Cultural And Liberal Nationalism In Global Context

The division between ancient and modern versions of nationalism according to Sargent (2009) is reflected in the current conflict between scholars of nationalism: that between cultural or ethnic nationalism and civic or liberal nationalism. Roughly speaking, the former is based on ancient roots and the latter on modern ones, and for most the distinction is between “bad” (ethnic) and “good” (civic). The distinction above gives the true picture of how Nationalism can both a good thing and a bad thing and in Bieber’s (2018) word that “the worry of nationalism as a “wave” alludes to its revolutionary side. The virulent nationalism that rejects the status quo and seeks to reassert the will of an imagined community over a political or cultural space is different from, but draws on, endemic nationalism. It is such nationalism that threatens the very existence of globalization in this century”.

It’s imperative to understand why such nationalism (ethnic) has been on the rise lately and is gaining such a high momentum that cannot be easily overlooked. Some of the trends globally that point out to a rise in nationalism include,

“The rise of far right parties across Europe which have had significant gains like the likes of the Front National Party in France which won 33.9% of votes in the second round of elections in 2017 and many others in Europe. These rise could be explained by the fact that voters of nationalist parties often belong to the majority community and who experience uncertainty and a combination of a real or even perceived marginalization which can be coupled with racism, authoritarianism and longing for a past that is long gone. Bieber continues on to say that support for these parties is not only based on nationalist views of voters such as anti-EU and immigration positions, but also on economic grounds” (Bieber, 2018).

Another global trend pointed out by Bieber, (2018) is the rise of nationalist violence and hate crimes around the world. According to her there have been key events such as Brexit, the election of trump and the massive influx of refugees in Europe that had led to an increase in hate crimes. These crimes point out the change in social norms that nationalist and xenophobic beliefs have become more acceptable and thus radical individuals and groups feel more empowered to carry out such crimes.

It is with no doubt that over the years there has been a backlash against Globalization. De Vries, (2018) asks a thought provoking question of whether the backlash against globalization is as a result of economic grievances by those intimated by globalization or is it the recent developments that constitute a cultural backlash based on immigration fears. She believes that it is both and gives a good example of this, that the financial crisis of 2008 was accompanied by both economic grievances as well as an influx of refugees in Europe. This saw a large number of European political parties taking advantage and making huge political strides as they ran on a platform that combined the two.

One of the most substantial reasons, that nationalism is a hindrance to globalization is that it hinders international trade. Take the European Union which has allowed European countries to join forces and through the years allowed them to assert themselves on the global stage. The economic success of the union can be largely contributed to the integration and institutions

which created massive economic growth and riches enabling both firms and consumers access to a larger market. (Zettelmeyer, 2019). This is the beauty of globalization but with recent developments like US protectionism largely due to Donald Trump's policies of "America First" and Brexit are threatening the very existence of this interdependence and integration which are integral to the existence of globalization around the world. According to a survey carried out by accountancy company KMPG, two thirds of UK business CEOs were worried by growing protectionism, including measure like tariffs, quotas imposed on imports. (Partington, 2018). Indeed Such trade barriers and policies hinder competition and chase away investors and immensely hinder global trade.

Furthermore nationalism in its extreme nature has no regards for human rights. Globalization meant the adoption of liberal views among nations in the world. However, rise of ethnic nationalism across many states in the world doesn't not conform to this. Rohignya Muslims for instance persecuted by their own country which refuses to acknowledge them as citizens of Myanmar on the basis that they are not among the majority Buddhists is the bluntest evidence of the vices of ethnic nationalism which is toxic, and non-inclusive and therefore doesn't not regard the rights of those that are different from the larger majority. Same goes for hate crimes instigated or carried out against minorities around the world.

REFERENCES

1. Bieber, F. (2018). Is Nationalism on the rise? Assessing Global Trends. Ethnopolitics, 17(5), 519–540. https://doi.org/10.1080/17449057.2018.1532633
2. De Vries, C. (2018 5). The Globalization Backlash: its both culture and the economy. Retrieved 29, 2020, from https://www.socialeurope.eu/the-globalization-backlash-its-both-culture-and-the-economy.
3. Partington, R. (2020, February 3). Business leaders say economic nationalism is biggest growth threat. Retrieved 2, 2020, from https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/may/22/economic-nationalism-biggest-threat-growth-business-leaders-poll-political-populism
4. Sargent, L. T. (2008). Contemporary Political Ideologies: A Comparative Analysis (14th ed.). Zaltbommel, Netherlands: Van Haren Publishing.
5. Zettelmeyer, J. (2019, April 2). The Troubling Rise of Economic Nationalism in the European Union. Retrieved 21, 2020, from https://www.piie.com/blogs/realtime-economic-issues-watch/troubling-rise-economic-nationalism-european-union