RAMJAS POLITICAL REVIEW
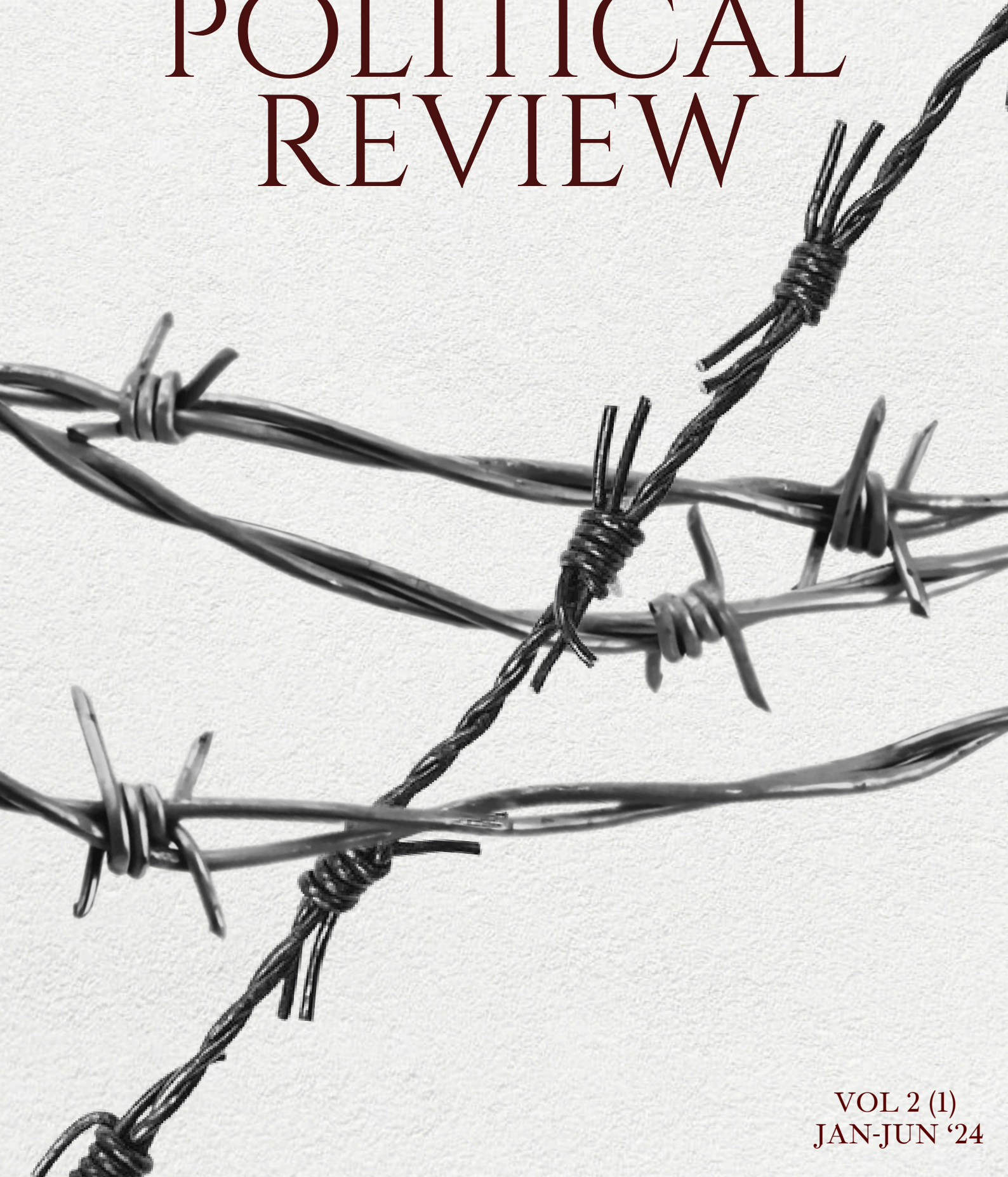
Syed Areesh Ahmad

I am immensely pleased to see the release of Vol 2(1) of the Ramjas Political Review. It is a matter of pride that now our journal has an ISSN number. This bears testimony to the high standard our editorial team meticulously seeks

to uphold. RPR may have had small beginnings three years ago, but now it is ready and primed to spread its wings and soar high. This glorious achievement has been made possible by the leadership of the Editor-in-Chief, Prem Ansh Sinha, who has worked tirelessly for the journal with unmatched passion and zeal. He has been ably assisted by our devoted and brilliant Editorial Board and the Creatives Team, whose members have done commendable work in ensuring that every contribution is put under the keen microscope of the editors, who only approve quality content worthy of publication in a properly peer-reviewed journal. Our faculty members of the Department of Political Science have been supportive and encouraging of this student-driven endeavour which seeks to establish new standards of excellence.

Wishing the journal more success in the years to come.

Mr Syed Areesh Ahmad
Associate Professor, Department of Political Science
Faculty Advisor
Ramjas Political Review

THE TEAM

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Prem Ansh Sinha

If Ramjas were an ocean; and its politics, a tempest, Professor Areesh would be its Prospero on a random island called Ramjas Political Review. For, to be able to cast magic without letting others get the slightest hints, Shakespeare would not disagree with this parallel, either. His wise acumen, fervid support, and unknown magic are reasons why a peer-reviewed academic journal can thrive in an undergraduate college.

When I became the Editor-in-Chief of Ramjas Political Review in my first-year, the first few months were about experimenting with everything I thought could be appropriate to arrive at our core objective, which is to create a strong foundational structure for a niche space for research and academia in the Department of Political Science. The amount of interest the students at the undergraduate-level, hold for academia, in India, is similar to the number of battles lost by Napoleon. With this, the whole responsibility comes down to the members of the organisation, to effectively function without the majority of our peers understanding what we even do; this cluelessness and emptiness about academia at the undegraduate-level is what we wish to address through our journal.

While we received over ninety submissions across several institutions, only ten could make it to the journal. This figure bears testament to the quality of research essays our Editorial Board got to edit. With only two to three students from each batch on the Editorial Board, Ramjas Political Review boasts the *crème de la crème* of the Department of Political Science. Had it not been for our entire team, it would have been seemingly tough for us to celebrate our tag as the only political science journal in the University of Delhi with an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).

I am sure the research essays published in this issue will add a small yet significant relevance to the pursuit of academia in political science for the authors and readers, alike.

Warmly (despite the heat waves),
Prem Ansh Sinha
Editor-in-Chief
Ramjas Political Review
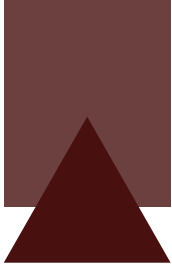
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About Us: Ramjas Political Review is an internationally authorised biannual peer-reviewed academic research journal, run by the Department of Political Science, Ramjas College.

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A CONVERSATION WITH THE FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY OF INDIA, MR MAHARAJAKRISHNA RASGOTRA

Interviewed by Prem Ansh Sinha (Editor-in-Chief, Ramjas Political Review)
Edited by Piyush Rangra (Associate Editor) & Arnav Sinha (Junior Editor)

An edited transcript of a candid conversation, as taken on August 14th, 2024 at the residence of Shri Maharajakrishna Rasgotra-ji is as follows:

PS (Abbreviation for Prem Ansh Sinha): Mr Rasgotra, in your book *A Life in Diplomacy*, you mention that figures like KM Panikkar, Pandit Nehru, and VK Krishna Menon had certain expectations for India's future. Tomorrow, we celebrate the 78th Independence Day. Do you believe those expectations have been fulfilled? Are we on the right track, or would they be disappointed with the current state of the nation? What is your view?

MR (Abbreviation for Maharajakrishna Rasgotra): How old are you?

PS: I am twenty, Sir.

MR: You were not born during that period (laughs), so you would not know what India was like in 1947. I am a hundred-year-old now, but at the time of independence, I was around twenty-four. I spent my early childhood in very difficult times. For instance, The Bengal Famine killed two-three million people, and the government at the time showed no concern. Poverty was rampant, education was extremely limited, and there were very few universities. Compare that to today — there are numerous universities, many of them very good. In my view, the country has progressed significantly since 1947, especially in areas like science, space exploration, and innovation. Maybe you are not completely satisfied, and that is good — it motivates you to push the government for betterment. But we have come a long way and should acknowledge that.

PS: If Pandit Nehru were to see India today, do you think he would be pleased?

MR: Anyone familiar with India in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s should be happy with its progress today. Of course, there is still a lot to be done, but that is often a matter of resources. We are not a rich country yet; we do not have the funds to do everything we want. I once asked Pandit Nehru a similar question. I accompanied him to New York for a UN meeting, and before we left, he had attended the inauguration of television in India. I knew him very well and I would talk freely with him. So, I foolishly taunted him, "I have

heard the news that you have just inaugurated a television, the Nigerian Prime Minister was speaking at the UN forum the previous day and he told us that they are now using television for mass education. So, have you thought about where Nigeria is and where were we? This comparison has disturbed me." He (Pandit Nehru) was quiet and pensive for half a minute or so and then said, "Maybe, you are right. But, I have got many things to do and I do not have all the resources that I need. So what I am doing is laying the foundation of every endeavour on which you have to build." A very honest answer in my opinion. To sum it all up, considering where the foreign occupiers left this country and observing the India of today, I think we have made very solid progress and on this basis, India will grow much faster in the future. It will lead in the fields of science and technology.

PS: Sir, do you not think we are still lagging in scholarship in the fields of humanities and social sciences, where we have not developed any theory post-independence that could level Kautilya's *Arthashastra?*

MR: I understand your concern. But compare India to Pakistan or Indonesia today. We started at the same time, and we are far ahead of both.

PS: But when we compare India with China, the story is different.

MR: Yes, we do not have communism. We do not have dictators here. So, the difference is in the process. How many million Chinese did Mao kill? Do you remember the figure? This happened around fifteen years ago, when millions were starved to death in China. So, one way of progressing is to carry everybody and educate them, and the other way is to set aside the people who have risen to a certain level, and kill the rest. We are India. We have a long civilisational history that places value in human life and believes in carrying everybody forward together. I am amazed by how education has spread at all levels in this country and we are being appreciated for the same in the USA which used to be the leading country. But we should not be complacent and continue to push forward.

PS: In your book, you mention that your wife, Mrs Kadambari, requested the President of the United States to act on the killings in East Bengal during the 1970s, hoping that it would enable the ten million refugees to go back home. Do you see a similar situation developing in Bangladesh today, and do you not think a war is inevitable, as some scholars suggest?

MR: Bangladesh's political scene is noisy, but the country is stable. People argue, but that is democracy — always unsatisfied, always demanding more. This is a virtue of the system Gandhi-ji gave us, which was later nurtured by Nehru and his colleagues. God has given us troublesome neighbours, but no Indian prime minister has ever fled the country, unlike the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, some days ago. It is a reminder of our resilience, even during

the Emergency, no leader fled India. While I was the Ambassador to France, George Fernandes came for a visit, and I invited him over for a dinner. He said that "we would finish this lady"; lady being Indira Gandhi. To which, I responded, "She might finish you." But later on, I told him that she would not, as I knew her — her phraseology and thought process was in sync with democracy thanks to the political education injected into her by her father.

PS: Mrs Indira Gandhi, in an interview right after the Emergency, justified it by saying that foreign powers had been trying to interfere in India's internal politics. How true do you think that was?

MR: She was giving a political answer to justify her actions. America did try to interfere, but did not cut much ice since Indian politicians are thoroughly Indian. So, no foreign power has been able to interfere in the internal politics of India as has happened in our neighbourhood.

PS: How was your experience of the Partition of India? I have heard many stories from my teachers during my time in Punjab. Did you feel fear, or did you hold on to hope?

MR: Oh! It was a terrible experience. It was a terrible experience. My entire family, except me, was in Pakistan. My parents were in Shakargarh near Jammu, and my brothers were in Multan running their businesses. They had to flee, walking for one day and one night along the Beas to reach Jammu. Although no one in my family was harmed, our businesses were taken over by our Muslim neighbours. At the time, I was a professor in Ludhiana and wrote to Nehru about my family's situation. Despite his many responsibilities, he arranged for their evacuation from Multan by air. Nehru had a big heart.

PS: Sir, this is a contemporary political debate and might not have any relevance for the current times, but given you have had the experience of working with them and hearing about them — do you think Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel would have made a better prime minister than Pandit Nehru?

MR: Gandhi-ji had declared that Nehru would be the Prime Minister of India, and everyone followed suit. Sardar Patel might have been a better choice, but he died just three years after independence. Nehru provided stability, and Patel made his invaluable contribution by integrating the princely states. Had Patel lived longer, perhaps there would have been some friction between him and Nehru.

PS: Sir, you wrote in your book that Sri Satya Sai Baba had told you that when you are confronted with a difficult problem, do what you think is right and do it fearlessly as a duty

— that has to be done in the spirit of service. How do you abide by this in case of a dilemma?

MR: This advice was given to me by a saint. I have always had a temperament that allowed me to follow that advice. It has been a part of my mindset throughout my life.

PS: But how did you stay positive and receptive when you disagreed with a prime minister or your seniors on a policy issue, especially when you believed you were right?

MR: I am not a believer of this 'would have been' philosophy. As an after-thought, if you are wiser, you keep quiet and if you are foolish then you would say, "this could have been better" and make an enemy for yourself. But, if you can argue and change someone's thought process then do go about the same. When I was the Foreign Secretary of India, I had daily discussions with Indira Gandhi on various issues. Sometimes she was right, and sometimes I was, but there was a mutual respect and trust, which allowed open dialogue. All prime ministers are receptive to discussion and disagreements with their bureaucrats including the current Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, who has been a chief minister as well for ten years and does listen to advice from his bureaucrats.

PS: Sir, in your book you talk about Nepal's Durand Syndrome where in 1890, after a three-year stint in Kathmandu — the British Resident Major EL Durand reported to the then Foreign Secretary HM Durand in Delhi that "despite the fact of liberality of British-Indian government, the settled policy of the *durbar* is to play-off China against us and to make use of pretended subordination to that power as a safeguard against the spread of our influence over this country." Do you not think it is still prevalent? And how do you think cordial relations can be reached with Nepal? Recently, they have updated their currency notes with the Indian territories of Lipulekh and Kalapani, how do we go about such issues?

MR: Talking things out is the only way forward. It has to be done over and over again. Let Nepal find out that they have made the wrong choice and allow them the autonomy to make such choices. As far as the question of territories is concerned, they are small and have not been officially handed over by us. A resolution will only come through dialogue.

PS: There was this idea of Indian diplomacy among the Western diplomats that our diplomatic parleys were argumentative, spiritually pretentious, and hypocritical. Is it still the case?

MR: Americans used to say that "you Indians are too argumentative". We were argumentative since we had arguments to give. We used to laugh and talk it out. You see, bilateral interactions are about confrontation, understanding the opponent's point of view,

and agreeing that war is difficult. Diplomacy is about standoffs, stalemates, and interactions and that is the case.

PS: Sir, I would now like to ask you about China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which has tried to target India's neighbours and trap nations in China's debt diplomacy. One of the critical aspects in this regard is the military base developed by China in Djibouti and the failure of the Assumption Island Project taken up by India in Seychelles. Furthermore, why do you say in your book that the One Belt One Road Initiative is seemingly innocent?

MR: As far as the military base built by China in Djibouti is concerned, it is of not much importance and India is being too sensitive about Chinese plans. We have a small but skilled Navy which can take care of the same. I have my doubts concerning the Belt and Road Initiative, which is about creating Chinese influence over the Indian Ocean region. India is the 'Big Brother' in the neighbourhood and therefore suffers from the Big Brother Syndrome. As far as the Seychelles question is concerned, each country has its interest to take care of and our interest lies in making sure that their interests are not in conflict with ours. We have to make sure that we maintain friendly relations with such nations where our interest lies. We have done this job fairly in my opinion and face a challenge from China only because Pakistan is going down the drain.

PS: Sir, Winston Churchill had this proud view about the British Civil Service and its ethos. Does the British Civil Service act in the same way as it used to do? To what extent, did we inherit those post-independence?

MR: The British have been reduced to their small islands and have lost weight and influence which they used to have at one point in time across the globe. However, they still lead in higher education and the world's two oldest universities — Oxford and Cambridge are there. But they suffer from a 'do we matter now?' problem and are trying to exert power that they do not have, just like India did in the case of Sri Lanka by sending its troops which was a serious mistake. Indira Gandhi's message to Rajiv Gandhi that was delivered by me to him was to 'Never enter Sri Lanka'. If we give India fifty years, it will indeed become a great power. But power should always be contained and not thrown around your neighbourhood or abroad as the USA did in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Containing your power is always enough to deter your enemies.

PS: How do you think India should respond to the turmoil in Bangladesh since Sheikh Hasina has also taken refuge in India?

MR: India should make sure to have cordial relations with the new regime. Muhammad Yunus is a good person in my opinion, and shall improve Bangladesh. Border management is very poor in India and needs to be voiced out by the youth as there has been an invasion

of illegal immigrants in Assam and West Bengal that have become vote-banks for select political parties, but nobody is going to trespass India in my opinion. India should also ensure that Sheikh Hasina engages in no mischief against Bangladesh from India, where she has been given refuge on humanitarian grounds.

PS: Rasgotra-ji, if you were to give any suggestion to any student interested in foreign services about something you think you learnt late, which they should be aware of from the very beginning, what would that be?

MR: Nothing as such. The advantage I had was that I became a part of the services when the country was born but we were fast learners and our diplomats could take on anyone at the time.

PS: Do you think there should be a separate exam for foreign services?

MR: There is a common exam for all services but I think they check for the subjects taken by you before allocating any service. In my case, since I had opted for international relations, I was asked in my interview about how the Indian foreign policy is made. To this, I replied, "Firstly, Indian foreign policy is made by Jawaharlal Nehru and secondly, foreign policy is drafted based on our interests vis-à-vis other countries." I wish we had succeeded in having a more diversified foreign policy as we had put all our eggs in the Moscow basket. When I became the Foreign Secretary of India, I was made aware by the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister's Advisor at that time that India had only one friend and was very happy with that friend. In my first meeting with the Prime Minister, I reiterated my concerns about being friends with only Moscow and called for her to develop good ties with the USA as making an enemy of them would incur harm on India. I also asked the Prime Minister to ask her advisors what would happen if India got annoyed with Russia, what would Russia do? To which the Prime Minister responded, "That is why you have been called, to make them all think."

Piyush Rangra (Associate Editor): Sir, how do you think Nehru's foreign policy of non-alignment stays relevant to date with the coinage of a fresh term - 'multi-alignment' for the same, and why should we continue with it and not adopt a much more realist foreign policy view as the USA?

MR: Nehru's idea was relevant at a time when the world was sharply divided. Despite not joining any of the two blocs, we were always leaning towards the side of Russia. We did come out strongly against the West and were tagged as 'Russian stooges', but we took a sharp stance against Russia in the case of their intervention in Afghanistan. I remember we were in Moscow where Mrs Gandhi, Principal Secretary Alexander, and I met with Brezhnev and his advisors. In the discussions that took place, Brezhnev kept saying that he

was reluctant to go into Afghanistan and initially had sent about 10,000 troops and now, there were 1,10,000 troops and he did not know what they were doing there. He wanted to know the way out. Brezhnev repeated the same question twice to Indira Gandhi to which she ultimately replied that 'the way out is the way in'. The room grew quiet and later on, the Prime Minister insisted that I stay in Russia and explain what she meant to the Soviets. Ultimately, I explained to them that they should leave the way they came in, and that is the only wise thing they can do as this is the region from which each foreign power had to flee, declare victory and retreat. I gave the same argument to the Americans during Vietnam. To sum this up with an aphorism — so many unwise people rule the world.

PS: How do you think we should be going about the neighbourhood problem and what are your suggestions to future policy-makers and budding diplomats for the same?

MR: When I was the Foreign Secretary of India, neighbours were stable. As such most of our neighbours are smaller than us which makes them inconsequential in my opinion. However, China is our biggest neighbour, and the biggest challenge can only be worked out through talks on borders and other issues of contention. China had already acquired the territory it wanted from India during the 1962 war. These areas in my opinion were never in Indian control historically and it was only Nehru's wisdom that he tried to protect those territories and deployed troops over there. We have created noise on this incursion to get attention against Chinese advances. The hard truth about the 1962 debacle should be accepted as these areas were never under proper administration because the Britishers ruled over India very poorly.

PS: Rasgotra-ji, how did you find the peace of mind to write poetry while you were in the foreign services?

MR: When I was struck by a thought, inspiration, and figurative imagination — I have written a lot but published very few poems because most of them make up my personal collection which I do not want to publish.

PS: Sir, you have your origins in today's Pakistan. With this pace, do you think Pakistan will still exist after fifty years? What do you think is the future of both the countries — India and Pakistan?

MR: Pakistan is messing things up well and properly. It was a reasonable chunk of British India and the richest part of British India agriculturally and had a solid industrial base which has now been destroyed. Islamic conquerors are very good at destruction and running destructive campaigns. Is there any rich and progressive Islamic-state? Saudi Arabia and UAE are rich but certainly not progressive as they live with mediaeval mindsets. Gods have been fairly unjust to India as it has not been allocated any resources. India in the future

will get out of the poverty trap. Narendra Modi is trying to push the country out of this malaise. India will indeed become a developed country by 2075, and become more progressive and prosperous than China at that point. As I have said earlier, we have seen substantial progress since our independence and the pace of the growth is set to increase now. India suffers from a conservative mindset in the government's human resources, also called the *Babu* mindset. In my opinion, there is a *Babu* mind and a Nehru mind where the former is conservative and the latter is progressive. We require dynamism within these two mindsets to push India in the right direction.

PS: Rasgotra-ji, I am still not satisfied with your response on how to solve the neighbourhood problem. You said that they will taunt us, punch us, and we have to be absorptive towards this behaviour. What is the breaking point?

MR: We need not say aggressive things but we should make them feel guilty. Right from the beginning, Nehru focussed a lot on the development of Nepal and provided them with ample amounts of funds. Now, they are playing the politics of India versus China. If I were the Prime Minister of India today, I would let them get swayed by China to get more funds which over the long run will automatically make them balance relations with India.

PS: Sir, how do you make the right decision when you are in a position of power?

MR: If you are sitting in a powerful post, you can consult several people and you should do that. You are never alone in policy-making arenas whether public or private. You are surrounded by people who have ideas, who have jealousy, and who may want to mislead you as well. You need to be a capable judge of people and personalities, a skill that you can learn through debates, discussions, and dialogues. Your teachers are your best guides.

PS: Rasgotra-ji, eight years after the release of your book, do you think you might wish to add more to it or is it a complete book for you?

MR: No. It is complete in my opinion and does not require any addition, as nothing major has happened or developed in India since 2016, which makes me inclined to not add anything to this book in the form of an appendix or a hundred-page book right now.

Ends.

Featured Essays

THE ROLE OF CONSCIENCE, LIBERTY, AND RIGHT IN POLITICAL OBLIGATION

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Abstract

'When does loyalty to the state give way to the demands of conscience?' This essay tackles this question by exploring the tension between political obligation and moral duty, guided by the ideas of Judith Shklar, Isaiah Berlin, and MQ Sibley. It examines how government betrayal can erode citizens' loyalty, particularly for those exiled by injustice. By reinterpreting Berlin's concepts of liberty through Shklar's lens, it shows how rights and conscience intersect to challenge the state's authority. Using the abolitionist movement in the United States (US) as a case study, it argues that when rights are violated, conscience compels disobedience, reshaping the boundaries of political obligation.

Keywords: Obligation, Loyalty, Disobedience, Conscience, Ethics of Politics

Introduction

In a world where political obligation and moral duty often collide, Shklar's inquiry strikes at the heart of a perennial dilemma: when does obligation as well as loyalty to the state end, and obligation to conscience begin? In this essay, *first*, I will elaborate on Shklar's arguments to lay a foundation for the essay. *Second*, I will explore what really causes the elimination of obligation and loyalty when the government "betrays" its citizens. Drawing upon Shklar and Berlin's insights, I will analyse the intersections of conscience, liberty, and rights. *Third*, using Sibley's arguments, I will elaborate on what constitutes disobedience on the ground of conscience and what its limits are. Additionally, I will examine Shklar's example of abolitionism in the United States, using Sibley's principles, to argue that there is more to disobedience and its ways of doing.

What Does Shklar Mean?

Judith Shklar was a prominent political theorist who fled Europe in her childhood, to escape persecution as a Jew and settled in the United States. As a result of her exile from her home country, her work focused on themes of injustice, political obligation, and the moral dimensions of political life. Her work, ranging from books, articles, and lectures on ethics and politics, has left a lasting impact on political theory. The main question that Shklar poses

in her work – *Obligation, Loyalty, and Exile*, is whether one still has the obligation and, or, loyalty if the government betrays them. To answer this, she delves into her nuanced distinctions between these concepts and explores how they manifest, particularly in the context of exiles.

Shklar (1993, p. 183) delineates political obligation as a rational, rule-governed conduct demanded by public agencies. She contrasts this with loyalty, which is the affective and emotional attachment to social groups, membership to which is not necessarily voluntary (Shklar, 1993, p. 184). For instance, patriotism to one's country, often involuntary, embodies loyalty, while political obligation stems from rational adherence to governmental demands. She recognises that both of them invite conflict but also sustain each other (Shklar, 1993, p. 186). The former is inevitable as she hints towards multiple loyalties and obligations existing simultaneously. The latter is possible when state and nationality coincide (Shklar, 1993, p. 187), which means part of one's loyalties, as that to one's country, is not in conflict with their political obligation to the government.

Shklar then delves into the complex scenario of exiles, shedding light on their relationship with obligation and loyalty to the state. An exile is of two kinds — involuntarily leaving their country due to the threat of harm to themselves and their family (an involuntary émigré) (Shklar, 1993, p. 187), and being surrounded by so much injustice within the boundaries of the nation that their loyalty and obligation are eroded (internal exiles) (Shklar, 1993, p. 195). She then focuses on internal exiles and argues that their ground for disobedience is "pure conscience" (Shklar, 1993, p. 194). Hence, drawing upon historical examples, Shklar (1993, pp. 188-193) illustrates how "injustice" by the government undermines citizens' sense of obligation and erodes their loyalty. While Shklar convincingly argues for the erosion of obligation and loyalty in the face of governmental injustice, further exploration is warranted into the exact understanding of injustice and conscience.

Liberty, Rights, and Conscience

In her insightful lecture at Berkeley, Shklar (2019) extended her argument of conscience as being intricately connected to the question of liberty. In this section, I will *first* lay down what Berlin's conception of negative and positive liberties was and point out how Shklar differs in her understanding of liberty, as connected to rights. *Second*, I will bring to the fore how rights, in the US, are connected to conscience and liberty, to *finally* show that injustice, by being denied rights, leads to diminishing liberty, and thus, invokes conscience.

Isaiah Berlin, in his work – *Four Essays on Liberty* – distinguishes between negative and positive liberty while equating liberty to freedom and separating it from rights, equality, and justice. Negative liberty, which he prefers, entails the absence of interference by others, allowing individuals to act without constraint (Berlin, 2002, p. 169). Positive liberty, in contrast, involves self-mastery and self-autonomy (Berlin, 2002, p. 178). It is the superiority

of higher rationality over the lower impulses of an individual (Berlin, 2002, p. 178). He warns against giving primacy to positive liberty as he believes it to be an easy and often employed tool for coercion and authoritarianism (Berlin, 2002, p. 180). This is because the attempts to maximise positive liberty involve a level of self-development (Berlin, 2002, p. 181). But this process can be and has been politicised to misguide people. For example, being told that "education" is required for self-development is actually just the way through which the state tells you what to think "freely".

Berlin's argument that politics is about choosing hints towards his acknowledgement of pluralism and conflicting values in society. Shklar (2019, p. 9) initially agrees with it but she extends it by saying that while choosing, we are exercising our conscience (Shklar, 2019, p. 9). Thus, she appears to make a case for a higher self in politics that guides one's decisions regarding the exercise of what Berlin calls negative liberty. It seems that she attempts to reconcile both liberties with the connecting link being conscience. She asserts that the opportunity to participate in politics should be considered a part of liberty as it involves not just following reasons by overcoming base instincts, i.e., positive liberty, but also having an "open door" to engage in the political process, i.e., negative liberty (Shklar, 2019, p. 10).

While she acknowledges the importance of negative liberty, she also concludes that if negative liberty is given primacy, it might result in complete political "immobility", where any change could greatly increase the liberty of some while diminishing that of others (Shklar, 2019, p. 10). Absolute negative liberty, which is complete freedom from external interference, is neither feasible nor sustainable. Without regulation, it would concentrate power and freedom in the hands of a few, depriving the majority of their liberties. Isaiah Berlin acknowledged this issue, arguing that unchecked negative liberty could ultimately undermine the freedom it aims to protect by allowing a few to dominate the many (Berlin, 2002, p. 173). This is why Shklar's conception of liberty helps to focus on positive liberty while not disregarding negative liberty.

Shklar's critique gains profound significance when examining the historical injustices within the US, particularly slavery. Within this context, slave owners enjoyed negative liberty, while slaves were deprived of both negative and positive liberty (Shklar, 2019, p. 12). The systemic denial of liberty to slaves and the tendency to employ it in other facets of life underscores the inherent flaw in the concept of absolute liberty, compelling the necessity for government intervention to rectify this fundamental imbalance. It was only through a government-led expansion of rights for slaves that liberty could be redistributed to all members of society (Shklar, 2019, p. 12).

This highlights that obstacles to the pursuit of liberty are not confined solely to external factors but also include internal barriers, such as acting in contradiction to one's conscience. Lincoln's understanding of freedom is particularly illuminating here. For him, the distinction between external and internal obstacles to liberty is blurred; whether one is enslaved to a master or to one's own passions is inconsequential (Shklar, 2019, p. 13).

Similarly, the abolitionists encountered a unique obstacle to their liberty, one neither external nor rooted in personal desires. Rather, it was the moral dilemma they faced every time they wore a cotton shirt, knowing it was produced through the labour of enslaved individuals (Shklar, 1993, p. 195). This ethical conflict stemmed from the denial of negative liberty to slaves, which in turn restricted the positive liberty of non-slaves even though they enjoyed negative liberty, as it did not allow them to move to higher rationality. Their conscience compelled them to reject complacency in the face of such evil, yet they were unable to fully realise their liberty due to the government's complicity in perpetuating injustice (Shklar, 2019, p. 11). Consequently, the abolitionists felt compelled to distance themselves from a government that upheld slavery by refusing to recognise their obligations (Shklar, 2019, p. 194).

Remarkably, this illustrates that conscience can be invoked, as seen with the abolitionists when the liberty of not only oneself but also others is under threat. According to Shklar (2019, p. 14), rights serve both as a safeguard of negative liberty and as means of redress against those who would oppress oneself or others. It necessitates proactive measures, primarily from the government, to restrain oppressors and safeguard the liberties of its citizens (Shklar, 2019, p. 14). Hence, the government holds an obligation to the citizens to uphold their liberty through the provision of rights. When it fails to fulfil this obligation, our conscience compels us to take action.

Thus, the injustice to which Shklar alludes refers to instances where governmental actions diverge so drastically from or blatantly disregard individual conscience that they result in the denial of liberty through the violation of rights. Then, conscience becomes a legitimate basis for disobedience. However, Shklar (1993, p. 195) acknowledges that such instances of disobedience, though rare, may be perceived as self-serving, potentially rendering them illegitimate. It must be noted that according to Shklar, such events of disobedience on the grounds of conscience are rare – something that she did not provide clarity on. In the subsequent section, I will explore how conscience can serve as a legitimate rationale for both obedience and disobedience to the law or government.

How Conscience Becomes a Ground

In this section, I will *first* answer what a possible explanation for conscience is. *Second*, I will note how disobedience can be justified on the grounds of conscience and the principles to be followed in doing so. *Finally*, I will look at the difference between revolution and civil disobedience using Shklar's example of Thoreau.

Sibley (1970, p. 559) argues that the conscience of each individual develops through the application of moral objective propositions to the particular circumstances and personalities of each. So, while there does exist a moral order that exists independent of a person's or group's judgement, the vast individual differences form a barrier to the former's application.

It is important to note that Sibley (1970, p. 567) places great importance on groups, as he opines that one's existence and personality are made possible by them, imposing a duty towards those groups. Shklar would call this duty loyalty. But then, Sibley (1970, p. 567) argues that if the law is an expression of that group, then one also has a duty to the law, which Shklar would recognise as an obligation. This means that loyalty and obligation coincide when one is obligated to the laws of the same and only the group one is a part of. But he is quick to note that one owes an absolute obligation to one's conscience, and only a limited obligation to groups and their laws (Sibley, 1970, p. 568); a hierarchy that also seems present in Shklar's understanding. Hence, while groups play a crucial role in shaping our conscience, they do not demand our obligation while violating our conscience.

It also appears that Sibley aligns with Berlin's pluralism and associated conflicts with respect to the politics of choice. He agrees that we live in a world of multiple associations of which the state is only one, which requires a choice on our part (Sibley, 1970, p. 568). Here, he echoes Shklar's view on conscience's role. He says that we must weigh the claims of those institutions against i) one another, and ii) our own conscience (Sibley, 1970, p. 569). But is this to say that the state and other institutions of associations exist on the same, or at least similar level, i.e., does the obligation to all of them have the same level of priority? It must be remembered that though states require a choice on our part for association, the sanction in the event of disobedience puts it apart from other forms of institutions of association.

Sibley (1970, p. 562) argues that there will always be a discrepancy between what the law demands and what one's conscience might hold. He admits that while the law can aspire to be just, it is, at best, a "clumsy instrument" that stands unable to do justice to all the unique personalities present in society (Sibley, 1970, p. 562). The tension becomes apparent when one notices the three requirements he proposes for a good law, from a non-positivist understanding — it must be the result of a system that is morally unobjectionable, it must be made according to the procedures of that system, and it must not violate what the individual regards as basic moral principles (Sibley, 1970, p. 573). It is the last requirement that seems to provide ground for evoking conscience for disobedience.

Moving from this understanding of an order, where do we draw the line with respect to violations of human righteousness, making it legitimate to disobey? Sibley (1970, p. 577), like Shklar, acknowledges that because the law demands obligation, there is an obligation on the part of the government as well. They both agree that if there is a breach on the part of the government, then the obligation of the citizens is reduced. In this case, they are justified in disobeying the law, albeit publicly and non-violently, with the intent to benefit the community (Sibley, 1970, p. 575).

Further, what happens when it is not a law that one is opposed to but the system itself? Sibley (1970, p. 582) recognises this situation by creating a distinction between civil disobedience and revolution. The former involves a general confidence that the system can be improved (Sibley, 1970, p. 582). Disobedience seems limited to law, not the system, as the

said law must have passed the first two requirements. But in the latter case, there is a belief that the system at its core is morally questionable and runs outrageously counter to the conceptions of elementary righteousness (Sibley, 1970, p. 583). Thus, it has failed all three requirements of a good law. Then, there is no requirement to maintain lawfulness and non-violence on the part of those disobeying (Sibley, 1970, p. 584). An important question that arises now is whether disobedience and revolution need to be collective or can be individual as well.

I think Shklar's example of Thoreau and other abolitionists fits Sibley's understanding of revolution and offers an opportunity to answer the question. Thoreau was not in opposition to a law or specific provisions in the Constitution as he felt that it was entirely, at its core, a "slave document" (Shklar, 1993, p. 194). This means that to him, all the three requirements proposed by Sibley had failed. But he could neither join most of his fellow abolitionists as he was not religious like them nor join the black slaves (Shklar, 1993, p. 195). He was absolutely alone, only with his conscience to depend upon. Interestingly, although Sibley recognises the possibility of using violence during a revolution, Thoreau chose not to engage in the same. Therefore, a revolution or disobedience need not be collective and involve violence. It is essentially a way to mark your disagreement with the government by disobeying its laws on the grounds of your conscience.

Conclusion

In this essay, I explored the dynamic interplay between conscience, liberty, and political obligation through the lenses of three prominent political theorists. Shklar's analysis reveals how betrayal by the state can undermine both political obligation and emotional loyalty, especially for exiles facing systemic injustice. Her work illustrates the conflict between rational duties to the state and personal moral convictions, particularly when governmental actions violate fundamental rights.

Berlin's concepts of negative and positive liberty provide a brilliant framework for understanding Shklar's view on conscience and its role in upholding liberty. Shklar argues that true liberty is unattainable if one's conscience is compromised by systemic injustice, as demonstrated by historical examples such as American abolitionism. The role of conscience in driving civil disobedience is further elucidated through Sibley's distinction between civil disobedience and revolution, highlighting how individuals respond to unjust laws and systems.

While in this essay, my analysis was limited to the historical event of the Abolition movement, future research could explore how modern movements and individuals navigate these tensions and how different cultural contexts influence the application of conscience in political resistance. This will provide a deeper understanding of the profound ideas of Shklar

in contemporary times, which have opened the floor for much discourse over the years in political ethics, loyalty, and obligation.

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Analysing Political Will in Public Policy: A Feminist Comparative Analysis of Manazir's Public Policy Framework through Devaki Jain's Lens

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Abstract

The larger understanding of political will is an established theoretical work in political science, and has seen recent integration into the public policy theoretical frameworks, worth mentioning is Dr Manazir's article, 'Reimagining Public Policy Formulation and Analysis: A Comprehensive Theoretical Framework for Public Policy.' In this review article of his work, the political will of governing elites, as postulated by Dr Manazir, is revisited and critically analysed by applying a feminist lens drawn from Dr Devaki Jain's seminal work, 'To Be or Not to Be: Problems in Locating Women in Public Policy.'

While Manazir's framework adeptly critiques traditional policy cycles and emphasises political will's role in policy disruption and non-linear development, this analysis highlights the gendered implications of such an approach, which he has not touched upon. By juxtaposing Manazir's focus on elite-driven political will with Jain's critique of women's marginalisation in public policy, this review reveals the gaps in addressing gender equity in the formulation and implementation of public policies caused and practised due to male dominance, and predominance as governing elites.

This review from a feminist lens underscores the necessity for public policy frameworks to account for the diverse experiences and contributions of women, particularly in understanding how the political willingness of political elites can perpetuate or challenge systemic gender biases in policy formulation, implementation, and analysis, and why women participation in the process is important.

Keywords: Public Policy, Political Will, Gender Mainstreaming, Policy Formulation, Analysis.

Introduction

The research article 'Reimagining Public Policy Formulation and Analysis: A Comprehensive Theoretical Framework for Public Policy' by Dr Sharique Hassan Manazir, addresses the complexity of public policymaking by revisiting existing frameworks and proposing enhancements to capture the nuances of political and social dynamics.

The article begins with exposing the larger understanding of policy science, and how public policy as an academic field has evolved since the end of the Second World War with the work of esteemed scholars like Harold Lasswell. The research paper then analyses and critiques traditional policy cycle theories for ignoring the larger understanding of political willingness, and the non-linear nature of the policy-making process which is rarely discussed in the conventional policy theories. The paper argues that the frameworks, including Harold Lasswell's Stage (Heuristic) Model, should not be viewed in isolation or as a universal solution. Moreover, one should incorporate the intricate interplay of political elites and their larger political will in shaping the policy process, formulation, and implementation. It emphasises the need for more theories in policy science that account for real-time data analysis and populist tendencies in governance. The article draws on historical and contemporary examples, such as Kautilya's counsel to Chandragupta and modern big data techniques, to illustrate how policy formulation and analysis can be more responsive to current challenges.

The proposed public policy framework by the author seeks to integrate various stages of the policy cycle – problem identification, policy formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation – while acknowledging the fluid and contested nature of policymaking in practice (Manazir, 2023).

Content Analysis

The author encourages the readers to understand the contemporary ontology of the policy formulation process and to recognise political willingness as a critical factor in shaping policy making. According to his proposed public policy framework, political willingness is crucial for the successful formulation, adoption, and implementation of policies — introducing non-linearity into the process. While the research does not delve deeply into the broader theoretical concepts of political elites and willingness, it is academically robust in its discussion of the historical context and the evolution of the policy process. Political willingness can be defined as the commitment and readiness of the political actors — such as elected officials, government leaders, and policymakers — to prioritise and implement specific policy initiatives, which is important at various stages of policy formulation; for instance, while prioritising policy agenda, during policy development of frameworks and strategies, and finally on resource allocation and adequate distribution of funding (Mujkić, 2015).

The political will of elites significantly affects the formulation and implementation of most policy-making processes. For instance, if the political elites possess a strong will to promote gender equality, they are more likely to introduce and support policies that address gender disparities. On the contrary, if the political willingness is male-dominated and inherently less inclusive, the end policy results are exclusionary.

The understanding of political elites and their impact on policy outcomes has been extensively explored through 'Elite Theory', pioneered by scholars such as Gaetano Mosca. According to Elite Theory, a small group of elites holds significant power and influence over political and social decisions. These elites shape policy outcomes based on their interests and priorities (O'Leary, 1987; Martinelli, 2009; UK, 2024). The theory posits that society is divided into a small ruling elite and a larger, less influential mass. The 'ruling elites' or the 'political elites' wield power in shaping public policy and governance (Delican, 2024).

Analysing the theories above, we conclude the impact of political elites on policy outcomes and policy issues based on the interests of political elites, which can be biassed and favoured according to their respective interests. Such prioritisation can not only affect public resources but can also determine the direction and content of certain policies. Furthermore, most of the time, political elites build coalitions and alliances to support their policy agendas. They also tend to shape public opinion and influence social issues. Thus, understanding the dynamics of political will and elite theory, from the review of Dr Manazir, not only helps to analyse public policy formulation and its implementation but also draws a larger picture of policy outcomes and the crucial role played in shaping certain policies for people at large.

Incorporating such insights in a framework can be valuable as well as impactful for a policymaker. The proposed framework by Dr Manazir, where political willingness takes centre stage across the public policy formulation cycle, bringing the process of non-linearity, can be well applied to understand social, political, economic, and demographic non-linearity in the policy process (Manazir, 2023). It shows how some inclusive policies are suddenly shelved, despite social outcry and how some exclusionary and regressive policies are implemented despite staunch opposition from the masses. Such a framework can also be used to understand gender dystopia and exclusion not only in policymaking as an avenue, but in policy outcomes that are inherently male-dominated, biassed, and exclusionary.

Comparative Analysis Through Feminist Lens

India's Public Policy landscape is characterised by its diverse, complex, and evolving nature. India not only faces significant socio-economic disparities but has a large, fragmented political landscape, with multiple political parties and interest groups. Dr Manazir's public policy framework emphasises political willingness in continuous tandem with social inclusion and stakeholder engagement ensuring that marginalised communities have a meaningful voice in the policy process.

Over here, the work 'To be or not to be: Problems in Locating Women in Public Policy' by Dr Devaki Jain is worth mentioning. Her work focuses on the challenges of integrating women's perspectives into public policy. Dr Jain argues how women have been systematically excluded from public policy formulation and implementation by tracing history and that the exclusion has been rooted in patriarchal societal structures for ages. The lack of female perspectives in policymaking leads to the creation of policies that fail to address the specific needs and issues faced by women. In her work, she has highlighted 'paradoxes' that remain for women in governance at the local level and development at the global level because most of the time, policies are decided and finalised in silos without involving women as an important stakeholder in the process, often leading to unintended consequences. She has shown how policies that do not include women's input often lead to unintended negative consequences for women, and uses case studies from the districts of Karnataka to illustrate the practical implications of gender-blind policymaking. She further argues that "it is necessary to recast the development framework, to come out with a treatise, a theoretically stand-alone development model which satisfies the external world changes and yet women's quest." The author recommends several strategies for better inclusion of women in policy formulation. These include increasing female participation and representation in political and policy-making bodies, using gender-disaggregated data, and promoting gender mainstreaming in all policy areas. She concludes her writing by saying that "the importance of an intellectual theoretical construct out of the ground experience, which can claim space in the world of theoretical discourse, must not be minimised. A new *Das Kapital* or *Wealth of Nations* is the only bomb that can explode the patriarchal mindset and exclusion of real agency of women in public policy" (Jain, 2007).

Henceforth, in terms of the approach to public policy formulation and its analysis, we largely see that where Dr Manazir's framework provided a broader, and more holistic approach to inclusive policymaking; Dr Devaki Jain focused on the specific challenges and recommendations of integrating women into public policy, mostly by gender mainstreaming and increasing women's representation. However, it is true that both emphasise the importance of inclusivity and the use of data in public policymaking.

In my understanding, gendering public policy within the public policy framework proposed by Dr Manazir (focusing on political willingness), will involve several steps and considerations. Gender mainstreaming is about systematically integrating gender considerations into all aspects of policy development, implementation, and evaluation. Both Jain and Manazir stress the importance of people′s participation and representation in policy formulation.

Conclusion

The present research work is an attempt to revisit the ontological understanding of the public policy process in the post-Machiavellian era. In his proposed public policy framework,

Dr Manazir positions the sociological aspect of "Political Willingness" at its centre, likening it to the modern-day concept of the 'panopticon,' which is governed by the political elites of our time. This perspective hints at a larger male dominance in the policy landscape when revisited through a feminist lens. This framework also explains the non-linearity of the policy process through the lens of elite influence, emphasising the often-overlooked prominence of political elites in contemporary public policy frameworks.

Dr Manazir's framework offers significant potential for exploration across various socio-political domains, with gender mainstreaming and social inclusion as key areas of focus. It seeks to address critical questions such as how women-centred policies can be inherently patriarchal, the reasons behind the underrepresentation of women in India's public policy ecosystem, the patriarchal nature of the broader discourse on women's safety, and the unequal representation of women from different sectors of society within policy discussions.

Moreover, the framework tackles the challenge of creating a contemporary and robust public policy structure, as raised by Dr Devaki Jain, ensuring that the pressing issues of women and diverse gender representation are not sidelined in policy planning and outcomes. The research thus highlights that policymaking as an avenue is inherently male-dominated, illustrating how political will operates as a silent authority in policymaking. This dynamic mirrors the silent observer in Bentham's Panopticon — an observer who is present yet invisible, frequently excluded from the public policy discourse.

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Of Refugees and Immigrants: The Political Language of the Body in a Humanitarian World

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Abstract

In recent decades, humanitarianism has gained prominence by focusing on mitigating the suffering of the sick, tortured, starved, and wounded beyond the political space. Humanitarianism at the outset was a legitimising tool for addressing human suffering. Theoretically and originally, it was supposed to give such humans the legitimacy to be aided regardless of the larger contextual aspects. However, when humanitarian principles were implemented in different countries beyond conflicts and large-scale wars, it led to other consequences. The essay examines some of these consequences, particularly in the contemporary period of immigration restrictions. Drawing on Miriam Ticktin's (2006) analysis, it explores how humanitarianism also became a form of politics despite its purported apolitical nature. As a result of this change, the bodies of immigrants and refugees, as embodiments of human suffering, acquire their own political language. The essay concludes by showing that this political language is often translated arbitrarily and ambiguously by governments while making refugee and immigration decisions due to the presence of humanitarian rather than juridical laws.

Keywords: Humanitarianism, Refugee Crisis, Immigration, Medical Humanitarianism, Political Sociology

History of Humanitarianism

Historically, humanitarianism evolved as a response to conflicts amidst the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars from 1793 to 1814 (Hardy et al., 2016). However, it was only in 1859, at the Battle of Solferino, that humanitarianism rose and had such a lasting impact up until the 20th Century when it continued to play a prominent role in the formulation of the Geneva Conventions, which are globally recognised as International Humanitarian Laws. The man behind this was Henri Dunant, a Swiss businessman who was horror-struck to see the condition of the neglected wounded soldiers in Solferino as there were no organised systems to treat the wounded on the battlefield. This led to him establishing the Red Cross to care for sick and wounded soldiers (Hardy et al., 2016).

Today, it is the largest humanitarian organisation in the world with branches present in various countries.

Over the decades, humanitarianism as an idea has gathered mass appeal beyond global war, especially in the space of migrant crisis and conflict zones. In its theoretical dimension, humanitarianism is conceptualised as the "ethical and moral imperative to bring relief to those suffering and to save life" (Ticktin, 2006). The paradigm has evolved beyond its confines of treating wounded soldiers in wars, extending its scope to encompass the broader objective of alleviating human suffering and safeguarding lives in different circumstances. Among these circumstances, the issue of refugees and immigrants plays a particularly significant role as both of them are influenced by humanitarianism. The 1951 Refugee Convention's Preamble highlights its wish that states recognise "the social and humanitarian nature of the problem of refugees" (United Nations, 1951). Under the convention, individuals fleeing persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion should be offered asylum by countries. This is a direct employment of humanitarian principles, where the prime focus of the states should be on safeguarding those whose lives are in grave danger. Similarly, the question of immigrants is also approached from humanitarian principles. One such principle followed in many European countries is a residence permit for medical reasons, i.e., granting illness permits for life-threatening diseases (Cailhol et al., 2020). This policy is also rooted in humanitarianism, as it prioritises the health and well-being of the people, regardless of their citizenship and legal status (Ticktin, 2006).

However, the rise of humanitarian policies and laws was accompanied by a growing mistrust of refugees in Europe (Fassin, 2011). Fassin (2011) examines that beginning in the mid-1970s, immigration restrictions were imposed, which further exacerbated the situation as the confusion between refugees and immigrants rose. Governments began to justify the increasing restrictions by referencing the bogus refugees as candidates tried to apply for asylum under false pretences. For instance, in 1976 France granted 19 out of 20 asylum seekers refugee status; however, three decades later, 19 out of 20 were denied, illustrating a sharp increase in mistrust and tightening of restrictions on refugees (Fassin, 2011). Jacques Chirac, the President of France from 1995 to 2007, famously mentioned "the noise and the smell" of immigrants in his speech referring to the overdose of immigrants in France (Michallon, 2019). During his tenure as the Prime Minister of France, he also mentioned their government's work on controlling illegal immigrants and enhancing French security (mediaclip, 1988). It becomes clear that the government drew the picture of growing immigrants as a security threat to the country.

The Political Language of the Immigrants and Refugees' Bodies

In this simultaneously growing ground of humanitarianism, immigration, and refugee restrictions, the human body takes on a central role (Fassin, 2011). At the core of humanitarian ideals lies the human body and its experience and manifestation of pain. Sickness, wounds, injury, scars, starvation, et cetera, are all manifested on the body wherein they are recognised and aided based on humanitarian principles. This is why the evidence of bodily marks has become important in granting humanitarian aid in many European countries (Fassin, 2011). Medical and psychological certificates attesting to the past experiences of refugees are a key feature of getting refugee status amidst the growing stringent immigration laws (Fassin and d'Halluin, 2005).

In this way, under humanitarianism, the body of a refugee became a site for the search for truth, i.e., the evidence of bodily injury (Fassin, 2011). At the same time and in almost a contradiction, a refugee's body was also a site of violence and exhibition of the state's power (Fassin, 2011). As Max Weber (1994) puts it, the state protects its people from violence, and in return, it earns the monopoly of legitimate violence. This is what Fassin (2011, p. 264) calls the "foundational violence" of the state. This violence is manifested in the body when the state power leaves its traces – both physical and psychological. So, in the case of a refugee, the body is at once the "site of the inscription of power through persecution" in the home country and also a site where the truth of this power or persecution is sought in the host country (Fassin, 2011, p. 287). Their body acquires its own political language as the existence of physical or psychic scars on or within the body takes precedence over the voices and personal narratives in determining state decisions regarding asylum.

Similarly, for immigrants, as noted above, many European countries have added a residence permit for medical reasons (Cailhol et al., 2020). For instance, in 1998, France adopted the policy of giving temporary illness permits in cases where undocumented migrants suffer from a life-threatening disease (Ticktin, 2006). In this way, the bodies of immigrants also acquire a political language since the presence (or absence) of an illness determines their access to stay within a country. For these immigrants, the nature and intensity of sickness in their bodies are measured through the line drawn by the sovereign power, in this case, France, which decides their legal status and illness permits. Consider this, the first question that social workers in NGOs usually ask the undocumented immigrants is, 'Are you sick?' and the next is, 'How sick?' The workers hope the answer to be 'Very sick' (Ticktin, 2006, p. 34). This situation arose not due to some hidden malice but because immigrants' illness provided them with an evident means by which to apply for a permit to stay in France. Ticktin (2006) outlines how some immigrants had even inquired about how to infect themselves with HIV and consequently obtain permits in France. The illness permit, based on the humanitarian principle of caring for the sick (Ticktin 2006), ends up making the immigrants' bodies acquire a political language. The host country interprets this political

language to make decisions about granting or denying asylum. Similarly, although a refugee's body first gains political language through political violence afflicted on it by the home country, it is through the presence of humanitarian laws that the body's political language takes precedence over personal narratives.

The Politics of Apolitical Humanitarianism

Although humanitarianism began as an apolitical moral imperative to recognise the suffering of the sick and wounded, its application within different countries made the political language of the body the kernel of humanitarian laws and policies for both refugees and immigrants. In the case of refugees, the troubling part of this aspect is that as governments and their asylum courts are asking for more and more evidence, there has been an increase in the techniques of torture that minimise traces left on the body (Rejali, 2007). This is further worsened by the discredit of the refugee's words. As the demand for evidence of physical or psychic traces increases, it leads to the "disqualification of the word of asylum seekers" (Fassin, 2011, p. 288). When the first-hand narratives of refugees are relegated as secondary evidence in the analysis of abuse, which shows that their account may not be the most trustworthy, the conditions for believing the authenticity of their bodily evidence also get complicated. For example, Fassin (2011) draws the story of a Bangladeshi man presenting a picture of him severely injured lying in a hospital bed in front of the National Court of Asylum in France. He claimed that he was abused because of his religious beliefs and activism. The president asked him, "What proves to me that you did not fall from your bicycle?" (Fassin, 2011, p. 268). Refugees lose their moral credibility when their personal accounts are taken to be subordinate to evidence (Fassin, 2011). Under such circumstances, how do officers and judges believe the primary evidence in the form of medical certificates and other documentation, which too are provided by the same refugees?

This approach to granting refugee status is arbitrary in two main ways. First, the Refugee Convention states that a refugee is "any person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (United Nations, 1951). According to the convention, the host country should grant refugee status based on "well-founded fear" rather than demanding conclusive evidence of endured torture and persecution. However, recognition of sources as "evidence of fear" can be difficult to decide and may again lead to arbitrary decision-making. The deeper problem lies in the lack of clear and transparent criteria outlining the evidence and elements that courts and, or state officials require for granting refugee status. This lack of clarity is mainly because refugee law and policies are based on humanitarian ideals rather than on the commonly followed legal frameworks (Ticktin, 2006). It contributes to the arbitrary nature of decision-making in refugee status determinations. Since there are no structured rules regarding the evidence

and proof accepted by the judges, refugees are left uncertain about the criteria used to evaluate their claims and are unable to contest the decisions made by the courts.

This arbitrariness is also most strikingly visible in the case of illness permits for immigrants. Although states have allowed granting illness permits to immigrants, they have not defined what diseases are classified as life-threatening. Consider this, the French state medical offices of three departments are vastly different in their results of granting papers. One of them gives papers for almost all pathologies, while the other two give papers to only those suffering from terminal illnesses like Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and cancer, and they may or may not give papers for chronic illnesses like diabetes, heart diseases, et cetera. On psychiatric problems, such as ADHD (Ticktin, 2006), they differ significantly with one of them having an 80 per cent positive response while the other has 0 per cent (Delettre 1999; Fassin 2001). If one refugee is given a permit for a specific disease while another is denied for the same disease by different departments, they cannot approach the court to redress the difference in the judgement of the state officials, since the government has not officially classified life-threatening pathologies. Other important factors such as the people's ability to access treatment in their home country, the means to pay for the required medical trips, the location and means of transport to hospitals, et cetera, are also not considered (Ticktin, 2006). Moreover, every few months, the medical officials have to demonstrate their statistics to the state officials. Ticktin (2006, p. 42) highlights how medical officials are jovially warned at the end of these meetings to "drastically reduce the number of sick people they let in." This influences the doctors' and nurses' decisions regarding their immigrant patients since their legitimacy among state officials depends on the number of immigrants they allow to stay. Without any pre-defined criteria for illness permits to refer to and justify their statistics, medical officials may not be left with any choice but to make arbitrary decisions in some cases.

The arbitrariness in handling cases of refugees and immigrants is largely because humanitarianism operates outside a strict legal framework. Humanitarianism emphasises a "politics of compassion" (Ticktin, 2006, p. 42) where benevolence takes precedence over justice and actions of charity over actions of obligation that come with a structured legal basis. Ticktin (2006) elucidates this aspect of humanitarianism where it transforms into a form of politics that has led to the employment from juridical to humanitarian logic. It frees the government and officials from the accountability and responsibility that comes with clearly laid down laws. Humanitarian laws lack a predetermined legal structure and such laws are often left open-ended, thus becoming ambiguous in their scope (Ticktin, 2006). It becomes difficult for refugees and immigrants to approach the court with a concrete case due to the ambiguity of these laws.

Since humanitarianism is rooted more in ethical values to alleviate suffering rather than actions undertaken in favour of justice (Ambrosini, 2022), countries are able to ignore laying down a rigid legal framework to deal with cases of refugees and migrants seeking asylum. The lack of a legal structure in humanitarianism also implies that there is no procedure for challenging decisions. Refugees and immigrants, unable to predict or contest the grounds on which judgments are based, may encounter deep uncertainty and injustice. Hence, humanitarian politics can both develop and further perpetuate inequalities and inconsistencies in how humanitarian assistance is provided and how asylum and immigration cases are resolved. Fassin (2012, p. 12) hints at the same arguing that humanitarianism "elicits the fantasy of a global moral community that may still be viable and the expectation that solidarity may have redeeming powers." However, this 'fantasy' may obscure the deeper issue of consistency and accountability in making decisions based on compassion regarding the status of refugees and immigrants.

The ambiguity around humanitarian laws becomes more detrimental in the current times when countries are limiting the entry of refugees and immigrants, and imposing stricter immigration laws. The possibility of making decisions at their discretion gives governments an advantage due to the presence of a humanitarian rather than juridical approach underlying such laws and policies. This ability of governments to make discretionary decisions allows them to manage and shape their immigration situation in the name of humanitarianism. While humanitarianism remains a relevant concept in the contemporary world with growing local and international conflicts, it is equally significant to recognise its evolution into a form of politics cloaked under the guise of being apolitical.

Conclusion

The progression of humanitarianism from an apolitical endeavour into a complex and politically entangled practice within states reveals significant consequences for refugees and immigrants. Based on Miriam Ticktin's analysis of humanitarianism as a form of politics, it has led to the bodies of refugees and immigrants acquiring a political language that may be interpreted arbitrarily based on the decisions and political agendas of the state. Since laws are grounded in a humanitarian approach, they do not follow a structured legal basis. The application of such laws becomes subject to the discretion of state officials and their interpretations (Ticktin, 2006). This shift from humanitarian neutrality to a politicised framework shows the unintended consequences of humanitarianism in the contemporary world. It demonstrates that the very principles employed to protect and support the vulnerable may be arbitrarily used to determine their fate.

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Changing Politics for Changing Times: Nationalism in the Era of Anthropocene

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Abstract

The 'Anthropocene' is a new term that has been popularised in the modern lexicon, delineating the debilitating impact of human activity on the Earth's natural processes. As the planet becomes increasingly calamitous with rising global temperatures, melting glaciers, and hazardous water bodies, which have led to exponential biodiversity losses, nation-states are slowly waking up to the menacing and unpredictable natural risks that have the potential to undermine human activity for sustenance. The essay, therefore, seeks to establish the relationship between the forces of nationalism and climate action — and examine the need for nationalism to tackle climate change. Primary scholarship on the subject has been analysed and examined to underscore the states wherein, the forces of "Green Nationalism" have pushed the climate agenda, as well as states wherein it has taken a pessimistic turn to 'Resource Nationalism' that has undermined environmental action. Therefore, the question that this article seeks to answer is whether the efficacy of nationalism is pertinent to alleviating the climate crisis that has defined the era of the Anthropocene.

Introduction

The upheaval in the post-COVID world led to the word 'Anthropocene' gaining renewed prominence. The term, constituting of 'Anthropo' for "man" and 'Cene' for "new", is used to describe a new planetary epoch in which humans are the key players in shaping the Earth's biogeophysical composition (Crutzen & Stoermer, 2000). The era has been described as one of human excesses, as the intervention has fundamentally altered the planet's natural processes, with the Earth becoming increasingly unpredictable and volatile after the stability of the Holocene Era. This has led to increasing calls for action by multilateral institutions such as the United Nations Environmental Programme (which was instrumental in setting up the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the World Economic Forum (WEF), amongst others, for countries to lead the global climate mitigation efforts. Despite the need for unified action and collaboration across the globe for

mitigation efforts, nationalism is expected to become a key factor in determining the trajectory that the fight against climate change is to take.

It is a truth universally acknowledged that the rise of nationalism has taken hold in recent years across the globe, with Hindutva in India, the fight for 'Britain First' in the United Kingdom (UK), right-wing nationalism in Europe, and the Trumpism era that gave birth to the cry of 'Make America Great Again' in the United States (Mehta, 2024). Nationalism has strengthened its tentacles in the multifarious nation-states; the spectre of one's national identity is, ironically, the only thing that has unified all the countries across the globe. Therefore, it is safe to say, in the words of Prasenjit Duara, that 'nationalism is at the heart of all the (environmental) crises in the modern world and becomes entangled in its effects' (Duara, 2021), and that the resulting climate action in countries, especially in Europe, serves as a reminder that a nationalistic lens is the most efficient way to fight the transcendent effects of climate change.

Nationalism and the Left Wing in Europe: The Fight for Climate Justice

The subsequent analysis of left-wing nationalism as a form of climate action will benefit from an analysis of Green Nationalism that has emerged in European countries, particularly in the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. Emerging as a positive and urgent response to the climate crisis in multiple political systems, Green Nationalism is defined as an "evolving concept" that uses "nationalistic sentiments and identity politics as a force for proactive environmental governance and climate justice" (Smith, 2019). Taking pride in the environment and recognising its corresponding importance to one's identity and existence lies at the core of this endeavour to staunchly advocate for suitable measures for the conservation of a country's natural resources, which has consequently led to the rise of several Green parties entering into national governments, including the Latvian Green Party in Latvia, which gave the world its first green party Prime Minister in 2004 (McBride, 2022).

The 'Environmental Turn' in the 1960s (Kaijser and Heidenblad, 2018) in Scandinavia marked the emergence of pioneering discussions and concerns about the imminent disaster that was to succeed the overwhelming impact of human activity on the environment. This period heavily romanticised the pre-modernist landscape of an idyllic countryside and the abundance of nature, which preceded the age of industrialisation and therefore bid to capitalise on the notions of simpler times. For example, in Scotland, the ruling Scottish National Party (SNP) has declared a 'Climate Emergency' and has proposed rewilding of the Scottish highlands in the manner of Romantic traditions of the past for a model of 'sustainability with nationalist aspirations' (Brown et al., 2011). This has resulted in environmental practices intermingling with the green nations' socio-political institutions to secure a "desired pattern of interest articulation" (Dryzek et al., 2002) among the people,

manifested in the form of increased compliance with climate action like the eco-taxes, strict implementation of low-energy building designs, and the smooth shift to renewable energy. In Norway, similar traditions of romanticism, embedded in the popular political and social values of the nation, have opened gateways to ambitious policies of staunch development of hydroelectricity and stringent targets for the reduction of emissions (Heggem, 2018). Therefore, nationalism can be used to leverage environmental stewardship by inculcating collective responsibility and stakeholdership for the citizens, as it places primary emphasis on the protection of natural resources for the existence of nationhood and, subsequently, national and personal identity.

But are All Forms of Nationalism Effective? The Emergence of Resource Nationalism and Climate Change Denial

An obverse form of Green Nationalism, 'Resource Nationalism' is defined as a "form of nationalist rhetoric that uplifts and sacralises soil-rooted national resources as a common good" (Conversi, 2020). It is characterised by collective ownership of certain natural goods that are found within its territory, such as fossil fuels, water bodies, and minerals by the nation-state, and hence justifies the exploitation of the aforementioned resources for the 'advancement and the betterment of the motherland'. Often practised in right-wing politics and in colonially exploited developing and least developed countries, the leaders use natural resources to emphasise the 'collective belonging' of a community of people residing within the nation-state (Koch & Perreault, 2018). Instances include - oil and petroleum in Saudi Arabia, which are seen as 'sacred resources' for the burgeoning national interests and economic development; Russia's state-owned company Gazprom, which consolidates national identity on the basis of hydrocarbons; and the emergence of Polish right-wing nationalism riding on the shale gas and oil exploration within the country (Materka, 2011). Therefore, the emergence of Resource Nationalism not only restricts the scope of global cooperation to tackle climate change but has also led to widespread climate change denial, undermining the effect of human intervention on Earth (Posocco & Watson, 2022). As the political leaders systemically rebuff the ills of a capitalistic and exploitative market economy that benefits a few, Resource Nationalism, as opposed to its green counterpart, romanticises the dazzling heights of an economically advanced nation with a strong economy built on its natural resources bestowed by God for the people, and therefore seeks to (over)use such resources indiscriminately. Thus, as China and India rallied to use the term 'phase down' instead of 'phase out' of coal during the COP-26 in 2021 (Express News Service, 2021.), citing national circumstances and meaningful economic development, the Era of Anthropocene has no indication of slowing down; instead, as the Global South pushes to reach the pinnacle of national prosperity and advancement, it is only expected to accelerate further.

A Critical Assessment of Nationalism in Environmentalism - Concluding Remarks

The winds of nationalism are a complex yet compelling case of the dynamic interplay of multifarious factors to alleviate the impact of the Anthropocene. It is true that a nation transcends the pertinence of several other entities and that its well-being weighs heavily upon the consciousness of the entire race that inhabits it. Therefore, the likelihood that a global crisis such as climate change, which requires multilateral cooperation between various nation-states to effectively combat the far-reaching effects of depleting natural resources and an overburdened environment, may be hindered by narrow territoriality is concerning, for it might not be able to generate a positive and collaborative response, which consequently inhibits the efficacy of climate action.

Secondly, the psychoanalysis of nationalism suggests that emotional loyalty to the nation has a strong impact on an individual psyche (Finlayson, 1998), and therefore, by employing nationalism to combat environmental degradation, the leaders can unleash a strong force that has the potential to overwhelm the climate change movement. Therefore, there is a need to recognise that Green Nationalism is not the only answer to addressing the crisis; rather, a fair balance must be achieved between an international response and a national one to successfully brave through the tempest of the Anthropocene.

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Academic Essays

Privatisation, Economic Reforms, and Alternate Movements: A Study of Indian Labour Movements in the 1990s

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Abstract

This paper looks at the function of organised labour in India within historical and structural frameworks. It charts the trade union movement and its historical consequences on the economy, politics, and society. This paper primarily employs social movement theory, thereby charting the process as a social movement. It looks at the labour movement's mobilisation in India from 1991 to the early 2000s in opposition to privatisation. This paper studies the stronger labour movement against economic transformations and notable differences. Taking the example of labour organisations such as the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, this paper aims to examine the various kinds of labour movement organisations in India and place them in congruence with the economic policies of the 1990s. This is done by employing a thorough secondary literature review.

Keywords: Privatisation, Liberalisation, Labour Movement, Economic Reform, Alternate Movements

Introduction

Although initial attempts to liberalise India's economy occurred in the 1980s, as indicated by lax rules and lesser restrictions on business creation during the Rajiv Gandhi and Indira Gandhi years, many scholars date the beginning of liberalisation to 1991, when the Indian National Congress (INC)-led government launched its New Economic Policy. The goal of this programme was to reform the inefficient, debt-laden public sector, and raise revenues to combat the growing budget deficit. One year later, in 1992, the government sold minority stakes in thirty of its two hundred and forty-four public-sector firms.

Nonetheless, India's privatisation process has been slower than that of Latin American, East European, and other Asian countries, with less revenue involved and fewer firms sold. Interestingly, the term "privatisation" was not utilised in Indian political discourse till the late 1990s. Instead, "disinvestment" was favoured because it was thought to be less radical, and hence more appealing to the public. Some cabinet members, such as the Minister of

Civil Aviation, Sharad Yadav of the Janata Dal Party, and the Minister of Heavy Industries, Manohar Joshi of the Shiv Sena Party, utilised an approach of "blame avoidance" while advocating privatisation. To clarify, they supported privatisation only if it did not involve their areas of responsibility. This "reforming by stealth" technique kept the public in the dark about significant economic policy changes. It is hardly unexpected that these problems did not influence election results (Uba, 2008).

Privatisation entailed not only the sale of government-owned factories, but also broader reforms such as increasing private investment in the finance sector, restructuring health and education systems, and allowing the private sector to run public utilities. The key point of contention in the Indian financial and insurance sectors was the amount of private and foreign funding that may be allowed into publicly owned banks and insurance companies. Even though the initiative for reform in these sectors began in the early 1990s, important legislation allowing privatisation and up to 26 per cent foreign investment in the insurance and banking sectors was passed later in 2000, despite strong opposition from bank and insurance sector trade unions (Kapur & Mehta, 2001).

Within social movement theory, tracing the varied changes across various landscapes provides an important context for understanding national issues through a global lens. As Edelman (2001) writes, the wave of transnational movements originating from the US spread similar ideas globally. These were influenced by environmentalism, feminism, and opposition to unfettered free trade. Even though these were the very same concerns that the Indian social landscape was battling with during the 1990s, ironically most of these were a result of the introduction of American capitalism into Indian markets. Not only did liberalisation provide permits to certain countries, but the American idea of capitalism remained at the forefront of the same. Agriculturists, labourers, and social movements relating to labour organisations were grappling with similar issues worldwide.

To offset the impact of labour retrenchment, which is commonly associated with company privatisation, the government established specific Voluntary Retirement Plans (VRS) for redundant workers and provided them with the opportunity to purchase stock in public corporations. Trade union activists, on the other hand, dubbed the VRS strategy a "not-so-voluntary scheme" because management often actively pressured employees in specific industries to retire before they desired to do so (Uba, 2008). Trade union organisers also noted that the majority of employees lacked the funds to purchase the shares offered. Similar to labour movements in other countries, Indian labour saw privatisation as a process that would eventually result in increased unemployment and lower union membership. As a result, labour mobilisation against privatisation was not unexpected; however, the main questions concerned its range and severity.

Industrial relations specialists occasionally regard the Indian labour movement as an outlier. Theoretically, it should be strong due to a supportive institutional structure, but its minuscule membership indicates a lack of mobilising capacity (Kuruvilla & Das, 2002). Protective labour legislation and political party affiliations among Indian trade unions are examples of supportive institutions. Before dismissing a workforce of more than 100 employees, a business owner is required by law to get approval from the government. However, these restrictions are not consistently enforced. Legislation also differs across states, and it is believed that stringent labour rules impede a state's economic development and investments (Besley & Burgess, 2004).

The Indian Labour Movement: Structure and Characteristics

Unionised workers from all industries are divided into five major trade union federations and several small trade unions. Most of the five major union federations are closely associated with various national political parties and have branches at both the federal and state levels. These branches, in turn, bring together commercial and public unions across a wide range of economic sectors, from banking to mining. Thus, whereas labour movements in other countries are typically supported by left-wing parties, all major political parties in India, regardless of ideological leaning, have their "own" trade unions (Saxena, 1993).

Here, the resource mobilisation theory can be employed (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Unions connected with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian National Congress (INC) have recorded the most members. These parties were also key drivers of India's privatisation movement. This poses an intriguing problem for social movement scholars; from a resource allocation perspective, proponents of resource mobilisation theory argue that organisations with greater resources are more likely to mobilise. Scholars who support the political opportunity structure approach alternatively, however, not in opposition, believe that protest mobilisation is less likely in a government with political allies or when a union's "own" party is in control. Although the latter thesis has not received consistent empirical support in studies of American and European movements, these tendencies could very well be present in developing countries. There are various questions here that require answers in order to study the Indian labour movement as a social movement. There are certain characteristics that inform the structure of a social movement. First and foremost, the labour movement needs to be categorised based on whether it arose from political parties as supporting organisations or whether they took root independently. As Jasper (2007) writes, the important question about social movements that arise is primarily based upon how the movements could overcome repression by the state in order to maintain or further their interests. Within the ambit of the same, he writes that members of social movement groups or organisations were either seen as "insurgents" or "challengers". Essentially, these people were outsiders attempting to gain entry into the realm of existing politics.

Herein, there needs to be a focus on why the labour movements in India took root in the first place. Unlike popular opinion, it does not merely exist because that is the way of developing societies. Rather, in all such cases, there exist specific structural issues that bring about the need for a movement. In this paper, there has been an attempt to highlight how the liberalisation of the 1990s primarily gave a push to the already existing labour movement in India. The reason why the situation is rather complex is, ironically, simple. In India, the intermixing of caste identities with class identities meant the emergence of various schools of thought that interpreted the labour "class" in different ways. The understanding of the social classes is not a simple task, and the erasure of cultural, linguistic, and caste identities is extremely easy if one uses the blanket of varying classes to identify different groups in the country. Frames and identities are important tools in the conceptual repertoire for understanding social movements (Jasper, 2007).

The first major peaks in protest activity occurred in 1993 and 1994 when the central government under the INC Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao, decided to open India's oil exploration and refineries to private investment and sell some shares of public banks. Interestingly, the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), the trade union affiliated with the Congress Party, even participated in some of these protest campaigns, although in a minor way. Prior to 1993, the federal-level leadership of INTUC had clearly distanced itself from any nationwide action against privatisation, thus supporting the hypotheses set forth by classic social movement theory that unions associated with ruling political parties will tend not to mobilise. Yet, the INTUC continued to refrain from participating in anti-privatisation protests targeting the central government, even after the BJP-led coalition came into power in 1998 and Congress became an opposition party. The INTUC's actions contrasted with those of the BJP-affiliated trade union, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (referred to as the BMS, hereon). Surprisingly, the BMS significantly participated in nationwide strikes and demonstrations mobilised against the liberalisation policies of the BJP-led government, although only until 2002. However, the majority of anti-privatisation protests directed against the policies of the central government were mobilised by the left-wing trade union federations, the Centre of the Indian Trade Unions (referred to as CITU hereon) and AITUC. For example, the BMS and INTUC were major organisers for three nationwide actions, whereas left-wing federations mobilised at least 37 campaigns.

Data also shows a reticence to protest in the years 1995 and 1996. The approaching elections at the time and the worsening macroeconomic situation were likely factors in this relative silence. The INC's central administration did not want to talk about privatisation programmes that were probably controversial because they were getting ready for the next Lok Sabha elections (Mitra & Singh, 1999). The privatisation programmes would affect various firms dealing with energy as an industry. This industry was key because not only was it imperative for national development, but it was also an employer of a big chunk of

India's labour force. Due to the brewing tensions, trade union splits amongst the various branches of the industry occurred. As a result of this split, three distinct energy firms were formed: distribution, transmission, and generation. Trade unions representing the energy industry viewed it as a first step towards the complete privatisation of the state's energy industry. Trade unions throughout India were inspired to show solidarity by organising demonstrations against the Uttar Pradesh government. The climax of state-targeting protests indicates this wave of dissent. As Jasper (2007) writes, the primary objective or an essential question about social movements is about how they overcome repression by the state so as to further their existing or new interests. Under the Marxist assumption, the interactions between the movement and the state can be understood through the idea that oftentimes the state is the judge as well as the opponent of the movement. However, Jasper also postulates that this approach often employs the idea of "relationships" between different actors as opposed to "interactions", which is imperative in understanding the contribution of the cultural context for the social movements.

Second, the Indian Parliament enacted the Insurance Regulatory and Development Bill in July 2000. This was a devastating defeat to the banking unions, who had been able to prevent the enactment of this legislation since the early 1990s. Unions viewed this defeat as a sign of weakness in the anti-privatisation movement, and they considered the expanded authorisation of private investments into the finance industry as a first step towards privatisation. Third, the labour unions' 67-day strike against the March-May 2001 sale of Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO) to Sterlite Industries was met with resistance by the national government. After the company was already sold, all of the major trade unions united in this action, which became a symbol of labour resistance to the central government's privatisation plans that had failed (Uba, 2008).

These losses did not put an end to all mobilisation; on the contrary, they sparked increased collaboration between union branches at the federal and state levels, but not between the numerous trade union federations connected to different political parties. Enhanced coordination among unions and their growing partnership with consumer and environmental groups resulted in a widespread demonstration movement against the proposed privatisation of Indian oil corporations in 2003, as well as against the privatisation of power systems in late 2001. In spite of these measures, the ruling BJP government raised the issue of economic reforms during the upcoming legislative elections. In 2004, the Congress Party defeated it. Even though it was a hot topic during the campaign, economic reforms were not the only reason for the defeat. Herein, Jasper's (2007) postulation of the characteristics of a social movement can be used. He writes that social movements are sustained and differ from spontaneous rallies and riots. The labour movement in India has a long history of sustained efforts that traces back to the colonial regime. For the purposes of this paper, our focus is on the labour movement as it came back up during the 1990s due to the economic liberalisation policies. However, the same is important to note so as to

establish the character of labour movements in India. With varying organisations, the movement has consisted of sustained efforts as well as rallies from time to time.

This illustrates how the anti-privatisation protest movement in Indian labour has grown over time and incorporated a range of protest strategies. Contrary to what resource mobilisation theories would predict, left-wing trade union federations with comparatively small official memberships have been more active than right-of-centre unions. Although the evidence does not entirely support it, it is possible that the larger unions' relative inactivity was caused by their partners' positions of power. The BMS's participation in nationwide anti-privatisation protests until 2002, even during the BJP's tenure in power, and the INTUC's comparative silence on the subject of mobilisation during Congress-led governments suggest that resource mobilisation patterns are more nuanced than traditional resource mobilisation theory suggests (Jasper, 2007).

By the 1980s, India had entered the early stages of globalisation, which accelerated in the 1990s with the implementation of the structural adjustment programme. Ironically, the Indian economy's globalisation caused worker agitation to become more localised, which eventually killed off any chance of industrial labour being mobilised across the country. Major Indian cities' labour-management relations were the subject of comparative research that revealed notable regional variations. Trade unionism was steadily declining in Mumbai due to ideology, while in Kolkata it became extremely politicised as a result of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Due to differences in the skill and educational levels of various enterprises, Bangalore has seen a surge in plant and firm-based unions (Oomen, 2010).

An Alternative Example: The BMS

Labour movements are mostly understood as stemming from leftist ideologies and are often studied from the same perspective. As Edelman (2001) wrote, the focus of new social movement theorists did not always study right-wing collective action. Even though as explained further, the BMS identifies as apolitical and not affiliated with any political party, its criticism of the Congress government and its policies and hailing of right-wing projects is evident in their journals. They write that right-wing social movements often employ cultural politics. The formation of BMS as a social movement stands as an example of the same, wherein the organisation is formed as an institution to protect *Bharatiya* values and refuse to incorporate Western ideals.

The BMS as a labour union that blatantly rejected the ideologies of Marxism and any leftist ideals, stands as a case in point in order to understand alternate labour movements in India. Based on data certified by the Ministry of Labour in 1980, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) has grown to be a significant trade union organisation in India, leaping to the

second rank in terms of worker support. The BMS is significant because, in contrast to other union groups, it was not a part of the national movement and had no connections to any trade unions that existed before 1947. Its assertion that it is a "non-political trade union movement" in contrast to other trade union movements that engage in party politics and are not solely connected to political parties is another noteworthy aspect.

The fact that there are several union centres in India does not indicate that the trade union movement in India is not politically involved with divergent viewpoints on labour-related matters, but rather as a result of the parties' disparate political philosophies. As a result, the main hubs have a political party affiliation, either explicit or implicit. The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) is associated with the Communist Party of India, the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) with the Janata Party and the Janata Dal, the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) with the INC, and the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) with the Communist Party of India (M). All these union movements had their roots in the AITUC, which had fought alongside the Indian National Congress in the struggle against British rule and for independence. In that regard, the BMS is a new organisation, having no historical connections to the liberation movement spearheaded by the Indian National Congress and no ancestry in the AITUC. Although it claims to be an apolitical organisation, it has ties to both the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Therefore, BMS asserts that it originated in the national culture. "BMS is one of the instruments of culture fighting against the mutually hostile but equally anti-human capitalism and Marxism," their statement reads, with the ultimate goal of establishing a *Bharatiya* social order based upon the tenets of Integral Humanism (Saxena, 1993). It rejects communism, Marxism, and capitalism. BMS rejects socialism because it emphasises the distribution component, and capitalism because it over-emphasises the importance of production. BMS places equal emphasis on both: workers have a fundamental right to an equitable share of the fruits of industry while achieving maximum productivity is labour's national duty.

The BMS states the following as its stance on the 1990s liberalisation policies:
> "The Hyderabad conference of 1984 declared war against the unholy alliance of multinational companies, Indian monopolies and the government. In 1989 USSR disintegrated and communism collapsed in the East European countries, resulting in the world becoming unipolar. By 1990 New Economic Policies like LPG (Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation) and Open Market Policy came into being. On the 3rd of July 1991, the Narasimha Rao Government announced the New Economic Policy (NEP) and New Industrial Policy (NIP) in India, which opened all her doors for foreign investment, first by institutions and later by foreign direct investments (FDI). After the 1990s when developed countries spread their

economic empire, Swadeshi Jagaran Manch was formed and BMS participated in many of its agitational programmes. The Tenth National Conference of BMS held at Dhanbad between 18th and 20th March 1994 declared a 'War of Economic Independence against Western Imperialism'" (Narayanan, 2022).

The Swadeshi Jagran Manch has been critical of foreign direct investment since its inception in 1991. Therefore, as we can understand, regardless of political leanings, most labour unions in India were critical of the liberalisation policies of the 1990s. Although it could be argued that BMS took its stance due to its political affiliations, the former statement remains true. The BMS proclaims that following the 1990s, despite the rise to power of several governments led or backed by various political parties, including leftists, both the labour and economic policies remained unchanged. BMS opposed the anti-labour policies of Congress's Narasimha Rao government, while leftists backed the Gujral and Deva Gowda governments. BMS also opposed the anti-labour policies of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, which included some of its "friends" (Swadeshi Jagran Manch, 1995).

Here, the characteristic of a social movement fostering or retarding social change (Jasper, 2007) can be understood. The BMS as an organisation supporting the rights of labourers fostered the social movement in multiple ways but also held many conservative ideals that excluded a wide section of their targeted population from their activities. Mobilisation of mass support is extremely important for the success of any social movement. Jasper's postulation, however, that only progressive movements could be studied as social movements can be invoked here. Even though labour organisations as a part of the labour movement fostered by the left-wing parties existed, the BMS stands as an interesting case. The BMS as an organisation whose conception then turned into a social movement to uphold certain ideals as mentioned above is an example of diversity of opinions within the same arena while demanding similar things from the state.

The political field (Ray, 2001) that the BMS operated in, contributed immensely to the resources that the organisation had and the support it received. The 1990s were a time of immense political turbulence with a lot of resentment towards state policies. The political field inherited by the BMS gave them a space that was in congruence with the ideals that a lot of their target population wanted to see in society.

Women's Involvement in The Labour Movement

The question of whether the workforce has become more "feminised" in the past ten years, especially since the liberalisation process started is very important. Deshpande and Deshpande (1992, p. 1998) evaluated how liberalisation affected female employment and engagement in the short term. They discovered that: (a) following liberalisation, both male

and female participation rates rose in urban areas; (b) gender-based wage disparities between regular wage or salaried rural and urban workers widened; and (c) women workers were increasingly turning to self-employment, and the informal sectors as their share of the workforce increased slightly, but their proportion in manufacturing declined.

Banerjee (1997) contends that, whereas globalisation has contributed to a feminisation of the manufacturing workforce in a number of nations, in India, the opposite has occurred. Women's chances in the secondary industries have decreased dramatically across all states. Nonetheless, there has been a tiny uptick in the number of agricultural jobs available to rural women, and advancements have been achieved in the tertiary sector. Low-income working women in the unorganised sector organise under the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) model to seek better wages and working conditions. Banks and cooperatives also provide them with financial help. This is already happening at the Working Women's Forum in Chennai and Annapurna in Mumbai. The CITU is making great progress in organising women who work in the unorganised sector.

Imagination of the Process as a Social Movement

The labour movement in India, unlike other social movements, is not clearly demarcated by specific ideals of resistance against one particular issue or mobilisation against a clearly defined entity. In this paper, an attempt has been made to trace the labour movement specifically in the period of 1990s-early 2000s. The implications of the liberalisation, however, can be studied in the Farmers' Protests of 2020 as well. All such issues are interrelated: however, to study them in one bracket is very broad.

The BMS is one example of a social movement that arose during the 1990s. Most of India's labour organisations were not formed during the liberalisation, but their activities increased immensely during that time due to the varying reasons mentioned throughout the paper. Borrowing from Jasper's postulations on the characteristics of social movements, the labour movement in India has consisted of sustained efforts that have worked towards the plight of labour rights in India. The social movement has very much been linked to culture and psychology, the BMS, for example, which makes it very intentional and not essentially spontaneous. The affiliations of various labour organisations with different ideologies have worked towards the labour movement in many ways, fostering social change in Indian society. Even though their ideals might be conservative, the call for social change and the betterment of labourers' conditions has always been at the forefront of the labour movement in India. The non-institutional characteristic of the labour movement can be highlighted by the fact that most of the movements arose as a response to neglect or repression by the state. Within social movement theory, the categorisation of movements based on the nature of their origin is imperative in order to then expand upon the characteristics that follow. As can be understood, the mobilisation of labour organisations

was mostly reactionary, aimed towards bringing forth the dearth of state machinery actively involved with the welfare of labour groups. The presence of a sense of community accorded protection to those who were part of these organisations. It was also in response to state policies that were extremely detrimental to workers' rights or conditions, as can be observed in the aftermath of the liberalisation of the 1990s.

It is imperative to understand that as much as these are organisational activities, the individual lives and lived experiences of the people involved are extremely important. The historical and cultural context can be utilised to understand the same. In India, the labour movements were very much informed by the history of colonialism. As far as the 1990s were concerned, the labour movements had undertones of the *Swadeshi* movement as it was during the independence struggle. As Edelman (2001) writes, theorists of new social movements could benefit immensely from taking into consideration the ethnographies, oral narratives, and documentary histories of the participants involved.

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Synthesising *Dharma* and *Danda*: Exploring Regulation of Political Power in the *Arthasastra*

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Abstract

In the Arthasastra, there is no divine theory of kingship. Since the king is not divine, VR Mehta assumes that he has a free hand in the use of political power (danda). However, Adam Watson notes that the goal of Arthasastra is to secure the happiness (sukham) of the people [as Kautilya aligns the ends of both the king and the subjects], which RP Kangle says, is possible only through transcending anarchy via the principled application of danda (power) on artha (the land where humans dwell and seek happiness). This not only makes danda a means to acquire the dharmic end of sukham, but the principled application of danda is necessitated by dharma – or dharma begets and restrains danda. But in the absence of an ordinance of divinity, what makes a king tread the path of dharma? I argue that Kautilya synthesised both Aristotelian and Socratic maxims on moral excellence to create an indirect check on the exercise of danda – through habit (practising self-regulation) and knowledge of the good (through the study of Puranas, epics, and Vedic texts).

Keywords: *Dharma*, *Danda*, happiness, Kautilya, Arthasastra

> "The Indian tradition of strategic thought emphasised the concept of *dharma* – a set of rules that bound the ruler and the ruled alike. Also, Indian concepts of statecraft had strong moral and ethical undertones in contrast to contemporary realist emphasis on aggregate power and material factors."

> Gupta and Holtsmark (2014, p. x.)

The Prelude: Absence of a Divine Contract

Let me begin this paper with verses 1.13.5-7 of the Arthasastra:

> "When people were oppressed by *matsyanyaya* (anarchy), they made Manu, the son of Vivasvat, the king. They fixed one-sixth part of the grains and one-tenth of their

goods and money [as] his share. Kings who receive this share [must be] able to secure the well-being of [their] subjects."

We can make a compelling observation here – there is no divine theory of kingship in Arthasastra. Kangle (1997, p. 116) calls the above verses "[a] contract for the establishment of monarchy." In the absence of a divine sanction above the king, the result could be royal power or *danda,* having what Ghokale (1966, p. 16) called "the calamitous potential of a conflagration or a flood."

It may be noted that in the later stages, *dhammachakka* (spiritual power) and *anachakka* (temporal power) in the Buddhist theory of kingship were synthesised into a single figure of the *dhammiko dhammaraja*, who ruled according to *dhamma*. Therefore, even in the Buddhist traditions, the check on wanton use of royal power was that of equating the ruler with the Bodhisattva, which is clearly absent in the Kautilyan paradigm. Taking this into consideration, Mehta (1992, p. 92) argues:

> "Since Kautilya often confused the preservation of the state with the preservation of the king, he virtually gave a blank check to the princes to commit all sorts of atrocities."

So, is there no check on *danda* (political power) in Arthasastra?

I disagree.

We may note that in the latter part of the verse quoted above [v. 1.13.5-7], ensuring the well-being of the citizens is established as the *dharma* of the king. This, PK Gautam (2016, p. 7) interprets as "political virtue or ethical and moral issues in statecraft". Thus, as I will elaborate upon further, the *dharma* of the king or the *rajdharma* in the Arthasastra has two components – one, it is the source of *danda* (political power); and two, it is something that necessitates the principled use of *danda*.

Along similar lines, Vivekananda (2011, p. 89) writes:

> "Since kingship in the Arthasastra was not concerned with divinity, the power to [censure and to] wage war was released from the logic of *dharma* and the attended duties of the virtuous king."

By this, Vivekananda is suggesting that the power to wage war and to use *danda* emanates from *rajdharma*, and in consonance with the aforesaid – *rajdharma* regulates the power of *danda*, as *danda* shall be directed to the well-being of the people.

Dharma Begets and Restrains *Danda*

For Watson (2009), the goal of human life, according to Kautilya, is happiness – the happiness of the people. He remarks:

> "It is curious that from the Arthasastra to the American Declaration of Independence, no other texts put the pursuit of happiness quite high."

However, there is no happiness in anarchy, where *matsyanyaya* (anarchy) prevails. Aristotle maintains that happiness – which is the pleasure of one's 'higher faculties' – can be attained only when the needs of the 'lower faculties', including nutrition and security, are met. In other words, (hu)man can aspire for happiness only when there is security. Thus, it is the prime duty of the king, according to Kangle (1997, p. 120), to annihilate anarchy through the "principled use of *danda* on *artha*" (the land where people reside, and seek happiness by productively utilising it), thereby creating positive conditions for people to be happy.

It is worth noting, however, that Kautilya allows for *danda* in such a proportion as necessary to transcend anarchy to create conditions for people to be happy. Thus, the corollary would be that unrestrained use of *danda* would defeat its very purpose. As professed by Chakravarty (1992, p. 333):

> "The king was given [the] authority of coercion (*danda*) and for awarding punishment to the wicked. But, Kautilya holds that unlimited coercive authority would defeat its very purpose and lead once again to *matsyanyaya*."

But how does the unrestrained application of *danda* engender anarchy? As I mentioned before, Kautilyan monarchy is the result of a social contract – thus, is a means to achieve the end of happiness (where the king creates conditions for the people to be happy through transcending anarchy via the just application of *danda* on *artha*) – and if the end is jeopardised, the *raison d'être* of the contract crumbles. People exit the contract as its utility is defeated – and the society will be thrown back to square one – that of anarchy. As Kangle (1997, p. 120) says:

> "An unjust or improper use of this power by the ruler might lead to serious consequences, the most serious being a revolt or *kopa* of the subjects against the ruler... The threat of *prakritikopa* or a revolt of the people is expected to serve as a check on the wanton use of his coercive power by the ruler."

Thus, in the Kautilyan paradigm, the ruler is bound by *rajdharma* to secure the happiness of his subjects. However, as argued by Kangle (1997), it is possible only through the principled use of *danda*, to augment *artha*, and make it conducive for human happiness. Therefore, as Mehta (1992, p. 87) notes, the power to use *danda*, "which represents the coercive power of the state", was not unhitched, but emanated from *rajdharma* [as the duty of the king to ensure the happiness of his subjects necessitates the use of *danda* to tame anarchy and make *artha* conducive for human happiness – thus, *dharma* begets *danda*], and was restrained by it [as the use of *danda* shall be principled, insofar as it augments *artha* or tames anarchy to secure *sukham*].

Thus, the restrained use of *danda* is not only the product of the looming threat of anarchy, which, for Kautilya is "worse than the highest tyranny" (Mehta, 1992, p. 84), but the principled use of force (*danda*) is necessitated by *dharma*. The king, bound by the *rajdharma*, is expected to direct the force of *danda* towards ensuring that the subjects are happy. Drekmeier (1962, p.10) affirms:

> "...Though *dharma* depends on *danda*, *dharma* is the higher power. The *rajdharma*, the *dharma* of the king, exists as guarantor of the whole social structure. *Danda* is the means, and *dharma*, the end."

Thus, it is the duty of the king to use *danda* as a means to achieve the ends of *dharma* – and in the Kautilyan sense, this *dharmic* end is happiness (*sukham*) – which is not only limited to the happiness derived from enjoying material gain, but a "triad of gains – mental, material, and spiritual" (Arthasastra, v. 9.7.60).

Therefore, Kautilya's idea of *danda* is noteworthy in at least two ways. One, it is only through the principled application of *danda* that the right conditions can be cultivated so that people can be happy, which is the end of statecraft – thus, *danda* is the means to achieve the end of statecraft. And two, the use of *danda* is restricted by its very purpose, i.e., to make people happy (Mukherjee, 1985, p.23).

Happiness of the King or Happiness of the People?

Till now, I worked on the concept of *danda* with an assumption that the end of statecraft in Arthasastra is the happiness of the people. However, as Kangle (1997, p. 128) rightfully notes, Kautilya talks about the happiness of the 'state'. He also mentions that Kautilya often used 'state' as a pun – alluding to both the king and the state. So, if the state is the king, is *artha* the personal tool of the sovereign to secure his happiness?

For Machiavelli, the end of statecraft was *mantenere lo stato*, or the maintenance of the state (or the Prince – as Machiavelli also used 'state' as a pun to mean both the state and the prince). He mentions *en passant* in the Discourses, that 'what benefits the Prince, harms the city', implying that the ends of both the Prince and the people are different.

So, as Mehta (1992, p. 92) says, is *danda* a "blank cheque" given to the king to advance his ends?

I beg to differ.

For Rousseau (Rousseau, as cited in Rawls, 2007, p. 223), justice (and morality) springs out of the 'general will' – the summation of the 'real will' of individuals, who submit "their person and all their power in common under the supreme direction of the general will" – or in other words, the will of people who have aligned their ends with the ends of all, thus, creating a "body ... [where] each member [is] an indivisible part of the whole". This is

morality, thus virtue, according to Immanuel Kant (1993, p. 44), who summarises the same in his third categorical imperative – "Act according to maxims of a universally legislating member of a merely possible kingdom of ends."

Kautilya attempts exactly to create this 'kingdom of ends' by aligning the ends of the king with the ends of the subjects. He says (Arthasastra, v. 1.19.34):

> "In the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king, and what is beneficial to the subjects, his own benefit. What is dear to himself is not beneficial to the king, but what is dear to the subjects is beneficial to him."

Drawing upon the same, Sihag (2016, p. 134) says:

> "Kautilya's approach is people-centric, and comparing it to Machiavelli's king-centric approach shows ignorance about his work."

Therefore, Kautilya propounds an ethics-centric approach to statecraft, rather than an approach based on the self-interest of the ruler, as Machiavelli came up with. He locates the "happiness of the king" in the "happiness of the subjects" (Arthasastra, v. 1.19.34), making the Kautilyan paradigm grounded in ethics and morality of statecraft.

Therefore, there is no morality suited to statecraft – statecraft, aspiring for *sukham* (of all – the subjects, thus, the king), is moral in itself. As rightly commented by Gautam (2016, p. 51), statecraft in Arthasastra is regulated by *dharma*.

Upinder Singh (2010, n. 64, p. 29-62) affirms:

> "I disagree with scholars who argue that the politics of Arthasastra is devoid of ethics. In fact, ethics was central to the ancient Indian discourse on politics."

Associating Kautilyan politics with ethics might seem insane to some, as Kautilya is often considered an amoral thinker. Nevertheless, we must not turn a blind eye towards the *ultima veritas* – *dharma* regulates *danda* in Indian strategic thought. Gupta and Holtsmark (2014, p. x) maintain that the Kautilyan conception of statecraft had significant "moral and ethical undertones," in stark contrast to the "contemporary realist emphasis on aggregate power and material factors." My engagement with the Arthasastra made me realise that Kautilyan statecraft is nothing but a magnificently prepossessing interplay of *dharma*, *artha*, and *danda*.

Gautam (2016, p. 16) observes:

> "*Danda* is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to understand the sinews of traditional Indian statecraft. In other words, there is a regulating mechanism of *dharma* with *danda*."

Quis Custodiet Ipsos Custodes?

Now that we have seen how *dharma* regulates the use of *danda* in the Kautilyan paradigm, the question Roman poet Juvenal asked centuries ago rings the doorbell of my mind – *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*? How to ensure that the rulers, who are mortal humans, do not fall into the mephitic pit of "a confederated sinister interest" (Bentham, as cited in Klosko, 2013, p. 398)? Especially "since kingship in the Arthasastra was not concerned with divinity" (Vivekananda, 2011, p. 89), how to ensure that the rulers act in accordance with *dharma*? Whilst the king knows what he ought to do, what force will make him do it?

For Socrates, human beings are inherently good – as their souls have an inherent desire to move towards the good. However, for him, knowledge is good – thus, 'to know is to be' – or to know good is to do good. On the other hand, Aristotle proposes that human beings are neither good nor bad – while knowledge tells them what is good, they may choose the wrong path, though they know the good (consider Duryodhana, for instance). For Aristotle, 'to know is not to be' – but one becomes good (morally excellent) as a result of practising virtues. He says, "Moral excellence comes about as a result of habit. We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts" (Aristotle, 2023).

Kautilya attempts a synthesis of both Socrates and Aristotle, to ensure that the king knows what he ought to do, be what he ought to be, and do what he ought to do.

Moral Excellence Comes About as a Result of Habit

If moral excellence is the result of habit, Kautilya suggests a plethora of self-restraining exercises in the Arthasastra, which envisages a *swami* who is self-restrained. He is *indriyajaya*, the master of his senses, who shall, through constant practice, keep a check on his overpowering passions, and avoid any form of fixation towards *vyasanas* (vices), including, "passion, anger, greed, obstinacy, fickleness, haste, and back-biting habits." (Arthasastra, v. 6.1.5)

In contrast to Machiavelli who counsels the Prince to masquerade as an epitome of Cicero's and Seneca's list of princely virtues (liberality, honesty, and magnanimity), especially by citing Cesare Borgia's act of publicly hanging his General, who, upon the former's orders, crushed the rebellion with an iron fist; Kautilya proposes the *swami* to actually possess *swamisampad* or princely virtues, including *abhigamikah gunah* (qualities of inviting nature), *prajna gunah* (qualities of intellect), and *utsaah gunah* (aspects of enthusiasm).

King possessing *abhigamikah gunah* shall be (Arthasastra, v. 6.1.2):

"Possessed of valour… virtuous, truthful, not of a contradictory nature, grateful, having large aims, highly enthusiastic, not addicted to procrastination… of resolute mind… possessed of a taste of discipline."

Prajna gunah includes qualities like "inquiry, hearing, perception, retention in memory, reflection, deliberation, inference, and steadfast adherence to conclusions" (Arthasastra, v. 6.1.3). Similarly, *utsaah gunah* includes "Valour, determination of purpose, quickness and probity" (Arthasastra, v. 6.1.4).

Swami shall also possess *aatmasampad* (nature of self-possession or personal qualities), which includes (Arthasastra, v. 6.1.5):

"A sharp intellect, keen memory, and keen mind… [and shall be] energetic, powerful, trained in all kinds of arts, free from vice… possessed of dignity; capable of taking remedial measures against dangers, possessed of foresight… making jokes with no loss of dignity or secrecy…free from passion, anger, greed, obstinacy, fickleness, haste, and back-biting habits."

Therefore, Kautilya envisages regulation of the king's behaviour through constant practice, cultivating in him, moral excellence, and the propensity to do the 'good' – i.e., *dharma*. Kautilya's emphasis on moral excellence (to be achieved through constant practice) made Brown (1964, p. 25) declare:

"*Dharma* [is] the ultimate basis of Indian political thought… Indeed, the moral behaviour of the ruler may be taken as a cornerstone of Indian thought… Over and over again, the Indian theorist stresses the prime necessity for the ruler and his ministers [to conquer] personal desire for pleasure and power and holding the duties imposed by office and law."

To Know is to Be

Whilst Kautilya groomed the king to develop, in his soul, the propensity to do the 'good,' how does he know what is 'good' in the first place? If to know is to be, how Kautilya attempts to inculcate in him the knowledge of the 'good'?

This takes us to Kautilya's system of education for the king. (Arthasastra, v. 1.5.13-14). It includes the study of *itihasa* (lore), encompassing *puranas*, *trayi* (the Vedas), *vartta* (economics), *danda* (politics), *dharmasastra* (law), and *itivrtta* (reports).

Patrick Olivelle (2012, p. 471) suggests that "the meaning of reports (*itivrtta*) is unclear, although a commentary identifies [it with] the epics Mahabharata and Ramayana."

Kautilya, by wanting the rulers to be well-versed in the epics and the puranas, therefore, attempts to inculcate in them the moral values camouflaged in these texts, both at the

personal level (for developing *swamisampad* and *aatmasampad*), and at the political level, when it relates to its practical use in statecraft.

Hence, by ethical education, Kautilya attempts to knit together in the ruler, the strands of ethics and morality, which would further light his path to using *danda* in achieving the end of *sukham*. Thus, Kangle (1997, p. 139-140) rightfully asserts that:

> "There is thus no reason to doubt that there is no constitutional check thought of in [the Arthasastra] on the absolute power of the monarch. What checks are thought of are indirect... The fact that [the king] would be brought up to regard the Vedic way of life as sacred and the performance of his own duties in accordance with that scheme of life as a means of achieving spiritual ends would also serve to make him behave with moderation."

> Hence, the education system provided to the incoming ruler, along with the self-restraining exercises to acquire moral excellence through incessant practice, acts as an indirect check on the malicious use of *danda* by the king.

Conclusion

> "The [ruler] severe with *danda*, becomes a source of terror to beings. The [ruler] just with *danda* is honoured... [The] administration [of *danda*], rooted in self-discipline, brings security and well-being to living beings."

> Kautilya (Arthasastra, v. 1.4.5-10, 1.5.1)

I began this paper by attempting to establish a relationship of harmony between *dharma* and *danda*. I examined how, in the absence of a divine notion of kingship in the Arthasastra, the use of *danda* is envisaged to be principled. I concluded that *dharma* begets and restrains *danda*. Hence, I concluded that it is the duty of the king to ensure restraint in using *danda*, as it is limited by the purpose of the social contract – the end goal of *sukham*.

But this left us with another problem to grapple with. As the Kautilyan notion of kingship is not divine – the king being a mere mortal – how to expect him to pursue *dharma*? How does Kautilya institutionalise a system such that the limitless power of the rod of governance bestowed upon him is channelised towards achieving the end of statecraft? I established that Kautilya actualises it through a well-engineered education system that combines both Socratic and Aristotelian maxims on morality. The training of the incoming rulers in the epics and the Vedas, including the practice of rigorous self-restraining exercises, acts as an indirect check on their behaviour.

Like Mill, Kautilya believed in the "transformative power of education" (Mill, as cited in Klosko, 2013, p. 414, 446), which would help individuals develop their mental and moral faculties, and develop an understanding and adherence to "social utilities" (Mill, as cited in

Klosko, 2013, p. 423) – which, here, is "happiness" through the principled application of *danda*.

And I end this piece with a question planted in me by my guide, Dr. Sri Ram Pandeya – is Kautilya really immoral?

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Shifting Media Narratives: Populism, Anti-Globalisation, and Political Appeals in Brazil's Discourse on Poverty

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Abstract

This essay examines the shifting media narratives in Brazil, focusing on how the political right has co-opted leftist concerns to secure influence. It highlights the paradox of impoverished populations supporting right-wing movements, which traditionally oppose their economic interests. Bolsonaro's rise in Brazil exemplifies this trend, using nationalist rhetoric to address poverty and resonate with disenfranchised voters. The study employs qualitative methodology to examine how Bolsonaro's 2018 campaign messaging intertwined anti-globalisation and anti-corruption pledges with promises to improve living standards. The essay concludes that the anti-globalisation discourse in Brazil blames global forces for causing poverty and proposes right-wing populism as the solution.

Introduction

In recent times, the contemporary political landscape in the Global South is characterised by a paradoxical trend where the political 'right' adopts agendas historically associated with the political 'left.' This phenomenon extends beyond mere appropriation, constituting a strategic co-option of erstwhile leftist concerns to secure political influence and authority. This shift marks a departure from traditional ideological boundaries, blurring the lines between 'left' and 'right' ideologies and redefining the socio-political narratives employed by conservative factions to resonate with diverse demographics. The ascendancy of right-wing movements, exemplified by leaders like Mauricio Macri in Argentina, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, and Donald Trump in the United States of America (USA), demonstrates a recalibration of rhetoric and policy stances (Minnite, 2012). This recalibration involves a nuanced engagement with socio-economic issues such as social exclusion, income inequality, and the adverse impacts of globalisation — themes traditionally advocated by leftist ideologies. By leveraging these concerns, the political right has effectively broadened its appeal, forging connections with segments of the population that were historically aligned with leftist ideologies. Moreover, this manoeuvring transcends

regional boundaries, as several other places in the Global South have witnessed the rise of right-wing populist leaders. Figures like, Rodrigo Duarte in the Philippines, epitomise this trend by utilising nationalist and anti-globalisation discourses to mobilise significant support from populations affected by economic distress and globalisation's ramifications (Jenkins, 2016). This critical trend highlights the pivotal role played by segments of impoverished populations in the dominance of right-wing movements globally (Lugo-Ocando, 2020).

It is increasingly evident that these movements have secured their electoral victories by garnering substantial support from deprived demographics such as Brazil that have chosen to oppose left-wing candidates. The significance of this phenomenon lies in its departure from historical voting patterns and ideological affiliations. Contrary to past assumptions, impoverished communities, often assumed to lean towards left-leaning platforms advocating for social welfare and economic equity, have shifted their allegiance. Instead, they have aligned with right-wing factions espousing anti-globalisation sentiments, promoting nationalist agendas, and positioning themselves as crusaders against corruption and crime. This electoral change can be contextualised within nations where widespread poverty prevails. For instance, in Latin America, the intense wave that ushered in the "Pink Tide" of left-wing presidents in the 2000s has since receded, leaving only a few in power, such as Luis Alberto Arce Catacora in Bolivia, and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador in Mexico (Reyes, 2012). At the same time, formerly popular regimes in Nicaragua and Venezuela now cling on to power with the support of the military, a tactic once criticised by the left (Spronk, 2008). In this context, the broader question revolves around why individuals from lower-income brackets vote against their perceived economic interests. Alterations in how poverty is portrayed in Latin American political communication and media discussions have significantly contributed to the ascent of right-wing populist leaders (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). This trend partly stems from the growing anti-globalisation sentiments in the Global South, which have rallied considerable portions of the populace around these leaders (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). Within this context, the right-wing leaders have framed poverty as a consequence of globalisation and its associated forces, emphasising the notion that unchecked globalisation leads to economic exploitation, loss of jobs, and increased societal disparities (McVeigh, 1999). This has enabled them to channel the discontent stemming from economic insecurities and social anxieties, consolidating their support base and galvanising widespread appeal among deprived sections of society.

Delving into this argument involves examining specific Brazilian news media outlets covering Jair Bolsonaro's presidential campaign extensively. This scrutiny is crucial in comprehending the nuanced dynamics of how political narratives, particularly those related to poverty, were shaped and disseminated during this pivotal electoral period. The selection of Brazilian news media outlets forms a focal point of this investigative analysis. These outlets represent influential channels with substantial reach and impact within the

country's media landscape. By focusing on these specific platforms, this essay aims to decipher the dominant narratives, biases, and frames employed by the media in portraying Bolsonaro and his campaign. It intends to uncover whether these outlets presented a consistent narrative aligning Bolsonaro with anti-globalisation rhetoric and nationalist ideologies, especially concerning poverty alleviation strategies.

Paradox of Right-Wing Politics: Conservative Populism

There are several historical instances, where conservative right-wing political figures have successfully gathered support from impoverished communities. While examining the 1922 Italian elections that marked Mussolini's rise to power, Antonio Gramsci (1992) questioned the working class's choice. He contemplated how individuals voted against their interests, favouring those who historically oppressed and exploited them (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). This historical precedent prompts a deeper exploration into the complex dynamics of electoral choices among marginalised groups. Gramsci's (1992) inquiry into this apparent paradox within 'dialectical materialism' involved closely examining culture and ideology's pivotal roles in power dynamics. He delved into the mechanisms by which oppressors could manipulate the political consciousness of the subjugated, shedding light on the complexities underlying the subversion of individual will and collective interests. This exploration underlined the intricate relationship between dominant ideologies and the assimilation of these ideas by oppressed communities, offering insight into the co-option of political allegiance among the disenfranchised.

Similarly, according to Lugo-Ocando (2020), leaders like Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States utilised strategic tactics to gain favour among the masses. Their approaches involved harnessing cultural elements and emphasising nationalist sentiments to resonate with a broader populace. As Prime Minister of the UK during the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher capitalised on fostering a sense of national pride and identity. She invoked the notion of 'the people' as a collective force to rally around conservative policies (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). Her leadership style centred on bolstering nationalistic narratives, advocating for economic reforms, and championing the idea of individual responsibility. Thatcher's administration often portrayed itself as fighting against what they considered to be the encroachment of socialism, invoking traditional British values and national interests as a call to action for the populace. Ronald Reagan, during his presidency in the United States in the 1980s, employed similar rhetoric. He projected an image of a leader advocating for the 'average American' against the perceived threats of big government and external adversaries (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). Reagan tapped into the patriotic sentiment of the American people, emphasising a strong national identity and traditional values. His policies and speeches often played on themes of American exceptionalism, aiming to unite the nation under a shared vision of prosperity and strength.

In recent times, the emergence of Donald Trump as a political figure and subsequently as the President of the United States marked a withdrawal from traditional Republican support for globalisation and free trade. Trump's presidential campaign and subsequent policies reflected a shift towards protectionist and isolationist tendencies, a departure from the prevailing stance of expanding global markets that had long characterised American conservative politics (Magcamit, 2017). During his campaign, Trump's rhetoric emphasised 'America First,' a slogan that echoed a staunchly nationalist sentiment (Ettinger, 2018). He criticised trade deals like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), portraying them as detrimental to American workers and industries (Magcamit, 2017). His arguments resonated with segments of the American population that felt left behind by globalisation, particularly in industries affected by outsourcing and trade competition. Increasingly, more Western conservatives are adopting nationalist expression, although it does not invariably translate into corresponding policies. This shift reflects a desire to revive protectionist measures and emphasise greater self-reliance, reminiscent of Spanish Fascist leader Francisco Franco's pursuit of economic self-sufficiency (McVeigh, 1999).

This argument analyses the stance of right-wing movements that advocate for limiting globalisation and emphasising nationalism. Beyond economic isolationism, these movements also harbour an aversion to certain societal advancements associated with modernisation. Hence, the discourses of these right-wing leaders are frequently linked not just to reinstating limitations on trade but also rolling back on civil liberties like same-sex marriage, abortion, and freedom of movement, using what is termed as 'cultural populism' (McGuigan, 1992). This stance reflects a broader strategy: employing rhetoric centred on preserving cultural values and identity to impede or reverse the march of modernity. Thus, the seemingly straightforward economic and nationalist agendas also serve as tools to resist societal advancements that do not align with their vision, showcasing a complex intertwining of economic, cultural, and political ideologies within these movements.

Methodology

The qualitative methodology utilised in this research aims to delve into Bolsonaro's political communication by examining how his messages and narratives regarding globalisation and poverty were framed through two influential Brazilian mainstream media platforms: the *O'Globo* broadcasting network and *Folha de São Paulo*. The study incorporates primary data derived from these media sources, complemented by secondary data from various scholarly works to support and substantiate the analysis. This investigation specifically examines Bolsonaro's messaging strategies from August to October 2018, with a focus on the electoral campaign period.

Primarily, the selection of these media platforms was critical as *O'Globo* was chosen for its expansive viewership and influence as Brazil's primary television network, while *Folha de São* Paulo was for its pivotal role in shaping national news agendas (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). The exclusion of social media and digital platforms in this study is to focus solely on traditional media sources. Despite the rise of digital platforms, none wield the same impact and authority as established legacy media in Brazil (Pedrozo, 2013). For instance, in 2018, *Folha de São Paulo* had an average daily circulation of 294,811 copies, establishing itself as the largest newspaper in São Paulo state and holding considerable influence nationwide (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). This extensive reach ensures that their content permeates various regions, reaching audiences of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, educational levels, and geographical locations.

Furthermore, this emphasises the concentrated ownership and restricted variety prevalent in Brazil's media structure, as indicated by scholars like Carolina Matos in *Journalism and Political Democracy in Brazil* (2008) (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). This concentration of media ownership suggests that a limited number of entities or individuals possess substantial control over various media outlets, potentially influencing the narratives and perspectives presented to the public. Also, the collected data provided an opportunity to delve into Bolsonaro's approach to communicating a narrative of 'change.' This mainly involved a deliberate drift away from the established concepts of modernity and liberalism. Instead, he aligned his discourse on poverty with the broader theme of anti-globalisation (Lugo-Ocando, 2020).

Media Manipulation: Bolsonaro's Populist Rise

The media's treatment of poverty in Brazil and other Latin American nations during non-electoral periods requires attention. Various academic investigations reveal a concerning trend that poverty occupies a marginal position in the news agenda of mainstream media outlets. These studies collectively assert that poverty is relegated to the lower rungs of news priorities (Lugo-Ocando & Nguyen, 2017). It tends to surface primarily within international contexts or when interconnected with specific news events. During the examined period of this study, *Folha de São Paulo* had a monthly news output averaging over 4,000 articles, with less than 8 per cent of its coverage focusing on poverty. Historically aligned with liberal and progressive viewpoints, the newspaper published only around 316 articles about poverty (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). Similarly, *O'Globo*, which had a monthly output of approximately 3200 articles, allocated around 6 per cent of its coverage to poverty-related issues, resulting in roughly 192 news pieces addressing poverty. However, a mere fraction of these articles engaged with poverty within political debates among candidates. This discrepancy is noteworthy, especially given the newspaper's past association with these ideological sectors. The lack of attention given to poverty in

mainstream media settings, especially within political discourse, signals a systemic trend indicating closer scrutiny.

In extension, this disconnect between poverty-related coverage and its integration into political discussions puts forward a broader media landscape where socio-economic concerns, particularly those linked to poverty, are not accorded the significance warranted by their societal impact. The evidence highlights a striking disparity in media coverage between Fernando Haddad and Jair Bolsonaro. Data collected through primary research indicates that Bolsonaro received over 30 per cent of the total electoral campaign coverage, whereas Haddad's coverage accounted for less than 17 per cent. For instance, *Folha de São Paulo* focused on Haddad in approximately 703 articles, whereas Bolsonaro attained centre stage in over 1,171 news pieces (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). Adopting a parallel approach, *O'Globo's* news coverage featured approximately 328 references to Bolsonaro's key speeches and public appearances, while Haddad's speeches were highlighted in approximately 119 instances. This substantial variance in coverage implies a notable skew in attention and emphasis towards Bolsonaro within the media. Recent studies conducted by Tible (2018) further underline this asymmetry, suggesting a distinct bias in the framing of news stories (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). Bolsonaro, notably, received a more favourable portrayal following an unfortunate incident where an attacker stabbed him.

Conversely, Haddad faced consistent censure, primarily linked to his association with the defamed leaders of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT). The systematic criticism directed at Haddad stemmed from the PT's involvement in corruption scandals like *Operação Lava Jato* and allegations of receiving bribes from Odebrecht, a prominent Brazilian construction company (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). This negative association with the tainted image of PT leaders significantly impacted the media's depiction of Haddad and influenced public perception of his candidacy.

Furthermore, the analysis, based on scrutinising primary data, puts forward a striking difference in the utilisation of the term 'poverty' between Bolsonaro and his supporters on one side and Haddad and his supporters on the other. Haddad and his allies, including Lula, prominently engaged with the term 'poverty' in their messages, focusing on its direct mention as part of their campaign dialogue. This emphasis sought to foreground poverty as a central concern, potentially signalling a more direct approach to addressing this socio-economic challenge. However, Bolsonaro's rhetoric encompassed less emphasis on poverty (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). Instead, he consistently emphasised eradicating poverty by linking it to broader themes of national progress and industriousness. This approach aimed to convey that Brazil's resurgence and poverty alleviation were contingent upon reclaiming sovereignty and guiding its future. For instance, Bolsonaro puts forward:

"The victory we are celebrating today is not the triumph of a political party but a 'victory for freedom.' The commitment we have made was to give a decent government to Brazilians. Committed only to Brazil and our people. I can guarantee that this is how it will be. Our government will consist of people with the same intentions as those listening to me right now. This will turn Brazil into a prosperous and free nation." (Lugo-Ocando, 2020, p. 111)

This indicates that Bolsonaro's discourse following his victory encapsulates a rhetoric reinforced by nationalist fervour and anti-globalisation sentiments, interweaving the notions of freedom, national commitment, and prosperity. In this case, the media's depiction of Bolsonaro as an anti-globalisation candidate, as evidenced by both *Folha de São Paulo* and *O'Globo*, diverges significantly from conventional right-wing narratives (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). This characterisation contrasts previous right-wing figures, marking a pivotal departure from established political trends. Bolsonaro's assertion of a victory for freedom aligns with the ideological stance of many right-leaning political figures, emphasising individual liberties and reduced government intervention. At first, Bolsonaro's claim of 'victory for freedom' echoes sentiments commonly associated with anti-globalisation. This stance often advocates safeguarding national sovereignty against perceived encroachments by global entities. Connected to this idea is Bolsonaro's pledge to provide a 'decent government' to Brazilians, indicating a commitment to addressing domestic concerns. This commitment likely encompasses several facets, including job creation and national development. The emphasis on a government formed by individuals with intentions aligned with the people's aspirations implies a dedication to tackling issues that resonate with the populace.

Moreover, Bolsonaro's claim of turning Brazil into a prosperous and free nation intersects with the notions of anti-environmentalism and pro-development. His interventions on *O'Globo's* newscasts during the period under research indicate a consistent connection between opposition to globalisation and environmental policies (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). The pursuit of economic growth and development often clashes with environmental concerns, as seen in policies favouring resource extraction or land use that may conflict with conservation efforts. This emphasis on prosperity could potentially overlook environmental sustainability, posing challenges for conservation efforts and climate change mitigation in Brazil. However, a recent study conducted by Brazil's leading polling institution, the *Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística*, and commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) – Brazil, highlights a shift among Brazilians who are progressively attributing greater responsibility for environmental protection to individuals rather than the government (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). The mention of job creation aligns with the broader goal of environment protectionism in an individual capacity, intensifying the agenda of national progress, which Bolsonaro fully capitalised on the opportunities addressed in his speeches. By advocating for the transition to renewable energy sources like solar and wind

power, Bolsonaro not only addressed the need to reduce dependence on fossil fuels but also emphasised the potential for developing a green economy. This transition led to job creation across various verticals, including manufacturing, installation, and research, contributing to both economic growth and environmental sustainability (Viscidi & Graham, 2019). In Bolsonaro's rhetoric, job creation within the environmental sector was framed as a means of bolstering the economy while simultaneously appealing to nationalist sentiments.

In a broader context, these discoveries necessitate examining the waning influence of the left-wing liberal paradigm in Brazil. Undeniably, the tenure of Lula's and Dilma's administrations, rooted in leftist ideologies, yielded substantial advancements that notably improved the lives of numerous individuals, marked by a considerable reduction in poverty levels (Lugo-Ocando, 2020). However, Bolsonaro's achievement of gaining considerable support from some of the most impoverished sectors warrants deeper scrutiny, especially in confronting the challenges posed by the ascendance of populism. The remarkable transition in political dynamics, marked by Bolsonaro's success in mobilising support from socio-economically disadvantaged segments, denotes a withdrawal from the traditional stronghold of leftist ideologies in these demographics. This transition signifies a seismic shift in political allegiances, highlighting a disconnect or disillusionment among these sectors with the previous left-wing administrations.

Furthermore, the findings of this research reveal a consistent strategic amalgamation in Bolsonaro's 2018 campaign messaging, intertwining pledges to spearhead anti-globalisation initiatives and combat corruption with a multifaceted approach aimed at uplifting living standards and tackling poverty. This entailed a nuanced positioning to resonate with a diverse voter base disenchanted with prevailing globalisation trends and concerned about corruption within political structures. In addition, within this narrative, Bolsonaro's platform conveyed a pronounced withdrawal from established policies related to free trade, environmentalism, and social and cultural liberalism. By proposing to curb free trade and challenge environmental policies, Bolsonaro resonated with constituents seeking protectionist measures and viewing globalisation as detrimental to national interests. Simultaneously, the rejection of aspects of social and cultural liberalism signalled a departure from traditional norms, aligning with segments of the electorate seeking a conservative shift in societal values. By framing these policy dynamics to improve citizens' economic conditions, Bolsonaro sought to appeal to voters disillusioned with the status quo and seeking tangible socioeconomic improvements. This alignment between anti-globalisation, anti-corruption, and socioeconomic welfare provided a comprehensive framework that resonated with diverse voter segments, contributing significantly to Bolsonaro's electoral success.

Conclusion

Despite globalisation being predominantly viewed as an economic phenomenon, it is often portrayed in political discussions and public perception as an individual and cultural phenomenon, as observed in the Brazilian context. Bolsonaro and the political right in Brazil skillfully leverage this multifaceted perception of globalisation in their discourse, employing populist rhetoric that pledges a revival of more prosperous eras while casting off elements of modernity. Modernity, characterised by rapid technological advancements, cultural shifts, and progressive social policies (Giddens, 1991), is often portrayed as a threat to traditional values and economic stability. Bolsonaro's utilisation of media platforms facilitated the articulation of narratives opposing globalisation, which aligned with sentiments disapproving of modernity. This approach allowed him to position himself as an advocate against the adverse effects of modernity, resonating with segments of the population disenchanted with contemporary changes and fostering a sense of disillusionment with global forces among the electorate. This highlights how anti-globalisation discourse strategically capitalises on addressing the pervasive sense of uncertainty prevalent within discussions on risk, particularly evident in the interplay between poverty and references to uncertainty. By linking poverty to feelings of uncertainty, his narrative implied that globalisation and its associated modernity perpetuated socio-economic unpredictability. This association served a twofold purpose: it framed globalisation as the underlying cause of societal challenges, and positioned anti-globalisation as the solution to mitigate this uncertainty.

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Deconstructing India's Welfare State: Ideals, Failures, and the Quest for Balance

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Abstract

This essay explores the evolution of the welfare state and examines the specific trajectory of the Indian welfare state, tracing its development from the post-independence period to the present day. In the Indian edition, the essay examines how welfare measures, initially limited to food security, expanded their role to include health, education, and employment. The essay critiques the limitations of India's welfare state, highlighting challenges posed by social cleavages, insufficient local governance resources, and flawed assumptions about human nature. Through this analysis, the paper argues that while India has made strides in welfare provision, it faces persistent barriers in translating public goods into meaningful social outcomes, especially in areas affected by societal norms and local governance weaknesses.

Keywords: Welfare State, Economy, Society, Public Provisioning, Local government

Introduction

The idea that the state is or should be the agency of human welfare is nothing novel. Aristotle (350 BC) asserts that a state is a natural outgrowth of human social life and its primary purpose is to promote the common good and enable individuals to live a life of virtue and fulfilment. It arises out of the need to fulfil human desiderata which cannot be met by individuals alone. Thus, the state exists for the purpose of allowing men to achieve eudaimonia, the just state must therefore be one that allows its citizens to flourish (Yian, 2021), i.e., a state originates for the physical welfare of human beings but continues to exist for their moral welfare. The *Shanti Parva* of *Mahabharata* (Vyasa, n.d.), too explains the ideal state as one where the ruler's governance aligns with the broader principles of dharma, leading to a just and harmonious society. It states that the state came into origin when sinfulness prevailed in the world and thus, the maintenance of *Dharma* by the King meant protection of the social order of family wealth, property, and communities (Garg, 2004).

What is novel about it is the coinage of the term where the state is not regarded as the agency of moral welfare but as an instrument of economic welfare. It is evident from the

multiple definitions of what constitutes a welfare state. For instance, Dr Abraham defines it as a community where state power is deliberately used to modify the normal play of economic forces so as to obtain a more equal distribution of income for every citizen, a basic minimum real income irrespective of the market value of his work and property (Ghosh, 1954, p. 328). This emphasis on the economic aspect of the welfare state is historical but does not express the welfare state in its truest sense. The essay will deconstruct the meaning of the welfare state in the following sections.

Origin and Evolution of Welfare State

Historically, the individualistic political setting enunciating equality and liberty coincided with an unprecedented period of prosperity. The nations were moving towards a force of industrialisation, but this prosperity came into the hands of a few at the cost of many. And these fortunate few who held material power wielded social power in similar proportion. This negatived equality and liberty becomes a myth in the absence of equality. These few, in possession of wealth, at the cost of the liberty of many, diluted the concept of freedom — and redefined it as freedom from state interference. Due to this, they could run unencumbered factories of exploitation and injustice (Ghosh, 1954). This reduced the role of the state to what Nozick (1974) called a "night watchman". It allowed the market economy to operate with individuals who, at least theoretically, were considered free. But even when Adam Smith advocated for free markets in his *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), he expounded on the limited but necessary role of the state. He expanded on three duties of the government – protecting the society from violence and invasion of other independent societies, protecting every member of society from injustice and oppression of others by proper administration of justice, and erecting and maintaining public institutions for the greater welfare of the society (Patton & Lipford, 2020).

Gradually, the realities of injustice within social order became clear. Problems of insecurity, inequality, and instability were produced by capital accumulation and market processes. The depressions of the 1890s and 1930s made the belief in a *laissez-faire* market weak and the political class all across advocated for stabilised markets and assured full employment. But to be 'for' the welfare state did not mean being against capitalism; it just meant the social control of economic processes for stability. Keynes too, when propounded for a broader role of the state for this purpose, observed that welfare states were not a means of destroying capitalist market processes; they were a set of collective action techniques for its more efficient management (Garland, 2016).

Then the question arises: what, in fact, is really a welfare state? Some of the misunderstandings come from the term 'welfare' in the phrase which often leads to the misconception that welfare states primarily focus on aid for the poor. However, they are fundamentally about social insurance, social rights, social provision, and the social

regulation of economic action — the chief beneficiaries of which are not just the poor but also the middle classes and those in employment (Garland, 2016). *Second*, the welfare state does not constitute the whole state; it is a specific mode of governing. Therefore, the welfare state is just a function of a larger state which engages in other activities too, such as expenditure, trade, and defence. *Third*, welfare states evolve and undergo over time to suit the needs of relative states of which they are a part. The welfare state of a developed country differs from that of a developing country based on the needs and conditions of its population. Welfare states take up various forms, some are more generous than others, while some have a fixed role to play; nonetheless, they have become an indispensable part of modern states.

In 1909, a young Beveridge published his *Unemployment - A Problem of Industry* advocating for an active role of the state in correcting the market failures. With time, it came to be accepted that unemployment has not only to do with individual capabilities but also with the organisation of society and the state, and that, the state could no longer disown it as a problem of the free market. After the two world wars, the Labour government with conservative ideas implemented various social security policies, such as those which catered to full employment, health services, and food subsidies. Lord William Beveridge's *Social Insurance and Allied Services* (1942), also known as the Beveridge Report turned out to be influential in the foundation of a welfare state in Britain. In the development of the idea of a welfare state, one thing has been made very clear — the emphasis on the economic aspect of welfarism.

Welfare State: The Indian Edition

The modern idea of a welfare state in India is a foreign import. And with this, the limitations of welfare states in the state of origin are also incorporated in the Indian form. Shedding light on the Ajmer resolution (1954) which says, "This necessarily involves the elimination of unemployment, the production of much greater wealth in the country, and the proper and equitable distribution of this among the people. For this purpose, the present social structure, which still continues to be partly based on an acquisitive economy, has to be progressively changed into a socialised economy" (AICC, 1954). This clearly puts emphasis on the economic side of welfare. Not only this, it also reveals some confusion between a welfare state and socialism. If socialism could be accepted by countries all across as a medium to achieve ultimate human welfare, there would not be a need to create a welfare state. As Ghosh (1954) puts it, a welfare state is a social service state within the philosophical framework of individualism and institutional organisation of the private economy, though planned. The United States is a welfare state in the sense that it provides some considerable social services to its citizens — health, food subsidies, old age pensions, et cetera but to no stretch of definition, it is a socialised economy.

Historically, India's welfare measures have been based on calorie-centric and money-metric assessments, limiting the scope of human prosperity (Rahman & Pingali, 2024). Consequently, the Public Distribution System was first launched after World War II as a centrally-sponsored scheme for food rationing. The Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme, launched in 1973, is a forerunner to the famous Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). However, these schemes lost their importance after the nation became self-sufficient in food grains during the Green Revolution, and were re-designed. Despite high levels of malnutrition in the country, nutrition did not emerge on the policy agenda until the mid-1970s. The Integrated Child Development Scheme was introduced in 1975 on a pilot basis, and its effectiveness remained limited due to poor implementation.

Until the 1990s, social welfare policy was centred around food security. It is evident from the fact that the poverty line was based upon the 'minimum calorie requirement'. The policy focus had been rural areas and food security, largely due to the history of famines in India (Rahman & Pingali, 2024). Even after the 1990s, with increased focus on fiscal responsibility, the Public Distribution System was restructured and made more targeted. For the first time in 1997, the concepts of Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) with ration cards were introduced. It still lingers in the policy space in terms of priority and non-priority households, respectively, in the National Food Security Act, 2013.

As the Indian economy grew in the 2000s, the consistently high poor child nutrition began to attract policy attention, and the Integrated Child Development Scheme saw an expansion. Similarly, a need to strengthen measures against classroom hunger was also felt, which led to the launch of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (an extension of the erstwhile National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, 1995).

In 2008, the Indian government launched the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana, which aimed to provide health insurance coverage to below-poverty-line families. It was also expanded in 2018 under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana with a larger beneficiary focus. This short introduction to various policies allows one to appreciate the growth trajectory of India from a narrow focus on food security towards an aim of a broader safety net. Many state governments too, have generously implemented such welfare schemes, upholding distinct welfare practices of their own.

Although India has created a strong structure for extending social protection to a large section of its population, its schemes so far have been working as a band-aid to the developmental challenges it faces. For instance, data from India's National Family Health Survey (NFHS) between 1992–1993 and 2015–2016 showed some progress. For example, the prevalence of stunting among children under five fell from 52 per cent to 38 per cent, and the percentage of underweight children declined from 53 per cent to 36 per cent (Nie

et al., 2019). However, recent data from NFHS 2019–2020 highlights that progress remained slow. The national rate of stunting marginally improved from 38 per cent to 36 per cent. A state-level comparison of NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 shows that only three states—Bihar, Manipur, and Sikkim—experienced a meaningful decline in stunting rates by at least 3 percentage points, with Bihar's rate falling from 48.3 per cent in 2015–2016 to 42.9 per cent in 2019–2020. Alarmingly, thirteen states and union territories saw an increase in stunting (Vir & Suri, 2021, pp. 8–10).

Why India's Welfare State Fell Short

This section aims to point out the performance of the Indian welfare state, specifically looking at the paradox of its effectiveness in some areas against inadequacies in others. It argues that India has performed relatively well in macroeconomic indicators, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth and controlling inflation, but has faced difficulties in addressing microeconomic issues that require improving individual living conditions. It has struggled in areas deeply affected by social divisions, such as caste and patriarchy, and where the local government machinery was required. The slow pace of development is also attributed to India's early transition to democracy and faulty assumptions of human nature, which may have influenced these shortcomings. The following is the explanation of the same.

A Distinctive Democracy

The distinctiveness of the Indian democracy explains the heterogeneity in the performance of the welfare state. This distinctiveness can be explained in three points. *Firstly*, in the West, the universal franchise was slowly given to people, from property-holding men to all men and then to women, whereas in India, the universal franchise with a democratic setup came in the wake of independence while literacy was just 18 per cent and the life expectancy was 32 years. In both Western democracies and East Asia, universal franchise came after the state had laid the foundations of public goods in education and health, and the structures of the welfare state were built gradually on these foundations (Kapur, 2020). However, in the case of India, public provisioning was followed by redistribution. It is evident from the fact that we had the National Policy on Education (1968 & 1986) and Operation Blackboard (1987) before we had the Right to Education (2009), finally making education a fundamental right for all children.

Since the country had a history of famines, the state chose to focus on vulnerable groups rather than providing everyone with basic amenities. As a result, not everyone benefited from the government's actions, as the state focused on aiding those most affected. This selective approach led to a loss of trust in the state from those who had means and wealth

(the middle and upper class), leading to an inclination towards the private sector for the provisioning of goods combined with a reluctance to pay taxes.

Second, electoral mobilisation along social cleavages; India is a vast country with diverse social groups (based on caste, class, religion, et cetera). This division on various lines, many a time, affects how politicians respond to voters' demands. So instead of trying to establish a consensus on broad policies and public services that benefit everyone, politicians focus on programs that target specific groups. Due to multiple instances of corruption, the voters have also lost trust in the political class, and because of this distrust, voters prefer to get what they can in the form of targeted subsidies rather than waiting for broader services that might never arrive.

Third, a trend can be witnessed where non-credible politicians tend to emphasise the provision of public goods that are visible and can be provided quickly, like infrastructure over improvement in human capital. It is also because such goods are tangible, easy to monitor, and measurable — the number of toilets built can be counted, but the improvement in the health of the children will take a long time to manifest into measurable results. This trend of subsidised public provisioning of essential goods and services, normally provided by the private sector, such as bank accounts, cooking gas, toilets, electricity, housing, et cetera, has come to be known as New Welfarism.

Inadequate Local Government Resources

The local government expenditure of India in comparison to its counterparts is somewhat skewed. Local government expenditure is 3 per cent of the total government expenditure in India, compared with 27 per cent in the United States and 51 per cent in China (Ren, 2015). Moreover, according to the economic survey (2017-18) by the Ministry of Finance, the reliance of India's rural local governments on its own resources is just 6 per cent (compared to 40 per cent for third-tier governments in Brazil and Germany), and they raise a meagre 4 per cent of their overall resources as direct taxes (compared with about 19 and 26 per cent in Brazil and Germany, respectively). As a result, central and state governments in India spend on average 15–20 times more per capita than local governments (Kapur, 2020). Given that the basic public goods — from primary health to education, from sanitation to water, and from policing to urban planning — are to be supplied by local governments (although the policies are created by the centre), poor delivery of services in India can be attributed to the lack of resources (both financial and human) at the lowest level of government. India has always been known for its robust bureaucracy and exceptionally good plans for development but the lack of manpower and funds at local levels hinders the developmental process.

Faulty Assumptions of Human Nature

A major flaw in the welfare ideology stems from the faulty assumptions of human nature. Humans tend to work till they can satisfy their needs. Beyond that, they work depending on the availability of material resources to achieve pleasure in the form of comfort and luxury. However, if the basic minimum needs are fulfilled by the state, the individuals would prefer to not work. Venkataraman (1994) argues that one of the assumptions behind the theory of the welfare state is that the individual would transform the socio-economic benefits provided to them by the state into tangible economic wealth as they tend to be productive. Yet, the experience shows that the vast number of beneficiaries neither became productive nor did they contribute to the collective good. The ancient Indian state used to be run by a king considered a paternal figure or provider. Although the figure of a king has become obstinate, the paternal qualities continue to be looked upon and are promoted by the party politics in the country — this creates a receiver-and-giver relationship between the leader and citizens. Moreover, the idea of looking up to someone for the fulfilment of all wants encompasses a spirit of dependence and complacency and a lack of initiative and enterprise. It also generates a kind of superiority in the provider and inferiority in the receiver.

Concluding Thoughts

It is clear from the various examples that the Indian state has been able to perform comparatively well in areas where reliance on local government was less in terms of delivery and accountability and on those goods and services where societal norms and values concerning hierarchy and status matter less. It explains why the Indian state has been able to provide "hard" goods rather easily. For instance, India has seen a multi-fold increase in food production but is still not able to improve malnutrition outcomes, which are affected by intra-household decisions. India's state is even less effective in improving worrisome sex ratios, low (and declining) female labour force participation, or generalised societal violence against women — all of which are rooted to varying degrees in social norms (Kapur, 2020). In these cases, state failures reflect societal failures, and it does so because the state is a natural outgrowth of human social life.

In this decade, India's state has successfully opened bank accounts for over 350 million people covering almost 78 per cent of the eligible population, delivered gas connections to more than 80 million households, built around 100 million toilets reaching 600 million people. However, access to the toilet does not mean that there is no open defecation. Around 11.1 per cent of our population still defecates in the open. Having access to gas connections does not mean that people have stopped cooking on fuelwood. The opinion in remote areas that fuelwood is better than cooking gas constrains the change along with the cost of refilling the cylinder. Bringing about a societal change is a long process. However, it

can be achieved by a mix of advocacy, education, policy and legal mechanisms, economic empowerment, cultural and social shifts, technology, and inclusive participation by all stakeholders. Not to forget it also comes with intangible benefits and is hard to monitor and measure. The data points throughout the essay are not to paint a bleak picture but to show that some improvement has been achieved and there's scope to achieve a lot more. There is no denying that the Indian state is building capacity for transforming the inputs into output; and transforming these outputs into outcomes is yet another potential step.

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Understanding Crime, Human Deviance, and the Morality of the State

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Abstract

Crime and human deviance are important concepts to understand when we talk about maintaining 'law and order' in society. Through this paper, we will examine these values and understand their implication for our society. Through analysis of various theories and concepts, this paper aims to understand 'what constitutes a crime?', 'why is it necessary for us to understand it?', and how morality and law work together in tackling it. We will take up ideas from contemporary scholars such as Michael Sandel and Tom Gash to understand how we perceive crime and combat it with all the knowledge we have today. We will also explore some sociological theories such as the social disorganisation theory which tells us that a breakdown in society can lead to an increase in crime statistics. We will also examine the utilitarian theory by Jeremy Bentham, and analyse its implication in the state's reaction to crime in general. Through this paper, we will examine the psychological, sociological, and political aspects of crime.

Keywords: Crime, Human Deviance, Policy, Morality, Social Disorganisation Theory

Why Does Understanding Crime Help? A Study By Tom Gash

When we talk about understanding crime, we are often faced with questions like 'why must we understand it?' and 'how does it help policymakers?' Understanding crime helps us identify its nature and causes, and identify its roots. Tom Gash, a prominent criminologist, talks about how research work on the same allowed policymakers to successfully lower criminal activity.

Human behaviour is much more malleable than we assume it to be, various criminologists along with policymakers have successfully reduced crimes by manipulating the behaviour of society. In 1993, Australia saw a 52 per cent decline in bar fights. This was done through simple ideas such as reducing happy hours in clubs and bars, barring the entry of drunk individuals, training the security to be welcoming instead of intimidating, and improving the transport system late at night (Gash, 2017). This success was achieved through the

collaborative efforts of criminologists and policymakers who worked together to understand the nature of crime. It helped them in analysing the patterns and motivations that fueled the cases of assaults. It helped them devise a strategy (reducing happy hours, changing the hostile environment, and improving the transport system at night) that allowed them to address the root causes rather than just addressing the acts of crime.

Along with policymakers and criminologists, business owners have successfully saved their businesses from criminals by preventing the chance of a crime being committed too. An example of this could be the famous United States-based retail store 7/11 changing the layout of its store by moving the cash register to the front of the store, making the windows bigger, and the store brighter, and removing signage from the windows to allow more visibility of the store from outside. Through this, instances of a 7/11 being robbed fell by two-thirds (Gash, 2017).

From the above, it can be inferred that understanding crime plays a pivotal role in the formulation of effective policies aimed at deterring crime. It allows policymakers to understand the root causes of crime, and its social factors, and recognise how crime can manifest differently in different cultural contexts. Moreover, a nuanced understanding of crime allows policymakers to reassess the methods of intervention strategies. An example of this could be how law enforcement agencies leverage small-scale drug dealers to infiltrate and dismantle entire narcotics networks, rather than focusing solely on the arrest of these minor offenders. By examining the profiles of individuals most likely to engage in criminal activity, policymakers can devise protective measures that prevent vulnerable groups from entering the criminal sphere. This fosters a societal approach that emphasises on restoration of social harmony and rehabilitation rather than emphasising punishment.

Understanding Crime and Human Deviance

Fundamentally, to understand the role of the state we need to first set a definition for crime and human deviance. While the mere question of 'what is crime?' may seem easy to answer, it holds a lot of debate in the field of criminology. Many scholars such as Stephen Case (2017) stated in an interview that it is difficult to define crime as it is a social construct. There is no 'perfect universally accepted' definition of crime because the things that constitute criminal behaviour change. An example of this could be the decriminalisation of homosexual relations. While in the past there have been reservations regarding homosexuality, today in some countries it is an accepted form of relationship. Another problem that comes up when trying to define crime universally is due to cultural differences an example of this is that in Saudi Arabia apostasy is considered illegal (United States Department of State, 2023) while in India apostasy is not illegal and remains a free choice that an individual can make with regards to their religious preferences.

Over the years there have been various thinkers who have tried to get a universal understanding of crime, but have failed due to all the above-stated limitations. However, this does not mean that we cannot use the closest definition of crime. In an analysis done by Grant Lamond (2007), he tries to approach the question of 'what is crime?' through two approaches – a doctrinal account which states that the definition should cover all clear examples of crime and apply to all new laws that might come in the future. Another approach is the philosophical understanding of crime which can be done by understanding the sheer nature of crime itself. Another approach to understanding crime is to see them as public wrongs. This means that crimes do not only affect the victim of the crime but also the society as a whole (Lamond, 2007). There is more to this political thought but it will be deliberated upon in the later sections of this essay when we try to understand the state's role in crime. While summarising his article on 'What is Crime?' Lamond (2007) concludes that crime is defined as a serious wrong-doing or action that warrants state-sanctioned punishment. This definition should not be confused with the idea that any action that violates conventional morality is a crime. A very simple example of this can be lying, while it is something that is not appreciated in society, unless it has to do something with fraud, bribery, or other legal implications, it does not warrant state-sanctioned punishment. This tells us how personal moral beliefs can be different from what constitutes a crime. The latter half of the definition underlines a crucial aspect of distinguishing between 'crime' and 'human deviance'. Human deviance can be understood as an act that defies established social norms which range from social conventions or formalised laws. This understanding is crucial because while all instances of crime are acts of human deviance, not all acts of deviance are classified as criminal in nature.

Renowned French Sociologist, Émile Durkheim, gives us a deeper insight into this idea by suggesting that not all acts of deviance are necessarily negative and that some may even manifest positively. It can seem like the act is 'deviant' or 'anti-social' in nature but can serve a greater purpose that challenges the existing framework of morality in society. An example of this can be Martin Luther King Jr, who was initially viewed as a 'deviant' or 'anti-social' figure by Southerners, but today stands as a global icon of resistance. His willingness to challenge the *status quo* in society and advocacy for social change were instrumental. His idea of the Civil Rights Movement illustrates how he was a 'deviant' to society at that time but was not considered criminal in nature.

Therefore, we can conclude that crime and human deviance are different concepts and while all crime may be deviant, not all deviant activities are criminal in nature.

Why Do Crimes Happen in Society?

Before examining the state's role in addressing crime, it is crucial to first understand why crimes happen, in the first place. Understanding this is crucial, as it gives us a basis for formulating policies. Sociologists have categorised a few reasons for this, two of which are said to be the primary reasons for deviant behaviour.

First, the psychological aspect of committing a crime is unresolved conflicts within individuals which propels them towards social deviance. This aspect states that psychological turmoil in an individual's mind can manifest itself in leading individuals to engage in criminal or deviant behaviour. While there are ongoing studies on this theme, this still remains a widely accepted notion. The sociological aspect states that the societal environment in which people are raised can shape an individual's behaviour. For instance, if an individual lives in an environment, where wealth and respect are attained through illegitimate means, then it is highly possible that the individual may follow the same path (Hartney, 2023).

Emphasising the second aspect, it is important to understand a theory widely accepted and often put by sociologists to understand the role of the state when it comes to the negative angle of human deviance. Researchers at the University of Chicago were studying the growing effects of urbanisation, industrialisation, and social organisation. They believed that just as animals compete for space and existence, humans compete for scarce and desirable spaces (Kurbin, 2009). Crime was not the focus initially but Shaw and McKay, two researchers entered this study, and they applied it to studying delinquency. They defined the theory as the state of society where there is a breakdown in social control, which leads to various challenges such as an increase in crime, general deviances, socioeconomic discrepancies, degeneration of values, and much more (Kurbin, 2009). This is known as the Social Disorganisation Theory. This idea holds high relevance in the field of political sociology as it helps the state recognise the causes of crime, human deviance, and social disorganisation. With this, we can understand the role of the state and the fallacies in its working that cause this disorganisation.

The state's role over the years has evolved to maintaining social order and ensuring the protection and well-being of the members of society. When the state fails to fulfil these fundamental duties, society descends into breakdowns as mentioned by Shaw and McKay in their social disorganisation theory. This chaos can lead to prevalent social issues such as patriarchy, substance abuse, lack of general social values, safety and security concerns, et cetera (McCartney & Parent, 2015). The studies conducted by Shaw and McKay show that in areas that lack social cohesion and proper access to essential resources like jobs, education, housing, and security have given rise to inequalities and weakened social frameworks resulting in social disorganisation and crime. A statistical example of this would

be London where 40 per cent more crimes were recorded in areas that were income-deprived than those in areas of least income depravity at 10 per cent (Bureau of Trust for London, 2024).

The absence of effective governance can lead to major problems such as poverty, violence, challenges in education, and healthcare, and lack of economic opportunities, leading people into further marginalisation, which pushes them towards crime. The state's role as mentioned above has evolved to ensure the well-being of the members of society which includes tackling such problems through investment in social welfare programmes, community development initiatives, education, healthcare, et cetera. Society also holds responsibility for helping the government succeed in their initiatives by creating an inclusive environment for all members of society.

Why Does the State Intervene?

As previously mentioned in the above sections, the state plays a significant role in maintaining the social order. To get deeper insight into this function of the state, it is essential to consider the nature of the state itself. To put it more simply, 'why does the state intervene in matters of crime and social unrest?'

To understand this question, we can refer to Lamond's (2007) analysis regarding the nature of crime. He mentions two insights into this theme, with contributions by Robert Nozick and Lawrence Becker. Robert Nozick states that when an injury is inflicted on a victim due to negligence, society views it as an unfortunate occurrence, whereas, he states on the contrary that when there is an intentional attack, not only the victim suffers harm but the event also instils fear within the public. This fear is one of the reasons why the state enters into the equation. Lawrence Becker tries to modify this concept by asserting that crimes lead to social volatility which means that there is disruption in the societal structure. This disruption then leads to distrust among people and compels them to take steps such as limiting social interaction and self-defence. To prevent this disruption, the state steps in to restore this order and fulfil its duty to prevent further disruption (Lamond, 2007).

Lamond (2007) expands on this by stating the various implications of how crime is perceived and differs in responses. He notes that while fear is one of the genuine reactions to crime by the public, not all criminal acts provoke the same reaction. For example, in cases of bribery, Lamond argues that the general public reacts to it with frustration or discontent but rarely with fear. This is because, while these are harmful crimes, they are less likely to put people in immediate danger of death. He also highlights that fear can arise even in the absence of an actual crime. He gives an example of a large group of football supporters gathering for a match, which may instil fear or uneasiness in people even when laws are not being broken. This perceived fear, he states stems from not an imminent attack but rather

from the fear that an attack could occur on them and their loved ones. It is also important to note that even in situations where fear is based on perception rather than reality, the state holds the responsibility to ensure the safety of the public. In this particular case, it holds the responsibility to minimise the risk of altercations and other public disturbances regardless of whether a crime is being committed or not. By doing so, the state helps to alleviate public anxiety and uphold social order.

Understanding the Morality on Which the State Should Operate

To answer this question, we will begin by exploring the philosophical reasoning behind the morality of the state. Michael Sandel (2009), in his lecture 'Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?' delves deeply into this topic. In the lecture, Sandel explores various concepts put forward by past thinkers to help us understand how the morality of the state can be viewed through different lenses. According to Sandel (2009), there are two approaches to examining the morality of the state: consequential and categorical.

When we consider consequential morality, where the morality of an action is judged by its outcomes, the rightness or wrongness is determined by the consequences it produces. Sandel illustrates this through the very famous trolley problem. In this hypothetical scenario, a trolley is going down a track towards five workers who will be killed if the trolley stays in its current path. However, there is an option to switch the trolley onto another track, where one worker is present. A consequentialist would choose the idea of killing one person over five considering the idea that more lives are being saved as a consequence. On the other hand, categorical morality emphasises more importance on principles and duties rather than consequences. To illustrate this, Sandel (2009) modifies the trolley problem, where instead of changing track, you stand on a bridge with a large man who, if pushed onto the tracks, is assumed to be heavy enough to stop the train. While he would die, the five workers on the track would be saved. A categorical thinker here would argue that it is always wrong to kill an innocent person even if doing so would prevent greater harm in society. In this situation, it would violate the duty of not harming others.

Sandel (2009) refers to this consequential approach as utilitarianism, a concept introduced by Jeremy Bentham. The idea of utilitarianism aims to promote the general welfare of the population as a whole. Criticism of utilitarianism is also noted by Sandel (2009). One significant critique is that utilitarianism can sometimes justify the morally objectionable. Sandel gives an example of this with the practice of Christians being thrown to the lions in the Colosseum in ancient Rome. While it did provide entertainment to the Roman public, does it make it morally acceptable? .

In terms of crime, these ideas put forward by Sandel can be correlated to the state's approach to crime and justice. In the consequentialist perspective, the state's goal may be to

address crime by ensuring the greatest welfare for society as a whole. These may be strict laws, heavy punishments, and even controversial ideas such as mass surveillance. Within this idea, it can be assumed that the sacrifice of a few individual freedoms could be justified if, in the long run, it results in safer and social order. When we view crime through the categorical lens, the morality of the state must also consider principles of justice, fairness, and individual rights. Even if harsh measures prove to reduce crime, they might violate moral principles that stop unjust treatment or infringement of human rights. Categorical morality emphasises that the state should uphold the dignity and rights of all individuals.

While it seems as if both approaches are at odds, both can be used hand in hand to guide the state's actions in addressing crime. A balanced approach would allow considering both the outcomes of its policies (consequentialism) and the principles of justice and fairness (categorical morality). To put this into perspective, an individual who commits a crime categorically must be punished to uphold the moral duty to ensure justice which in this case we will assume to be sentencing to imprisonment, while a consequentialist perspective would want them to go to jail and keep them off the streets so that in the long run, they might not get the opportunity to commit the crime and get a chance to rehabilitate themselves.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we see that the overlapping of crime, human deviance, and morality of the state showcases the complexities of maintaining social order while upholding ethical principles. Crime, which is often viewed as an act of deviance, not only disrupts the fabric of community life, but also challenges the moral legitimacy of the state, which bears the responsibility of creating and enforcing laws. The state responds with its justice mechanism to deter, punish, and rehabilitate with fairness. The state acts not only as an enforcer, but also as a guardian of value and promoter of the common good and individual rights.

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Political Polarisation, Civic Culture, and Social Capital in Indian and the US Democracy

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Abstract

This essay aims to study the patterns and evolution of political polarisation in two democracies – the USA and India. Political polarisation can be considered as a form of an extreme ideological divide (generally) between two factions or (the left and the right-wing) political parties, which may lead to a feeling of hostility for the other. This essay traces the recent history of political polarisation in both countries and describes its current status through data and academic research available on the topic. Moreover, the bifurcation between the ideological and affective polarisation has been highlighted while stating their respective roles in the polarisation of the public.

The essay also explores the concepts of civic culture and social capital, while highlighting their versatile significance in a democratic society. Through a detailed study of the two cases, with the help of various academic sources and research data, the impact of political polarisation on civic culture and social capital has been elucidated, indicating how it may directly or indirectly cause democratic backsliding. To conclude, a few recommendations have been mentioned based on the research and data, to reduce political polarisation and thereby, its impact on society.

Keywords: Political polarisation, Social Capital, Civic Culture, Democracy.

Introduction

The former United States (US) President and the present Republican candidate, Donald Trump was shot on the 13th of July, 2024 during a campaign rally. What, fortunately, was a failed assassination attempt spoke even more severe truths about modern democracies, which demand our strict attention. Although this is the latest of such attacks against politicians, it is certainly not the sole one. The world has seen various violent attacks on politicians for decades, if not centuries; some of these being the murder of Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro in 1978, and the assassinations of the former Indian prime ministers Indira Gandhi in 1984 and Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin

in 1995. The list of such politically motivated violent acts in the recent past includes the assassinations of Shinzo Abe, the former Prime Minister of Japan in 2022, Walter Lübcke, a German conservative politician in 2019, and a severe attack on the Slovakian prime minister, Robert Fico, earlier this year. Growing polarisation and political intolerance within democracies is deemed to be a grave concern for this escalating trend of political violence.

While the above instances are stated to showcase the gravity of the subject, this essay does not aim to put its entire focus on such violent acts, but to explain some of their underlying factors. This essay focuses on democracies in general and the United States of America and India, in particular. Although the data available on political polarisation in India is not as rigorous as that available for the USA, this essay aims to analyse and note the characteristics of polarisation as observed in the two nations. Additionally, the study aims to understand the symbiotic relationship between civic culture and social capital in a democracy and how they are impacted in a polarised political system. Thus, it tries to understand certain foundational features which are adversely impacted by polarisation and extremist politics, and how they can, sometimes, lead to political violence.

Understanding Political Polarisation

According to Sartori (1976, p.135), "ideological distance" is a defining characteristic of polarisation. Political polarisation can be considered as a form of an extreme ideological divide (generally) between two factions or (the left and the right-wing) political parties, which may lead to a feeling of hostility for the other. Thus, a polarised political environment is marked by significant divergence in political attitudes, often leading to a stark division between political parties, groups or ideologies.

Political polarisation is a threat to democracies around the world because of both – the processes it involves and the implications it has. Some of the threats include predisposing the society to gradual executive takeovers through democratically elected officers (Svolik, 2019); gridlock and ineffective governance; social unrest and hostility towards opposing ideological groups, etc; these factors lead to democratic backsliding (see also Svolik, 2019). Since the only major benefit of 'healthy' polarisation is that it provides distinct alternatives to the public in democracies, this essay focuses on the dystopian image of the same. Moving forward, the essay aims to analyse political polarisation in the USA and India and their impacts on the civic culture and social capital, which form the fundamentals of a democratic system.

Civic Culture and Social Capital

In their seminal work, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (1963), political scientists Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba define civic culture as a political culture characterised by "a balanced mixture of participant, subject, and parochial political orientations." According to Almond and Verba, civic culture is a very significant factor for democratic stability, effective governance, and conflict resolution in a country.

However, there are many debates regarding the role of civic culture as either a cause or effect of democracy. Thinkers like Almond and Verba (1963), and Inglehart (1988, 1990) hypothesised that cultural attitudes like balanced engagement, political efficacy, and trust in institutions are crucial prerequisites for a stable democracy. However, critics and thinkers like Edward N Muller and Mitchell A Seligson present a contrasting view. They postulate that civic culture can be considered an effect of the democratic political system and the "successful persistence of democracy over time is likely to increase in levels of civic culture attitudes" (Muller & Seligson, 1994). In other words, a democracy should further reinforce such qualities and sustain public trust in governmental institutions and with each other. Thus, it is a case of circular causality where civic culture attitudes could be considered both – a cause (Almond & Verba, 1963) and an effect of democratic societies (Muller & Seligson, 1994). In either case, the civic culture of a democracy is impacted through the processes brought about by political polarisation. Being a causal factor of democracy, the impact on civic culture may endanger the foundations of such a society; being one of the outcomes of democracy, it becomes vulnerable to various alterations in public attitude towards politics.

Another concept of importance in the study of democratic systems is social capital. Social capital refers to the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). It includes the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from these networks. James Coleman (1988), who highlighted the functional aspects of social capital in creating human capital, postulated that certain features of social capital, such as trust, interconnected networks, norms, and obligations, led to social facilitation and cooperation.

Social capital is vital for the functioning of democracy. It further fosters civic engagement, as individuals are more likely to engage in political processes when they feel connected to their community and trust their fellow citizens and institutions (Putnam, 2000). Social capital fosters trust in institutions, which is essential for democratic stability and the effective functioning of government (Fukuyama, 1995). Moreover, high social capital promotes accountability and good governance, as a well-connected citizenry can more effectively monitor and influence government actions (Coleman, 1988). Robert Putnam et

al. (1993) postulated that regions with higher levels of social capital exhibit stronger adherence to democratic norms such as tolerance and reciprocity. Thus, one can observe the multiple strands or explanations of social capital, each leading to a similar conclusion: its immense yet mundane significance in the stability of a democratic system. It is quite integral to understand these notions of civic culture and social capital, as these principles are quietly affected by political polarisation and can lead to the undermining of democracy.

Political Polarisation in the United States of America

What is considered to be the symbol of democratic ideals, at least since the Cold War, the US has faced intense political polarisation since the past. Currently too, the 2024 presidential elections in America are looming on the surface and it has already proved to be one of the most intense electoral battles the country has seen in the post-Cold War era. A few weeks ago, on 13 July, Donald Trump, a former President and the Republican candidate, was attacked during an electoral campaign in Butler County, Pennsylvania. This failed assassination attempt further added fuel to the already heated electoral divide in the US. Although the attacker's specific motive still remains a mystery (Mallin et al, 2024), this act of violence has spurred conversations about the polarised climate of the country and has indeed led to an upsurge in conspiracy theories and scepticism which has deepened the political divide (Rhodes, 2024). The following section of the essay explains the brief history of political polarisation in the US and tries to trace its evolution through the decades.

Ideological Elite Polarisation to Affective Mass Polarisation: An Overview

The political polarisation in America as observed today has taken shape through the gradually incrementing ideological divide and changes in the political attitudes in the country. It started in a rather common way, a way through which politics generally gets polarised in many nations – through the formation of a clear division of political parties on ideological lines. In the case of America, it began after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which set in motion the sorting of parties based on ideologies (Kleinfeld, 2023). This political cleavage further led to a full-fledged divide in ideologies based on the views of the politicians on significant national and social issues, for instance, the Vietnam War and the rights of women, the LGBTQ+ community, and environmental concerns.

Polarisation can be categorised on the basis of its range or focus into elite and mass polarisation. Elite polarisation restricts itself to the polarisation of the political parties (generally into two extremes), while mass polarisation divides the common populace based on political preferences and ideas. Rachel Kleinfield (2023) excellently compiles and analyses different statistics about polarisation in the US. She highlights polarisation initially manifested itself in the form of ideological elite polarisation. This refers to the gradual practice of sorting political parties on ideological lines starting from the 1970s, as stated

above, and which culminated in clear distinctions between the Republicans and the Democrats. Data by the Pew Research Centre shows that both sections grew ideologically apart, moving away from the centre in opposite directions, rendering the democrats more liberal, while the republicans became more conservative (DeSilver, last updated 2022). As a result, "(they) are farther apart ideologically today than at any time in the past 50 years" (DeSilver, 2022). This was accompanied by a growing sense of antipathy towards the opposing party politicians and supporters which was seeping into the common populace.

Although polarisation, in its early phases, restricted itself to the political parties and leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties; however, currently America observes an expansion of such polarising attitudes among the public as well, which Kleinfeld refers to as "affective mass polarisation" (2023). Mass polarisation, as is clear from its name, refers to the polarisation of society and not just the formal political actors (Geçer, 2023, p. 182); affective mass polarisation refers to the concept of polarisation among the public on emotional bases rather than ideological ones. It refers to the phenomenon where individuals in a society start to increasingly dislike or even feel hostility towards the members of the opposing political party or group. The American public started to internalise the identities of their preferred party and grew a sense of attachment towards it; however, many times, it relates more to the feeling of antipathy towards the other party than the liking towards one's own (Kleinfeld, 2023).

Affective mass polarisation can prove to be a curious case of socio-psychological study since partisans, out of sheer apprehension towards the other party, may refuse to collaborate even when their priorities and concerns are alike. This generally happens due to misconceptions. Moreover, it was not the ideological polarisation that proved to be a threat to democracy; rather, it was the affective one, led by emotions and identity politics, that made for a subtle darkness over American democracy. Thus, mass effective polarisation can lead to social fragmentation and erosion of democratic norms as discussed later in the essay.

Political Polarisation in India

As Thomas Carothers and Andrew O'Donohue (2019) put it "(Polarisation) is not just an American illness; it is a global one." However, the academic research and statistics available online are heavily focused on Western democracies (Puthran, n.d.). Hence, the analysis of political polarisation in India presented in this essay would not be as thorough as for the US.

Although political polarisation in India is a prevalent concept, it has been re-moulded many times according to the changing political climate of the nation. In the newborn Indian democracy of the 1950s, the Indian National Congress (INC) inherited the legacy of the national movement and enjoyed a hegemonic power in Indian politics against a fragmented

opposition. The Nehruvian era of Indian politics garnered stable and popular support for the INC by the public. This era of 'single-party dominance' was strategically played out through functional elements like the maintenance of plurality within the party which provided diverse representation of views, checked factionalism, and internal and external margin of pressures as explained by Rajni Kothari (1964). However, the seed of political polarisation had been sown when Indira Gandhi, the former PM of India declared the infamous Emergency in 1975, following which the party faced, for the first time, public scrutiny and lost support (Rai, 2022). The 1977 general election shook the, once invincible, Congress with 'Anti-Congressism', which saw the formation of a united opposing alliance incorporating ideologically distinct groups. Thus, it caused a divergence of votes under the labels of 'Congress-supporting' and 'Congress-opposing,' respectively, causing the end of the Congress system with the Janata Party forming the government. This later also gave way to a wave of coalition politics in India which lasted for a few decades till 2014. Certainly, this polarisation could not be considered exclusively as 'ideological' since it did not involve rigid ideological segregation and led to partisan politics and group formations.

Polarisation took a leap in 2014 and 2019 and has been gradually increasing since. 2014 saw a landslide victory for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which secured 282 seats in the general elections. This verdict also marked the historic replacement of the already-ended 'Congress-System' (which secured only 44 seats) with the 'BJP-System' (Maiorano et al., 2020) since the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has secured victory for three consecutive terms since then, the latest being in the 2024 general elections.

Even though the 77-year-old democracy comprises multiple parties, politics has simultaneously become more polarised, with the latest general elections assumed to be one of the most polarised in the post-independence period. Affective polarisation in India in the last decade has observed more emphasis on identity politics rather than party politics; the groups are categorised by Prarthna Puthran (n.d.) as 'Modi supporters' and 'Modi opposers'. The interviews conducted in the study showed how the people are "passionate" about Prime Minister Modi and how his identity plays a significant role in forming opinions about his party and its opponents. This categorisation also played a remarkable role in the 2024 general elections. However, the election saw a significant counterbalance through the desperate efforts of the India National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) led by the Congress Party, which effectively challenged this trajectory. Various political parties came under a single umbrella to form the INDIA and proved to be a strong opponent to the BJP, which could secure only 240 seats (The Hindu, 2024), down from 303 in 2019 (Dale & Jeavans, 2019), and thus, failed to form the majority government by itself, and thus, it has proved to a turbulence in the party's decade-long dominance. Nevertheless, the NDA did manage to assume office, making PM Narendra Modi only the second prime minister to win a third consecutive term in the history of the modern Republic of India.

Affective polarisation along with negative partisanship is becoming a common social phenomenon in Indian politics (Barthwal & Jensenius, 2024). Partisan loyalists have shown stability in their opinions, according to a report (Barthwal & Jensenius, 2024). A survey conducted by Sharanya Hrishikesh and Vikas Pandey (BBC, 2024) explained instances of how some people, irrespective of their satisfaction with the level of progress, showed strong admiration for PM Modi.

However, political polarisation is a multi-faceted concept, especially in a country as diverse as the largest democracy, involving the study of social concepts. A more informed understanding of the situation requires more empirical data and studies conducted in the field.

Causes of Affective Polarisation in Both Countries

This section aims to highlight some common causes that led to political polarisation in India and the US.

Firstly, affective polarisation includes heavy sorting of political and partisan identities. Kleinfeld (2023) explains that the identification of people with extreme political positions and the forming of an in-group and an out-group categorisation leads to the overestimation of the opponent's threats and a sense of protection towards the in-group. This can be explained as a mentality of "Us versus Them". For instance, this was also visible in Donald Trump's electoral campaigns in 2016, which involved the rhetoric of "'Us' – the 'real' Americans... and 'Them' – 'the immigrants and minorities'" (Abramowitz & McCoy, 2019). Rhetorics in India also seem to create a partisan divide, especially among the loyal supporters.

Secondly, partisan media and social media play a major role by creating echo chambers and media bubbles (Kleinfeld, 2023) in both the US and India. The problem of social media in polarising the masses is overemphasised while underestimating the effective role played by other media outlets; however, it is not the case because, firstly, the Internet only came into use in the 2000s; it does not explain the polarisation trend that started two decades earlier in the US; secondly, affective polarisation seemed to be growing much faster in people aged more than sixty-five years, who spent more time watching news on the television than on the Internet (Kleinfeld, 2023). Social media and other forms of media in India have also been awarded a major part in electoral campaigns and for spreading political views. WhatsApp, having a base of 400 million active Indian users, has also provided a lucrative platform for political parties and partisan groups (Joshi, 2024). Subsequently, it has become a channel of spreading disinformation and hate speech (Joshi, 2024). This is the reason why the company has limited the number of people or groups a person can share a message to, at

one time, to five. This measure was taken to ensure people recheck the facts before forwarding something, and to at least make the job of spreading misinformation more difficult (Chitra, 2018). Thirdly, the geographic placement of the in-group members near each other even incidentally predisposes them to similar ideas, which strengthens such ideas. The process of socialisation with other in-group members may lead to the psychological concept known as the bandwagon effect, which "refers to the tendency of people to adopt certain behaviours, styles, or attitudes simply because everyone else is doing it" (Cherry, 2023).

Nolan McCarty, Keith T Poole, and Howard Rosenthal in their seminal report "Political Polarisation and Income Inequality" (2003) establish a correlation between ideological polarisation and income inequality. However, there is a much less established correlation between economic factors and affective polarisation due to a lack of studies in the field (Kleinfeld, 2023). Social factors related to race, caste, and religion can lead to political divides. According to a report by DW Davis and Wilson, "racial resentment is a powerful underlying force in polarisation" in the US (Lempinen, 2024). Due to a much more expansive meaning of the term "religion" in India than in the West (Verghese as cited in O'Reilly, 2022), religion, along with caste, inevitably gets involved in the political question. For instance, the BJP has been associated with promoting a Hindu-centric narrative, while the Samajwadi Party's (SP) ideology of socialism has been centred around caste. The INC had also presented various caste-based elements and schemes in their manifesto for the recent general elections (Indian National Congress, 2024). Rahul Gandhi's slogan "Jitni Aabadi, Utna Haq" (offering rights proportionate to communities' population) was also criticised by the opposing leaders (Manoj, 2023).

One of the most influential causes of mass polarisation would be the strategies used by politicians, such as negative campaigning and providing political incentives (Kleinfeld, 2023). Populist leaders and leader-based electoral campaigns seem to have become commonplace in America and India. Even during the ongoing electoral campaigns, negative campaigning has become the norm; recently in a speech, Donald Trump called Kamala Harris, the Democratic candidate, a "radical left lunatic," targeting her and President Joe Biden over illegal immigration and crime, while she claimed that these were "wild lies" (Hindustan Times, 2024). Even the Indian election campaigns earlier this year saw the prominence of leader-based campaigns and targeting comments by both the contesting alliances – the NDA and the INDIA.

Impact of Affective Mass Polarisation on Civic Culture and Social Capital

After the assassination attempt on Trump, it was quite evident that political rivalry was no longer limited to debates and discussions among the politicians, rather that it had entered the public arena and was taking the shape of violent extremism. In fact, even the politicians

have realised that the political climate of the nation has heated up and as said by the US President Biden, "it is time to cool it down" (Reid et al., 2024). Mass affective polarisation, characterised by deep-seated emotional hostility and distrust between political groups, has significant and detrimental impacts on civic culture and social capital in democracies.

Firstly, it diminishes the quality of public discourse. Conversations are marked by hostility and personal attacks. This leads to a lack of constructive arguments as there is reduced tolerance for dissent. According to de Tocqueville, as explained by JL Sullivan and JE Transue (1999), tolerance is one of the prerequisites of democracy and the people must at least be open to "put up" with opposing arguments. Growing intolerance results from heightened threat perceptions of the opponent (outgroup) (Sullivan & Transue, 1999). Hence, growing intolerance among the public leads to a decline in pluralistic views and subsequently the democratic spirit, as one might say.

Secondly, it raises the question of civic engagement. Civic engagement manifests in various forms in a democracy: public participation, community involvement, and public advocacy are some of them. Analysis of public participation through voting and running for office shows whether polarisation has enhanced or diminished public willingness to directly engage with politics. However, polarisation may not have a linear impact on voter turnout; since voter turnout has increased in the US (Hartig et al., 2022), while decreased in India from 67.4 per cent in 2019 to 65.79 per cent in 2024 (Election Commission of India, 2024, p.1). Furthermore, many other points may be attributed to the voter turnout, making it difficult to explain the correlation.

Thirdly, polarisation can socially fragment society. As people withdraw into like-minded groups, they may become less likely to participate in broader civic activities. The sense of shared community purpose diminishes, weakening the collective civic culture. Moreover, political opinions and preferences seem to guide one's daily life in a highly polarised society. For instance, as mentioned in the study by Iyengar and Westwood (2015), the partisan task required the members to choose the better candidate based on their resume and political leaning; the results depicted that approximately 80 per cent of the partisans chose their in-party candidate.

Fourthly, individuals exposed to partisan media and social influences may feel compelled to conform to dominant group opinions. Instead of critically evaluating information, they may seek conclusions that reinforce in-group loyalty (Jilani & Smith, 2019). This can stifle diverse political expression. Mass polarisation deteriorates social capital as partisans may not want to collaborate even on common issues due to a lack of understanding and misconceptions. This may adversely affect community behaviour and understanding.

Almond and Verba (1963) argue that a balanced civic culture, incorporating parochial, participant, and subject cultures, is essential. However, in a polarised society, there may be an overemphasis on participant or subject cultures at the expense of parochial culture. Conversely, a lack of awareness of rising polarisation could increase parochialism.

Extreme and excessive affective polarisation can lead to offensive public behaviour like hate speech and violence. This stems out of heightened intolerance towards opposing views. Furthermore, negative partisanship and antipathy towards an opponent party or leader would lead to an increase in overall tensions and targeted violence. Especially in the US, political violence is on the rise (see also Kleinfeld, 2021) and observed together with popular attitudes and gun culture, it proves to be a threat to democracy.

Lastly, polarisation may also lead to a reduction in interpersonal trust and trust in institutions. As polarisation creates stark divisions in society, it limits inter-group discussions which fosters stereotypes and prejudices. Furthermore, legislative gridlock and the unaccountable attitude of governmental institutions leads to a lack of trust in them.

Conclusion

The essay begins by understanding the concepts of civic culture and social capital and how they relate to the proper functioning of democracies. Civic culture and social capital work together and form the fundamentals of a democracy. Many democracies of the world are observing heightened polarisation due to various factors. The analysis includes case studies of the United States and India, drawing parallels between the characteristics and evolution of political polarisation in these democracies. The essay identifies common causal factors of polarisation and explores its effects on civic culture and social capital, which, if unchecked, can lead to democratic backsliding.

Some of the ways to address increasing polarisation in the two countries and democracies, in general, would include increased constructive dialogue between the polarised parties and groups. This would foster understanding and collaboration while breaking misconceptions. Inter-group interactions in social settings over common interests can be purposeful in decreasing polarisation. Improved media literacy can help individuals evaluate and fact-check biassed content rather than believe it blankly. A crucial point put forward by Kleinfeld (2023) is to emphasise the salience of a shared identity, i.e., the identity of a citizen of a country. This must be considered the foremost identity instead of the adopted partisan one. Civic education regarding democratic norms and public harmony can be useful to mitigate affective polarisation by adopting a 'bottom-up' approach.

Furthermore, more research on the correlation between the causes and consequences of affective polarisation would lead to more refined findings. Region-specific data of big

democracies like India and the USA would also help cater to specific concerns related to polarisation in the two countries.

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MEET THE BOARD

Prem Ansh Sinha

Prem is pursuing his undergraduate studies in political science. He likes to write about foreign affairs and security, while reading of the past, and making sense of contemporary Indian politics. While he is done with his daily quota of rambling about old books and archives, he likes to crush his peers at competitive quizzing across the country to fuel his egoistic fires. Additionally, he enjoys listening to ghazals and slow instrumental music in the evenings.

Formerly, he has also been associated with the Centre for Joint Warfare Studies (CENJOWS), HQ IDS, Ministry of Defence as a Research Intern.

Piyush Rangra

Piyush is a second-year undergraduate majoring in political science, and a passionate aficionado of history, politics, economics, and international relations. He enjoys immersing himself in the lives of influential figures from world history. He is also a budding quizzer who loves to learn a bit of everything through his peers in the quizzing circuit.

He also loves to unravel and learn the interconnectedness between Global history and contemporary global happenings, and is a fan of political strategy as seen in American politics and 'House of Cards'.

Khushi Kukreja

Khushi is an undergraduate student of political science and economics. Passionate about exploring various disciplines, she is constantly seeking out new opportunities and challenges, striving to excel in everything she undertakes.

When she is not juggling a million things, you will find her lost in a good fiction book or attending philosophy workshops to ponder life's big questions. An avid debater and enthusiastic participant in case competitions, she loves to yap about anything and everything that piques her interest.

MEET THE BOARD

Arnav Sinha

Arnav is an undergraduate student specialising in political science, with a keen interest in global studies and international relations. An avid reader across multiple genres, he is also a writer, orator, and debater, passionate about exploring and analysing global affairs.

In his free time he likes to delve into literature, politics, and music. He enthusiastically engages in deep research on everyday events trying to find the denotative meaning hidden among them and their connections with larger theories of society and the world at play.

Arshita Chopra

Arshita is a first-year student of political science who is constantly exploring various concepts within the field. Fascinated by academia, she approaches her studies and editorial work with discipline and an eagerness to learn from those around her. However, this above-mentioned curiosity for diverse topics does not help her much when she has to decide on one of them for her next essay.

Naman Raj

Naman is a first-year undergraduate student pursuing political science and economics. He believes that the only way to learn is to share. His interest lies in Cold War studies and political philosophy. Naman aspires to apply his knowledge and research abilities to bring practical solutions to the issues in society, hoping to bring positive changes through his work. Apart from academics and rocking a hairstyle similar to Raju from Chhota Bheem, he loves listening to rock music and following F1 in his free time.

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