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Belgian and Indian Data

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* Owing to the recent illness of Alfred Stepan, this joint paper is a draft hastily draw together by Stepan from a 100 page paper the three of us are doing and from a book Linz and Stepan are writing . Juan J. Linz is Sterling Professor Emeritus at Yale University; Yogendra Yadav is at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi, and was the National Coordinator of the 1996 and 1998 National Election Studies of India (NES); Alfred Stepan is Wallace Sayre Professor of Government, Columbia University and would like to thank the Ford Foundation for its support of his research on comparative federalism. All the authors want to thank Enrique Ochoa-Reza and Jeff Miley, who are completing dissertations at Columbia and Yale universities respectively, for their invaluable research help.

“Nation State” or “State Nation”? Conceptual Reflections and Spanish, Belgian and Indian Data

Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan and Yogendra Yadav

Introduction

One of the urgent conceptual, normative and political tasks of our day is to think anew about how polities that aspire to be political democracies can accommodate great cultural diversity within one state. Given the reality of cultural diversity in many of the polities of the world, the belief that many people have that every state should be a nation and every nation should be a state seems to us to be misguided and indeed dangerous since, as we shall argue, many states in the world today in fact contain more than one nation (or territorially-based cultural groups) within their boundaries.

The belief that every state should be a nation reflects perhaps the most widely accepted normative vision of a modern democratic state, i.e. the “nation state.” After the French Revolution, especially in the 19th century, many policies were devoted to creating a unitary nation state in France in which all French citizens had only one cultural and political identity. These policies included a package of incentives and disincentives to ensure that French increasingly became the only acceptable language in the state. Political mechanisms to allow the recognition and expression of regional cultural differences were so unacceptable to French nation state builders that advocacy of federalism was at times a capital offense. Throughout France, state schools at any given hour were famously teaching the same curriculum with identical syllabi by teachers who had been trained and certified by the same Ministry of Education rules and tests.

Numerous other state institutions, such as universal conscription, were designed to create a common French identity and to be robustly assimilative.¹

Of course some very successful democracies, such as contemporary Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, and Portugal are close to the ideal type of a unitary nation state.

Some federal states such as Germany and Australia have also become nation states. In our view, if a polity (at the historical moment when a conscious state directed political program of “nation-state” building begins) appears to be relatively culturally

homogeneous throughout the territory of the state, and most of its citizens have a strong sense of shared history, the aspiration to create a nation state should not create problems for the achievement of an inclusive democracy. In fact, the creation of such a national

identity and relative homogeneity in the 19th century was identified with democratization and was possible in consolidated states. In the twentieth century, however, attempts to create a nation state by state policies encountered growing difficulties, even in an old

state like Spain. In our judgment, in the last century virtually no new nation-states have been created except as the result of wars, violence, oppression, and secession. However, if a polity has great politically salient cultural and/or linguistic diversity (and many

polities do) we will argue that political leaders in such a polity need to think about, normatively legitimate, and make use of, the concept of “state nation”.

Linz and Stepan first introduced this concept in 1996, but only in a paragraph (and one figure). “We...believe some conceptual, political, and normative attention

¹ For a classic book on these policies see Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976). Most 19th Century progressives and democrats, particularly those associated with the French Revolution, were profoundly opposed to federalism. For the normative advocacy of a unified, homogeneous, nation state see the entries on “Federalism”, “Federation”, “Nation”, and “Departement” in the extremely illustrative but not well known, François Furet and Mona Ozouf, eds., *A Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Belnap Press, 1989), pp. 54-64, 65-73, and 742-753.

should be given to the possibility of state nations. The states we would like to call state nations are multicultural, or even multinational states, which nonetheless still manage to engender strong identification and loyalty from their citizens, an identification and loyalty that proponents of homogeneous nation states perceive that only nation-states can engender.” They went on to say that neither Switzerland nor India were [in the French sense] “strictly speaking a nation state, but we believe both can now be called state nations. Under Jawaharlal Nehru, India made significant gains in managing multinational tensions through skillful and consensual usage of numerous consociational practices. Through this process India became in the 1950s and the early 1960s a democratic state nation.”²

The rest of this essay will be devoted to developing our concept of “state nation” and to applying it to polities such as Spain, Belgium, and India. We will attempt to demonstrate that all three of these polities have strong “state nation” (as well as some “nation state” and some “multinational”) identifications and loyalties.

In order to develop the “state nation” concept, we think it necessary to clear some conceptual ground. In thinking about how “socio-cultural diversities” are politically managed, there are two axes that need to be mapped, with the help of analytical distinctions. The first axis pertains to the nature of socio-cultural diversities that present themselves to political actors. Such diversities are of course a product of developments over a long historical period, but they are “givens” to political actors. Hence the temptation to see these diversities as essential, natural, or primordial. Nevertheless, what appear as essential divisions in any given society are no more than social cleavages that

² See the chapter titled “Stateness, Nationalism, and Democratization,” in Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.34, as well as figure 2.1.

happen to be politically activated and mobilized at that moment. There is always a gap between the map of potential cleavages that underlie every society and the actual map of politically-salient divisions.

All too often this axis is seen as ranging from “homogenous societies” to “diverse societies,” as if homogeneity or its absence were a “natural” condition or starting point. However, the division between so-called “homogenous” and so-called “diverse” societies is better captured as a distinction between societies in which socio-cultural divisions have not acquired political salience, on the one hand, and societies in which they have, on the other. An historical context is built into this distinction; thus, the crucial question is whether such potential cleavages have become activated by the time competitive politics are instituted.

Furthermore, we need to distinguish among societies with different types of politically-activated socio-cultural divisions. At one extreme are societies where social divisions have a geographical concentration and are articulated in more than one “nationalist” vocabulary throughout the territory of the state. Such a society may be called a “multi-national society.”

At the other extreme are societies where socio-cultural divisions exist that are not geographically concentrated and are not articulated in a “nationalist” vocabulary. Following the recent literature, we would call such a society a “multi-cultural” society.

Between these two extremes are a range of societies, in which politically salient social divisions do permit varying degrees of geographical concentrations yet are not articulated in a “national” vocabulary. We stress that the distinctions we are making here

are between “ideal types.” In reality, a society can be both “multinational” and “multicultural” at once.

The second axis that invites theoretical clarification is the one we will be principally concerned with in this paper. It relates not to the nature and articulation of socio-cultural diversities, but to the models of political strategies and some specific institutional responses for dealing with such diversities. Three ideal-types can be delineated along this axis.

“Nation-state” policies stand for a political-institutional approach that attempts to privilege one socio-cultural identity over other potential or actual socio-cultural cleavages that can be politically mobilized. That has been achieved historically by following a variety of routes: (1) by creating or arousing a special kind of allegiance or common cultural identity in those living in a state; (2) by encouraging the voluntary assimilation of those who do not share that initial allegiance or cultural identity into the nation-state’s identity; (3) by various forms of social pressure and coercion to achieve this and to prevent or destroy alternative cultural identities; and (4) by coercion that might, in the extreme, even involve ethnic cleansing.

By contrast, “state nation” policies stand for a political-institutional approach that respects the legitimate public and even political expression of active socio-cultural cleavages, and that evolves mechanisms to accommodate competing or conflicting claims made on behalf of those divisions without privileging or imposing any one claim. “State nation” policies involve creating a sense of belonging (or “we-feeling”) with respect to the state-wide political community, while simultaneously creating institutional safeguards for respecting and protecting politically-salient socio-cultural diversities. The “we-

feeling” may take the form of defining a tradition, history and shared culture in an inclusive manner, with attachment to common symbols of the state and/or inculcating some form of “constitutional patriotism.”

In democratic societies, the institutional safeguards constitutive of “state nation” policies most likely take the form of federalism, and often specifically *asymmetrical* federalism, and/or consociational practices.

Why is federalism an institutional response that is frequently central to the design of a state nation? This is the subject of Stepan’s larger work in progress.³ But, for the proper understanding of the argument we develop in this paper, we should note that Stepan demonstrates that virtually every long-standing and relatively peaceful contemporary democracy in the world whose polity has more than one territorially concentrated, politically-mobilized, linguistic-cultural majority, is not only federal, but “asymmetrically federal”(Spain, Belgium, Canada, and India).⁴ This means that these polities, in order to “hold together” their great diversity in one democratic system, have special cultural and historical prerogatives constitutionally embedded for some of the member units, prerogatives that respond to their somewhat different linguistic/cultural aspirations, demands, and/or historical identities.⁵ We believe that had political leaders insisted upon attempting to impose one language and culture on the country and insisted upon a homogenizing French –style unitary nation state, the cause of social peace,

³ See his “Federalism, Multinational States, and Democracy: A Theoretical Framework, The Indian Model and a Tamil Case Study”.

⁴ Some border line cases might be Sri Lanka, but while it may be a marginal democracy, it certainly is not peaceful. The United Kingdom is multinational but English is the strong majority language in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and thus in this sense the UK does not have more than one territorially concentrated linguistic majority as does Belgium, Spain, Canada, or India. Nonetheless, the multi-cultural and multinational United Kingdom is increasingly becoming asymmetrical with elected assemblies recently created for Scotland and Wales as well as for Northern Ireland.

⁵ The concepts of “asymmetrical federalism” and “holding together federalism” will be developed with greater detail and documentation later in this and Stepan’s chapter.

inclusionary democracy, and individual rights would not have been served in any of these four, long-standing democratic states. This was so because more than one territorially based, linguistic, cultural majority had already been activated in each of these four countries. The strategic question therefore was whether to attempt to repress or accommodate this preexisting diversity. Asymmetrical federalism historically emerged in Belgium, Spain, Canada, and India as a policy response aimed at accommodation. We therefore think that, as a normative concept, an institutional framework, and a set of historical experiences, “asymmetrical federalism” should be strongly considered, by theoreticians and political leaders alike, as a possible approach to democracy in polities such as Sri Lanka and Burma that have more than one territorially based, already politically activated, linguistic-cultural majority within the existing state.

In sum, then, the idea of the nation associated with the “nation state” approach implies creating one common culture within the state; while the idea of the nation associated with the “state nation” approach can contain more than one politically-salient culture, but nonetheless encourages and requires respect for the common institutions of the state, as well as respecting existing socio-cultural diversities.⁶

Thus, “state nation” is a term introduced to distinguish democratic states that do not, and can not, fit well into the classic French style “nation state” model based on a “we feeling” resulting from an existing or forged homogeneity. “State nations” nonetheless can, and have, managed to create powerful and positive citizens’ identification with the

⁶ The analytical distinction between “nation-state” and “state-nation,” as the terms imply, involves an affinity – since both include the term “nation,” and certainly, for some theorists of nationalism, both terms would fit under their conception of a nation.

institutions and symbols of the state, such as the Constitution, inclusive democratic institutions and procedures, and guarantees of basic freedoms.

The state nation needs to be differentiated from another model -- namely, that of “pure” or extreme multinationalism, in which territorially-concentrated, socio-cultural groups that employ a “nationalist” vocabulary and conceive of their “nationalities” as nation-states in *potentia*, aim at reducing the state to a basic minimum, with the result, intended or not, of an extremely weak (if any) “we-feeling”.

Unlike the concepts of the “nation state” or the “state nation”, pure or extreme multinationalism is more a sociological concept than a particular type of political institutionalization. Pure or extreme multinational societies cannot be nation-states (in the specific French sense of the term), but they can be either state-nations or the basis for conceptualizations aiming at a confederal (but not a true federal) state. Relatively stable democratic federal states are either nation-states or state-nations, but not mere aggregates of multiple nation-states (i.e. confederations of multiple nation-states). When the “we feeling” is dominantly or only centered on a “nation”, and the state is identified with only one of the “nations” within the state (or is perceived as alien, or worse as an oppressor to the other “nations”), the construction of a state-nation becomes difficult, if not impossible. Democracies are stable in multinational societies only if an effort is made to legitimate the state by those who also could aim at its disintegration.

It is clear to us that if citizens in a territorial region of a state define their primary loyalty as being exclusively to that region, and if they have almost no loyalty or identification with the central state, not only that federal system, but that state as well, is prone to disintegration -- Yugoslavia by the early 1990’s being the clearest case in point.

The leaders of “nationalities” – or “nations” – in a multinational state may reject being part of a “state-nation”; they may define themselves as “nations” living under a state (not as “part of” or “in” a state), and commit themselves to a nation-building project against the state, with the goal of achieving statehood at the first opportunity (by peaceful or violent means). This does not exclude the possibility that, after attaining statehood, the new nation-state may establish friendly relations with the state from which it separated, even possibly a confederal relation. Obviously, many advocates of such a “pure” (or what we consider extreme) multinational state do not express themselves so bluntly. Some of them demand that the whole state becomes multinational “all-the-way-down”, doing away with as many symbols and practices supporting the idea of a common state. They may advocate a state that is a sum of nations, each with its own exclusive identity, symbols and laws, where the state becomes an empty shell, and the citizens of the state have nothing important to say about common institutions – except to the extent that in international relations and organizations, the states and their citizens have a say.

Let us now turn to examine the relationship between the two axes, one representing activated socio-cultural diversities, and the other representing institutional responses and political strategies. As we have suggested, a key question here is the relation between state nations and multinational societies (such as Yugoslavia in the late 1980s) in which all the nationalities are conceived of as nation states in *potentia*, and whose leaders aim at reducing the common state to a basic minimum. The result of this process can be the generation of a very weak “we feeling” among the citizens of the state. In the case of Yugoslavia, by the early 1990s, most citizens of the state felt they were “Croatian”, “Slovenian”, “Serbian”, “Bosnian” or “Macedonian”, and very few they were

also “Yugoslavian”. Dual and complementary political identities and loyalties had virtually disappeared as “multinational” Yugoslavia had increasingly become merely a composite of hostile, aspirant nation states with very little or no “we feeling”.

Multinational societies (even those which tolerate and indeed manifest dual identities and much “we feeling”, like Spain) cannot be complete nation states in the classic French sense of the term. However, and this is crucial, multinational and multi-cultural societies can be, or can become, state nations with strong we feelings, if complementary as well as multiple cultural and political identities exist or are generated.

Another issue concerns the relation between multicultural societies and the two competing conceptions of the “nation state” and the “state nation”. Our conception of “state nation” derives from our belief, based on historical case studies and analysis, that democracy is possible in polities that are sociologically and politically multi-cultural and even partly (but not exclusively) multinational, if an effort is made to legitimate the state by those minorities and majorities who could conceivably aim at its de-legitimation. Our advocacy of the term “state nation” is also based on our recognition that in some countries, cultural groups are not territorially concentrated but instead are so diffusely located that even “asymmetrical federalism” is not an option. However, given the robustness of these different politically salient cultural groups, a classic French-style “nation state” may also not be an option for a peaceful democracy without a costly, and most likely non-democratic, period of state imposed assimilation efforts, and possibly even ethnic cleansing. Nonetheless, in the same cultural context, a state nation may be a possibility, and probably the most possible, democratic model to pursue.

Some readers might feel that the term “state nation” is an “ideological” concept. However, the argument in France about the absolute necessity of creating a “nation state” after the French Revolution was also ideological. In any case, “ideological constructs” are both a reflection, and a source, of empirical political-social realities. Our introduction of the term “state nation” is intended both to introduce a normative standard to which democracies in polities that appear highly diverse can aspire to, and to introduce a set of at least three observable empirical socio-political realities that a polity, if it is a state nation, will manifest.

A diverse polity, if it has become a state nation, will have the three following, empirically demonstrable patterns. First, despite multiple cultural identities among the citizens of the polity there will be at the same time a high degree of positive identification with the state, and pride in being citizens of that state. Second, there will be a high degree of trust in the most important constitutional, legal, and administrative components of the state. Third, by world democratic standards, there will be a comparatively high degree of positive support, among all the diverse groups of citizens in the country, for the specific state-wide democratic institutions through which the multicultural and possibly multinational polity is governed.

At this point, we need to address a potentially powerful, but in our view, misguided, argument about socio-cultural diversity. After the bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia and parts of the Soviet Union, many analysts have begun to reject wholesale all political and institutional frameworks that grant any form of prerogatives to territorially-concentrated, socio-cultural groups -- arrangements which they refer to as “ethno-federal.” These scholars criticize “ethno-federal” arrangements because they

believe they privilege “sub-national” socio-cultural identities at the expense of identification with common symbols, institutions and individual rights. This privileging, they claim, is likely to foster at least the activation of conflictual, *as opposed to complementary*, identities, and perhaps violence and fragmentation.⁷

These critics ignore, however, the fact that nearly all successful democratic states with more than one politically-activated, territorially-concentrated, linguistic-cultural majority, have institutional frameworks that include a substantial (but absolutely not, as in Yugoslavia, a virtually exclusive) “ethno-federal” dimension. In successful state nations, group rights do not, and should not ever, violate the individual’s rights that come to them as individual members of the state. Witness the institutional frameworks of the states that we consider to be exemplary state-nations – namely, Belgium, Canada, Spain, and India. The institutional frameworks of all of these contain an element of “ethno-federalism.” Nevertheless, none of these states can be classified as purely “ethno-federal” either, since in these states recognition of the legitimate public and political expression of active socio-cultural “national” cleavages is balanced with constitutionally sanctioned respect for common symbols, institutions, and individual rights, thus facilitating the maintenance and nurturing of *multiple and complementary*, as opposed to *single and conflictual*, identities.

We believe that it would be a grave error to discard the state-nation approach simply because the institutional framework associated with it tends to contain a

⁷ Even though in her book, *Subversive Institutions: The Design and Destruction of Socialism and the State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Valerie Bunce does not explicitly argue this point, many people who read her book, have employed its analysis of the Yugoslavian and Soviet experiences to make the case that “ethno-federal” institutions by themselves are “subversive” institutions for stateness and peace. See also Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: Norton, 2000).

significant ethno-federal dimension. In our judgment, in order for a variety of states (such as Burma or Sri Lanka) that are not now peaceful or democratic to achieve a consolidated democracy, they would have to strive to become state-nations. This means, quite simply, that for consolidated democracy to be possible, these states would have to craft institutional frameworks that contain both (a) a substantial “ethno-federal dimension” and (b) mechanisms facilitating identification with common symbols and institutions. If, in the process of democratization, leaders of these states were to pursue either a pure nation-state model, or a pure ethno-federal model, the result would almost certainly be continued armed struggle and failure to achieve democratic consolidation.

Let us not allow a reading of the Yugoslavian and Soviet experiences to destroy the legitimacy of all institutional arrangements containing a “ethno-federal” dimension; for to do so would require giving up on the middle ground of the “state-nation” – a model that has proven valuable in the important but extremely difficult task of reconciling cultural inclusiveness with democratic stability in states containing more than one politically-activated, territorially-concentrated, socio-cultural “national” group (see Figure #1).

Figure 1 goes here

Let us now attempt to develop the argument in more detail to see if, and how, culturally diverse countries such as Spain, Belgium and India approximate our analytic model of “state nations”.

“Holding Together Federalism” and “Asymmetrical Federalism” as Frequent Institutional Forms for the Model of State-Nations

The fact that a number of the oldest and most successful states were nation-states led many to think that all states should be coterminous with nations, that states should be nation-builders like France was in the nineteenth century, and that all nations should become states, as the Wilsonian ideology of self-determination implies.

However, a large number of states do not fit into the classical conception of the nation-state and are in fact multi-national societies. One example is Spain, one of the oldest states in Europe whose borders have not changed since the mid-seventeenth century. Linz, writing in 1970 before the transition to a federal type of state after the death of Franco, asserted that Spain is a state for all Spanish citizens, a nation-state for a large part of the population, and only a state but not a nation for important minorities. Also, he added, there is a small minority which contests or rejects that state and seeks independence.⁸

In the Spanish case, like that of quite a few other countries, would-be nation-builders who sought to create a unique shared sense of identity based on language, history and culture following the French model, ultimately failed. We would argue that such efforts in the twentieth century were often not fully successful; in the twenty-first century, they might well backfire and arouse the latent sense of national identity of significant minorities.⁹ In 1993, in a paper titled “State Building and Nation Building,”

⁸ Juan J. Linz, “Early State-Building and Late Peripheral Nationalisms against the State: the Case of Spain,” in S. N. Eisenstadt and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Building States and Nations: Analyses by Region*. Volume II (Beverly Hills, Ca: Sage Publications, 1973) 32-116.

⁹ In India the phrase “minority” normally refers only to a “religious minority”. However, in this paper we will follow standard social science vocabulary when we use the word “minority” so to include linguistic, tribal, ethnic, as well as religious minorities.

Linz formulated clearly some of the main reasons why we feel this is the case. He stressed in particular how in today's world, sensibilities have emerged within the "international community" that act as an effective pressure against it. He wrote:

"We are living in an era in which the liberal democratic principles of legitimacy, the institutions of the Rechtsstaat, are being loudly proclaimed by everyone, even when they might be constantly violated. That legitimacy formula makes it impossible in many countries needing the respect of the world community to pursue oppressive and discriminatory policies against those asserting primordial identities, cultural and linguistic rights, and also the articulation of nationalist sentiments, even of extreme nationalists. This is a reality that modern states cannot ignore except by turning to authoritarianism, a choice that often is also not legitimate for those who do not share sympathy with, or tolerance for, the nationalists questioning the idea of nation-state building by the state. In this context, it is necessary to turn to different and new methods of state integration other than those based on nation building."¹⁰

In addition, and complementary to Linz's point about the international *zeitgeist*, Alfred Stepan, too, has stressed interconnected technological and normative developments that have led to a certain "de-territorialization" of conceptions of individual identity, and thus rendered the chances of successfully pursuing classical models of nation-state building decreasingly likely in contexts where a significant percentage of the permanent residents are first or second generation immigrants (or originally guest workers) and have different cultures. In an article titled "Modern Multinational Democracies: Transcending a Gellnerian Oxymoron," first published in 1998, he argued:

"Given the significant technological changes that have occurred since the late nineteenth century state-induced homogenization processes so well described by Eugene Weber, and the analytically distinct but related emergence of what Charles Taylor calls 'the politics of recognition,' there are grounds for thinking such processes are now less available. Most of the world's minorities can keep in cultural contact with their home cultures via radio, cassettes, and cheap air travel to a vastly greater extent than was possible a hundred years ago. Also, due to advances in literacy and communications, more minority communities have semiprofessional 'cultural carriers', in the Weberian sense of *Träger*, than a hundred years

¹⁰ Juan Linz, "State Building and Nation Building," *European Review*, Volume 1 (1993): 355-369.

ago. Normative changes in the form of increased desire for cultural autonomy in some minority (especially Muslim) communities – contested by rising antiforeign sentiments in the majority cultures that reduces the integrating capacity that in theory the majority culture would like – probably have contributed to greater cultural will, and greater cultural capacity, for minorities to resist cultural assimilation.”¹¹

Given all of these developments, we think it necessary to issue a warning to would-be nation-state builders in contexts with a significant degree of politically salient cultural and linguistic diversity: specifically, that their strategy is likely to be ineffectual at best; and most likely it will end up being radically counter-productive. Put simply, the pursuit of nation state building policies will probably provoke the very kind of fragmentation that adherents of the nation-state model most deeply fear. In the process, it will frequently engender significant levels of resistance – resistance that can often only be countered effectively by descent into authoritarian styles of rule. As such, it seems clear that in many parts of the contemporary world, nobody with a genuine commitment to democratic governance should support the pursuit of the nation-state model in contexts where there are already politically salient issues that revolve around deep, especially territorially-based, cultural differences.

Any minority today has articulated leadership and structures, and has intellectuals which formulate their national aspirations and finds support among those concerned with their rights as a culture. This makes the assimilating policies of the successful nineteenth-century nation-builders, as in France, aiming at erasing such distinct identities, extremely costly.

In our view, as we shall show with the limited data we have, India at one point or another has been and is, like Spain, Belgium and Canada, to mention three democratic

¹¹ Alfred Stepan, *Arguing Comparative Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 187-188.

federal states with multi-national components, a nation-state for most citizens, a state to which they owe allegiance but not a nation in the classical sense for significant minorities, and the state that is contested by some minorities in the periphery of the state.¹²

This brings us to a basic distinction among federal states between those federations which are largely “coming together” in their origin, versus those that are largely “holding together” in their origin.¹³ Coming together federations were basically formed by a process in which relatively autonomous separate units, often sharing much of the same political culture, sometimes a common enemy, jointly arrive at an agreement to pool part of their previous sovereignty in order to gain the advantages of creating a new federal state. This has been the case of the United States when the thirteen colonies got together to achieve a more perfect union as an independent state. The history of Australia fits that same pattern, as does even multicultural Switzerland.

But there is another quite different process for the emergence of new federal states. Old states, governed as unitary states and originally conceived as future nation-states, when confronted with rising peripheral nationalisms, with new identities based on language, culture or history which threaten their unity, can turn to federalism to continue to “hold together” the people in a common state. This has been the origin of the long process of the transition in Belgium since independence in the 1830's from what was

¹² For a typology of democratic states that takes into account both whether they are unitary or federal ones and whether they are mono-national or multi-national, see Juan Linz, “Para un mapa conceptual de las democracias,” *Politeia*, no. 26 (2001): 25-46.

¹³ Our original formulation of the distinction between “coming together” federalism and “holding together” federalism can be found in Alfred Stepan, “Toward a New Comparative Politics of Federalism, (Multi)Nationalism, and Democracy: Beyond Rikerian Federalism,” in Stepan, *Arguing Comparative Politics*, 315-361.

supposed to be a unitary nation-state to a new federal state. A similar process occurred in Spain in the 1970s. This might be the future of Sri Lanka.

There are great differences between the federations formed by a “coming together” of separate units, like the Swiss cantons in the course of their history, the United States and Australia, where the pre-federal units retained considerable power and sometimes a sense of identity, and are zealous of their rights with respect to the center, and those “holding together” federations created on the basis of an existing state, particularly a unitary state, which devolves power to units to satisfy their emerging demands.¹⁴

The “coming together” process of federation formation tend to create constitutionally symmetrical federations, whereas federations that are “holding- together” in their origins and intentions tend to have important, constitutionally embedded, asymmetrical characteristics.

Obviously, some countries do not fit neatly into this typology. Occasionally the reality involves elements of both processes.¹⁵ This was the case in Canada where, in 1867, asymmetrical federalism was used to “hold together” French-speaking Quebec and English-speaking Canada; but Canadian federalism also served to incorporate the

¹⁴ It is possible that if the princely states in India had coincided with cultural, linguistic and other social characteristics, and the federation had been created as was sometimes discussed in the thirties by the princely states retaining their identities, acceding to a federation, India could have been a case of a “coming together” federation. For many reasons we shall not discuss here, this did not happen. For the atmosphere of the debate in the 1930’s see N.D. Varadachariar, *Indian States in the Federation* (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1936).

¹⁵ In the case of the Soviet Union, especially in 1919 to 1923, there was actually a third pattern that Stepan calls “putting together” federalism. See his “Russian Federalism in Comparative Perspective”, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, no. 16 (April-June 2000): 133-176.

Maritime Provinces that, after important incentives were arranged, wanted to “come together” and join the new federation.¹⁶

In the case of India, the joining of Sikkim, facilitated by Article 2 of the constitution, which allows for the possibility of other political units to join the republic, reflected some “coming together” elements, as did the social reality of the Indian independence movement itself. German federalism in the nineteenth century served the processes of nation-building, giving the nation the roof of the common state, although formally it was the coming together of kingdoms, dukedoms and city states under Prussian hegemony.

Some federal states are based on a strong national identity in practically all its citizens. They are relatively homogeneous in their culture, language and sense of history and can be seen as nation-states. The state and the nation are one. Germany, after giving up claims to Alsace-Lorraine and losing the eastern territories inhabited by large numbers of Poles, is now a nation-state with tiny minorities enjoying a special status like the Danes on the northern border and the Sorbs. However, with the Cold War division between the *Bundesrepublik* and German Democratic Republic, there were two states and one nation. The two states each sought to legitimize their rule, in West Germany by what was called the *Verfassungspatriotismus*, the loyalty to the democratic liberal state and its market institutions, and in East Germany by the construction of a socialist state.¹⁷

¹⁶ For an overview of the current constitutional impasse in Canada, see Richard Simeon, “Canada: Federalism, Language and Regional Conflict” in Nancy Bermeo, ed, *Territorial Conflict and Federalism in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, forthcoming). On the evolution of Quebecois nationalism, see Maurice Pinard, “Les quatre phases du mouvement indépedantiste québécois,” in Robert Bernier, Vincent Lemieux, and Maurice Pinard, eds., *Combat Inachevé* (Sainte-Foy, Quebec: Presses de l’Université du Quebec, 1997).

¹⁷ For the original formulation of the concept of “constitutional patriotism,” see Dolf Sternberger, *Verfassungspatriotismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel-Verlag, 1990). For Jurgen Habermas’s development of the concept, see his *Einbeziehung des Anderen: Studien zur politischen Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main:

The first Austrian republic was founded in 1918 and in its constitution defined itself as part of the German nation and was committed to joining the German Federal Republic. Only after the second World War did Austria acquire an identity of its own as a state, though not for a long time as a nation.¹⁸

Most of those writing about Switzerland do not see it as a nation-state, but as a voluntary state that we would characterize as a “state-nation”. With its linguistic heterogeneity of largely mono-lingual German, French and Italian (Raeto-romansch-speaking) cantons, Switzerland is a unique federation. Given the fact that none of its linguistic regions, none of its religious communities, and none of its cantons consider themselves nations, as many Basques and Catalans consider their Autonomous Communities in Spain, it would be wrong to consider Switzerland a multinational state. The Swiss confederation enjoys a legitimacy, felt by all its multicultural and largely cantonal-focused citizens, which is unique, and provides the ideal type of what we call a state-nation, where the institutions of the state with its distinctive political culture is the basis of a particular type of identification of its citizens.¹⁹

Suhrkamp, 1996). For a recent elaboration on the theme (in English) and adaptation of it to contexts outside of Germany, see Habermas, “Citizenship and National Identity,” in *Between Facts and Norms* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1998), 491-515.

¹⁸ On the very recent emergence of national consciousness in Austria, see T. Bluhm, *Building an Austrian Nation. The Political Integration of a Western State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973). See especially 220-241. On the same theme, see also the excellent piece by Fritz Plasser and Peter A. Ulram, “Politisch-Kulturell Wandel in Österreich,” in Plasser and Ulram, eds., *Staatsbürger oder Untertanen? Politische Kultur Deutschlands, Österreichs und Schweiz im Vergleich* (New York: P. Lang, 1991) 157-245.

¹⁹ A fine overview of the Swiss case can be found in Lidija Basta, “Minority and Legitimacy of a Federal State,” in L. Basta and Thomas Fleiner, ed. *Federalism and Multiethnic States. The Case of Switzerland* (Fribourg, Switzerland: The Institute of Federalism, 1996) 41-69. For another treatment that deals extensively with language policy in Switzerland, see Kenneth D. McRae, *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies*, vol.1 (Ontario, Canada: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1986). For an earlier formulation of the concept of the state-nation, and its distinctiveness from both the nation-state and the multi-national state, see Juan Linz, “Democratic States, Nation-States, State-Nations and Multinational States,” unpublished. A shortened version of this article was published in German as “Nationalstaaten, Staatsnationen und multinationale Staaten,” in Marcus Gräser, Christian Lammert and Söhnke Schreyer, eds., *Staat, Nation, Demokratie. Traditionen und Perspektiven moderner Gesellschaften. Festschrift für*

In contrast to the ideal-typical state-nation of Switzerland, in state-nations with important multinational components, such as Spain, Belgium, or Canada, many citizens, who may constitute a significant proportion of the population of federal units, identify with a distinctive nation with its own language, culture, history, rights and grievances against the state in which they live. The federal state-nation is a nightmare to those who originally conceived of the state as a nation-state; a nightmare to those who want to nationalize the whole population in the process of nation-building, of which the French Republic would be the historically most successful model; a nightmare for those nation builders for whom federalism would be conceived, at the most, as a form of decentralization for purposes of administrative efficiency.

Multinational Societies: Multiple and Complementary Identities? Possible State - Nations?: Spain and Belgium

There are those who think that the multi-national federal state is inevitably condemned to break-up, who see federalism in those states as only a step toward disintegration, and who therefore want to limit the federal constitution and engage in a process of more or less aggressive nation-building. For complex reasons into which we cannot enter here, such efforts are likely to fail, producing a backlash that will lead to the opposite result from the one that their proponents pursue. However, intelligent political engineering, constructive political leadership and some favorable contextual factors can serve to overcome the tension inherent in multi-national societies. A federal state that is

Hans-Jürgen Puhle (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2001), 27-38. See also Juan Linz, "Democracia, multinacionalismo y federalismo," in *Revista Española de Ciencia Política*, Volume 1 (October 1999), 7-40.

multinational can become a successful state-nation. Unfortunately, we have few systematic studies of how this has been achieved.

A study of the Indian Republic and its history and institutions could make an important contribution to this important task for social scientists and policy-makers. As can closer study of Spain and Belgium. Unfortunately, some of the brilliant theorizing about multi-culturalism, particularly in the United States and, to a lesser extent, in Europe, in recent years, is only in part relevant to this task.²⁰ Multi-culturalism in the way that we find it discussed in that literature is not distinctive to federal states. The literature is equally relevant to unitary states like France, with its increasingly important Muslim immigrant population. The literature on multiculturalism is especially relevant to cultural minorities, particularly immigrants claiming a range of rights as individuals and communities, but who are not the same as territorially based autochthonous communities with an articulated or latent national identity.

Multi-culturalism represents a different dimension of social and political reality that we can find in nation-states, state-nations, and multi-national societies. Also multiculturalism certainly can be found in India as a whole and within the states of the Indian federation.

²⁰ The literature on “multiculturalism” is of course extensive, and here we will only refer the reader to some of the most basic works, written from a variety of perspectives. These include: Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality: an Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001); Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), as well as his more recent contribution, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1995); Bikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000); Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” in Amy Gutmann, ed., *Multiculturalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); James Tully, *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Most of the literature on nationalism treats national identities as if they were mutually exclusive. The literature is plagued with the use of expressions like “the Catalans,” or “the Flemish,” and their opposites, “the Spanish,” or “the Belgians.” However, such expressions represent a gross over-simplification. Though nationalists on both sides reject the idea of dual identities as a form of bigamy, in fact, in all more or less multi-national societies, most citizens tend to have dual, and often complementary, or at least not exclusive, identities.

The region of Catalonia, in Spain, provides a case in point. Since the late nineteenth century and particularly in the twentieth century, there has been a growing sense of cultural and, increasingly, *national* identities among people in bilingual regions in certain parts of Spain – most acutely, in Catalonia and the Basque Country.²¹ At the turn of the century, nationalist parties emerged in both of these regions and began to articulate these identities. In the decades following the Spanish Civil War, such identities gained additional strength as a reaction to the Franco regime, since that regime pursued an aggressive policy against peripheral nationalist movements, including discriminatory language policies. By the end of the Franco era, the democratic opposition had come to sympathize with the peripheral nationalist movements and to demand that their aspirations be at least partly recognized. In the transition to democracy, the drafters of the 1978 Constitution did just that; they agreed to accommodate linguistic, cultural, and

²¹ For a useful bibliography on the historiographical debates about the rise of peripheral nationalisms in Spain, see Xosé-M. Núñez, “Historical Research on Regionalism and Peripheral Nationalism in Spain: a Reappraisal,” published as a working paper by the European University Institute in Florence as ECS no. 92/6 (1992). For Linz’s contribution to this debate, see Juan Linz, “Early State-Building and Late Peripheral Nationalisms against the State: the Case of Spain,” in S. N. Eisenstadt and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Building States and Nations: Analyses by Region*, Volume II, 32-116.

national differences by organizing the state as an “*Estado de autonomías*,” a type of federal political system.²²

Since the transition to democracy in Spain, a number of questions about national identity have been asked in opinion polls – all of which reveal the predominance of multiple and complementary identities. Exclusive and competing identities turn out to be the exception, not the rule. For example, when asked, “Which of the following sentences would you identify with most: I feel only Spanish, I feel more Spanish than Basque/Catalan/etc., I feel as Spanish as Basque/Catalan/etc., I feel more Basque/Catalan/etc. than Spanish, or I feel only Basque/Catalan/etc.,” only 16% of the Spanish population chooses an exclusive Spanish identity, and another 5% chooses an exclusive Basque/Catalan/etc. identity. Dual identifications are dominant, sometimes more Spanish, sometimes more Catalan, or whatever other region is chosen. Specifically, 11% of the Spanish population choose “more Spanish than Basque/Catalan/etc.,” 50% choose “as Spanish as Basque/Catalan/etc.,” and 16% choose “more Basque/Catalan/etc. than Spanish.”²³

²² On the process of devolution to a federal state in Spain, see Juan Linz, “Spanish Democracy and the Estado de las Autonomías,” in Robert A. Goldwin, Art Kaufman, and William A. Schambra, eds., *Forging Unity Out of Diversity* (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1989), 260-303. On electoral results in and public opinion about the Estado de las Autonomías during the first decade-and-a-half of democracy, see Juan Linz, “De la crisis de un estado unitario al Estado de las Autonomías,” in Fernando Fernández Rodríguez, ed., *La España de las Autonomías* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios de Administración Local, 1985), 527-672. On the continuing conflict in the Basque Country, see Juan Linz, *Conflicto en Euskadi* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1986). Also see Francisco J. Llera, *Los Vascos y la Política. El proceso político vasco: elecciones, partidos, opinión pública y legitimación en el País Vasco, 1977-1992* (Bilbao: Servicio Editorial Universidad del País Vasco, 1994). On public opinion in the Basque Country, see *Euskalherria en la encuesta Europea de valores* (Bilbao: Universidad de Deusto, 1992). Also see the series of *Euskobarometro*, directed by Francisco Llera, (Bilbao: Servicio Editorial Universidad del País Vasco). For public opinion in Catalonia, see the yearly surveys published by the *Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials* (Barcelona: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), and Francisco Andrés Orizo and Maria-Angels Roque, *Cataluña 2001: Los catalanes en la encuesta Europea de valores* (Madrid: La Fundación Santa María, 2001).

²³ All the data we cite from Spain is based on the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, Study no. 2228 (March 1996). For a useful monograph based on the results of this study, see Felix Moral, *Identidad*

What's more, despite the fact that identification with the region is significantly stronger in Catalonia than it is for the Spanish population as a whole, still only a small minority of the population registers an exclusive identity. To be exact, in Catalonia a mere 11% of the population identify themselves as exclusively Catalan, while another 12.9% identify themselves as exclusively Spanish. The rest – approximately three-quarters of the population there – report some kind of dual identification. They feel as Catalan as Spanish (36%), or more Spanish than Catalan (12%), or more Catalan than Spanish (26%); but they do not exclude one or the other identity. The same can be said for the Basque Country, the region in which identification with the Spanish nation is weakest: even there, those who identify themselves as exclusively Basque barely reach one-fifth of the population (see Table #2).

Table #2: *Subjective National Identity in Spain.*

<i>Subjective National Identity in Spain</i>				
	<i>All of Spain</i>	<i>Basque Country</i>	<i>Catalonia</i>	<i>Galicia</i>
Only Spanish	16	05.4	12.9	04.9
More Spanish than Cat/Basque/Gal	11	04.0	11.4	07.8
As Spanish as Cat/Basque/Gal	50	36.2	36.7	43.9
More Cat/Basque/Gal than Spanish	16	29.9	25.7	35.5
Only Cat/Basque/Gal	05	20.6	11.0	06.9
Don't Know/Don't Answer	02	04.0	02.2	01.0
	100	100	100	100
(N)	(4932)	(428)	(744)	(490)

Source: *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, Study #2228, March 1996.

regional y nacionalismo en el Estado de las Autonomías (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1998).

Nor is Spain an exception in this regard; for the same is true in the case of Belgium. Belgium was founded in 1830 as an independent unitary parliamentary monarchy. In the course of a complex process marked by considerable conflict, it has evolved in the twentieth century into a federal, basically bi-national and bilingual federal democracy.²⁴

In Belgium, a number of relevant questions about national identity have been asked in opinion polls too, distinguishing between those who speak Dutch, those who speak French, and the inhabitants of Brussels. All of these again reveal the predominance of multiple and complementary identities. For example, when asked, “Which of the following statements applies most to you: I consider myself only as a Belgian, I feel more Belgian than Fleming or Walloon, I feel as Belgian as Fleming or Walloon, I feel more Flemish or Walloon than Belgian, or I feel only Flemish or Walloon?,” only 2.9% of the Belgian population choose an exclusive Flemish or Walloon identity. Thus, despite all the talk about the polarization of identities in Belgium, only a tiny fraction of Belgian citizens reject outright any kind of affective identification with the state. Though another 14.2% choose an exclusive Belgian identity, the overwhelming majority choose a dual identity of one kind or another – in descending order, “as Belgian as Flemish or Walloon” (43.2%); then “more Belgian than Flemish or Walloon” (20.5%); and finally “more Flemish or Walloon than Belgian” (17.4%).²⁵

²⁴ For a good synthesis of this historical process and an extended discussion of language policy there, see chapter one of Kenneth D. McRae’s *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies: Belgium* (Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986). For a study that focuses on linguistic conflict in the metropolitan region of Brussels, the only place where significant numbers of French-speakers and Flemish-speakers live side by side, see Jan de Volder, “Le FN Brade Bruxelles,” in *Revue Française de Geopolitique*, no. 6 (May 1998).

²⁵ The data we use for Belgium is based on the 1995 *General Election Study*, conducted by the Interuniversitair Politieke-Opinieonderzoek, K.U. Leuven, and the Point d’appui Interuniversitaire sur l’Opinion publique et la Politique, U.C. Louvain. Results published in 1998.

Among the French-speaking Walloons, who at the time of the founding of the state lived in the more prosperous and state-building communities, identification with the Belgian nation is somewhat stronger than it is for the whole of the population. 17.7% of them identify themselves as only Belgian; 24.8% identify themselves as more Belgian than Walloon; and 43.8% identify themselves as much Walloon as Belgian. A mere 9.8% identify themselves as more Walloon than Belgian; and a miniscule 1.8% feel only Walloon. In the capital city of Brussels, the only place in the country where significant numbers of French-speakers and Dutch-speakers live side by side, 23.5% identify themselves as only Belgian; 25.7% identify themselves as more Belgian than Flemish or Walloon; 31% report an equal dual identity; 11.3% identify themselves as more Walloon or Flemish than Belgian; and only 2.6% fail to mention the Belgian identity. But despite the fact that identification with the region is stronger in Flanders than for the population as a whole, perhaps what is most surprising about the Belgian case is the strength of the Belgian identity among the Flemish people. In Flanders, those who identify themselves as exclusively Flemish amount to a mere 3.5% of the population. Over 95% of “the Flemish” identify to some degree with the Belgian state – 10.6% identify themselves as only Belgian; 17.0% identify themselves as more Belgian than Flemish; 44.6% identify themselves as equally Belgian and Flemish; and 22.8% identify themselves as more Flemish than Belgian (see Table #3).

Table #3: *Subjective National Identity in Belgium.*

<i>Subjective National Identity in Belgium</i>				
	<i>All of Belgium</i>	<i>Flanders</i>	<i>Wallonia</i>	<i>Brussels</i>
Only Belgian	14.2	10.6	17.7	23.5
More Belgian than Flemish/Walloon	20.5	17.0	24.8	26.7
As Belgian as Flemish/Walloon	43.2	44.6	43.8	31.5
More Flemish/Walloon than Belgian	17.4	22.8	09.8	11.3
Only Flemish/Walloon	02.9	03.5	01.8	02.6
Don't Know/Don't Answer	01.9	01.4	02.2	04.5
(N)	100 (3651)	100 (2099)	100 (1258)	100 (311)

Source: 1995 General Election Study Belgium.

What's more, not only do the overwhelming majority of citizens in Belgium, regardless of the territory from which they hail, identify themselves at least sometimes as Belgians; but also, they register a very high degree of affective attachment to an important common state institution – specifically, the monarchy. Such attachment is evident in the responses of Belgian citizens to a question about how much they trust their king – for fully 54.3% of them claim to trust him either very much or a lot (13.4% and 40.9%, respectively); while a mere 10.6% of them claim to trust him only a little or a very little (5.9% and 4.7%, respectively). Now, it needs to be noted that among Walloons, the level of trust in the king is moderately higher than it is among the Flemish. Whereas 59.2% of the former claim to trust their king at least a lot, only 50.6% of the latter do so. Nevertheless, despite this difference, the fact remains that *both* communities share a very strong sense of attachment to the king, and by extension to the institution of the monarchy (see Table #5).

Table #5: *Trust in the king.*

	<i>Trust in the King</i>						<i>N</i>
	<i>Trust very much</i>	<i>Trust a lot</i>	<i>No trust, no distrust</i>	<i>Little trust</i>	<i>Very little trust</i>	<i>Don't Know / Don't Answer</i>	
<i>All of Belgium</i>	13.4	40.9	32.5	5.9	4.7	2.6	(3668)
Flanders	10.7	39.8	35.0	7.4	4.2	2.9	(2099)
Wallonia	16.4	42.8	29.7	3.4	5.2	2.4	(1258)
Brussels	19.3	40.5	27.0	5.8	6.1	1.3	(311)

We understand this kind of affective attachment to a set of common institutions and symbols to be indispensable for the legitimacy, and therefore stability, of any state in contexts with a high level of cultural, linguistic and even national heterogeneity. This is why we stress the importance of not only *multiple* but also *complementary* identities within a multi-national, federal, democratic framework. Of course, as we have already suggested, there are two intimately related difficulties with this framework: first, that centralists often dream of doing away with the fact of *multiple* identities; and second, that peripheral nationalists often seek to undermine the fact of *complementary* identities. But, at least in the Belgian case, neither of these difficulties seem to be unmanageable. We do not share the skepticism of some other commentators, who feel that Belgium is falling apart. Both the overwhelming preponderance of dual identities and, especially, the high level of affective attachment to common symbols and institutions there justify our sense of optimism. Were such affective attachment to common symbols and institutions lacking, there would be reason for pessimism. Late in Yugoslavia, for example, it is highly doubtful that any Yugoslavian institution had a high level of trust by all the citizens of the country. Fortunately, however, the Belgian case is quite different from that of Yugoslavia.

By all means, nationalists would like the question formulated not as, “Are you *more* Flemish *than* Belgian?” or “Are you *more* Catalan *than* Spanish?” but rather as, “Are you *either* Flemish *or* Belgian?” or “Are you *either* Catalan *or* Spanish?” – despite the ubiquity of multiple and complementary identities in settings that are more or less multi-nation. And inevitably, both those who speak of self-determination, that is, the right of every nation to become an independent state, and those who favor a total national integration into a single cultural or linguistic community, reject the very idea of dual identities.

This is the main reason (and there are many) why democratic plebiscites are normally such an undesirable solution. People have to make one or another choice, like the one of defining the territorial units for which the decision should be binding. The quorum necessary to reverse such a decision is totally different from a normal election since it cannot be reversed four years hence. A plebiscite might be the only solution in certain extreme situations where the polarization created by violent conflict has destroyed any dual identity. But in those cases it will mean a loss of rights and equal citizenship among those not supporting the majoritarian choice.

Reflections on India as a “State Nation”: Accomplishments and Threats

As comparativists, and as observers who have had the opportunity to visit many parts of India, we are very aware of India’s continuing problems with low levels of literacy, nutrition, basic sanitation, as well as periodic communal riots. Some of these comparative problems are made abundantly clear in Table 6. We are also painfully aware

of some relatively new dangers to the quality of democracy in India, which we will discuss later.

Table #6: Comparative Indicators of India's Human and Income Poverty.

Average GDP per Capita in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) in 2000 (US Dollars) among Arend Lijphart's universe of the thirty-six continuous democracies of the world from at least 1977 to 1996	\$20,252
India's GDP per Capita in PPP in 2000 (US Dollars)	\$2,358
India's Human Development Index (HDI) Ranking among the 173 countries of the world ranked by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	124/173
India's HDI Ranking among Arend Lijphart's thirty-six continuous democracies	34/36
India's Human Poverty Index (HPI-1) among the 88 developing countries ranked by the UNDP	55/88
Adult Female Literacy Rate in India	45.4%
Percentage of Underweight Children in India at age 5	47.0%

Sources: UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 149-152, 157-159, 172, 190-193, and 224. Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999). See table 4.1 for Lijphart's universe of the thirty-six countries in the world that were all continuous democracies in his judgment from at least 1977 to 1996.

However, the focus of this essay is on political institutions and perceptions of them as mechanisms for handling societal diversity and potential conflict. As writers about democracy and democratization in the world, and as students of nationalism, multi-nationalism, and diversity and extreme crises of "stateness, such as in the former USSR and Yugoslavia, we are convinced that India has more diversity than any long standing democracy in the world and that democracy nonetheless is increasingly supported by the overwhelming majority of these diverse groups in India. This pattern is not sufficiently recognized, not to say analyzed, by general readers or even by most specialist scholars, so we will now attempt to document, and begin to account for, these phenomena.

Notwithstanding the great linguistic, religious, ethnic, and caste differences within its diverse polity, India is one of the world's democracies that scores most highly on the three key state nation indicators: identification, trust, and support.

Our methodological and analytic position is that in politics, what has been socially constructed, can also be socially destroyed. We shall discuss these possibilities later in this conclusion. However, no matter what may happen in the future, India's past and present achievements concerning being a state-nation are worthy of reiteration, and comparative analysis, in this conclusion.

Concerning identification, certainly less than 30% of the total Indian population speak Hindi, are Hindus, and come from a part of India (ie., the non-“inner line” areas) that experienced the somewhat homogenizing and interactive impacts of direct British Colonial rule, and more importantly, the historic Gandhi-Nehru led Congress Party independence movement.

Nonetheless, in answer to the World Values survey question “ How proud are you to be Indian,” 69.6% of all Indian respondents said they had a “ great deal” of pride, and 18.1% answered they were “quite” proud. Thus, 87.7% of Indian respondents were proud of being Indian. Among the 11 long-standing federal democracies in the world only the United States and Australia had higher “great deal” of pride scores. Moreover, among the four long-standing federal democracies that have a significant multinational dimension (Canada, Belgium, Spain and India) India has the highest percentage of respondents who said they have a “great deal” of pride in their country. See Table 7.

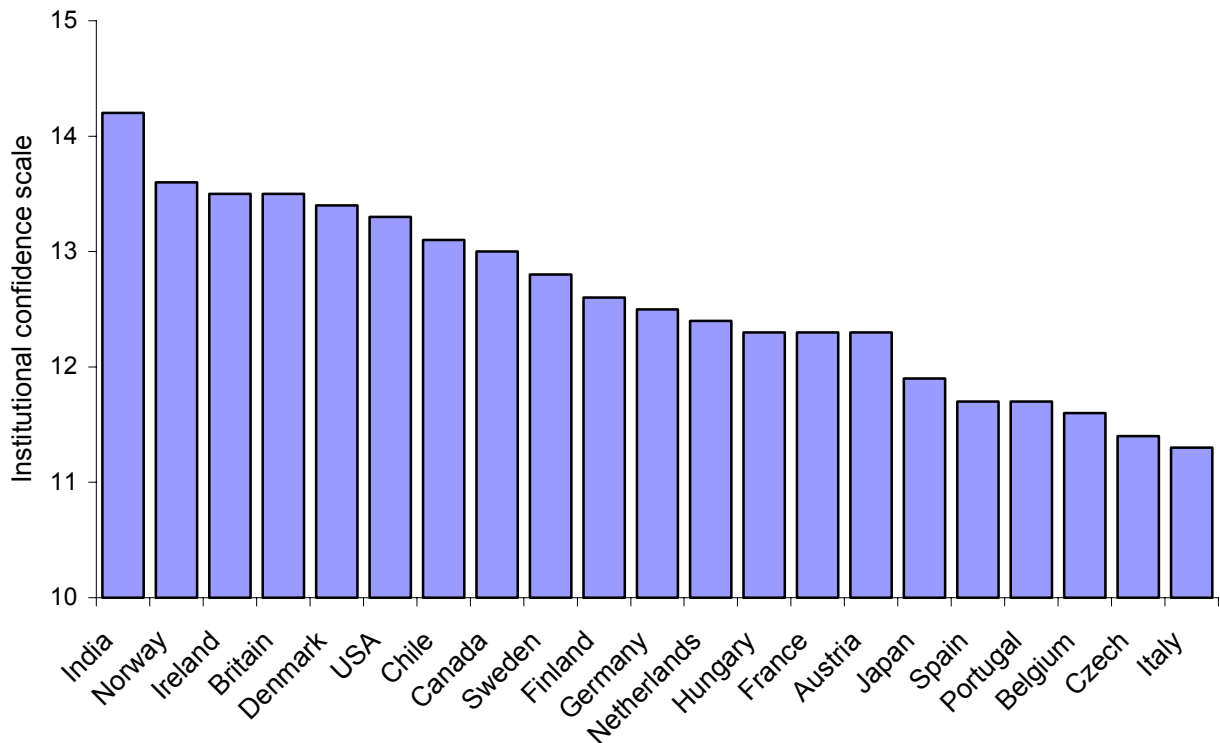
Table #7: “How proud are you to be (nationality)?” Responses in the 11 longstanding federal democracies (percent).

<i>How proud are you to be (nationality)</i>						
	<i>Great Deal</i>	<i>Quite</i>	<i>Not Very</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Total</i>
USA	77.3	19.8	01.5	00.3	01.0	100
Australia	70.3	23.0	02.1	00.4	00.1	100
India	69.6	18.1	07.1	01.2	04.0	100
Brazil	64.1	19.1	14.3	01.9	00.3	100
Spain	63.8	26.2	04.5	03.1	00.5	100
Canada	60.6	33.8	04.0	01.5	00.0	100
Argentina	55.3	28.9	08.3	02.6	04.8	100
Austria	53.0	39.9	05.7	01.4	00.0	100
Belgium	29.0	52.3	12.5	06.1	00.0	100
Swiss	23.5	46.7	15.9	07.2	06.7	100
Germany	11.1	35.8	21.5	13.7	17.9	100

Source: The data for all countries but Austria, Belgium and Canada is from *World Values Study: 1995-1997*, Ronald Inglehart et al., Inter University Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan, question 205. The data for Germany is from the Lander of the former West Germany. Canada, Belgium and Austria were not included in the 1995-97 survey. The data for them is from *WVS: 1990-93*.

Concerning trust in major state institutions, Pippa Norris of Harvard, using the World Values study of 1990-1992, came to the conclusion that among the twenty-one countries she analyzed for trust in five key political and state institutions (the parliament, civil service, legal system, police, and army) India ranked first, and the three other multinational countries ranked 8th (Canada), 17th (Spain) and 19th (Belgium). Pippa Norris' set of countries included such long standing and leading social welfare states as Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, and the global superpower, the USA. See Table 8.

Table #8: *Institutions and Political Trust in India and Twenty Other Democracies: 1990 - 1993*



Source: Pippa Norris, *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), figure 11.2, p. 229. Norris constructed this chart by combining the responses in *World Values Surveys: 1990-93* concerning trust for five institutions, parliament, the civil service, the legal system, the police, and the army, p.222.

Our confidence in Pippa Norris' findings was bolstered when we ran the data on trust in six major institutions for the eleven long-standing federal democracies using the 1995-1997 World Values study. When we combined "great deal of trust" and "quite a lot of trust" for each of the six institutions, India ranks first or second out of the eleven federations for five of the six institutions. No other long-standing federal democracy

ranks first or second for more than two institutions. When we study the scores for the three other multinational countries we see that Belgium and Canada rank in the top two for only one institution (of the four for which we have data) and Spain was not in the top two for any of them. See Table 9.

Table #9: Responses in the 11 Longstanding Federal Democracies to Questions about Citizen Trust in Six Major Institutions (percentage)
 “How much confidence do you have in the (Central) Government?”

	Switzerland	India	Brazil	Canada	USA	Spain	Argentina	Australia	Germany	Belgium	Austria
Great Deal	5.1	11.5	10.9	5.9	4.7	3.8	5.1	2.3	1.1	n.a.	n.a.
Quite	45.2	36.8	37.3	31.8	25.9	26.3	21.6	24.1	22.4	n.a.	n.a.
Not Very	34.3	22.4	19.3	50.2	55.2	44.3	41.7	53.7	53.2	n.a.	n.a.
None	11.7	12.3	31.6	12.1	14.2	22.7	31.6	19.9	21.1	n.a.	n.a.
Don't Know	3.7	17.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	n.a.	n.a.
		}50.3	}48.3	}48.2	}37.7	}30.6	}30.1	}26.7	}26.4	}23.5	

“How much confidence do you have in Parliament?”

	India	Belgium	Switzerland	Austria	Canada	Spain	Brazil	Australia	USA	Germany	Argentina
Great Deal	11.5	3.6	2.2	6.0	5.8	3.6	4.8	4.0	3.1	1.4	2.1
Quite	41.9	39.1	39.2	35.2	32.2	31.1	28.5	26.6	27.2	26.7	13.9
Not Very	18.9	43.4	40.1	48.9	51.4	40.9	20.3	54.0	55.4	55.7	43.6
None	9.4	13.8	12.9	9.9	10.7	19.2	45.3	15.4	14.2	11.9	40.4
Don't Know	18.4	0.0	5.5	0.0	0.0	5.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0
	}53.4	}42.7	}41.4	}41.2	}38.0	}34.7	}33.3	}30.6	}30.3	}28.1	}16.0

“How much confidence do you have in the Legal System?”

	India	Switzerland	Austria	Brazil	Canada	Germany	Spain	Belgium	USA	Australia	Argentina
Great Deal	19.0	9.2	14.9	17.4	10.4	7.6	7.6	6.6	6.1	5.2	6.8
Quite	47.8	55.3	43.5	37.3	44.0	46.1	37.0	38.0	30.2	29.8	19.9
Not Very	14.4	27.3	34.7	21.1	38.8	39.5	39.9	40.3	50.1	53.4	47.6
None	4.1	5.9	6.8	23.8	6.8	5.4	11.1	15.1	13.6	11.6	25.7
Don't Know	14.7	2.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	1.4	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	}66.8	}64.5	}58.4	}54.7	}54.4	}53.7	}44.6	}44.6	}36.3	}35.0	}26.7

Table #9 cont.
 “How much confidence do you have in the Police?”

	Canada	Australia	USA	Germany	Austria	Switzerland	Spain	Belgium	Brazil	India	Argentina
Great Deal	24.3	18.1	16.3	10.0	16.5	11.7	11.0	6.9	9.4	11.7	3.9
Quite	59.8	57.5	54.9	60.4	51.3	54.9	49.5	44.1	35.5	24.0	18.7
Not Very	13.1	20.5	23.7	26.1	27.5	25.3	27.1	37.6	20.2	28.7	46.4
None	2.8	3.9	5.1	2.8	4.7	5.2	9.8	11.4	34.1	22.5	31.0
Don't Know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	2.9	2.6	0.0	0.8	13.0	0.0
	84.1	75.6	71.2	70.4	67.8	66.6	60.5	51.0	44.9	35.7	22.6

“How much confidence do you have in the Political Parties?”

	India	Brazil	Switzerland	USA	Spain	Australia	Germany	Argentina	Canada	Belgium	Austria
Great Deal	11.0	3.7	1.2	2.7	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Quite	28.4	28.5	24.2	18.5	16.4	14.9	12.5	7.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Not Very	28.2	19.4	48.6	62.4	49.1	66.1	66.0	42.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
None	16.2	47.6	19.1	16.3	29.0	18.0	17.5	49.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Don't Know	16.2	0.8	6.9	0	4.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
	39.4	32.2	25.4	21.2	17.9	15.9	13.5	8.4			

“How much confidence you have in the Civil Service?”

	Brazil	India	USA	Canada	Germany	Switzerland	Belgium	Austria	Spain	Australia	Argentina
Great Deal	13.9	12.7	7.2	6.2	2.5	2.0	4.3	5.6	3.5	3.6	0.7
Quite	44.7	40.5	44.7	43.9	44.1	40.9	38.3	36.3	36.1	34.6	7.1
Not Very	21.8	17.1	40.4	42.6	43.2	39.4	42.9	50.6	41.8	51.2	43.9
None	18.7	6.1	7.8	7.3	7.6	11.4	14.5	7.5	13.5	10.6	48.3
Don't Know	0.8	23.6	0.0	0.0	2.8	6.3	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0
	58.6	53.2	51.9	50.1	46.6	42.9	42.6	41.9	39.6	38.2	7.8

Source: The data for all countries but Austria, Belgium and Canada is from *World Values Survey: 1995-97*, Ronald Inglehart et al., Inter University Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan. The data for Germany is from the Lander of the former West Germany. Canada, Belgium and Austria were not included in the 1995-97 survey. The data for these countries is

from *World Values Survey: 1990-93*. For both the 1990 - 1993 and 1995 - 1997 surveys the question numbers were from top to bottom, 142, 144, 137, 141, 143 and 145. Question 143 was not asked in Canada. Questions 142 and 143 were not asked in Belgium and Austria

Concerning our indicator of support for democracy, as Table 10 shows, 60% of respondents in India said that “democracy is preferable to any other form of government”. In 2001(a particularly bad year) the Latin American average for this question was 48%. Chile only had 45% and Brazil 30%. In East Asia, Korea, in 1999, only had 53%.²⁶

Table #10: *Attitudes toward democracy and authoritarianism in six post-1975 cases of redemocratization: Uruguay, Spain, India, Korea, Brazil and Chile (in percentages). The number in parenthesis shows the attitude of those who answered the question.*

<i>Attitudes toward democracy and authoritarianism in six post-1975 cases of redemocratization</i>						
Questions	Country					
	Uruguay	Spain	India	Korea	Chile	Brazil
With which of the following phrases are you most in agreement?						
Democracy is preferable to any other form of government	80 (85)	78 (83)	60 (83)	53 (48)	52 (54)	41 (48)
In some circumstances an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic government.	08	09	06		18	21
For someone like me, a democratic or a nondemocratic regime makes no difference	06	07	06		25	23
Don't know/ No answer	06	06	27		04	15
N	(1213)		(8133)		(1200)	(1240)

Source: The data for India are from the *National Election Study, 1998*, coordinated by Yogendra Yadav of the Center for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. Data for Uruguay, Brazil and Chile are from the *Latino Barometer 1996*, directed by Marta Lagos. The Spanish data are from the *Eurobarometer 37* (1992). The Korean data is from the *Korea Democracy Barometer 1999*. In Brazil, for the 2002 *Latino Barometer* the "Democracy is preferable to any other form of government" response has dropped from 41% in 1996 to 37%.

However, in a diverse polity, even if the average is fairly high, if within a major minority group, support for democracy is low, this can present a problem. Yet this is not a problem in India concerning religion because the major religious minority group is the Muslims, and they are not statistically different in their support of democracy (59.2%) than the Hindus (60.1%). See Table 11.

²⁶ For Latin America in 2001 see Marta Lagos, “A Road With No Return?”, *Journal of Democracy*, 14 (April 2003), Table1, p.165.

Table #11: *Opinions about democracy by religious groups.*

<i>Opinions about democracy by religious groups</i>						
	<i>Hindu</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Christia</i>	<i>Sikh</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>n</i>					
Democracy is preferable	60.1	59.2	61.8	66.4	69.7	60.3
Sometimes authoritarianism is preferable	05.7	05.5	08.1	05.5	03.9	05.8
No difference	06.1	08.0	11.2	01.6	05.3	06.4
Don't know/ Can't say	28.0	27.3	18.9	26.6	21.1	27.5
	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	(6749)	(895)	(285)	(128)	(76)	(8133)

Source: *Indian National Election Study 1998.*

Of the major long-standing democracies in the world India has by far the lowest per capita income. If the poorest segment of the population had a very low support for democracy in contrast to the rest of the population this could also present a problem, but 54.9% of the “very poor” in the Indian sample answered that “democracy is preferable”. Finally, given India’s uniquely important caste system, it is important to note that even among the Scheduled Castes (formerly called “untouchables”), 56.6% support democracy. In comparative terms therefore, the percentage of India’s Muslims, of India’s untouchables, and of India’s poorest strata, who answer that “ democracy is preferable to any other form of government”, is about ten percentage points higher (for each of these potentially alienated anti-democratic groups) than the average of Latin America countries for 2001.

On our three key empirical indicators for which a high score is particularly useful for a diverse polity to be a successful “state nation”, positive identification and pride in being citizens, trust in the major state institutions, and support for democracy, India

scores extremely well. In this respect, India's past and present achievements in creating unity, democracy, and a useable state in the context of great diversity must be recognized, and we hope, further analyzed.

We would like to end our discussion of India however with a major cautionary note. There is a significant element of "social construction" in politics. What has been socially constructed can under some circumstances be socially destroyed. More than a quarter of a century ago Linz and Stepan edited a volume on the breakdown of democracy in twelve countries. One of their major conclusions was that "the independent contributions made to the breakdowns by political incumbents is a theme that emerges in almost all cases."²⁷ Linz and Stepan also concluded that virtually none of the breakdowns was inevitable.

The authors of this essay have two major conclusions concerning India's political engagement with its socio-cultural diversity. First, India is not a classic "nation state." Second, India has managed to create a functioning, democratic "state nation." In our judgment, the effort to attempt to forge a classic "nation state" of the French style would destroy the present, functioning "state nation" and not assure the creation of a democratic nation-state. It would be extremely dangerous and ultimately unsuccessful and would almost certainly produce at best, a lower quality democracy, an eroded state nation, and weaker attachments to the state. To the extent that the Indian state is not a classic nation-state, and that India's federalism has historically recognized the diversity of people within the union, a nation-building campaign on the basis of a cultural, linguistic or religious homogeneity, and the marginalization of those not sharing in this sought after

²⁷ See Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, eds., *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), IX.

homogeneity, is a potential threat to the Indian state. Many loyal segments of the population in India, many groups, many political administrative units, can be part of a state-nation, but not part of a classical nation-state.

However, increasingly in India, some militant groups often referred to as “Hindu fundamentalists” (such as the RSS, the VHP, and the Bajrang Dal, and frequently – but not always – supported by the BJP) often use a discourse, and carry out actions, whose socio-political consequences, if their project for India were ever implemented, would make India sharply less inclusive. In the Gujarat massacres of 2002, in which approximately 1500 Muslims were killed, many of these groups supported, indeed helped coordinate, the anti-Muslim attacks, with the complicity of the BJP’s state government. In the wake of the massacre, the BJP swept elections in Gujarat, and discussion of the “Gujarat model” as the future electoral strategy of the BJP was frequently referred to in Indian political discussions. After the Gujarat elections, Ashutosh Varshney wrote the following, which we will quote at length to give an indication of the worries that some important observers have about the current threats to pluralism and inclusiveness in India.

“ In effect, Gujarat’s electorate has legitimised independent India’s first unambiguous pogrom, a pogrom much more vicious than the the killings of the Sikhs in Delhi in 1984, a pogrom that came closest to the classic, anti-Jewish pogroms of Russia and Europe in the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century. The Congress Party, though deplorably involved in anti-Sikh violence in 1984, never had an anti-Sikh ideology. For purely electoral reasons, the Congress became contingently anti-Sikh for a while. In contrast, the VHP, the RSS and their stormtroopers, the Bajrang Dal, have an anti-Muslim ideological core.

Therefore, the victory of Rajiv Gandhi’s Congress in 1985 was basically a strategic phenomenon, cynically parasitic as the Congress campaign was on Mrs Gandhi’s assassination by her Sikh bodyguards. The BJP’s victory in Gujarat, on the contrary, is ideological. It is about a larger vision of the polity, in which minorities, as the RSS put it earlier this year, must seek protection in the goodwill of the majority community, not in the laws of the land. The massive legitimisation of an ideologically charged pogrom is a truly bruising embarrassment for all Indian liberals and a severe undermining of the pluralist national vision in Gujarat.”²⁸

²⁸ Ashutosh Varshney, “ Will the Stallion Balk in Mid-Gallop?” *The Hindu Magazine* (December 30, 2002).

Clearly, if the Gujarat model became a dominant model in India this would bring about the socio-political destruction of India's state nation. We hope that this will not occur, and we do not believe it is inevitable that it will.²⁹ Much of what we have discussed about India's institutions as well as the data we have presented here about the attitudes of citizens would support a more optimistic view.

²⁹ Let us briefly mention some reasons that make us more confident than many others that the "Gujarat model" is not bound to be successful in India's twenty-seven other states. Gujarat has many features that make it exceptional in India. First, the Gujarat electoral model was aided by the fact that the BJP was ruling in Gujarat without the actual, or at least potential, constraint of coalitional partners. In all other major states where the BJP was then in power they were in multi-party coalitions. Second, Ashutosh Varshney in his award winning book *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p.97, presents data on deaths as a result of communal violence per 1,000,000 of urban populations in seventeen major states in India from 1950-1995. Gujarat, by far, had the highest death rate. Third, of the seventeen states for which we have survey data on support for democracy, the state that had the highest number of explicitly anti-democratic responses in 1998 was Gujarat (see Table 18). Fourth, Gujarat had emerged as the safest electoral bastion for the BJP and had witnessed the most intense Hindu-fundamentalist mobilization of any state in the decade prior to the massacre. See Yogendra Yadav, "The patterns and Lessons [of Gujarat Election Verdict]" (*Front Line*, January 3, 2003: 10-16). Fifth, the Godra incident in which 58 Hindus burned to death in a train returning from Ayodhya, one of the main symbols for Hindu fundamentalism, helped ignite the massacres. Without great complicity by incumbents, and unprecedented terrorism by civil society groups (whether Muslim or Hindu), a Godra type incident will be an extremely rare occurrence. More generally, we can say that the leaders of the BJP as a political party (who are in a governing coalition with twenty-three partners) for reasons of parliamentary, coalitional, electoral, and even very important national and international investment imperatives, might well want to distance themselves from full association or complicity with, the projects of such groups as the RSS, VHP and the Bajrang Dal. Finally, a non-BJP government at the center, might not allow this, not only out of a commitment to value India's tradition of inclusiveness but also for reasons of party competition. This would contribute to governability, a strong Indian state, and wide-spread support for a state nation. Such a government at the center, in all likely-hood, would not tolerate an individual state leader's incitement of a Gujarat type anti- inclusionary campaign and its attendant massacres. The BJP's defeat in the state assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh in February 2003 demonstrated some limits to the Gujarat model.

Pure Nation-State Model
State-Nation Model
Proposals for Pure Multinationalism

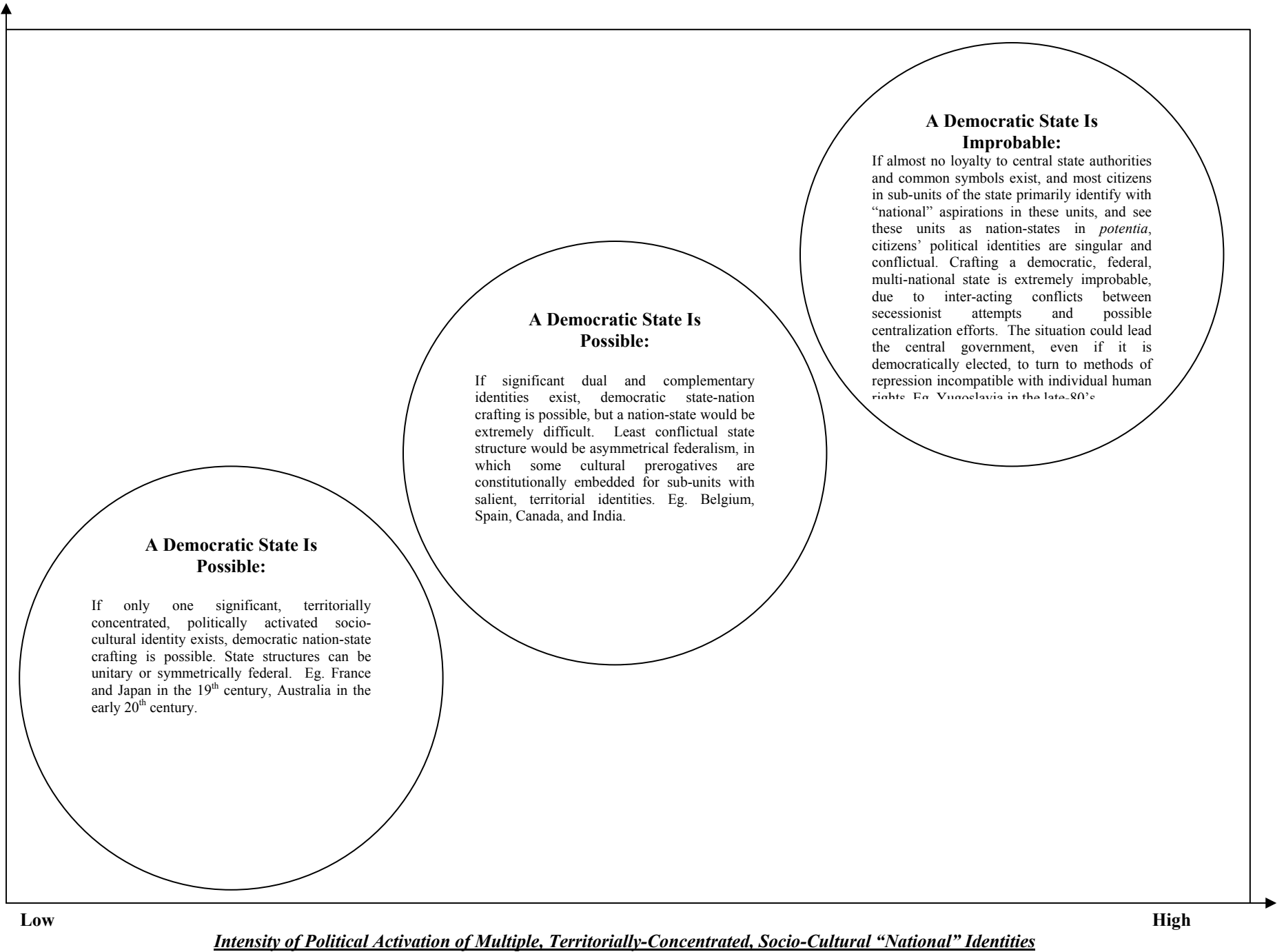


Figure One: Democratically-Probable and Improbable Relationships between Activated, Territorially-Concentrated, Socio-Cultural Identities and Political-Institutional Strategies.