

Ekatavad and Anekatavad: An Ideological Framework of Indian Politics

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Abstract

This paper introduces and develops 'Ekatavad' (Unitarianism / Cultural Nationalism) and 'Anekatavad' (Pluralism / Secular Liberalism) as a novel binary framework for analysing the ideological landscape of Indian politics from the nineteenth century to the present day. While existing scholarship has employed labels such as Hindu nationalism versus secularism, or cultural nationalism versus civic nationalism, this paper argues that the Ekatavad–Anekatavad dyad captures the deepest epistemological cleavage in Indian political thought with greater precision and explanatory power. Ekatavad holds that India is a civilisational and cultural unity whose diversity is merely surface-level, that its spiritual and philosophical roots are common to all inhabitants, and that national development must flow from indigenous traditions rather than Western mimicry. Anekatavad, by contrast, holds that India's plurality — of language, religion, ethnicity, and custom — is the fundamental reality; that unity is political and administrative rather than civilisational; and that the modern Indian state must be constructed on the principles of Western Enlightenment, secularism, and liberal constitutionalism. The paper traces these two streams through the social reform movements of the nineteenth century, the Congress nationalist movement, the post-independence Nehruvian order, and the BJP-led assertion of the early twenty-first century. It further examines how sub-ideologies such as communism, casteism, and regionalism relate to this primary dyad. The paper concludes that India's democratic vitality depends on a productive tension between these two traditions rather than the elimination of either.

Keywords: Ekatavad, Anekatavad, Indian political ideology, cultural nationalism, secularism, Hindu nationalism, Congress, BJP, ideological pluralism, political theory

Introduction

Ideology is the skeleton of politics. Without an ideological substrate, political behaviour dissolves into mere opportunism. In the case of India — a civilisation-state of extraordinary antiquity and complexity — the ideological foundations of political life have been contested, layered, and frequently misunderstood. The scholarly literature has long sought stable categories through which to make sense of this contestation. Conventional labels such as 'left versus right', 'secular versus communal', or 'nationalist versus cosmopolitan' have all been applied, yet none captures the full depth of the cleavage that runs through Indian public life.

This paper proposes a new analytical dyad rooted in the internal logic of Indian political thought itself: Ekatavad and Anekatavad. These terms — the first translating roughly as 'doctrine of unity or oneness', the second as 'doctrine of plurality or many-ness' — are coined by the present author not as mere translations of existing Western concepts, but as genuinely indigenous categories that describe how Indian thinkers, reformers, and political actors have understood the fundamental nature of the Indian nation.

The central claim of this paper is as follows: since the beginning of organised political consciousness in nineteenth-century India, two distinct and competing worldviews have shaped every major political debate, institutional design decision, and cultural controversy. The first worldview — Ekatavad — holds that beneath all apparent diversity, India is one: one civilisation, one spiritual tradition, one cultural nation whose unity is prior to and more real than its observable differences. The second worldview — Anekatavad — holds that

India's plurality is ontologically primary; that its unity is a legal-political construction of relatively recent vintage; and that the appropriate model for Indian governance is a neutral, plural, and secular state that treats all communities as equally valid components of a diverse whole.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section two reviews the existing literature and identifies the gap that this framework addresses. Section three provides precise conceptual definitions of both terms. Sections four and five trace their historical development from the nineteenth century through independence. Section six analyses their post-independence trajectories. Section seven examines sub-ideologies and their relationship to the primary dyad. Section eight analyses their contemporary manifestations in politics, academia, media, and cinema. Section nine offers a comparative analytical evaluation, and Section ten concludes with observations on the future of this ideological contest.

Literature Review

The ideological dimensions of Indian politics have attracted sustained scholarly attention, though no prior work has employed precisely this framework. The most relevant bodies of literature are those dealing with Hindu nationalism, Indian secularism, and postcolonial nationalist thought.

Partha Chatterjee's foundational work *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* (1986) identified the 'derivative discourse' problem — the paradox that Indian nationalism was compelled to think within the categories introduced by European colonialism even as it sought to oppose European domination. Chatterjee distinguished between a 'material' domain (technology, economy, statecraft) where the nationalists accepted Western superiority, and a 'spiritual' domain (religion, family, culture) where they asserted Indian distinctiveness. This distinction maps closely onto the tension between Ekatavad and Anekatavad: the former prioritises the spiritual domain as the ground of national identity, while the latter largely concedes the spiritual domain to the private sphere and builds national identity on modern material-political foundations.

Rajni Kothari's *Politics in India* (1970) described the Congress Party as a 'system' rather than a mere party — an umbrella organisation that absorbed diverse ideological tendencies and managed conflict through bargaining rather than exclusion. Kothari's analysis implicitly recognised the co-existence of Ekatavad and Anekatavad within the Congress tent, though he did not use these terms. His concept of 'consensus politics' can be read as a description of the uneasy truce between the two streams.

Christophe Jaffrelot's *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India* (2007) provides the most detailed account of what this paper terms the political institutional expression of Ekatavad — the RSS-BJP ecosystem. Jaffrelot traces the intellectual genealogy from V.D. Savarkar's *Hindutva* to M.S. Golwalkar's *We or Our Nationhood Defined* and onwards to contemporary electoral politics. His sociological analysis of the movement's social base (lower-middle-class urban Hindus) complements the ideological analysis offered here.

Sunil Khilnani's *The Idea of India* (1997) is the most eloquent defence of the Nehruvian vision — which is to say, of Anekatavad in its most sophisticated form. Khilnani argues that Nehru's project was to create a political community capable of holding India's diversity together through democratic institutions rather than cultural homogenisation. His analysis highlights the strengths of the Anekatavad position but also, implicitly, its vulnerabilities — particularly its dependence on a secularised elite unable to speak the language of ordinary Indians.

The gap in the existing literature is precisely the absence of a unified framework that places both streams in a single analytical architecture without reducing either to a pathology of the other. Most Western scholarship

treats Anekatavad as normative and Ekatavad as deviant; most right-leaning Indian scholarship does the reverse. This paper attempts a genuinely symmetrical analysis.

Conceptual Framework

Ekatavad: Doctrine of Civilisational Unity

Ekatavad, as used in this paper, is not simply Hindu nationalism, nor is it religious chauvinism. It is a broad family of beliefs united by the following core propositions. First, India is a civilisational entity of great antiquity whose unity transcends its observable diversity. Differences of language, dress, diet, and religious practice are real but superficial — they are variations within a single cultural ecosystem whose roots lie in the Sanatan Dharmic tradition. Second, the historical continuity of Indian civilisation gives it a unique identity that is prior to modern political constructions. Third, Western modernity — while not without merit — is not a universal template; India's path to development must emerge from its own civilisational logic. Fourth, the 'White Man's Burden' theory and the associated claim that Western colonialism was beneficial or civilising is to be firmly rejected. Fifth, there is genuine pride in one's own religion, culture, and intellectual heritage.

It is essential to distinguish between Ekatavad as an analytical category and its particular political expressions. Not all who share Ekatavad premises support the BJP; not all who are culturally proud are communalists. The category encompasses figures as different as Swami Vivekananda (who had no political programme), Bal Gangadhar Tilak (who used cultural symbols for anti-colonial mobilisation), and contemporary political organisations.

Anekatavad: Doctrine of Constitutive Plurality

Anekatavad holds that India's plurality — religious, linguistic, ethnic, caste-based — is not an accident of history or a surface variation, but the fundamental constitutive reality of the subcontinent. Unity, where it exists, is a political achievement rather than a natural inheritance. This has several implications. First, the modern Indian state must be strictly neutral between religious communities, treating all as equally entitled to state protection and equally excluded from state patronage. This is the 'equal distance' (not 'equal nearness') model of secularism that many Anekataবাদis favour. Second, the historical account of British rule is more complex than simple condemnation: the British introduced modern institutions, rule of law, and a unified administrative framework that helped forge a political nation from what was previously a collection of kingdoms and communities. Third, the authentic sources of inspiration for India's modernisation lie in Western liberalism, Enlightenment rationalism, and international human rights norms, adapted to Indian conditions. Fourth, majority culture must exercise particular restraint in the public sphere to prevent the marginalisation of minorities.

Historical Origins: The 19th-century Matrix

The encounter with British colonialism was the crucible in which both ideological streams were formed. The British colonial enterprise rested on an epistemological claim — that Indian civilisation was inferior, stagnant, and in need of European tutelage. This claim, articulated by figures such as Thomas Macaulay (in his infamous Minute on Education, 1835) and James Mill (in *The History of British India*, 1817), forced Indian thinkers to formulate responses. The responses they formulated constituted the first systematic expressions of what this paper terms Ekatavad and Anekataবাদ.

The Anekataবাদic response, pioneered by Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833), accepted much of the British critique of Indian social practice — particularly regarding widow immolation (sati), child marriage, and caste

discrimination — while rejecting political subjugation. Roy founded the Brahma Samaj (1828), advocated for English education, and saw the British presence as an agent of social modernisation. His framework was essentially one of grafting Western rationalism onto a reformed Indian religious tradition. This made him the founding figure of Indian Anekatavad: plurality is managed by a neutral, reformed, rational public sphere, and India's path forward runs through Western modernity.

The Ekatavad response emerged slightly later, most powerfully through Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824–1883), founder of the Arya Samaj (1875). Dayananda's rallying cry — 'Back to the Vedas' — was simultaneously religious, cultural, and political. He rejected the authority of medieval accretions to Hindu practice while insisting on the superiority and self-sufficiency of the Vedic heritage. His argument was that India needed no external guidance; its own ancient literature contained all the knowledge necessary for social progress, scientific development, and national regeneration. This is the quintessential Ekatavad stance: India is not backward because it is Indian, but because it has departed from its own highest traditions.

Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) gave Ekatavad its most intellectually sophisticated and globally resonant expression. His address at the Parliament of World's Religions in Chicago (1893) was not merely a religious speech; it was a civilisational counter-claim. At a moment when Social Darwinism and the civilising mission were at their peak, Vivekananda asserted that Hindu Vedanta represented a universal spiritual science superior in its comprehensiveness to any particular religion. His insistence that 'each soul is potentially divine' — a claim with profound implications for equality, human dignity, and social reform — gave Ekatavad a genuinely universalist dimension rather than a narrowly chauvinist one. Vivekananda also foreshadowed the later argument that India's contribution to world civilisation was its spiritual wisdom, and that this wisdom had practical political implications for how a modern Indian nation should be organised.

The Congress Period: Competition, Fusion, and Dominance

The Indian National Congress, founded in 1885, became the arena within which these two streams competed for organisational control and ideological direction. The so-called Moderate faction — including Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C. Bonnerjee, and most importantly Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866–1915) — represented early institutional Anekatavad. The Moderates believed that progress lay through British constitutional channels, that Indians needed to develop 'fitness for self-government' through education and rational deliberation, and that religious sentiment should be kept out of political mobilisation. Their admiration for British parliamentary traditions was genuine, as was their belief that India's modernisation required Western institutional models.

The Extremist faction — Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920), Lala Lajpat Rai (1865–1928), Bipin Chandra Pal (1858–1932), and Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950) — represented the political vanguard of Ekatavad. Tilak's decision to revive the Ganesh Chaturthi festival (1893) and the Shivaji festival (1895) as vehicles of political mobilisation was a calculated deployment of cultural nationalism — the argument that India's emotional resources for anti-colonial resistance lay not in English-language petitions to Parliament, but in shared religious-cultural practices that could unite the masses. His declaration that 'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it' resonated precisely because it invoked an unconditional claim rooted in identity rather than a conditional claim rooted in fitness for self-governance.

Gandhi's Synthesis and Its Limits

Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) represents the most creative attempt in Indian political history to synthesise Ekatavad and Anekatavad — and the most instructive failure of that attempt. Gandhi drew deeply from both

traditions. From Ekatavad, he took: the use of religious vocabulary and Hindu-Buddhist moral concepts (ahimsa, satya, tapas) as political instruments; the critique of Western industrial civilisation in Hind Swaraj (1909); the insistence that India's authentic identity was spiritual rather than material; and the mobilisation of mass political consciousness through cultural-religious symbols. From Anekatavad, he took: a profound commitment to religious plurality (his 'Ishwar-Allah tero naam' prayer); respect for Christian ethics and Tolstoy's moral universalism; an insistence that the Congress tent be wide enough to include Muslims, Dalits, and all minorities; and a rejection of any politics that pitted religious communities against one another.

Gandhi's synthesis held the Congress together for two decades. But it had structural tensions that proved fatal. Ekatavadis within the Congress — figures like Madan Mohan Malaviya and later Vallabhbhai Patel — could only be satisfied by a politics that gave explicit priority to Hindu cultural symbols; Anekatavadis like Nehru were embarrassed by what they saw as Gandhi's obscurantism and worried about its exclusionary implications. The synthesis began to fracture in the 1930s and collapsed entirely with Partition, which both streams interpreted through profoundly different lenses.

Nehru and the Institutionalisation of Anekatavad

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) was the architect of post-independence India and the decisive institutionaliser of Anekatavad as state ideology. The Constitution of India (1950), drafted under Nehru's political direction by B.R. Ambedkar and the Constituent Assembly, embedded Anekatavadic principles at every level: a secular state that made no special provision for any religion; fundamental rights that protected minorities; universal adult franchise irrespective of religion or caste; and a socialist-inflected directive principles scheme that prioritised material redistribution over cultural assertion.

Nehru's approach is best described in his *Discovery of India* (1946), where he envisions Indian civilisation as a river that has absorbed countless tributaries — Aryan, Dravidian, Greek, Saka, Mughal, British — without losing its essential flow. This is superficially similar to Ekatavad, but the difference is crucial: Nehru's unity is synthetic and evolutionary, a product of historical layering, not the assertion of a prior spiritual essence. Moreover, Nehru was deeply sceptical of religious institutions in public life, viewing them as potential instruments of obscurantism and communal violence. His 'scientific temper' — explicitly mandated in the Constitution's Fundamental Duties — was a direct challenge to the Ekatavadic reverence for traditional knowledge systems.

Post-Independence Trajectories and The Assertion of Ekatavad

The Nehruvian order successfully marginalised Ekatavad at the institutional level for three decades. The RSS was banned twice (1948 and 1975), the Jana Sangh remained electorally weak, and the dominant intellectual culture of post-independence India — shaped by universities, the Planning Commission, Doordarshan, and a largely Anglophone media — was strongly Anekatavadic. The RSS and its ideological ecosystem — what scholars call the Sangh Parivar — continued to build grassroots organisational strength, but lacked the political vocabulary to compete effectively in electoral democracy.

The transformation began in the late 1970s and accelerated through the 1980s. The Emergency (1975–77) discredited the Congress and created space for new political alliances. The Shah Bano controversy (1985–86) — in which Rajiv Gandhi's government legislatively overturned a Supreme Court judgement to appease Muslim personal law boards — alienated large sections of the Hindu electorate and gave Ekatavad its most potent contemporary grievance: the charge that Anekatavadic secularism practised 'minorityism' — special treatment for minorities — rather than genuine neutrality.

The Ramjanmabhoomi movement (1984–1992), culminating in the demolition of the Babri Masjid on 6 December 1992, was the most dramatic political expression of Ekatavad in post-independence India. L.K. Advani's Rath Yatra (1990) converted a religious dispute into a nationwide political mobilisation that tripled the BJP's Lok Sabha seats in 1991. The movement's cultural logic was purely Ekatavad: the claim that a particular site in Ayodhya represented a civilisational wound that had to be healed; that the secular state had no right to overrule Hindu religious sentiment on a matter of this significance; and that the 'vote bank politics' of the Congress had systematically privileged Muslim sensibilities over Hindu ones.

The Narendra Modi-led BJP's landslide victory in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections — 282 seats out of 543, the first single-party majority in thirty years — represented Ekatavad's most significant democratic mandate. The Modi government's subsequent policies — the abrogation of Article 370 (2019), the Citizenship Amendment Act (2019), the Supreme Court's Ayodhya judgement (2019), and the inauguration of the Ram Mandir (January 2024) — constituted the most sustained policy implementation of Ekatavad priorities since independence. The 2024 election, which returned the NDA to power though with a reduced majority, confirmed that Ekatavad retains a strong popular base while also demonstrating that Anekatavad — operating through the INDIA Alliance — commands significant and resilient support.

Sub-Ideologies: Communism, Casteism and Regionalism

Communism and the Anekatavad Merger

Indian communism, whose institutional expression dates from the founding of the Communist Party of India in 1920/1925, began as an autonomous ideological tradition distinct from both Ekatavad and Anekatavad. Marxist-Leninist theory offered a class-based analysis of Indian society that cut across religious and cultural divisions. However, over time, Indian communism has moved into an increasingly close alliance with Anekatavad, and the two have effectively merged in practical politics. The reasons are structural: both traditions share a distrust of religious institutions in public life; both prefer state intervention in the economy over market mechanisms; both draw their core constituencies from urban, educated, secular middle classes; and both face a common political opponent in the BJP-RSS ecosystem. The INDIA Alliance of 2024 — which brought the Congress, the Left parties, and various regional Anekatavad formations into a single electoral coalition — is the institutional crystallisation of this merger.

Casteism: Challenge and Co-optation

Caste-based politics represents a distinctive challenge to both ideological streams. For Ekatavad, caste is a social pathology that divides the Hindu community and must be overcome in the interest of civilisational unity. The RSS has consistently promoted a 'casteless Hindu society' as its social ideal, though critics argue that this ideal has been imperfectly implemented in practice. For Anekatavad, caste identities are constituent elements of India's social plurality that must be represented and protected through affirmative action policies. The Mandal Commission Report (1980) and its implementation in 1990 by V.P. Singh represented Anekatavad's most significant incorporation of caste into its political framework.

Contemporary Anekatavad has gone further: the demand for a caste census, most prominently championed by the Samajwadi Party, the RJD, and increasingly the Congress, represents an attempt to build a stable electoral coalition on an alliance of OBC, SC, ST, and minority identities. This 'INDIA bloc' strategy of 2024 was essentially an attempt to mobilise Anekatavad's potential majority through caste arithmetic. The Supreme Court's 2024 judgement permitting sub-classification within SC/ST reservations has added a further dimension of complexity to this political landscape.

Regionalism: A Shared Challenge

Regionalism — the assertion of subnational linguistic, cultural, or ethnic identities — poses a distinctive challenge to both streams. Both Ekatavad and Anekatavad support 'moderate' regionalism: the recognition of linguistic states (as in the States Reorganisation Act of 1956), the official use of regional languages, and the accommodation of regional cultural aspirations within the federal framework. Both, however, resist 'strong' regionalism — separatist movements, anti-national ethnic assertions, or demands for territorial rearrangement that threaten the integrity of the Union.

Where the two streams differ is in how they conceptualise the limit of acceptable regional assertion. Ekatavad tends to see subnational identities as subordinate to the larger civilisational unity of Bharat; regional cultures are appreciated as variations within a single civilisational whole. Anekatavad tends to see regional identities as constituent elements of India's plural whole, equally valid in principle, whose aspirations should be accommodated as generously as possible within the constitutional framework.

The Ideological Contest Beyond Electoral Politics

One of the most distinctive features of the Ekatavad–Anekatavad contest is that it extends far beyond the electoral arena into the domains of academic knowledge production, media discourse, and popular culture.

In India's major universities — particularly central universities such as Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Hyderabad Central University, and Delhi University — Anekatavad has historically been hegemonic. The social science curricula at these institutions are heavily influenced by Western Marxism, post-colonial theory, and secular liberalism. Scholars working within Ekatavadic frameworks — those who take seriously the epistemological claims of Hindu philosophy, who question the periodisation of Indian history inherited from colonial scholarship, or who challenge the secularist premises of mainstream social science — have frequently faced institutional marginalisation. The National Education Policy (2020) and the establishment of new research institutions such as the Indian Institute of Advanced Study's recent orientation represent Ekatavad's attempt to create alternative knowledge-production centres.

In the English-language media — print and digital — Anekatavad remains dominant. Major newspapers such as *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*, and *Wire* maintain editorial positions broadly aligned with Anekatavadic secularism, pluralism, and constitutionalism. Hindi-language and regional media present a more complex picture, with many outlets sympathetic to Ekatavadic cultural nationalism. This linguistic split is itself significant: it reflects the class division between an Anglophone elite whose educational formation is Anekatavadic and a vernacular public sphere more receptive to Ekatavadic cultural claims.

In popular cinema, particularly Bollywood, Anekatavad has historically been the creative default. The secular 'composite culture' celebrated in films from the 1950s to the 1990s — in which Hindu and Muslim characters share spaces, festivals, and friendships as a matter of course — was a conscious expression of Nehruvian Anekatavad. Films that engaged with Hindu religious practice typically did so in a devotional or apolitical register rather than a civilisational-nationalist one. The success of explicitly Ekatavadic films such as *The Kashmir Files* (2022), *The Kerala Story* (2023), and *Samrat Prithviraj* (2022) represents a significant shift — though these remain exceptional rather than typical in the industry's output.

Analytical Evaluation

Explanatory Power of the Framework

The Ekatavad–Anekatavad framework offers several analytical advantages over existing categories. Unlike the secular/communal binary, it does not carry a built-in normative loading that places one tradition in the dock of history from the outset. Unlike the left/right binary, it captures the specifically Indian nature of the ideological contest rather than importing European parliamentary categories. Unlike the nationalism/cosmopolitanism binary, it is centred on the question of India's national identity rather than its foreign policy orientation.

The framework also has explanatory power for apparent anomalies. Why do Indian communists, despite their class-based ideology, consistently ally with Congress and against BJP? Because the deeper ideological cleavage is between Anekatavad and Ekatavad, not between left and right. Why does the BJP sometimes adopt welfare-state policies that look 'left-wing'? Because Ekatavad is not intrinsically committed to free markets; its primary commitment is to civilisational assertion, which can be expressed through welfarism (the Modi government's large-scale delivery of subsidised food, housing, and banking access to lower castes) as readily as through cultural symbolism.

Limitations and Caveats

The framework has limitations that must be acknowledged. First, it risks creating false coherence: both Ekatavad and Anekatavad are internally diverse family resemblance categories, not unified doctrines. There is significant disagreement within each camp about specific policies, historical interpretations, and strategic priorities. Second, individual political actors often draw from both traditions simultaneously, as Gandhi's example most clearly shows. Third, electoral politics in India is heavily driven by caste, patronage, and local considerations that may have little to do with these ideological positions. Fourth, the framework is primarily useful for understanding elite-level ideological contestation; its application to mass political behaviour requires supplementation with sociological and ethnographic research.

These limitations suggest that Ekatavad and Anekatavad are best understood as 'ideal types' in the Weberian sense — analytical constructs that illuminate real patterns without claiming to describe any particular actor or movement in its full complexity.

Conclusion

This paper has proposed and developed a new analytical framework for understanding the ideological landscape of Indian politics: the Ekatavad–Anekatavad dyad. These two streams — the one asserting the civilisational unity of India as its foundational political reality, the other asserting its constitutive plurality — have shaped every major ideological contest in Indian public life from the social reform movements of the nineteenth century through the electoral politics of the twenty-first.

The paper has argued that this dyad is more analytically precise than existing alternatives: it captures the specifically Indian nature of the ideological contest, avoids the built-in normative loading of the secular/communal binary, and has genuine explanatory power for political phenomena that other frameworks struggle to account for. It has further shown that sub-ideologies — communism, casteism, regionalism — relate to this primary dyad in determinate ways: communism has effectively merged with Anekatavad; casteism represents an autonomous dimension that both streams seek to incorporate; and regionalism poses a shared challenge to which the two streams respond with broadly similar institutional strategies but different cultural logics.

The deeper implication of this analysis is that neither Ekatavad nor Anekatavad represents, in its pure form, an adequate political vision for the Indian republic. A politics of pure civilisational assertion risks exclusion of those — religious minorities, Dalits, linguistic communities — whose histories and identities do not map neatly onto the Sanatan Dharmic framework. A politics of pure plurality and liberal secularism risks disconnection from the lived cultural reality of the majority of Indians, and may suppress legitimate expressions of civilisational pride in the name of communal harmony. The most successful Indian political projects have been those — Gandhi's independence movement, Vajpayee's moderate BJP governance — that found creative ways to speak from both traditions simultaneously.

The future of Indian democracy will depend, in significant measure, on whether this productive tension can be maintained. If Ekatavad consolidates into a majoritarian hegemony that silences minority voices, the foundational plural commitments of the Constitution are at risk. If Anekatavad hardens into a permanent counter-coalition built on caste arithmetic and minority solidarity, it risks deepening social fragmentation rather than healing it. The ideal resolution — though not a guaranteed one — would be a politics capacious enough to honour India's civilisational depth while remaining rigorously committed to the constitutional equality of all its citizens.

Ideology, as noted at the outset, never dies. Ekatavad and Anekatavad will continue to animate Indian political life, in varying proportions, for the foreseeable future. The task for scholarship is to understand this contest with the clarity and symmetry it deserves — as a genuine philosophical disagreement about the nature of India, in which both sides have important insights and both have characteristic blind spots.

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