations and nationalities, the interactions would in turn create understanding among people, helping to develop common values and common visions for all humanity. As many people travel across the world and trade with each other, cultural barriers would be minimized. For example, Karl Marx (1818-1883) thought that in a mature stage of capitalism, nationalism would disappear, and the main contradictions in a society would be reduced to the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. According to Marx and his colleague Frederic Engels (1820-1895), socialism, the social philosophy both are most known for, would bring about political and economic equality for all members of a state. Moreover, they thought that an international order based on class solidarity as opposed to national solidarity would solve the national divisions among people. They asserted, "Working men

have no country," and "national differences . . . are daily more and more vanishing."¹⁶ The prediction did not come true. Nationalism emerged as a victorious social and political movement. Snyder accurately described the development of nationalism as counter to reason and common sense. He wrote:

In a world in which transportation and communication have brought peoples everywhere closer together, the nation-state has become an anomaly fit for discarding in the ash can of history. However, instead of disappearing in favor of viable world order, nation-states became even more powerful as the preferred units of society. At the same time, suppressed minorities clamored for recognition of their rights.¹⁷

Snyder also suggests that there is a historical predicament for nationalist contradictory phenomena. The contradictory aspect of nationalism, according to Snyder, is rooted in the formation of the nation-state. The nation-state has achieved unity through political indoctrination in many cases, but the unity and mass loyalty was won through violence.

Snyder writes:

The birth of modern nation-states was almost always a painful process in which a dominant majority subjected reluctant minorities to amalgamation and assimilation. The artificial structure was composed of either a few or many special groups with either related or distinct languages, cultures, and historical traditions. From the beginning there were difficulties between the central authority and the component parts.¹⁸

¹⁶Omar Dahbour and Micheline Ishay, "Socialism, Nationalism, and Internationalism," The Nationalism Reader (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International), p. 9.

¹⁷Louis Snyder, Global Mini-Nationalisms: Autonomy or Independence (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), p. 253.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 252.

The Development of Modern Nationalism and the Formation of the Nation-State

In its widest sense, a State may be defined as any self-governing set of people organized so that they deal with others as a unit. It is a territorial unit ordered by a sovereign power with a unique symbol, such as a flag. A State is defined necessarily with respect to both a territory and to a population which occupies it and forms the basis for the existence of the State. Moreover, a State is characterized by a political power monopolized by a numerically small group, but which has a military force at its disposition to defend the nation-state and to coerce its people when needed. Thomas Paine observed that, a state is not the best of two good choices; it is, rather, a lesser but necessary evil to avoid calamity if society does not have one. He wrote:

Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher. . . . Society in every state is a blessing, but Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil.¹⁹

The transition from stateless society to a society organized under state generally happened through the conquest of the stateless society by a military force external to the stateless community and tribes. The militarily and politically superior group progressively extends its control by regulating the behavior of the defeated community and tribes, by designing a social division of labor, by the circulation of goods and by the manipulation of sacred symbols. The state accomplishes these tasks by forming its own civilian bureaucracy or the apparatus of the state. Depending on historical circumstances of how

the state emerged, the state establishes courts to enforce its laws such as collecting taxes, adjudicating civil conflicts and monitoring security. Born in violence, the state perpetuates its power by using ideology to legitimize its actions. The state staffs its institutions with its personnel to ensure its continuity and stability. The group of loyal bureaucrats is usually the backbone of the State, and forms, more or less, the permanent infrastructure upon which governments are based. The birth of the State also led to the dichotomy between the natural rights of citizens and the assumed sovereignty of the State. The Natural Rights view is the view that each person has certain inalienable rights which other persons and the state must respect, and cannot assail.

Moreover, because the states were formed in violence, mostly by subjugating communities without regard to ethnic relationships and natural settlement of people, this historical precedence seems to have greatly contributed to the continued ethnic and nationalistic violence. And as a result, wherever modern states, which, for the most part, are dominated by an original core group, do not acknowledge historical injustices and make an effort to tackle the injustice and social inequalities, the oppressed nationalities struggle to attain some justice.

Historians believe that the age of nationalism arose from humankind's search for freedom and a dignified life, the kind of life wherein every person is recognized as a citizen of a nation, instead of a subject of feudal lords. For example, many European nations which were under the Holy Roman Empire resented the fact that one person was master of

¹⁹Kramnick, The Portable Enlightenment Reader, p. 442.

almost half of the continent of Europe and master of people of diverse culture and language. When Emperor Maximilian died in 1519, the power struggle between his successors facilitated a condition for many European nations to fight for independence as well as increasing an awareness of national consciousness.²⁰ The sentiment of nationalism was promoted by the development of vernacular literature, the rise of national armies, and the emergence of mercantilism. Nationalism was originally used as an organizing idea to fight against privileged kings. It was a force of unification and helped to consolidate the state that had outgrown feudal division, and it also unified hostile factions. Germans and Italians united via a nationalist struggle which molded them into single national states—Germany under Bismarck, and Italy under Cavour. As a unifying idea, nationalism was believed to promote the interests of nations by both enhancing personal freedom and protecting the individual from state abuses and foreign threats. With increased personal freedom and protection, cultural groups expanded economically, culturally and even emotionally. Feelings of security, responsibility, and belongingness flourished. The common social psychology of identifying oneself with a particular nation, and preserving

²⁰The death of Maximilian created a power vacuum in the Roman empire. The power struggle was mainly among three candidates: Charles, his grandson and great prince of the Hapsburg empire; Francis I of France; and Henry VIII of England. The electors chose Charles. Charles claimed more territory than any European monarch since the days of Charlemagne. Moreover, Charles took over the administration of holdings of his insane mother Joanna, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. Joanna's holdings included Castile and Aragon, Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and all the Spanish colonies overseas. Francis I of France, who was angry about the selection of Charles, claimed Naples in Italy and Navarres in Spain as territory that historically belonged to the French, and waged unsuccessful war against Charles. (Source: Goldwin Smith, The Heritage of Man A History of the World, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960.)

the common nation in which these achievements of personal freedom and common political destiny would be ascertained, quickly developed. And yet, the irony of nationalism is that while it provided greater protection to the individual, it carried with it a threat to the unity of humankind and to the rational freedom of people to live cooperatively. Nationalism did not overcome differences in language and culture. On the contrary, nationalism gave rise to linguistic and cultural rivalries. The success of nationalism in forging unity in Germany and Italy generated enthusiasm in nationalities of other countries. Minorities in Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman empire and other places called for independence based on geographic unity, common language, interests, culture, traditions, and customs.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, nationalism became a force of aggression. As international rivalries rose to colonize other nations, nationalism transformed into imperialism. Imperialists considered themselves super-patriots and claimed it was their mission to bring civilization to the “backward people” of the earth. The expansionist desire of bigger and powerful nations, and their attitude towards smaller, weaker nations contributed to the persistence of nationalistic wars. The attitudes of imperialist nations toward smaller nations, and their rivalry, may be summarized by the remarks president William McKinley of the United States made to justify the annexation of the Philippines. He wrote:

And one night it came to me this way—I don’t know how it was, but it came: (1) that we could not give them back to Spain - that would be cowardly and dishonorable; (2) that we could not turn them over to France or Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable; (3) that we could not leave them to themselves; they were unfit for self-

government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain’s was; and (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God’s grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow men for whom Christ also died. And then I went bed and went to sleep and slept soundly.²⁰

The opposing national interests among imperialists had a great bearing on World War I.

After World War I, there developed a new kind of nationalism.

The factors that generated nationalism persisted between the years of 1919 and 1939. After World War II, nationalism in Western Europe had, more or less, subsided. This was primarily because of the withdrawal of Britain, the Netherlands, and France from some of their colonies, and the rise of socialism in the Soviet Union with its expansionist policy. The Western European nations created an alliance to stop the socialist expansion. The focus of imperialism changed from the original “super-patriotic” ambition to contain the expansion of socialism. Both the Western nations and Soviet imperialist policies competed to spread their political influence in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

In Africa, Latin America and Asia, nationalism fostered the unity of the people to fight against imperialist aggressions. However, after liberation, partially due to the conditions facilitated by the imperialists, ethnic conflicts among the indigenous groups began. The anti-colonial nationalistic wars are clearly justified by their universal aim for human dignity and freedom while ethnic nationalism is limited in scope to a particular ethnic group. Individuals should be granted the right to life, liberty and happiness because they are autonomous human beings, not because they belong to or do not belong to a

²⁰ Smith, Heritage of Man, pp. 705-706.

nation, a group, or a community. The success or failure of nationalism, its rationality or irrationality, is measured and must be measured by whether it upholds the idea of universal human freedom, not as it is limited to a particular nation's or ethnic group's interests.

The eighteenth century French revolution set a stage for liberal ideas that promoted universal human dignity. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity were the central tenets of the French revolution. From 1789 to 1815 European politics were dominated by the slogans such as Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. From 1815 to 1871, liberal ideas of the French revolution suffered a setback by the rise of opposition to Napoleon. Although the ideas of the French revolution upheld the principle of universal human dignity, they paved the way for the rise to power of a military dictator. Moreover, the idea of cosmopolitanism was never free from the nationalistic attitude, although its wish was to advance common good for all humanity. Nationalist movements make the idea of freedom the exclusive goal of their own group. Nationalists emphasize the bonds among a particular nation or nationality. Modern nationalism particularly extends recognition only to members of a given national or ethnic group. The emphasis on one particular group's interests potentially leads to conflicts with the interests of other groups. Nationalism first began as a protest against the ideals of Enlightenment which attempted to promote universal philosophy. Since the universal philosophy undermines the importance of emotions and passions, many people regarded cosmopolitan philosophy as abstract and inhuman. For example, the spread of romanticism in Germany and other parts of Europe emerged as a protest to the Cosmopolitan philosophy.

Romanticism helped establish political and philosophical grounds for nationalism.²¹

Romanticism encouraged each nation to treasure its particular interests and culture.

Romanticism opposes the idea of cosmopolitanism. Romanticism emphasized singularity over plurality. Romanticism is horrified by the universality of rationalism. An

Englishman, Sir Walter Scott, expressed his fear of the idea of universalism as follows:

Let us remain as Nature made us—Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen—with something like the impress of our several countries upon each! We would not become better subjects if all resembled each other like so many smooth shillings. . . . The degree of national diversity between different countries is but an instance of that general variety which Nature seems to have adopted as a principle through all her works, as anxious to avoid as modern statesmen to enforce, anything like an approach to an absolute uniformity.²²

Romanticism also emphasized mystery and the supernatural—strangeness and wonder as opposed to the finite; emphasis on the imaginative and emotional as opposed to the rational; appeal to the heart rather than the head. The attempt of romanticism was to free individuals from absolutisms and social and political hierarchies so that they could

²¹As a movement, romanticism arose gradually in many parts of Europe. In France, Victor Hugo (1802-1885) emphasized as a controlling idea in romanticism the "liberalism of literature," the freeing of an artist from restraint and rules imposed by classicists and the encouragement of revolutionary political ideas. In Germany, Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) thought the dominant aspect of romanticism was its revival of the past (medievalism) in letters, art, and life. In England, Walter Pater (1839-1894) suggested that the adding of strangeness to beauty constituted the romantic spirit of the age. Other writers have suggested that the romantic mood is a desire to escape from reality, especially unpleasant reality. (Source: Harry Shaw, *Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.)

²²Hans George Schenk, *The Mind of the European Romantics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 15.

discover the true selves that would express truth in art as well as in social life. William Pfaff writes²³:

Romantic individualism attacked society's hierarchy and its structures and assumptions, attempting to overturn them. Authenticity was found in emotion, the channel to primal reality of man. Liberation from imposed forms was held to be necessary, not only the forms of classicism in art, but also those imposed by society. The established order of politics and power had to be smashed for individuals to be free to fulfill themselves. The domination of reason had to be broken; reason was "sterile" because it left no place for those inexpressible feelings which were held by Romantics to have a better claim to truth than mere thought.

Nationalism, whenever possible, has tried to avoid a rigorous process of reasoning and human negotiation based on deliberate reason. The nationalist passion was aroused by both the romanticist temper and hostility to the Napoleonic invasions and repression in the first half of nineteenth century Europe. During this period, even in America, there were nationalist tendencies. For example, there was a general belief that a person could better win his or her freedom through nationhood rather than through political machinery. The sensation of being kin, being many, strong, self-determining, seemed to offer more reliable hope for many people than working through a complex parliamentary system.

Bertrand Russell argues that nationalism should not be regarded as an avoidable natural phenomenon and as a necessary experience. Historically, Russell argues, nationalism began with the decline of the medieval system and hardly existed at any earlier times. The origin of nationalism according to Russell is a resistance to alien domination, or the threat of it. Russell writes:

²³William Pfaff, The Wrath of Nations: Civilization and the Furies of Nationalism (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1963), p. 35.

[Nationalism] began, in France with Joan of Arc's resistance to the English. It began, in England with resistance to the Spanish Armada and found its first literary expression in Shakespeare. It began, in Germany with resistance to Napoleon, and in Italy with resistance to Austria. In the early nineteenth century, it was acclaimed by liberals and decried by reactionaries. Metternich, who governed a polyglot empire containing a great mixture of races, was the most vehement and powerful opponent of nationalism, while the movement for German and Italian unity and for the liberation of Greece from the rule of Turkey commanded the enthusiastic support of all whose politics were progressive.²⁴

According to Russell, nationalism, insofar as it is against domination, is justified, since it is essentially a demand for democratic rights. However, the development of the militaristic nature of nationalism, especially in Western Europe, transformed itself into imperialism. The new era of nationalism began with Bismarck in Germany. Bismarck²⁵ unified Germany by three successful wars of aggression and made nationalism militaristic rather than democratic. Also, nationalism outside of Western Europe became militaristic when Stalin turned Russian socialism into Russian nationalism. Russell writes:

Socialism, as Marx conceived it, was to be international and it retained this internationalism in the minds of Lenin and Trotsky. . . . But Stalin, in a new way, did for Russia what Bismarck had done for Germany. [Stalin] made communism nationalistic. Russians who supported him felt that they were supporting Russia. It is this change that enabled Russian communism to acquire a degree of strength which Lenin could never have given it.²⁶

²⁴Russell, Fact and Fiction, p. 127.

²⁵Otto Edward Leopold von Bismarck became known as ultraroyalist (1847), resenting Austria's predominance and demanding equal rights for Prussia. He was ambassador to Russia (1859-62), appointed to prime minister in 1862 with explicit remit to thwart liberal pressure for constitutional monarchy. During the seven weeks war between Prussia and Austria, he was a guiding figure, becoming a national hero and reconciling the liberals and Prussian monarchism. He united German feeling, deliberately provoked the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871, and acted as Germany's spokesman.

²⁶Russell, Facts and Fiction, p. 128.

One source explains the spread of nationalism to Africa and Asia as a transplantation of the European model of nationalism. According to the source, Western trained elites, who usually lead nationalist political organizations, had distorted ideas of nationalism. In Africa and Asia nationalism spread successfully as an effort to imitate new ideas and new way of life. The nationalist ideology is quite confused, half-understood, misapplied and distorted. As a result, in several countries the concept of nationalism did not achieve the goal of bringing about social justice.

Nationalism became a difficult theoretical and practical problem for scholars and state leaders. Nationalism is a paradoxical, contradictory, and morally perplexing belief. The paradox, contradiction and moral ambiguity in nationalism are best expressed by Gamal Abdel Nasser. The late president of Egypt, Colonel Nasser confessed rather candidly the moral ambiguity and irrationality of nationalism. Nasser writes:

I thought of assassinating the ex-king [Farouk] and those of his men who tampered with our traditions. In this I was not alone. . . . Many nights did I lie awake preparing the means for the expected positive action. Our life was, during this period, like an exciting detective story. We had great secrets; we had symbols; we hid in the darkness and arranged our pistols and bombs side by side. This is the hope we dreamt of. . . . I still remember . . . our feelings and emotions as we dashed along the road to its end.

The truth is, however, I did not feel at ease within myself to consider violence as the positive action essential for the salvation of our country's future. I had within me a feeling of distraction which was a mixture of complex and intermingled factors: of patriotism, religion, compassion, cruelty, faith, suspicion, knowledge and ignorance.²⁷

²⁷Snyder, The Dynamics of Nationalism, "The Philosophy of the Revolution, 1953," p. 310. In "Philosophy of the Revolution, 1953," Nasser analyzes his own motives in the struggle for Egyptian independence. He expresses anguish over the death of innocent people in revolution. Nasser argues that assassinating individuals does not solve

Indeed, Nasser points out the importance of introspection. Without this kind of candid self-examination of one's own actions, it may be impossible to stop nationalist violence. As Nasser suggests, one should look at the root problem rather than acting on emotional impulses. Many of the problems of nationalism are rooted in the distorted characterizations of nationalism.

Irrationalities of nationalism have led many people and some world state leaders to practice contradictory policies. For example, Charles de Gaulle, who called for a free Quebec, denounced Britain's proposal for Brittany's freedom. Many English people who supported Greek independence in the nineteenth century saw nothing unreasonable in opposing Irish freedom. Canadians who supported the cause of Armenian, Kurdish and Palestinian independence denounced Quebec separatism as an unnecessary step toward the dissolution of the state. Along the same view, Abraham Lincoln promised to save the union at any cost. He said:

I would save the Union. . . . My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save the Union by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because it helps to save the Union.²⁸

Lincoln's position seems to be contrary to the generally held belief that the American civil war was waged to end slavery. Lincoln's suggestion that unity even at the cost of

social problems. He finally suggests that one should look at the root of social problems rather than plot the assassination of individuals.

²⁸Allen Buchanan, Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1991), p. 1.

maintaining slavery is morally unacceptable, to say the least. Some may argue that Lincoln deliberately evaded emphasizing the slavery issue to persuade the South, which was opposed to the abolition of slavery. It is true that this may have worked politically. However, it should be noted that rationality is more than what works. Rationality, most importantly, relies on the notion of truth. If something is true, it must be rational. Truth does not depend upon the likes and dislikes of people. Nonetheless, the success and durability of the American Revolution and the subsequent political and relative economic stability of the United States seem to have been due to the strong civic law that upheld the principle of universal human dignity—the principle that affirmed that all persons are created equal. The problem of nationalism is that it promotes the idea that certain nations, races, or ethnic groups are better endowed by nature and therefore deserve to enjoy a superior life.

Chapter 3

DIFFICULTIES OF DEFINING NATIONALISM

The problem of defining nationalism arises from the fact that it affects all aspects of social and individual life. According to the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *nationalism* may be defined in at least five ways.²⁹ First, it may be defined as a sentiment of loyalty to a nation (or as a variety of patriotism); second, as a propensity to consider exclusively the interest of one's own nation, especially, in cases where these compete with the interests of other nations; third, as an attitude which attaches high importance to the distinctive characteristics of a nation; fourth, as a doctrine which maintains that national culture should be preserved; fifth, as a political and anthropological theory which asserts that mankind is naturally divided into nations, that there are determinate criteria for identifying a nation and for recognizing its members, such that each nation is entitled to an independent government of its own, and that the states are legitimate only if they fit into this definition. Politically speaking, only if every nation is formed as a single state can every state consist exclusively of the whole of one nation. The Dictionary of History defines nationalism as a political or social movement of individuals primarily loyal to a given state.³⁰ However, dictionary or even scientific definitions of nationalism seem to leave out certain essential descriptive components. Therefore, one can hardly define

²⁹Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 5, Paul Edward, ed. (New York: Macmillan, Inc., 1967).

³⁰Dictionary of History, Bruce Wetterau, ed. (New York: Holt and Company, 1994).

nationalism from one or two perspectives. Probably the best approximate definition of nationalism is reported in the research done by the Royal Institute of England.

In 1939 the Royal Institute of International Affairs introduced their study on nationalism as follows:

Nationalism cannot be properly appreciated if it is treated as an isolated political or psychological phenomenon. It must be regarded as a special case of the more general and permanent problem of group integration. Far reaching questions of sociology and group psychology are involved, questions that admit of wide differences of opinion and to which scientific methods of study cannot be easily applied.³¹

The Royal Institute study also found that *nation* in English is used synonymously with 'State' or 'Country' to mean a society united under one government. *Nation* is also used to denote an aggregation of individuals united by political as well as sociological ties. For example, race, religion, language, or tradition are some of the common themes that are used to promote nationalist causes. Individuals are rallied for the nationalist goals using common institutions that give unity to the group and foster a spirit of sympathy between the members. The Royal Institute also defined *nationality* as a condition attributed to a person or a group of persons in virtue of his or their membership of a *nation*. By extension it is sometimes used in a sense equivalent to the word *nationalism*. In a strictly legal sense *nationality* is used as an equivalent to membership of a State. *Nationality* is also used to describe a people, and not necessarily a nation. In this paper, *nationality* is used in the latter sense.

³¹Snyder, Dynamics of Nationalism, pp. 14-17.

Some scholars argue that nationalism is a social phenomenon of the eightieth century. For example, Elie Kedourie argued that nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century.³² Nationalism, Kedourie adds, pretends to provide a criterion for the determination of the unit of population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate exercise of power in the state, and for the right organization of a society of states. Moreover, many modern scholarly views on nationalism seem to associate nationalism with the birth of modern nations. The literature assumes that nationalism conceptually depends on the existence of a nation. However, the criteria for determining what constitutes a nation and thus deserves the right accorded to nations are even more problematic than the definition of nationalism.

Walker Connor argues that defining and conceptualizing a nation is difficult because the essence of a nation is intangible.³³ He argues that the essence of a nation is a psychological bond that joins people and differentiates it, in the subconscious conviction of its members, from all other people in a most vital way. Moreover, since a nation is a self-defined rather than an other-defined group, the broadly held conviction that a group has a singular origin cannot be proven with actual empirical data. An additional difficulty is that the original meaning of the word *nation* is different from its meaning in modern usage.

³²Elie Kedourie, Nationalism, 4th ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

³³John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, eds., Nationalism (Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 36-46.

The original meaning of the word *nation* conveyed the idea of common blood ties. Its etymology is from the past participle of the Latin verb *nasci*, meaning to be born; hence, the Latin noun *nationem*, connoting breed or race. The term "nation" was introduced into the English language in the thirteenth century, and it was then understood as a term that primarily described a blood related group. It wasn't until the early seventeenth century that *nation* was first used to refer to the inhabitants of a country, regardless of its population's ethnonational composition, thereby becoming a substitute for less specific human categories such as the people, or the citizens. However, it is less clear how the meaning of *nation* has evolved into its current multiple meaning. Connor asserts that there is general belief that the transformation of the meaning of the word nation comes from the rapid spread of the doctrine of sovereignty. Subsequent use by movement leaders in their literature connoted all the people who belonged to the same state. For example, the French Declaration of Rights of Human Beings proclaimed that the source of all sovereignty resided essentially in the nation; no groups or individuals could exercise authority not emanating therefrom.

Joseph Stalin argued that a nation is a historical category that belongs to the epoch of rising capitalism, a historical epoch in which the rising bourgeois class replaces the feudal class. After victory over the feudal system, according to Stalin, the bourgeoisie fights over control of the domestic market. According to Stalin, a nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up that may be manifested in common culture. Stalin argued that all the objective conditions which are the basis for the

enrichment of the national culture—such as common territory and stable community of people, and the subjective conditions such as common language and common psychological make-up—must exist at the same time. He writes:

It is sufficient for a single one of the characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation. [And] it is possible to conceive of people possessing a common “national character” who, nevertheless, cannot be said to constitute a single nation if they are economically disunited, inhabit different territories, speak different languages.

Moreover, Stalin asserts that a nation is a relative community of national character. National character is the sum total of each nationality’s unique physical and spiritual characteristics that distinguish one nation from another. Furthermore, a nation is an aggregate of people bound into a community of character by common destiny.

For Stalin, the essence of the national question is economic. Thus, for Stalin, solving economic problems would also solve problems of nationalism. For example, if the bourgeois class is overthrown by waging *socialist revolution* and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat, the problem of nationalism would wither away. As this thesis will discuss specifically, Stalin’s influence in instituting nationalistic policy in the Soviet Union after the death of Lenin indicated that the hope for the demise of nationalism through socialist revolution was not realized. As suggested in the previous discussions, a more comprehensive and accurate definition is required to accurately illuminate the problems of nationalism in order to seek appropriate solutions.

Weber seems to have recognized the complexity of nationalism.³⁴ He argued that the concept of a nation cannot be defined unambiguously in terms of empirical qualities common to those who count as members of a nation, and he asserts that the concept of nation is manifested as a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups. According to Weber, a nation is not identical with the people of a state, but with the membership of a given polity, which is not identical with the community speaking the same language. In other words, speaking the same language does not seem to be an absolutely necessary condition to constitute a *nation*. Weber argued that to constitute a nation, people must have the same interests or imagine a similar political destiny. Common interests and a common imagined political destiny unite otherwise heterogeneous people. What makes a nation is a group's political sentiment and ambition to form their separate common state. Weber writes:

A nation is a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own; hence a nation is a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own.

Ernest Renan argues that a nation is a soul and a spiritual principle—one is in the past, and the other is in the present.³⁵ According to Renan, to constitute a nation, the conditions such as the possession of common history, the desire to live together, and the will to continue to value a common heritage, are necessary. He says that “a heritage of glory, a reluctance to break apart, and a desire to realize the same national programs in the

³⁴Ibid., pp. 21-25.

³⁵Ibid., p. 17.

future—to have suffered, worked, and hoped together—are worth more than common taxes and frontiers conforming to ideas of strategy. These are what one really understands as nationalism despite differences of race and language.” Moreover, Renan goes on to argue that common suffering and common sorrow are more significant than triumph in that they impose obligations and demand a common effort. “A nation is a grand solidarity constituted by the sentiment of sacrifices which one has made and those one is disposed to make again.”³⁶ For Renan, nationalism is a belief that each nation has both the right and the duty to constitute itself as a state. According to Renan a nation is not based on race or similarity of language; rather, the main criterion for constituting a nation is having similar psychological make-up.

Benedict Anderson argues that theories about nationalism are flawed by the portrayal of nationalism and ethnicity as artificial constructs. Nations, according to Anderson, are created through “unself-conscious” process of explosive interaction between capitalism, linguistics and technology. Anderson writes:

It is quite possible to conceive the emergence of the new imagined national communities without any one, perhaps all, of them being present. The convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set a stage for the modern nation.³⁷

As the preceding discussions may have shown, there is no agreement among scholars on the definition of a nation and nationalism. Contrary to suggestions that

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Hutchinson and Smith, Nationalism, “Imagined Communities,” pp. 93, 95.

nationalism is an invention and/or the phenomenon of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century development of the modern nation-state on the basis of its etymology, the concept of nationalism does not seem to depend on the emergence of nations, since there was the use of the term “nation” before the eighteenth century and later centuries which are considered the eras of the modern nation-state. Nonetheless, the civic aspect of nationalism—where one belongs to a nation as a *citizen* (as opposed to a feudal empire which considered one a *subject*) is added in the late eighteenth century. The emergence of nations has complicated already complex ways of group integration. Despite the added political element of gaining citizenship status of people to a particular geographic boundary, the primordial loyalty of an individual to a group or groups to a kingdom or empire existed long before the modern nation-state.

The essences of nationalism seem to be more psychological than political in the sense that there is a psychological state of mind that must exist before nationalism is expressed in a political form. For this reason the preferred definition of nationalism, in this paper, is one that emphasizes the state of consciousness, on the part of individuals or groups, of membership of a nation, or of a desire on the part of a people to promote the strength, liberty or prosperity of a nation. Nationalism is a sentiment that bonds people or a community due to common historical experience. Nationalism is, moreover, a state of mind in which the supreme loyalty to a nationality or community is felt due to persons having a shared value. Shared values exist when people have lived together in the same geographic area within common borders. The sharing of common values is reflected in culture, psychological make-up, language, literature, and folklore. Sharing of common

values is also reflected in the desire for a common political destiny. Nationalistic sentiment is developed in common history and reflected upon to build a prosperous future for the nation. It seems that the common factor in all cases of nationalism is that there is the claim that a nation or a group knows itself at present or historically, that it is or was a nation, or that the group is a distinct community. Carlton J.H. Hays' definition of nationalism better expresses this concept of nationalism. He writes:

Nationality is the product of remembered or imagined factors from a people's past that together produce the conviction of being a separate and distinct part of humanity. Nationalism is an emphasis upon this distinctness at the expense of similarities of mankind as a whole, and for that reason easily becomes an aggressive attempt to impose the difference as a superiority . . . the tendency of nationalism to adapt patriotic rituals which resemble those of religion elevating the state as giver of private as well as public morality, and thus making the state into simulacrum of the Deity.³⁸

The psychological aspect of nationalism is critical because it seems to produce a common culture that does not always require rational justification for people of the same heritage acting together against real or perceived threats. The political aspect of nationalism, having a concrete common territorial boundary under an independent state that maintains the social order, is also important but does not seem to be as critical as the psychological aspect of nationalism. Living in the same territorial boundary helps foster common sentiment due to physical proximity which may bring about intermingling of people. However, physical proximity does not always guarantee the unity of people, or imply a common national sentiment. There are people who have lived in the same geographic area for many years but have spent many of those years waging wars against

³⁸Pfaff, Wrath Of Nations, p. 54.

each other. Native Americans and other Americans, the English and the Irish, and the Israelis and the Palestinians are some examples. Territorial boundaries of groups have been changing throughout the history of humankind while the sentiment of common heritage and remembered common history seems to stay the same across politically divided nations and ethnic groups. Powerful nations have annexed powerless nations or groups and have divided people who have common heritage and territories into different nations. Many territories have been annexed by bigger and more powerful countries, but the people in those territories have kept their sentiment of treasuring their common heritage in the face of the annexing group. For example, native Americans, Ethiopian Jews, or Russian Jews have kept the sentiment of belonging to their respective communities for centuries. For this reason it appears that the most enduring aspect of nationalism is the common sentiment that binds people of the same heritage rather than common geography.

Furthermore, nationalism is a state of mind in the sense that people are conscious of themselves as a sociologically or anthropologically justified community which constitutes a distinct group. The knowledge of such uniqueness is politically expressed with reasoned demands to achieve a political goal. The demands are usually related to a belief that the condition of people's lives or of a nation ought to be better in the future than the prevailing conditions. Nationalism is evoked by the existence of a threat to nations or to a group. Where chauvinism and/or political and economic domination exist, nationalism is used as an organizing tool to fight against such marginalizing attitudes and oppression. The existence of a dominant group evokes national sentiment. It is important

to understand why and how people respond to the factors that evoke nationalism.

Although the psychological aspect of nationalism is critical to understand, nationalism ought to be studied in its multiple forms in order to find ways in which people of different heritages and nationalities can coexist in a just society. I emphasize the psychological background of nationalism to stress the point that, without understanding what provokes nationalism, it is difficult to promote tolerance and a cooperative life. By no means do I intend to minimize the importance of economic aspects of nationalism. Like all other social problems, nationalism is essentially a demand for justice, directly or indirectly. The problem of nationalism, furthermore, should be understood within the context of a quest for justice. The problem, however, is that the notion of a just society and how it might be achieved is not so obvious. This issue is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Nationalism and Patriotism

In psychological terms, patriotism is a subjective and internal predisposition toward external threats. In political terms, patriotism is most commonly defined as "love of a country." Historically, patriotism has been defined as, among other things, a loyalty to the monarch. The relationship between patriotism and nationalism is that nationalism arises psychologically when patriotism leads to certain demands and possible actions. This does not mean, however, that *nationalism* is an exclusively psychological term, but, rather, that the demands and actions of nationalism stem from a psychological state, patriotism, when the ensuing demands and actions are politically, socially, and economically significant.

Both patriotism and nationalism may stand against despotism, tyranny, oppression and corruption. However, nationalism extends itself into maintaining cultural purity, fighting against heterogeneity, or oppressing and discriminating against certain groups of people—for example, the notion of a separate Aryan nation and Hitler’s racism. Patriotism is, more or less, a conscious conviction of a person. The patriot believes that his or her welfare and that of the group to which he or she belongs are dependent upon his or her heroic action to preserve the power and culture of his or her heritage and country. Patriotism is more the result of institutional education than of self-originated feeling. Children are taught early in schools about their nations through national anthems and stories about personalities who contributed to the defense of the nation, as an initiation to patriotism. However, when the indoctrination of national pride is emphasized, a patriot becomes vulnerable to an exaggerated loyalty to the state or a nation. According to Christian Bay, patriotism may be defined as an unequivocal commitment to the apparent best interest of one’s nation. However, to a person of a different nationality, what would be called patriotism could be called chauvinism, or narrow nationalism. Bay states:

It is patriotism that blinds most people. . . . [Because] patriotic indoctrination, which begins hitting us as soon as we get out of the cradle, programs us to an orientation of national selfishness that is just as simpleminded as the average small child’s individual selfishness: if something is mine it can’t be yours as well, but if something is yours I would like to share. . . . By the mystification of patriotism . . . which bids us all to love and worship the state; or, if that is too much to ask, we are told to love and respect *our flag*, anthem, head of state, selected facts and fables from our history, and so on. In short, we are programmed to be patriotic, or nationalist.³⁹

³⁹Christian Bay, “Patriotism: The First Refuge,” Philosophy Forum (1979), p. 59-63.

A patriot is said to be conscious because, having been educated about the history of his or her country, he or she can appreciate the fact that other people also share his or her convictions; but he or she is only "more or less conscious," since unconscious factors may always play some role in the behavior of the patriot.

The patriot and the nationalist may have similar ideals and beliefs about their nation in that both are partially committed to the belief that the interests of their nation need to be articulated and protected. Nationalism may always hold an element of patriotism. Nationalism may be expressed when, more or less, the following situations exist: (1) when people in a society share the feeling, (2) when such feelings lead to patriotic demands which have justifications, and (3) when nationalists are ready to make sacrifices on behalf of their nation. The existence of these nationalist demands, however, are not a guarantee that all nationalist demands are appropriate or lead to appropriate actions - and/or appropriate solutions to conflicts. Although some similarities between patriotism and nationalism exist in some respects, they are also dissimilar in many respects in some important ways. For example, patriotism can be expressed by an individual, whereas nationalism, in its technical definition, can only be expressed as a collective.

Nationalist demands vary and depend on historical circumstances. The general content of nationalist demands are specified when their origin is attributed to people's patriotism; thus, those demands pertain to the preservation or expansion, or both, of the power and culture of a particular people's own society. For nationalism to have a significant social consequence, people must share the demands set forth by nationalist political organizations. Moreover, justifications must accompany nationalist demands.

The types of nationalist demands, however, are not obvious. To prejudge or generalize nationalist demands as legitimate or illegitimate is difficult. Nationalism may be better understood if approached on a case by case basis rather than categorizing all forms of nationalism as one and recommending the same solution for all forms of nationalistic political demands. Nationalist demands are irrational when their foci and emphases are on national purity, and when narrow nationalists and racists assume their values are unquestionable because they belong to certain ethnicities, nations and/or races. A chauvinist may consider himself or herself a nationalist or a patriot when holding such a view.

Alastair MacIntyre argues that the notion of patriotism can create a dilemma.⁴⁰ First, MacIntyre points out that there are different definitions and understandings of what patriotism means for different people. Some think patriotism 'names a virtue,' while others think it 'names a vice.' When patriotism is defined as an attitude that can only be possessed by belonging to a particular nation, it necessarily becomes a partial attitude which does not stand up to the universal moral standard required by liberals like Kant. Patriotism, since it requires one to go to war on a particular community's behalf, cannot hold a neutral attitude toward other communities. A patriot, therefore, is required to be partisan.

⁴⁰Alastair MacIntyre, "Is Patriotism a Virtue?" in Social Science and Political Philosophy, ed. William Shaw and John Arthur (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1992).

According to the Kantian account of morality, impartiality is required to adjudicate conflicting interests. It seems, however, that a patriot's own community and other communities can be differentiated by looking into what a community is to the patriot. A community is a place where the patriot shapes his own identity, expresses himself or herself, and can be understood without difficulty. It may be claimed, then, that protecting the community or the nation, for a patriot, is almost like protecting himself or herself. It seems that just as one has a duty to himself or herself, a patriot also has a duty to his or her community where his or her interests are rooted. Nonetheless, a patriot can only be a patriot by his action against other communities. But if a patriot is participating in aggression, it is not clear how he or she is qualified to be virtuous. Some claim that patriotism and nationalism are different in the sense that the former is defensive while the latter can be aggressive. Even granting that, however, the justification of patriotism still rests on the circumstances under which one acts. Again, the justification of patriotism is conditioned by whether the act of the patriot is motivated by a universally justifiable cause. Whether patriotism can be a universally justifiable act or not a justifiable act at all is debatable. Voltaire shows that patriotism is a paradoxical concept. He wrote:

It is sad that in order to be a good patriot one often has to be the enemy of the rest of mankind. . . . To be a good patriot is to wish that one's city may be enriched by trade, and be powerful by arms. It is clear that one country cannot gain without another's losing, and that one cannot conquer without bringing misery to another. Such then is the human state, that to wish greatness for one's country is to wish harm to one's neighbors. He who

wished that his fatherland might never be greater, smaller, richer, or poorer, would be a citizen of the world.⁴¹

To overcome the egoistic act of patriotism or collective egoism of nationalism, genuine dialogue is required among communities. Without true conversation among people of different communities, the beliefs and values of people of different communities cannot be reconciled. By *true conversation* is meant a dialogue among people without any label being put on people. True conversation can only occur when dominant nations or groups accept the legitimacy of oppressed groups.

The development of civic communities requires evolutionary development rather than revolutionary process. The notion of community implies the voluntary association of people. The violence associated with nationalism is partly attributed to historical predicaments in the formation of a territory. The human race was forced arbitrarily to form a territory. In this regard, Alan Butt Philip suggests that nations should have been formed through an evolutionary process. He writes:

Nations develop over the course of centuries, reacting to events and environment, and from the shared experience they unconsciously evolve individual characteristics, ways of life and idioms which are transferred through succeeding generations.⁴²

It seems that one of the reasons that nationalism defied both logic and definition is that political society was not formed through voluntary association of communities.

⁴¹Isaac Kramnick, ed., The Portable Enlightenment Reader (New York, Penguin Books Inc., 1995), p. 421.

⁴²Alan Butt Philip, "European Nationalism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in The Roots of Nationalism, ed. Rosalind Mitchison, (John Donald Publishers Ltd., 1980), p. 8.

The psychological make-up of community cannot be instituted or legislated. Nations evolve over a course of years to develop common psychological make-up and manifest this in common culture; it is an evolutionary process rather than a revolutionary process. On the other hand, the political orders such as common territory can be arbitrarily drawn, and a common national language can be politically enforced. True unity among communities or people cannot be legislated; true unity among people can only happen when conditions allow people naturally and voluntarily to interact and thus form a truly stable community. One of the major reasons why nationalistic resentments persists despite technological progress is that unity is forced upon people who do not share common values and beliefs.

The Role of State Leaders and Intellectuals in Promoting Nationalism

State leaders and some nationalist organization leaders seem to assume that they can turn on and turn off the public sentiment for national unity or for separation from a dominant state. In the arena of politicizing the public, political groups rarely present the true relationships among communities. In many cases, political manipulation through distortion of what is considered “other communities” is taken so far that communities become eternal enemies. Once people have acted upon distorted political propaganda, it is difficult to stop political violence.

Governments and nationalist political organization leaders seem to lack an understanding of how true unity among people of different historical experiences might be established. If the unity of people is forced, the unity will last only as long as the force

that created unity exists and stays undisturbed. For example, the forged unity among the Soviet nationalities lasted only until 1989 when the Soviet Union faced political crises, and the power was disturbed. Artificially enforced unity almost ensures the occurrences of violence, and that the cycle of armed violence will not foreseeably abate. In the name of national unity and territorial integrity, many states have transformed political and cultural demands into full-fledged wars. On the other hand, by attempting to dissolve political struggle by military force, instead of by peaceful negotiations, most governments have helped the nationalist struggle to win support or at least sympathy from broad masses of their nation. It seems that no amount of force can stop the nostalgia about the lost or the imagined nation, for example Eritrea, Palestine, Northern Ireland, and Israel, to cite a few. It seems that a rational alternative is available to all involved states and that nationalist political organizations can seek peaceful and negotiated settlements. The measure of people's rationality should be their willingness and diligent effort to avoid war, rather than how they use reason to win the war. It seems that there is no rationality to war. In his letter dated July 27, 1783, to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society of London, Benjamin Franklin wrote,

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to settle their differences without cutting throats; for, in my opinion, there never was a good war, or a bad peace.⁴³

⁴³Kramnick, Portable Enlightenment Reader, p. 551.

People may reason that they wage war for lack of choices. When there is no alternative to choose from, it seems no action can be rational. To assert that war is the only method to settle conflicting interests may imply that there is no human rationality.

In addition, intellectuals seem to exaggerate differences among nations and nationalities. Intellectuals frequently play on people's emotions, sometimes by describing natural or moral rights as belonging exclusively to their nation or nationalities or ethnic groups. Political propaganda claiming that humankind is naturally divided into nations, that every nation has its *personality* or character or sometimes a mission in the world, makes people believe that the differences among them are irreconcilable. Mass-media that are mostly run by the elite of a nation promote the idea that a person must first be loyal to the nation-state. However, the nature of human difference and the use of this difference as a justification for national separation and as a basis for discriminating among people has very little or no rational support. First, the claim that humankind is separate by nature in the sense that humans are predetermined not to have association is not self evident. It seems that the nature of human difference is individual in the same way that a person is different from his parents. Second, patriotism and subsequent nationalism are mostly due to a state's educational indoctrination. Diana M. Ronell argues that the problem of nationalism is that it puts the emphasis on variations in human culture at the expense of the fundamental unity of humankind. She writes:

Humanity constitutes one species. As any other species, Homo Sapiens displays varieties. These varieties have obscured our knowledge of oneness and focused our vision instead upon our differences. Our individual interactions, social institutions and political activities are all rooted and reinforcing of this vision of separateness. Yet, if man as a species is to

survive, it is imperative that we recognize and experience our similarities and focus upon our common bonds and the fundamental that we are all of humankind.⁴⁴

Moreover, she argues that the single most important factor for nationalism and its resultant conditions—namely, exclusiveness, narrowness, insistence on uniformity, pressure to conform to standards of thought and conduct, prejudice, and discrimination—is an exaggerated loyalty to a group.

Anthony D. Smith asserts that the most common criterion that appears to be a necessary condition for all nationalist movements is the *role of the intelligentsia*.⁴⁵ He argues that intellectuals are the main catalysts in the promotion of national sentiment. He writes:

Nationalism is the product of a new type of education, which first affects a small, disaffected minority within the traditional society, the intelligentsia, and then spreads to other groups using the mass media and literature to reach the masses. This novel type of education is radically opposed to the traditional elite or folk varieties. It stresses secular, utilitarian values, linguistic in form, relates individuals through sets of shared symbols, and transmits memories and experiences to posterity.⁴⁶

In the same regard, John Breuilly argues that nationalism is primarily an instrument that the elite uses to achieve political power.⁴⁷ He asserts that nationalism is a form of

⁴⁴Diana M. Ronell, "Psychological Foundations of Nationalism," Philosophy Forum 16 (1979), p. 43-46.

⁴⁵Anthony D. Smith, Theories of Nationalism (New York: Holmes & Meier Publisher, 1979), pp., 158-60, 167-73.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 87.

⁴⁷John Breuilly, Nationalism and the State (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) p. 1.

politics, as opposed to a state of mind, that exhibits an expression of national consciousness, and a political doctrine elaborated by intellectuals. He says that "Nationalism, beyond all else, is about politics and politics is about power. Power in the modern world is about control of the State." Max Weber argued that nationalism is mainly expressed in the petty bourgeois intellectual sentiment of prestige for attainment of power-positions. Intellectuals, by virtue of their peculiar position in the society, have access to certain achievements considered to be 'culture values,' and usurp the leadership of the people who claim to have a common culture. Intellectuals, to make their claims legitimate, invent a theory for nationalism.

Nationalism and Ideology

Nationalism was promoted as an independent political theory or ideology in the eighteenth century. However, the sentiment of belonging to a group, or loyalty to a group, was present throughout human history, at least after the division of humans into families. Moreover, it does not seem that nationalism is an ideology. For an idea to be classified as an ideology, it must have a coherent system of justification on which it is based. Nationalism does not seem to have any kind of separately identifiable system. Nationalism appears to be a *parasitic* idea that can be coupled with almost all kinds of ideology for its justification. That is, nationalism does not belong to any one social system such as capitalism or socialism. One of the reasons for the difficulty in defining nationalism may stem from scholars' effort to give nationalism a separate status. Nationalism can be better understood by adding whichever ideology it is coupled with.

Ideology, in its original sense, means a scientific idea. In recent somewhat distorted use, ideology means a dogmatic idea.⁴⁸ Nationalism is neither a dogmatic nor a scientific idea. It appears that the significant factor for the rise of nationalism as a feeling of loyalty to a group was present starting from the time society was organized in groups. What is different about nationalism after nations have been defined in the modern sense (beginning in the eighteenth century) is that nationalism became a tool for all forms of states for an indoctrination based on whatever political and economic system they follow. The following examples may illustrate how nationalism is used as a tool of propaganda by states that are based on various economic and political systems.

On 23 March 1919, the day the fascist movement was founded in Milan, Italy, Mussolini said "Imperialism is a fundamental element in the life of every nation that tends to expand economically and spiritually. . . . We ask for our place in the world because we are entitled to it."⁴⁹ In the same day, Mussolini made two speeches; the above quotation is

⁴⁸The term 'ideology' was first coined in the late eighteenth century by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836). Tracy was influenced by the European Enlightenment, and sought to develop a new discipline that would be concerned with the systematic analysis of ideas and sensations. It was this discipline that he described as ideology, which literally means the science of ideas. He believed that this discipline would enable human nature to be understood and hence would enable the social and political order to be rearranged in accordance with the needs and aspirations of human beings. The early project of ideology was thus a natural development of certain themes characteristic of the enlightenment, such as the capacity of the human beings to understand and control the world through systematic scientific analysis.

Source: Joel Krieger, ed., Oxford Companion to Politics Of the World (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁴⁹S. William Halperin, Mussolini and Italian Fascism (Toronto: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1964), p. 97.

from his morning speech. In the afternoon he made another speech in which he agitated the public against the threat of Bolshevism. He said, "Unquestionably, bolshevism has ruined the economic life of Russia. . . . It is a typically Russian phenomenon against which our western civilizations . . . are resistant. For our part we declare war on socialism . . . because it has aligned itself against the nation. . . . The official Socialist party has been obviously reactionary. . . ." In August 1931, Mussolini fascistized Italian universities, a traditional stronghold of intellectual freedom and independence. He imposed a loyalty oath on college professors, which reads as follows:

I swear to be loyal to the King, to his royal successors and the Fascist regime, to observe loyally the Statuto[constitution] . . . fulfill academic duties with the purpose of forming citizens, industrious, honest, and devoted to the Fatherland and the Fascist regime. I swear that I do not belong and will not belong to associations or parties whose activity is not conciliable with the duties of my office.⁵⁰

Despite his self-acknowledged fascism, Mussolini claimed his government was progressive and Italians ought to follow his radical nationalist view. The most intriguing part is how nationalism is used to deceive. Legitimacy and credibility of nationalism and a national question may be rationally decided by considering the content of the national demands and by careful study of each circumstance individually. History tells us that under the banner of nationalism and national questions, there have been ill conceived and misguided nationalism and national questions that have brought atrocities against humanity. In addition to Mussolini's example, the following views and ways of expressing nationalism

⁵⁰Ibid., p.145.

may illustrate how nationalism varies and yet couples itself with almost all kinds of ideologies.

In 1917, Lord Rothschild, a leading British Zionist, wrote a letter to former British prime minister Lord Balfour asking for help in forming a Jewish homeland. The letter reads as follows:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.⁵¹

A Palestinian writer, Walid Khalidi, argued that Zionism, a belief in a Jewish right to a homeland, is an injustice to the Palestinians who were displaced when the Jews chose Palestine as their homeland. Khalidi writes:

The ancient Jewish possession of Palestine did not . . . give contemporary Jews an overarching political right which negated the political rights of the Palestinians.⁵²

In 1941, Mao Tse-tung stated:

The culture of New Democracy is national in character. It opposes imperialist oppression, and advocates the dignity and independence of the Chinese nation. It belongs to our nation, and possesses its characteristics.⁵³

Charles de Gaulle, in 1962, asserted the following:

⁵¹Bruno Leon, Nationalism: Opposing Viewpoints (St. Paul, MN: Greenhaven Press, 1986), p. 49.

⁵²Ibid., p. 117.

⁵³Snyder, Dynamics of Nationalism, p. 331.

Our country [France], with her tinted sky, her varied contours, her fertile soil, our fields full of fine corn vines and livestock, our industry, . . . adaptation and self-respect, makes us, above all others, a race created for brilliant deeds.⁵⁴

Hopefully, these examples sufficiently show how nationalism is expressed in all kinds of socioeconomic systems and by all types of states—fascist, capitalist, semi-feudal—and even by those who remembered the long lost nation and hoped to create it again. In all cases, nationalism is used to evoke national sentiment. The argument that nationalism is only a phenomenon that arises in a specific socioeconomic system does not seem to hold. Nationalist organizations forget that rational decisions are always made to influence the future, not the past. Possibility is always in the future. Although the nationalists' attempt to correct past injustices is plausible, to dwell on history can also paralyze the present life in which future possibilities are rooted. It is important to subject the historical claims to critical evaluation. The relevant and irrelevant factors must be differentiated. It seems that all forms of nationalism, from narrow and ethnic nationalist organizations to "grand empire chauvinists," attempt to distort the interpretation of history by adding a twist to serve their own political objectives. Therefore, there must be unbiased criteria to differentiate between legitimate and illegitimate nationalist claims. The problem is, however, that what count as rational criteria to delegitimize or legitimize nationalist claims are not obvious. It seems that this problem is rooted in the impasse between the assumptions of modern philosophy, which seeks mathematical certainty to claim knowledge, and distorted conceptions of rationality and social realities which do not

⁵⁴Snyder, Dynamics of Nationalism, "The Glory of France, 1962" p. 134.

always fit into these criteria. How modern philosophy's model of thinking influenced ways of understanding social problems, including nationalism, is the subject of chapter four. For now, let us explore types of nationalism and philosophies they use to promote their demands. This will help us understand nationalism and its rationality or irrationality.

Chapter 4

CLASSIFICATION OF NATIONALISM

Historically, nationalism has been classified as *Humanitarian, liberal, Civic, Romantic, integral,* and *ethnic*. These classifications are based on the philosophical views they are coupled with. Nationalism in itself is not an independent world view. Thus, if the philosophy a type of nationalism is conceptually based upon is not rational, then the type of nationalism it promotes is irrational. To accurately characterize the type of nationalism, one has to look into the values and beliefs each type of nationalism promotes. The following are summary definitions and features of types of nationalism.

Humanitarian Nationalism

Humanitarian nationalism is a combination of *humanism* and *romanticism*. Humanitarian nationalists argued that every nationality was entitled to its own development consonant with its particular genesis.⁵⁵ Each nation should attend to the business of its own development and should have the kindest and most understanding sentiment toward other nations striving for similar ends.

Humanitarian nationalism is the earliest type of nationalism, and focused on the well being of humanity. Humanitarian nationalism was based on the following ideas of enlightenment: (1) it substituted the natural for the supernatural, science for theology, and

⁵⁵Carlton Hayes, The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism (New York: Macmillan Company, 1931), pp. 33-42.

it assumed that the whole universe of matter and mind is guided and controlled by calculable natural law; (2) it depended on pure reason (more or less) to understand the natural law; (3) it assumed that humankind would use reason and obey the natural law, and it promised the progress and perfectibility of the human race; (4) it included the tender regard for the natural rights of the individual and predilection for the social blessing of an enlightened humanitarian.

Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751) was an Englishman who denounced the belief in the supernatural, the miraculous, and the metaphysical tradition. He rejected the authority of the Bible and all ecclesiastical authority. Instead, he extolled natural rights of humankind, the natural law, reason, and humanitarianism. Bolingbroke was the father of Theism, the belief that there is a personal Being, accessible, omnibenevolent, supreme in power, and the source of the sanction of values. Like many of the eighteenth century new religions, Bolingbroke's Theism was also somewhat difficult for many people to accept. His God of reason was remote, impersonal, and scientific. The people of that era could not tolerate the strict, scientific, abstract God; they needed another outlet for emotional enthusiasm and heart-felt worship. As his fellow citizens turned to pure humanitarianism, Bolingbroke also turned to humanitarian nationalism as an alternative way of emotional expression.

According to Hayes, Bolingbroke's philosophy of nationalism is contained in four of his short writings: *The Idea of the Patriotic King*, *On the Spirit of Patriotism*, *Remarks on the history of England*, and *A Dissertation upon parties*. Bolingbroke asserts that the God of Nature and Reason created nationalities on Earth from the First Cause of All

Things. God planted the irresistible impulse to form nationalities, and marked off one from another by differences of geography, climate, language, character and government. He provided them with two laws: one was the universal law of reason; the second was the particular law or constitution of laws by which every distinct community chose to be governed. Through reason, both laws are revealed to humankind, and by nature, humankind is related, since all humans have the same nature. One law is to safeguard humanity; the other is intended to protect nationality; and both laws are intended to be compatible.

Romantic Nationalism

The rise of German romanticism was the strongest protest against rationalism, and gave a philosophical backbone for the spread of the most aggressive type of nationalism. According to Hans Kohn, romanticism, though in the beginning little concerned with politics or the state, prepared the rise of German nationalism after 1800.⁵⁶ Kohn argues that German romanticism was in essence a revolt against the rationalism of the Enlightenment. Absorbed into the rising nationalism, romanticism developed an anti-liberal, anti-Western character, a Germanophilism which, while not unique, assumed an integral, aggressive character. Moreover, Kohn traces back the rise of Hitler's nationalist and racist views to the romanticism. Kohn writes:

⁵⁶Snyder, Dynamics of Nationalism, "Romanticism and the Rise of German Nationalism After 1800," pp. 140-142.

It was an aesthetic revolution, a resort to imagination, almost feminine in its sensibility; it was poetry more deeply indebted to the spirit of music than poetry of the eighteenth century had been rich in emotional depth, more potent in magic evocation. But German romanticism was and wished to be more than poetry. It was an interpretation of life, nature and history- and this philosophic character distinguished it from romanticism in other lands. . . . [Romanticism] mobilized the fascination of the past to fight against the principles of 1789 [the French Revolution].⁵⁷

In opposing the ideas of the French Revolution, romanticism came to concern itself with the politics of state and society. However, romanticism never developed a program for the German nation-state, but with its emphasis on the peculiarity of the German mind it fostered the consciousness of German uniqueness. The idea of German uniqueness led to the rise of *integral nationalism* in Germany.

Romanticism is a philosophical movement that bridges the transition between Kant and Hegel. Romanticism differs from German idealism in the conception of Spirit, its metaphysical account of nature and humankind, and its epistemological method of investigating and understanding reality. According to the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, romanticism holds that Spirit or the absolute is essentially creative and argues that the ultimate ground of inquiry of all things is primarily an urge to self-expression.⁵⁸

Romanticism has brought a focus on the search for ways of self-realization. One could say that if the absolute of Fichte is a moralist, and that of Hegel is a logician, for romanticists it is primarily an artist. For romanticists, objects in nature represent mind and intelligence.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 140.

⁵⁸Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 5, Paul Edwards, ed. (New York: Macmillan, Inc., 1967).

Nature is a manifestation of reason, which, in humankind, becomes conscious of itself. The epistemology of romanticism is exclusively emotional and intuitive. Romanticism stresses the necessity of the fullness of experience and depth of feeling if reality is to be understood. For romanticism, reason is artificial and analytical, and reason is inadequate to the task of comprehending the absolute. For romanticism, knowing is living, and it suggests that philosophers must approach nature through inspiration, longing and sympathy.

Romanticism had a healthy and necessary influence by reaffirming the value and dignity of nature. It also had a positive influence in stressing the importance of emotion in a person's life. It is an inadequate doctrine, however, because it did not provide any detailed procedure of how its claims might be achieved other than insisting on inspiration. Romanticism regards all forms, rules, conventions, and manners as artificial hindrances to the grasp of enjoyment and expression of nature. As Pfaff noted, romantic individualism was considered "unspoiled," a virtue of authentic persons, and closer to truth than the intellectual method of rigorous reasoning.⁵⁹ In addition, romanticism stresses the values of passion, sincerity, and spontaneity against the cultivation and deliverance required by reason. It reasserts the primacy of sentiment as opposed to reason. Romantic individualism also produced a revival of old spoken languages which were considered a purer expression of primal feelings in the nineteenth century. Intellectuals developed written literary languages. Grammar and folk poetry were read and recorded. Folk poetry

⁵⁹Pfaff, Wrath of Nations, p. 36.

was considered an expression of human innocence. The political consequence of this literary movement was the demand by the submerged human communities with the same language to be recognized as political nations.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are considered the age of reason. Emphasis began to be placed on the power of human reason in politics, religion, and education. Rationalism insisted on building a political society that was guided by reason. It also insisted on the freedom of people as a group and as individuals. In supporting individual freedom and the autonomy of the person, the enlightenment philosophers agreed with the ideals of romanticism. However, in requiring reasons for beliefs and behavior, they disagreed with romanticism. William Pfaff writes:

The development of nationalism in the nineteenth century was connected to the traumas of modernization, which perturbed the social order in parts of the essentially feudal and largely preindustrial Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. Old communities and political attachments were undermined by secularization, urbanization, and the influence of liberal thought, together with scientists' attack upon religion. This left national attachment as the principal surviving factor in an individual's sense of identity.⁶⁰

The Philosophy of Romanticism regards reason as dirty, mediocre, and insensitive to concrete historical situations. Johann Georg Harmann wrote,

The state is a monster of reason that conscience, necessity and prudence oblige us to venerate, but not to judge, even less to love.⁶¹

Herder, along the same lines, wrote:

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 43-44.

⁶¹Maurizio Viroli, For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 113.

Do you still have a fatherland whose sweet name is freedom? Yes, only we think differently than the ancients when we use the word freedom. For them freedom was untamed audacity, the daring to hold the wheel of the state in one's hand, the willfulness not to suffer any other name above oneself.⁶²

Moreover, Herder speaks of nationalism in the sense of cultural purity. This seem to contradict some of his ideas that resemble liberal views. He says, "Our nationality . . . remained unmixed with others . . ."⁶³ and "Love of our national culture is a natural inclination, a vital force that reason endeavors to corrupt."⁶⁴

All German romanticists did not, however, hold the view of integral nationalism. Some prominent German romantics were liberals as well as humanitarians. For example, Herder and Fichte advocated liberalism as well as humanitarianism. Herder acknowledges both unity and difference among human beings. The concept of the common good is important in Herder's view. Nonetheless, he emphasized romanticism by adding the role of spirit in all of his discussions about social life. Herder writes:

Notwithstanding the varieties of the human form, there is but one and the same species of man throughout the whole of our earth. . . . No two leaves of any one tree in nature are to be found perfectly alike; and still less do two human faces, or human frames, resemble each other.⁶⁵

Herder also asserts that nature wants people to love their own culture primarily. Nature, he writes,

⁶²Ibid., p. 114.

⁶³Ibid., p. 121.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 124.

⁶⁵Dahbour and Ishay, Nationalism Reader, p. 48.

has placed inclinations towards diversity in our hearts, but has also placed all we need to satisfy them in our national culture and made us insensitive to what lies outside the horizon of our culture. . . . National soul is the mother of all culture upon the earth, and all culture is the expression of national soul.⁶⁶

Fichte also emphasizes the national spirit and national purity in a similar way to Herder. On the Eighth Address to the German people, Fichte remarked:

Freedom to remain German . . . and continuing to settle their own affairs independently and in accordance with the original spirit of their race, going on with their development . . . propagating this independence to posterity.⁶⁷

According to Fichte, a patriot has an obligation to regenerate the nation's spirit and a patriot must play the role of a prophet who, by speaking of the nation's past, moves his compatriots to identify with the people. Furthermore, patriotism, according to Fichte, is love of eternity which is possible to achieve in life by promoting one's nation's interests. One must love his or her nation an eternal love. Fichte writes,

Love, what is truly love, and not merely a transitory lust, never clings to what is transient; only in the eternal does it awaken and become kindled, and there alone does it rest. Man is not able to love even himself unless he conceives himself as eternal; apart from that he cannot even respect, much less approve of himself.⁶⁸

Fichte supports the idea of a federation of independent *nations* in which the independence of each nation would not be violated. As a federation of nations extends to embrace several nations, the chance for eternal peace increases.

⁶⁶Viroli, Love of Country, p. 120, 123.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 128.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 132.

Civic Nationalism

Civic nationalism generally maintains that the nation should be composed of all people who subscribe to the nation's political creed, regardless of race, color, creed, gender, language, or ethnicity. The civic view of nationalism envisages the nation as a community of equal, right bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values. Civic nationalism is usually present in a mature democratic multinational state. Civic nationalism is similar to liberal nationalism, but the idea of liberalism must precede the values of civic nationalism. Moreover, Civic nationalism is more related to a polycentric or multiethnic view of nationalism. These views advocate participation of all members of the society in public discourse to seek common solutions for social, ethnic and/or nation's conflicts. Civic nationalism, moreover, is the product of civil society. By civil society is meant a society where the power of the state is balanced by public institutions that promote civic discussions on matters of social organizations and ways of life.

Ethnic nationalism

Katherine O'Sullivan See defines ethnic nationalism as a social movement which challenges the authority and boundaries of existing states, demands control over the political and economic systems, and justifies these demands in terms of the inherent rights of the ethnic group to self-determination.⁶⁹ Ethnic nationalism claims that an individual's

⁶⁹Katherine O'Sullivan See, National and Ethnic Movements (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications Inc., 1980), p. 107.

deepest attachments are inherited, not chosen. It is the national community that defines the individual, not the individual who defines the national community. The ethnic view of nationalism is based more on blood relationships than on civic relationships. The ethnic nationalist claims seem to be rationally indefensible. First, rationality requires self-reflection or objective evaluation of oneself. However, since the ethnic view of nationalism claims that individual attachment to a nation or a community is inherited, rather than chosen, it cannot be self-reflective. Second, rationality implies that a person has the capacity to make a choice. A person may be reflective about things he or she did not choose. Nonetheless choosing implies rational decision more than simple reflection. Ethnic nationalism denies the possibility for a person to make a choice, because it holds a view that a person is destined to belong to a certain nation, group or creed.

Liberal Nationalism

Liberalism is the belief that people can and should be free to determine their own destinies. Classical liberalism, in particular, views personal freedom as a basis for the integrity and dignity of a person. Belief in freedom of choice, autonomy, and integrity, provide the intellectual basis for liberals to justify the claim that all people are entitled to the same treatment. To believe differently from this would be to contradict oneself or at least to be inconsistent. These justifications are also the basis for liberals' respect for personal autonomy, reflection and choice. Liberals acknowledge the importance of belonging, membership, and cultural affiliations, as well as the moral obligations that

follow from them. Liberals argue that national ideals should be fostered without losing sight of universal human values against which the national ideals ought to be weighed.

Liberal nationalism holds that the need to develop a national culture in the pursuit of national interest should ensure that universal human rights and the autonomy of the individual person are not violated. Liberalism considers individuals as centers of moral value and considers each individual to be of equal worth. Thus, the individual should be free to choose his or her own end in life. Philosophical theories of liberalism have been addressed in the works of Kant and others in the eighteenth century. The notion of autonomy of a person as an end in himself or herself is attributed to Kant. According to Kant, a person is an end in himself or herself and should be treated as such. The autonomy that is only given to humans also requires accountability for actions. This Kantian concept of autonomy established a philosophical basis for moral, legal and social theories of liberalism. It established the notion of rights with responsibility. The central assumption about Kantian autonomy of a person is that people are rational (capable of using reason.)

Mazzini (1805-1872) argued that differences among people of different nations should be viewed only as a matter of administrative practicality. He asserts that one has an obligation to embrace the whole of humanity and have faith in the unity of people of different nations. The unity of people is a natural law. He says, "You are men [mothers] before you are citizens or fathers." To disobey this natural fact is to disobey the natural law of life itself. Moreover, he writes:

Italy is our home, the home which God has given us . . . a given spot, and by homogeneous nature of its elements, is destined to special kinds of activities. Our country is our field of labor; the products of our activities go forth from it for the benefit of the whole earth. . . . Our country is the fulcrum of the lever which we have to wield for common good. If we give up the fulcrum we run the risk of becoming useless to our country and to Humanity. Before associating ourselves with the nations which compose Humanity we must exist as a nation. There can be no association except among equals; and you have no recognized collective existence.⁷⁰

For Mazzini, each nation has a special mission in the world and, at the same time, must recognize and acknowledge the existence of other nations. Mazzini also stresses the importance of keeping the balance between the rights of an individual nation and its obligations. He expresses this view in his criticism of the French Revolution. He writes:

A Declaration of Rights furnished no foundation for idealism; it provided no absolutely binding law for man; it set no guide for conduct; it gave no definition to happiness; it neglected the strongest impulses to right action—enthusiasm, love, and a sense of duty. The French Revolution was selfish. Having begun with the Declaration of Rights of Man, it could end only in the man who was Napoleon.⁷¹

As it turned out, this weakness in the French Revolution caused liberalism to lose momentum. The economic hardship after the French Revolution forced some citizens to abandon its ideals. People resented the ideals of human rationality because reason generally requires thorough thought and deliberation. Liberal nationalists were high-minded, optimistic and devoted to the cause of peace. Liberal nationalism fosters national ideals without undermining other human values against which national ideals ought to be weighed. By comparing conflicting national claims, liberal nationalism redefines and

⁷⁰Leon, Nationalism, p. 20-21.

⁷¹Hayes, Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism, pp. 154-155.

makes adjustments to the national goals and how to achieve them. Liberal nationalism supports the particularity of the ways in which individuals are embedded in culture together with their personal autonomy.

Yael Tamir asserts that liberal nationalism relies on the assumption that just as liberalism is a theory about the eminence of individual liberties and personal autonomy, so nationalism is a theory about the eminence of national-cultural membership and historical continuity.⁷² As such, one must recognize the importance of perceiving one's present life and one's future development as an experience shared by people of other nations.

Mazzini's idea of liberal nationalism changed in its content, however, between the years 1880 and 1914. According to Eric Hobsbawm, there are three reasons for this change.⁷³ First, nationalism during this period abandoned the 'threshold principle' that was central to liberal nationalism. Plenty of groups of people considering themselves a *nation* claimed the right to self-determination. This right to self-determination could extend to the formation of a separate sovereign state for territory with no restrictions. Second, as a consequence of the creation of the potential for many more unhistorical types of nations, ethnicity and language became the central and decisive and, in some cases, the only criteria for potential nationhood. Third, the national sentiment developed within the established nation-state shifted from the political rights of the people to the to the defense

⁷²Yael Tamir, Liberal Nationalism (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 79.

⁷³Hutchinson and Smith, "The Rise of Ethno-Linguistic Nationalisms," Nationalism pp. 178-179.

of national symbols such as a nation's flag. Although some forms of liberal nationalism may barely exist as compared with the original ideas of liberal nationalism, nationalism has been transformed to what is known as *integral nationalism*.

However, the political claim of a nation to self-determination is usually associated with J. S. Mill's political philosophy. According to Mill, to constitute a legitimate, distinct nationality, a group must have a special voluntary unity that stems from common sympathies which make some people cooperate with each other more willingly than with other people.⁷⁴ Also, there must exist a desire to be under the same government. Moreover, Mill points out that there may be various reasons why people want to be identified as one nationality. Factors such as race, religion and geography may contribute to the feeling of nationality. Stronger than these factors, however, is a unity felt as a result of political antecedents; the possession of a common history accompanied by community recollection, collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, all connected with the same incidents in the past. None of these conditions, however, are sufficient by themselves. The factors that evoke a sentiment of nationality vary from place to place depending upon specific historical circumstances. For example, Switzerland has strong national sentiment regardless of the fact that its population is composed of different races, religions, and languages. Considering these criteria, Mill seems to grant national self-determination as long as people demand their own government. He argued as follows:

⁷⁴Dahbour and Ishay, "Considerations on Representative Government," Nationalism Reader, pp. 98-9.

Where the sentiment of nationality exists in any force, there is a prima facie case for uniting all the members of the nationality under the same government, and a government to themselves apart. This is merely saying that the question of government ought to be decided by the governed. One hardly knows what any division of the human race would be free to do if not to determine with which of the various collective bodies of human beings they would choose to associate themselves.⁷⁵

The liberal tradition that has been promoted by Mill and others has influenced the nature of national questions and fostered the rise of ethnic nationalism in particular. Some of the effects of the influences of liberal nationalism are unintended consequences of the momentum of the French Revolution. The desire to achieve liberty, equality and fraternity at the same time was derailed by a rising conservatism. Moreover, emphasis on fraternity promoted the idea of nationalism. The notion of self-determination of a nation and the notion of the autonomous individual became a problem for a state. First, the idea of a state as an organization exercising authority over everyone within its boundaries is incompatible with the idea of granting each person a right to choose whether to give his or her loyalty to a state. The influence of an individual on a state could not go beyond participating in some form of constitutional decision procedures. Second, the more fundamental problem was to decide what would constitute a national group for the purpose of self-determination. If what constituted a nationality were judged by objective criteria such as language and territory, the principle of national self-determination would support state expansionist policies.

⁷⁵Snyder, Dynamics of Nationalism, p. 4.

The nation's desire would presumably be more authoritatively expressed by the majority of people, regardless of the wishes of minority people. Also, if nationality were to be judged by such subjective criteria as a desire to live under one government, repudiation by the minority group would appear to be justification for denying that it was part of the same nation. But a disagreeing minority within that subgroup could then equally claim a separate national identity; this could go on with no stopping point. That is, if one accepts subjective criteria for group self-determination, there is no reason for not granting an individual self-determination. On the other hand, if the principle of self-determination is extended to individual autonomy, the practical consequence could be a frustration of much needed cooperative social life. The liberals' inability to understand the context of self-determination was partly responsible for the current rise of ethnic nationalism. The original intention of the idea of self-determination was to protect individuals from tyranny, from the imposition of group views on individuals without their consent. However, since people have a capacity to use good ideas to do evil, the idea of self-determination has been used maliciously to promote war among ethnic groups by a power hungry elite.

The Idea of Self-determination

The idea of self-determination is an outcome of the liberal tradition that a person, whether considered in a group or as an individual, must be treated as an autonomous being. The notion of autonomy has its philosophical root in the Kantian notion of moral freedom. Kant held that the idea of moral freedom and autonomy of people had also

established the principle by which people, as self-legislating members of the kingdom of ends, must impose political obligation upon themselves. Authority must be derived from and subject to the general will as expressed in the law.

Self-determination, in the current political definition, is a democratic principle that legitimates governments of modern states. Self-determination is also generally understood as a criterion to use in the event of territorial changes of sovereign states. It is the principle that holds that people should have the opportunity to choose their own government. Moreover, the principle of self-determination assures freedom for ethnic or religious groups constituting minorities in sovereign states to create an independent state or to join groups existing in another state.

The French Revolution proclaimed the principle of self determination, both as a ban on territorial annexations as well as a criterion for democratic legitimization of governments. The ideas raised in the French Revolution were promoted by liberals like J.S. Mill and later in early twentieth century by Woodrow Wilson and by Lenin, in different ways.

Woodrow Wilson referred to self determination of nations as a remedy for shattered states as a result of World War I, specifically the Austro-Hungarian, German, and Ottoman Empires. Moreover, for President Wilson, the acceptance of the idea of self-determination was based on a liberal political philosophy and ethical principles. When Wilson realized that the idea of self-determination could be extended based on the same liberal logic, he regretted advocating it. In testimony to the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Wilson said, “When I gave utterance to those words [that all nations

had a right to self-determination], I said them without the knowledge that nationalities existed, which are coming to us day after day. . . . You do not know and cannot appreciate the anxieties that I have experienced as a result of many millions of people having their hopes raised by what I have said.”⁷⁶ On the other hand, Lenin conceived the idea of self-determination of nations as applied to an anti-colonial and anti-imperialist postulate. For Lenin, self-determination is a tactical approach to promote the cause of proletarian internationalism. However, after four decades, the question of self-determination is once again challenging Russian leaders.

Until W.W.II, the principle of self-determination of nations remained a political principle. In 1945, at the initiation of the Soviet Union, the principle of self-determination of nations was, for the first time, given legal status by the United Nations charter. In 1960, the United Nations General Assembly urged immediate independence to colonial countries and people by passing Resolution 1514 [XV]. The specific articles were one and six. These two articles are, however, incompatible. The articles read as follows:

Article One: All people have the right to self-determination; by virtue of the right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Article Six: Any attempt aimed at the partial or whole disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.⁷⁷

⁷⁶Crawford Young, “The dialectics of Cultural Pluralism” The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), p. 19.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 20.

Despite the United Nations grant for self-determination of nations and people, many countries have used the language in article six to argue against self-determination. According to Crawford Young, the only country which successfully used the provision in article one is Bangladesh. In 1991, however, the situation seems to have changed. This is due to the collapse of the Soviet Union. In Yugoslavia and the Horn of Africa (particularly Ethiopia and Somalia), nationalist organizations have declared their independence and have used the provision of the United Nations article one to secede. In 1993, the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) conducted a referendum which decided Eritrea was to separate from Ethiopia. In 1991, the northern Somalia people declared their independent Somaliland. In general, the collapse of the old political system in the Soviet Union seems to have unleashed the claims of nations and nationalities for self-determination.

Integral Nationalism

Integral nationalism supports an exclusive and militaristic form of nationalism. Its basic claim is that a nation is an end in itself. That is, a nation, as a fictitious entity, has a priority over its citizens. Moreover, national interest is above the interest of individual humans. Contrary to the liberal view of nationalism, the integral view of nationalism suggests that a nation is an end in itself as opposed to a means to achieve cooperative life on an international scale. The integral view of nationalism promotes imperialistic expansion and distrust among nations. Moreover, integral nationalism holds that a nation declines if it loses military might. Heinrich von Treitschke argued "If [the state] neglects

its strength in order to promote the idealistic aspiration of man, it repudiates its own nature and perishes."⁷⁸ Because integral nationalism views a nation as an end in itself, it is hostile to the idea of internationalism that is promoted by liberal and humanitarian nationalism.

The early forms of nationalism, according to historical evidence, were more liberal than integral. Carlton Hayes has analyzed the process of transformation from liberal nationalism into integral nationalism.⁷⁹ Hayes gives three reasons for this transformation: the dilemma of the liberals, the arrogance of the liberals due to successes, and the state propaganda that used public schools to preach nationalism.

The dilemma of liberal nationalism emanates from the militarist spirit engendered by the wars that were undertaken in order to free and "unify" oppressed nationalities. Though liberal nationalists wished to promote pacifism, their other wish to redraw the political map along lines of nationality forced them to use arms against the tyrants and military uprisings of foreign oppressors. Such revolts and uprisings often led to international complications and wars. Liberal nationalists would have been less than human if they had not viewed these struggles as glorious, and the military leaders of them as heroic.

The feeling of superiority engendered by these successes led liberals to arrogance. Many "potential nations," inspired by liberal nationalism, began their struggles for freedom

⁷⁸Bruno, Nationalism: Opposing Viewpoints, p. 23.

⁷⁹ Hayes, Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism, pp. 225-228.

and unity. Most succeeded due to the sympathy, and, in some cases, the direct support of foreign nations. However, after securing unity and freedom, their success turned into arrogance. They grew proud of themselves and felt that they had acquitted themselves admirably to prove superiority over all other peoples, which justified their expansionist policies for ruling "backward" nations. After achieving certain liberal goals, most liberal nationalists treated their achievement as a starting-point for a continuing race toward integral nationalism. Added to this was the romanticist temper which desired to see individual or particular experience as authentic and thus more trustworthy than the remote views of rationalism or universalism. For example, romanticism desired to replace the abstract and machine-like rationalist philosophy, which was modeled after mathematics and physics, with a richer model of experience that is based on a model of biology.

Liberal states that believed they were promoting liberal educational programs turned public schools into places of indoctrination of nationalism. Public schools, whose original purpose was to educate the new generation to think critically, became places where prejudiced nationalist propaganda was inculcated. Children learned to be more gullible, but did not learn to be critical.

The characteristic of nationalism and national question has changed over years due to political and economic changes in the world. According to Eric Hobsbawm, nationalist movements of the late twentieth century are negative and divisive.⁸⁰ The emphasis is on

⁸⁰ Dahbour and Ishay, Nationalism Reader, pp. 364-365.

Hobsbawm argues that the rise of ethnic agitation is due to the fact that, contrary to the common belief, the principle of state creation since World War II, unlike that after World War I, has nothing to do with the Wilsonian concept of self-determination. It has

ethnicity and linguistic differences, and sometimes this emphasis, mixed with religion, becomes an expression of the irrationality of nationalism in its extreme form. In the former Yugoslavia, different nationalities that had been living together under Marshall Tito's socialist government have slaughtered each other; and despite NATO intervention and the Dayton Peace Agreement, the resolution of the conflict is not yet known. The unfortunate fact is that modern nationalism is more of the integral type than the liberal type. Some nationalist groups, after achieving their goal, tend to turn into dictatorships. In the same way, Hayes has described the transformation of the old liberal nationalism into integral nationalism. This arrogance after achievement of state power can be observed in the new government of Ethiopia, for example.

The Politics of Ethnic Nationalism in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, despite the overthrow of the Military government, there is again the potential for a civil war.⁸¹ The new "coalition" government has divided the country into

to do, rather, with decolonization, revolution and the intervention of outside powers. Since more than half of the states presently existing are less than forty years old, this seriously limits the incidence of the traditional "principle of nationality."

⁸¹On 28 March 1991, the armies of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPDRF) entered the capital city Addis Ababa and deposed the 16 year-old totalitarian regime of Mengistu Halemariam, who had earlier fled the country. The EPDRF, whose leader, Meles Zenawi, has become acting head of state, was formed from a military merger of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Ethiopian People's Democratic movement (EPDM). Although it had generally been regarded as a radical Marxist organization, the EPDRF has recently [10 March 1990] changed its program, giving signs of a more democratic outlook; that is, they alleged that they will smoothly and peacefully transition Ethiopia for Democratic election.

zones based on ethnic relationships. This ethnic zoning has created tension among people of different ethnic origins. Before the current government, there was no political zoning system. The zoning system has increased ethnic consciousness among the people and by definition includes certain ethnic groups and excludes others. Although this may promote the nationalist agenda, it is a dangerous political game, because it traverses the boundary of meaningful nationalism. That is, the democratic elements of the nationalism are undermined by the grouping of people into primordial blood-relationships. Minorities in some of the politically zoned regions are regarded almost as foreigners by some *native* people. The ethnic zoning, moreover, conflicts with the ideals of civil society which, by definition, are based on multiethnic civic associations, institutions and agencies for the common good of a society. It is questionable if any civil government can legitimately survive and provide administrative services to all people regardless of ethnicity, when holding a view that ethnicity is a criterion for zoning and settlement. Furthermore, it is questionable if a government can settle nationalist resentments, while evoking and provoking nationalism.

Former Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) members dominate the current Ethiopian government. The TPLF originally fought to liberate the Tigre province. However, as the domestic and international political situation changed, the TPLF created a United Front with a faction of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Army. Furthermore, the TPLF created the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) to claim the representation of the Oromo people. However, OPDO is an organization composed of war prisoners and some disenfranchised Oromo intellectuals. The OPDO is not an elected

representative of the Oromo people. In addition, the Amharas, who were the dominant nationality in the country, are not legitimately represented in the "coalition" government. Both the Oromos and the Amharas resent the fact that they are not legitimately represented. Given these circumstances, and *if* this ethnically focused government does not change its policies, it appears that it is only a matter of time before there is another flare-up of nationalist or other forms of civil war. This is not a prophecy, but, considering the historical ambivalence of the TPLF's political positions, one can suggest a potential for war with a fair degree of confidence.

The TPLF, which is a dominant power broker in the so-called coalition government of EPRDF, historically rambled between different political positions.

Christopher Clapham describes the TPLF's ambivalence as follows:

(T)he major problem for the TPLF derives from the ambiguity of its aims. . . . (I)t does not formally seek secession . . . since Tigray has formed part of Ethiopia since antiquity, it could not claim that post-colonial independence which [for example] the EPLF seeks for Eritrea. At the same time, it is engaged in continuous warfare with the Ethiopian government in the name of the regional autonomy which cannot be defined, and which it is extremely hard to envisage being realized. On the other side, differences of objectives, of tactics, and implicitly of territorial definition involve it in an uneasy relationship with the EPLF, which at times breaks into open conflict. The [Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front] EPLF, for example, strongly disapproved of the TPLF decision to respond to the 1984 famine by evacuating the population en masse to the Sudan - a decision [no less ruthless] than the Ethiopian government's resettlement scheme, and the dictated need to retain control over the population, which would otherwise have had to seek food from the Ethiopian authorities.⁸²

⁸²Christopher Clapham, African Studies Series 61, Revolutionary Ethiopia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 211-212.

The political ambivalence of the TPLF continues even after its having obtained political power. The problem seems to stem from the flawed TPLF's nationalistic view, which includes a bit of arrogance from having successfully captured state power.

Meles, the current Prime Minister and former transitional government president, took office in May 1991. Meles, without previous government experience, took over a political system that was in an advanced state of decay because the preceding government had not resolved many of the major political demands put forth by the 1974 February revolution, particularly the nationality questions.

The aristocratic government of Emperor Haile-Selassie and the later military dominated government of Mengistu Hailemariam did not try to accommodate legitimate nationalist demands of various types. Instead of negotiating a peaceful settlement with concerned nationalist groups, both governments had chosen to subdue the nationalist demands by military force. The war effort to control the nationalist guerrilla groups destroyed many lives, as well as the social and economic infrastructure of Ethiopia. To overcome such inherited problems, the task for the current government would not be easy. Given this, the current government's approach toward resolving the nationality problem and maintaining a viable civil government has gone astray, to say the least.

The root of current and potential future problems may be accounted for by looking at the political associations of the leading group. The dominant group in the current government is Meles' TPLF. To achieve such a dominant role, the TPLF modified its political goals. From the start, the TPLF's narrow nationalist political demand was not compatible with the Tigray people's understanding of themselves as *Ethiopia proper* since

early history of the region. Thus, the TPLF's effort to project itself as representing people who have a separate history from Ethiopia has failed. In 1981, through rather a smart political move, the TPLF played a major role in the formation of the Ethiopian Peoples Democratic Movement (EPDM), a non-nationalist group dominated by the Amharas. In 1989 TPLF merged with EPDM to form the dominant group in the current government. The TPLF attempted to change its nationalistic image via a calculated effort to merge with the newly formed EPDM, thus claiming legitimacy as representing all Ethiopians.

According to ADELPHI PAPER 269, there is a possibility of conflicts, given the hostile relations of the current government to its critics inside and outside of the government.⁸³ For example, the TPLF dominated government went through an uneasy and confrontational relation with the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), up until OLF totally withdrew from the so-called coalition government. The OLF signed an agreement of cooperation on 17 July 1991. The OLF represents about forty percent of the Ethiopian population. Obviously, getting cooperation from the OLF would further the TPLF coalition's legitimacy. The OLF's hope to play a bigger role in the TPLF was shortcut by the TPLF dominated coalition government. The TPLF restricted OLF activity by setting an agenda for all coalition members, and sometimes scolded the OLF for trying to assert itself. The OLF withdrew from the coalition. This suggests that the OLF as an organization, with its desire to form an independent Oromo (Oromia) state, is still in progress. A potential for a wide range of conflicts still exists.

⁸³Samuel M. Makida, International Institute for Strategic Studies (London: Bassey, 1992), pp. 10-16.

Furthermore, as in all ethnic nationalism, the underlying philosophical problem with TPLF is that it is not self-critical. Due to this problem, the government is resentful of criticisms from opposition groups. The TPLF-dominated Ethiopian government is seen as arrogant and vengeful toward any opposition group. This arrogance and vengefulness result from somewhat unexpected overachievement. The vengeful political attitude toward the Amhara ethnic group, for example, is an unwarranted political attitude. Moreover, the TPLF is unable to show its legitimacy to govern in Oromo regions because of loose connection, or lack of connection, with Oromo people. The TPLF are fearful of the Oromos because of their inability to relate to the Oromos, culturally or otherwise. Their ally Oromo organizations, such as the OPDO, have little or no support in many of the Oromo regions. These circumstances will lead to wider conflicts if not corrected.

Chapter 5

THE ASSUMPTIONS OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCE AND THE SOCIAL REALITIES

Philosophy is generally understood as a discipline that provides a frame for viewing ideas about understanding ourselves and our universe. Philosophy seeks answers to some of the fundamental questions of humans, about their lives as isolated beings and as social beings. Philosophy seeks also to provide a plausible way to define problems of social conflict and to suggest plausible solutions. Problems of nationalism are human problems. For philosophy to hold a different status and pose different possible solutions from those of psychology or anthropology, philosophy must be comprehensive enough to meet the challenges of skeptics. A failure to provide such comprehensive ways of thinking about the universe could alter the traditional role of philosophy.

To plausibly understand nationalism and the problems it presents, one needs to look at the traditional conception of modern philosophy. Historically, modern philosophy emerged from science. Science is understood as the unique enterprise in which humanity discovers fundamental truths about the world in a systematic, rational way. Scientific truths are considered fundamental, provable and universal. The scientific revolution has led humanity to believe that everything can be explained using science. Scientific methods of physical science are also being used to examine human nature and the basis of human cooperation. For example, Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) attempted to reduce physical laws to mathematical formulas. The achievements in mathematical reasoning (for

example, infinitesimal calculus) promoted the confidence that scientific reasoning would apply to social issues, including reasoning within the realm of values. The confidence in science as an all-encompassing foundation of truth also added responsibility to humankind to account for their knowledge claims. To claim knowledge implies that one has a justification for how he or she knows something. Knowledge in this sense is different from mere opinion or faith; moreover, to have knowledge is to have a reason to believe something is true or false.

Most philosophers consider Descartes as the father of the modern philosophy of rationalism. Rationalism, as promoted in Descartes' philosophy, aimed at achieving certainty to explain the universe, using the science of mathematics. Descartes postulated that by using mathematical reasoning, deduction from metaphysical principles, hypothesis and experiment, one can reach the foundation from which everything else is understood. Descartes claimed that the foundation upon which all things depend is self knowledge. He believed that self-knowledge is an innate characteristic of being human.

Rationalism is generally defined as a philosophical position that prefers the precedence of reason over other ways of acquiring knowledge, such as passion, sensation, convention and customs. In epistemology, rationalism is traditionally contrasted with empiricism—a philosophical position that claims that the senses are the primary means of access to knowledge. Rationalism assumes the existence of a human capacity to know certain things *a priori*, without relying on sense experiences. Rationalism, as used in this paper, refers to a reflective capacity of humankind to use reason as an evaluative tool for monitoring its consistency of beliefs. Rationalism and empiricism promoted the idea that

humanity should move from a religion-dominated view to a secular philosophy. The transition is usually associated with the seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers, particularly Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz, Locke and Hume.

One criticism of rationalism, which carries a host of other criticisms is the idea that a person can judge the world from a neutral stance. Skeptics argue that rationalism requires a person to deny the importance of his or her feelings and emotions. Rationalism hopes to force a person to de-center himself or herself and understand the world from no point of view. The question whether a person can transcend his or her point of view or not impacts on a host of other philosophical issues, and seems to have created an impasse between two competing views—objectivism and subjectivism. These are the two ways of arriving at what is considered true—thus, rational, and what is considered false - thus, irrational.

Objectivism assumes that truth is arrived at from no particular point of view, whereas subjectivism holds that truth is arrived at from a particular point of view. Objectivism argues that truth is discovered rather than made, and therefore exist independent of the knower. This view is called realism. Realists assume that fact in the world does not depend on state of mind, but corresponds to the descriptions of theories about it. Moreover, realism is a view that scientific theories are true or false depending on whether the objects they describe actually exist and have the characteristics the theories ascribe to them. Realists argue that if truth is dependent upon the subject, truth becomes contingent and therefore possible to be false.

The problem with realism is that, if facts in the world are independent of how people think, and theories about them may not correspond, there is a possibility that what people think may not be the case at all. That is, realism leaves that truth about the world as a contingent. Therefore, realism can be legitimately criticized by skeptics. On the other hand, subjectivism can also be criticized for many reasons. For example, since subjectivism validates the view that truth depends on the eyes of the beholder, and since a person who holds a view more than likely adheres to a particular culture and is limited by location, he or she is determined to be loyal to his or her particular culture, and his or her knowledge of other cultures is necessarily incomplete. It seems that an amicable philosophical ramification for this impasse will also provide philosophical ramification for problems of nationalism, and a host of other ways of understanding social problems. For example, if it is possible that a person can transcend his or her point of view and be able to consider another person's point of view and/or another person's interests, it is at least logically possible that the partial viewpoints that nationalism promotes can be overcome. Moreover, if there is a way of modeling a universally applicable method of interpreting human problems, it is possible to overcome the predicament of incomplete knowledge. Nonetheless, the impasse between being a person and holding no personal point of view cannot be discarded so easily. One of the problems is the concept of mind/body as dually existing entities.

The Problem of Dualism and Foundationalism

Dualism holds that two and only two kinds of substance exist: mind and physical objects. Dualists argue that the two separate entities are irreducible to one another. For example, Descartes argues that a human being is composed of a body (matter) and mind (thinking substance). Although these entities seem to be opposite, one entity cannot exist, and may be unintelligible, without the other. According to the dualist argument, a mind is purely mental, and a physical object is purely material and spatially extended. Descartes argues that disembodied existence is incomplete. Nonetheless, the dualist account regards the mind as the foundation of existence: no mind, no world.

Matter is limited by space and time, whereas the mind is not constrained by space and time. The body has geometrical properties of shape, size and divisibility, but the soul or the mind has no size or shape, and thus is not divisible. This notion of foundationalism is expressed in Descartes' epistemology. Descartes argued that knowledge is possible only on the condition that there is something about which we can never be wrong. Descartes has doubted everything, but he could not doubt his own existence. He (Descartes), as the "I," existed at the core of reality. According to Descartes, the "I" is necessarily true no matter what "I" is in all possible worlds, as long as one can doubt. Descartes' famous phrase "I think, therefore I am" became a tautology, even for one who doubts the existence of everything else. For Descartes, the "I" is the "thinking thing." However, thinking cannot exist without the subject (the thinker). Once one accepts that thinking is happening, he or she must also accept the existence of the thinker. Thus,

Descartes must account for how the thinking ego (the mind) and the body (matter) are related.

Descartes does not plausibly reconcile the mind/body dichotomy. Where the body is dependent upon the substance which is extended, the mind is also dependent upon a substance which has a capacity of thinking. Based on these assumptions, both mind and body become contingent realities. Descartes seems to resort to appealing to the existence of God as a cause of all contingent realities. He asserts that God does not depend on anything else to exist, and all other things depend on the existence of God for their preservation. Thus, Descartes makes God responsible for our understanding of scientific investigation itself. Furthermore, Descartes' dualism introduced the notion of hierarchy of existence by ranking the mind as essential, the body as supplementary. This notion of hierarchy of existence created vigorous negative criticism, especially from postmodern philosophers; this will be discussed later. Nonetheless, one should not underestimate the positive achievements of Descartes.

Descartes contributed to modern philosophy in at least two ways. First, he introduced the notion of methodological skepticism in the form of hypothesis, and developed a way of responding to possible challenges. Descartes brought methodologies of philosophical investigation to the attention of the intellectuals of his era and thereafter; methodological skepticism is attributed to his work. Descartes also signified once again the ideas of appearance and reality in philosophy by his methodological skepticism. Second, by contrasting the knowledge of his own body to the mind, Descartes introduced the idea that knowledge of the "I" (or self) is the foundation of knowledge of the external

world. Descartes was certain of the “I” because by doubting the “I” he could only prove the existence of the Self who is engaged in doubting.

Descartes’ philosophical methodologies and the issues he attempted to explain are critical to philosophy, but he never plausibly explained the mind/body relationships. The mind/body dualism sits at the heart of problems of modern philosophy. According to the dualist theory, the body is understood as a supplement to the mind, whereas, the mind is considered the foundation. The mind, from knowledge of itself, builds a hierarchy of knowledge; the body is assumed to limit the mind’s ability to achieve certainty in understanding the world. However, this is an admittance of the contingency of the mind itself, because if body can limit mind’s understanding of the world, it is not possible to claim that mind is independent or essential.

The problem of dualism has direct impact on the theory of knowledge as put forth by modern epistemology. The radical separation of body from mind, and mind from nature, promotes mutually irreconcilable theories of the physical world and the human world. Human beings are separated from the rest of natural world, and are assumed to be superior to the natural world. However, it seems that humanity has not really found its place in the world. At times, because people tend to overestimate the power of their knowledge, they make decisions which are destructive to the world and to themselves. Nonetheless, reason is important as a tool for the survival of humanity, as well as a tool to destroy humanity. There must be a way of reconciling this paradox. One way in which the idea of rationality attempts to escape this paradox is by adding the notion of ethics as one of the criteria for rationality. This criterion makes what is rational necessarily ethical,

and what is unethical necessarily irrational. In this way, the idea of rationality is attached to right actions, and the idea of irrationality is related to wrong actions. For example, one may discriminate against people on the basis of nationality, but this becomes irrational, because to discriminate against people using nationality as a criterion is wrong, since it undermines the idea that all human beings have the same intrinsic value. Despite such plausibility, however, modern philosophy leaves many unanswered questions.

Epistemology, for example, argues for the possibility of knowledge without resolving the problem of dualism. Modern epistemology requires an impartial perspective for claims of knowledge. The problem, however, is that the body, which is located in space and time, and which is also a *vehicle* for the mind to assert itself in the world, cannot escape the predicament of partiality because knowledge is necessarily incomplete. Thus, the argument that knowledge is possible to the degree of mathematical certainty cannot escape criticism. One of the criticisms is that the idea of epistemology itself is partly a response to historical challenges. If history influences philosophy, then the idea that philosophy is beyond historical challenges becomes questionable. For example, seventeenth century intellectuals such as Leibniz and Descartes attempted to find a way of restoring communication between nations which had been divided in theological views and religious loyalties in the face of crumbling feudal systems. Witnessing the Thirty Years' War,⁸⁴ Descartes attempted to find an ideal method which would be neutral toward

⁸⁴The Thirty Years War was between Protestants and Catholics, and was from 1618-1648. The Thirty Years War was ended by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The influence of history on modern philosophy cannot be underestimated. For example, one possible reason that Descartes insisted on finding the foundation of humans' belief systems

religions and by which people could transcend religious divisions. Leibniz thought that the deeper source of war was the multiplicity of languages and cultures.⁸⁵ To narrow the gap between different cultures and languages, Leibniz thought that developing a new universal language was necessary. He hoped that by developing a new language, greater understanding and cooperation among people could be possible.

Problem of Causality

The dualist theory assumes that human beings are in part free of causality and in part causal. The human mind is considered free of causal determination, whereas the body is determined by things external to it. Although the essence of humanity is considered to be rationality, and rationality is an attribute of the mind, the body, which is causal, is said to distort the working of the mind. Thus, causality and rationality are incompatible concepts.

Stephen Toulmin summarized the incompatibility of the notions of causality and rationality as follows:

was to find a universal philosophy on which all people could agree. Witnessing the religious dogma which led to the Thirty Years War, Descartes seemed to search for philosophical uniformity to avoid value conflicts. (For further reading, see The Columbia History of the World, edited by John A. Garraty and Peter Gay, New York: Harper & Row, 1972.)

⁸⁵Stephen Toulmin, Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity (The University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 100-103.

The human thing about humanity is its capacity for rational thought or action; rationality and causality follow different rules. . . . Humans live mixed lives, part rational and part causal: as creatures of Reason, their lives are intellectual or spiritual, as creatures of Emotion, they are bodily and carnal; Emotion typically frustrates and distorts the work of Reason; so the human reason is to be trusted and encouraged, while emotions are to be distrusted and restrained.⁸⁶

Causation is making something happen, allowing or enabling something to happen, or preventing something from happening. Causality can also be stated as a view that everything has an original cause; the cause is understood as preceding the effect. The relationship of cause and effect is understood as flowing from one direction; that is, the cause determines the effect. Accepting or rejecting the existence of causality is problematic, because one has to account for how he or she knows that something is caused or not caused. On the other hand, the notion of causality has important practical functions in society. For example, in legal analysis one has to use the notion of causality to determine guilt or innocence, who to punish and who to reward. In medicine, a doctor has to find the cause of a certain disease to find a remedy. The notion of law, and functions of public institutions, generally depend on the idea of freedom; but if every event in the world is caused by a force greater than human beings, the notion of freedom in a real sense does not exist, or can only exist contingently. The idea of causation has a direct relationship with the idea of determinism. If something is caused with a greater power than itself, its existence is determined. Determinism and freedom, and the notion of responsibility, are opposite. For example, Descartes compromised the independence of

⁸⁶Ibid., p.109-110.

the “mind” by asserting that God is the first cause of everything, including mathematical physics. The skeptic may ask that, if everything is caused, how is it possible that human beings can assign responsibility to each other for their actions? A religious fanatic may claim that God ordered him or her to kill people he or she does not particularly like, and may defend his or her position on the ground that a higher force which he or she “cannot say no to” ordered him or her to kill.

The earliest skeptics against an all-encompassing theory of science were the British empiricists. The most prominent was David Hume. He argued that there is no underlying foundation or essence, no necessity, cause, or scientific law for everything. Some of the main philosophical arguments of Hume are as follows:

- Whatever one knows, and however faint knowledge it may be, it is derived from sense impressions.
- No facts can be connected, proved or explained without experience.
- Space and time provide the way in which impressions occur within us.
- Existence is not a separate idea, independent and accompanying any specific idea we have, but is identical with the idea of whatever we think of.
- There is a distinction between matters of fact, discovered by empirical observation and by empirical logical inference, and relations of ideas discovered by intuition and logical demonstration.

Although empiricists accepted the importance of rationality, their assumptions about how human beings attain knowledge were radically different from those of the rationalists.

Empiricists assumed that the mind was a blank paper at birth and that it gained knowledge through being in the world and from ordering sense experiences. According to this assumption, knowledge is closely related to culture, since culture is part of experience. The problem, however, is that, since culture is created through the interaction of people, it is, more or less, conventional. For empiricists, then, culture is a convention agreed upon by people who share economic resources and social space. By contrast, rationalists assume that the capacity for knowledge is innate, or hard wired into the mind. As a result, human beings have a capacity to differentiate between behavior that can be justified by pure reason and behavior that is distorted by cultural influences. This rationalist view assumes, at its background, the notion that human nature is the same everywhere. Rationalists tend to think that knowing some group or population can lead to universal knowledge of humanity in general.

Enlightenment Optimism

The *enlightenment* philosophers, for example, Locke, Rousseau and Kant, have assumed that people would be liberated from belief in superstitions to belief in themselves.⁸⁷ Kant defines enlightenment as man's emergence from his self-imposed

⁸⁷The Enlightenment was a sociopolitical and philosophical movement of 18th century Europe. The philosophers of the Enlightenment were critical of traditional institutions of the monarchy, religion, family, and the political and social stratification in general. The philosophers fought against the prerogatives and privileges of the commercial and feudal classes, demanded freedom of thought and inquiry, fought against bigotry, and in many ways were the apostles of and prepared the groundwork for the French Revolution. They sought truth on the basis of reason as well as observation. They were the social critics of their age.

immaturity and/or as an inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another person.⁸⁸ The intellectuals of the time hoped that unassisted human reason would replace faith in tradition. They hoped that pure reason would become a guide for human action. They argued that humanity was not innately corrupt. For example, Kant argued that having the courage to use one's own reason was the way to go. Everything, including religion and authority, must be subjected to a critique of reason if it is to be worthy of human use. The enlightenment philosophers argued that no man was a natural authority over his fellow man, and that force created no right. Liberty became the condition of being human. The enlightenment philosophers assumed that human progress is endless, and that this progress could be measured by scientific development. The natural universe was governed by scientific laws that were accessible to human beings through the scientific method of experiment and empirical observation. God became no more than the supreme intelligence, or the craftsman who had designed and set the world in motion. Morality depended on pure reason, as opposed to depending on the will and the existence of a supernatural being. The enlightenment philosophy put the individual at the center of the process of knowing. As discussed earlier, the idea that the subject judged the world from a neutral stance did not overcome the challenge of skepticism. On the one hand, the subject is assumed the creator of meaning, truth and even reality. But in reality the subject

Source: George A. Kourvetaris and Betty A. Dobratz, Society and Politics, (Dubuque, IA: Kendal/Hunt Publishing Company, 1980).

⁸⁸Vincent G. Potter, Reading in Epistemology (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993), p. 221.

is limited by space and time; thus his or her judgment cannot escape the egocentric predicament.

Locke believed that the individual mind impartially orders the chaotic sensory experience by constructing meaning for the world. Locke insisted that matters of belief and moral conviction should be removed from the public realm and placed in the private realm. A person was allowed to believe as he or she wished privately. Public laws were stopped from enforcing religious decrees. Locke argued that all humankind is born into a "state of nature" with certain God-given natural rights, the right to "life, health, liberty and possessions."

The influence of eighteenth century philosophy on the political life of people was significant. Modernity—the belief that benevolent humanity could gradually liberate itself by appealing to universal reason—became the hope of the eighteenth century. People believed that reason enabled humanity to understand how the universe works. The modern philosophical view of universal reason is also the basis for the belief that human nature is the same everywhere, and therefore humankind ought to believe in the same scientific truths, ought to accept the same moral guidelines, and ought to endorse the same political ideologies. Modern philosophy's optimism is based on the belief that human beings can be perfected through time as they make a sort of linear progress. The idea of human perfectibility and the idea of linear progress, however, are contradicted by repeated atrocities of humanity against each other and by repeated self-destructive actions of people. Some argue that history repeats itself rather than moving from a lower stage to a higher stage.

Opposition to modern philosophy's conception of reason, especially as it applied to social sciences, persisted in many forms. From romanticism to postmodernism, the idea of modern philosophy's pure reason is resisted on the ground that it undermines emotions and passion, which are important components of being human. Many of the latest opponents of the idea of modern philosophy's concept of rationality are based on Nietzsche's line of argument. Nietzsche denies the existence of truth or falsehood, the possibility of an impartial point of view (or objectivity), and the existence of absolute value. Nietzsche questions the possibility of knowledge. He argues that there exists neither "spirit" nor "reason." Everything is dependent upon perspective and feelings. He writes:

The legitimacy of knowledge is always presupposed; just as the legitimacy of feelings or conscience-judgments is presupposed. . . . The presupposition that things are . . . ordered so morally that human reason must be justified—is an ingenuous presupposition and a piece of naiveté. . . . The intellect cannot criticize itself, simply because it cannot be compared with species of intellect and because its capacity to know would be revealed only in the presence of true reality. . . . [E]verything of which we become conscious is arranged, simplified, schematized, interpreted through and through . . . the actual connection between feelings, desires, between subject and object, are absolutely hidden from us—perhaps purely imaginary. . . . Thinking, as epistemologists conceive it, simply does not occur; it is quite arbitrary fiction, arrived at by selecting one element from the process and eliminating all the rest, an artificial arrangement for the purpose of intelligibility. . . . There exists neither *spirit* nor reason, nor thinking, nor consciousness, nor soul, nor will, nor truth: all are fictions that are of no use. . . . Knowledge works as a tool of power. . . . The subject is not something given, it is something added and invented and projected behind what there is. . . . [T]he world is . . . interpretable . . . [and] has countless meanings. —PERSPECTIVISM.⁸⁹

⁸⁹Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, The Will To Power, trans. Walter Kaufman and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), sections 530, 470, 471, 473, 477, 480, and 481.

Nationalism seems to approve this Nietzschean view. Like Nietzsche, most nationalists hold perspectivism and/or emphasize a particularistic view point. Like Nietzschean perspectivism, some nationalists want to interpret the world and truth to justify their own political goals. Moreover, the interesting development in recent years is that nationalism seems to get another philosophical ally—Postmodernism.

Postmodernism

Postmodernism builds its philosophy on Nietzsche's theme. Some main features of postmodern philosophy may be summarized as follows: Like in Nietzsche's philosophy, postmodern philosophy denies the notion of all-encompassing truths, and rejects the categorical certainties of modernism. It is anti-foundationalism, opposed to transcendental arguments and transcendental standpoints. Postmodernism rejects the truth as correspondence to reality, and questions the assumption of modern philosophy that humankind makes linear progress. Postmodernism also argues that modernism has already failed, as in its promise to liberate humankind from ignorance and irrationality.

Postmodernism argues that genocide against humanity—such as Hiroshima, the Nazi concentration camps, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, Rwanda, and the widening gap between the rich and the poor—renders questionable any belief in modern philosophy's assumption that humankind is liberated from barbarism. Humankind cannot learn from the past; history has failed to provide foundations for human sciences.

Postmodernism is a complex philosophical reaction to modernism. In many ways postmodernism is similar to romanticism. Postmodernism touches on every aspect of a

person's social and political life. In the same way that romanticism cannot be reduced to one guiding principle, similarly, postmodernism is not reducible to one guiding principle. Both philosophies emphasize de-centering reason. Furthermore, both romanticism and postmodernism reject the philosophical claim of modernism that impartial knowledge is possible. Both philosophies support subjectivist views.

Some views of postmodernism are advanced in the works of Jacques Derrida, Michelle Foucault, Jean-Francois Lyotard and Rorty, and echoed by many other scholars. Their common philosophical theme is that there is not any center that is or must be a foundation for social sciences. Though there are common themes, postmodernism is not monolithic philosophy.

Steven Seidman argues that much of sociological theory is based on foundationalist assumptions.⁹⁰ It aims to justify and analyze social science using the methodologies and assumptions of modern logic. But this, Seidman argues, is a misguided approach for understanding contemporary social problems. Seidman writes:

Sociological theorists have stepped forward as the virtual police of the sociological mind. In the guise of maintaining rationality and safeguarding intellectual and social progress, we have proposed to legislate codes of disciplinary order by providing a kind of epistemological *casuistry* [emphasis added] that can serve as a general guide to conceptual decision making. . . .

Seidman casts doubt on methodologies of modern philosophy by appreciating the works of Richard Rorty. He approves the postmodernist claims that foundational discourse cannot avoid being local and ethnocentric. The knower cannot transcend a

⁹⁰Steven Seidman, "The End of Sociological Theory," in The Postmodern Turn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 122-127.

particular viewpoint which may only reflect a particular interest. By virtue of living in a specific society at a particular historical juncture and occupying a specific social position defined by his or her class, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnic origin and religion, a person's view is necessarily partial.

Rorty allies himself with Foucault and Dewey by arguing that people need to abandon traditional notions of rationality, objectivity, method and truth.⁹¹ According to Rorty, rationality is determined by history and convention; there is no fundamental and/or ahistorical structure upon which all human beliefs are based. There are no such things as Nature of Man, Law of Man, or the Nature of Society to be discovered. The concept of Man is a fraud [a quote from Foucault]. Moreover, quoting Nietzsche, Rorty asserts that,

The mistake of philosophy is that, instead of seeing logic and categories of reasons as means for fixing up the world for utilitarian ends . . . one thinks that they give one a criterion of truth about reality.⁹²

If one accepts these arguments, one must also approve the nationalist view that a person is condemned by Nature to prioritize the interest of [his or her] nation, race, or gender with no apparent requirement of justification. It seems, however, that if a person is able to represent the interests of a class, gender, race, or nationality, it must be logically possible that one can transcend his social location. That is, since class, gender and race by definition are composed of many people, to say that a person can represent the interests of certain classes, but not others, is inconsistent. If one has a capacity to transcend himself

⁹¹Richard Rorty, "Method, Social Science and Social Hope," in The Postmodern Turn, p. 58-59.

⁹²Ibid., p. 59.

or herself and understands the common interests of people in his economic class, it must also be possible that he or she transcends to understand what is common to all humanity. Postmodern arguments imply that there is no overriding value that people have to uphold, but this is problematic because, if there is no overriding value that people ought to uphold, even the postmodernist assumptions that Seidman and others appeal to would not stand opposing assumptions. First, the assumption of postmodernism, such as what Rorty called social conversation or dialogue, is an overriding value itself. Second, conversation or dialogue itself is for a purpose. There is no purposeless social conversation. All conversation or dialogue contains some overriding assumptions and values. If there is no such value, there is no need for social conversation in the first place. Therefore, whether to cooperate or even decide not to cooperate with people presupposes an overriding value. Rorty assumes that Dewey's understanding of rationality and science is the same as his. However, there seem to be significant differences between Rorty's attitude of philosophy as a discipline of study, and Dewey's concept of philosophy. First, Dewey gives philosophy an important place as a tool for thinking through the complex problems humanity faces. He argues that philosophy must be understood from a broad cultural perspective. And, the value of philosophy is measured by how much it helps one to understand complex cultural and scientific problems. Dewey writes:

First-rate test of the value of any philosophy offered us: Does it end in conclusions which, when referred back to ordinary life-experiences and their predicaments, render them more significant, more luminous to us, and make our dealings with them more fruitful? Or does it terminate in rendering the things of ordinary experience more opaque than they were before, and in

depriving them of having in “reality” even the significance they had previously seemed to have?⁹³

For Dewey, philosophy was not only important, it was a means of studying life experience.

Rorty seems to share Dewey’s view in accepting the importance of social experience (or social conversation, as he called it). However, it seems that Rorty reduces the idea of epistemic justification to social convention, and reduces philosophy to sociology.⁹⁴

Some versions of postmodern philosophy emphasize language. For example, Francois Lyotard and Jacque Derrida emphasize the role of language to legitimate and delegitimate knowledge and power claims. Lyotard attacks what he calls the *grand narratives* of modern philosophy. Lyotard argues that the idea that modern philosophy can restore unity to learning and develop universally valid knowledge for humanity is impossible. He asserts that there is no totalizing reason, only reasons. Modern science cannot legitimize itself, and thus cannot be a basis for the legitimization of other ideas. He says, “The technological transformations are having a considerable impact on knowledge. The miniaturization and commercialization of machines are already changing the way in which learning is acquired, classified, made available and exploited.”⁹⁵ Moreover Lyotard

⁹³James Campell, Understanding John Dewey: Nature and Cooperative Intelligence (Open Court Publishing Company, 1995), pp. 87-88.

⁹⁴Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979). pp. 170-171.

⁹⁵Madan Sarup, Poststructuralism and Postmodernism (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1993), p. 133.

argues that there is no difference between modern science and other, non-scientific narratives—fiction, stories, arts, etc. Lyotard wants to delete boundaries between what is considered essential in modern science and what is considered non-scientific or non-objective.

Along the same lines, Derrida introduces what he calls deconstruction. According to Derrida, deconstruction is a kind of procedure by which a text reveals its contradiction and corrects itself. It is a technique by which a concept is repeated in a different context. It is concerned with texts, singular situations, signatures with the entire history of philosophy, within which a concept and a method are constituted. He argues that there is no such thing as truth in itself. Truth is plural. Like most postmodernists, Derrida understands truth as an instrument of power games. Deconstruction in particular denies privilege to any particular point of view.

Despite the criticisms, postmodernism does not offer solutions for the problems it cites. Some postmodernists are pessimistic and say, “that is the way it is. Give up searching for a historical justification.” However, reason is not a finished product that has its own metaphysical existence, but it is a way of reflecting on issues. It seems that the insistence on the lack of a standard will drive human communities into chaos. The sign of this is already seen in Somalia, Liberia, Bosnia and Rwanda, where hooligans seem to be in charge. An absence of values led these countries to destruction. As the postmodernist attitude settles in, more chaos may be created. Chaos implies the absence of values and moral standards, but not a value-neutral stance, as some postmodernists seem to suggest. As suggested earlier, reason and rationality are concepts of reflexivity by which people

evaluate the consistency of their beliefs in different concrete situations. The realization that a person need justify his or her beliefs to others is itself rational because it implies that if a person holds false beliefs, he or she is willing to correct himself or herself. Rationality becomes a problem if one understands it as a metaphysical dogma. Reason, if rationally applied, protects society from both metaphysical dogma and skeptical dogma. It must be said that skeptical dogmatism leads to nihilism, which leads to philosophical chaos. Philosophical chaos arises as a result of the promotion of social values that undermine the values of common humanity. Postmodernism pushes toward this exclusivity of values to each social group.

Relativism and Nationalism

Relativism is a doctrine that holds that something exists, or has certain properties or features, or is true, only in relation to something else. Relativism, as it applies to value theory, argues that truth is not always universally applicable. Truth is bounded and depends on one's culture, economic level, social condition, race, gender, and other circumstances.

Relativism, as originally reflected in Protagorean philosophy, assumed that "man is the measure of all things; of things that are that they are, and things that are not that they are not." This epistemological aspect of the relativist argument says that what is perceived is as it is perceived by the perceiver. This type of relativism is sometimes called *cognitive* relativism. For relativists, truth may be not what it is apart from perception. In other words, truth does not exist independently of the perceiver, and whenever truth is not

related to perception, and people agree about it, then it can be considered to be true based on common agreement. These relativist assumptions, however, are indefensible on logical grounds. Relativism is essentially an abrogation of the existence of truth. Relativism says truth depends on a person's, group's, or culture's perspectives. Relativism approves contradictory beliefs. For example, if Smith believes "the earth is round" and John disbelieves "the earth is round," both beliefs are equally true for the relativist. However, this is an inconsistent belief, a contradictory belief. Either A is the case or A is not the case. To believe that A and $\sim A$ are, is to believe nothing. Contradictions cancel each other. If truth depends on such contingencies, then it is not possible to adjudicate value conflicts among people. Moreover, if truth depends on perspectives, any claim to truth is possible, any postulation of beliefs and derivative true conclusions is possible. If one follows this relativist line of argument, any social group who perceives itself as oppressed is justified to ask for compensation, or retribution. For example, white Americans, as a race, are justified to ask compensation for damages affirmative action has done to them. On the other hand, what the Nazis have done to the German Jews can be justified, because they perceive the Jews as a threat. This can be justified based on their perspective; the Jews were seen as an anomaly in the Germans' "pure race."

Relativism has been used and can be used deliberately and insidiously. Relativism makes the apolitical majority susceptible to committing heinous crimes against each other. Nationalists, by capitalizing on nonfundamental human differences, instigate wars among people of different nationalities or tribes. Furthermore, nationalists selectively agitate on issues of public passion, such as national or tribal symbols. Nationalists use such

emotionally charged techniques when they fail to persuade using reason and/or are unable to articulate legitimate national claims to the public by using reason. The recent heinous ethnic crimes such as those in Rwanda and Bosnia are examples of nationalists' manipulation.

One of the ways in which nationalists, and even racists, legitimize their rightful place in a society, in the presence of other competing national groups, is by legitimizing their history. For example, the notion of national destiny has been used to legitimize expansionism and consolidation of a territory. Persons who do not belong to a nation within a certain territory may be regarded as not worthy of having equal rights and respect to those persons within the nation. Racists may even go so far as to claim that persons who are identified as "others" deserve harm or death. When a community's or nationality's legitimate status in a multinational society is not acknowledged, it may lead to conflicts. When dominant nationalities fail to acknowledge certain nationalities' historical contribution to the building of a nation or contribution to human civilization in general, nationalists may forcefully demand the recognition of their legitimacy. Since relativism is a view from a perspective, it justifies the distortion of the history of a particular nation or nationality by adding conditions to their historical claims.

Distortion of people's history means that a particular group will be judged based on manipulated history. For example, if history is written about African Americans without acknowledging what slavery has done to them, the reader of the history may believe that the current economic disparity between white Americans and African Americans is only because of the weaknesses of African Americans. On the other hand, if

history is written accurately about the impact of slavery and racial segregation, the reader of history may be sympathetic to the demands that African Americans achieve economic equality. If relativism is accepted, writing accurate history becomes a matter of convenience. Many kinds of history could be postulated based on a perspective. One of the critical reasons why history should tell only truth about people is that people may pass judgments based on historical distortions.

The powerful group falsely defines the powerless to delegitimize their economic and political claims. Sometimes history is used to accomplish such a delegitimization function. If history, for example, does not tell the truth about the existence of native Americans in the Americas before the arrival of the European Americans, then native Americans are seen as not eligible for some of the special considerations and concessions that have been made. Moreover, by distorting the history of a particular group of people and propagating falsehoods about them, the dominant group may deny the legitimate access of the oppressed nationalities to economic resources, and prevent narration of their stories and cultural enrichment. This systematic denial of the legitimate social position of particular nationalities or groups marginalizes the oppressed nationality. Oppression creates unity (or common national sentiment) among the oppressed nationalities which, in turn, may lead to different forms of violence.

One of the problems for solving political disputes in modern society seems to be a substitution of politics for justice. Most politicians seem to seek only political solutions for nationalities' conflicts. Political solutions that do not consider truths as an object of doing justice are doomed to be a temporary fix for social conflicts. Rationality, above all,

is about truth. Truth is about justice. Although it seems necessary for people to subject politics to the criteria of truth, the nature of political process is incompatible with the criteria of rationality. Rationality, among other things, has to satisfy the criteria of ethics. Since politics is, more or less, a collective process, and ethics seems to be less workable when applied to collectivity, politics are more susceptible to irrationality. For example, there is a prevailing attitude among the public to accept lies from politicians as a normal occurrence. Truth sets a standard of adjudicating disputes by enforcing consistency of beliefs. For example, a politician may assume that by legislating a law that proclaims equality of all people, he has solved a problem. However, this may not be a solution, because some human demands are demands for justice. Political negotiations are more of a convention than settling value conflicts based on truth as a criterion. It is important to see social conflicts in terms of whether justice in the resolution of a conflict has been served. Without doing justice, the cycle of violence may continue from one generation to another.

Moral implications of Nationalism

Nationalism is particularly problematic with respect to ethics. Ethics, by definition, attempts to place moral responsibility at an individual level. Because nationalism is collective by definition, it is difficult to locate moral responsibility in collectivity. Praise or blame can only be made when responsibility is located. Moreover, nationalism argues that national identity is a fate, rather than a choice. The belief that belonging to a particular nation is natural is extended to the view that the first moral obligation of a nationalist is to his or her nation. The partial moral commitment of nationalists results in the promotion of

intolerance among different nations and nationalities. Nationalism encourages arrogance, prejudice, and racist and genocidal attitudes toward people of different races and people of different communities. Ethical relativism grows out of such an attitude. Ethical relativism is the theory that there are no universally valid moral principles. Ethical relativism holds that all moral principles are valid, relative to culture or individual choice.

If morality has to sustain its overriding guideline to act without undermining personal integrity or harming other human beings, it must be based on a universal criterion of justification. The concept of morality requires that one judges human action from a point of view which is not dependent upon nationality, group membership, skin color, or any other contingency, but from the point of view which does not consider contingent circumstances as a factor in deciding moral judgment. If moral judgments are based on a universal criterion as opposed to a particular criterion, it will not be conditioned by contingent circumstances such as belonging to a particular nation, being of a certain color, gender, profession, or political persuasion.

Kant advanced the idea of universal moral judgment. Kant's idea of being human is connected to the idea of being moral and rational. For Kant, to be capable of moral obligation, one must be rational. Kant argues that since rationality pertains only to humans, they alone are capable of moral obligations. As indicated in chapter four, being rational is equivalent to being ethical. The key concepts in Kant's moral philosophy are based on the ideas of autonomy of a person, reason, freedom, and Will. Universal reason provides the basis for the universal principle that must govern moral and political life. In order for moral action to be of value, a free agent must act voluntarily, based on reason.

According to Kant, a person who complies with coercive laws is not necessarily virtuous. Human autonomy is not based on contingent capacities and abilities. Without autonomy of the person, it is impossible to apply universal reason as a basis for moral obligation. Autonomy presupposes a moral agent who is free and rational, and autonomy also constrains morality by setting limits to the principles and actions it contains.

According to Kant, moral obligations arise from duty and are not consequential benefits. Moral actions are not arbitrary results, either. Kant asserts that actions done from duty have moral worth, not in the purpose to be attained by them, but with respect to the maxim in accordance with which they are decided upon. Kant establishes the general context in which morality and rationality have to be understood. However, one has to point out that Kant also faces problems which may make his claims less than what he intends. The significant theoretical problem for Kant is that his theory of knowledge only applies to what he calls the phenomenal world, or world of experience. Kant argues that man is incapable of knowing the noumenal world. If humans are incapable of knowing the noumenal world, knowledge becomes relative, and the claim of universal knowledge and thus universal morality just does not hold up to his intention. Moreover, Kantian moral theory faces a problem in cases of conflicting social goals of a political movement. For example, the goals of the French Revolution were Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. However, liberty may not be achieved peacefully in many cases. People may have to wage violent war to achieve liberty. In this case, even though Kant may approve the end goal, he may not plausibly approve the means, since his moral theory sanctions violence. History shows that most despots would not give up their power for public benefit. The question

arises, then, is one justified to accept a coercive law because the means of achieving freedom is morally unacceptable? This is a moral dilemma for many political organizations. Kant seems to assume that a rational individual will abide by universal morality, even though he approves nationalism in the form of a world states federation. However, it is not clear how he would reconcile a person's moral obligation to himself and to the nation state in which his interests lay.

Nationalism may be a valid option in some versions of utilitarianism. For example, J. S. Mill, who has written on both the nationality questions and on moral theory, approves nationalism and violent means of achieving freedom if certain conditions are fulfilled. If, for example, the majority of the nationality fulfills the criteria of nation, he would approve achieving their freedom based on the cost benefit analysis of violence.

Utilitarianism holds that one should act to promote the greatest happiness (pleasure) for the greatest number of people. This is the original view of utilitarianism which Jeremy Bentham promoted. This version of utilitarianism is sometimes called hedonism because it emphasizes pleasure. Bentham argued that pleasure and the absence of pain are desired by all human beings. Since we know that each person seeks his or her own pleasure, one ought act in ways that bring about happiness (pleasure) to the greatest number of people or to the community as a whole. Nonetheless, Bentham's version of utilitarianism begins with individual empirical evidence that a person desires happiness and pleasure, and concludes that all people desire happiness and pleasure. Moreover, Bentham assumes that pleasure is measurable by intensity, duration, propinquity (nearness), purity, and certainty. The problem is that criteria of happiness and pleasure are not the same for

all human beings, and pleasure is subjective, and one cannot objectively assign a value to pleasure. Moreover, Bentham reduces all values to happiness. Therefore, generalizing from the particular taste to general community desire or taste, is not plausible.

John Stuart Mill emphasizes happiness and evades using pleasure. As he sees it, the utilitarian doctrine is that happiness is desirable and the only thing desirable as a means to that end. The determining criteria for the proof that people actually desire a certain thing are based on seeing what people do and hearing what people say. Mill seems to gather a sort of consensus to determine what is desirable. In both the original and modified versions of utilitarianism, nationalism may be approved. The core thesis in both cases is the cost benefit ratio. Thus, if it costs less and benefits more to achieve political goals, nationalists are justified to act in their interests, even if what they do is intrinsically immoral.

Moreover, nationalists face an ethical dilemma, because nationalism requires one to commit himself or herself to two contradictory obligations. For example, a nationalist or a patriot is required to be loyal to his nation and may also be required to be loyal to humanity. Loyalty to a nation is a form of altruism when compared to lesser, local interests. The unselfishness of the patriot is the basis for the promotion of a nation interests and at the same time for the promotion of national egoism. National egoism promotes the use power without moral restraint. The unqualified commitment of the patriot to a particular nation's interests violates the criterion of rationality that ethics requires. Furthermore, as discussed earlier, State boundaries that a patriot is committed to protect are gained through annexation, conquests and/or peace agreements. If the

conquest or peace agreements are not based upon morally acceptable criteria, then it would be immoral for the patriot to commit to defend morally indefensible gains.

Chapter 6

PROBLEM WITH THE CONCEPT OF INTERNATIONALISM

Both Kantian and Marxist notions of internationalism face problems, but the problems are different. In the Kantian case, the notion of internationalism is a notion of federation of many sovereign states. As long as the state structure exists, nationalism will exist. The global national state will be just a bigger state that may represent the interests of all states. Since this global state guarantees the rights of nations, the competing interests among nation-states will not go away.

In the case of the Bolshevik revolution, the hope was that the nation-state will gradually wither away as society marches toward the communist stage of human development. However, the criteria for achieving the communist stage of social development are fuzzy and abstract. The requirements are assumed to almost come naturally. The role of social revolution is to help this historical evolution to give birth to the new social system. As Marx said, "Revolution is the midwife of history." However, revolution is not predictable social engineering. No one can calculate the outcome of revolution. Revolution is not a science, therefore, it cannot predict whether its outcome would bring about an improvement in the social condition of life.

Immanuel Kant recognized that nationalism is a threat to world peace. Kant suggested that eternal peace between nations can only be achieved through international treaties and a world government that enforces these treaties. Kant assumed that people have the capacity to be rational and act accordingly. On the other hand, many Marxists

have argued that world peace and internationalism would be achieved if the proletarian class led the revolution toward the classless society. Marxists emphasize the economic basis for conflicts among people and nations. Regardless of the persistence of nationalism, the ideas of internationalism in both the Kantian and Russian revolution cases have contributed to some of the current ideas and principles of international organizations.

Kantian Idea of Perpetual Peace and Internationalism

Kant emphasized the idea that the problems of nationalism are a threat to human civilization. He argued that the achievement of universal civic society, which administers law among people and nations, is critical to avoid the threat of wars among nations. By creating universal civic society, Kant hoped that sometime in the future people would live in a state of perpetual peace. He thought that, through steady progress, humanity would discover its common end—an end in which all people would be enlightened and discover the universal oneness of humanity. Kant argued that if a republican government were formed within a nation, and if international organizations were formed to coordinate relations among nations, it would be possible for humanity to live in perpetual peace. Kant argued that by entering into international legal agreements and forming a world body that enforced the law, perpetual peace would be protected. To understand these propositions it is necessary to look into Kantian philosophy. Kant's theory of knowledge is at the base of his philosophy of history, politics and moral philosophy. All of these philosophies are related. Kant derives the justification for one from the other.

Kant believes that rationality distinguishes humankind from the animal kingdom. Rationality is also a basis for a person to act morally. Action implies freedom to act. Free rationality implies responsibility. Responsibility establishes a moral and legal limit to action. Kant writes:

In general every rational being, exists as an end in himself and not merely as a means to be arbitrarily controlled by this or that will. He must in all his actions, whether directed to himself or to other rational beings, always be regarded at the same time as an end . . . rational beings are called persons inasmuch as their nature already marks them out as ends in themselves. . . . Such an end is one of which there can be substituted no other end to which such beings serve merely as means, for otherwise nothing at all of absolute value would be found anywhere. . . . The practical imperative will therefore be the following: Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means.⁹⁶

For Kant, to act contrary to these principles is to act irrationally; and to act irrationally is to be less than human, because the distinguishing criterion of being human is rationality. Moreover, treating another person irrationally amounts to treating a person as less than human and treating oneself as less than human.

Self-consciousness is the basis of human knowledge. Knowledge is derived from two sources: sensibility and understanding. Judgment is possible through the joint application of senses and understanding. Based on the assumption that knowledge is possible, Kant asserts that humankind's essential purpose is moral growth. As humanity evolves from a state of barbarism to an age of enlightenment, Kant hopes this trend will continue to develop to the point where the human species will achieve the highest possible

⁹⁶Immanuel, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, trans. Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1983), p. 10.

rationality. No person can meet his or her diverse needs alone. To fulfill their needs, people have to create relations with other people. The dialectical relationships between the individual and society create situations in which human sociability becomes a necessary condition for existence. Recognizing that all members of society are involved in social relations and have rights by virtue of being human, everyone, according to Kant, enters into a social contract to protect their mutually beneficial relationships. A social contract is the first step to promote humanity's personal and collective goal. People also need to realize that the social contract is only a means to an end, the end being the moral goal of self-legislation. Kant argued that this social goal is in agreement with what nature intends for humanity. Kant writes:

Perpetual peace is insured . . . by nothing less than that great artist nature . . . whose mechanical process makes her purposiveness . . . visibly manifest, permitting harmony to emerge among men through their discord, even against their wills.⁹⁷

Kant suggests six legal preconditions for perpetual peace.

1. No conclusion of peace shall be considered valid if it was made with secret reservation of the material for a future war.
2. No independently existing state, whether it be large or small, may be acquired by another state by inheritance, exchange, purchase or gift.
3. Standing armies will gradually be abolished altogether.
4. No national debt will be contracted in connection with the external affairs of the state.
5. No state shall forcibly interfere in the constitution of and government of another state.
6. No state at war with another shall permit such acts of hostility as would make mutual confidence impossible during a future time of peace. Such acts

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 120.

would include the employment of assassins or poisoners, breach of agreements, the instigation of treason within the enemy state, etc.⁹⁸

These preconditions also presuppose that there is a legitimate republican government which represents autonomous states. Moreover, the states would have relationships in the same way private citizens would have civic relationships. Kant's suggestions in many ways resemble the current United Nations Charters. It seems that his suggestions are logically possible, provided that his assumptions are in place. However, in light of current complex political problems within a given nation, and international relations, his suggestions are too optimistic. Regardless of his optimism toward humankind's capacity to be rational and act in socially constructive and cooperative ways, Kant leaves room for the possibility of the irrationality of people. For example, the fact that he suggests an internationally delegated law enforcing agency among nations seems to imply the idea of self-legislating human beings. In the end, Kant's solution to the conflict among nations rests on legal means. The fact that Kant divides the world into empirical and non-empirical realms, and his suggestion that the non-empirical (or the noumenal) world is not quite knowable, leaves the possibility that one may never go beyond the limit of empirical knowledge. Therefore, it seems that Kant must admit that human beings are limited by nature to transcend their phenomenal world, which is not real. It follows that what one knows in this unreal world also becomes unreal or at least becomes relative to individual

⁹⁸Howard Williams, Kant's Political Philosophy (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p. 245-246.

or group experience. Thus, it seems that Kant did not really escape from the predicament of *our* and *their* experience which influences human judgment.

The Russian Revolution and the idea of internationalism

The 1917 October Revolution was an attempt to establish a socialist state that would promote internationalism. The revolution was based on the hope that the proletariat dictatorship would transform Russia into the state of the whole people. The October Revolution was based on Marx and Engels' vision that socialist revolution should take place in the most developed capitalist countries through mass action by trade unions and democratic socialist organizations. Moreover, Marx and Engels envisaged changing the world through the vanguard of a proletarian party and by a state in which the proletariat would become a dominating class. However, this vision is entirely based on an assumption that the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeois class would be a natural direction of the dialectics of history. As such, the leaders of the revolution underestimated their challenges. Marxist dialectics of history assumed that social change comes about because of the existence of contradictions between the oppressed and oppressor classes. This assumption is derived from dialects of nature, in which it is assumed that any growth is due to contradictions within an *organism*. For example, an organism grows due to the process of building cells (or metabolism) and the process of destroying cells (or catabolism). Contradictory processes coexist temporarily and conditionally; however, contradiction is assumed to be eternal. If the contradiction ceases to exist, the organism also will cease to exist. Similarly, class warfare between the oppressor and the oppressed

will only cease to exist with the abolition of class society; thus, it is necessary to create a classless society. However, whether this physical science phenomenon is a compatible analogy to the social phenomenon is arguable. Many an unexpected surprise occurs due to the fact that humankind has a capacity to predict and change events; people are active players in shaping the natural and social phenomena.

Marx and Engels asserted that all past history, excepting primitive society, was the history of class struggle; that the warring classes of society are always the products of modes of production and exchange—the economic conditions of their time; that the economic structure of society always furnishes the real basis from which people alone work out the ultimate explanation of the whole superstructure of juridical and political institutions as well as of the religious, philosophical and other ideas of a given historical period.

Marx and Engel's vision seems to have flaws in at least two respects. First, it assumed that violence is a natural necessity and, second, that human rationality is limited by history, class or social location, and/or economic condition. The problem is that if human rationality is limited by history, class, and maybe gender, all nations that may claim different history and economic conditions under which they have lived can justify any actions, based on these contingencies. The Russian Revolution was based on this relativist vision, but still claimed to hold universal vision. However, universalism and relativism are conflicting visions. In addition to this philosophical problem, the Bolshevik party leaders were afraid to adopt a principle of representative government in which all Russian people participate.

After the overthrow of the Russian Tsar, Nicholas II, there was a general disintegration of the feudal empire. Nationalist movements in all border areas of the empire created new governments that were opposed to the Bolshevik political philosophy, and demanded separation (Poland, Baltic States, Ukraine) from Russia. This was a great challenge for the Bolshevik party leaders. There were differences among party leaders on how to respond to nationalities' questions. For example, within the Bolshevik party, there were differences between Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin. Trotsky argued that the transformation of the Bolshevik party into a big bureaucracy and the defeat of the proletarian revolution in different parts of Europe were factors for the rise of Russian nationalism.

According to Trotsky, the petite-bourgeoisie bureaucrats, who considered themselves agents of the proletariat, transformed from being agents to being arbitrators of conflicts between the bourgeois class and the proletariat class. This role of serving two interests evolved into protecting their independent interests. Trotsky writes:

The young bureaucracy, which had arisen at first as an agent of the proletariat, began now to feel itself a court of arbitration between the classes. Its independence increased from month to month.⁹⁹

Moreover, the international political situation, which was an anti-proletarian revolution, gave confidence for the Russian petite-bourgeoisie class to consolidate their own power.

Trotsky writes:

⁹⁹Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed (New York: Pathfinders Press Inc., 1972), p. 90.

The crushing of the Bulgarian insurrection and the inglorious retreat of the Germans workers' party in 1923, the collapse of the Estonian attempt at insurrection in 1924, the . . . liquidation of The General Strike in England . . . the terrible massacre of the Chinese revolution in 1927, and, finally, . . . the still ominous recent defeats in Germany and Austria—these are the historic catastrophes which killed the faith of the Soviet masses in world revolution, and permitted the bureaucracy to rise higher and higher as the sole light of salvation.¹⁰⁰

In addition to international political conditions, the leaders of the Bolshevik party promoted proletarian defeat. Stalin's reversal of original Bolshevik internationalist policy to a nationalist policy may clarify this claim.

In the October 1917 revolution, Stalin was made Commissar of the nationalities. Three weeks after the October Revolution, Stalin attended the Congress of the Finnish Democratic party that proclaimed the right of the Finns to national independence. The decree of independence was agreed upon by Stalin and later signed by both Lenin and Stalin. The decision was opposed by Bukharin and Dzerzhinsky within the Bolshevik party and by members of the Mensheviks, for example by Martov. The opponents of the decision argued that the decision was a "sellout" to the bourgeois nationalism of a smaller nation at the expense of Russians and the Russian Revolution.

Stalin interpreted the right of nations to self-determination as a means to an end but not as an end in itself. His hope was that independent nations would naturally evolve toward forming seemingly voluntary unity. However, the grant of national autonomy was accepted only when implemented under communist control. Stalin made this view clear in

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 90.

1918 during his speech to the conference on the creation of the Tatar-Bashkir as an autonomous Soviet region. He stated,

Autonomy is a form. The whole question is what class control is contained in the form. The Soviet government is for autonomy, but only for an autonomy where all power rests in the hands of the workers and peasants, where the bourgeoisie of all the nationalities is not only deprived of power, but also of participation in the elections of governing organs.¹⁰¹

There are problems with Stalin's arguments. First, the Bolsheviks hoped to bring about by revolution democratic rights which were denied under the Tsarist regime. However, as indicated in Stalin's speech, the democracy that had been sought was democracy for the working class; this showed that Stalin's democracy was partial. For Stalin (and maybe for all Marxists), existence of democracy indicated the existence of a class society. The concept of democracy, however, is also related to the concept of human rights and freedom for all people, regardless of class or other criteria.¹⁰² Second, Stalin's assertion is at least morally problematic, because he denied the bourgeoisie the right even to be citizens if they did not remold themselves into a proletarian class. That is, if one cannot participate in the national life of his own country, the nominal citizenship

¹⁰¹Allan Bullock, Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), p. 96.

¹⁰²Marxism sees democracy as a temporary and necessary evil to transform society from class to classless where democracy is no longer needed. It is assumed that in a communist society the economic evils such as private property would not exist. The economic distribution of wealth is based on the principle "from each according to his ability and to each according to his need." Moreover, Marxism holds that solving economic problems would solve most or all social problems. However, it is not clear, at least to this writer, whether a classless society is the end of history, since Marxism assumes that where there is no contradiction, development or growth ceases to exist.

does not have any impact. Underlying Stalin's contention is an implication that people of different economic classes cannot represent each other because class interest determines a person's values; in other words, economic condition determines human behavior.

Furthermore, human behavior does not seem to change in a mechanical way. If the bourgeoisie does not change so quickly, it literally has no place in a society. The question, however, should be asked with respect to the intellectuals who claim to represent the proletarian interests. As the history of the Bolshevik party shows, the elite turned out to be oppressors of the proletariat, contrary to their claim that they were the vanguard of the workers' interests.

In the commission formed to draft the Soviet constitution in 1918, Stalin dropped his earlier advocacy of a centralized structure of the state in favor of federalism, based on national and territorial units. However, some writers question the sincerity of this change of position. For example, Mikhail Reisner points out that Stalin did not really change his beliefs, but disguised them—"hidden centralism under cover of a federal structure."¹⁰³

Trotsky also points out that Lenin's effort to handle nationality's demand in a democratic manner was reversed by the Bolshevik party bureaucrats. He writes:

The bureaucratic degeneration of the State has rested like a millstone upon the national policy. It was upon the national question that Lenin intended to give his first battle to the bureaucracy, especially to Stalin, at the twelfth congress of the party in the spring of 1923. But before the congress met, Lenin had gone from the ranks. The document which then Lenin had prepared remains even now suppressed by the center.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³Bullock, Hitler and Stalin, p. 97.

¹⁰⁴Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, p. 171.

Trotsky argued that the Bolsheviks were not keen to solve the contradiction between the required broad cultural autonomy of people and economic centralism. He asserted that, though there is no ready-made formula to resolve the problem, the Bolshevik party was not willing to use the best available alternative. For example, they did not enable people to participate in the administration of their economic and cultural life; the Bolshevik bureaucracy did not allow people to participate in deciding their destiny. Trotsky states,

Only people's actual participation in the administration of their destinies can draw the necessary line between legitimate demands of economic centralism and the living gravitation of national culture. The problem is, however, the Soviets in all national divisions are now wholly replaced by the will of a bureaucracy which approaches both economy and culture from the point view of convenience of administration.¹⁰⁵

Trotsky's point is that socialism is not nationalism. To maintain the internationalist nature of socialism, the leaders of the revolution should let material conditions ripen from internal factors, instead of imposing the revolution from above, or externally through the bureaucracy. Trotsky's view was that, since the Russian economy and culture were semi-feudal and semi-capitalist, the Bolsheviks should let the economy and the culture grow in evolutionary fashion. In other words, the party should build the economic and cultural infrastructure, instead of running socialist propaganda without a material basis. Furthermore, Trotsky's larger philosophical dispute with the central committee of the Bolshevik party was that he did not believe in the policy of peaceful coexistence with non-socialist nations. He advocated a more aggressive policy of permanent socialist revolution

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

on an international scale. Through such international revolution, the nationality questions in Russia and elsewhere would be diluted to class struggle and would be answered within this larger context of democratic questions. Describing the nationalities problem in Russia, Trotsky writes:

In the school of the union, lessons are taught . . . in no less than eighty languages. For the majority of them, it was necessary to compose new alphabets, or to replace extremely aristocratic Asiatic alphabets with more democratic Latin. Newspapers are published in the same number of languages - papers which for a time acquaint the peasants and nomad shepherds with the elementary idea of human culture. Within the far-flung boundaries of the tzar's empire, a native industry is arising. The old semi-clan culture is being destroyed by the tractor. Together with the literacy, scientific agriculture and medicine are coming into existence. It would be difficult to overestimate the significance of this work of raising up new human strata. Marx was right when he said that revolution is the locomotive of history. . . . But the most powerful locomotive cannot perform miracles. It cannot change the laws of space.¹⁰⁶

In light of the current rise of nationalism in Russia and other parts of the world, Trotsky's observations seem to be plausible. The elite who run state bureaucracies attempt to make a revolution from the top down, without even attempting to make what they are trying to do intelligible to the people. The failures of some revolutions and the rise of nationalism are partly attributable to elite arrogance. In some third world nations, nationalism is promoted as an imported idea without due attention to the specific circumstances of nations. As Trotsky has pointed out, without an economic and cultural infrastructure, provoking political movement may harm rather than liberate the people it is attempting to help.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

Stalin used nationalistic patriotism to rally the Russian people against Hitler's Germany. Before the 1930s, patriotism was regarded as sentimental, idealist, and reactionary by the Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik party believed that people acted as members of classes, and that social classes were guided by their concrete material interests.

P. Stuchka wrote,

In our times patriotism plays the role of the most reactionary ideology, whose function is to justify imperialist bestiality and to deaden the class consciousness of the proletariat, by setting impassable boundaries to its struggle for liberation. . . . Proletariat by the defense of its class state fulfilled its internationalist mission, in that it defended the Soviet *Socialist Fatherland* but not the national unity which is contained in it.¹⁰⁷

However, this internationalist belief began to change with Stalin's May 1925 speech to the leaders of the Moscow party. Stalin said,

It is possible to build socialism by our own effort in our country, technically and economically backward, [even] if capitalism persists in other countries for more or less. It would be possible to construct a fully socialist society, under the leadership of an alliance of workers and peasants. But the *final victory of socialism* . . . is achieved by industrialization.¹⁰⁸

The rise of Russian nationalism after 1925 was systematic. The Association of Proletarian Writers and its affiliated but partly autonomous non-Russian counterparts were abolished by a decree of April 1932. The party leaders reversed earlier internationalist policies through administrative measures. *Pravda* 24 April 1933 published a decree to abolish the right of constituent republics to grant orders of distinction. In 1934 all Soviet writers were put under control of a single Moscow directed Union of Soviet Writers.

¹⁰⁷Snyder, *Dynamics of Nationalism*, p. 224.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p. 225.

Henceforth, Soviet nationalism and patriotism were intensified through the mass communications media. Education, scholarship and the arts began to reflect Soviet pride and patriotism. The war against Germany became known as the "Holy War," and the "Great War of the motherland." Stalin named the 1941 war with Hitler's Germany *the great patriotic war*. In December 1943, the Internationale, "the international proletarian anthem" composed by Eugene Pottier in 1871, was modified to fit the nationalist patriotic sentiment. *Arise ye the wretched of the earth* was replaced by:

Unbreakable Union of freeborn Republics,
Great Russia has welded forever to stand;
Created in struggle by will of the peoples,
United and mighty, our Soviet Land!
Sing to our motherland, glory undying,
Bulwark of peoples in brotherhood strong!
Flag of the Soviets, peoples flag flying,
Lead us from vict'ry to victory on!¹⁰⁹

These claims being made by the national anthem, claims of strong unity of the Soviet union and the voluntary union of the peoples, are not supported by the historical evidence. In fact, these claims are contradicted by the current nationalist movements and the historical claims they are making. The poetic prediction of "the great Russia that people have welded together" turned out to be false in 1989. What came true supported Stalin's ambivalence in his speech of 1925 about whether socialism can succeed through industrialization or through political indoctrination. Nevertheless, nationalism seems to have surprised the communist leaders. Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn said,

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 222.

Surprising though it may be, the prophecy of our Vanguard [Marxist-Leninist ideology] that nationalism would fade has not come true. In the age of the atom and cybernetics, it has for some reason blossomed.¹¹⁰

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin thought that nationalism was a phenomenon of bourgeoisie competition for markets. He argued that, throughout the world, the period of victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked with national movements. Lenin states:

The economic basis of those movements is the fact that in order to achieve complete victory for commodity production the bourgeoisie must capture the home market, must have politically united territories with a population speaking the same language, and all obstacles to the development of this language and to its Consolidation in literature must be removed. [For] language is the most important means of human intercourse.¹¹¹

Two observations can be made on Lenin's view. First, Lenin regarded nationalism as an inevitable historical phenomenon which nations must pass through step by step. Second, he regarded nationalism as a phenomenon of capitalist society. However, these assumptions are not obvious, to say the least. If one assumes that nationalism is an unavoidable natural phenomenon that society must necessarily experience, it follows that human beings have only limited control over shaping the social and political policy of a society. Furthermore, the assumption that nationalism is a natural phenomenon implies that human beings are determined by nature to be nationalists. If one accepts the idea that nature determines whether one is prone to nationalism or not, then it becomes difficult even to criticize the problems that nationalism may promote.

¹¹⁰Snyder, Global Mini-Nationalisms, p. 1.

¹¹¹Dahbour and Ishay, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," Nationalism Reader, p. 208.

Chapter 7

THE NATURE OF HUMAN DIFFERENCE AND POLITICAL DISTORTIONS

The concept of nationalism is based on the notion of human difference. Human difference is multifaceted. In addition to tribal, cultural, national, and skin color differences, people differ in the wealth they possess. All these differences do not seem to be fundamental to human diversity. They are externally generated, artificial differences. It is accidental whether one is born American or Mexican, black or white. What seems to matter to human difference is a difference in beliefs. Human beings act upon what they think is true about themselves, and about others and the world. Actions have consequences, which may enhance or detract from people's lives. Impulsive actions are more likely to cause conflicts than actions based on reason. When people act on reason, it is likely that they consider other human being's interests and are likely to weigh their own interests against others'. Consideration of other people's interests is an acknowledgment of other people's rights to pursue their interests. Acknowledging that everyone has an equal right to life enhances cooperative life among people. This is why reason should guide action.

In the Western Philosophical tradition, human rationality is generally defined as a trait which individuals or collectives display in their thought, conduct, or social institutions. If one acts rationally, one tends to act only after deliberating and calculating, as opposed to acting impulsively or in obedience to unexamined intimidation. One's

conduct is controlled according to abstract and general principles; one tends to systematize convictions and/or values in a single coherent system, and is inclined to find human fulfillment in the exercise or satisfaction of intellectual faculties rather than in emotion or sensuality.

Rationality generally characterizes beliefs and actions. If beliefs are deemed to be rational, one ought to choose them. One of the criteria of rationality is decidability. Given any two outcomes, A and B, a rational person should be able to tell whether he or she prefers A to B, or B to A, or is indifferent as to either. The concept of rationality must be consistent with the transitivity principle. For example, if a person prefers outcome A to outcome B, and outcome B to outcome C, it would be irrational to prefer outcome C to outcome A. This concept of transitivity also implies that there must be consistency of behavior in decision making or action.

One problem with nationalism is that contradictory standards are applied for granting freedom and giving respect to human beings. It reduces ideas of freedom and human dignity to a particular category instead of a universal category. Nationalists claim that their nation or ethnic group or race is deprived of certain rights, but considers these rights as exclusively belonging to them. Contrary to nationalists' beliefs, human freedom and rights, by definition, are not relative concepts. Culture, nationality, history, or race do not limit the application of human rights and human freedom. They belong to all human beings regardless of nationality, culture or race. If one prefers liberty and human dignity over one's nation, race or community, he or she must also prefer the same for other human beings unless he or she considers the others are somehow less than humans.

Nationalism appeals more to passion than to reason. Passion is generally defined as an excessive, intense, or overpowering impulse or emotion such as rage, anger, or jealousy.¹¹² The overpowering emotion is usually a result of things such as antipathy or inordinate desires that control behavior. Nationalist beliefs and behavior are inconsistent. The following poem may illustrate both its inconsistency and its irrationality. In 1848 a Rumanian poet, describing the Rumanian nation, wrote the following:

It is in it that we were born, it is our mother;
We are men because it reared us;
We are free because we move in it;
If we are angered, it soothes our pain with national songs.
Through it we talk today to our parents who lived thousands of years back;
Through it our descendants and posterity thousands of years later will
know us.¹¹³

The metaphor used in this poem is the ultimate passion of nationalism. It compares mother and nation. The truth is that a mother rears her children, whereas a nation may destroy her children. The recent history of Rumania itself is an example. President Nicolae Ceausescu, the late leader of the Rumanian communist party, destroyed the lives and livelihood of many Rumanians with his sixty thousand strong personal police force. He forced hundreds of Rumanians to leave "mother Rumania." One's nation is not necessarily a source of pleasure and joy. In many instances, nations have been the source of pain for many people. Many nations have persecuted many of their own citizens just

¹¹²Peter A. Angeles, The Harper Collins Dictionary of Philosophy (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992).

¹¹³Walker Connor, Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 205.

because they happen to hold views states do not like. Millions of dislocated people all over the world are witness to this. The point is that a nation-state is a contingent fiction that creates a contingent loyalty. Belonging to a nation is a contingent reality, whereas belonging to the human race is not contingent. Truth is neither a metaphor nor a passion.

Before one is associated with other human beings or related to the world, he or she is a human being. Being human is a universal characteristic. One can belong to any human category, either by choice or historical accident; association is either biological or sociological. Biological and sociological association to categories of people are contingent upon history. Belonging to a social group is a matter of choice rather than a matter of fate. By contrast, being human is a fate, not a choice. It is a fact that one is born with all the potentials to be completely human—assuming one is born with full health.

One of the ways in which humankind copes with the uncertainties of life is by creating associations with other human beings. As people mingle with each other, they create group dynamics. One consequence of group dynamics is the creation of individual loyalty to the group. Group loyalty, however, comes at the expense of individual beliefs and individual values that set a boundary to personal identity which in turn is the basis for individual freedom, values and responsibilities. Personal beliefs and values are sacrificed in the name of loyalty to the prestige of the group, race, or ethnicity, and to the nation. Loyalty to these particular biological or sociological human categories is one proof of the irrationality of nationalism. Loyalty overshadows the reality of the oneness of humanity at the deeper level. Nationalistic sentiments confuse individual identity, which also at the same time is universal human identity, with biological or sociological group identity.

Conventionally, a person has a proper name and is identified as such in a human category. However, race (a biological category) and nation (a sociological category) are used to identify individuals in place of proper names. For example, "José" is a proper name that will be replaced by "a Mexican guy," "Gary" becomes "an American white or black guy," and "Hussein" becomes "an Arab guy" or "the Muslim guy."

Historically, nationalist distortions have been used to promote group interests in different ways. Distortions have been used sometimes to glorify groups, and sometimes to marginalize and persecute groups or individuals that are considered the "other." For example, the German Nationalist Worker's party (or the NAZI) used the idea that "Aryans," as a race, were superior and by nature good, and that the Jews were by nature evil and were the cause for Germany's economic crisis during the second world war. For the NAZI, the group or religious name "Jew" replaced individual names such as "Goldman" or "Rabin." Whenever social evils would occur, these individuals would be the culprits. The culprit must be prosecuted; therefore, these individuals that happened to have Jewish names were prosecuted. Hitler claimed that Germany had been cheated and betrayed by a supreme conspiracy. In W.W.I, Hitler argued, Germany was particularly sabotaged by the Jews, the intellectuals, and the Communist International. Hitler appealed to the Germans to restore their fatherland to the place of pride she had been before 1914, and to return her racial integrity to the ancient "Aryan." In 1935, two laws were passed in the Nuremberg Nazi party congress. The first law deprived German citizenship to those not of "German or related blood"; the second law made marriage or extra-marital relations

illegal between Germans and Jews. These two laws were formal steps in the process of terrorizing non-Aryan Germans.

Another example of the irrationality of nationalist passion were the Japanese internment camps in the United States. During the second world war, the American government put many people who had Japanese surnames into concentration camps, and controlled their movements. This view that all Japanese Americans should be suspected, because loyalty to race is preferred over loyalty to a country, has created long-lasting animosity between the Japanese community and other American communities since the war. The irrationality of nationalist passion is a source of prejudice and an obstacle to community relations all over the world.

People migrate, regardless of national or racial prejudices, from country to country, in search of better opportunities for improving their living conditions. People throughout the world are an amalgamation of many ethnic and cultural roots. In wartime, states attempt to evoke the nationalistic emotions of people, but because citizenship and political persuasion do not necessarily go together, some groups of people become victims of war between warring states. For example, during the Gulf war many Iraqi-Americans and Arab Americans became innocent victims of hate. They were suspected by virtue of having biological and/or sociological relationships with Iraq. They became the *others*.

D.M. Ronell remarked:

The process of seeing another individual, group, or nation as the 'other' eliminates identification with the 'other' as a fellow human who is someone's child, husband or wife, father or mother. The 'other' lacks human reality; the

moral codes that exist within one's world no longer apply to that of the 'other'.¹¹⁴

Instead of promoting and searching for common purpose, people have slaughtered each other over abstract cultural prestige.

More exploration is needed to understand what it means to belong to the human race and human groups. It is apparent from the evidence of history that being human is beyond being solely an economic entity. There are psychological dimensions to being human, one of which is the concept of human dignity. It is not enough for a community of people just to achieve economic progress. In addition to economic growth, people need the recognition of other communities. According to Hegel, humans, like animals, have natural needs and desires for objects outside themselves.¹¹⁵ Food, shelter, and, above all, the preservation of their bodies are examples of these needs. However, one of the significant ways in which humans are different from animals is that they crave the recognition of other human beings. Specifically, humans want to be recognized as beings with a certain worth or dignity. The need to be recognized as a human being is what motivates humans to risk their lives and die over pure prestige. It is natural for humankind to fight curtailment and limitation within their world. In most cases, nationalist movements are provoked by the marginalization of a community, or a nationality. Usually a state, through its bureaucracy, perpetuates the curtailment of economic and cultural life of

¹¹⁴Ronell, "Psychological Foundations of Nationalism," p. 47.

¹¹⁵Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and The Last Man (New York: The Free Press, 1992), p. xvi.

oppressed nationalities or communities. For example, ancient feudal Greek states supported the indignation of non-Hellenic people, who were perceived to be barbarians or savages. The Ethiopian Amhara ruling classes identified the Oromos as *Galas* (a derogatory word that approximately means uncivilized), and called the Tigrigna speaking people "locust-eaters," (a culturally demeaning phrase). The dominant group fabricates a language that will mischaracterize the dominated group. In many instances, this invisible language penetrates the psyche of the oppressed nationalities and makes them believe that what is said about them or their group is true. These distortions are processes which the feudal lords use as means to psychologically prevent the oppressed group from questioning their authority. How a person defines *things* in the world may be a good predictor of his or her relationship to those things (including human beings). In the examples that are used here, the social groups that are assigned these distorted definitions are being treated based on these distorted definitions. That is, non-Hellenic people are barbarians; barbarians are uncivilized; therefore, they do not deserve responsible positions in the civilized society. They are the *others*, to use the postmodern description. The *others* are not yet fully human; therefore, they cannot and should not claim, and/or have no equal claim to what their nation has to offer. Those who protest these distortions and labels are considered criminals by the states. For example, Aristotle thought that a state is a creation of nature, that humans are by nature political animals, and that politics is practiced only within the context of the state.¹¹⁶ Those who are without state are either

¹¹⁶Richard McKeon, ed., Basic Works of Aristotle, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Random House, 1941), Politics, Bk. I, Ch. 2, 1253a.

bad men or outside of the human category. To use Aristotle's description, they are tribeless, lawless, and heartless. As discussed earlier, this ancient Aristotelian concept of treating a person based on the definition seems to operate in modern society as well.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

Philosophical theories about nature and society shape the way people think and consequently determine social relationships and how people are related to nature itself. The task of philosophy is to show possible ways of being in the world and to help adjust expectations, using reason. One should be wary of taking reason as a faith, thereby becoming a victim of ideological dogma; and also of taking reason as a tool for everything possible, thereby becoming a victim of radical relativism, which lead to nihilism. As discussed in this thesis, for reason to be an instrument of rationality, it must satisfy the criteria of ethics, so it should not be used to harm people or to do injustice.

Humanity faces the continual challenge of finding ways to live together. In medieval society, people slaughtered each other over dogmas of religion. At present, nationalism presents problems in the world by promoting value conflicts. The challenges of overcoming problems of nationalism lie in changing the ways people view themselves, their situation and role in the universe.

Nationalism contradicts the idea that humans can view their own affairs objectively. Moreover, nationalism seems to blow with the *political winds*. This is mainly due to the lack of a philosophical foundation from which nationalist organizations could design a rational political program. Nationalism obeys the prevalent political philosophy of a time. An obstacle to understanding nationalism is that there are inherently overlapping ideas that are used to describe a nation. Sociological ideas such as family,

clan, tribe, community, and society are defined by what makes them different and distinct. These sociological ideas are usually defined in terms of cultural ideas such as religion, language, and literature. In addition, institutional concepts such as empire, state, nation, province and municipality are defined with sociological concepts. It is not possible to define nation, and thus nationalism, just in terms of one criterion, or some criteria, leaving out other conditions that are important to the definition of a nation. However, all the conditions that are necessary to define a nation are not present in most cases. Therefore, the definition of a nation is necessarily incomplete. As a result, if one relies on these criteria and attempts to define nationalism, the definition necessarily will be incomplete.

In addition to using incomplete definitions of nations and nationalism, nationalist political organizations pursue political power by following an exclusionary political policy. Because bureaucracy is a somewhat permanent institution, even when nationalist organizations achieve political power, they are faced with the challenges handed down from the old bureaucracy. Nationalist political organizations desire to change a political power structure. In particular, they want to dismantle the old bureaucracy; however, there is clear danger in dismantling an old bureaucracy. If a new nationalist government does not use the old bureaucracy, it will not be able to provide day to day administrative services because most new nationalist political power groups just do not have the skill to provide public services, even if they try to serve the public in good faith. This is a dilemma for new nationalist governments; however, instead of accepting the fact that public administration requires professional skills, nationalists blame their inability to provide public services on old bureaucracies. They argue that the old bureaucracy

constantly sabotages implementation of their political programs. Nationalist governments sometimes use this justification to persecute individual career bureaucrats, but, more often, they use this excuse to justify dismantling the old bureaucracy and organizing their own bureaucracy to represent their interests. Although the justification for state power may appear to be logically sound, the new bureaucracy that may be built on the design of the nationalist organizations may also be based on an exclusionary policy. Interests of people who may not believe in the programs of the nationalist organizations, and people who do not belong to the new dominant nationality that is represented by the new nationalist state, are excluded from equal considerations.

This is going back to *ground zero*. Nationalism therefore fails to give adequate justification for people to be justly treated as human beings, not just because they belong to a certain nationality or ethnic group, but because they are human beings who deserve respect and equal opportunity. Nationalism as a sentiment emphasizes the cultural distinctness and differences in people's values. The emphases on cultural aspects of human life presuppose that people are products of their culture. Culture may influence how a person views the world, but culture does not determine how a person behaves. Culture itself is a social construct, learned and chosen. A particular culture is not a destiny for a person. Millions of people have learned about different cultures and acted consciously, according to the requirements of a particular culture.

Nationalism views the differences among people as a natural phenomenon. That is, people are different by design. The consequence of holding such a belief is that people who are outside a particular culture are distrusted and feared. But fear is not a substitute

for knowledge. As there are rational fears, there are also irrational fears, and one must uphold rationality while striving to overcome irrational fears, which are based on unjustified beliefs. For example, to assert that a certain nationality or race is untrustworthy implies that each individual belonging to that nationality or race is untrustworthy. This is equivalent to saying that, because Hitler is untrustworthy, Germans are untrustworthy. Confusing individual behavior with group behavior is irrational. Furthermore, to believe that people of a different nationality or race are not trustworthy amounts to the denial of democratic representation under multinational states. This type of argument leads eventually to denying the possibility of objectivity altogether. That is, it implies that it is impossible for a person of another nationality to impartially adjudicate conflicts and implement policies in such a way that all nationalities or races receive equal treatment under the law. The evidence shows, however, that, contrary to this belief, many nations in the world are heterogeneous nations that govern themselves through democratic representation.

The nationalist justification for allegiance to a particular nation's interest is based on the belief that humanity is naturally divided into nations and that each nation is one such natural phenomenon; therefore, it is legitimate to form a national self-government. Such uncritical allegiance has led to barbaric wars, such as those in Bosnia and Rwanda. Nationalists who are promoting these kinds of heinous acts must also approve when this kind of crime is committed against their nationalities or tribes. As discussed in this thesis, nationalists apply a double standard. However, consistency of belief is required if one is to be rational. Nationalist beliefs are not consistent because their views are partial or stem

from a relativist view. One objects to oppression and fights for freedom, not because he or she belongs to a particular nation or nationality, but because all forms of oppression are universally wrong, independently of where oppression occurs and regardless of who its victims are. Human dignity is based on the idea of freedom; human dignity is a universal principle which asserts that no human being should be deprived of his or her natural rights. The nationalist line of reasoning is usually backward-looking in that it bases the justifications for freedom and national rights for statehood on past suffering. However, the justification of freedom is independent of historic circumstances of any particular nationality or group. Therefore, it is irrational to cast a theory of nationalism or suppression of rights on a remedial justification that must depend on the contingent features of particular cases, rather than universal justification. The appeal to history as a means to achieve present political goals necessarily perpetuates a cycle of violence. As has been argued earlier, history cannot be represented accurately; thus, solutions for historic problems usually are distorted. Remedies for historical problems are more political than judicial; in fact, one of the difficulties in dealing with historical problems is that politicians seek political expediency more than justice. Without judicial solutions, it is likely that violence will not abate. National rights of people should be supported on different grounds from these contingent past circumstances. If nationalists adopt forward-looking as opposed to backward-looking contingent circumstances, there may be grounds for reconciliation among contending national groups. Based on legal principles of self-determination, members of certain nations want to establish an independent nation-state because they believe that only a state of their own can protect them from the violence and

threats of other nations or nationalities. However, if the reason for forming an independent nation-state is not the right to express national identity or democratic rights, but rather the nation's survival, it must follow that, once people have formed their nation-state, the threat of violence and tyranny will go away. This argument, however, is contradicted by historical evidence. There are many kinds of violence against humanity that one would presume the creation of an independent nation-state would avoid; but, in reality, most violence against humanity is committed by nation-states that should have protected the interests of their citizens. For example, being a fellow national does not seem to protect many Iranian nationals unless they believe in the government's religious ideology. Nor is statehood a guarantee of protection from tyranny and intimidation, for states have intimidated many of their citizens for holding controversial opinions about how their nations should be governed.

Thus, the nationalist claim of self-determination based on protection does not seem to hold. Nationalism seems to be rational when it is considered within the context of universal rights that are applicable to all people, not because they belong to this group or that group, but because they are human beings. Being a person in itself should be sufficient to warrant respect and freedom.

Nationalism grants priority to the interests of a particular nation or nationality, regardless of contrary evidence that may sanction such a priority. Nationalism, then, approves essentially a relativist view and, therefore, the claim that nationalism is rational amounts to claiming that relativism and perspectivism are rational. However, relativism

and perspectivism are logically indefensible. National questions and nationalism are coherent when their claims do not contradict the ideals of universal *human dignity*, as when a nation's political goals respect individuals as persons not because they belong to a particular group but because they are persons. When nationalism is viewed within such a broad context, it will be a coherent claim.

This thesis has explored many political and conceptual problems related to nationalism. As discussions in this thesis may have shown, it is not an easy task to discard or disregard many of the problems.

The hope lies in avoiding both conceptual dogmatism and relativism. Kant has honestly shown the conceptual difficulty that exists between relativism and absolutism. His effort to bridge empiricism and rationalism is the realization of this difficulty. There are no absolute boundaries where human rationality stops, but there seems to be a limit to human rationality, in the sense that people face dilemmas and paradoxes because of rationality itself. That is, because human beings have the capacity to question their own actions theoretically, but often tend to act contrary to what is rational and moral, they run into dilemmas. The fact that human beings see this difficulty shows that they are self-critical. The hope for peace and cooperation lies in this ability to be self-critical in the sense of monitoring one's own consistency of behavior and actions.

In the political arena, the hope for humanity lies in cooperation among nations and states to form an authoritative world body which will monitor the behavior of each nation-state in relation to its citizens and other nation-states, each individual as member of a nation and also as a member of the human community. It has been shown that belonging

to a nation or a state does not guarantee individual freedom; many nations and states have abused their own citizens. The current international law system emphasizes the sovereignty of the nation-state. Except in limited cases, no international law would interfere with the so-called internal affairs of a nation; therefore, there must be an authority, and a way by which individuals and nation-states may appeal their grievances against injustices from their own state or from other nation-states. This concept of an international agency that would adjudicate injustices against humanity has been shown, for example, in the Nuremberg trials.¹¹⁷ The proceedings in the Nuremberg trials set a precedent that the world could question nations, states, and individuals for crimes against humanity. The military tribunal was set in August 1945 and sat from November 1945 to October 1946. Twenty-one Nazis were tried. The implication is that humanity is above and beyond nation-state boundaries; therefore, there is a basis and there are overwhelming

¹¹⁷The International Military Tribunal of the Nuremberg document defined, Crimes Against Humanity, Crimes Against Peace and War Crimes as follows:

Crimes Against Humanity: Murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation and other inhuman acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war, or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where perpetrated.

Crimes Against Peace: Planning preparation, initiation or waging war of aggression, or war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the above.

War Crimes: Violation of laws and customs of war. Such violation includes, but is not limited to, murder, ill treatment or deportation to slave labour or for any other purpose of civilian population of an occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public property, destruction of cities, town or village, or devastation not justified by military necessity.

(Source: A Philosophy of Public Affairs Reader: "War and Moral Responsibility," Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974, Editors, Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel and Thomas Scanlon, pp. 136-7.)

reasons for establishing an international agency to represent the interests of humanity.

This principle can be extended under a stronger international agency, with extended authority to monitor peace among nation-states and to protect human rights.

Psychologically, loyalty to the state, nation and community can be subordinated to the interests of humanity. If nations' and states' interests are emphasized without due consideration to the interest of humanity, nations or states can destroy themselves as well as humanity. For example, environmental problems are problems of humanity, and, because of their global nature, no nation or state would have exclusive power to decide on policies that would affect the population of the world. Loyalty to a state's interest in such a case does not make sense. To promote loyalty to the human race, there must be civil society wherein people are respected as people, not because they belong to powerful or powerless groups, but because they are human beings, who have economic and psychological needs, who have natural rights to life and liberty.

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APPENDIX

Descartes (1596-1650) is considered a father of modern philosophy. His contribution ranges from analytic geometry to epistemology, including philosophy of mind. However, he is most known, positively and negatively, for discovering the existence of the "self," or the knowing ego. Descartes began by doubting anything that could be doubted. No matter how weak the reason for doubting might have been, he probed questions until he found logically indubitable ground for knowledge. He reasoned that everything he had accepted for so long was based upon sense perceptions which were untrustworthy; and he permitted the logical possibility that his mind could be controlled externally by a malevolent force. So, under these conditions, Descartes concluded that the only thing that could not be doubted was the "self." He asserted that "I think, therefore I am" was true, whether he was dreaming or not. The self could not be doubted without self contradiction. So, this logically indubitable selfhood became the so-called "Archimedean Point." The next step for Descartes was to establish the existence of the external world. Having discovered this selfhood and having confirmed that his self was his consciousness, Descartes knew he must account for how he knew he had a body, for it was possible that he could doubt that he had a body. He concluded that the mind had a content, and the content was "self", "identity", "substance", and "God". Descartes focused on the definition of substance. He defined substance as an "existent thing that requires nothing but itself in order to exist." Although his contribution to how humans should understand themselves is fundamental, Descartes has left some unanswered questions.

First, he divided body and mind and never reconciled the dualism. The mind and the body remained mutually exclusive of each other. So the question arises, how could the mental world, which does not occupy space and which is immeasurable, have any effect upon the physical world? This is the fundamental question he attempted to answer with a commonsense view known as naive realism, or "what you see is what you get," and which he later replaced with what is known as Cartesian realism, which basically says, "what you see is *not* what you get."

Spinoza (1632-1677) contributed to the philosophy of rationalism by adding the coherence theory of truth. The deductive mathematical method of Descartes inspired Spinoza to construct a philosophical system that is similar to geometrical principles. Based on the thesis that both human nature and the natural world are governed by scientific laws, Spinoza argued that all true ideas are ultimately interrelated in physical reality. Beginning with adequate ideas and definitions of axioms, Spinoza asserted, one could establish a flawless proof of his or her philosophical ideas. However, since Spinoza believed that God is infinite, he reasoned that the system of ideas must necessarily be infinite. Moreover, Spinoza argued that to understand the world one must view its logical structure as an integrated whole, and apprehend the logical relationship of one object to everything else and to the ultimate substance (or God). Like Descartes, Spinoza equated the "infinite substance" with God, but, unlike Descartes, he also equated it with nature. He argued that one can either consistently believe that only matter exists (be a materialist) or consistently believe that only mind exists (be an idealist). But, Spinoza asserted, Descartes' dualism is a confusion of perspective. According to Spinoza, a true

philosopher attempts to transcend the purely human perspective and view reality from the perspective of reality itself (or, objectively). From this perspective, Spinoza concluded that humans have no privileged position in the universe; that is, humans have no more nor less dignity than anything else in nature.

Leibniz (1647-1716) introduced a way of checking the consistency of beliefs. Leibniz' philosophy brought attention to the use of language in philosophy. Here the belief is that, since the best way of telling whether a belief is consistent or not consistent is by looking at language, then, by examining the way language is used, it is possible to tell whether an asserted belief is consistent or inconsistent. His approach to knowledge may be summarized in terms of three principles: the principle of identity, the principle of sufficient reason, and the principle of internal harmony.

Leibniz divided all propositions into two types--*analytic* propositions and *synthetic* propositions. In analytic propositions: (1) Beliefs are true by definition, that is, beliefs are true by virtue of the meaning of the words in the sentences used to communicate the beliefs. (2) Beliefs are necessarily true; their opposite assertions are self-contradictory. (3) Beliefs are known a priori; that is, the truth of the belief does not depend on the facts in the world.

On the other hand, synthetic propositions are characterized as follows:

(1) Synthetic beliefs are not true by definition of the words; rather, the truth or the falsity of the beliefs depend on facts in the world. (2) Beliefs are not necessarily true, but contingently true, for they would be false if facts in the world were different. (3) Truth

and falsity of beliefs are known by observations, that is, beliefs are dependent upon a posteriori knowledge.

According to Leibniz, if something exists, there must be a sufficient reason why it exists exactly as it does. If one does not accept this, Leibniz asserts, he or she is irrational. He argues that God, who is both rational and good, has established a maximum existence possible (or metaphysical perfection) and the maximum amount of activity possible (or moral perfection) for people to be actualized.

Empiricism is an epistemological view that holds that true knowledge is derived primarily from sense experience. For empiricists, all significant knowledge is a posteriori, and a priori knowledge is either nonexistent or tautological. Empiricism is usually associated with the seventeenth and eighteenth century British philosophers Locke, Berkeley and Hume. All of these philosophers denied the existence of innate ideas and conceived of the human mind as a "blank slate" at birth. Although they have this belief in common, their philosophies are different in many respects. For the purpose of making the historical links that are needed here, it will suffice to consider Locke and Hume.

John Locke (1632-1704) was the first of the classical British empiricists. In his essay, *Concerning Human Understanding*, he rejected Descartes' innate idea. He posed a rhetorical question "Let us ...suppose the mind to be...white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas: How comes it [the ideas] to be furnished? To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE." In the same essay Locke argues that the mind at birth is a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate, and is informed by sense experience.

David Hume (1711-1776) begins by considering the relation of ideas and matters of fact. This distinction is similar to Leibniz' analytic/synthetic distinction of propositions. However, Hume added a condition to the analytic proposition which made a great deal of difference to the rationalist approach of Leibniz. Hume agreed that there were such things as a priori necessary truths, but he differed from Leibniz in saying that all analytic truths were tautological, that is, verbal truths that provide no new information about the world, but only about the meaning of words. For example, Hume argued that asserting that "all sisters are siblings" is an analytic proposition, but that this tells one nothing about a particular sister that was not already known by calling her a sister in the first place. Moreover, other claims like " $3+2 = 5$ " are analytic, and so depend on the knowledge of "three," "plus," "two," and "five." Therefore, Hume concluded that only synthetic claims--"matters of fact"--can correctly describe reality. This kind of claim is necessarily based on observation, which placed Hume back into the empiricist position.