



A STUDY OF PATRIARCHAL MYTHS IN PRATIBHA RAY'S *YAJNASENI: THE STORY OF DRAUPADI*

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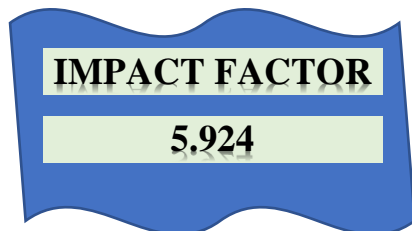
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ABSTRACT

Meaning. Different writers have defined the word national integration in their own way. Some definitions are as follows:

Dr. Radhakrishnan says, "National integration is not a house which could be built by mortar and bricks. It is not an industrial plan too which could be discussed and implemented by experts. Integration, on the contrary, is a thought which must go into the heads of the people. It is the consciousness which must awaken the people at large."

In the words of Prof. Myron Weiner, "National integration implies observance of divisive movements that would Balkanise the nation, and presence of attitudes throughout the society that give preference to national and public interest as distinct from parochial interests."

H. A. Gani considers National integrations as "A socio-psychological and educational process through which a feeling of unity, solidarity and cohesion develops in the hearts of the people and a sense of common citizenship or feeling of loyalty to the nation is fostered among them."

Keywords : National integration, industrial plan, feeling of unity

Therefore in brief, national integration means that while retaining the diversity, we must strive for achieving the unity of hearts irrespective of our religion, race, creed, language and sex.



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To maintain national integration in India, the land of diversity, is indeed a challenge before the government. The government of India soon realised that the centrifugal and parochical forces operating in the country in the form of linguism, casteism, communalism and regionalism were the greatest danger to the unity and integrity of the country. Therefore, the Government of India felt an urgent necessity to suppress communal propaganda. For this purpose two Bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha on 10 August, 1961. The first Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 31 August, 1961 which laid down that the promotion of enmity or hatred between different religious, racial or language groups or castes or communities was an offence punishable with an imprisonment for a period up to three years. The second Bill passed on 4 September, 1961 laid down

similar penalty for attempts to appeal to religious, communal, caste or linguistic sentiments for electioneering purpose was forbidden and a person resorting to these means could be disqualified from voting or from membership of Parliament or State Legislatures.

First National Integration Conference, 1961

The Government of India in order to check further the centrifugal forces and promote the unity and integrity of the country convened in New Delhi a conference from September 28 to 1st October, 1961 to discuss and examine what is called the problem of national integration. The conference noted that the political parties played a major role in fomenting linguism, casteism, communalism and regionalism, therefore, the conference evolved a code of conduct for them. The principles evolved by the conference were as follows:¹

- No political party should indulge in any activity which aggravated existing differences, created mutual hatred, or caused tension between different castes and communities, religious or linguistic groups.



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- Political parties should not resort to agitation which was likely to disturb peace, create bitterness or increase tension between the different sections of the public.
- The political parties should desist from creating obstructions to or breaking up meetings, processions, etc., organised by other parties.
- The government, while taking measures to maintain law and order, should take care not to impose undue restrictions on civil liberties, and should not employ such measures as interfered with normal functioning of political parties.
- Political power should not be used to serve party ends.

Second National Integration Conference, 1968

The decisions made at the First National Integration Council were sound, yet they were not fully followed by the various political parties. The code of conduct evolved there was also not strictly implemented by the government at the centre and in the states and the various political parties. so it remained a piece of paper. They failed to promote communal harmony in true spirit. Consequently, during 1966 and 1967 more serious and widespread communal riots, regional disorders and disturbances over the language question occurred in U.P., Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Jammu & Kashmir. Therefore, the Union Government decided to revive the National Integration Council but it was made more broad-based and representatives of the business and trade unions were included in it. Thus, the membership of the council was increased from 31 to 55. The council held its meeting at Srinagar from June 20 to 22, 1968 and adopted a declaration condemning all tendencies that “strike at the root of national solidarity”. The conference called up all political parties, organisations and the Press to discourage communal ill-will and regional animosities, to propagate actively the principles of tolerance and harmony, and to mobilise the constructive forces of society in the cause of national unity and solidarity.

**Dimensions of the Problem of National Integration**

Multidimensional. The problem of national integration is multidimensional. It has political, economic, social and cultural aspects. It does not mean merely the building up of a strong and viable nation-state. though that is the first step in the direction of national integration. In the economic sphere national integration means the balanced development of every region of the country, elimination of unemployment, and the guaranteeing of a minimum standard of living for every citizen of the country so that an equalitarian society may be established. In a sociological sense national integration means the establishment of a just sociopolitical order in which every citizen gets an opportunity to work freely for the realization of his material and cultural aspirations. There is also a psychological dimension to the problem. It implies that majority of citizens feel that the political system in which they live and function is just and conducive to the free growth of every individual. In this sense, it involves the creation of a common set of values, norms and attitudes which most, if not all sections of the people accept and willingly adhere to. It means a sort of emotional integration of the construction of spiritual linkages between the diverse sections of the people.²

Political Dimension. As pointed above, the building up of strong nation-state is a prerequisite to the realization of the ideal of national integration. This task has been completed with commendable success. When the country attained independence, the first and foremost problem that confronted our leaders was that of integrating the princely states into the Indian Dominion. With the creation of the Dominions of India and Pakistan, British paramountcy over the Indian States lapsed and their rulers had the option of joining either the Dominion of India or Pakistan or remain independent. This provision of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 was extremely dangerous as it seriously threatened the unity of the Indian Dominion. But the statesmanship of Sardar Patel triumphed and he successfully brought about the integration of



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the States into the Dominion of India. At first the Indian Union retained the old administrative division. But some important administrative reforms were carried through even during the first years. The smaller states dotted all over the provinces ceased to exist as separate administrative units and were merged in the provinces within which they lay. For example, the Southern and Northern Maratha States were incorporated in the province of Bombay, the Eastern States were incorporated in Orissa and so on. Clusters of small states centred in a particular area were joined together into Unions of States. One such union, Saurashtra, consisted of Kathiawar states, another Himachal Pradesh comprised the states in the Simla area, Rajasthan was made up of the states of Rajputana and so on.

In 1950, when India became a sovereign Republic. she was a federation composed of units which were divided into four groups, ie., Part A. consisting of former Governor's provinces, Part B, the former princely states or unions of such states; Part C, made up of former Chief Commissioner's provinces and a few princely states, and Part D. the Amdaman and Nicobar Islands,

But the population of Southern India and their representatives wer not satisfied with these arrangements. Sriramulu, one of the oldest Congressmen of Andhra, began fast unto death in support of the Telegu demand for an Andhra State and died on the 55th day of the fast. This forced the Government to constitute an Andhra State comprising the northern areas of Madras.

The establishment of Andhra gave a new impetus to the movement for the reorganization of the country on a linguistic basis. The government was compelled to appoint a States Reorganization Commission in 1951 The Commission submitted its report in 1955. The States' Reorganization Act passed by Parliament in August 1956 was, with a few exceptions, based on the



recommendations of the Commission. It provided for the division of India into 14 States and 6

Union Territories. The linguistic principle was more or less consistently applied in the South.

But the movement for political reorganization either on linguistic ground or in the name of administrative efficiency continued and consequently several new full-fledged States were created with the result that now the Indian Union consists of 25 States and 7 Union Territories.

The States' Reorganization Act, 1956 not only divided the country on a linguistic basis, it also established Zonal Councils to advise on matters of common interest common to each of the five zones into which the territory of India has been divided Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western and Central.³

It appears that the goal of territorial integration of the country has been achieved. However, the fact is that movements for further division of the existing States are going on in different parts of the country. The people of Vidarbha want a separate State of their own. Their plea is that it was conceded to them by the States' Reorganization Commission. Similarly, there is a demand for a separate State of Telangana in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The Kumaon and Garhwal areas of Uttar Pradesh have raised their voice for the formation of a separate State of Uttarakhand. From time to time Braj, Rohilkhand and Bundelkhand regions of Uttar Pradesh also raise a demand for statehood. The tribal people of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal are agitating for the creation of a separate State of Jharkhand. At present the Gorkhas in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal are conducting a violent agitation for a separate state of Gorkhaland. But the most dangerous is a terrorist movement of a section of militant



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Akalis for the establishment of a sovereign state of Khalistan. This movement has cost the lives of thousand of innocent men, women and children.

- **Economic Aspect of National Integration.** The economic p of the problem of national integration is more challenging than any aspect. When the British len, the country was extremely backw economically. The role of British rule in India had been destructive than constructive. They had destroyed the did self sufficient economy village communities as well as old handicraft industries which were spread all over the country. Consequently lakhs of rural and urban families had been pauperised. While the British destroyed the old economic base of Indian society, they did not build up a modern industrial society. They failed to bring about such a technological revolution as had been brought about by the bourgeoisie in the countries of Western Europe.

When the country became independent, it was confronted with the gigantic problem of economic transformation of society, and this could be done only by initiating a technological and scientific revolution. There is no doubt that the central and state governments have faced this problem with courage and determination. A Planning Commission was set up. It framed ambitious plans most of which have been fulfilled. Community Development Projects and National Extension Services were launched. A chain of scientific laboratories was established. A number of technical institutes and universities were started. A gigantic public sector of economy was created. Agricultural research was encouraged. A network of irrigation facilities has been spread all over the country. Means of transport and communication have tremendously developed. Lakhs of villages have been electrified.

All these measures have paid dividends. The country has become self- sufficient in foodgrains. We have a big pool of scientists and technological experts.⁴



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But in spite of all this progress it cannot be said that the problem of national integration has been solved. The new rulers of the country have not yet been able to build a fully industrialized society. Industrialisation is yet confined to a few selected cities and industrial areas; the bulk of the rural areas remain unaffected by the economic and technological changes brought about by industrialisation. In agricultural and other sectors of rural activity too, modern technology and the consequent changes in the people's life are confined to narrow stratum of well-to-do elements in the rural areas. As D. R. Gadgil points out, "The total picture that emerges is that of concentration and control over and patronage resulting from all modern finance, trade and industry in the hands of comparatively small number of persons concentrated in particular social groups. The diffusion of the benefits of the rise of modern industries and commerce is thus severely restricted within the community and the joint operation of socioeconomic and political power makes certain groups so entrenched that social justice is denied and social peace cannot be guaranteed with the continuance of this state of affairs."

The Indian society has been polarised as never before into two classes the majority who are impoverished and have little or no property of their own, and a minority who are taking the utmost advantage of opportunities for developing themselves into millionaires and multimillionaires.

Extremes of poverty and extremes of opulence both hinder the process of national integration. Those who are on the verge of starvation, half-naked and illiterate cannot be expected to be inspired by a high sense of patriotism, national honour and dignity. And similarly those who roll in ill-gotten wealth can never be patriotic. Ill-gotten wealth and patriotism do not sit together.⁵

- **Sociocultural Aspect of National Integration.** No attempts at national integration can succeed if there is no social justice. Social justice means that in social intercourse



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citizens meet with and treat one another on a footing of equality, and do not consider others to be inferior to themselves on the grounds of religion, race, colour, caste or sex. In India, untouchability was widespread before the new Constitution came into operation. Women in general also suffered from several handicaps. In every sphere of life they were supposed to be inferior to men. The framers of our Constitution realized that democracy would be a sham without social justice. With this in view they included in the Constitution a comprehensive list of rights of which the right to equality is most significant. This right includes equality before law, prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, sex, place of birth or any of them, equality of opportunity in matters of public employment, and abolition of untouchability. Further, the Constitution empowers the State to make special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Accordingly there is reservation in government services for these classes. Seats are also reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Central and State Legislatures. Similarly, there is reservation for the Anglo-Indian community. The Constitution also lays down a number of Directive Principles of State Policy. These principles are basically aimed at the establishment of social justice. Working of democracy shows that both the Central and State Governments have faithfully tried to implement the above provisions for the upliftment of socially backward sections of the nation. The implementation of the Directive Principles shows that “the Government in power has not taken them as 'pious homilies' as was apprehended by critics when they were engrafted into the Constitution.” By inserting Act 31C by the Constitution (25th Amendment) Act 1971 the Congress Government demonstrated that it was determined to implement the Directive Principles and that even if the Fundamental Rights came in the way, it would not hesitate to amend even the



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Fundamental Rights. The Supreme Court has also adhered to this view. As Durga Das Basu remarks, the goal of economic and social transformation has been achieved to the extent that the Government has succeeded in implementing the Directive Principles. There has been a tremendous improvement since independence in the condition of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and women.

In the sphere of cultural integration a lot of useful work has been done. The Constitution contains several provisions which are calculated to promote cultural integration of the nation. Of these provisions, the right to freedom of religion and cultural and educational rights are especially very significant. All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, every religious denomination has the right to establish and maintain religious institutions; no person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are meant for any particular religious sect, no religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of state funds; any section of the people having its own language, script or culture shall have the right to establish and administer educational institution.

All these provisions have been faithfully implemented. The Indian State is secular in the sense that it does not recognise, establish or endow any religion and that it does not interfere in the religious affairs of any community or individual.

The language problem created certain difficulties and even threatened the unity and integrity of the nation. But the Government has adopted a very sensible policy in the matter. According to the original provision of the Constitution Hindi should have become the official language of the Union after fifteen years from the commencement of the Constitution. But the Official Language Act, 1963 lays down that notwithstanding the expiration of the period of fifteen years from the commencement of the Constitution, the English language may be used, in addition to Hindi for all official purposes of the Union.



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The greatest failure of the Government is that it has not been able to enact a uniform civil code. The Government and all the political parties and their leaders have corrupted the meaning of the concept of secularism. By secularism they do not mean separation of the state from religion, but respect for all religions. This has weakened the forces of secularism and allCouraged the revival of fundamentalism. Under the guise of respect for all religions, the Government shelters under its wings all sorts of obscurantism, dogmauser and religious fanaticism.

Conclusion. It is a matter of great satisfaction that working of democratic institutions during the last forty years has brought about a radical transformation in all spheres of national life, and tremendous progress has been made towards the goal of national integration. Today we are a politically integrated nation; and we can also be reasonably proud of our achievements in the economic and sociocultural fields. Apart from the Legislature and the Executive, the Supreme Court has made a significant contribution to the development and integration of the nation-state. As Durga Das Basu remarks, "The Supreme Court has well performed its task of protecting the rights of the individual against the Executive, against oppressive legislation and even against the Legislature itself, when it becomes overzealous in asserting its privileges not only against the individual but even against the judges."

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