

Ethno-Nationalism in India

Interdisciplinary Perspectives



ATLANTIC

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Published by

ATLANTIC

PUBLISHERS & DISTRIBUTORS (P) LTD

7/22, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj, New Delhi-110002

Phones : +91-11-40775252, 40775214, 23273880, 23275880

Fax: +91-11-23285873

Web: www.atlanticbooks.com

E-mail: orders@atlanticbooks.com

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Printed & bound in India by Atlantic Print Services

Preface

The present endeavor is an anthology of eleven peer-reviewed research papers which had been presented at an International conference held at Bodoland University, along with an introduction. It interrogates the rise of ethno-nationalism in India with specific reference to Northeast India. It aims to provide interdisciplinary perspectives drawn from studies of culture, history, literature, and politics to the analysis of emerging and existing nationalism in India. In particular, it examines the ways in which literary-textual representations intervene in debates regarding ethno-nationalism, sub-nationalism, and other permutations of Indian nationalism. It examines a variety of political movements and literary works by various writers over the past five decades that have created, enshrined, and contested ideas pivotal to the rise of Indian nationalism.

The papers have been contributed by mid-career academics and young researchers who have argued about the pros and cons of rising ethno-national consciousness vis-à-vis Indian nationalism. Most of the papers investigate the causes that have catapulted the rise of ethno-nationalism in India. This is not a new phenomenon however, because there have been precedents of linguistic nationalism since the time of India's Independence. Once the first instance of balkanisation was set, it became a trend for smaller communities to seek recognition.

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Nationalism and Minority Politics in Assam: A Look at AIUDF's Performance

Parvin Sultana

Political parties are important institutions of a democracy. Multicultural democratic societies have witnessed the growth of political parties which represent the interest of different groups. Many parties claim to represent the interests of specific groups, ethnic communities etc. Ethnic political parties now flourish across the democratic world. Canada, Spain, India, the United Kingdom, Israel, Sri Lanka, Macedonia, South Africa and Russia are only a few examples of the established or emerging democracies in which they have taken root (Chandra, 2004). An ethnic party is a party which claims to overtly represent the interests of the cause of one particular ethnic category or set of categories to the exclusion of others, and that makes such a representation central to its strategy of mobilizing voters.

Chandra defines a multiethnic party as one which makes appeal related to ethnicity central to its mobilizing strategy but that assumes a position of neutrality or equidistance toward all other relevant categories. Parties which don't appeal to voters on ethnic lines can be termed as non-ethnic parties. Parties can be categorized as such based on its support base and the message it send across to prospective voters in the form of manifesto, representation, co-option of leaders from newer ethnic communities, etc.