



Reconfiguring Nationalism: Protest and Acquiescence

Call For Papers:

Department of English, Bodoland University is going to organise an international seminar on the theme “Reconfiguring Nationalism: Protest and Acquiescence” from 6th to 8th February 2020. Original and unpublished research papers are invited from teachers, researchers and interested participants for presentation at the seminar.

Concept Note:

According to Hobsbawm the Spanish word *nación*, prior to 1884, meant “the aggregate of the inhabitants of a province, a country, or a kingdom and also a foreigner”, and later the same word came to signify a “state or political body which recognises a supreme centre of common government”. The French and the English used the word to mean a state which included people even if they spoke different languages. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the term *nationalism* appeared in Europe to underscore the rise of national sentiment within an established nation-state, subsuming the right to self-determination by focusing on ethnicity and language.

Nationalism since then has been viewed with mixed responses because of its positive and negative aspects. At times it is seen to be helpful in safeguarding values and traditions – especially in the face of globalization; It brings people together and binds societies. It acts as a unifying force for the nation. For instance, in the case of India, it brought people from various classes, communities and so-called castes together and made them stand united. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s song “Vande Mataram” from *Anandamath* and Iqbal’s famous composition “*Sāre jahan se accha, Hindostan hamara, Ham bulbulen hain is ki, yih gulistan hamara*” became iconic representation that lighted the spirit of romantic imagination of nationalism in India.

However, at other times it is also seen as detrimental in multicultural/ multiethnic societies. Nations have also historically been characterised by those whom they exclude, marginalise and persecute. It leads to racial/religious abuse and hostility. The present-day rise of revanchist nationalism all over Europe culminating in the Brexit vote (metaphorically, according to Robert Shrum) and Donald

Trump's America First policy is damaging for international cooperation in such urgent issues as tackling climate change, the refugee crisis and helping all others fleeing oppression and persecution.

In the Indian context too, nationalism has proved to be equally problematic after independence. Nationalism, an imported term and ideology by Indian nationalists from Europe in the nineteenth century, has been one of the most contested terms as it tried to negotiate the inherent contradictions of self-negation and acceptance of a national culture to achieve political ends based on the western standard of modernity and progress. This had led to a catastrophic disintegration in the Indian society because the ideal of nationalism led to identity formation with the help of culture, which indirectly hinged on language thereby creating space for sub-nationalism and ethno-nationalism. Consequently, the European model of nationalism which was conceived as an anti-imperial/ anti-colonial tool in India had created complication in the post-colonial times. The very objective of nationalism in India is defeated by its inherent ideologies. Further, Benedict Anderson's imagined communities also added new possibilities of viewing nationalism outside a territorial domain.

Post 2014, the questions: "What is nationalism?" and "What it should be?" have been so widely debated in the political arena in India that it has accrued newer meanings and dimensions. Political scientists, print and media journalists, politicians, film-stars, students and many more— all had talked about nationalism in the present-day context. When a word like 'nationalism' is tossed around outside the academic domain, it is susceptible to be conflated with many things that fall outside its primary meaning and yet are still bound to affect the life and thought of the people of that nation. Today, not only in India, but also in the rest of the world the very concept of nationalism has become the core of the political thought. Right from Brexit to religious fundamentalism - nationalism underscores all debates. There is an immediate need to have a coherent and meaningful discourse on nationalism that would help in the nation-building process and curb anti-national activities. However the core of the problem is that the issue has not been addressed systematically in Indian academia that can help percolation of the idea from the higher to the lower level of masses. Tagore commented that "When our nationalists talk about ideals they forget that the basis of nationalism is wanting." So what is wanting needs to be addressed and replenished.

The seminar seeks to provide a platform to the researchers to share their research findings and deliberate on streamlining the ideas related to nationalism especially in post-colonial nations.

Sub-themes:

1. Nation as Mother.
2. Nationalism and literature.
3. Nationalism and self-determination.
4. Nationalism, sub-nationalism, ethno-nationalism.
5. Nationalism and globalisation.
6. Nation and the imagined communities.
7. Linguistic and religious nationalism.
8. Nationalism and women.
9. Nationalism and history.
10. Nation without a state.
11. Nationalism and post-colonial nation.
12. Nationalism as a problem.
13. Nationalism as a solution.
14. Nationalism and hegemony.
15. Nationalism and education.
16. Crossborder nationalism.
17. Transnationalism.
18. Nationalism and diaspora.
19. Nationalism and films.
20. Nationalism and media.
21. Nationalism and nation-state.
22. Nationalism and climate change.
23. Nationalism and the refugee crisis.
24. Nationalism and art and culture.
25. Nationalism and minority population (religious/ethnic/linguistic).
26. Any other relevant sub-theme that is related to the theme.

Submission guidelines:

Abstracts (250-300 words, with maximum 5 key words. MS Word, font size 12 points, Times New Roman with 1.5 spacing, justified, 3 cm margin on all sides.) should be sent to bodolanduniversity@gmail.com on or before **15th August, 2019**. All abstracts will be scrutinised through blind re-

view by the editorial board. The selection list will be published in the university and seminar website by **31st August 2019**.

Shortlisted authors must submit full papers (5000 - 8000 words) on or before **15th November 2019** without fail. Details of the article format is available at <https://internationalseminarbodolanduniversity.in/cfp>. Each participant will be given 35 minutes (25 Minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion), therefore the oral presentations must be prepared accordingly.

Registration Fee and Accommodation charges:

The registration process shall begin from **1st September 2019** and shall close on 1st November 2019. Payment information shall be published on **30th August 2019**.

- **Indian Participants*: Rs. 3,000. (Excluding food and lodging)**
- **SAARC countries: \$ 60 (Including lodging from 5th to 8th February 2020)**
- **Foreign Participants other than SAARC countries: \$ 100 (Including lodging from 5th to 8th February 2020)**

In case of multiple authors, all participating authors must pay the registration fee individually. There is no provision for travelling allowance, so the participants are requested to make the travel arrangements on their own.

***(Travelling allowance may be granted to selected Indian participants at a later stage, subject to receipt of funds from sponsoring agency.)**

Keynote Speakers:

Liah Greenfeld

University Professor and Professor of Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology,
Boston University, MA. USA

Susheel K Sharma,

Professor, Department of English. University of Allahabad,
Prayagraj, UP. India.

Saugata Bhaduri

Professor, Centre for English Studies
School of Language Literature and Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

Dilip Borah
Professor, Comparative Literature and Culture
Department of MIL and Literary studies
Gauhati University, Guwahati, India.

Maya Tudor
Associate Professor, Blavatnik School of Government
Fellow, St. Hilda's College
Oxford University, UK

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Contact Person:

Dr. Debajyoti Biswas
(Convener).
Assistant Professor, Department of English,
Bodoland University. Kokrajhar (BTAD),
Assam. India- 783370. Ph: +91-9864180048. (Email: bodolanduniversity@gmail.com)

Seminar website: <https://internationalseminarbodolanduniversity.in>

For more information please visit the university website: http://bodolanduniversity.ac.in/s24c/menu/administration/about_university.php

About the Place:

Kokrajhar is one of the districts of BTAD in the state of Assam, India. It is connected by railways and roadways. The nearest airport is located at Borjhar, Guwahati at a distance of 185 kms (approx.).

Tourism: There are several places of tourist attraction close to Kokrajhar: Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary (for Golden Langur), Manas Tiger Reserve (for Tigers and one horned Rhinoceros), Ultapani reserved Forest (for Butterflies) and many more. Interested participants may visit the following websites for more information:

https://bodolandtourism.org/?page_id=250; <https://www.tourmyindia.com/states/assam/>; <http://www.assamtourisonline.com>

How to reach the university:

<https://goo.gl/maps/aGhvRDXgrB7FxNs26>

Hotels:

Hotel Gaurang Valley: <https://hotelgaurangvalley.com>

Hotel Om Shree.

Hotel 7 Brothers. (For assistance in Booking Hotel, Mr. Rustam Brahma (Programme Coordinator, +91-9101135300) may be contacted.)