

through subaltern processes, creating autonomous ways of political participation and opposing the mainstream ways of involvement. The alternative forms of political participation and mobilisation can be observed in the politics of the All-Jammu and Kashmir National Conference from the 1930s to 1953, the Plebiscite Front and the 1987 Muslim United Front.

One could also understand that the support for Kashmiri nationalism majorly evolved through the collective awareness of the community and a deep urge to exercise their political agency. The repetitive failure of non-violent political mobilisation paved the way for the eventual rise of militancy. In other words, the militant nationalism introduced new ideas which were not always sharing their objectives with Kashmiri nationalism and undermined Kashmiri nationalism over time. This thesis tried to understand how the structural inconsistencies within state nationalism paved the way for further augmentation of Kashmiri nationalism. It thus justified the hypotheses that the weakness of democratic institutions has created social categories for the distribution of patronage, resulting in chasms based on ethnicity, religion, and region.

## Hypotheses Two

### **Kashmiri nationalism is essentially a contestation of self and the other.**

The second hypothesis of the tie study stated that Kashmiri nationalism is essentially a contestation of self and the other. 'Self' and 'Other' denote identity and differences about specific political actors. Rumaëlili (2007:22) notes that simultaneously, the self and the other emerged as perspectival and interchangeable concepts, where the self and the other changed constantly. The collective identities were constituted about the differences; hence, the formation of collective identity entailed differences with those outside of the collectivity. This resulted in the relative difference between the collective self and others.

Nationalism forms identities when socialisation enables individuals to see themselves and how others perceive them. Thus, individuals become self by encompassing other individuals' attitudes, as Mead

(1934:88) calls them 'generalised others. Similarly, individuals refer to nationalism from the perspective of a generalised other. In this way, Kashmiri nationalism sees itself and its relation to the other through oppositional structuring, construing a meaningful identity in opposition to other nationalisms. Therefore, the discourse revolves around morally superior nationalism juxtaposed with less superior nationalism. The performance of nationalism entails a representative character, and the politicisation of differences furthers the sense of self and otherness.

The contestation of self and others in Kashmiri nationalism, if analysed carefully, is a contestation between civic forces of nationalism and the ethnic forces of nationalism. It is a recurring tussle between a set of contradictory values of inclusive liberal universality versus the illiberal, ascriptive, exclusive particularism. In its current form, Kashmiri nationalism emerged against the highhandedness of the ruling Dogra house in the 1930s. The fundamental idea that emerged from this was a territorial idea of an inclusive Kashmiri homeland with a common citizenship. A cursory glance at the critical pre-colonial junctures reveals the civic dynamics of Kashmiri nationalism. For instance, the movement against Begaar (bonded labour) was for exclusive citizenship rights, the right to work, and equal opportunity. Even the tirade against the Dogras was directed against the exclusion of ordinary Kashmiris, oppression, lack of opportunity, etc. The resistance of Kashmiris to share administrative positions with non-Kashmiri officers led to the enactment of state subject law in 1927. This movement saw the coming together of Kashmiris, irrespective of religion, against opening jobs for non-Kashmiris. However, in another instance, the Roti agitation was launched in 1932 by Kashmiri Pandits after the Maharaja's government opened the gates for Kashmiri Muslims. The incident hints towards the shortcomings in the construction of the narrative of Kashmiri nationalism. The formation of the Muslim Conference in 1931 and its conversion to the National Conference in 1938 is determinative that Kashmiri nationalism was constantly evolving with visible tensions between ethnic and civic nationalism.

Without getting into the micro-political details of the politics of the accession signed in 1947, which the National Conference ensured, it was, in many ways, a vote against the ethnic irredentist nationalism

espoused by the Pakistani state. In the 1940s, the organisation's popularity declined after it moved away from Islamic principles and towards vague ideas of secularism and nationalism. Kashmiri nationalism had taken a bold position against the illiberal premise of religious commonality. However, Jalal (1998) notes that Indian nationalism represented by the Indian National Congress excluded those seeking to accommodate religious differences within the framework of the Indian constitution. The resultant creation of the binary opposition between the secular nationalities and the religious communalism denigrated the affinities to religion and not with the nation. Like Indian nationalism, Kashmiri nationalism was also becoming resistant to any other alternate vision of Kashmiri nationalism.

Kashmiri nationalism repeatedly expressed itself against the exclusionary nature of religious nationalism. It debunked Islamic revivalism in its inception and distanced itself from the Muslim League, which stood for the ideals of the Muslim Conference, which was in favour of the ultimate accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. The political outlook throughout the 1940s was far more ambiguous, with the presence of multiple actors who displayed a diversity of interests. However, the pertinent theme is the dialogue between religious and communitarian identities and the deep longing for rational democratic governing structures. Though, in practice, the central appendage of Kashmiri nationalism, the National Conference faltered in successfully incorporating dissent and difference.

Nonetheless, the shortcoming should be ascribed to the National Conference, not Kashmiri Nationalism. In some ways, one can assert that the disjunction between the politics of the National Conference and Kashmiri nationalism placed a precedent for the importance of state nationalism over other valuational variables. The thesis tries to question and transcend the polemical and teleological interpretations of Kashmiri nationalism. The process reveals that Kashmiri nationalism could not be delinked from the ideas of significant nationalisms and their shortcomings elsewhere in South Asia. Civic and ethnic nationalism are not set against one another but are affiliated with modern nationalism.

After 1947, the contestations within Kashmiri nationalism did not cease to exist. Differences were enhanced with the rising political consciousness and education development of the press and media. A vibrant civil society developed in Kashmir, and Kashmiri nationalism based on civic lines gained further momentum. Kashmiri nationalism formed a narrative where people and territory were to belong together and possess a singular political will. A sense of belonging to the same community and an urge for self-governance was fostered. Civic nationalism developed more like a social movement with democratic characteristics. Ethnic nationalism was propounded by the political actors who imagined a commonality of Kashmiri nationalism with Pakistani nationalism. The binary articulated itself in the political and militant forms of Kashmiri nationalism and exhibited constitutive differences. However, the relationship between the self and the other is constituted along multiple dimensions, which allow for a broader range of possible interactions and contradictions. The interactions and contradictions emerge around the nature of difference, the social difference between the self and other and the response of the other.

