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The Impact of Pandemic Framing on Response Effectiveness – Global Implications

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ABSTRACT

The heavy and ongoing toll from the COVID-19 pandemic has driven home the dramatic failures of the international community to effectively respond to pandemics. The recent WHO declaration that Monkeypox now joins COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) even before COVID-19 has been brought under control highlights the reality that the pandemic threat is not a passing aberration, but rather an ongoing challenge requiring significant effort to address. One proposed approach is to "securitize" pandemics – in other words, elevate the status of pandemics from a matter of low politics to one of high politics. In this paper I consider the pros and cons of taking such a step.

Keywords: Global implication; Pandemic framing; Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

Our understanding of what constitutes a threat to security has been increasingly debated since the late 20th century. Whereas most conceptions of security derive from the Cold War era where large armies with nuclear weapons faced off against each other, with the end of the Cold War, new conceptions of security have grown increasingly popular. One relatively recent focus has been on health security, how to define it and whether the decision to define health as a "non-traditional" security issue is a wise one. I draw on two examples – one in the Middle East and one in East Asia - to explore the pros and cons of securitization.Does framing pandemic threats as a high politics, non-traditional security threat increase or decrease the likelihood of an effective global response to future pandemics?

Why focus on Pandemics?

The outset of the 21st century has seen an increase in both the frequency of pandemics and global awareness of the risk these pandemics represent. According to a study by Kate E. Jones et. al. covering the period 1940 to 2004, the frequency and number of emerging infectious diseases has been increasing, with 60 percent being zoonoses (i.e., transmissible from animals to humans) of which 72 percent originate in wildlife.[1] Having a particularly powerful impact on global awareness, the 2003severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak originating in China forced the pandemic threat onto the global agenda. This outbreak brought the potential cost in human lives and economic

losses starkly into focus. In response, the international community recognized the need to strengthen global mechanisms to contain and control future outbreaks. That taking such action is necessary was driven home by reports such as those by the World Bank (2013) that, reflecting a growing consensus, estimated the worst case scenario resulting from an influenza pandemic at between 30-40 percent of the world's population infected, 71 million dead and 4.3% of global GDP (USD $3 trillion) lost. Also, predicted are major disruptions including in food distribution and in public order.[2] Writing about growing concerns arising from the potential for a major pandemic outbreak, the World Economic Forum in its 2012 Global Risks Report identified pandemics as among the gravest risks to our planet.[3] Despite these experiences, assessments and declarations, COVID-19 caught the international community off guard, triggering "the largest global economic crisis in more than a century," with dramatic, negative impacts on global poverty and inequality.[4]

THE THREAT

Facilitating the spread of newly emerging infectious diseases is the fact that the overall human population is growing and spreading out, bringing humans into closer contact with hitherto sheltered wild animals. This process is exacerbated by deforestation, a growing reliance on factory farms and live animal markets, rapidly growing human mobility and climate change. Globalization has also played a role. Whereas the 1918-1920 Spanish Influenza infected approximately one third of the global population over an extended period, initially spreading by troopship during WW I, the 2009 H1N1 outbreak infected between 20-40 percent of the global population, spreading across the globe on international flights in only five weeks.[5] COVID-19 spread even more rapidly, with occurrences being reported by countries across the globe within a month of the first case being reported in Wuhan China.[6]

The WHO Global Agenda declares that "shared vulnerability to health security threats demands collective action…"[7] Echoing these statements in its Global Health Partnerships publication, the USCDC asserts that "the scope and intensity of global health challenges ensures that no single country or agency can work alone to meet them".[8] Indeed, as with any pandemic threat, effective response requires both domestic and coordinated international cooperation. As noted by Heymann and Rodier, to protect the global population from emerging and epidemic-prone diseases, the international community requires strong defense systems at both the national and international levels. Referring to the SARS CoV-1 (2003) example, they note the broad consensus in the international health community that "inadequate surveillance and response capacity in a single country can endanger national populations and public health security of the entire world".[9] Clearly, it is beneficial

to increase the international focus on pandemics and to encourage international cooperation on pandemic response. An important question is what strategies will work best to facilitate a global cooperative response to pandemic disease? To address this question, I turn first to a discussion of how pandemics are framed in the security literature.

FRAMING THE PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

How we frame an issue influence how we approach that issue. Schon and Rein define frames as "underlying structures of belief, perception and appreciation."[10] Different parties may view any given situation with conflicting frames -distinct perspectives that influence how they approach an issue and seek to resolve it. The very terminology we use contributes to establishing a frame and influences our approach to resolving the issue identified. With regards to pandemic threats, how we choose to frame them will influence the nature of state responses, international cooperation, and the willingness of actors to make concessions. As Waever suggests, how we elect to frame health (in this case, as a security issue or not) will influence international governance of pandemic response for better and for worse and therefore must be explored.[11]

Historically, health issues were not considered high politics – issues of security and sovereignty. After all, traditional definitions of security refer to protecting the territorial integrity, political institutions and national sovereignty of states from external physical threats.[12] Rather, as during the Cold War, health was considered a low politics issue, one that lacks great manifest political or military import, being technocratic in nature and irrelevant to either national or international security.[13] However, following the conclusion of the Cold War, and the eruption of new and often frightening pandemics, a move to expand global definitions of security to include health began. In 1946, the WHO constitution stated that "the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security".[14] In 1994, the United Nations Development Program Human Development Report focused on security as symbolized by "…protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards."[15] In 2000, while speaking before the UN Security Council opening session, then Vice President Al Gore called for an expansive definition of security to include emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.[16] Also in 2000, the US National Intelligence Estimate for the first time classified infectious disease as a threat to national and global security, a statement repeated in the 2010 US National Security Strategy. In 2007, the WHO referred to the H5N1 virus as the "most feared security threat" defining Human Security as "the activities required, both proactive and reactive, to minimize vulnerability to acute public health events that endanger the collective health of populations living across geographical regions

and international boundaries". In making this statement, the WHO pushed infectious diseases towards the realm of non-traditional security and high politics.[17] Non-traditional security incorporates non-military threats to the survival and well-being of people. By 2002 the call for securitizing extended to include the threat of even naturally occurring pandemic influenza. After all, the threat to health security remained regardless of the source of threat.[18]

Susan Peterson identifies two main causal mechanisms by which infectious diseases may threaten security. First, infectious diseases may alter the balance of power among states resulting in economic or political instability that may foster conflict. Second, infectious diseases may be used deliberately as weapons of war or may inadvertently cause illness among troops thereby undermining their ability to function.[19] Linking such diseases with national security – "securitizing" health – means using security related strategies and tactics when addressing health concerns. Doing so is likely to raise awareness among both government officials and the public in general and, as a security challenge, will draw greater investment by the government. As Caballero-Anthony argues, framing infectious diseases as national security-related enables governments and populations to better prepare for sudden eruptions of pandemics that may threaten lives and even the state's survival.[20] Officials and academics involved in disease control and response will enjoy greater prestige and will likely find themselves involved in an increased number of high profile international meetings and conferences to address the threat.[21] In short, linking pandemics to security will increase awareness, "raise the stakes," capture scarce resources and invigorate the national and international response.

The US "war on drugs" is an example of the impact of framing. Here the US effort to control movement into the US of illicit drugs was described as a "war". As such, the government securitized and thereby raised the profile of the drug challenge, increasing attention and resources for the effort to eliminate the threat. Similarly, the Taiwan CDC(TCDC) decided to describe efforts to contain and control epidemic diseases in Taiwan as a "war on disease." By securitizing epidemic diseases, the Taiwan CDC explicitly framed these as high profile, important security challenges requiring serious attention and support.[22] Many other countries followed the same strategy – declaring a War on COVID.

However, there are potential drawbacks to "securitizing" pandemics as well. If pandemics are framed as security threats, they become associated with traditional security issues, including state sovereignty and national security. Securitization turns health into a foreign policy issue that may be exploited by states to achieve wider political objectives.[23] Compromise and cooperation at the international level – key aspects of effective pandemic response – may become more difficult as narrow self-interest becomes the

basis for action. States will become more likely to act only if and when the infectious disease is perceived as directly threatening the interests and national security of the state. Furthermore, states are more likely to respond by garrisoning behind national borders to protect their citizens from the external threat.[24] Finally, by "securitizing" pandemics, the more traditional conception of security is potentially diluted, requiring a new vocabulary to capture more immediate threats to the state.[25] Can the linkage between pandemics and security be over-used and as a result actually weaken the concept of security? Does raising pandemics from a public health and development challenge requiring a humanitarian response to a security challenge increase the possibility that international politics will interfere with effective response?

In short, does securitizing pandemic response enhance or weaken international pandemic response? If the former, there may be room for this approach. If the latter, framing pandemics as a security issue maybe unwise.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

The main international actor in pandemic preparedness and response is the WHO (World Health Organization) which came into existence, replacing its League of Nations predecessor, in 1948. In 1951 the WHO adopted the International Sanitary Regulations first developed in 1851, changing and renaming them the IHRs (International Health Regulations) in 1969. These were most recently updated in 2005, coming into force in 2007. Under the new IHRs, the 194 WHO members are required to notify the WHO Secretariat of any public health emergencies of international concern. The IHRs also expanded from covering only three diseases to more than fifteen, with the option existing to add additional diseases that might arise. All members are legally bound by the IHRs though the WHO lacks real enforcement powers beyond "naming and shaming". The WHO also established six WHO regional surveillance networks. The WHO's responsibility is to mobilize the financial, technical, and human resources required to respond to outbreaks, while providing advice and information to governments, the media and the public in general.[26]

Another important international institution is GOARN - the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network - formalized in 2000. Part of the WHO, GOARN includes over 140 participants. It identifies and responds to over 50 outbreaks in developing countries each year, providing resources to the WHO which can then coordinate responses. GOARN works closely with the WHO's Global Influenza Surveillance Network, established in 1947 with a focus on vaccine development and distribution.[9]

Additional contributors to international pandemic preparedness and response include the Global Public Health Intelligence Network established by the Canadian government in cooperation with the WHO in 1997. This

network monitors international media for information on outbreaks, terrorism and other natural or human-induced disasters.[27] Also contributing to surveillance and response is the US GEIS - Global Emerging Infectious Surveillance and Response System. GEIS has over 35 worldwide partners to monitor and research infectious diseases, provide local training, coordinate information, and notify GEIS laboratories in the US of any potential threats.[28]

These by no means describe the full extent of global organizations (governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental) that have an active role in pandemic preparedness and response. Thus, ProMED (the program for monitoring emerging diseases) is a broadly accessible internet-based electronic notifications system encompassing approximately 185 countries and over 80,000 members(as of 2022). The UN Food and Agricultural Organization, the UN Children Fund, the World Bank, the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) and more participate.

As Taiwan is not a UN member nor a member of the WHO, it lacks membership in these intergovernmental organizations. As such, its participation in global pandemic response initiatives is constrained. However, as the MECIDS (Middle East Consortium on Infectious Disease Surveillance) example illustrates, it is not always necessary to be a formal member of the international community to participate in international pandemic response institutions.

THE MECIDS

Long notes that the MECIDS, established in 2003,includes one non-state actor (non-member of the WHO) – the Palestinian Authority – as well as Jordan and Israel.[28] Drawing on this example, he also asserts that successful cooperation can be achieved even among enemies. The relationship among these three began informally, based largely on unwritten understandings, and with the goal of maintaining equality among participants. The Chair rotates among all participants, with the organization's functions divided up geographically among all three. Drawing on the IHRs, the organization facilitates cooperation and information sharing to prepare and respond to disease outbreaks and pandemics. Participants are drawn from governments, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the private sector. Thus, the Ministries of health for each country participate along with local universities and institutes. The MECIDS strives to remain apolitical, receiving no funding from the governments of the organization's three participants, but rather from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector, with the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NGO) a primary funding source.

Long argues that this organization's success derives from creating institutions that are inclusive, practical, equitable and efficacious, incorporating formerly excluded actors while building trust among participants. MECIDS fulfills

an important public health task while also thickening ties, strengthening relationships and fostering trust, mutual support and resource sharing.

Success is further bolstered by the lack of endorsement by any of the relevant heads of state or foreign ministers, thereby avoiding pressures for political posturing. Relationships are personal and professional, enabling recognition of shared goals and values without being trapped in the traditional, fraught, political narrative of high politics, security, threat and competition.

Finally, success derives from a recognition that, as one participant explained, "you are only as strong as your neighbor".[28] In other words, cooperation is recognized by all participants as beneficial to the safety of their own populations because their proximity increases the likelihood that a disease in one of the members is likely to quickly cross into the jurisdiction of the other two.

ASEAN AND ASEAN + 3

An important East Asian example of an organization working on pandemic response is ASEAN (the Association for Southeast Asian Nations) and its expanded format, ASEAN + 3 (China, South Korea and Japan).[29] In the wake of the 2002-03 SARS outbreak, ASEAN members established four key pandemic-related forums in an effort to strengthen both domestic and regional pandemic related surveillance and response capacity. Among the groups established were: 1. The Expert Group on Communicable Diseases; 2. The Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Taskforce; 3. The ASEAN plus Three Emerging Infectious Disease Program; and 4. The Regional Forum for Control and Eradication of HPAI.[21] These groups facilitate information sharing on emerging infections of international concern and national practices in member countries.

In 2002, the ASEAN+3 members signed a joint declaration highlighting the need for extensive cooperation in coping with non-traditional security threats that, with the outbreak of SARS CoV-1, came to include pandemic diseases.[30] At the conclusion of the 2004 annual ASEAN summit for health ministers, the joint declaration included commendation for work being done by the expert group on communicable diseases in expanding and improving the ASEAN + 3 Action Plan on Prevention and Control of SARS and other infectious diseases. Conspicuous in its absence from ASEAN and the ASEAN+3 forum is Taiwan.

TAIWAN'S PLACE IN THE INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNITY

As already noted, effective pandemic response requires cooperation among all countries in the international community. Ideally, all countries will share information regarding potential pandemics within their own communities while also providing technical and other support. Not only

is this an ideal, but it is a requirement of the International Health Regulations (IHR). Also, all countries should enjoy equal access to information regarding outbreaks, have access to WHO expertise and the expertise of participating WHO members. WHO member countries have these resources as well as access to flu strains and health specialists who travel to member countries to assist in epidemic response.[31] Members also participate in the World Health Forum (a gathering of all member countries) and in regional forums where information and ideas are exchanged. WHO Country-members also have access to information regarding epidemic developments that are not available to the general public. These reflect just a few of the benefits deriving from WHO membership. By actively participating in the WHO and adhering to the IHRs, member states form a web of communication, information sharing and support in the case of a potential pandemic. Of course, to participate one must be a member, and to be a member one must be recognized as a state.

Taiwan, officially the Republic of China, was replaced as a member of the World Health Organization in 1972 by China, officially the People's Republic of China at the same time that Taiwan lost its UN membership. Now categorized by the WHO as a province of China, this self-governing democracy of 24 million people no longer benefits from official, state level, interactions between its health officials and medical professionals, and the WHO. WHO organized workshops and forums, including those on topics such as disease diagnosis, effective monitoring, and control of emerging infectious diseases have become inaccessible to Taiwan representatives.

In addition, Taiwan has lost its eligibility to access controlled early warning or risk assessment information regarding emerging infectious diseases. Even access to virus samples and equipment stockpiles has been withdrawn by the WHO. Officially, any information that Taiwan might seek is to be obtained through the Mainland Chinese government. From Taiwan's perspective, this has become an untenable situation.

Taiwan has adapted to its status in global pandemic response by fostering informal relationships with important regional and international actors. Taiwan public health officials work closely with the US CDC and the Japan equivalent. Taiwan also draws heavily on open-source information as made available through organizations such as ProMed and CIDRP (the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy).

After failed efforts from 1997 to 2008, Taiwan's situation improved somewhat when in 2009 China supported Taiwan's application for observer status at the World Health Assembly. Under the title "Chinese Taipei", this new status ensured that Taiwan's point of contact for epidemic information sharing was accepted, and that Taiwan could access the WHO's secure event information site. WHO officials were permitted to visit Taiwan, and within certain constraints, Taiwan's public health officials were permitted to attend WHO committee meetings dealing with PHEICs.

This greater openness to Taiwanese engagement in the WHO followed the rise to Taiwan's presidency of Ma Ying-jeou in 2008. A proponent of closer cooperation with China, Ma Ying-jeou facilitated expanding economic and tourism ties between China and Taiwan.

However, at China's insistence, Taiwan lost its observer status in 2016 when Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan's current president and a proponent of greater autonomy from China, was elected. By 2020, despite efforts to diversify, Taiwan's exports to China constituted over 43% of its total exports while China has been unsuccessful at diversifying away from high-technology Taiwanese products it requires for its own economic development.[32]

In 2021, citing Taiwan's extensive experience in pandemic management and its ability to assist the international community in managing COVID-19, members of the G-7 sought to have Taiwan's observer status reinstated. This effort was blocked by China which argued that as a part of China, Taiwan's interests must be represented by China alone.[33] China's sensitivity to even the perception of Taiwan independence was made starkly evident by its response to the August 2022 visit to Taiwan by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.[34] As Xi Jinping has made clear, Taiwan's status is a question of state sovereignty and China's internal affair, and any moves by Taiwan to increase its international status, such as gaining status with the WHO, would not be tolerated.

The Taiwan-China nexus is of particular importance to pandemic control. China has in past and continues to be a major source of emerging infectious diseases. In China's southeast can be found high human population densities, a rich diversity of wildlife and a warm climate – conditions conducive to the spread of emerging infectious diseases. According to the US National Intelligence Estimate, "particularly Chinese agricultural practices place farm animals, fowl and humans in close proximity and have long facilitated the emergence of new strains of influenza that cause global pandemics."[35] The close economic and tourism ties between Taiwan and China has resulted in increased travel between them, with the result that they form almost "one unit" in terms of pandemics.[36]

DISCUSSION

Under CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping, China has boosted its nationalistic rhetoric, tying successful Chinese "rejuvenation" to "re-unification" of China with Taiwan. This narrative has been inculcated into Chinese society to such an extent that even should the Chinese leadership wish to do so, it would be politically difficult to take a softer line on Taiwan's status.[37] Even in the case of public health – normally considered a "low politics" issue – China's refusal to allow Taiwan to enjoy WHA observer status demonstrates a

conflation of public health with sovereignty issues and hence "high politics". In essence, China has raised the public health component of the China-Taiwan relationship from a "low politics" to "high politics" making any cooperation difficult.

Does framing pandemic threats as a high politics, non-traditional security threat decrease the likelihood of an effective global response to future pandemics? Or would the global response to future pandemics be stronger if framed as a public health and development issue? The examples of MECIDS and the Taiwan-China relationship suggest that raising the profile and the stakes associated with pandemics – shifting pandemics from low to high politics – serves to undermine international cooperation on pandemics and in the process weaken the international community's capacity to manage pandemics.

That China and Taiwan are highly interdependent is clear. The quick movement of COVID-19 from China to Taiwan reflect this reality. Undoubtedly there is great potential benefit not only to China and Taiwan but to the international community to be derived from incorporating Taiwan more closely into international pandemic preparedness and response networks. To build this level of incorporation, enhancing relationships and trust is essential. However, if pandemics are framed as high politics, the possibility that a situation similar to that found in the Middle East will become far harder to achieve.

Taiwan has seen its access to and participation in the international public health community swing from full participant to non-state observer to its current exclusion. China has used Taiwan's World Health Assembly observer status as a political weapon, penalizing the island after it elected a less China-friendly president. The outcome is weakened pandemic preparedness in Taiwan, in China and internationally. While shifting pandemics from low to high politics may increase its profile and potentially the resources directed to pandemic response, the costs in terms of global cooperation are significant.

CONCLUSION

There is an ongoing debate about the benefits and drawbacks of "securitizing" health. On the one hand, there is a strong argument to be made that in an era where pandemics like Ebola, H1N1, SARS CoV-1, MERS, SARS CoV-2 and Monkey pox have returned with a vengeance, public health challenges must be given a higher priority. Institutions such as the WHO should be given greater financial support and international influence and countries should sign treaties that facilitate deeper cooperation in advance of a novel pandemic. Securitizing health – raising it from low to high politics, will contribute to achieving this end. Once health is considered a security issue, governments will prioritize health, investing more heavily and taking more seriously any health-related challenges. However, as the MECIDS and Taiwan-China examples demonstrate, there are notable costs

to securitization. Most importantly, turning health into a matter of high politics raises the profile of any health threat. Where in the past governments might allow low-key, low-level cooperation among otherwise unfriendly neighbors (as in the Israel-Jordan-Palestinian Authority case), such cooperation becomes far more difficult when the stakes are raised as occurred between China and Taiwan.

There is new and increasing global awareness of the growing threat to the international community constituted by pandemics. It would be a grave error to ignore this threat and to under invest in preparing for and responding to current and future pandemics. However, steps to securitize pandemics have the potential to achieve the opposite outcome. Leaving pandemics, and health in general as low politics decreases the stakes for politicians and for state governments, enabling low-key cooperation even among unfriendly neighbors. Given that pandemics know no borders, such cooperation is critical to future global pandemic preparedness and response.

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Indian Perceptions of the US: A Study of Indian Surveys and Public Opinion

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ABSTRACT

The Indian public has traditionally had very little say in the making of foreign policy. However, they do have views on foreign policy and the media and elites play an important role in influencing them. What do Indians think about the US, the most important power in the world and about the bilateral relations between New Delhi and Washington? Have the views of Indians on the US evolved over the years and what do Indians think about India's future ties with the US? This article examines these questions and traces historically Indian views of the US and how they have evolved over the years. The article uses available data from opinion polls and studies based on opinion polls. A descriptive analytical approach is used for the study.

Keywords: Perception; Public opinion; USA; India; Survey

INTRODUCTION

The Indian public has traditionally had very little say in the making of foreign policy. However, they do have views on foreign policy and the media and elites play an important role in influencing them. What do Indians think about the US, the most important power in the world and about the bilateral relations between New Delhi and Washington? Have the views of Indians on the US evolved over the years and what do Indians think about India's future ties with the US? This article examines these questions and traces historically Indian views of the US and how they have evolved over the years. The article uses available data from opinion polls and studies based on opinion polls.

This article is divided into four sections. The first section examines the debate on the influence of the public on foreign policy. Section two traces Indian perceptions of the US over the years. The third section deals with opinion polls conducted in India on foreign policy and studies based on these polls, focusing on Indian views of the US. The concluding section analyses factors which have influenced Indian views of the US, the demographic divide in the opinion polls and portends the future of Indian perceptions about the US.

PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY

International Relations scholarship has witnessed much debate on the influence of public opinion on foreign policy. Gabriel Almond (1960) through his mood theory laid a foundation for doubts on whether the public had the ability to give inputs for foreign policy. His theory suggests that

attention to or interest in foreign policy is usually low and can fluctuate in times of crises. He argued that the public is usually indifferent to foreign policy. But, he warned that this indifference could quickly change to apprehension to fatalism or even anger in times of crisis. Other scholars in the realist tradition like Hans Morgenthau were dismissive of public opinion, considering the public to be utterly unaware of the nuances of foreign policy decision-making. They believed foreign policy making to be the exclusive domain of elite opinion leaders and argued that a greater role for public opinion could potentially the international system. As Morgenthau said, "the rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count upon the support of a public opinion whose preferences are emotional rather than rational" (1978:558 quoted in Holsti 1992: 440)[1].

Liberals, on the other hand, find "public opinion to be relatively stable, sensibly structured, consistent, and consequently impactful on foreign policy", as leaders take into consideration public opinion while making foreign policy decisions (Dorani 2018).[2] In fact, Page and Shapiro (1992)[3] in their study found that public opinion was remarkably stable and rational. This should be read in conjunction with the liberal democratic peace theory which posits that democracies do not go to war with each other as leaders are answerable to the public. Liberal theories, argue that leaders have to take public preferences because of two reasons (Dorani 2018).[2] The first is that public support is essential for legitimising democratic governments. Second, reasonable politicians keep aside their own beliefs and follow public preferences because they are responsible to the public's will and opinions. So, they try to get advantage at the elections by following which would have public support.

Finally, analysts focusing on decision-making assume that public opinion is a crucial source of analysis and therefore plays a part in shaping foreign policy decisions (Ibid).

In modern history, one has witnessed the influence of public opinion in the US during the Vietnam War, with public opinion forcing the US to withdraw from Vietnam. The same scenario played out in Afghanistan in 2021 when the US withdrew because the long-drawn war had little support domestically.

In the case of India, while foreign policy has generally been immune from public opinion, there have been instances when the Indian state has had to take cognisance of public sentiments. India's intervention in 1971 in East Pakistan was driven partly by the angst in West Bengal of Bengalis being killed in East Pakistan. As Bass contends, though India was hesitant initially to intervene because of concerns over Pakistan's sovereignty, its "deference toward sovereignty was undone by its own public opinion, expressed through its democratic system. Almost the entire political spectrum clamored(sic) to stop the killing, with scant concern about criticizing what Pakistan did inside its own borders" (Bass 2015: 238).[4] Bass points out how from the

very beginning, India's public opinion and press condemned Pakistan for genocide and how the Congress Party decried "the crime of genocide." Both houses of India's Parliament also unanimously urged all governments to press Pakistan to stop "the systematic decimation of people which amounts to genocide." (Ibid: 253)

Similarly, India's policy towards the Sri Lankan civil war was held hostage for a long time by Tamil sentiments in Tamil Nadu. More recently, in 2014, the Prime Minister refused to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) summit held in Sri Lanka because sustained protests in Tamil Nadu against this. By and large, barring a few issues – like relations with Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the United States, and China – the Indian public does not have strong views on many international issues. So, most surveys on foreign policy in India show high proportions of 'no opinion' or 'don't know' responses.

The majority of Indians have little interest in foreign policy as Devesh Kapur established in 2009 in his paper on public opinion and Indian foreign policy based on a survey of two hundred thousand households. Kapur argued that there are enough people who do have an interest and this demographic group is growing rapidly (2009:304).[5] Hesuggests that public opinion is likely to play a greater role in shaping the future of India's foreign policies due to two reasons (290). First, India's political landscape has become more fragmented leading to a weakening of executive power compared to the legislative and judicial branches. Second, more electoral competition has meant that marginal voters matter more for electoral success and if India's current economic trajectory continues, the marginal voter is likely to be urban and more educated. If foreign policy issues have greater salience with this demographic, then public opinion on foreign policy will have greater weight. Third, one could also add that the increase in access to social media and indeed the information overload on the internet is increasing interest in foreign policy everywhere in India like it is across the world as it has been established that people are influenced by elite opinions and media. Wittkopf and Maggiotto(1983) and Wittkopf 1987[6,7] argued that masses and elites in the United States tend to possess similar foreign policy belief systems, thus proving that elites have some influence in shaping the expression of public opinion. The reason I point to the influence of elites on public opinion is because many of the surveys examined in this study are based on surveys of the elites in India. Finally, the proliferation of social media and the rise of Narendra Modi as a global leader—aided by his social media presence shows the priority laid by the government in using social media to uphold positive public opinion (Iyer 2020).[8] The"Mann Ki Baat" radio show where the Prime Minster talks about issues, including foreign policy, underlines the rising relevance of public opinion and the relations between public opinion and foreign policy in India (Ibid).

The next section traces out historically, Indian perceptions of the US.

INDIAN P ERCEPTIONS OF THE US

As one of the most powerful countries in the world, even before India's independence, Indians, at the least the educated ones, had views about the US. In the 1930s, even as India was fighting for independence, resolutions introduced in the US Senate condemned 'British repression in India', supporting the Indian freedom movement. In 1941 President Franklin Roosevelt argued for Indian independence. In a meeting with Prime Minsiter Winston Churchill, he argued that the "I cannot believe that we can fight Fascist slavery and at the same time not work to free people all over the world from a backward colonial policy. The peace cannot include despotism. The structure of the peace demands and will get the equality of peoples" (Banerjee 1968: 316). [9]

The US was therefore seen by Indian freedom fighters as a beacon of democracy and anti-colonialism. Shortly after independence, President Harry S. Truman invited Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to Washington. So, there was certainly some amount of goodwill for the US in India initially. US aid, its assistance to India in agriculture, science and technology, irrigation, education, and most importantly, US food aid enhanced this goodwill for India.

In July 1964, when the Civil Rights Bill was enacted as law in the US, the President of India sent a message to President Johnson expressing sincere congratulations on this historic measure and great achievement which would ensure the enjoyment of equal rights by all citizens of the U.S.A. irrespective of race, colour, or creed.

Other than foreign policy related issues, some other factors have had a deep impact on Indian perceptions of the US. The first is the idea of the US as a home or a land of opportunities. Small numbers of Indians, often sailors, began to immigrate from the British empire from Punjab and sometimes Bengal. But this was stopped after race based immigration restriction acts in the US. In 1907, the Oregon state legislature enacted a law prohibiting Indians from getting permanent residency in Oregon (Chakravorty, Kapur, and Singh 2017:8). [10] There were even riots against Indians in Bellingham, Washington, possibly over fears that they were stealing jobs. It was also feared that they carried diseases like hookworms (ibid: 10). The House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization held "Hindu immigration hearings" in 1914 over fears of Indians overrunning the West Coast (Ibid: 9). As a result, during the first two decades of 20th century, there were only 300 migrants every decade from India (Ibid: 56). The 1924 US immigration act also prevented Indians from immigrating. However, despite all these anti-Indian sentiments, the US refused to deport the Gadariites to British India because of its own anti-colonial sentiments. In 1952, an act was passed which increased immigration. But till then, Indians

encountered hostility in the US. However, the number of Indian immigrants remained small till 1965. Till 1965, as per the US census, there were only 12,296 people of Indian origin in the US. The period after this witnessed the emigration of skilled professionals and students.

Indian immigration continued through three phases. In the first phase between 1965 and 1979, professionals, especially doctors, skilled professionals and students, began immigrating. In the next phase between 1980 and 1994, families began immigrating. The final phase started in 1995 with the IT revolution in India, which led to the immigration of large numbers of IT professionals and students. 3/4th of Indians in the US arrived after the mid 1990s. This can be attributed to the IT revolution, changed higher education policies in both countries which facilitated movement of people, the mushrooming private engineering colleges, especially in South India. Soon, the US adapted the H1B visa programmes. Today, the Indians immigrating to the US are mostly youth. As the US became more welcoming and more accessible, Indian perceptions of the US also changed. All this was happening in the backdrop of globalization and the LPG reforms in India which led to more interactions between Indians and Americans at both personal and official levels.

The second factor is the role of some American personalities, particularly the popularity of some American Presidents in India. Starting with President John F Kennedy[11] Indian media and elites have not been immune to his charm as is event from the newspapers of the time. His aid and support to India during the 1962 war with China helped increase his popularity in India. In more recent times, President Bill Clinton arrived to adoring crowds in India and was mobbed by legislators after his speech to the Parliament. President George W. Bush was also popular in India. Similarly, President Barack Obama remained immensely popular in India during both his terms. Even President Donald Trump was popular in India.

Third, American soft power mediated through Hollywood movies, brands like Pepsi, Coca Cola, KFC, Levis, etc have also influenced Indians' views of the US as have depictions of the US in Indian media, which remains largely Western oriented.

The role of US public diplomacy also cannot be discounted in changing Indians' perceptions about the US. US government scholarships, exchange programmes, conferences, and media junkets played a big role in introducing the US to Indians and in projecting a positive image of the US. The next section looks at some studies and surveys which look at Indian perceptions of the US and on issues related to US-India bilateral ties over the years. But most of these surveys have limitations: mostly the respondents are urban youth; educated people; and elites. It is also not clear how much percentage of the respondents were women. But usually these surveys have overwhelmingly

male respondents.

RE-READING SURVEYS ON INDIAN VIEWS OF THE US

There have been very few surveys on Indian views of the world, particularly during the Cold War years. But a paper by Aidan Milliff, Paul Staniland and Vipin Narang in 2019 titled 'Uneven Accountability? Public Attitudes on Indian Foreign Policy since the 1960s' explores public opinion about India's foreign policy using both historical survey data from the 1960s and 1970s, and modern, scientific surveys from the 2000s onwards.[12] However, this survey was confined to the urban public and to literate people. But the urban, University-educated public is also the constituency most likely to have influence on foreign policy issues and shape media treatment of them. The paper finds that the urban public was fairly pro-US in the 1960s and 1980s, making the 1990s rapprochement perhaps less of a surprise than people would think (Milliff, Staniland, and Narang (2019: 8).[12]
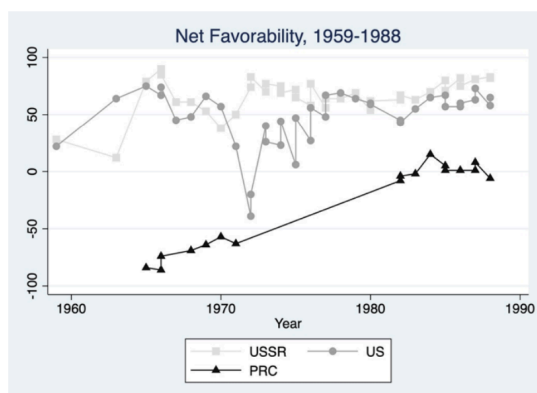

Fig. 1: Net Favourability of the US, USSR, and PRC from 1959-1988 in IIOPO Urban Surveys. *Source: Milliff, Staniland, and Narang (2019: 6)[12]*

If one examines the Net Favourability of the US, USSR, and PRC from 1959-1988 in Indian Institute of Public Opinion (IIOPO) Urban Surveys, there are no surprises. There are favourable perceptions of the US in India after the 1962 war, thanks to the help extended by the US. Part of this could also be attributed to President Kennedy's charmas mentioned earlier. Then we see a cooling of relations after the 1965 war, and then US backing for Yahya Khan's regime in 1970-71 leads to the decline in positive views. The lowest point in Indo-US relations was in the 1970s, particularly during and after the Bangladesh War and that is reflected in this survey quite well. Thus, the favourability of the US which is quite high in this survey in the early/mid-1960s (see Figure 1), starts to decline in the late 1960s, and then declines further during and after the 1971 war, when the US supported Pakistan and sent the USS Enterprise aircraft carrier into the Bay of Bengal. Conversely, the favourability

of the USSR climbs substantially in response to Soviet backing for India in the same period (Milliff, Staniland, and Narang 2019: 8).[12] After the 1971 war, the pro-US sentiments bounced back, and by the end of the Cold War, was not very far behind the USSR. So, as this survey makes clear, pro-US sentiment was actually quite high, other than in the early/mid-1970s. This makes the speed of the US-India rapprochement after the end of the Cold War less unexpected as this was also a time when a growing number of Indians started moving to the United States. In fact, in 1985 Rajiv Gandhi had already reached out to Washington, and the evidence in this survey shows that an influential section of Indian public opinion wanted closer ties with the US (Ibid:8).
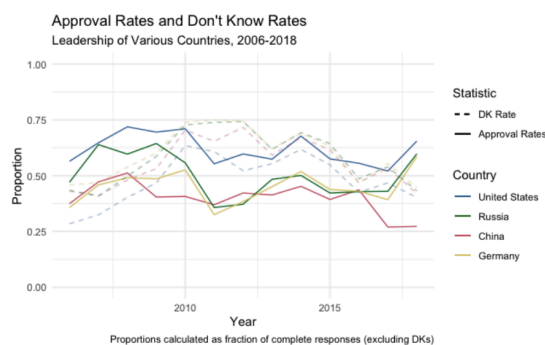
Fig. 2: Approval rates for the leadership of Russia, China, and Germany, and the United States. *Source: Milliff, Staniland, and Narang (2019: 25)[12]*

Similarly, if one studies the approval rates for the leaderships of various countries, the approval rates for US have remained consistently high (See Figure 1).

Region	China Approval	US Approval	Approval Gap
North	0.46	0.72	0.26
Central	0.35	0.61	0.26
East	0.26	0.44	0.18
South	0.54	0.64	0.10
West	0.35	0.59	0.24

Fig. 3: 2008-2018 World Gallup Poll Approval Rates of US and China. *Source: Milliff, Staniland, and Narang (2019: 32)[12]*

Figure 3 also shows the consistently higher approval rates for the US as opposed to China across the different geographic regions in India. Northern respondents are warmer towards the United States (see Figure 3). Milliff, Staniland, and Narang point out some other interesting facts from the World Gallup Pollsin their study (2019:28):[12]Muslim respondents have almost 14 points lower warmth of feelings toward the United States than Christian respondents. It also seems that higher education translated to higher approval of the US.

In 2006, Outlook and AC Nielsen conducted surveys on India's public attitudes toward India-US bilateral relations.

Among other items, it asked respondents whether India could trust the United States for support in times of need. The results showed that 55 percent of Indians had positive feelings towards the US. In fact, a plurality of Indian respondents (66 percent) considered President George W. Bush as India's friend.

INDIAN PUBLIC OPINION ON FOREIGN POLICY: SUMMARY OF RECENT SURVEYS

Survey	India sample size	Coverage	Results - attitudes towards:	
			US	China
Pew, 2006	2, 029	Urban	56% viewed the US favorably, down 15% from 2005.	Not available, but 56% viewed China favorably in 2005
			4th highest rating given out of 15 countries polled	
Pew, 2007	2, 043	Urban	59% viewed the US favorably, up 3% from 2006	46% viewed China favorably, down 10% from 2005
			15th highest rating out of 47 countries polled	26th highest rating of 47 countries polled.
Chicago Council of Global Affairs, 2006	2, 458	National, Formally Educated	66% believed US had significant influence on the world[21]	46% believed China had significant influence on the world.
			54% *wanted* US to have that much say in the world	48% *wanted* China to have that much say in the world

Fig. 4: Indian Public Opinion on Foreign Policy: Summary of Recent Surveys. *Source: Kapur (2009: 291)*[5]

Kapur's study seems to reinforce this view about approval for the US (see Figures 4, 5 and 6). This cuts across different states and age groups in the country (See Figures 7 and 8).

		yes
SEC A1 ("elites")	USA	66.72 (5948)
	China	53.58
	Pakistan	29.85
Urban	USA	62.44 (50546)
	China	50.92
	Pakistan	31.93
Young (less than 30 years old)	USA	61.65 (6918)
	China	49.69
	Pakistan	32.72

Fig. 5: Favourable Feelings towards US, China, Pakistan. *Source: Kapur (2009): 294*[5]

Devesh Kapur's study on 'Public opinion and Indian Foreign Policy' further found that Indian elites may like the US more in absolute terms as they benefit more from better relations with the US and are better informed about the US. He finds that weaker segments of society also appear to harbour warmer feelings towards the US compared to other
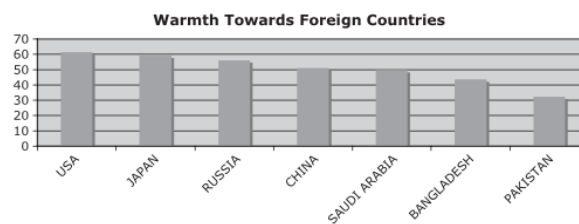

Fig. 6: Overall Feelings of Warmth towards Foreign Countries. Source: Kapur (2009: 297)[5]

RATINGS ON FEELINGS OF WARMTH TOWARDS FOREIGN COUNTRIES ACROSS STATES

States	US	Pakistan	China
Andhra Pradesh	68.4	32.1	51.9
Assam	63.6	33.7	63.4
Bihar	53.6	33.3	53.3
Chandigarh	65.5	35.1	55.6
Chattisgharh	56.8	34.8	53.2
Delhi	67.3	34.8	53.5
Goa	64.6	25.7	45.8
Gujarat	51.4	25.8	39.1
Haryana	71.3	29.5	55.5
Himachal Pradesh	59.9	28.7	52.3
Jammu	61.1	28.5	46.8
Jharkhand	63.0	34.8	54.1
Karnataka	68.2	37.8	54.4
Kerala	52.9	36.1	48.9
Madhya Pradesh	57.5	31.7	49.4
Maharashtra	58.2	29.5	45.2
Orissa	64.7	29.5	53.2
Punjab	68.1	41.6	54.3
Rajasthan	56.9	27.8	48.5
Tamil Nadu	71.9	33.5	63.4
Uttar Pradesh	58.6	31.3	50.2
Uttaranchal	59.3	30.3	50.1
West Bengal	61.6	35.3	55.8

Fig. 7: Warmth towards Foreign Countries across States. Source : Kapur (2009: 299)[5]

RATINGS OF FEELINGS OF WARMTH TOWARDS FOREIGN COUNTRIES ACROSS AGE GROUPS

AGE	US	Pakistan	China
15–19 years	64.1	35.2	52.2
20–29 years	62.1	32.7	50.9
30–39 years	60.1	31.3	50.6
40–49 years	59.7	31.1	51.1
50 + years	59.9	31.9	50.0

Fig. 8: Warmth towards Foreign Countries across Age Groups. Source : Kapur, 2009: 298[5]

countries and younger people seem to have warmer feelings towards the US than older people.

The Lowy Poll conducted in 2013 based on 1233 respondents found that among all the countries in the world Indians like the United States most and Pakistan least (Medcalf 2013).[13] The study also found that 75% of Indians want US-India ties to strengthen further over the next 10 years. Yet, a substantial minority (31%) of Indians think the United States poses a threat to India, though only 9% see it as a major threat. A large majority of Indians (83%) consider India-US relations to be strong, with 38% describing this relationship as very strong. Three quarters of Indians would like the US-India relationship to become stronger still over the next 10 years, with 50% wanting it to become a lot

stronger.

In his Survey of India's Strategic Community" for Brookings India, Jaishankar (2019)[14] surveyed 290 members of India's strategic community, with 18% of respondents being female. He found that 75% perceive the United States to be India's most important partner on global issues (see Figure 9). Additionally, a large minority of respondents (43%) are in favour of closer collaboration with the United States in the event of greater U.S.-China competition (see Figure 10). The respondents see trade disputes and U.S.-Pakistan relations to be constraining the India-U.S. partnership. Jaishankar also found that those born between 1960 and 1979 generally place a greater priority on the partnership with the United States, a point emphasized by the other surveys mentioned above.
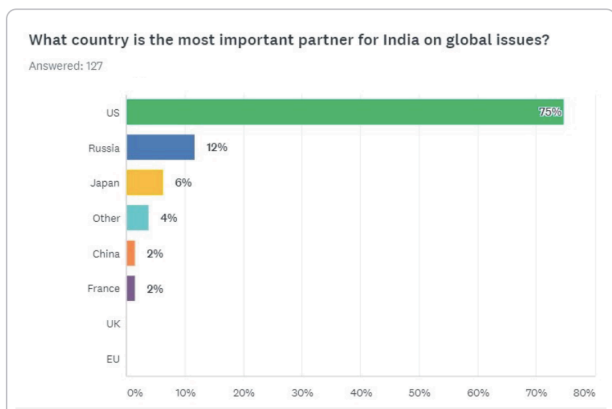

Fig. 11: Biggest Obstacles to better Relations with the US. *Source: Jaishankar (2019:14)[14]*

Fig. 9: Most Important Partners for India on Global Issues. *Source: Jaishankar (2019:13)[14]*
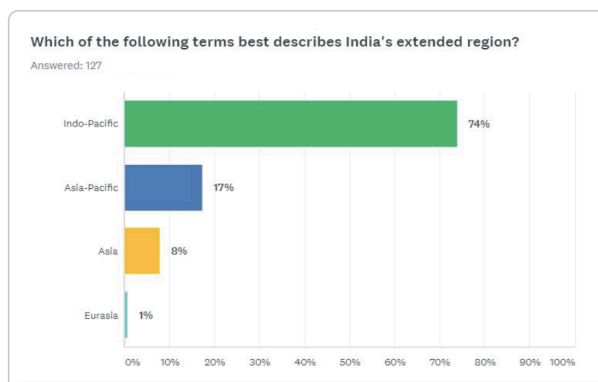
Fig. 12: India's Extended Region. *Source: Jaishankar (2019:15)[14]*

Fig. 10: India's Posture in the case of greater US-China Competition. *Source: Jaishankar (2019:14)[14]*

Jaishankar's survey shows that the Indian elites see the Indo-Pacific as India's extended regions, much above the Asia Pacific or Asia or Eurasia. This construct would therefore suggests closer collaboration with maritime powers,

including the United States, Japan, Australia, and Southeast Asia. As the idea of the Indo-Pacific is closely associated with the US and its treaty allies, one could extrapolate that the Indian elites favour closer ties with the US. The survey finds that those born between 1960 and 1979 are more likely to identify the United States as India's most important partner and are more likely to believe that India should collaborate with the United States in the event of greater U.S.-China competition

The Pew Research of 2017 found that Indians remain relatively positive on America and President Trump. Roughly half (49%) have a favourable view of the U.S., while just 9% have an unfavourable view. Four-in-ten had confidence in President Donald Trump to do the right thing regarding world affairs. It also found that roughly half of BJP supporters (52%) are positive on the U.S., but only 36% of Congress party supporters are positive towards it. There is a similar pattern on confidence in Trump, with BJP supporters slightly more likely to say they trust the U.S. president on the world stage (44% vs. 33%) and Congress supporters more likely to offer no opinion. These assessments stand in stark contrast to the negative ratings Trump received in much of the world.

Across 37 countries, people were most likely to say they think of Trump as "arrogant" (a global median of 75%), "intolerant" (65%) and "dangerous" (62%). Similarly, even before, in 2016, during the Obama administration, solid majorities held a favorable opinion of the U.S. (56%) and trusted Obama's approach to international affairs (58%). The Pew Research of 2019 found that 58% of Indians see US as the leading economic power; 45% see US economic influence as positive; 74% believe that US-India economic ties are good; and 72% want better economic ties with the US.

The New Delhi-based Thank tank Observer Research Foundation's (ORF) Survey of 2021 identified the top priorities in foreign policy among its respondents. It found that 82% see better relations with US as a priority. However, this survey was focused on the youth in India, that too urban youth.
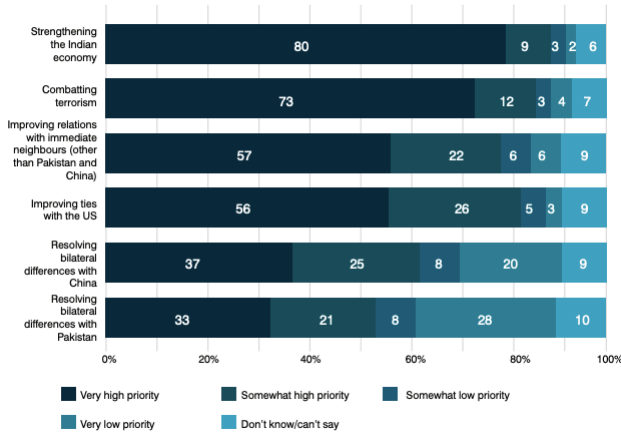
Fig. 13: Top Priorities in Foreign Policy. *Source: Pant et al. (2021: 17)* [15]

On the questions of countries which its respondents trust the most, the US with 77 percent favorability rating leads when it comes to trust (32 percent trust completely, and 45 percent trust somewhat) [See Figure 14]. The highest number i.e. 78 percent of respondents believe that the US is likely to be India's leading partner in the coming decade (See Figure 15). The positive sentiment for the US is reflected in the fact that it is the only country in whom trust for the present is matched by the projections for the future as the report points out.

Similarly, as per the ORF survey, 44 percent of those surveyed saw the US as India's most likely future partner, followed by Australia, Japan, and Russia respectively (see Figure 15).

On the question of India's position if US-China tensions rise, the majority of the respondents (62%) suggested cooperating with the US, with only 32 % preferring to remain neutral (See Figure 16).
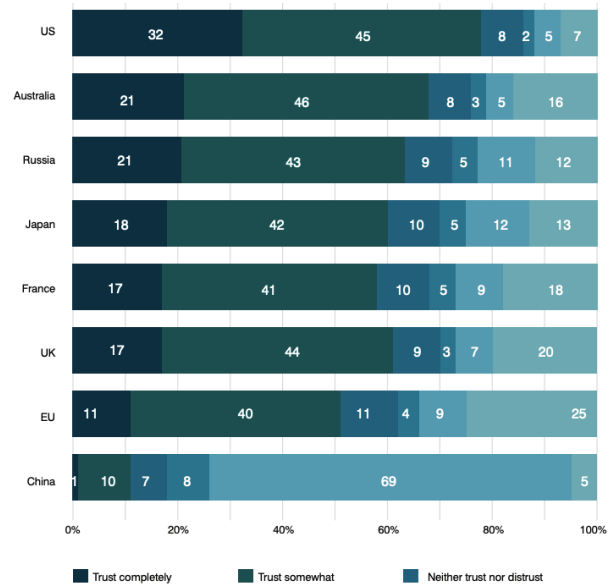
Fig. 14: How would you rate these powers on the basis of how much you trust them?. Source: Pant et al (2021:25) [15]
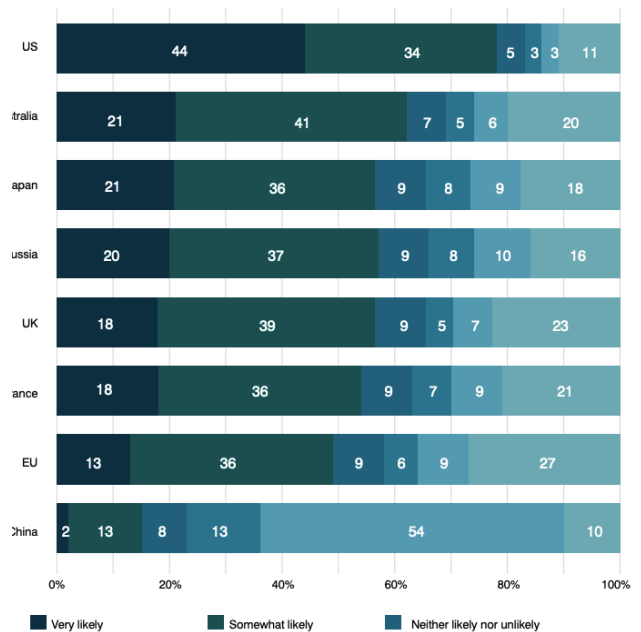
Fig. 15: In the next 10 years, how likely are each of the following powers, to become India's leading partners?. Source: Pant et al (2021: 27) [15]
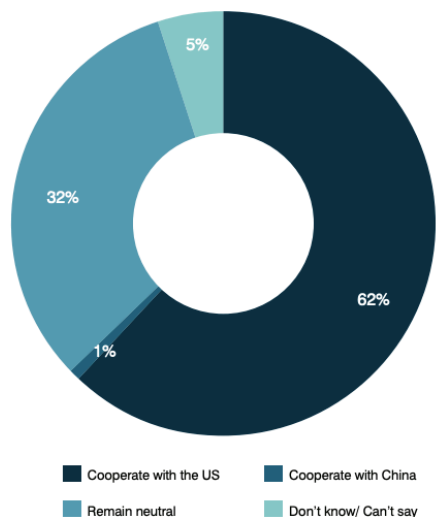
Fig. 16: India's Position in case of US-China Tensions. Source: Pant et al (2021: 28) [15]

INDIAN PUBLIC OPINION AND INDIA-US TIES

Indian public opinion has not been a decisive factor in shaping India's relations with the United States. However, there have been several instances where public opinion has had an impact on issues affecting Indo-US ties.

The first instance is that of the nuclear deal with the United States. In 2008, an Outlook India poll found that 56 percent approved of the government's decision to press ahead with it. That probably gave the then Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, the courage and support to go ahead with the deal despite opposition from within his coalition parties. The Congress Party won the next general elections, proving that the public was not against the deal. Another instance of public opinion having an impact on Indo US ties can be found in 2003. Again, a survey by Outlook published in July 2003 found that 69% of urban Indians, albeit in a small sample size, were not in favour of sending Indian troops to Iraq (Outlook 2003). Blareland Pardesi (2012) [16] concluded that, despite clear preference of the ruling elites in favour of participating in the US-led Iraq War, India's public opinion constrained the final policy outcome when India decided against sending troops to Iraq. Similarly, during the 1991 Gulf war, a large majority of respondents (71 percent) expressed the opinion that India should adopt a neutral stance on the issue (Malik 1991: 852). [17]

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a quick survey of Pew Research over the years shows that there has been consistent support for the US. Even President Donald Trump, mocked and reviled in most other countries, was popular in India, with even a temple being built for him and people praying for him to win the Presidency a second time. There is no doubt that since Independence, India has looked up to the United States as a leading democracy. The help extended by the US during the 1962 war with China helped to improve perceptions about the US among the Indians. US AID, particularly US food aid, which made a difference on the ground for ordinary people also helped improve perceptions of the US. However, later, President Johnson's short tether policy on food aid to India might have affected these perceptions as did President Nixon's tilt towards Pakistan and the US rapprochement with China. This added to the perception among any people in India, particularly those on the Left, saw the US as an Imperialist power, which was bent on not allowing India to emerge as a leading power. In fact, several times during the Cold War, often the US came in handy for the ruling class as the "foreign hand" interfering in India's domestic politics. It was perhaps during the Bangladesh war that the US became most unpopular.

But despite all this, the US was seen as a place to migrate to, a land of opportunity where Indians could do well. The US is the second most preferred choice to migrate to for Indians, after the UAE. Post LPG reforms, perceptions of the US became even more pro-US because of the IT revolution which led to more interactions among Indians and Americans. Not withstanding this, Indian perceptions of the US have always been coloured by the perceived strength of US-Pakistan relations; and to a lesser degree by US-China relations as is evident from the different surveys. However, there appears to always have been a groundswell of pro-US sentiments in India, possibly because of shared democratic values. Today, as all the surveys have shown, Indians have very favourable views of the US. This positive perception about the US is seen across age groups and states. Moreover, with India's population becoming more youthful because of its demographic dividend, this positive image will only increase. Moreover, more and more of the youth are now studying in the US as it is the most favoured destination for higher education and are therefore getting more exposed to the US. This is true of the elites as well who are more invested culturally and economically in the US than in any other foreign country. In fact, this graph is likely to rise as more interactions take place between the peoples of the two countries and as US-China tensions rise along with India-China tensions. The US is seen as a partner who can be trusted against China. So, if public opinion has a say in the formulation of future Indian foreign policy, all indications are that India will grow closer to the US in the future.

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Research Article

Can the Arab World be Democratic: An Analytic Study from the Perspective of the Arab Spring

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with the democratisation debate in the Arab world. The region remains one of the least receptive regions in the world towards the popularly and universally accepted Western norm of liberal Democracy. This is at odds with the location and general direction in which these nations and the people of these nations look for inspiration and direction. Today the Arab world stands at a crossroads, seemingly torn between the forces of the new Cold War. The region appears to be a new battlefield for the proxy war between the West and Russia, with Syria and Yemen being the best examples of this phenomenon. This is particularly tragic, given that in the last Cold War that started in 1945 and ended in 1991, this region was the zone of a number hot-engagements that resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths, displacement of people, huge refugee crises (the Palestine-Israel issue, Yemen Civil War, etc) and general instability in the region. This instability in turn provided the impetus for Strong-men and Dictators to take charge in many nations of the region. As a result, the move towards a liberal democratic stature in the region took a back-burner. This article will seek to look at this issue from the perspective of the Arab Spring.

Keywords: Democratic; Arab world; Arab spring

INTRODUCTION

Democracy is often defined in terms of the etymology of the name itself. 'Demos' meaning people and 'Kratos,' meaning rule or power; thereby together referring to 'rule by the people.' Democracy comprises of two main components, 'contestation' and 'participation.'[1] 'Contestation' refers to those political systems where free and fair elections are conducted and different political parties compete against each other. 'Participation' off-course refers to the involvement of different sections of society in the democratic process. There are different types of democratic systems in the world today. Procedural or minimalist democracies are those that prioritise elections over everything else. They can also be called illiberal democracies. Consolidated democracies are those that put limits on the power of

the ruling elites. According to acclaimed American scholar S.P. Huntington, 'democracies…provide accepted channels for the expression of dissent and opposition within the system.[2] Democracies can also cease to be democracies, this process is known as de-democratisation. Huntington again describes this phenomenon. He also describes the reasons for this phenomenon, 'such as the low level of loyalty to the democratic values, economic crisis, polarisation, the reluctance of conservative classes to share power, the deterioration of the rule of law, external intervention, the snowballing impact of the collapse of democratic regimes in other countries.[1]

In Huntington's view, there have been three waves of democatisation in the modern world. The first wave occurred during the period from 1828-1926, over a hundred-year period. The second wave occurred during

the period 1943-62, corresponding with the de-colonisation movements in much of Africa and Asia during this period. The third wave, according to him, has been on-going since 1974.[1]

DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE ARAB WORLD

In the period after the end of the Second World War, many movements for democracy have swept the world. However till recently, the Arab world seemed to be immune to the call for the installation of democracy in their respective countries. While the Arab people were quick to liberate themselves from centuries of foreign rule in the last century, they seemed to be at a loss as far as the installation of true democracy was concerned. Democratic changes occurred in many parts of the world in the 20th century. The first wave in the post-WWII era transformed, albeit under Western supervision, Japan, Germany and Italy into democratic governments responsible to their respective peoples, while at the same time countries such as Israel, India, Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka and other states in Asia and Africa achieved independence and an initial transition to democracy during this period. Democratic stabilization was not possible in all of these countries, however. The second wave of democratization was a primarily European phenomenon as long-standing dictatorial regimes in Spain, Portugal and Greece gave way to popular democratic governments in the 1970s. In the 1980s, many nations in Latin America, such as Brazil and Argentina embraced democracy. However, the most spectacular phenomenon was the fall of the Berlin Wall and the associated spread of popular government across all the states of the former Warsaw Pact in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This was known as the so-called Velvet Revolution.[3]

While there were projections that the Arab world would be next in line for democratic transition, this did not materialize at that time due to many reasons, such as the rigidity of the various regimes of the region and the extent of support that Western developed nations extended to them. The Middle Eastern/West Asian region is of extreme strategic importance to the West primarily because of its location at the crossroads of the East and West (North and South), but also because of the large quantities of hydrocarbon wealth possessed by many of these nations.

Case 1: Algeria

Algeria was a test case for democratization in the Arab-North African world in the 1990s. When we think of Islamists winning political elections, often the best example that comes to mind is that of the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria. Known popularly by its French acronym as the Front Islamique du Salut or FIS, this party is credited with winning the first round of free parliamentary elections in Algeria on December 26, 1991, cornering around 48% of

the popular vote and getting 188 of the 231 seats that they contested, naturally putting them in a position to win the subsequent round as well.[4] The Algerian army that had always dominated the state as in the case in Egypt took fright at this Islamist party success and quickly canceled the whole electoral process. What happened after that was the rapid slide of Algeria into a state of civil war with a multitude of groups, Islamist-oriented as well as pro-government forces fighting each other as well as committing horrendous massacres of civilians, abetted in part, it would generally seem by the internal security services of the ruling Army establishment. In a Civil War spanning almost two decades, more than 100,000 Algerians lost their lives.[5]

This would also probably reflect the view in the West during the period from the early 1980s to the latter part of the 2000s that it would be too dangerous to allow Islamist parties to come to power by democratic means, as they might then seek to the rewrite the whole democratic process to their advantage in the future. In short, that Islamists might then emerge as the new dictators. In the contest between a secular-nationalist approach and an Islamist approach, it was generally felt that preference should be given to the secular-nationalist approach, democracy or no democracy. It was this attitude in the Western security establishments that acquiesced in the rule of so many 'secular' non-democratic nationalist dictators in the Arab world for so long. There was also a time in the not so distant past when it was felt by the West that Arab Nationalist leaders posed the main threat to the security of the Middle East, with an emphasis given on propping up various absolutist Kingships, Sultanates and Emirates not to speak of Sheikhdoms as the acceptable form of rule from a Western point of view in the region. The fact is that absence of a state defined by the rule of law and lasting governmental institutions is the real danger to democracy and stability in all the problem of regions of the world, such as the Middle East, South West Asia, Central Asia and parts of Africa.[6]

Thus in the case of the Algerians, it was clear that no Western power would interfere in the situation as an alliance between local ruling military-political elites and external powers such as France strengthened the role of the state and weakened the emerging civil society in the region. This situation prolonged military dictatorships and tyrannical regimes in the region more than any other part of the world. Western democracies such as France and Great Britain were and have been major obstacles to the process of the shift to democracy in the Arab world. As far as foreign policy is concerned, the US Government has for long been practising what can only be classified as 'democratic exceptionalism.'[7]

Case 2: Palestine

Another apt example of the above syndrome was the case of Palestine. Legislative and presidential elections have been held consecutively since 1996 in Palestine. The first

presidential election in 1996 was won by the late former Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat. Following his fall from favour with the West and in particular with America and the state of Israel, the incumbent President Mahmud Abbas was first elected as Palestinian Prime Minister and later on the untimely death of Arafat, was re-elected as Palestinian President. In 2005, Palestinian municipal elections to various town and area councils were held after a long lapse. The 2006 legislative elections were held on 25 January 2006. For the first time ever in the history of Palestinian democracy, the radical Islamist grouping Hamas won 74 seats out of the 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Assembly that were in the public electoral sphere.[8]

Fatah, the main Palestinian Liberation Organisation grouping along with the US and Israel sought to sideline, boycott and deny Hamas its electoral victory in the January 2006 elections and the right to form the next Palestinian government. The resulting clash between the two rival Palestinian factions led to Hamas taking over the Gaza Strip in June 2007. Palestinian internal politics since then has been characterised by a fractured polity, with Hamas's control of the Gaza Strip meaning almost total isolation for the people of the Strip from the outside world, as Israel has enforced a strict blockade of the area from both land as well as sea to put pressure on the radical Islamist grouping, thereby putting the people of the Strip under incredible economic and social hardship and suffering.

Hamas's control over the Gaza Strip and virtually half of the Palestinian political spectrum has also given the Israelis a good excuse to desist from serious or meaningful peace negotiations with the Palestinians on the pretext of not having a suitable partner for peace in the region, Hamas being ideologically committed to the establishment of an Islamic state on all of the historic territories of Palestine, much of which is now the state of Israel. The founding Charter of Hamas mentions that the state of Israel would be eventually destroyed by Islam.[9]

Hamas has never to date formally repudiated this founding Charter of principles that seek to guide the Palestinian Islamic Movement. The new Hamas Statement 'A Document of General Principles and Policies,' released by Hamas Media Office on 1st May, 2017 does not seek to replace the original founding Charter, but seeks to bring to public notice certain new aims such as the willingness to accept a sovereign and independent Palestinian State based on the ceasefire lines of June 4th, 1967, with Jerusalem as the capital of the proposed state.[10]

Hamas and Fatah have periodically sought to bury their differences and come together in a show of unity to form a pan-Palestinian national government of unity, but these efforts have also been stoutly opposed by Israel and also by the US under the pretext of having nothing whatsoever to do with a 'fundamentalist' Islamist grouping such as Hamas.[11] It remains to be seen whether Hamas and Fatah will really be able to cooperate together in forming a national government as being envisaged in the present-future as the two parties have never had a history of collaborating effectively with each other and indeed have only had an experience of intense political and sometimes fratricidal rivalry and conflict.

ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES

The best examples of the US Government's support for dictators and unsavoury rulers were witnessed in its own backyard of Latin (Central and South) America. Western nations have long been acting under the false assumption that their interests are best served across the non-European and Anglo-Saxon world under autocratic regimes and not democratic establishments. Another misconception that was long prevalent in the West (something that the Arab Spring has hopefully corrected) was that Arabs and Muslims cannot establish democratic governments and societies as their political culture is incompatible with modern norms of democracy. There are two schools of thought that are dominant in the debate over the predicament of democracy in the Arab world. One is known as the 'exceptional' and the other is known as the 'compatibility' discourse. The 'exceptional' discourse recommended the thesis that the Arab Middle East was largely immune to democracy because of the incompatibility of the Arab-Islamic political culture with the universal values of democracy. Arab political culture and Islam were held responsible for the democratic 'gap' in the region. Samuel P. Huntington along with others was the main advocates of this view. Their writing dominated the intellectual discourse of the 1990s. Huntington's 'Clash of Civilisations' was taken for granted in Orientalist scholarship towards the region. The 'compatibility' discourse or school of thought led by area specialists to the region presented the thesis that Islam and Arab political culture were no less compatible with democracy than other cultures and religions. The main scholars who advocated this view were Esposito, Hudson, Ibrahim, Norton, Richards and other scholars.[12]

Much of the literature about democratization in the Middle East that came out before the Arab Spring, sought to explain the 'why' aspect rather than the 'how' aspect, that is, researching why the countries of the region and the greater Islamic world are undemocratic instead of trying to investigate how to bring about a successful transition to a democratic set-up for these particular countries. Huntington's writings as well as those of Bernard Lewis and Francis Fukuyama reflected this position. Tim Niblock attempted as early as 1998 to change the dialogue by calling for an investigation of the instruments of democratization, instead of investing decades in a fruitless search for the reason why Arabs can never be democrats. His call fell on deaf ears. It would appear that the Orientalist main aim was to discourage endogenous democratic forces or external voices from proceeding in their struggle for democratization

in the region. [13]

It was in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States that the Bush Administration reversed the policy of 'democratic exceptionalism' in the Arab world and started to strongly call for democratization in the region. This was again a policy change that was undertaken as it gave the best excuse for intervention in the internal affairs of many Arab nations, predominant among which was Iraq. It was also a policy that was directed against the various despots and autocratic regimes of the region. The Bush administration publicly stated that democratization was the best instrument for stability and coexistence, as well as the best answer in dealing with terrorism. [13]

Following the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq in 2003, there was hope that the winds of change would spread through out the region. However those who felt so were disappointed as even the Bush administration's crusading desire to democratize the Arab-Islamic worlds seem to fade in the light of the intransigence to true democracy shown by two key leaders of the Arab world at that time, namely Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. President Obama in his speech to the Islamic world in Cairo on June 2nd, 2009 also made it clear that democratization in the Islamo-Arab worlds would be very high in his foreign policy agenda. [13] It is probably significant that change when it happened in the Arab world through the medium of the Arab Spring took place during the US Presidentship of Barack Obama, a President who himself embodied the principle of change in Washington, D. C.

It was the obstinate and obdurate nature of the leadership and government of many Arab states that caused the change that occurred to be revolutionary and violent. These uprisings in the Arab world were not surprising to Area specialists who had for the last thirty odd years been warning of the dangers of ignoring popular demands for change and freedom in the Arab world. However, the Arab Spring came as a shock to policy-makers and leaders in western capitals who had for so long ignored such demands. Not only that, they had openly supported tyranny in the region and had provided local despots with the military, political, diplomatic, and financial aid necessary to strengthen their autocratic regimes, and simultaneously weakened democratic forces and the emerging civil service institutions in the Middle East. The uprisings in the Arab world indicate one thing that at last the Arab people have realized that any democratic change must come from within the civil society system and not without. [13]

FACTORS HINDERING GROWTH OF DEMOCRACY IN THE ARAB WORLD

What are the main factors that hinder the growth of democracy in the Arab and Islamic worlds? The first and most important issue that one has to deal with from a global perspective is the issue of oil and energy resources in the Arab Middle East. Global interest in the oil-producing countries was the main factor in the West propping up and supporting tyrants and despots in this region. Oil producing countries tended to be countries where small elites controlled the entire economy and skimmed off the profits from the oil industry as well. Oil consuming countries also believed that their interests were best protected by autocrats, and felt threatened by democratic governments, should democracy indeed triumph in the region. Oil consuming countries need to realize that democratic countries will sell oil as well and will be more stable and free-market oriented. Free governments are more likely to abide by market mechanisms in terms of oil production, pricing, supply, demand, and marketing. Such free trade mechanisms would reduce the heavy investment in armaments to protect oil routes and the need to maintain a military presence in the Middle East, especially for the United States. The US security support of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, and other oil-producing countries can only be understood from an oil perspective. Therefore, democratic authority would free both producers and consumers from unnecessary fear over the flow, pricing, and marketing of oil, within the context of free trade that protects the interests of both sides. [13]

ISLAMIST POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

The second factor that hinders the growth of democracy and democratic institutions in the Arab and Islamic worlds deals with the issue of Western fears of Islam and Islamists as a political force in the region. The West continues to hold unfounded imagery about Islam as a religion, and Islamists as a political force in the region over the past millennium. The most misunderstood movement, and by far the most popular, is the Muslim Brotherhood, a mainstream reform movement established in 1928 by a schoolteacher named Hasan Al-Bana. [14] The movement has been an integral part of the socio-economic and political struggles of the region since then. Its marginalization from politics is unrealistic and counter-productive. The aim of the Muslim Brotherhood was to restore God's sovereignty, aspiring for a government that operated on the basis of Muslim values and norms. [15] Its landslide electoral success in several Arabs and Islamic countries is a testament to popular support and trust placed in this Islamic current. Therefore, instead of excluding Islamists from politics, they should be assured of their right to participate in politics, and engage in constructive dialogue with the West; its members should be trained in parliamentary processes, and assisted in moderating their platforms to better serve the cause of democracy. [13]

While Arab ruling elites and military dictatorships understand the Islamic movement and its goals and methods very well, the West in particular needs to better understand Islamists. Regimes exploit this gap by exaggerating the threat of Islamists to western interests. Therefore, they present

themselves as a better alternative to Islam. The burden of taking steps to ensure mutual understanding lies on the shoulders of both sides. Islamists must make themselves known to and well understood by the entire world. They must initiate and accept an open dialogue with the West. They must work openly, as secrecy only creates an atmosphere of suspicion, mistrust, and antagonism. Islamists need to realize that there are no divine or scriptural impediments to accepting western initiatives for such dialogue. There are no religious impediments to talking with the United States in particular on formal or informal levels. Islamists must know that the current world operates under the rules of compromise, openness, dialogue, mutual understanding, mutual interests, globalization, multiculturalism, cultural dialogue, interfaith dialogue, and Civilisational dialogue. There is no room in the current world for clandestine behaviour, isolationism, or self-imposed confinements as long as individuals seek an active participation in the political life of their nation. Islamists must also modify their political discourse, tactics, and strategies in dealing with local, regional, and international affairs.[13]

By the same token, rather than viewing them as foes, the West ought to accept Islamists as active participants in the political milieu of the region, and deal with them on equal footing, as partners in the process of transition to democracy. Islamists platforms are similar to Christian Democrats in Europe and Republicans in the US as they are inspired by faith, but are practical enough to ensure good government, such as in the case of Turkey and Malaysia.[13]

Another element in the democratization process deals with the War on Terror. Lack of democracy is fully responsible for terrorism, extremism, and instability in the region. Prior to the momentous changes in the Arab Middle East of the last two years, Western policy-makers continued to hold Islam and Islamists fully responsible for terrorism, while autocrats in the region were considered close allies. However, a closer examination reveals that the direct response to tyrannical rule was the radicalization of segments of Muslim society. Dictatorial regimes create terrorism, extremism, and violence, and democratization is the best way to combat them. In Egypt, state tyranny has been a major element in radicalizing mainstream Islamists and moving them toward extremism and terrorism.[13]

The security of Israel and its survival is another element in the current democratization debate in the West Asian region. The US and the Israel government were concerned that if the governments of Egypt and Jordan fall, Israel will have to shoulder the burden of securing hundreds of miles of borders. However even after the change of regime in Egypt, no radical change has taken place in Egypt's relation with the Zionist state. Therefore, the Israeli government should view democratic change as a positive force, and attempt to build on it. In fact, democratic forces in Israel, as well as the Israeli civil society, are in a better position to build bridges

of friendship, peace, and coexistence with their neighbours. Democracies do not fight each other, and democratic people aspire to similar sets of values and goals.[13]

Overall, democratic change in Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and other countries in the region would provide both Israelis and Palestinians with confidence and an incentive to engage in serious negotiations to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel would be more inclined to accept the two-state solution, while Palestinians would be more willing to accept an independent and democratic state of Israel that lives in peace with its neighbours. In the long run, Israel would be more secure in a democratic context than in an autocratic neighbourhood.[13]

Case 1: Algeria again

While international concerns are legitimate, so are the concerns and the ambitions of the Arab people as well. The revolutions occurring in the region represent the yearning of the Arab people for freedom and dignity. For so long, the world has ignored the wishes of the Arab people prolonging the reign of dictatorship in the region.

A cursory look at the situation of various countries in the region will be enough to illustrate this point. The present situation varies from country to country in the region. Let us start with Algeria. In the post-Arab Spring era, what we saw was the old political-military elite exerting its influence again by nipping the people's protests that broke out in the early part of the last decade. The Algerian deep state took rapid steps to boost internal employment opportunities while seeking to publicly act again official corruption and increasing subsidies that seek to cushion the day to day existence of the common people.[16] Algeria is the largest African state by area with a relatively small population of around 38 million, when compared to other populous African states like Nigeria, Egypt or Ethiopia. With large hydro-carbon reserves and production that amounts to 34 percent of GDP and 65 percent of government revenues and 98 percent of exports.[17] Algeria has a state-dominated economy and the private sector has a very limited role due to excessive state control. The Arab Spring protests in Algeria in February and March of 2011 prompted the Algerian government to pump in $23 Billion into the internal economy in the form of public grants and retrospective salary and benefits. This was in addition to the extensive system of subsidies that are provided by the Government which are in turn funded by the extensive oil revenues of the state.[13] This has helped the Algerian Deep State to ride over the regime-destabilising effects of the Arab Spring and achieve status quo in the present context.

Case 2: Tunisia

Turning to Algeria's north-eastern neighbour Tunisia, where the Arab Spring started way back in December 2010 when

Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year old vegetable vendor who set himself alight in protest at bureaucratic highhandedness on the part of a certain Tunisian government official who was harassing him. Tunisians took the suicide of Bouazizi to heart, thereby forcing the long-ruling despot Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to flee from power and the country. Tunisia is today considered one of the few African and Arab nations that can be classified as a relatively free semi-liberal democratic state. Tunisia has had its fair share of internal strife and conflict as a result of the authoritarian tendencies of its rulers, post-independence, the country was ruled by just two rulers over a fifty-year period. [18] Currently of all the MENA (Middle East & North Africa) countries, Tunisia is the only country that has actively embraced the reforms that were championed by the masses during the Arab Spring. The country has conducted regular Presidential and Parliamentary elections since the events of 2011. A new constitution was ratified for the country in 2014. [13] Unfortunately Tunisia also has had its fair share of internal unrest and terrorist attacks in the last ten years. These attacks have been primarily directed at the North African country's lucrative tourism industry. [13] It is significant that the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, the umbrella group of four Civil Society organisations were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for the year 2015. [19]

Case 3: Egypt

The case of Egypt, as the most populous and militarily the strongest Arab state, was quite different from that of Tunisia. While Tunisia was able to ride the waves of its Jasmine Revolution to lasting political change, Egypt found itself revolving around the same political quagmire. The departure of Hosni Mubarak as a result of the protests that took place in Tahrir Square in Cairo during the Arab Spring failed to ensure that his successor regime would be one that was acceptable to the main power-broker of Egypt, namely the Military. The Army ensured that the Freedom & Justice Party, a front political organisation of the banned Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, and its leader, the democratically elected Mohamed Morsi would not remain in power and would be replaced by a military-supported Civilian President, the retired former Field-Marshal and Defence Minister under the now discredited Morsi regime, General Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi. [16] He has since been very successful in containing militant Islamist politics in Egypt, resulting in the revival of the lucrative international tourism industry in the nation.

Case 4: Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia adopted a 'carrot and stick' policy, broadly similar to the approach of Algeria, pumping revenues into massive state subsidies, strengthening the 'nitaqat' system of labour substitution in more and more fields, while at the same time adopting a firm and retroactive stand against

any indications of greater political aspirations and freedoms on the part of the general population. [13] The Saudi regime went through a process of generational change during the last ten years with the ascendancy of Mohammed Bin Salman (MBS)as the undisputed leader behind the throne, while his ailing father King Salman is on the throne in Riyadh. The Sunni fundamentalist Wahhabi nation has been busy renewing its conservative image in the world's eyes by following an activist foreign policy replete with armed interventions, especially in the neighbourhood, such as in Yemen and Bahrain. Internal domestic reforms are also taking place within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whilst being the custodians of the two holiest shrines of Sunni Islam namely the Grand Mosques at Medina and Mecca.

CONCLUSION

Certainly in the case of Syria and Yemen, we see the repercussions of the Arab Spring going on through a long-drawn Arab Winter, where in the case of both countries, movements to displace long-ruling authoritarian regimes have evolved into extremely debilitating Civil Wars with the active involvement of neighbouring hostile and other great powers. What we see is the abdication of responsibility for the region by the United States and the rise of new actors like Russia and China. Coupled with this is the rise of the Shia Crescent as epitomised by the increasing power and clout that the Islamic Republic of Iran is able to command and played out in a number of conflicts, both hot and cold, that the region, such as the on-going Yemeni Civil War involving the Shia Zaidi Houthis and Hezbollah's 'State within a State' existence as an Iranian-backed proxy force in Lebanon.

If we scrutinize the developments of the last couple of years, Western decision-makers seemed traumatized by the developments occurring in the Arab world. The former Obama Administrations response to the Egyptian Revolution changed in a week's time from support of Mubarak to an 'orderly change' to pressuring Mubarak to resign. In other parts of the Arab world, the administration was clear in calling and acting for regime-change especially in Libya. While the Obama administration seemed to understand the necessity for change in the region, it remained reactive rather proactive, and lagged far behind the developments in the region. The next Trump administration adopted an isolationist posture while selectively interfering in the various conflicts in the region. The issue of understanding the depth of resentment to some regimes still seems too difficult for some Western governments to comprehend. In the present situation, managing Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar will be the real challenge. In the long run, the solution to world stability vis-a-vis the West Asian/North African region seems rather simple: promoting democratization and political development, accommodating all political forces in the region including Islamists and resolving the Arab-

Israeli conflict. The main instrument for such stability is democracy, the rule of law, transparency, employment, and good governance.

Unfortunately the present status of the region leaves much to be desired. Chronic instability, lack of transparency in governance, skewed economic policies, insufficient capacity-building in durable liberal democratic institutions, lack of an effective Western-educated intelligentsia that can govern these countries and directly influence the development of these nations have all contributed to keeping the nations of the 'Arab Spring' in a state of seemingly permanent instability.

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Research Article

Jinnah-type Neta: Yearning for Elite and Cosmopolitan Political Leadership among the Muslims in Kerala

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ABSTRACT

This work presents debates on leadership in Muslim community in Kerala analysing the experience of Indian National Muslim League in the state. There are four varieties of leadership, namely, Jinnah-type, ulama, pradesika and pragmatic in Muslim League emerged within the specific political and religious context of Kerala. Of the types of leadership, Jinnah-type and pradesika are in constant conflict right from the beginning and this conflict has shaped contemporary history Muslim League in the state. This work also examines the transformation in nature of League leadership and persistence of Kerala Muslim community's yearning for an elite cosmopolitan leadership while at the same time always critiquing it. Such an examination explores the construction and stabilization of certain 'models' through the discourse set around the Muslim leadership in general and League leadership in particular.

Keywords: Political leadership; Cosmopolitan; Kerala; Muslim community

INTRODUCTION

C.H. (C. H. Muhammad Koya, known popularly as 'C. H.' is former Chief Minister of Kerala and the leader of Indian Union Muslim League) with his profound knowledge and proficiency in English language could stand out in the discussions in the Indian Parliament. His trademark sense of humour and use of satirical expressions in Malayalam remained intact in his speeches in English at the Parliament. Treasury benches, in fact, found a dangerous enemy in this young revolutionary… Koya studied different aspects of subject of his speech before making any intervention in the House. He read hundreds of books for preparing every speech. His style of reading also was surprising; he was able to read a book in half an hour while others taking hours to finish reading it. [1]

These generous descriptions about Koya, especially about his knowledge, sharp intellect, English language proficiency and habit of wide and extensive reading as some of the adjectives of his leadership qualities, may seem unusual to the readers outside Kerala, but when viewed from a local perspective, they come from a peculiar tradition of political leadership shaped by Islam in the region. It does not address specific conceptions about leadership in the larger Islamic world with the intent to provide universally accepted models about what a Muslim leader should be. Islam, of course, provides the basis for both leadership and its actual universal form and practice. But the tradition of Muslim leadership in Kerala often stays linked to a multiplicity of models of leadership emerged time to time in the history of Muslim community in the region, not necessarily the models that Khulafa al-rashidun, the first four successors of the Prophet

set, which the Muslim communities world over consider ideal.

So, there is an innate and perennial tension between entrenched local practices and what Islam has instructed about leadership in the Muslim community in Kerala.This tension resurfaces whenever there is a serious allegation about the leadership in the Muslim community, especially in the Indian Union Muslim League, a community-based political party that occupies an all-important position in the Muslim politics of Kerala.Islam becomes a major reference point for normative debates on such occasions and people invoke the traditions of the first four caliphs in Sunni Islam for setting a comparison. Though Islamic ideals of leadership seldom makes any influence on the formation of Muslims leadership in the context of Kerala, while discussing various forms of it, some aspects of its relationship to the religious history must be analysed.

Khalifa Umar's leadership, for that matter, holds a special position in the Islamic tradition. Though the leadership in Islam is defined generally in terms of taqwa or personal character and the ability to motivate Mu'mins or those who believe in the Truth towards the realisation of specific religious objectives, Umar's life has been set as a benchmark for how or what an ideal Islamic rule should be. To underline the importance of it, people frequently refer to tales from the life of Umar, most of which revolve around the 'austere life' of him. His daily routine of patrolling around the city of Medina in the night to monitor the quality of life of the subjects in person is a favourite theme recurrently appears in the Friday sermons on occasions, when people want to criticize the leadership in the community. As is the case in every Muslim community, the leadership of Umar carries a metaphoric value or offers a model to be emulated, but mostly in an imaginative setting. However, it is interesting to note that when people in the Muslim community of Kerala often imagine an Umar-type leadership as the ideal one, they never insist to have such a model in practical politics. They instead desire for a pragmatic leader with modern secular outlook, who they believe, will be or pretend to be at their disposal in needs.

Such attributes rather may have particular political purposes to serve due to a long history of neglect, prejudice and outright denigration of political and intellectual capacities of Muslim leaders by branding them as fanatic, uncivilized, illiterate during the colonial period.[2] The fear of 'fanatical' anti-colonial Muslim leaders of Malabar has historically been deep-seated in the social imaginary in Kerala and was often popularized by the British accounts on them. The postcolonial leadership among the Muslims of Kerala, therefore, was compelled to defend the community against colonialist stereotypes. They insisted on the need to rely on modern education because of the power political potential of it.

This study presents an account of how discourse on leadership in Islam in Kerala can be thematised, described and discussed taking cues from the Muslim League in the state. In this work, I deal with specific individual leaders and, concurrently, with different perspectives on life and leadership which developed out of their different life histories. For some of the leaders of this study, their life histories will be sketched out and their attributes of leadership will be discussed about through the description given in their biographies.

Since its inception, the debate over modern education, liberal orientation and secularism in the Muslim League had led to the development of two antagonistic camps- modernists and traditionalists-though not clearly demar- cated. Modernists focused mainly on the social and political development in the community that would help integrating it with the 'mainstream'. The traditionalists, in contrast, were portrayed as those who sought to maintain Islamic/moral orientation of the Party by preserving values and traditions of the community with a strong sense that they are still be of use for the present. This schism has been apparent throughout the history of the Party, but one can see that this difference never takes an antagonistic form without reconciliation, but a matter of personal orientation and belief.

Different conceptualizations of leadership in the League have different ethical, pragmatic, religious, political and metaphorical implications. Therefore, to understand the particularities of each type, one needs to have a prior knowledge of the context in which each one emerged. Each individual we discuss here is, to a considerable extent, situated in different social and economic sphere, but connected through Muslim League, the politically binding unit. The difference is because of their belongingness to different schools that influence, determine and shape their thought processes, political outlooks, personalities etc. This also relates to a variety of attributes such as education, outlook, class, and family (sometimes even clan in the case of leaders of Arab origin) and masculinity function as mediating channels through which the quality of leadership is determined. To be precise, these attributes, in their collective form, define the quality of an 'ideal' leader.

Leadership in the League since its inception has been represented largely by two opposite traditions, namely, Jinnah-type neta and Pradesikaneta or local leader. Elite leadership in the early period of the Muslim League can be seen as a quality developing to address common need for building an intellectual base for the Party. It was, therefore, developed to a considerable extent around the image of a 'modern', elite', 'educated' and 'English speaking' 'male' Muslim which Jinnah's persona created or influenced all over the sub-continent. From this perspective, leadership is always seen as linked to a broader political imagination, thus, can be contextualized within the specific social and religious

experience of Kerala Muslims, no matter how universal its imagined qualities were.

This work also maps the transformation in nature of League leadership and examines the persistence of Kerala Muslim community's yearning for an elite cosmopolitan leadership while at the same time always critiquing it. A detailed investigation into the leadership of Muslim League provides us with insights and information about the specific local traditions of leadership in Kerala Muslim community. The intension is to explore the construction and stabilization of certain 'models' through the discourse set around the Muslim leadership in general and League leadership in particular. The discussion is not concerned with whether one type is 'good' and another 'bad' or one 'progressive' and another 'traditional', but rather, with the tendencies and efforts that come to gather in support of one type and attribute to it the characteristic of 'ideal'. The topic is explored further through analysing leadership models narrated in the biographies and autobiographies of the leaders of Muslim League in Kerala published primarily in Malayalam language.

PULL OF PIETY AND PRAGMATISM

The post-independence Muslim political leadership elsewhere in India had/has two levels to act; local and universal. In the universal mode, it holds unity and singularity of the religion at the global level as prime concern. The leaders belonging to the category of 'universal' could assist to attain a wider understanding of 'community' and 'self' placing them in the larger context of global Muslim community. In the local, the leadership, however, reckons with and respects the social and cultural specificities of the locality. In the second case, leaders find it essential to maintain a particularistic outlook in order to make them more appealing to the people of other faiths also. But taking cues from the experience of Kerala, one can say that such a generalization does not jell with the development of Muslim leadership in the region. Kerala rather had some region-specific motivations that shaped the Muslim leadership in the state. This part of the work explores a series of Kerala-specific unshared historical moments that set political movements and institutions, and shaped leadership among the Muslims with a focus on Muslim League. Providing a brief history of Muslim League, I hope, would help understand how each of these historical moments contributed to the making and transforming the leadership in the League.

Malabar district committee of Muslim League, formed in 1937 with Abdul Sathar Sait, K.M. Seethi, K.M. Maulawi, Kottal Uppi and B. Pokker as its founding members, was the first unit of the Party in Kerala in the pre-independence period.[3] Malabar district committee functioned under the Madras State Committee which was established almost a year before at the direct intervention of Muhammadali Jinnah. League's presence, initially, had made no resonance in the Malabar politics. Pokker, one of the most popular faces of the League in its heydays suffered defeat in the elections to Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937. But the activities of the League became intense with the Muslim League conference of 1941 held at Madras in the presence of Jinnah. Many leaders from Malabar had participated in the conference actively. The demand for the creation of Pakistan as a separate country for Muslims gave a new life to it in the first half of the 1940s.The demand became intense throughout the region and managed to gain many takers in Eranad Taluk of pre-independent Kerala which had been an epicentre of Mappila Rebellion of 1921.[4] Slogans such as Pakistan Allenkil Qabarstan (Pakistan or Graveyard), Pathinju Kathi Kondu Kuthi Vangum Pakistan (We know how to get Pakistan using ten-inch long knife) etc. echoed in the streets throughout the Muslim-dominated pockets.[5] The visit of Nawabzada Liyaqat Ali Khan, the then General Secretary of All India Muslim League in 1945 offered further boost to the growth of League in Malabar.[6]

After the partition of India in 1947, the All India Muslim League was succeeded by Indian Union Muslim League in the post-independent Kerala. However, the Partition and creation of Pakistan as an independent Muslim state couldn't mobilize Muslims of Malabar much in its favour. The Muslim leaders of Kerala, except a few, had been not supportive of the reality of Pakistan as an independent country. Less in number of takers for Pakistan may be partly because of the cultural and logistic dangers it had in the context of Malabar. In its place, the leaders of the Muslim League were in favour of creating a separate independent province called Moplastan. They argued that only such a move would help improve the situation of Mappila community on educational, political and social fronts. Seethi mooted this demand in the Madras Legislative Assembly. However, Jinnah turned down it in a discussion with the leaders of Muslim League from Malabar held in 1947 in New Delhi alongside the National Council Meeting of the League just before the Partition.[7]

Only a few voluntarily left for Pakistan from Malabar; of the people who opted to be the citizens of Pakistan, most were 'undocumented' workers and petty traders held up in Lahore, Karachi and other major cities of today's Pakistan.[8] Those who were stuck up in Pakistan faced discriminations of different sorts, being the ethnic one more intense. The Muslim leadership in Kerala initially did not try to resist or accept the two-nation theory of Jinnah and the self-determination thesis of the Communists.[9] Muslim Leaders associated with the National Movement, especially Muhammad Abdulrahiman, saw it neither as a national issue nor a Pan-Indian Muslim issue. He rather addressed the question of Pakistan as a cultural issue-an issue of two regions, "North" and "South", hence opposed.[10] Abdulrahiman asked:

Pakistan would be carved out of Muslim dominated north-west and north-east states of India, even if they win in

gaining legitimacy for their demand, what we, the Muslims of Madras state, who are minority constituting only 7% of the total population, are going to gain out of that.Are we willing to move down abandoning this place [Malabar]? Is it right for us to raise the demand for Pakistan by inviting the displeasure of majority Hindus here [Malabar]?[11]

There was a moment soon after Independence that appears to be something like a point of transformation in the history of Muslim politics in Kerala. An urgent and deep concern in the Muslim leadership circles on what should be done to overcome the stigma of partition, though the aftereffects of it was far less in Kerala, emerged. A section of Muslim leaders of the Congress was against the post-independence re-organization of the Muslim League. The leaders like E. Moidhu Maulawi and M. Abdulla Maulawi launched scathing campaigns against the League and presented a resolution in a joint meeting of Muslim clergies and notables in the community in Malabar immediately after the Partition that the League should be dispersed.[12] The leaders like K.M. Maulawi and K.M. Seethi, on the other side, opposed the resolution arguing that the survival of Muslim League was a political necessity.[13]

The early pre-independence leadership in Muslim League in Kerala had allegedly maintained a tilt towards the big merchants and landlords from the community.[14] The economic and religious elites constituted the social constituency of the League leadership in the early phase of its growth. The same group continued to influence the policy making of the Party even in the post-Independence period. T. J.Nossiter describes the post-Independent League leadership as the practitioners of Bazaripolitics.[15]

The traders who remained affluent throughout the colonial period became powerful through their intimate relations with the senior leadership of the Party. The Keyis of Thalaserry, a family which maintained strong commercial and political ties with the British East India Company, for instance, had donated many prominent early leaders to the League.[16]

Apart from the rich merchants and landlords, there was a quasi-independent class of ulama who maintained close relations with the elite classes.[17] This class was active in politics through their leadership role in a series of anti-colonial uprisings during the British rule. **The** ulama leadership had given spiritual benediction to several outbreaks of the Mappilas against the oppression of colonial power since the Portuguese period, especially in Southern parts of Malabar.[18] Some scholars of Islamic history seem nostalgic about a time when the line between the religious leadership and the community leadership was blurred.[19] However, the composition remained slightly different in the case of the rank and file of the Party. Among the followers of the League, upper strata consisted of rich landlords with roots in the trade towns such as Kannur, Kozhikode etc. and trans-regional traders based in Koilandi and Thalaserry.

The lower strata comprised of peasants and agricultural labourers of Eranad Taluk. Rich and middle class Gulf migrants were the later entrants to the class base of the League, but now the affluent class of rich Gulf-based business persons play a significant role in the policy making of the Party.[20]

There has been an internal conflict in the Party between the social and economic background of the followers and the class interests of the leadership. The communist parties-both Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party of India (Marxist) have always taken advantage of such conflicts, which are basically of class in nature. The Communist parties tried to allure the people of lower stratum by targeting the elite leadership of the League. The League considered the Communist Party as the major rival in Malabar as the political bases of both the parties in Malabar were same; poor peasants, agricultural workers, porters and petty traders.[21]

The Party right from the beginning took out a pragmatic strategy of anti-communism in order to escape form the causalities of this conflict. It was the ulama leadership that helped the Party reconcile the class-based squabbles appeared occasionally in the Party. The Party overcame this challenge mainly by bringing Sayyids and ulama into the leadership and thereby nursing the feeling of the followers, majority whom were from the conservative sections of Muslim population. Coincidently, Abdul Rahiman Bafakhi Thangal, the first President of Indian Union Muslim League in Kerala, P. S. M. A.Pookoya Thangal who took over the position of president after him and his son Pannakkad Muhammad Ali Shihab Thangal, who succeeded Pookoya Thangal-all the presidents of the League since independence belonged to the Sayyid families, claiming their descendence to Ahlul Baithor the family of the Prophet.

No doubt that Bhafakhi Thangal's physical structure, personal charisma, his noble decadence-all have helped his emergence to the position of supreme leader of the community. Tall body with fair complexion, pleasant face, impressive attire along with his elegant behaviour, aristocratic family background, and soft speech- all merge in him to form the attributes of a great leader.[22]

The presence of people enjoying special religious status provided legitimacy and ensured the support of the ordinary people to the Party.[23] It turned out to be an un-written convention in the Party to have an affluent figure with Sayyid lineage to lead the organization. N. P**.** Chekutty points out that the cycles of exchanges between a Sayyid leader and the follower take place outside the sphere of politics as there is a something spiritual about it.[24] Ulama and leader became nearly synonymous in the new discursive practices and it conferred vast powers on the Sayyid families. Their powers operated both in the realm of religion as well as in the secular politics.

Panakkad Thangals, a family of Sayyids based in Southern Malabar, were the prominent group that could effectively combine both spiritual and political leadership. They enjoyed the distinction being the Kazi of about thousands of mahals in the state simultaneous to being the leader of the United Democratic Front (UDF), a broader alliance of a set of political parties. Thangals were widely hailed as leaders with utmost piety, spirituality and compassion. Muslims in Malabar turn to them seeking solutions for their problems in daily life. Prominent members from this family often fulfil the role of mediators and peacemakers in politics and their influence, thus, cuts across the boundaries of parties and religions.

The tradition of placing a Sayyid at the helm of the Party was justified, and rationalized in the modern Kerala politics. The reformist thinkers within the party, however, accepted it grudgingly; they stressed on the necessity of a reformed leadership instead. The idea of pious leadership does not neatly fit into the reformist political imagination. In the eyes of critics, such a leadership pulls the community backwards. At some point of time, the influence of Salafi ideology was apparent in shaping the politics of some of the early leaders of the League such as K.M.Maulawi and K.M. Seethi. However, realizing the Sunni dislike over the Salafi orientation of the leaders, Seethi took out the strategy of making the Party appealing to them by bringing Bhafakhi Thangal the most popular Sunni leader into the leadership. Till the 1970s leaders with Salafi orientation dominated the leadership, though the followers belonged mainly to the Sunni faction. Being actively a part of Salafi movement Seethi and Maulawi were the target of criticism from the Sunni leadership for their reformist initiatives such as redefining the concept of interest in the modern context and establishment of faith-based interest-free bank. Maulawi' sfatwa favouring modern banking system and substantiating it using the canonical texts of Shāfi jurisprudence especially had attracted the wrath of Sunni orthodoxy.[25] While leaders like Maulawi, Seethi, Koya etc. showed an inclination towards Salafi ideology, Bafakhi Thangal, Pookkoya Thangal, CheriyaMammukkeyi etc. were adhered to the Sunni orthodoxy.

Parallel to this, in neighbouring Tamil Nadu in the post-independence period, Muslim League under the leadership of Khaide. Millat Muhammad Ismail[26] had built strong political ties with the Dravidian movement of Anna Durai and the independent party floated by C. Rajagopalchari[27] as a counter-alliance to the Indian National Congress in the late 1950s. He led the Party in South India initially, and of late, the whole country for the next two decades after the independence amidst serious political crises. Few South Indian Muslim leaders have been the subject of a more robust and voluminous corpus of writing than Ismail. His popularity hinges not only on his interventions in Indian Parliament and Madras Legislative Assembly but also on

the images of him as a leader emerged from a humble background and lived an austere life projected much by his followers after his death through hundreds of biographical works on him.

Ismail emerged to the leadership in the early 1920s through the Khilafat and civil dis-obedience movements launched under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He dropped his studies in response to a call for boycotting western education by the national movement. From that period onwards, he put on Khadi clothes unto his death. He participated in the Thirunalveli session of All India Congress Committee in 1920 as a volunteer. Through the personality of Ismail, Gandhi's austere life formed an effective model fostering and fomenting the discursive influence of Gandhi among the Muslim Leaders in Kerala.

The anti-colonial posture among the early leaders in the League with Salafi orientation was instilled partly by their Egyptian mentors who had maintained an open admiration towards the anti-British ideology of Mahatma Gandhi in the early twentieth century.[28] Gandhi's leadership role in khilafat movement placing the ideology of non-violence at the centre had captured the imagination of many in the Salafi movement in Egypt despite their strong ideological dislike towards the Ottoman caliphate.[29] Al-Manar,[30] one of the most important media platforms of Islamic modernism in Egypt became the major outlet for these debates to take place.[31] As al-Manarhad a cross-regional influence among the modernist Islamic intellectual circles in South and Southeast Asia, these debates in turn made some profound resonance in the pre-partition India animating a range of potent discourses over colonialism and colonial modernity.

Most of the leaders of the League were previously active in Indian National Congress, but departed when the community drifted away from the movement with the Mappila Rebellion of 1921, which the Congress opposed for its alleged use of violent means in anti-colonial agitation.[32] Early leaders like Pokker Sahib represented Malabar in the Khilafat Conference held at Madras presided over by Maulana Shoukkathali[33] while Seethi attended two annual sessions of All India Congress Committee (AICC) as a representative of the State Congress Committee of Cochin held at Lahore in 1929.[34]

However, as happened in any Muslim societies in the world, the importation of modern secular leadership into the Muslim society in Kerala occurred in the wake of colonialism and as a part of broader modernization of society. In the early twentieth century, the British administration conferred the title of Khan Bahadur, a formal title of respect and honour on the Mappila Muslim notables in Malabar and appointed modern educated Mappilas in certain key position with the intent of creating a new tradition of leadership moulded in the western system of education in the community. K. Muhammad, a native of Kunnamkulamin South Malabar was one of many such officers assigned with the mission

of modernizing the community making them exposed to modern education. The British administration in Malabar in the late 1930s appointed him as the special education officer deployed with the job of modernizing Madrassa and designing new curriculum for them.[35]

THE INVISIBLE JINNAH

As indicated earlier, this work is not about the conflict between "tradition" and "modernity" in Muslim leadership in Kerala, but inter alia, about a particularly constituted tradition about the leadership in which modernity and tradition converge. The history of the League right from the very beginning is characterized by this convergence. The League's engagement with modernity and tradition is actually far more complex that can be explained here. The idea of modernity had gathered a different collaborative meaning while circulated in the Kerala Muslim context; modernity often compatible with tradition and needed to be protected against distortions and misuse by the ill-motivated. Modernity's relation with tradition also led to the emergence of a sort of 'apologetic modernity', as Faisal Devji rightly termed it.[36] The pull of universalismor the closeness of the movement's thinking to modern thought on one side and its inability to engage with and integrate intellectually due to the unavoidable pressure from local Muslim culture on the other, made any attempt to modernize the community inevitably 'apologetic'. The formation of Muslim League leadership in Kerala provides an interesting clue to how this dichotomy shaped the politics of the community in Kerala.

Islamic traditions in general distinguish between religious (ulama) and secular leadership (umara). A significant part of this distinction is derived from two related sources, namely Naqly or sources of revealed religion-the Quran and teachings and the practices of the Prophet and Aaqly or sources rationally derived through the secular practices.[37] The leaders of the League in the initial stage maintained high regard for the secular leadership and rejected on overvaluation of ulama leadership. Stemming from the community's attempt to reconceptualise the leadership in the post-1921 period, a line of thinking in the Party with an emphasis on modern education as the principal quality of leadership emerged. Reviving the Muslim community from humiliation and bitter experience of 1921 Rebellion became a commonly accepted agenda among the leadership that made them more liberal in orientation and outlook. The feeling of humiliation also created a political subjectivity and eventually led to the formation of a new consciousness of identity, which was first expressed politically through the activities of Muslim League.[38] Simultaneously they denounced the supposed rationality of Western-modelled leadership for its alleged association with liberal ideas. The point is, therefore, not that the early leaders of Muslim League were rational and modern and/whereas the followers intentionally embraced tradition and irrationality in life and politics. In his work on the life history of K. Uppi Sahib, T.C. Muhammad identifies modern education and habit of reading as two commonly accepted traits of leadership in the early phase of evolution of Muslim League. 'The collection in his (Sahib's) library includes books published by Oxford and Macmilan from London.[39] He had the habit of subscribing even English dailies published from outside the country.[40]

Abdul Sathar Sait, the founding president of Muslim League in Malabar, who later left India for Pakistan responding positively to the personal invitation of Jinnah, was supposed to be the first leader belonging to the category of Jinnah-type neta in pre-independence period.[41] There was a campaign against him in the 1934 Elections to the Malabar District Board in which he was a candidate from the Muslim constituency that he had no university degree, whereas the opponent from the Indian National Congress, Muhammad Abdul Rahiman holding a B A honours degree.[42] The Congress published a leaflet titled 'Comparative Study' disclosed this information to defame the image of Sait. The League campaign, on its part, stressed on Sait's proficiency in three languages including French, the official language of the French Malabar, where he hailed from, along with Kutchi, his mother tongue, and Malayalam, the language of Kerala.[43] This sketch of situation shows how the absorption of western education into the leadership qualities has been at the heart of the Muslim politics. This also implies that longing for an elite leadership is something that cannot be understood as a Pan-Indian practice, but as a fundamentally local one occurred within the specific local context of Kerala.

Despite his liberal attitude toward religion, Jinnah provided inspiration for many leaders of Muslim League who were highly religiously oriented. Ironically enough, Jinnah's belongingness to Shiism did not seem unappealing to many of the Sunni Muslim leaders in Kerala. He has even been canonized in the autobiographies and biographies of them listed as one of the most influential leader. Vatakara, the biographer of Koya, for instance, writes, '[T]he role Jinnah's persona in shaping the worldview of C.H. was instrumental. He was able to quote Jinna hgenerously for everything everywhere. He was of a firm belief that none is comparable to Jinnah who contributed formidably to Muslim politics.[44]

Through this what vatakara does is not just exposing Koya's fondness towards Jinnah but raising Jinnah from his narrow political context and universalizing him so as to posit him as the best source of Indian Muslim's political imagination. The leaders of Muslim League were actually motivated by Jinnah's modern outlook, not of course his political ideology, that allowed them to imagine and present themselves as Jinnah-like cosmopolitan figures. Biographical works too have contributed much to emerge Jinnah-type leadership as a model for the League leaders to emulate, though they keep a safe distance from him politically. Jinnah

remained politically acceptable only to a miniscule few, while his leadership traits travelled into numerous followers of the League by way of biographical stuff written on him. Autobiographies of the early leaders of the League in which Jinnah's 'liberal' persona has been presented as inspiration in the political formation also played an important role in disseminating the image at a mass level. What is interesting is the way in which Jinnah's personality traits created a resonance in Kerala, farthest corner of India, with a strong dislike for his politics in the post-independence period. What they draw from Jinnah was a form of elitism that promotes a 'liberal' ethos of religion.

The leaders of the League belonging to the category of 'liberal Muslims', however, found it impossible to completely divorce themselves as leaders of the community from religious life and practice. They instead of rejecting religion as a whole, subscribed to a liberal version of Islam in which religion was a private matter of belief. They left a space for religious belief but sealed them off from their political life. Religion was increasingly seen not as a matter of 'private' or 'personal' faith, but remained steeped in public life, thus, a matter of public display. The liberals nursed an unflinching desire to see 'secular' at the heart of their scheme of thinking and of political activities as well. This position considered westernized knowledge as an essential quality for leadership. The 'liberal Muslim' in the context of the League, was an ideological catchphrase, not the one discussed in true sense of the term but the one who envisaged secularism's definitive role in the Muslim politics.

The significance of Jinnah's extraordinary impact on the League leadership in Kerala is suggested by almost a dozen biographies of him published in Malayalam language including the Malayalam translation of his sister Fathima Jinnah's biographical work on him, My Brother.[45] Vatakara confirms that the influence of Jinnah in Kerala was much bigger in the post-independence period than it is now.The genre of biography of Jinnah has a long history and the first biography was authored bySeethiin 1940.[46] The goal of Seethi's writing was not to endorse the political positions of Jinnah but to make his readers familiar with the specific leadership traits of him.While Seethi presents Jinnah's position revolutionary to have universal validity, he describes its content as culturally specific. Seethi, as per the account of Vatakara, did not have an alternative, equally valid model of leadership to offer. The partition, Indo-Pak Wars in 1965 and 1971 and the resultant anti-Pak feeling, of late, contributed to the waning image of Jinnah among the Muslims of South India.Despite their continued admiration for Jinnah's leadership and liberal attitude, the leaders of League were painfully aware of the political consequences such an admiration creates.

Seethi was the one, who attempted in modernizing the Muslim leadership first. He was one among the first generation modern educated leaders of the community.

He studied law and started his career as a lawyer before entering into politics. Seethi's entry into the lager arena of national politics was through Indian National Congress. He represented the Congress Party twice (1928 and 1931) in the Cochin Legislative Council. But broke ranks with the Party when Congress decided to disassociate with the League and started organizing the League in Malabar District in the mid-1930s. Vatakara remembers him as an intelligent and charismatic leader who was completely a Jinnah-type neta. The followers of him praised for having brought the element of modernity to the Muslim politics and occasionally referred to him as the Sir Sayyid of Kerala. Vatakara notes:

Seethi Sahib belongs to a rare species of leaders which includes Sir SayyidAhamad Khan, MaulanaMuhammadali, Quaid-i-AzamMuhammadali Jinnah and MaulanaAbulKalam Azad…Sahib was so pious and had a deep understanding of Islamic knowledge on par with any religious scholar. He absorbed the best of qualities of Muslim leaders of the sub-continent; an interesting merger of compassion of Muhammadali, intellect of Jinnah and oratory skills of Azad, all in one person. Well educated, his proficiency in both English and Malayalam was well known…Being a cosmopolitan in outlook, Sahib throughout his political life remained instrumental in preserving the secular fabric of Kerala by making broader alliance of Hindus, Christians and Muslims in politics possible.[47]

Vatakara presents Western education that Seethi acquired at a very young age in life as something that shaped his political life later.[48] Similar kinds of narratives are commonplace in the biographies of the early leaders.Kunjimoosa, the biographer of B. Pokker, for instance, generously praises the Western-modelled education of him and makes it clear that such schooling has contributed to his political and intellectual life.

Pokker Sahib mastered English at a time when people in the Mappila community maintained an approach of extreme dislike and prejudice over the British education. Awidely-held belief that the English education would land up Muslims in hell had existed.Young Pokker excelled others in studies and scored highest marks in the class and this was taken by surprise not only by his colleagues, but also his teachers.[49]

The leaders of the League with reformist-orientation shared the urge to use the life histories of the contemporary leaders of global Muslim community as case studies to legitimate the necessity of having cosmopolitan leadership subscribing to a modernist version of Islam.With the publication of biographies of Islamic modernists like Jamal Din-Afghani and Muhammad Abdu, they hoped to invest in and popularise a brand of leadership modelled on such leaders.

Although became unpopular for a short while because of the political consequences it created in the post-Indo-Pak wars, the popularity of Jinnah-typeneta built on elite

conception of leadership made a comeback in the late 1970s. The style of political activism of leaders ofthe League like C. H. Muhammad Koya, E. Ahamed invested Jinnah's legacy with ideals of possibilities and potentialities. As Chekutty observes, 'Koyasucceeded in creating a liberal public sphere in favour of the League. This he could do with his relentless interventions in the fields of literature, media and education.[50] Personally, from a political leader, Koya ascended to the status of public orator, author, journalist, editor, social thinker etc., acknowledged duly not just by the people in the community, but also by other communities (2020:136).

Koya rose to the Party leadership from a humble background, but maintained, a liberal outlook, sharp intellect, political sensibility and above all, enormous sense of humour. He was thus a highly respected leader cutting across the communities for his exceptional wit and skills in the use of language. In Koya the traditional and the modern interacted and intertwined in a forward looking Muslim leadership that respects both local sentiments and cosmopolitan aspirations.Koya recognized the strengths of Jinnah and believed personally that Muslim societies should model on his leadership without endorsing his political ideology.[51] Throughout his political life, Koya's concern was to develop the community based on the principles of modernity which, he was of the opinion, would be possible only through modern education.[52]

Nevertheless, Koya's leadership met stringent opposition from a section of League leaders, especially from those who represented the affluent traders of northern Kerala.As Chekutti writes, 'Koya became a dust in the eyes of the rich and economically elite leaders of the Party. CheriyaMam-mukeyi and UmmarBafakhi, two leaders belonging to the coterie of the then President, BafakhiThangal, with their elite lineage held the decision-making power in the Party.[53] The ascendance of Koya to the leadership upset the power equations prevailed in the Party as he was hailing from an ordinary family, which by tradition engaged in teaching in Madrassa (2020).Koya was also branded as a 'Wahhabi'[54] not respecting the senior clergies belonging to the Sunni faction associated closely with the Party.Taking advantage of the situation, the critics of him warned the Party that such an affiliation could incite the wrath of tradition-oriented Muslims.

After the death of BafakhiThangal in 1972, Koya could liberate the League leadership from trading elites of north Malabar and bring it down to the PanakkadKudumbam, a family settled in the hinterland of Malappuram and engaged mainly in agriculture. Accommodating PookkoyaThangal, the head of Panakkad family and the spiritual leader of majority Sunnis of Malabar as president was with an intention to tackle the charges of Salafi orientation of the leadership levelled by the clergies of Sunni community. Thangal introduced a new line of leadership completely

independent of merchant and trading elites and created a new mixed social constituency of clergies, landlords, farmers and Gulf migrants. The trading elites who were dissatisfied with the policies of new regime even floated a new organization called All India Muslim League by splitting IUML in 1975. M. K. Haji, UmmarBafakhiThangal, CKP CheriyaMammuKeyi etc. led the new party.

E Ahamed is another leader, who could successfully reconcile modernity and elitism, a quality typical of Jinnah-type neta and the tradition that the Muslim League in Kerala politically stands for, in a delicate balancing. As Jayant Jacob describes, 'Ahmed batted for progressive Muslim politics rooted in religious ethos.[55] Ahamed was the most prominent leader of the League at national level of all time. He served as the Minister of State for External Affairs two times and represented India in the United Nations six times between 1991 and 2009. He maintained intimate personal relations with the rulers of most of the Arab countries and was sent to the countries in the region many times as political envoy of Prime Minister. Because of his wider transnational political connections,Ahamed had always been branded as Viswapouranor global citizen by the media and political circles alike. Mathrubhumi one of the most prominent dailies in Malayalam language wrote on the occasion of his death, "Ahmed will be remembered as a cosmopolitan politician and skilled crisis negotiator even in international disputes."[56] This viswapouranimage has helped him gain popularity among the voters and contributing to his electoral victory many times.[57]

PRADESIKANETA TROPE

Just opposite to the Jinnah-type neta, there was another category of leaders who can conveniently be put in the group of Pradesikaneta. The leaders belonging to this category emerge locally with the image of 'unsophisticated' and 'rustic' leadership. This image remains a secular trope that has never fully disappeared from the popular imagination even in the twenty-first century. They have often been discounted in the popular discourse for lack of education and absence of 'tradition.' This branding of leaders was more visible with Seethi Haji, the most popular leader of the League in South Malabar in the 1970s and 1980s, known for his witty political speeches. He was caricatured in political and media circle alike for his rustic appearance, Southern Malabar slang, witty expressions and lack of formal education. His political speeches were heavily laden with the language of the masses and the uneducated Muslims of Malabar, therefore, were the target of crude caricaturing.

Those who belonged to the category of Pradesikaneta, however, were proud of their traditional background as it had given them some privileges among the majority Sunni Muslims. Lack of formal education was something which did not have to hide for Haji. Whenever getting an opportunity, Haji used to reveal his educational qualification

which did go not beyond fourth standard. The intention of this 'fourth standard' usage was to motivate the people of his community who were relatively less or not educated. SayyidHyderaliShihabThangal in a tribute to Haji writes:

"None has to mourn about it, see I am also a lower school dropout"-Haji intentionally conveys as a message of comfort to the ordinary people around him. He also warned the young generation not to grope in the darkness with lack of education… [H]e learnt the psyche of public not from any universities. Bitter circumstances of own past and experience of dealing with issues in everyday life of people rather acted as his university. [58]

In writing this, Thangal wants to narrate the acceptance that Haji enjoyed thanks to his specific kind of political activism which had already been branded as 'popular' during that period. More than his praise of Haji, Thangal's stress on the essential leadership qualities of Haji is of key importance in understanding how the qualities of leadership in the Muslim League was re-imagined in the 1980s. This period marked a new era in the League politics, wherein the Jinnah-type leadership underwent severe criticism. Ibrahim SulaimanSait, G. Banatwala and E. Ahmed, three top leaders and members of Parliament from Kerala stationed most of their time in Delhi were critiqued by the followers for their urban elite style of living and lack of mass base in Kerala. The Pradesika-netaconception of leadership, thus, at some point of time became the basis of advancing a new critique of elite leadership.

However, in the eyes of critics inside and outside the community, pradesika-netatype leaders were considered to be an aberration not fitting neatly into elite, modern conception of leadership which the League nurtured in previous decades. Alleging a total break from the leadership tradition, the critics even used to go to the extent of 'othering' them for their lower educational status. Narratives providing information about their lack of education and unpolished mannerisms would often spring up, whenever their names would be considered for positions in the government. The identity of such leaders and the public sphere in which they were negotiated were mediated chiefly by such stereotypes. Popular jokes about Haji caricaturing him crudely as illiterate and ignorant provide channels for knowing best how the self of a pradesika-netatype leader is created in popular imagination. This image construction has always been a direct rendition of the community's wish for having elite cosmopolitan leadership.

It is also important to note that there was a drastic social change in the community and the League in the 1980s with the massive migration of Muslims to the Gulf countries from Malabar. In the post-migration period, one can see that the role of visionary leaders was overshadowed by that of leaders with high amount of pragmatism. At times of crisis in the Party or in the politics of Kerala, they appear with a more active political role. The League became increasingly dependent on such leaders, who with their intimate relations with the Gulf-based Malayali business persons, could use their power of collective bargaining in Kerala politics. Kerala politics in the post-globalization period witnessed the emergence of such leaders cutting across the party lines gaining enormous amount of popularity and influence either through their capacity of mobilizing fund for the Party or through a wide range of welfare packages implemented on their own initiative and financing. P. K. Kunjalikutti, who carries the image of 'Chanakya' for his specific skills of crisis management in politics, represents this category.

Kunjalikutt's ascendance to the leadership happened at a very difficult time for the Party. In the post-Babri Masjid politics, the issues related to identity, citizenry rights, and reservation in government employment spawned serious debates in the community, which in turn, forced the community to develop certain strategies for the survival. The League initially could not recognize that political dynamics and, therefore, faced serious setback in the elections. Later, the Party was compelled to re-assert its moderate and secularist credentials in order to face the challenges of resisting majoritarian communalism and countering mobilizations of new sorts within the community based on radical Islamic identity[59], a phenomenon which became more apparent by 2000 in response to the global religious-political developments such as War on Terror and resultant Islamophobia, though began little early in the 1990s. Kunjalikutti's political strategy was more pragmatic and he emerged as a mediator in political disputes and his image as 'spin doctor' within the Party and outside grew further to the extent that the UDF often depended on him to mediate dispute among the constituent parties of the Front.

CONCLUSION

As discussed earlier, the leadership qualities in the Muslim community in Kerala are often discussed in diverse terms, not just in terms of qualities such as the capacity of administering the mass by which the leadership has been conventionally assessed. The Islamic conceptions of ideal leadership or universally accepted models of Muslim leadership also do not make much resonance in the context of Kerala. Instead of that, there are some region-specific conceptions and imaginations developed over the qualities and attributes of ideal Muslim leadership which has been deftly transferred to the Muslim League.

Based on education, elitism, nobility, descendence to a particular family, four kinds of leadership in Muslim League- Jinnah-type, ulama, pradesika and pragmatic- have been discussed in this work. Initially, the League leadership comprised of traditional landlords, economically affluent traders and influential ulama and some miniscule few middle class professionals. Most of these groups, except the ulama had shown an apparent British leaning. Ulama leadership symbolized both political and moral power and

played a significant role in setting a religious base for the Party and leadership. Different conceptualizations of leadership in the League were/are also reflective of various ethical, pragmatic, religious and political considerations emerged in the community time to time.

The first generation leaders of the League advised their followers to promote modern education as a means to gain visibility for the community and to mobilize the mass towards achieving certain goals. They foregrounded a specific form of Muslim leadership with modern education and cosmopolitan outlook as its two essential attributes. For them education and leadership were necessary allies. Their educational status and language skills aided in gaining high stature for them both inside and outside the Party. A major impulse of the liking for elite leadership is the popularity of Jinnah-type neta which entered the League politics through its first generation leaders who nurtured a strong fondness towards Jinnah's liberal persona and cosmopolitan outlook, despite keeping a political distance from him. Invoking the memory of Jinnah, thus, became a standardized practice, his model being so pervasive that he has been cited even in the most mundane situation.

ACKNOWELDGMENT

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Journal of Contemporary Politics

Book Review

RSS: Depth and Breadth by Devanuru Mahadeva

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"Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realize that our people have yet to learn it. Democracy in India is only a top dressing on an Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic." – This observation made by Dr Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly is a timely caveat which needs to be reiterated from time to time. Renowned Kannada writer and intellectual Devanur Mahadeva does this with commendable finesse in his latest book titled "RSS – Aala Mattu Agala (RSS -Its Depth and Breadth) , an excoriating critique of the ideologies of RSS. It is unique that the author in his dedication of his book, hopes that the children who are born as citizens of this world may remain so as they grow older. Mahadeva has not claimed proprietary rights over this book. He has also adopted an ingenious strategy for distribution of this highly readable monograph of 64 pages on RSS lucidly written in Kannada, devoid of pedantry or stilted flourishes. He has permitted several publishers to publish this booklet without expecting any royalty. Several translations in regional languages have also resulted in the proliferation of his ideas in the Indian subcontinent, dealing a fatal blow to the Hindu supremacist , hegemonic agendas of the RSS.

Mahadeva emerged as the icon of the Kannada Bandaya movement with his masterpiece "Kusumabale" and the widely popular "Odalala" by resuscitating Kannada literary idiom with his subversive use of the colloquial dialect in a startlingly refreshing manner. He does it again by delivering the coup de grace in RSS – Aaala Mattu Agala in his inimitable, iconoclastic style. Mahadeva has makes an impassioned appeal to the people of our civil society to vindicate the democratic and secular edifice of contemporary India and uphold the sanctity of our Constitution by subscribing to the ideologies of solidarity , equality and tolerance enshrined in it. The book is a

new addition to the impressive list of other works by Devanuru Mahadeva over which also he has not claimed any proprietary rights : IgaBharata Matanaduttide (Now India is Speaking), Janandolanagala Maha Maitri Jatha (Grand alliance March of People's movements) Ondu Pranalike (A Manifesto) and Maha Maitrige Nade Nudi (Ways and Means for the Grand Alliance). Originally published by Abhiruchi Prakashana Mysore , the book now has many publishers across the state and nation state.

In his riveting foreword, Mahadeva recounts the horror of the havoc and mayhem caused by RSS by presenting a fascinating metaphor from our folk tales. The tale of the sorcerer who recklessly goes on a rampage as his 'prana' (life –soul) resides in a parakeet hidden in a distant cave , beyond the seven seas . To put the kibosh on the sorcerer's atrocities, one has to find the parakeet where his 'prana' resides. This takes Mahadeva on an inexorable quest for the 'life force' that energises the RSS in the ensuing five chapters : 'RSS na Prana Ellellide?' (Where all lies the life of RSS ?), 'Heegella Dakhalegalu Matanaduttive' (Thus speak the documents) 'Indu Vartamanadalli' (Today in the present), 'Ee Hinney alli Mataantara Nishedha Kayideya Marma' (In this background, the crux of religious conversion prohibition Act) and 'Eega ' (Now). In the chapter "where all lies the life of RSS?" Mahadeva discusses excerpts from the thoughts and viewpoints of Golwalkar and Savarkar Exposing the relentless indoctrinating machinations of the RSS brainwashing children about the Chaturvarna system by introducing Bhagavad Geeta in the curriculum in the states ruled by the BJP, Mahadeva contends that Golwalkar's declaration to 1350 top-level leaders of the RSS at Madras, in 1930, where he declared "RSS inspired by one flag, one leader and one ideology is lighting the flame of Hindutva in each and every corner of this great land." Is a fascist and Nazi ideology. Therefore, Mahadeva states "Hence, for this particular Hindu stock, which hopes for a child born in India as a 'global citizen' to be tightly bound into the Jaati-varnasystem and wishes for it to remain within its confines until death, contemporary India's Constitution drafted under the leadership of Ambedkar with its civil and humanist ideals, is actually a nightmare. This is ruining their sleep. RSS and their parivara (family/affiliates/associates) are involved in indefensible acts to destroy our Constitution."

In the second chapter "Thus speak the documents" Mahadeva elaborates upon the xenophobic convictions of the RSS by alluding to how Golwakar had warned that there were only two courses open to the foreigners in India. "Either they ought to merge themselves in the national race and adopt its culture, or to live at its mercy so long as the national race may allow them to do so and to leave the country at the will of the national race…". Condemning

these 'racist, depraved' attitudes of Golwalkar, Mahadeva poses pertinent counter-discursive questions regarding the Anti Tippu propaganda. He asks if the allegations of RSS that Tippu Sultan had forcibly converted over 69,000 people to Islam in Coorg were true, Coorg should have had an overwhelmingly huge Muslim population today whereas in our contemporary times the Muslim population in Coorg is only 15%.

Mahadeva observes how the seeds of deceit are sown by the RSS and how the crops of this chicanery are being harvested by RSS and its allies. The third chapter analyses how the RSS ideologues denounce the federal states and their semi-autonomous existence in favour of a totalitarian, anti pluralist government. Vehemently opposing the imposition of Hindi in non Hindi speaking states, Mahadeva articulates his suspicions : staring at us now are the efforts to make Hindi the lingua-franca as the first step towards achieving the goal of making Sanskrit eventually into the common language of our country. These are all small steps towards eventually realising their anti-pluralist aspiration of one nation, one language, one race, one leader, etc" He also points out how the RSS has hijacked and sabotaged the education system by resorting to unsavory revision of textbooks. He also throws light on the misogynist agendas of RSS and how by weakening the public education and strengthening private education , RSS has been instrumental in depriving women from underprivileged groups of access to education. In the next chapter on religious conversion prohibition act, Mahadeva explains how BJP presented 'Religious freedom Protection Bill 2021' in the legislative assembly, got it passed in a rush, got the approval of the cabinet to implement it through an ordinance, and secured the governor's assent to it and now it has become a law. According to Mahadeva, "This Act is called 'Protection of Right to Religious Freedom". But on closer examination, we find that it is replete with prohibitions against religious conversion. There is not even a whiff of religion, freedoms, rights or any protection in this act. Although named after freedom, the act only offers ways to demolish freedoms. That's why people have begun referring to it popularly as the 'Prohibition of Conversion Act' in line with its actual intent ! Furthermore, Mahadeva sharply points out how women and Dalits are deprived of any agency under this act to make their decisions and there is an infantalisation of women and Dalits under this act.

Against the conflagrations of communalism and religious fundamentalism in the recent years, Mahadeva's voice of sanity appealing for equality, espousing communal harmony and rights of the disenfranchised sections of the civil society, his unequivocal indictment of the religious nationalisms that threaten the substratum of democracy has an irresistible appeal.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Department was established in July 1973 by Prof. K. H. Cheluva Raju, with the support of Dr. H. Narasimhaiah, the then Vice-Chancellor of Bangalore University. Dr. Cheluva Raju served as Professor and Chairman till 1987 and went on to become the Vice-Chancellor of Gulbarga University from 1987-1990. Since then, the department has had qualified faculty members, who have carried forward the legacy and values established by Prof. K. H. Cheluva Raju.

They include Prof. Narayana, Prof. R.L.M. Patil, Prof. M.G. Krishnan, Prof. P. S. Jayaramu, Prof. D. Jeevan Kumar, Prof. Sandeep Shastri, Prof. Meena Deshpande, Prof. M.J. Vinod and Prof. P. Ramanna.

Since its inception, the Department has promoted critical inquiry and exchange of ideas. It strives to remove barriers in higher education and motivate students in realizing their potential through creative spaces. It promotes inter-disciplinary research and tie-ups with civil society and industry, with the intention of facilitating placement of students.

Presently, the department consists of three Professors.
Prof. M. Narasimhamurthy
Prof. Veena Devi
Prof. S. Y. Surendra Kumar

At present there are 120 P.G. Students and 32 Ph.D. scholars (two foreign students) pursuing their studies.