

Dynamics of nation - building in Third world countries: theoretical analysis

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The end of World War-II and more importantly, the end of colonialism in Asia and Africa marked the journey of building cohesive nation-states out of the remains of colonialism. What was found common in overwhelmingly majority of these countries was the quest to organize their political life around the European model of nation-state system in a fixed timeframe and with the predetermined set of goals. Ironically, this was supposed to be accomplished in the absence of essential attributes, pre- required before proceeding on the mission of cementing the bonds of nationhood. This was possible only if the people may be convinced that as of now onward, they are the integral constituents of the new state, where they would be equal citizens, irrespective of socio-cultural and religious differentiations. However, this did not happen. It was partially due to prime necessity of the state's own survival as an independent entity that forced these governments not to share power and enter into political dialogue with sub-national groups and partially, because of elite competition for political power and economic advantages. Subsequently, they put maximum emphasis over law and order, concentration of authority, economic development and establishing the effective administrative paraphernalia that somehow further underestimated the need to foster the political process in these countries. Above all, they followed often-overlapping approaches of nation-building and state-building simultaneously and, under the rubric of national integration, where they tried to construct a national identity along the lines of a particular ethnic group or class. Any type of opposition to these attempts was labeled as anti-national. The ultimate outcome was the release of frustrations and alienation, which forced marginalized groups to engage in political protest, resistance that often led to violence. The present paper therefore attempts to study the flaws eclipsing nation and state-formation processes and, concludes that nation-states can not be created in a fixed time frame. Rather it is time taking and, from bottom to top process.

Key words: Ethnic conflicts, Global integration, Nation and state-formation, National identity, Ethnic violence, National chaos, Third world countries

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