

NATIONAL ANTHEM AS A PERFORMANCE OF NATIONHOOD AND CITIZENSHIP IN INDIA

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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JULY 2015**



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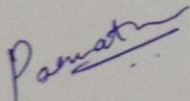
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R. Parvathi

*For Thatha, Shri R Ganesan;
the creator of the best story I know.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The journey of this research work has been fantastic and I would not have gotten thus far if it hadn't been for the support, guidance and encouragement of a wonderful group of people, who accompanied me on the path to this dissertation.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the guidance of my supervisor Dr. Urmimala Sarkar Munsri. Throughout the process of this dissertation, she brought coherence and structure to my haphazard ideas. With infinite patience and a smile to go with it, she listened to our grand plans for the research and without ever discouraging us, gave realistic directions and found new paths for our research ideas. One of the most hardworking persons I have known, Urmi ma'am always gave us her valuable time and undivided attention even if she had had to stay up working all night at our behest. This dissertation has gained a lot from her critical and nuanced feedback.

Throughout my time in the Masters and MPhil programme at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, many professors have been a great source of learning and inspiration. I have always admired their passion for sharing their knowledge with students and for their enthusiasm to continue learning. I offer my heartfelt gratitude to all of them. Prof Bishnupriya Dutt and Dr. Trina Nileena Banerjee infused the masters course with fun and learning, embedding my interest in theatre and performance culture. This subject of this dissertation itself came from a small presentation that students were required to do for a fabulous course on political theatre by Dr. Trina and I would like to thank her for inspiring my minor brainwave. I would like to thank Prof. Rustom Bharucha for an amazing course in the final semester of the masters course that made me re-learn how to *really* read, write and approach theoretical concepts that I had always dreaded. I would like to thank Dr. Brahmprakash, Dr. Ameet Parmeswaran, and Dr. Soumyabrata Choudhury for their insightful classes that gave me the lens to look at theatre and performance in so many new exciting ways. Further, I would like to thank Prof Ira Bhaskar, Prof Ranjani Majumdar and Prof Naman Ahuja, for making the cinema studies and visual studies classes in the Masters course so stimulating.

There are some teachers who leave an everlasting mark on how you, not just gifting a wealth of knowledge but also an entire way of perceiving the world. For me, that teacher would be Late Prof MSS Pandian from the Centre for Historical Studies in

JNU. I came away from his classes feeling exhilarated and amazed at his ability to be politically critical while still being truly unbiased. That was just other-worldly and awesome. I feel very fortunate to have gotten a chance to be a part of his classes and also receive his guidance regarding my field work in Tamil Nadu.

My MPhil classmates Krupa, Devika, Subodh, Samik, Sankar, Debojit and Promona made the journey well worth it, not just making the classroom a stimulating space but also for being such a great source of support. I will not forget the all-nighters, food-hunts and scooty rides that were part of the special moments I shared with them. I would like to thank Rohit, Satish, Amit, and Aprameya.

I would like to thank the administrative staff at the School of Arts and Aesthetics - Mr Diwan Ram, Mrs Poonam Latther, Harsh and Satish – for their patience and support with our umpteen amounts of paperwork. Further, I am thankful to the library staff- Mr Gulam Rasul and Mr Dalip Kumar – for all their support and very importantly, the technical staff - Mr Vinayak, Mrs Savita and Mr Rahul- for adding to the fun during long hours in the library.

My friends and colleagues at Gati Dance Forum – Mandeep Raikhy, Anusha Lall, Jahnvi Sreedhar, Juee Deogaonkar, Virkein Dhar, Bhakti Nefertiti, Manishikha Baul, Paushali Priya Dutta, Govind Singh and Kavidatt Joshi - for being such humungous source of support, joy and encouragement. Each and every one of them has truly inspired me and have helped me grow professionally and as a human being in the past two years.

The experience of travelling in Tamil Nadu for field work added not just to the documentation material but also to my own understanding of the harsh realities in the state. This understanding would be the most valuable learning I would be taking away from this MPhil. For making this all possible from start to end, I would like to thank Mr. Ponnudurai Salvarpatti. His guidance, suggestions and amazing host of resource persons across Tamil Nadu, helped me sail through that amazing month.

During my travels in Tamil Nadu, I met many inspiring helpful people, who very kindly shared their opinions and experiences. Although they are represented here by merely a name, their immense contribution towards this dissertation cannot be expressed in words. I want to thank Prof Thennarasu and Mrs Sujata in Salem; Mr Arun and Prof Sekhar in Coimbatore; Mr Nagendran in Mettupalayam; Mr

Murugesan and Mr Krishnamurthy (Kicha) in Ootacamund; Mr Radhakrishnan, Mrs. B. Jaya and Prof Alagachamy and his family in Madurai; Mr Subhash Gautam in Gudalur; Prof Muthukumar and his students Devakiran and Meenatchi in Chennai. I also want to take this opportunity to thank those who opened their hearts and homes to accommodate me, sending me off for the day's work with a smile and a stomach full of delicious food. My heartfelt gratitude to Sajidabanu aunty in Ootacamund; Kalaiselvi aunty in Salem; Kichan Perippa, Shyamala athai and Alamelu mami in Madurai; Ramani mama and Jayashree mami in Chennai; Balasubramaniam mama and Lalitha aunty in Kudankullam.

In the odyssey of my educational pursuit in Delhi, many friends have coloured my days with joy, laughter, inspiring conversations and good spirits. They put up with my long face when I was worried about the MPhil and knew just how to cheer me up. Although some of them don't live close to me anymore, their energy has left an indelible mark on me. A big thank you to Senjuti, Ribhu, Adele, Shobha, Harsha, Simon, Gayatri, Anshei, Ayshwaria, Joshu, Abdul, Ajith, Persis, Sharanya Murali, Kanishka Bagga, Arushi Singh and Ramesh Babu. My gratitude to Amitava for his sharp editorial eye and slick formatting and to Pujita Guha for finely editing the photographs and videos from the field work documentation.

I want to especially thank Aashique, who has been a most wonderful friend and inspiration. Aashique's journey through his own MPhil dissertation set a great precedent for me that I may have hardly been able to reach. Nevertheless, all the wisdom he shared with me through long walks around JNU, certainly propelled me in this path.

My gratitude also goes out to my friend and confidante Bijoy. Whether about academic work or about life, talking to Bijoy has been a way of thinking anew on every front.

Many thanks are due to Swati and Sukrita, my roommates in Ganga hostel, who welcomed me with warmth at the end of each day. I have enjoyed every moment of living and sharing my life with them.

For turning the MPhil journey and also my time in Delhi into an adventure, I want to thank Peter. A fabulous friend and a ruthless editor, he has been pivotal in the transformation of a small idea into this long treatise. Through endless conversations, Peter made me challenge, question, defend and knit together my thoughts in the process of this research. On lazy days he has been a nudge, on miserable days he has been a supporting shoulder and every day the reason for a smile.

I want to thank Shreya and Gaurav, who despite the several miles between us, have been a source of emotional support and so much love. In all our different meandering paths, I know our journey together shall be long.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family – G. Ramanathan, R. Lakshmi and Rajaram- for their immense support and appreciation, for granting me this privilege to pursue higher education and for all their love.

The inspirational ethos and culture of Jawaharlal Nehru University's campus has been significant in shaping my approach and opinions that certainly inflects not just this dissertation, but also an attitude towards life and the world. My time here shall be counted among my most special days, and I am grateful for it all.

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INTRODUCTION

On January 26, 2015, the Vice-President of India Hamid Ansari found himself in the middle of a controversy covered mostly on social media, following the Republic Day celebrations in Delhi. The controversy was centred on his alleged disrespect for the Indian national anthem and Indian national flag during the Republic Day parade when he did not salute the national flag during the playing of the national anthem¹. Pictures circulated on social media platforms Twitter and Facebook showed defence minister Manohar Parrikar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Pranab Mukherjee standing in attention position with their right hands raised to their forehead in a salute while Hamid Ansari stood in attention position with his hands by the side. Along with repeated circulation of this image, often with Ansari's face circled in red, there were also hate-tweets branding him as a "Jihadi sympathizer", "anti-India" and "traitor". The vice-president's office later responded to the controversy by issuing a statement that Ansari did not salute during the national anthem as he was not required to do so as per the official protocols. Citing the Flag Code of India, his office clarified that only the principal dignitary president Pranab Mukherjee and persons present in uniform (such as military uniforms) were required to salute the flag at an event such as this. Hence, it was not incorrect for Ansari to not salute the national flag during the playing of the anthem, and he as well as Parrikar and Modi were required to only stand in an attention posture.

This incident sheds light upon how deeply entrenched and yet uninformed the codes of conduct regarding the participation with national symbols are in India. The codes of conduct with regard to the Indian national anthem are corporeal in nature, requiring the 'ideal' Indian citizen to hold her body still to the call of the nation. When the body does not appear to perform the function of the nation, it is quickly categorized as anomalous, as is the character of the citizen. Hence, the body becomes the bearer of proof of one's patriotism and unanimity with a national character. In Hamid Ansari's case, it was not just anybody whose patriotic fervour was questioned. It was the body of a Muslim, it was the body that was already being scrutinized for the religious

¹ Adrija Bose, "Why Hamid Ansari didn't salute the national flag on Republic Day? Because he didn't have to", Firstpost.com, January 28, 2015. <http://www.firstpost.com/india/why-didnt-hamid-ansari-salute-the-flag-on-r-day-because-he-didnt-have-to-2066109.html>. Accessed 10/7/15

affiliation of its possessor, and further targeted for appearing different during the national anthem. Although Ansari, the Vice-President of India, was absolutely following the requisite protocol by standing in attention posture, he was required to prove his loyalty to the nation through his participation in the national anthem. It is significant that this incident was instigated because of the negative perception of Muslims' allegiance to the nation in India, and that hence, a Muslim would have to prove her allegiance over and over again. In the case of the national anthem and other symbols of the nation-state, every subject of the nation-state, and more so those who belong to non-dominant communities are required to corporeally prove their loyalty to the nation, over and over again.

Symbols and practices of the nation-state create the idea of 'one nation' in myriad ways. Through defiance and ruptures in the normative practices, alternative notions of the community become visible. These also throw light on the inherent paradoxical nature of personal sovereignty and citizenship vis-a-vis the modern nation and attempt to reveal the portrait of the culturally-laden idea of citizenship in India. These are some of the issues this dissertation will explore.

The Indian national anthem's trail

India's national anthem *Jana Gana Mana* was composed by Rabindranath Tagore as a prayer song and sung for the first time at the 26th annual conference of the Indian National Congress on December 27, 1911. It was first published in January 1912 under the title '*Bharata-vidhata*' with a subtitle '*Brahmasangeet*' in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, the official organ of the Adi Brahma Samaj.

AK Dasgupta, in a historical account of India's national anthem², writes that it was only in the late 1930s that the 'song' *Jana Gana Mana* began to be considered for use as the 'national anthem'. Dasgupta records that this was also the time that a persistent slander campaign against it began with the claim that it was composed praising the imperial throne on the occasion of the visit of King George V to the Delhi Coronation Durbar in December 1911. Both, the coinciding of the King's visit with the Congress'

² AK Dasgupta, "Our National Anthem: The Story of Unfortunate Controversies", *Mainstream*, March 25, 2005, 6–11.

session and the ambiguous English translation of Tagore's hymn has fuelled this debate concerning the intention behind the song. In order to dispel these notions about *Jana Gana Mana*, Prabodhchandra Sen wrote a booklet titled *India's National Anthem* in 1949. The booklet reprints two letters by Rabindranath Tagore to his friends where he dismisses that he could ever associate the dispenser of India's destiny ('*bharata bhagyavidhata*') with George V or any other monarch. In their biography of Tagore, Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, referring to the linking of the song with the Delhi Coronation Durbar suggest that the song may have been really composed for the occasion of George V's coronation at the Durbar in Delhi but may have been not sung because it was insufficiently "loyal"³. Considering that Rabindranath Tagore was *persona non grata* with the British government till 1913, when he won the Nobel Prize, and taking into note his explicit rejection and dislike of nationalism as an ideology, these allegations against his intentions in writing the song may be considered false⁴. Nevertheless, this debate continues to be reiterated in popular culture today and is also quoted as a reason in recent Public Interest Litigations with requests to replace specific words in the national anthem.

Another strong contender for use as the national anthem was *Vande Mataram* written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay as part of his novel *Anandamath* (1882). Throughout the national movement, use of the first two stanzas of the *Vande Mataram* by the Congress had made it a popular choice as the national anthem of India, for its capacity to mobilize and enthuse masses. Having been set to music by Tagore and sung at the Congress session in 1896, *Vande Mataram* was sung invariably at the beginning and end of almost every mass meeting and conference. This gained further popularity following the partition of Bengal in 1905. However, the overtly Hindu unsecular connotations of *Anandamath*⁵ and the references to Hindu deities such as Goddess Durga (particularly in the third and subsequent stanzas), raised objections to the choice of the song as the national anthem from many Muslim Congressmen. Several opinions on the issue were expressed in public letters and articles. Writing in favour of *Jana Gana Mana* as the national anthem, James Henry Cousins, the

³Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, *Rabindranath- The Myriad-Minded Man* (Rupa & Co.1995), 61.

⁴Dasgupta, "Our National Anthem: The Story of Unfortunate Controversies", 8.

⁵AG Noorani, "How Secular Is Vande Mataram?", *Frontline*, January 2, 1999, <http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl1601/16010940.htm>. Accessed 12/7/15

principal of the Theosophical College in Madanapalle, wrote of Tagore's song as "the real expression of aspiration for the highest welfare of a whole people" and claimed that "It has a tune and a rhythm that make it singable with definiteness, unity and vigour".⁶

Subhash Chandra Bose had, unofficially, decided upon *Jana Gana Mana* to be the anthem of Free India during his visit to Germany in April 1941 when he set up the Free India Centre. Hence *Jana Gana Mana* as the anthem is said to have been "Born in Exile"⁷, when it was first played by the Radio Symphony Orchestra of Hamburg on September 11, 1942. The score of the national anthem as it is sung today, is sung largely inspired by this rendition. According to a report in *Harijan* magazine, Nehru, who gave more importance to the tune than the lyrics of the anthem, thought that the tune of *Jana Gana Mana* represented the Indian musical genius as well as to some extent Western so that it might equally be adopted to orchestral and band music, and for playing abroad.⁸ In 1947, when the United Nations in New York wanted to play India's national anthem to welcome India as a free nation, an old recording of the song was provided to the American orchestra, which Nehru observed "was greatly appreciated and representatives of many nations asked for a musical score of this new tune which struck them as distinctive and dignified".⁹

Officially, after several debates and deliberations, Rabindranath Tagore's *Jana Gana Mana* was declared the national anthem, chosen over Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Vande Mataram*, on January 24, 1950 ready for the occasion of the signing of the Indian Constitution¹⁰. President Rajendra Prasad declared his decision on the matter: "The composition of the words and music known as 'Jana Gana Mana' is the national anthem of India subject to such alterations in the words as the Government may authorise as occasion arises; and the song 'Vande Mataram' which

⁶Madras Mail, Nov 3, 1937, pp 48-48

⁷The name of the 1980 All India Radio show which broadcast the taped version of the first ever rendition of the song as an anthem representative of the nation. The recording was taped by NG Ganpulay, a close associate of Subhash Chandra Bose and an active member of the Free India Centre.

⁸As stated in AK Dasgupta's "Our National Anthem: A story of unfortunate events" (p 9) referencing *Harijan* dated May 8, 1946.

⁹Bharatbala Productions. *Jana Gana Mana*, 2006

¹⁰Article 51 (A), Constitution of India

has played a historic part in the struggle for Indian freedom, shall be honoured equally with the 'Jana Gana Mana' and shall have equal status with it."¹¹

Thereafter the singing of the national anthem has become a collective state practice and respecting it has been declared to be a Fundamental Duty of the citizens of India. There are several codes and norms enlisted to state the exact duration for which the national anthem is to be sung, the exact pose to be held by all people during the anthem, and the various occasions when it is to be played or sung. These include national day¹² celebrations, civil and military investitures, and morning assemblies at schools. In 1960, the Committee on Emotional Integration was formed as part of the Ministry of Education to make future generations feel "emotionally integrated" and as part of one common nation of India through policy implementations. The national anthem was one of the mandates of this committee that enforced the making of a uniform rendition for a homogenous¹³ state. Stating that "singing the Anthem is something which admits to no variation in method"¹⁴, it suggested that "to ensure complete uniformity of rendering ...recorded music by the All India Radio should be invariably used as a guide both to instrumental and vocal rendering of the Anthem"¹⁵. Throughout the years, new regulations have been added, including the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act of 1971, which make any breach in the prescribed codes while engaging with a national symbol a punishable offence. One example for such regulatory provisions regarding the national anthem is the provision in place in Maharashtra since 2003, and sporadically in other states, that the anthem be played and sung in cinema halls before every screening.

National anthems, as constructed symbols of modern states, have been recognized and begun to be studied only recently. Karen Cerulo's (1989) studies on the manner in which the structure and design of the national anthem is determined by the varying levels of socio-political control has informed several other studies, through the method devised by her to study music as a symbolic code. While in other works she

¹¹ National Archives, Home , F. No. 15/25/50-Public

¹² Republic Day, Independence Day and Gandhi Jayanti.

¹³An idea pointed out by MSS Pandian in "Nation Impossible". *EPW*, Vol 44, No 10, March 2009

¹⁴This idea of sanctity is unique to the anthem, while any other national song can be adapted and have its lyrics changed, one does not treat the anthem casually.

¹⁵ Report of the Committee on Emotional Integration, (Vishwa Bharatya Press, 1962)

does briefly look at distribution of power in a ‘world-system’ and modernization as impacting the syntactic structure of the anthem, there is further space for research in the area of the role of the national audience and its response to projected symbols.

Regarding the Indian national anthem, there has been sparse work such as Prabodhchandra Sen’s out-of-print work *India’s National Anthem* and AK Dasgupta’s essay “Our National Anthem: The Story of Unfortunate Controversies” (2005). Both are attempts at drawing a historical account of the writing of the *Jana Gana Mana*. *Icon and Mother: An Enquiry into India’s National Song* (2008) by Julius Lipner also looks into the debates on the choice of India’s national anthem. Although these works talk about the socio-political reasons from a historical perspective, there is a lack of investigation of the anthem from a performance studies approach, which is the objective of this research. The national anthem in India, being not just a text but a corporeal call to the nation that rouses people to their feet, demands to be observed from lateral perspectives. Performance studies, hence becomes an ideal tool to access another aspect of the anthem’s history, “one grounded in the repertoire as well as the archive, focused on embodied practices that distil meaning from past events, store them, and find embodied modalities to express them in the here-and-now, yet with an eye to the future”¹⁶ – that is, the future of the nation. Along with using the concepts and tools offered by performance studies, I find that a thorough understanding of the concepts of nationalism and citizenship become essential for this.

Nationalism in the modern state

Since the emergence of the modern state in Europe in the early nineteenth century, a vast range of scholarship on nations and nationalism has been produced.

Understanding the evolution and newer paradigms to approach these concepts have laid the foundation for this dissertation.

Some theorizations on nations and nationalism are based on an ethno-symbolic notion that communities derive a sense of deep solidarity from belonging to a common ethnic group with a long, continuous past, and that groups associating themselves to a

¹⁶Diana Taylor, “Performance And/as History,” *TDR: The Drama Review* 50, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 72.

shared history and common cultural heritage form a cohesive bond of nationhood. Contesting this nationalist approach of Anthony D Smith (*Myths and Memories of the Nation*, 1999), Ernest Gellner (*Thought and Change*, 1964) propounds a new theory of nationalism associating it with the effects of the uneven global modernization. Based on the idea that nations are essentially a modern phenomenon, Gellner alludes to the transition from agrarian to agro-literate to modern industrial societies to explain the consolidation of nations and the rise of nationalism. In *Nations and Nationalism* (1983), he reformulates his basic modernist theory where he emphasizes the role of a mass public education system in sustaining ‘high’ cultures in modern industrial societies. For Gellner, nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy “which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent”¹⁷. In the forces of nation formation, he brings about an awareness of the congruence between culture and power. This consideration of the hegemonic power forces linked with the cultural paradigm is visible in many theorists of nationalism, such as Anthony Giddens, Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson, all of who associate nationalism with the modern state. Giddens interprets nationalism as a psychological phenomenon that captivates members of a political order by creating a sense of communality through the use of symbols and beliefs. His primary focus is on the nation-state which, according to Giddens, “exists in a complex of other nation-states, is a set of institutional forms of governance maintaining an administrative monopoly over a territory with demarcated boundaries (borders), its rules being sanctioned by law and direct control of the means of internal and external violence”¹⁸. Eric Hobsbawm attempted to understand the appeal of nations by associating it with what he calls “invented tradition”¹⁹. For Hobsbawm, the set of invented practices that are emotionally and symbolically charged signs of group membership, such as flags and anthems, form the crucial part of his work. These symbols and practices inculcate patriotism and loyalty, and being prominent in the public life of citizens such as in mass schooling and in the institutions and practice of state, they create value systems and obligations among citizens. Benedict Anderson, one of the most prominent theorists on nationalism, relates the emergence of nationalism to print capitalism. He offers that the nation “is

¹⁷Ernest Gellner, and John Breuilly. *Nations and Nationalism*. (Cornell University Press, 2008). 1

¹⁸Anthony Giddens. *The Nation-State and Violence*. Vol. 2. (Univ of California Press, 1985). 121

¹⁹Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”²⁰. For both Hobsbawm and Anderson, nations and nationalism are constructs and are systems of cultural artefacts. However, for Anderson, nations are imagined – not invented or fabricated, but created. Hence, for different communities different nationalisms are shaped uniquely with their own material and reference points. He focuses on the influence of print capitalism in creating a monoglot public accessing a single *lingua franca* that imagines itself with a sense of “deep, horizontal comradeship”²¹.

In the Indian context, Partha Chatterjee offers an alternative to Anderson's seminal work, stating that “the most powerful as well as the most creative results of the nationalist imagination in Asia and Africa are posited not on an identity but rather on a *difference* with the ‘modular’ forms of the national society propagated by the modern West”²². Chatterjee proposes that in India (and in other parts of Asia and Africa), the nature of anti-colonial nationalism was shaped by a separation of the material and spiritual domains. This segregation of the “outer” domain of the imposed Western material culture from the sovereign “inner” spiritual domain in the creation of a national culture in India shaped the structure of the family, tradition and society. He further discusses Sudipta Kaviraj’s suggestion of the “fuzzy” notion of community which begins to get enumerated in the colonial period²³ to problematize the multiple understandings of *jati* in India. The many *jatis*, or communities contained in the Indian populace, struggle to find congruity with the modern Indian state’s narrative, especially in one ridden with inequality and discrimination.

This dissertation is shaped by this awareness of the multiplicity of community-hood in India created by the “universal struggle for capital [that] cannot recognize within its jurisdiction any form of community, except the single, determinate, demographically enumerable form of the nation”²⁴. The scholarship of Aloysius on nationalism and on the categories of how regions are conceptualized has also helped in understanding the

²⁰Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 2006), 6.

²¹Ibid. 7

²²Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton University Press, 1993). 5

²³Sudipta Kaviraj, “The Imaginary Institution of India”, *Subaltern Studies VII*, 1992, 1- 39

²⁴Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, 238.

systems of hegemony in the nexus of culture and power that operate in the Indian nation-state. In *Nationalism Without a Nation in India*, he highlights “alternate and antagonistic visions of India, challenging the dominant vision of glorified, nationalized Brahminic hierarchy”²⁵, that were offered by subaltern groups. Aloysius’s approach to language as a mode of conceptualizing the region exposes the dual systems of social structures at work. While communicative symbols, myths, memories, motifs, attitudes, aspirations, worldviews, styles of dominance and resistance are produced in and through language, there are also several circumstances when language homogenizes and hegemonically supersedes several forms of social and political fragmentations.²⁶ In this dissertation, this understanding has aided the analysis of language politics in Tamil Nadu and in problematizing the fissures within the alternative nationalistic imagination of a unified Tamil identity.

Nationalism practiced, nationalism performed

The scholarship on nationalism has developed a long way from theorization of nationalism as a political concept or a historical point of reference to present-day understanding of nationalism as part of cultural practice. Identifying that 'nationalism' is not just displayed momentarily in social movements or in times of war, but is an essence of routine and familiar embodied habits of social life, Micheal Billig in *Banal Nationalism* (1995) points out how “in the established nations, there is a continual 'flagging' or reminding, of nationhood.”²⁷ Through a collection of ideological habits (including habits of practice and belief) that are shaped by cultural products among other factors, “the citizenry are reminded of their national place in a world of nations”²⁸.

Billig’s work, along with works that unpack systems of nation-state formation in India such as those of Srirupa Roy and Jisha Menon, have provided tools for this dissertation. In *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism*, Srirupa Roy traces the project of the Indian nation-state to forge an idea of India and

²⁵G Aloysius, *Nationalism Without a Nation in India* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 162.

²⁶Aloysius, *Conceptualising the Region*, (Critical Quest, 2013), 22–23.

²⁷ Micheal Billig; *Banal Nationalism*; Sage Publications, 1995, p. 8.

²⁸ Ibid.

Indianness. Looking into the workings of official institutions of the state and the systems that were orchestrated from the capital city, Roy delineates “the realignments of national identity and the transformations of nationalist discourses and practices that attended the imagination of India as a sovereign nation-state after 1947”²⁹. In the Indian context, theoretical apparatuses of performance studies are already beginning to be used to understand how nationalism not only invisibly permeates our daily lives, but often unnoticed, is embedded in our corporeal habitus³⁰. The analysis of embodied participation with symbols of the nation state, especially in a public space, raises new approaches to understand the complex processes of nation formation. Jisha Menon, in *The Performance of Nationalism*, underscores that “the performative insists on the processual, unfinished and constantly renewed function of national belonging – what Ernest Renan calls ‘the daily plebiscite’³¹ – than assume the unchanging, static, *a priori* ontology of national identity”³². The spectacular production of symbolic, affective and embodied dimensions of state-making at the Retreat Ceremony at the India-Pakistan border as well as theatrical interpretations of the experience of partition become the focus of Menon’s research.

The national anthem has a strong embodied code of expression and evokes immediate response. Thus, a work that is embedded and is initiated from the body will depend on several tools of analysis and thought that thinkers including Michel Foucault and Judith Butler have provided through their work.

The vast dimension of Michel Foucault’s scholarship on structures of power, knowledge, discipline and genealogical approach has informed the processes of this dissertation. Foucault’s work on discipline traces how different institutions of knowledge frame discourses and structures within which further knowledge production can take place. His approach to the concept of power and the possibilities of resistance to power have offered this research the purview to address the multi-

²⁹Srirupa Roy, *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism* (Duke University Press, 2007), viii.

³⁰ “System of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively “regulated” and “regular” without in any way being the product of obedience to rules.” (Pierre Bourdieu; *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, p. 72)

³¹ Ernest Renan, ‘What is a Nation?’ in *Nation and Narration*, 1990.

³²Jisha Menon, *The Performance of Nationalism: India, Pakistan and Memory of Partition* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 12.

dimensional movements and systems of power within the nation-state. Significant here is also Foucault's contribution to understanding what he terms "technologies of the self", practices that "permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality"³³.

Judith Butler's understanding of performativity allows one to examine the role that the national anthem has played in a subliminal consolidation of a power (as well as granted citizens a sense of belonging) and influenced the ways in which subversion of this power is manifested in the public space. Butler distinguishes 'performance' from 'performativity', stating that "the latter consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's 'will' or 'choice'; further, what is 'performed' works to conceal, if not disavow, what remains opaque, unconscious, un-performable"³⁴. The varied theorization on affect³⁵ may be used to articulate the forces and resonances that circulate among the sites of the national anthem and the bodies that engage with the event (irrespective of whether these bodies inhabit the site).

Memory and imagination being central to the experiential affect of a collective act such as the singing of the national anthem, the works of Diana Taylor also are useful in unpacking this event as a performance. In *Archive and the Repertoire*, Taylor writes about embodied memory which, being live, surpasses the ability to be captured sufficiently by the archive. Though embodied memory performances replicate themselves, nonetheless there is a process of selection, memorization or internalization, and transmission which in turn determine specific systems of re-presentation. "Multiple forms of embodied acts are always present, though in a constant state of againness. They reconstitute themselves, transmitting communal

³³ Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the self", <http://foucault.info/documents/foucault.technologiesofself.en.html> Accessed 5/7/15

³⁴ Judith Butler, "Critically queer." (GLQ-NEW YORK- 1, 1993): 24

³⁵ "Affect, at its most anthropomorphic, is the name we give to those forces – visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion – that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension, that can likewise suspend us (as if in neutral) across a barely registering accretion of force-relations, or that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world's apparent intractability." (Gregory J Seigworth & Melissa Gregg; *An Inventory of Shimmers*; Affect Studies Reader; Durham and London 2010; Pg 1)

memories, histories and values from one group/generation to the next. Embodied and performed acts generate, record, and transmit knowledge.”³⁶

Through the national anthem, it is the knowledge of the nation that is being generated, reproduced and redefined. This dissertation will consider the national anthem as one that corporeally constructs the 'ideal' individual as part of a nation, lends a sense of identification in sites of contestation with the other, and by foregrounding the question of identity, also creates possibilities of ruptures in the performance of ideal citizenship.

‘Singing the nation into being’³⁷

Over the years, the codes of participation in the national anthem in India that have been prescribed by the Constitution and law, have become normative behaviour and part of the body's habitual response to the anthem for many citizen-subjects. Through several years of discipline taught in schools or public functions, as soon as one hears the national anthem, most people immediately stand in a militaristic attention position with their hands on the side, feet together, chin up and gaze straight ahead. For instance, in any sports arena, such as a cricket match in India, the spectators, players, as well as presumably the audience in front of their televisions at home, can be seen standing up for the anthem to mark their allegiance to the nation. Social conditioning, as well as potential reproach from others, often make it difficult to be sitting down while the anthem is being played. This is telling of how ‘governmentality’, as coined by Michel Foucault, works, where ‘the conduct of conduct’ creates a disciplinary mechanism of ‘governing the self’ to ‘governing others’. The inherent, deeply embedded discipline in this act can be understood even by comparing it to the contrasting moments immediately before or after the anthem. After 52 intense seconds of singing the anthem, an impassioned “*Bharat Mata ki jai!*” (Long live Mother India) becomes the crowning echo on what the national anthem really tries to establish its sovereignty.

³⁶Diana Taylor, *Archive and the Repertoire* (Duke University Press, 2003). 22

³⁷ Borrowed from Rukmini Bhaya Nair’s article, “Singing a Nation into Being,” *India Seminar*, 2001.

The choice of the hymn written in a Sanskritized Bengali language as the national anthem also raises the question of the complicated language politics of the country. Gayatri C. Spivak in a conversation with Judith Butler³⁸ points out that many Bengalis can be noticed to be singing the anthem with a more pronounced Bengali enunciation and accent. The sense of ownership and recognition this song can lend one group can be compared to the alienation that one who does not know the language or meaning of this song could feel while singing the anthem. This feeling of involvement or disenchantment felt through the language but expressed corporeally through the body and voice, is the subject of study in this research. This could be observed in any of the several spaces that will be sites studied in this dissertation – institutionalized spaces (schools, military/civil ceremonies), spaces of contestation (sports arenas, territorial borders), and informal spaces that are often unlikely sites of encountering the anthem (cinema halls, housing colonies). The responses that the same national anthem evokes in an individual in different spaces are also of significance. Where it can feel a routine activity for some, a non-resident Indian may find a means to gain a sense of belonging, declare his nationhood and claim citizenship through the anthem.

The national anthem evokes a sense of the past, a shape of the nation that was and gives a perception of this entity as everlasting and stable. This dissertation will also attempt to understand the relationship between the memory of a past and its impact on the imaginations of the nation-state. The idea that what one considers to be one's own community is quite varied (and fluid) vis-à-vis the nation state³⁹ will be essential to my work. Distinct yearnings for community-hood are also present among collectives in India that identify themselves as being religiously, linguistically, ethnically separate. Tamil Nadu is one such state that has historically manifested an alternative Tamil nationalism; this is made visible even today through embodied practices and vocal political viewpoints. The state has adopted a state anthem called *Tamilttay Vazhthu* (Invocation to Mother Tamil) since 1970 which is often sung at the time of the hoisting of the national flag and during all state assemblies. For instance, at the swearing-in ceremony of J Jayalalitha as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in May

³⁸ Judith Butler & Gayatri C Spivak; *Who Sings the Nation state: Language, Politics and Belonging*; Seagull Books; 2007

³⁹ BR Ambedkar, in his writings on nation and nationalism, has extensively differentiated between communities, states and nations, in terms of their internal cohesiveness and imagination of ultimate destiny.

2015, a short, 20-second version of the Indian national anthem was played, an act which is against the protocol of the Union Home Ministry orders for such an occasion. That the short version was followed by the playing of the Tamil Nadu state anthem – *Tamilttay Vazhthu* – was reported extensively nationwide. In the language politics of India, where the dominance of Hindi is contested in the southern states, such acts, especially from an official forum, can be examined as performative acts of defiance. The emotionally charged anti-Hindi protests in the 1960s in Tamil Nadu in the shadow of EV Ramaswamy's Self-Respect movement, shaped and heralded the consciousness of a strong Tamil identity in the state. This was also manifested in the demand for a separate Tamil nation, which even as a political strategy today becomes useful to understanding modes of nationalism and identity consciousness through a performance studies approach. Hence, Tamil Nadu makes for an interesting case study to understand how “aesthetic and spectacular representations of the state are not simply absorbed by its citizen-subjects but are contested, contradicted and negotiated through other enduring imaginaries of kinship and belonging”⁴⁰.

The idea of citizenship will be explored through the national anthem and proceed onto other signifying symbols and acts pertaining to the nation. Citizenship is usually constituted as a political and civic category which grants constitutional rights and liberties to citizens. Bhikhu Parekh notes that being a citizen means to “transcend one's ethnic, religious and other particularities and to think and act as a member of a political community”.⁴¹ Thus, citizenship emerges as a neutral entity, “through its distinction from the cultural other, who is measured and found wanting for citizenship”.⁴² However, through the culturally coded act of singing the anthem, the participants recognize each other and identify themselves as upholders of a common citizenship. Thus public collective acts that bind individuals to nation-state projects and to otherwise invisible fellow countrymen during national day celebrations would be of interest, as will the momentary reiteration of this citizenship in informal spaces such as cinema halls and sports events.

⁴⁰ Menon, *The Performance of Nationalism: India, Pakistan and Memory of Partition*.11.

⁴¹ Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Macmillan Press, 2000).181

⁴² Leti Volpp, “The Culture of Citizenship,” *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 8, no. 2 (July 2007). 574

My own motivation towards this research has stemmed from an interest in the idea of the nation and the systems that sustain its structure in the present world of nations. In India, while there may be much written about the economic and political structures and relations within the communities that come within the Indian state's purview, the practices that maintain these structures are only beginning to be written about. It these practices – corporeal, visceral and emotional expressions of the body – that in their routineness are overlooked for their meaning-making power to innocently indicate common identities and highlight differences. Amid the constant engagement between the state's institutions through nation-state symbols and the polity, the minor processes and shifts in their practices as demanded by the nation-state are unnoticed. In the present tenuous socio-political moment in India, it then becomes necessary to look closely at these actions – in the case of the national anthem, a disciplined response to a symbol of the nation-state. While it may provide a sense of unity and validation through citizenship, it also diminishes the possibilities of pluralities. It is to reflexively observe the many plural tunes that are being simultaneously chanted in the idea of 'one India' that I embark upon this research.

In this dissertation, I closely examine the practice of singing the national anthem in India – an act of 52 seconds that is repeated identically lakhs of times across the country every year. Through this, I have attempted to find diverse approaches to this habitual mimetic moment as well as use this moment as a starting point to branch out towards the explorations of the ever-shifting dynamics of identity-making in India today.

Methodological tools

In this research, Delhi is seen as a centre where emblems related to the nation are displayed and consumed on an everyday basis. I would like to compare this with the treatment of national symbols, and creation of new symbols in Tamil Nadu. For this I will rely on parliamentary proceedings available in national and state archives that contain the discussions and debates on this subject. Archival material of parliamentary proceedings, judicial proceedings and newspaper records have been used to understand various ways in which people have engaged with the national anthem in

the last hundred years. Video and audio materials documented by the researcher have played a significant role in analysis of role of the anthem in shaping people's relationships with the nation-state. An analysis of mediatized versions of the national anthem⁴³ as well as people's responses to them could be further useful in understanding how visual representations and popular imaginations about who belongs to the Indian community influence one another.

While Clifford Geertz's tool of 'thick description'⁴⁴ will be used to unpack the corporeal performative responses to the national anthem, field work interviews will be used to eke out the affective experience of those present in the various sites, such as students in different kinds of education systems, middle-aged persons in different occupations and locations (such as wage workers, soldiers and politicians) and older persons. Interviews of individuals who haven't engaged with institutionalized education in schools will be used to find out if at all they know the national anthem and what constitutes their imagination of the nation-state and the national community. There do exist limitations in this method, as the extremely layered personalities of the interviewees cannot be sufficiently deciphered with limited interaction and the results thus drawn cannot be treated as a generalized truth. Nevertheless, performance studies can provide a new approach to study the music and corporeality visible during the national anthem so that different kinds of performative actions and the varied intentions behind each of them can be closely understood.

There are veritably several communities that struggle with the imposed idea of India and find their territorial sovereignty to be compromised. States such as Kashmir and those in north-eastern India have an ongoing movement for secession from the Indian state, with varying amounts of support from the people. The presence of insurgent groups working to realise their separatist demands has also led to the enforcement of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and the brutal suppression of people's autonomy. Years of negative engagement with the Indian state seen as 'mainland' India and a consistent awareness of a separate ethnic identity also reflects

⁴³ In 2007, Bharatbala Productions along with Times Music produced a DVD titled "*Jana Gana Mana*" that contained 24 video films and 34 audio renditions of the national anthem by various musical maestros from across the country.

⁴⁴ Clifford Geertz, *Thick Description: Towards an Interpretative Theory of Culture* (New York, Basic Books; 1973)

in their participation with symbols of the nation-state. For instance, in many states in the north-east it is common for a *bandh* to be declared by separatist groups on Indian Independence Day each year. There are also far fewer public celebrations of national days than in other parts of the country.⁴⁵

While it may have been relevant to explore ruptures in the idea of the nation through these peripheral states, the scope of the MPhil dissertation required focused attention. My choice of Tamil Nadu to explore alternative nationalisms in India stemmed from my own intermittent engagements with the Tamil-speaking state. Being brought up in Mumbai, I have been visiting my ancestral village in Tirunelveli district as well other towns in Tamil Nadu every year. While the decision to work on Tamil nationalism was a practical one due to my knowledge of the Tamil language that was essential for conducting interviews during field work, having grown up outside the state also gave me adequate objectivity in understanding this very sentiment of attachment to the Tamil language that was expressed by my interviewees. The scope of this research also gave me the opportunity to learn more about the politics of language and nationalism that I had often witnessed in the state. This also brought up interesting challenges such as finding the vocabulary to talk about categories such as nation, nationalism and community in my mother tongue, Tamil, rather than English, which had been the language that had formed the boundaries of my academic endeavours thus far. Documenting and interviewing people of various age groups, and speaking to them in Tamil about *naadu*, *Tamil desiyam*, *samuham* and *patru* (land or nation, Tamil nationalism, community and affection) allowed me to understand these concepts more dynamically because of the layered untranslatable meanings that words in any language might bring to us.

Although all the material collected during field work in Delhi and Tamil Nadu have not been used in the body of this dissertation, the attempt was to gather a holistic, objective survey of the understanding and participation with the national anthem and *Tamilttay Vazhthu* in these states. In Delhi, the morning assemblies of two schools – one public school and one private – were documented. In Tamil Nadu, I conducted

⁴⁵Abhishek Saha, “Bombs and boycott: ‘celebrating’ Independence Day in the Northeast”. Hindustan Times, New Delhi, August 15, 2014.
<http://www.hindustantimes.com/68thindependenceday/bombs-and-boycott-celebrating-independence-day-in-the-northeast/article1-1252332.aspx> Accessed 13/7/15.

parts of my field work across nine districts – Salem, Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Chennai, Madurai, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai, Tirunelveli and Nagercoil in urban, semi-urban and rural areas.

Defined as “a patriotic song or hymn especially one adopted officially or played or sung in formal occasions as a mark of loyalty to the nation”⁴⁶, the national anthem is a fairly recent convention, originating in nineteenth-century Europe. Yet all nation-states today have a national anthem that is used ceremonially to mark symbolic moments, such as at the time of the flag hoisting on Independence Day celebrations in India. It is used to forge a bond among its citizens by attempting to invoke the memory of a collective past, motivate patriotic fervour and grant or acquire legitimacy and authority. One can especially understand this in the case of India. In the words of the composer of India's national anthem, Rabindranath Tagore, “India is too vast in its area and too diverse in its races. It is many countries packed in one geographical receptacle... has all along suffered from the looseness of its diversity and the feebleness of its unity.”⁴⁷ Yet in the 'unity in diversity'⁴⁸ plan of Nehru's India, the national anthem has become a consensus-building act that assumes homogeneity. This act has become representative of an identity that is performed, and by its repetition and reiteration, reinforced. On the one hand, this hailing of identity can give one a sense of belonging to a space; on the other hand, it highlights the exclusion of others from this space. At a time in the history of the country, where any voice too loud, any action too different and any person outside the purview of this uniform culture is seen as a danger⁴⁹, this research hopes to understand the sense of validation and moments of contestation the national anthem brings into the lived public life of the citizen-subjects in India.

In chapter one, I will attempt to trace the individual citizen's corporeal and “emotional integration” with the nation through the act of the national anthem. The influence of colonial militaristic practice and the legal codes relating to singing/playing the

⁴⁶ Merriam Webster Dictionary

⁴⁷ Collection of Tagore's speeches on nationalism: Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism*: (Project Gutenberg; 2012)

⁴⁸ As we can summarise from Nehru's *Discovery of India* (1946) and Partha Chatterjee's *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* (1986)

⁴⁹ This is evident in incidents such as the arrest of a group of students in Meerut on grounds of sedition for applauding Pakistan's victory over India in a cricket match.

national anthem will be analysed the role of the state in shaping and cementing a homogenous national character. I shall also explore the process of the transition of disciplined action into habitual gestures and the role of a structure of governmentality in producing this system. The way in which this governmentality works in institutionalized spaces such as schools and civil/military ceremonies, as well as public spaces such as the cinema halls in Mumbai will also be analysed. This chapter will endeavour to find out, through the national anthem, the kind of negotiation of power and agency that moulds an individual into a citizen-subject.

The second chapter's central seed of enquiry is the question of identification with the nation created through the affective force of the anthem in sites of contestation such as sports arenas and territorial borders. This chapter explores how the nature of the space is altered and charged through collective acts in these spaces, thereby momentarily becoming a means to 'emotionally integrate' the polity. Analysing the singing of the anthem before a cricket match in India, we will recognize how at one moment the citizen-subject's body is governed by discipline and in another instant is moved by patriotism (through cheering, claps, chants). With shifting and fluid spaces of contestation, it would also be interesting to see how the paradox of the same song eulogizing a changing territory is reconciled⁵⁰. The play between memory of a lived history and imagination generated through songs (the anthem as well as other patriotic songs), and how they mould identities and affinities with the nation, will be probed through oral histories and interviews.

Chapter three explores the performative essence of ruptures in nationhood and citizenship through an analysis of the expressions of an alternate nationalism in Tamil Nadu. Amid the language politics in India, the adoption of a Tamil song as the state anthem and its use become telling of how this nationalism is performed. The evolution of the possibilities of rupture in the Indian nation-state with constant negotiations in identity, as observed in Tamil Nadu will be delineated. Through a consideration of the varied unequal experiences of citizenship in India, I shall excavate how subversions are performed within the alternative. With a codified and

⁵⁰ An instance of a 2006 PIL demanding to replace the word '*Sindh*' with '*Kashmir*' reveals how the anthem shapes one's idea of the nation's territory, such that identity is mired in signifiers of nationhood and territorial politics.

fixed image of the 'ideal' within the purview of nationhood and a prescribed idiom to perform this ideal, this chapter shall be a search for the subverting vocabularies of the 'anti-national' and alternative ways in which the community, citizenship, identity and belonging are being imagined.

Thus, this dissertation attempts to explore how identities associated with nationhood and citizenship are reflected during the singing/playing of the national anthem. In India, tools of performance studies will be used to analyse the complex amalgamation of habitual body memory, affective vigour and political persuasion that become the impulse for one's corporeal gestures during this encounter. By codifying the acts to engage with national symbols and disciplining ways of being in sites where the anthem is played, such as school assemblies, national day celebrations, sports arenas and cinema halls, the individual is moulded into a citizen-subject of the nation-state. Regarding the anthem as a 'narration of the nation', it would be important to understand if and how it creates a notion of the past and an aspiration for the future.

Tracing the roots of the Indian national anthem as a prayer song in 1911 to its embodied practice in the contemporary period, this dissertation will use judicial contestations regarding the anthem to understand changing popular perceptions of the nation-state. A corporeal act that is variously marked by nationalism and patriotism, defiance and even indifference, the performance of the anthem is affected by and, in turn, forges distinct imaginations of the nation-state and community. The question of the legitimacy of a single 'national' anthem in a multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-ethnic nation, and ways that it is engaged with, will be explored to unpack the debates around who is really 'Indian' and how 'Indian-ness' is to be performed. This will be interrogated through the manifestation of an alternative regional nationalism in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu that is voiced through a separate state anthem called *Tamilttay Vazhthu*. Modes of engagement with the two anthems, other nation-statist symbols and institutions will be analysed to understand how performative acts display ruptures in the idea of the nation and re-appropriate citizenship.

CHAPTER I

EMBODYING AND ‘EMOTIONALLY INTEGRATING’ THE NATION

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form... The nation, like the individual, is the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion... To have common glories in the past and to have a common will in the present; to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more - these are the essential conditions for being a people.¹

**- Ernest Renan,
‘Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?’, 1882**

As Renan noted over a hundred years ago, the very formation of the nation – of any nation – is the result of a historical context and its fulcrum is placed on the collective memory of its citizens who acknowledge and validate this history. However, in this very process of acknowledging the past and thereby the establishment of the nation, there is a simultaneous forgetting or ignorance towards the ways in which the nation continues to be produced and validated in the present. The nation is not merely produced in times of crises to arouse latent national identities. Instead, the nation and national identity is produced and remembered through constant reminders that dot the subject’s routine life in the form of symbols of the nation-state. These symbols of the nation-state are present ubiquitously, conspicuous enough to be addressed by the subject, yet a familiar enough part of the environment or structure of an event. They are subliminal reminders of nationhood but don’t appear as so, especially in the rushed flow of daily routine life. National flags, national emblems, songs playing on loudspeakers in public transport, and even currency notes, are all part of this network of interpellative symbols of the nation-state.

¹Ernest Renan, “What is a nation?” , A lecture delivered at the Sorbonne, 11 March 1882. 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?', Oeuvres Complètes (Paris, 1947-61), vol. I, pp. 887-907. An earlier translation, consulted, is in A. Zimmern (ed.), Modern Political Doctrines (London, 1939), pp. 186-205.

On many occasions, these symbols and practices may also be part of the momentous ceremonial and commemorative form of discourse and practice that affirms the nation-state, and involves the participation of both state and non-state actors. In India, as in most nation-states, a combination of both these kinds of practices, produce and validate the political boundaries as well as its ‘imagined community’².

As mentioned earlier, these experiences, both from routine everyday lifestyles as well as momentous commemorative events, cumulatively add to a set of habits that become part of individual and collective corporeal memory over time. This chapter will consider the Indian national anthem in the performative form as it is practiced in the country today- as part of daily routines as well as part of commemorative events. It will attempt to identify some of the ways in which various institutional mechanisms are used by the state to create and inculcate this corporeal habit. Specifically, the Ministry of Home Affairs’ Orders relating to the singing of the national anthem, the report of the Committee on Emotional Integration (1960) will be examined through intersecting theoretical apparatuses provided by historical, sociological and performance studies. Discipline inculcated through educational institutions and structures of governmentality in public spaces in the context of the national anthem will also be analysed. Essentially, we will seek to understand if and how, through the national anthem, the nation is embodied by citizen-subjects and how it becomes a mechanism, (even an attempt at that), to ‘emotionally integrate’ the polity.

The reproduction of the nation-state takes place in very consistent ways. The constant presence of markers and symbols of the nation-state act cumulatively, reminding the subject of her nationhood and of her place in a world of nations. For instance, one may hardly, if ever, notice the patterns and images that are present on a currency note of each denomination, inspite of physically handling several currency notes every day. Of course, one may notice the anomalies there may be in a given note to help identify it as a counterfeit one. However, the citizen-subject may not consider why a particular montage of images is on a denomination of currency and what they symbolize. The reason behind the image of a smiling Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

² The title and subject of Benedict Anderson’s book on nations and nationalism, that also emphasizes the way in which the communities’ imagination is integral to the nation’s being.

on every currency note may go all the more unquestioned, passing if off as a justified act to commemorate the 'Father of the Nation'. However, a declaration with such a title has never been made by the Government of India, and this title used to fondly address Gandhi, is created by popular usage,³ of which the currency note is probably a part. Examining such structures of the nation's constant reproduction through what he terms as 'banal nationalism', Michael Billig writes,

Daily, [nation states] are reproduced as nations and their citizenry as nationals. And these nations are reproduced within a wider world of nations. For such daily reproductions to occur, one might hypothesize that a whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices must also be reproduced. Moreover, this complex must be reproduced in a banally mundane way, for the world of nations is the everyday world, the familiar terrain of contemporary times.⁴

Addressing some of the ways in which banal nationalism is reproduced by nation-states especially by those that are termed as 'the West', Billig examines the 'natural' assumption of languages as apt markers of boundaries of nation-states, the rhetoric of nationhood used by politicians hoping to secure the support of citizens and even the syntax and language of daily newspapers, all of which revolve around an unquestioning assumption of the existence of the nation as a starting point of their discourse.

It must be noted that these symbols of nationhood are informed by and in sync with the collective memory of subjects that inhabit the nation-state. In its common-placeness, it is not noticed as an oddly-placed reminder of nationhood, but an acceptable and almost expected part of one's routine. The subjects that consume and perpetuate these symbols of the nation-state, through this act, become citizens of the nation-state. Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat write of the state 'as the representation of the *volonte generale* producing citizens as well as subjects; as a source of social order

³KruthiGonwar, 'Who gave the title Mahatma to Gandhiji?', The New Indian Express, Hyderabad, June 26,2012; <http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/hyderabad/article550794.ece> Accessed 31/5/15

⁴Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (Sage Publications, 1995), 6.

and stability; and as an agency capable of creating a definite and authorized nation-space materialized in boundaries, infrastructure, monuments, and authoritative institutions.⁵ This nation-space gets secured in its form through everyday practices and systems of knowledge that confirm the existence of the institutionalized nation-state as the only form and structure in which society can be imagined to exist, with the state “as the great enframer of our lives”⁶.

Colonial and constitutional roots of the anthem

In 1947, when the Indian national flag was raised at Red Fort in Delhi as the beacon of self-rule and independence⁷ from British colonialism, the leaders of the new India, that was as yet cartographically a vague entity, had a great task of construction and reformation at hand. While it was essential to create sustainable systems and institutions to garner the country’s resources, it was also necessary to build a sense of unified belonging-ness, such that, ‘substantial groups of people were in a position to think of themselves as living lives *parallel* to those of other substantial groups of people - if never meeting, yet certainly proceeding along the same trajectory’⁸. As this idea of a “horizontal solidarity” was being forged, there was also the need to design methods to ‘establish a representative relation between nation and state such that the state is the sovereign "gauge and emblem" of the nation, and the resulting centrality of the "state idea" to the idea of the nation, are notions with which few would disagree.’⁹ In his expositions on the forging of imagined communities, Benedict Anderson explains how the nation-building policies of the former colonized states of Asia and Africa can be traced to imaginings of the colonial state through various

⁵Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat, eds., *States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 2.

⁶*Ibid.*, 37.

⁷Although flags of many different kinds of designs had been used throughout the Indian independence movement, the Indian national flag in its present design was proposed by Nehru in the Constituent Assembly on July 22, 1947 and was unanimously approved. This was the flag that was also hoisted on August 15, 1947. For an analysis of the history and politics of representation of the Indian flag, refer to SadanJha, “The Indian National Flag as a Site of Daily Plebiscite”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLIII, No. 43(October 25, 2008): 102-111

⁸Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 2006), 188.

⁹Srirupa Roy, *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism* (Duke University Press, 2007), 12.

institutions/ acts of power, some of them being the census, the drawing of maps and the building of museums.

Along with these institutions projecting the power of the state in defining and stating the values of the new nation-state, there were several other practices that the newly formed Indian government inherited and chose to replicate with limited mediation. Srirupa Roy in her book *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism*¹⁰ suggests that through such nation-statist ideologies and practices forged in the 1950s and 1960s- such as the celebration of the Republic Day Parade at Rajpath on January 26 each year, the visual language of the documentaries made and circulated by the Films Division of India, the structure and lifestyle enabled by the steel townships- some of the ideas of India that the colonial state sought to endorse had been continued. The combination of all these set of practices was directed towards ‘an emphasis on the India’s cultural diversity, the state-centricism of the political-cultural field, and the imagination of the state as an impartial, apolitical and transcendent institutional entity’¹¹. The practice of the national anthem in India is one such emblematic mechanism of the nation-state that can be traced to its colonial genealogy as well as be unpacked for its role in continuities and ruptures in this idea of India.

All the British colonies, including India, prior to gaining independence, had ‘God Save the King’ (or ‘God Save the Queen’ if the monarch was female) as its national anthem. The national anthem and its code of conduct which will be discussed later in this chapter, was integrated into educational and administrative systems among others. It was taught and sung in morning assemblies at schools and also at gatherings to mark other ceremonial events on a regular basis. When the British national anthem was being sung or played, all those present had to stand up in attention posture and remain still till the end of the song. This bodily code, whether or not as yet deeply entrenched, was seen as a respectful gesture that had to be duly accorded to the national anthem. An idea of just how spontaneous the British officers’ bodily response to their anthem can be derived from Michael Hutt’s essay ‘Singing the New

¹⁰Roy, *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism*.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 27.

Nepal¹² where he traces the use and evolution of national anthems in Nepal. In 1899, Nepal's king Bir Shamsher Rana decided that the king and the prime minister should each be saluted with a separate unique song, instead of a version of the British national anthem. According to one source, the demand for the need for a separate salutation song/tune was first raised by the British envoy to Nepal, 'who complained that he and his staff were experiencing difficulties because of the Nepali military band's use of 'God Save the Queen' – they had to stop whatever they were doing and stand to attention whenever they heard it being played.¹³ This anecdotal telling of the experience of the British national anthem, is indicative of how immediate and deeply entrenched the officers' corporeal response to 'God Save the Queen' was, and to the great extent to which they themselves were bound to this obligatory practice.

Although the song itself was in praise of the monarch, the gestures and attitude towards the anthem itself can be read as being a militaristic practice to define and give a visual aural representation to the presence and might of colonial rule – the colonizer's anthem could rouse not just the colonized populations to their feet, but was sacrosanct for the colonizer as well.

In India, this colonial militaristic practice of standing up in attention position as a gesture of respect was replicated when *Jana Gana Mana* was chosen as the new nation's national anthem. Following the official declaration of Rabindranath Tagore's *Jana Gana Mana* as the Indian national anthem through a constitutional measure in 1950, the anthem was imbricated further within the lives of the citizens of the state through several legal codes. These codes declared and demarcated what were considered to be an appropriate set of mores and actions related to the playing and singing of the national anthem.

¹²Michael Hutt, "Singing the New Nepal," *Nations and Nationalism* 18, no. 2 (2012): 306–25.

¹³Kanak Mani Dixit, 'The king's song: The military tune that became the anthem'. *HimalSouthasia*. Kathmandu, June 2003. <http://old.himalmag.com/component/content/article/4214-the-kings-song.html>. Accessed 20/5/15

Importantly, Article 51A of the Constitution of India (inserted by the 42nd Amendment)¹⁴, declared it being the Fundamental duty, amongst others, of every citizen of India to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the national flag and the national anthem. It is noteworthy that the amendment regarding the national anthem and other emblems were made in 1976 which was a period of Emergency in India. The declaration of a state of Emergency for a period of 21 months by Indira Gandhi was in response to what was considered ‘internal disturbance’ and such a declaration was directed at curbing anti-national activities in the nation-state. The decree regarding the national anthem, declaring it as a ‘fundamental’ ‘duty’, in this crucial moment in Indian history, hence becomes significant in how it was formulated to curb voices of dissent within the nation-state.

Furthermore, other general laws in relation to the anthem and other emblems such as seals and flags continued to be introduced over a period of time after independence. These were the Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) 1950 and Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act 1971. The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 (Act No. 69 of 1971) enacted by Parliament declared it as a punishable offence for whoever intentionally prevents the singing of the Indian national anthem or causes disturbance to any assembly engaged in such singing:

The Orders relating to the national anthem of India issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs¹⁵ furnish further details regarding the occasions when *Jana Gana Mana* should be sung:

[at] civil and military investitures; when National Salute (which means the Command “Rashtriya Salute – *Salami Shastr*” to the accompaniment of the national anthem) is given on ceremonial occasions to the President or to the Governor/Lieutenant Governor within their respective States/Union Territories; during parades – irrespective of whether any of the dignitaries

¹⁴ Constitution of India; Part IVA.; Article 51A (a) states - It shall be the duty of every citizen of India--(a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the national flag and the national anthem.

¹⁵The Orders were initially issued in 1953 by the Ministry of Home Affairs in circular No.40/3/1953 Public dated 11.11.1953; Further changes may have been made over a period of time.

referred to above is present or not; on arrival of the President at formal State functions and other functions organized by the Government and mass functions and on his departure from such functions; immediately before and after the President addresses the Nation over All India Radio; on arrival of the Governor/Lieutenant Governor at formal State functions within his State/Union Territory and on his departure from such functions; when the National Flag is brought on parade; when the Regimental Colours are presented; for hoisting of colours in the Navy.¹⁶

Having said that, the order further declares, “It is not possible to give an exhaustive list of occasions on which the singing (as distinct from playing) of the Anthem can be permitted. But there is no objection to the singing of the Anthem accompanied by mass singing so long as it is done with *due respect as a salutation to the motherland and proper decorum is maintained.*”¹⁷ [My emphasis]

While the state declares the citizens as free to sing the national anthem on several occasions, it warrants that not participating on all the occasions when it is declared that the anthem be sung or played, is unconstitutional and implicitly anti-national. Along with this, it is also indicated that there is a certain manner in which the national anthem should be participated in – the citizen should accord ‘due respect’ and maintain ‘proper decorum’. In Section V, the code declares that the State leaves it to the “good sense of the people not to indulge in indiscriminate singing or playing of the Anthem”¹⁸. Phrases and terms such as ‘due respect’, ‘proper decorum’ and ‘good sense’ are still vague in their usage as well as context, where some questions are considered relevant, and the answers to others are not considered worth defining, such as – how much respect is due? What would be ‘proper’ decorum and more importantly, what would be improper?

This idea of ‘due respect’ and ‘proper decorum’ is what is reflected in the corporeal practice that is related to the singing of the anthem – a practice that is inherited from a

¹⁶ Orders relating to the National anthem of India, Ministry of Home Affairs; Section II (1) P2

¹⁷ Ibid, Section III (4). P4

¹⁸Ibid, Section V. P5

colonial legacy, validated through the constitution, and reproduced by governmentality, habit and culture, all of which collectively claims the position of 'good sense'.

It is further imperative to examine some of the clauses regarding the occasions when *Jana Gana Mana* has been decreed to be played or sung – civil and military investitures, parades, state functions among several other official occasions - events to put in place the state's civil and administrative structure. Through the act of making a direct association of the nation-state's institutional structures with the national anthem, a legitimacy is conferred on the anthem, far above that possessed by other patriotic songs or folk songs. The legitimacy afforded to the anthem, a symbol of the nation-state's political authority, increases its power and effectiveness on the citizen-subjects.¹⁹ When the national anthem is played immediately before and after the President addresses the nation on All India Radio, the anthem acts as a part of the system of ideological state apparatuses. In the long run, the President's address gains validation by the sanctified position given to the anthem, and as a corollary, the anthem gains importance through its inclusion in the event of the President's address to the nation.

In their function, anthems may be perceived to be a kind of speech act. JL Austin's *How to do Things with Words* suggests that words are instrumental in getting things done, elaborating that there are illocutionary acts of speech and perlocutionary acts of speech - the former referring to actions that are performed by virtue of words, the latter to actions performed as a consequence of words. The national anthem, considering the larger event in which it is set, may be considered to have these speech acts working in tandem. While the words of the Indian national anthem- as they name its topographical features and finally proclaim its victory in the closing notes of *Jaya Jaya Hey* – the singers of the anthem, representing the collective nation, performatively declare its sovereignty through this speech act. While the singing of the same song in colonial India may have different connotations, the meaning of singing the same song may be interpreted differently in the present for what it

¹⁹Karen A. Cerulo, "Sociopolitical Control and the Structure of National Symbols: An Empirical Analysis of National Anthems," *Social Forces* 68, no. 1 (September 1989): 79.

signifies. On every occasion, what may be said to remain constant is that the act of singing the anthem is preceded by a certain deliberation- either to celebrate a national holiday, the end of a meeting or the beginning of a sports match.

Jisha Menon notes that “The performative speech act fundamentally revises our understanding of the stability and given-ness of national and religious identities. By paying attention to not only the descriptive features of language, meaning and intentionality of speech acts, but also to their ability to effect through their very utterance, performative speech acts demonstrate the world-making and world-shattering power of discourse.”²⁰ Menon’s comment may be alluded to the national anthem in India, and the practice of singing it in unison as a collective action. The inundating affective register of the national anthem sung en masse, then doubly enlivens the national anthem as a speech act. The anthem, signifies the nation-state, is enacted by the national, and further creates the nation.

Corporeally synthesizing the nation

The conventions applied to the playing and singing of the national anthem, seek to corporeally synthesize the nation, in appearance for the 52-seconds that the anthem is played for, but effectively, choreographs the overall mode of movement and stillness of several generations. It also sets up a normative understanding for all the things one may not do, or is not allowed to do to effectively establish what is the exact action that is expected of an ideal citizen - how one is required to be in a corporeal sense- to be a citizen.

Following colonial militaristic practice, the playing and singing of the national anthem in India, requires everyone present to stand up in attention posture for the duration of the anthem. The code states, “Whenever the Anthem is sung or played, the audience shall stand to attention. However, when in the course of a newsreel or documentary the Anthem is played as a part of the film, it is not expected of the

²⁰Jisha Menon, “Bordering on Drama: The Performance of Politics and Politics of Performance,” in *The Performance of Nationalism: India, Pakistan and Memory of Partition* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 12.

audience to stand as standing is bound to interrupt the exhibition of the film and would create disorder and confusion rather than add to the dignity of the Anthem.”²¹

It is remarkable to see the manner in which this law, enforced over the years, has created almost a motor reflex habit of the body among many citizen-subjects in India. The laws related to singing or playing the National anthem are not taught, but merely the code of standing in attention is instilled from a young age, through schools and public ceremonies. It is when such bodily codes are not followed, that the anomaly becomes glaring and visible. There have been several cases and incidents when an individual or a group, not standing up for the national anthem, has faced legal implications or stirred controversies.

One of the landmark cases on this front was when three school students, siblings who religiously identified as Jehovah’s Witnesses, refused to sing the National anthem during the school’s morning assembly every morning as it was against the tenets of their religious faith-not the words or the thoughts of the national anthem-but the singing of it. When a legal case was filed, the Kerala High Court ordered that the students be expelled from school. However, when the case was taken to the Supreme Court of India, the 1986 judgement repealed the Kerala High Court’s decision, asking that the students’ admission be re-instated, as the act of not singing the national anthem was part of their conscientiously held religious faith. They possessed the fundamental right to freedom of conscience and to profess, practice and propagate religion, and as long as ‘proper respect is shown to the national anthem by standing up when the national anthem is sung’, they were not violating the constitution by not joining in the singing of the anthem, and as before they were “standing up in respectful silence” when it was sung. This case²² and the Supreme Court’s decision is oft-cited by judges in cases related to the national anthem and is celebrated as a

²¹Orders relating to the national anthem of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Section (V) P5

²²Bijoe Emmanuel & Others Vs State of Kerala & Others on August 11, 1986 ; 1987 AIR 748, 1986 SCR (3) 518 ; <http://indiankanoon.org/doc/1508089/>. Accessed 10/6/15.

landmark decision that upheld the fundamental religious freedom of minority communities.²³

While the judgement did not find not singing of the national anthem as a violation, the State still requires citizens to stand up in attention for the national anthem, indicating (in this case and several other cases²⁴) that the anthem has an idea of sanctity attached to it. Any action that might change how the national anthem is performed, experienced or participated in, is often deliberated upon legally, and even more often, challenged spontaneously as an offense by an individual or group present on such an occasion. Not standing up in attention for the National anthem is seen as an act of disrespect towards the anthem. Using the anthem as an inspiration to create another song is considered to be akin to its desecration.

A well-known incident, as a case in point, is the controversy that the Bollywood film *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham* (2001) found itself in as a result of having the Indian national anthem *Jana Gana Mana* as part of the film as a ‘surprise item’ (that is, without forewarning the cinema audience that the anthem is going to be played). The complainant perceived this as an insult to the anthem, because of the scenario in cinema halls during the particular scene in the film when the national anthem is sung. It was observed that during the scene, there would usually be some confusion in the cinema hall with some members of the audience uncertainly standing up for the anthem and many remaining seated.²⁵ It is worth noting that the presiding judge ruled that the film shall not be shown in any theatre until the particular scene is deleted, stating – “The national anthem is pivotal and centripetal to the basic conception of sovereignty and integrity of India. It is the marrow of nationalism, hypostasis of patriotism, nucleus of national heritage, substratum of culture and epitome of national

²³Jehovah’s Witness Org, “India’s landmark Supreme Court case upholds free speech for 30 years”<http://www.jw.org/en/news/legal/by-region/india/supreme-court-national-anthem-free-speech/> Accessed 10/6/15

²⁴SanjeevBhatnagarVs Union of India, ShashiTharoor case (Crl.Mc.No. 14 Of 2013 vs Unknown); <http://indiankanoon.org/doc/724972/>. Accessed 10/6/15.

²⁵Shyam Narayan Chouksey vs Union Of India And Others on 24 July, 2003 ; AIR 2003 MP 233. However, according to the MHA’s Orders related to the singing of the National anthem, it is not required to stand up for the national anthem when played in the course of a newsreel, documentary or film.<http://indiankanoon.org/doc/1836522/>. Accessed 10/6/15.

honour.”²⁶ Hence, the High Court judge reasoned that “Any person who shows disrespect to the national anthem in a way, has to be regarded involved in anti-national activity... Every citizen should remember that every word, deed and thought by him has to be indicative of the respect for the Constitution and the national anthem. No one is permitted to pave the path of deviancy and introduce the theory totalistic individualism in the name of freedom of expression.”²⁷

A similar controversy dealing with the conflict between the national anthem and freedom of expression is regarding the film *Rann* (2010) by Ram Gopal Varma, which depicts a parody of the national anthem. The parody is a scathing commentary on the socio-political inequalities in India. The film’s trailers were not allowed to be aired by the Central Board for Film’s Certification until the parody was removed, as according to them, it tampered with and distorted the national anthem. The song *Jana Gana Mana* written by Tagore in 1911, having been declared the anthem in 1950, has evidently grown to hold a sanctimonious position, such that, any interpretation of it would be considered mutilation and insulting to national honour.

This kind of disrespect or mutilation of the anthem is immediately associated with belonging to a seditious anti-national sensibility. For instance, in August 2014, when a student Salman Zalman and his friends in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, did not stand up for the national anthem before a film at a cinema hall, he was charged with sedition under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, and was also charged under Section 66A of the IT Act, for allegedly posting derogatory comments about the national flag on a social media website.

Singing of the national anthem allows a very narrowly defined bodily conduct, specifying that respect can be enacted in a certain way that is ‘Indian’, as opposed to some other nationality. A controversy that Member of Parliament Shashi Tharoor was embroiled in and eventually acquitted of, is a case in point. A commemorative event in Kochi in 2008, where Tharoor delivered a lecture, culminated in the singing of the national anthem. When the guests and organizers on the dais along with the audience,

²⁶ Ibid, No. 23

²⁷Ibid, No. 27

were about to start singing *Jana Gana Mana*²⁸, Tharoor moved to the microphone and announced that the national anthem has to be sung in the American way keeping the right hand on the left chest instead of the attention posture followed by Indians thus far. An audience member of an opposition political party took offence and filed a police complaint, leading to a court case in which Tharoor was eventually acquitted. Any alteration from the regular rendition or manner of participating in the anthem becomes not just an affront to the anthem but to Indianness itself (in this case also lauding an American tradition).

This idea of Indianness, associated with notions of continuing tradition and culture, veritably that of a dominant section, trickles down to everyday moments. One's creative expression, thought and the very manner in which the body can be conducted, is required to be in sync with this notion of Indianness, that requires the citizen to be the an ideal - a patriotic subject, having moulded the rhythms of her body to the tunes of an imaginary unified national character, created by the nation-state but maintained by the panoptic vision and attitude of society.

Emotionally integrating the nation

This idea of Indianness, manifested in actions and behaviour, by the ideal Indian citizen is expected to stem from a 'natural' internal sense of patriotism, belonging and attachment to the Indian nation. This requirement of an innate sense of love and belonging to a wider national territory and different multifarious communities, than the region/community that one has thus far interacted with, demands for the arbitrary nature of the nation to be camouflaged and the internal violence in the process of its formation to be forgotten.

²⁸The original allegation in the case was that Tharoor had disrupted the singing of the anthem *after* the gathering had started singing the anthem. According to the judgment that can be found in CrI.Mc.No. 14 Of 2013 () vs Unknown, a CD of the event's proceedings proved otherwise. Nevertheless, it may be ideal to consider the involvement of influential political parties here that could possibly allow alterations in versions of an event and hence influence the judgment.<http://indiankanoon.org/doc/95023798/> Accessed 10/6/15

This process of forgetting and masking, in order to create a unified people that don't just identify as citizens of a nation, but are also *emotionally* integrated, was a challenge recognized early by the makers of the Indian nation-state. The vast population residing in the region that had been colonised by the British and left to the young nation, belonged to various races, ethnicities, languages, dialects, philosophies, lifestyles, religion, castes and from regions that were distant and distinct. Of course, the topographical features that bound the Indian subcontinent, centuries of monarchy and warfare, colonial rule and the nationalist struggle for independence, among many other factors - had fostered an idea of Bharat for many regions, although varied and undefined. Yet, this was not sufficient to bind all its people to the notion of this entire geographical unit, of which the contours were still tenuous and shifting, to be attached to the land and emotionally bound to people alien to their own cultures.

At the same time, there was a Nehruvian idea of 'unity in diversity' driving the manner in which this disparateness was managed. Nehru writes of this India and of its civilization that he perceives to be vivid and homogenous²⁹, in the *Discovery of India* (1946):

something has bound them together and binds them still. India is a geographical and economic entity, a cultural unity amidst diversity, a bundle of contradictions held together by strong but invisible threads. Overwhelmed again and again, her spirit was never conquered, and to-day when she appears to be the plaything of a proud conqueror, she remains unsubdued and unconquered. About her there is the elusive quality of a legend of long ago; some enchantment seems to have held her mind. She is a myth and an idea, a dream and a vision, and yet very real and present and pervasive.³⁰

Nehru's writings, a year short of India's independence, indicate towards how the delicate idea of a nation was bound by an association with a common past. This notion of a common past and common history that still did not hold true for many

²⁹Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Centenary edition (Oxford University Press, 1994), 452.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 562–563.

communities, especially those on the peripheries of the territory, was among many other strategies to authenticate the idea of India.

This is also evident from the various five-year plans, policies and constitutional mechanisms that were put in place 1947 onwards, that strategically seek to inculcate this vision of the unity in diversity among the Indian citizenry. Etienne Balibar in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous identities* remarks at how "a social formation only reproduces itself as a nation to the extent that through a network of apparatuses and daily practices, the individual is instituted as *homo nationalis* from cradle to grave, at the same time that he or she is instituted as *homo oeconomicus, politicus, religious*"³¹. While it has been noted previously in this chapter that apparatuses such as the national emblem, national flag and national anthem were part of the system creating the citizen, it would also be useful to see how they are interacted with and brought into daily practice.

The Committee on Emotional Integration, 1960

In November 1960, the Education Minister's Conference collectively sought the formation of a committee to plan a campaign to increase emotional integration. This committee, called the 'Committee on Emotional Integration' under the chairmanship Dr Sampurnanand worked with the mandate to "study the role of education in strengthening and promoting the processes of emotional integration in national life..."³² Even thirteen years after independence, various communities were noticeably disjointed and lacked a feeling of oneness, thus making the state make it their own imperative to address the issue through an institutional measure.

The committee worked with the purpose of forming policies and practices in educational institutions that could instil a common nationhood, oneness, uniformity and homogeneity. A notion that the Indian state appeared to be working on, to manufacture this national consciousness, was through creating a uniformity and

³¹Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (Verso, 2011), 93.

³²Report of the Committee on Emotional Integration, Ministry of Education, Government of India 1962

homogeneity in everyday practice. The final report submitted in September 1962 says, “Nationhood has a strong psychological basis and depends on the people concerned having had similar experiences and, what is no less important, interpreting them in the same way. If political and other events convey different meaning to different groups, they will continue to be a source of dissension and disintegration...”³³

As the above statement shows, this understanding of nationhood did not leave any space for dissenting perspectives, and further that dissent could be controlled by maintaining sameness in experiences in a way that curtailed modes of thinking itself. While unpacking the Committee’s Report in *Nation Impossible*, MSS Pandian points out that these measures were aimed at making all citizens “think alike”.³⁴ Ultimately, this report and its recommendations revealed the paradox that while India’s cultural diversity was celebrated as ‘diversity’ by the state on some occasions, the same differences were a source of anxiety for the state as they were seen as a barrier in the nation-making process.

The Indian national anthem was one of the subjects deliberated over in the report by the Committee on Emotional Integration. The report declared that "singing the Anthem is something which admits of no variation in method". Hence it suggested measures "to ensure complete uniformity of rendering... recorded music by the All India Radio should be invariably used as a guide both to instrumental and vocal rendering of the Anthem"³⁵. This was to be implemented in the use of the National anthem in a ways that affected the rhythms and orders of movement of citizens, especially that of the student and youth, who these policies aimed at directly.

The recommendations of the report included orders to schedule daily mass singing of the national anthem, following a 10 minute talk in the school assembly.³⁶ This has

³³Ibid, 2

³⁴MSS Pandian, “Nation Impossible,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no. 10 (March 7, 2009): 65.

³⁵Report of the Committee on Emotion Integration, Ministry of Education, Government of India; 1962

³⁶The Committee on Emotional Integration also recommends the nature and content of the 10 minute talk that was to be delivered in the assembly. A committee was appointed to prepare a book containing 50 excerpts from the lives and speeches of well-known personalities ancient and modern, which may serve as a guide to the teachers to determine what the nature of the talk was to be. Other noteworthy

remained in the orders relating to the national anthem issued by the Ministry of Home affairs stating that “in all schools, the day’s work may begin with community singing of the Anthem. School authorities should make adequate provision in their programmes for popularising the singing of the Anthem and promoting respect for the National Flag among students.”³⁷

The Committee suggested that the regional broadcasting stations of the All India Radio were to fix two times – one in the forenoon and the other in the afternoon – when the National anthem could be played in the approved official tune and style, which gatherings of students of the schools located in that area could all together sing in unison with the broadcast. The report also mentions that instruction had been given for units with National anthems to be played in rotation, for students in primary and high schools in rural Uttar Pradesh, on the unit’s visit, hence reaching out even to populations where the provisions of radio technology may not have reached yet. Gramophone records of the standardized version of the *Jana Gana Mana* were also available to be played in schools for mass singing.³⁸

This idea of mass singing, and its affective quality was certainly essential here. A community gets formed instantly through the act of singing together and becomes aware of itself in this instant. It is also significant that a standardized version of the anthem now began to be circulated, as noted earlier, to permit no variation in the manner in which the anthem could be sung or participated in. It could also be deduced that this stricture on the times of the day when a standardized version of *Jana Gana Mana* was played, may have augmented the sanctity placed upon the song, making its codes almost inviolable, and influenced the transformation of the song into an anthem for the common public, not just officially, but emotionally as well, as the Committee had envisioned.

recommendations were that students should gather twice each year and take a pledge dedicating themselves to the service of their country and countrymen.

³⁷ Orders relating to the National anthem of India, Ministry of Home Affairs; Section III (5), P 4

³⁸Report of the Committee on Emotion Integration, Ministry of Education, Government of India; 1962; 57

Then, as Rukmini Bhaya Nair points out in her article about how *Jana Gana Mana* brought the nation into being, “National anthems are psychological dynamos which routinely succeed in getting whole countries to rise to their feet... The national anthem, once established, seems to enjoy a sort of magical immunity. It ensconces itself as an indelible part of the cultural repertoire – resistant to mockery, to erasure and to contradictory impulses.”³⁹

Bodies disciplined to the anthem’s tunes

The recommendations of the Committee on Emotional Integration were not limited to the anthem, but extended to other corporeal and speech acts, such as students swearing by a national pledge every day, national camps for physical fitness and other activities to keep the ‘youth of the country conscious of the national needs and national consciousness’⁴⁰. After more than five decades of the formation and gradual implementation of the committee’s suggestions along with other laws (mentioned earlier here) put in place from time to time, it would be useful to analyse how the national anthem is performed and engaged-with in schools today.

Depending on where in India the school is located, students are also likely to have varying levels of exposure to the nation’s symbols. For instance, in Delhi, the national capital, the Indian tricolour flag is ubiquitous, on the many government institutional buildings, on the front boots of cars belonging to the *bharat sarkar*, among other locations such as the Central Park at Connaught Place, which is identified as the centre of the city. However, it needn’t be obvious emblems of the state such as flags, but merely understated reminders through which the citizen can unconsciously be reminded of her national identity. Srirupa Roy indicates aptly how merely the numerous beacon lights on VIP vehicles in Delhi and the manner in which they literally dictate the pace and direction of the citizen’s movement in the city leaving the common man with little to do but wait for the convoy to pass and accept that “it

³⁹Rukmini Bhaya Nair, “Singing a Nation into Being,” *India Seminar*, 2001.

⁴⁰Ibid,

happens only in India”⁴¹. In comparison, one is far less likely to see convoys on a daily basis in smaller towns far away from the centre. Although very much present, there are also fewer national flags and emblems that one encounters in these areas.⁴² However, with its aural-register, it has been possible to weave the national anthem into the everyday routines of schools in India, in a manner that all students interact with it. This interaction is unlike how one may engage with the national flag which is hoisted or pinned to one’s chest on Independence Day. The anthem, with its strict corporeal practice, lends itself to getting embedded in one’s memory, becoming a habit of the body as well as of the tongue, unmindful to the citizenry, inculcating a national identity.

In this study, some schools in New Delhi and in Tamil Nadu have been considered for empirical research. The video recordings, interviews and observations from this research will be analysed over the course of the three chapters. For easier understanding, we shall thoroughly unpack the order of events surrounding the national anthem only in one school in Delhi and Tamil Nadu respectively, and delve into some key moments in some of the other schools that were examined.

Discipline, an endemic condition

Tagore International School is an English medium school located in Vasant Vihar, a posh neighbourhood in Delhi. The school bases its philosophy on Rabindranath Tagore’s philosophy, aspiring for encouraging the expansion of the human spirit through education⁴³. The manner in which the event of the national anthem plays out in the daily lives of a regular school day, is telling of how systems of discipline are put into place.

As per the orders issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the national anthem is sung en mass in the school’s morning assembly. At Tagore International, students

⁴¹The saying ‘it happens only in India’ is a common one, often said in jest about the way of life in India, to comment on situations whether they are dangerous, comical, frustrating or even bizarre.

⁴²It may be worth pointing out that in these small towns, one is likely to see more symbols pertaining to that region or State, such as flags of local and regional parties.

⁴³Information taken from the school’s website

congregate for a common assembly on Mondays and Thursdays.⁴⁴ The School's principal and the sports teacher are present on the dais as students of classes IV to XII arrive in queues, aligning themselves in rows in order of their seniority in class, and queuing in increasing order of height. As this way of arranging large groups is fairly common, it might not seem peculiar in the space of a school. Certainly, it is a practical system and an arrangement where everyone can see the dais and the peers around them, and simultaneously everyone can be seen from the dais. At the same time this arrangement of the school assembly reminds one of the idea of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon. In *Discipline and Punish*, Michael Foucault recognizes how Bentham's design for the Inspection house lent to disciplinary techniques that allowed a "continuous network of power connecting the vigilance of the sovereign to the minute regulation and supervision of individual conduct"⁴⁵. In this system of surveillance, police power bore upon "everything that happens...even the little things"⁴⁶- actions, behaviour, opinions, shaping what Foucault termed as 'docile bodies'. At the school assembly here and in other schools that were observed (in Delhi and Tamil Nadu), a lot of time was spent in fussing over the 'little things', with rows of students being asked to move two inches to the left or right in order for all the rows to be equidistant. The authority derived from the hierarchies in the education system, are used to create, maintain and justify a system of order- in the morning assembly, an event that may otherwise appear harmlessly routine, but one that is a synecdochic part of parallel systems of power and discipline. In a school, students and teachers enter the system beginning with the hierarchies already present therein, which precludes opportunities for a shift or rupture in the system. In this manner, discipline in the institutional space, becomes not an intermittent mood, but an endemic condition.⁴⁷

⁴⁴From video documentation by the researcher on March 24, 2014

⁴⁵Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect : Studies in Governmentality* (The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 25.

⁴⁶Ibid. ; Colin Gordon refers to Foucault's writing in *Histoire de la Folie* of when Catherine II's mention in her Great Instruction of the 'little things'.

⁴⁷This idea and phrasing of discipline is derived from Billig's writing on nationalism. "Daily, the nation is indicated, or 'flagged' in the lives of its citizenry. Nationalism, far from being an interminant mood in established nations, is the endemic condition." Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 6.;

To verify if indeed systems of discipline with regards to responding to the national anthem, run so deep, this researcher asked all interviewees if, they heard national anthem being played somewhere (at a school assembly or another event in their vicinity) but were alone and had no one to observe them, would they still stand up in attention posture? The answer was always in the affirmative, that indeed the interviewee always stood up for the national anthem even if they were not being observed by anyone. While this corroborates with the argument about discipline and self-conduct, it would still be worthwhile to consider that acts of discipline are induced by being watched or judged by society. Hence, responses to the researcher, in some cases may have been dishonest with regards to this question. The pressure to be seen as a patriotic citizen of India may not be felt in the absence of another individual, and even forces of habit might not yield the requisite response off the national anthem.

Returning to our morning assembly at Tagore International School, one hears the sports teacher on the dais speak into the mike to the beat of a drum, “Attention, Stand-at-ease, Attention... Make a V-formation with your toes, heels together...take one arm distance”. As can be noted here, the mores of standing in a fixed uniform standard posture are given as very specific instructions, detailing how one’s eyes, hands, feet etc. are to be used. This is repeated multiple times during the course of the assembly. The morning’s prayer starts with *Vande Mataram*, a song that was a popular option at the time of the selection of the national anthem. During this song, all students stand with their fists clenched closed, close their eyes, and sing en mass. Following this, the *Gayatri Mantra* is chanted thrice, with students joining their hands, spontaneously, without being instructed to do so. Their eyes remain closed as they chant. Throughout the assembly, the principal, sports teacher and students of the chorus group, stand on the dais facing the assembly of students, and hold postures for them to imitate. Before the next prayer song, the Principal gives instructions into the mike, “All of you are supposed to fold your hands like this”, simultaneously herself holding up her hands in a *Namaste* gesture, to show them how. “Close your eyes and participate in the prayer.” The students follow suit and sing the next prayer. The question of what differentiates an active participation from a passive one is key here. With the morning assembly two days every week, the students have plenty of attempts

to imbibe the registers of acceptable and compulsory movement, gestures and stillness. Thereafter, the sports teacher gives instructions for the students to alternatively stand in-attention and at-ease a few times, before a polite yet firm “no movement please”.

The educational institution becomes an agent for constructing not just the pupil’s cognitive faculties, but also to develop and shape a set of values and body habits to a uniform “docile” acceptable disciplined form and rhythm. The idea is to create a docile body hereby using creating a set of disciplined actions that are required of the student. Holding a disciplined body is part of this requisite set of actions expected from the student, who at this moment becomes a citizen-student. For example, during the assembly, the principal gives several instructions and reminders of rules regarding punctuality, cleanliness of uniforms and shoes. Further, she also admonishes students for not walking properly and dragging their feet while walking around the school premises. The instructions given during the morning assembly become set the base for the disciplined body posture for the singing of the national anthem.

Towards the end of the morning assembly, the sports teacher says, “Keep your heels together, make a V-formation, make a fist by the side. Look up.” The principal indicates with her hands what V-shaped feet would look like. Thus, parallel and continuous sources of information reiterate instructive information. She repeats, “Keep your toes apart, heels together and hands in a fist”. The sports teacher again commands-“No movement please. Ready for the national anthem.” Some students, mostly younger ones, do not understand the rhetorical instruction and reply – ‘Yes!’ One may recognize such incidents as moments of rupture, a breaking away from the norm, albeit unintentional. After the laughter that follows quiets down, the harmonium plays three notes to indicate the beginning of the anthem and students start singing. Some have their eyes close, and hardly a few move or fidget. They sing diligently, and appear sincere – with a gaze looking forward throughout the anthem and the body still. Immediately after the anthem, the sports teacher asks them to start marching on the spot, and in a queue they disperse.

Before continuing with further analyses, it may be worth questioning the researcher (or any other observer's) own judgement of what is sincere. This allows for the opening of discussions and study of the corporeal mannerisms of the modern subject- such as what quality of a gesture indicates passive or active participation? What quality of movement or stillness indicates sincerity?

In state board schools in Tamil Nadu, the national anthem is to be sung every day at the end of the morning assembly. In the many schools in Tamil Nadu that this researcher visited, there was an additional item of the 'National pledge' being taken. In Mahatma Gandhi School⁴⁸ in Chennai, the students stretched out their arm in front of them with their palm facing down and recited the pledge at a very fast pace with consecutive words almost merging with each other – another indicator of the routinized set of actions this is part of. The national anthem was sung with some gusto with some students holding the prescribed attention posture, while many were in a relaxed posture with their feet apart. At the end of the anthem, the students make the gesture of a salute and say the words 'Jai Hind!'

The conductors of the orchestra

Considering that the education system plays an active role in creating a national consciousness among generations of Indians, it is imperative to explore the role of specific modes of transmission in this process, that is, the educators. Being teachers, mentors and role models for students of all groups over many years, teachers have a great influence on students' consciousness and habits. Irrespective of the nation-state's agenda, they forge their own relations with students, teaching through instructions as well as leading by example. Indeed, this is also evident in the interviews of teachers in different schools in Delhi and Tamil Nadu.

As per a teacher⁴⁹ who was formerly teaching at a Vivekananda Kendriya Vidyalaya in Anjaw district, in Arunachal Pradesh at the border with China. "We have an assembly every day, and daily we have a flag hoisting ceremony followed by singing

⁴⁸From video documentation by the researcher in Mahatma Gandhi school, Chennai. August 28, 2014

⁴⁹Muruges, Interview by research scholar, Voice Recording, Madurai. August 21, 2014.

of the national anthem. At the end we say aloud 'Jai Hind!' and 'Bharat Mata ki jai!' Having taught at the school for 14 years where all students live in the institution's hostel, he says, "My profession was that of a teacher...to make the people understand that they are in India. That was the main agenda of the school. All central government schools have an agenda that we should teach all subjects through national integration." Speaking further on how this is ensured, he says, "We teach current affairs first...Who is the Prime Minister, President, etc. We tell them about the condition of our country and tell them that they are Indian. We teach them about other states and its culture...we also discuss films...Salman Khan or Aamir Khan films that also become a way for national integration. Standard I onwards we teach them the national anthem, national song and other patriotic songs. *Vande Matram* is played when they wake up. We teach them what is the national flag, how to sing the national anthem...how to stand at that time." The teacher who hailed from Madurai district of Tamil Nadu, shared how he first secured this job in Arunachal Pradesh, his experience, telling of why at all a dedicated agenda for national integration had to be put in place. "My interview was in Kanyakumari and they told me that I would have to go to Arunachal Pradesh. I did not even know where Arunachal Pradesh was...that was the first time I saw the map...and found out that it was near China. At that time I was 23...that is the condition of our Indian people...we were unaware of those things. It took 6-7 days for me to reach the school and the conditions are very tough. But in that place also, the Indian army is working, Indian people are working for national integration. It's the best thing. I really congratulate them for their work and am glad they selected me to work for this national integration. We worked for 14 years with those tribal people... those who do not know they are Indian. We forced... certainly forced actually... 'You are Indian, you are not Chinese'. They think they are Chinese."

In this professed agenda of cultivating national integration, through education and knowledge- cognitive as well as corporeal- and by its daily repetition, a reframing of identity appears to be occurring, doubtless with a simultaneous process of erasure.

Miss Sukanya (name changed), at St Cluny School in Coimbatore⁵⁰, shares how she often corrects students' pronunciation of words in the national anthem as well as Tamil Thai Vazhthu, as when any word is enunciated differently, the meaning of the sentence or song completely changes. Mrs Anitha Shantharam, Principal of SDH Jain Vidyalaya in Madurai, said, "Whenever I find a child moving during the anthem or not responding to it, I make it a point to correct them immediately. We have also trained students to sing the national anthem to the prescribed seconds, our only concern is their body gesture and how far they have understood the song. The code for singing *Tamilttay Vazhthu* is also the same. We have to bring our physique under control...body, soul and mind under control to pay respect to whatever is being sung at that moment."⁵¹

The morning assembly is part of a larger network of moments and events that are structured into one's early education in India today. Just as in Arunachal Pradesh, it moulds the young student, who may as yet have unformed ideas about the nation, state and territory, bringing her in sync with the national character. The countless number of times when the national anthem is routinely sung, even in a tired disinterested way, it continues to have an impact and leaves a memorial residue that may be awakened on every occasion in the future when the national anthem is played.

On asking why one sings the national anthem, while speaking to students at a municipality school in Ootacamund District of Tamil Nadu, the response the researcher heard was "": Our leaders...such as Gandhi have struggled a lot for us and for this nation. *Jana Gana Mana* is not even a minute long...so while singing this song, if we think of them and stand peacefully and steadily, it would be a way of paying them our respect and gratitude."⁵² No one in the group, however, knew the meaning of the Tagore's song.

⁵⁰Sukanya (name changed), Quote from an interview conducted by the researcher, St Cluny School, Salem. August 13, 2014

⁵¹Mrs Anitha Shantharam, Quote from an interview conducted by the researcher, SDH Jain Vidyalaya, Madurai. September 1, 2014

⁵²Students, Quote from interview conducted by researcher, Municipality school, Ootacamund, August 20, 2014

It is an important to note the reasons that these students quote for why the national anthem is or should be sung. The narrative of the national anthem begins with the struggle for independence, the sacrifices of our national leaders, and the glory of the motherland. The existence of the anthem, or rather a physical display of respect for *Jana Gana Mana* is explained with an account that remarks that standing in attention posture is a sign of respect for your nation. In this discourse, the rhetorical question that remains unasked is ‘which Indian does not love and respect his motherland?’ While the codes and mores for singing the national anthem in India are taught by repetition, the underlying message suggests that the reason for this is because *this is how it has always been done and so this is how we do it*. One is not taught that one stands in this posture because of its declaration as a fundamental duty in the Indian constitution and due to the several official codes related to this. This filtering of knowledge in this situation, hinders cognizance of these code having gotten embedded as a corporeal habit over the years. When the national anthem is played unannounced, as a ‘surprise item’ and one springs to her feet, then it is not recognized as classical conditioning and habit, but a love for the nation. Conditioning creates the foundation for the logic and reason for this reaction, which appears as a love for the nation. While a citizen-subject might feel different levels of national sentiment and emotion on different occasions when the national anthem is played- even on a day when she is not particularly tuned in with the nation’s call, her response to the national anthem is predetermined by habitual body memory.

At this point, it may be useful to allude to Sara Ahmed’s unpacking of the role of habit in understandings of happiness and transpose a similar argument for habit and its association with national pride. Ahmed points towards Aristotle’s model of happiness from *Ethics*, which relies on habituation,

‘the result of the repeated doing of acts which have a similar or common quality’ (1998, vii). The good man will not only have the right habits, but his feelings will also be directed in the right way: ‘a man is not a good man at all who feels no pleasure in noble actions; just as no one would call that man just who does not feel pleasure in acting justly’ (11). Good habits involve work: we have to work on the body such that the body’s immediate reactions, how

we are impressed upon by the world, will take us in the "right" direction. It is not only that we acquire good taste through habits; rather, the association between objects and affects is preserved through habit. When history becomes second nature (Bourdieu 1977), the affect becomes literal: we assume we experience delight because "it" is delightful.⁵³

Here, Ahmed makes relevant associations between affect and habit, a habit that possesses the impressions of all the history that precedes it and the cultural milieu that coincides with it. Similarly, the national pride and patriotic fervour that might be generated in an individual at the time of the national anthem, is a reflection of the a habit – a habit of physically responding to *Jana Gana Mana* in a conditioned manner, of cheering for the Indian cricket team during a match - all repeated acts that have a similar quality and common logic behind it, underscoring the nation as a given. Yet, this habit is not necessarily always recognized for what it is, but assumed that to be Indian, and to be Indian in *this* way is the only natural way.

As can be carved out from this argument, the policies and practices surrounding the national anthem don't just create docile bodies. The various institutional measures based on systems of dominations and the prevalent cultural systems together create a nexus of power. As Foucault contends, "What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted is simply the fact that it doesn't weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse"⁵⁴. This structure that forms the basis of what Foucault coins as 'governmentality', moulds the subject into a governable citizen.

The performing public: Structures of governmentality

This prevalent structure of governmentality is most visible in other spaces, where the incidental or ceremonial playing of the *Jana Gana Mana*, allows extremely limited means or space for subversion. Some of these spaces and events in India are the

⁵³Sara Ahmed, "Happy Objects," in *The Affect Theory Reader* (Duke University Press, 2010), 35.

⁵⁴ Foucault, Michel (1980): 'Truth and Power' in Colin Gordon(ed), *Power/ Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, trans by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Sopher, The Harvester Press. 119

celebration of Independence Day on August 15 and Republic Day on January 26 each year, civic and military investiture ceremonies and even cinema halls in parts of India.

Each year, Independence Day is celebrated with a ceremony at the Red Fort in Delhi, where the Prime Minister hoists the national flag, immediately after which the national anthem is played. This ceremony is imitated at various levels, in each state, district, *taluka*, *panchayat*, and in every school and college as well as some corporate spaces. The celebration is not limited to merely a flag hoisting ceremony, but extends to a longer programme of performances. At Cluny School in Salem (Tamil Nadu), a private school here run by a convent congregation, Independence Day in 2014 was celebrated with great fanfare⁵⁵. The order and detail of performances, if analysed, reveal the nature or limit of what is considered to be appropriate for a day that celebrates India – a Bharatanatyam Invocation dance performance, a play on women’s issues in India today, a folk dance performance on a popular Bollywood song ‘*Chak de India*’ and a rendition of *Vande Matram* by the orchestra. The closing performance of this special assembly was a performance of *Jana Gana Mana* – a orchestra with many Indian and western musical instruments, played the national anthem, as a row of students facing the watching audience, ‘performed’ the words of *Jana Gana Mana* as is performed by those who are hearing-and-speech impaired-with each word or sentence enacted with hand gestures. Notably, before the performance was to begin, the compere instructed the students to not stand up for this orchestral performance of the national anthem as this will officially be done immediately after the Independence Day special assembly ends, along with the hoisting of the national flag. In spite of these repeated instructions, one could still observe many students rising to their feet, moved by habit, rather than reason.

The anniversary of the adoption of the constitution and the declaration of India as a sovereign republic on Republic Day, is celebrated with a parade of militaristic strength and cultural diversity of the sovereign state on Rajpath in Delhi. Jyotindra Jain comments, “Here by juxtaposing a historicist reconstruction of visual stereotypes (evoking age-old exotic fantasies of a past Golden Age) with imported modern

⁵⁵Video documentation by the researcher at Cluny Matriculation school, Salem on August 14, 2014

weaponry, the nation is projected as an un-ruptured homogenous entity with the past and the present merging seamlessly”⁵⁶. The national anthem and the national flag, consecrates this celebration, as it does the lakhs of flag hoisting ceremonies across India on this day. Present at the Republic Day celebration of 2013, this researcher noticed how the space was charged by the energy and excitement of lakhs of citizens thronging to the Rajpath in the chill of the Delhi winter morning, to witness the annual event that is viewed on television by crores of others across the nation. The heightened sense of pride, harked upon by numerous signifiers constantly evoking a constructed idea of India, makes this a very uniform space. The constant policing of conduct merely by mob behaviour and through security personnel, makes it a potentially dangerous space to cleave a rupture in the idea of homogeneity that is sought to be established. On attempting to play with or challenge the corporeal mores of participating in the national anthem, the researcher found it extremely difficult to remain seated on this occasion, though she had done so several times in other spaces.

In this and similar situations, one can observe how regulated modes of power do not work on obvious and spontaneous exertion of power over others, but follows ‘a specific form of reasoning (a “rationality”) which defines the telos of action or the adequate means to achieve it’.⁵⁷ In a space such as the Republic Day Parade at Rajpath, it would be considered unthinkable to challenge the notion of the state. Any challenge to this nation-state, especially through a performative act, obviously would have been seen as too provocative and also seditious. Through the various practices associated with them, national symbols such as the anthem and flag have been leveraged with a notion of purity. In India, this idea of purity attached to symbols translates to discriminate practices due to it having direct implications on the social inequalities in the country, especially with idea of purity being attached to caste and labour. The president of Karamadai village administration in Kanarpalayam panchayat in Tamil Nadu is a Dalit leader, Saraswati, who has not been allowed to hoist the Indian national flag for the past three years, on national day celebrations as well as other occasions. Having been brought to power with the provision of a

⁵⁶Jyotindra Jain, ed., “India’s Republic Day Parade : Restoring Identities, Constructing the Nation,” in *India’s Popular Culture: Iconic Spaces and Fluid Images* (Marg Publications, 2007), 62.

⁵⁷Thomas Lemke, “Foucault, Governmentality and Critique” (Rethinking Marxism Conference, University of Amherst, 2000), 5.

reserved constituency, Saraswati has not been allowed to sit in her office seat, due to her caste identity, with the vice-president of an upper caste controlling the functions of the office. The mere idea that an individual elected through a democratic process, being a Dalit body is not allowed to come in contact with the national flag, exposes how deep the corporeal notion of purity as well as discrimination runs with regards to nation-statist symbols.

Some of the most tenuous spaces with regard to the playing and singing of the national anthem that have evoked much debate are cinema halls. Being spaces meant for entertainment, their juxtaposition with a political and civic signifier such as the anthem, stirs several cords that aren't always in unison. In 1980, all cinema halls across India were required to play the national anthem at the end of each film show. "This practice was soon discontinued as it was noticed that as soon as the film got over, most people would start walking out of the hall while the *Jana Gana Mana* was playing, often they would rush out to avoid being delayed by the national anthem. This was very insulting to the anthem as well as the nation," says Manisha Talwar, a resident of Delhi, assuring that she had always stood up for the anthem herself.

The return of a similar law in Maharashtra since 2003, when Nationalist Congress Party brought in a law for the anthem to be played before every film screening in all cinema halls, brought the debate back into the public sphere. The anthem was not relegated to being sung a few days in a year anymore, but was brought up to be contested on an everyday basis in a space and context it wasn't directly associated with. At the time when this rule was introduced, a spokesperson for INOX theatre commented on rule as being a sincere effort to evoke patriotism among people.⁵⁸ However, one can notice that this contestation with one's personal relationship with the nation, has provided ground for several altercations in cinema theatres. If one does not stand up in the required attention posture during the national, the punishment for this is swift and immediate – not meted out by any official governing body but by the governing public itself. For example, a young man in a South Mumbai theatre was

⁵⁸Sandhya Iyer, 'National anthem in theatres: Good, bad or necessary?' ; The Times of India. Dec 1, 2002. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/pune-times/National-anthem-in-theatres-good-bad-or-unnecessary/articleshow/29982702.cms> Accessed 18/7/15

beaten up by fellow movie-goers because his South-African friend failed to stand up for the anthem⁵⁹. Bollywood actress Preity Zinta was applauded by some and disdained by some for joining a group to throw a boy out of the theatre for ‘disrespecting the national anthem by not standing up for it’.⁶⁰

The manner in which groups and samaritans seem to be working to channelize modes of behaviour, not inconsequential behaviour, but one that represents a mode of thought regarding the nation, is to be noted as essential. Here, it could be useful to invoke Foucault’s definition of government as conduct, or, more precisely, as "the conduct of conduct" and thus as a term which ranges from "governing the self" to "governing others". Through the events related to the national anthem in the cinema theatre, one can expressly observe what Thomas Lemke points out in Foucault’s work - how the modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other's emergence, through a process of governmentality.⁶¹

During this researcher’s visit to cinema theatres in Mumbai to find out more about this phenomenon, it was observed that a message asking people to ‘Please stand up for the national anthem’ is displayed on the screen in Hindi and English. Often an image of a waving Indian tricolour flag is displayed on the screen. In the four cinema screenings that I went for, all audience members stood up for the anthem, except a few who were not Indians. While some stood in the requisite attention posture, others had their hands crossed behind their back. The researcher observed that no audience member in the vicinity of her seat sang aloud along with the anthem. The body language and the pace at which most audience members stood up, seemed to convey a range of responses- from polite participation to resignation and detached boredom- in their participation of what had now become a routine part of an evening at the cinema. Gaurav Kukreja, a 25-year old who had come along with his friends to watch *The Imitation Game*, confirmed the same. “Initially, when the rule was introduced, most

⁵⁹Adrija Bose, ‘Ugly Indian patriot: foreigner refuses to stand for national anthem; mob thrashes Indian friend’; First post, October 21, 2014; <http://www.firstpost.com/india/sedition-charge-attack-youth-theatre-illegal-stand-national-anthem-1766667.html> Accessed 18/7/15

⁶⁰Apurva Singh, ‘Only she can do it! Preity Zinta throws boy out of theatre’; The Indian Express. Oct 8, 2014. <http://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/bollywood/preity-zinta-throws-boy-out-of-theatre/> Accessed 18/7/15

⁶¹Lemke, “Foucault, Governmentality and Critique,” 2–3.

people could be heard groaning and sighing about having to stand up again after settling down in their seats. It was also puzzling for us as common people, to understand the reason for this new rule being imposed. Quite often the situation is all the more bizarre because right after something sanctified like the national anthem, we switch to something completely different like Spiderman or something.(sic) But now we are just used to it.”⁶²

However, when the researcher attempted to test audience members’ attitudes on this subject, it was found that most people are not used to seeing people remain seated during the national anthem. While on one occasion, this researcher found many eyes staring at her while she remained seated, on another occasion, she was urged by a middle-aged lady, a stranger, to “stand up and respect the country”. Suraj Tambe (name changed),⁶³ working as a security guard at a popular cinema hall in Central Mumbai, spoke about the measures that cinema halls have taken with regard to the anthem. Before the beginning of each film, in this particular theatre, Suraj, is required to go in and ask people to stand up for the anthem in case there is anyone who does not wish to stand up. In the prevalent militarized culture of fear, it can only be guessed what reaction or space for debate on this matter, someone dressed in iconic recognizable garb worn by security personnel could evoke. “Almost every month, there is a small argument or fight due to someone not standing up for the anthem and fellow movie-goers getting angry about this. I have noticed nowadays that some people wait outside the cinema hall until the screening of *Jana Gana Mana* is over in order to avoid confrontations.”

Why does an individual not standing up for the anthem, irk someone to the point of confrontation, during an evening at the cinema? The disturbance and challenge to modes of thought, in an otherwise apolitical space of entertainment reception, sets up situations for unprecedented conflicts. It also reveals that structures of governmentality and panoptic surveillance cultivate and maintain everyday habitudes of action and thought, in relation to the nation and performing nationhood.

⁶² Gaurav Kukreja, Quote from Interview conducted by researcher, Navi Mumbai on 27 February 2015

⁶³Suraj Tambe(name changed), Interviewed by researcher, Mumbai, February 27 2015

This performance of nationhood, through the anthem or other symbols of the nation-state, are taken to indicate undefined yet inflexible assumed categories of character such as integrity and moral duty. The chief guest at the investiture ceremony of a military education institution in India, expressed this in his closing speech, linking integrity as a means to build national character. Stating that this discipline and integrity would help the students become good soldiers and good citizens of India, he closed his speech with an emphatic 'Jai Hind'. Encouraged by these words, the national anthem sung thereafter was loud and in unison, with everyone present standing- in attention posture, fists closed, heels together and gaze straight- just as their military training had imbibed in them. The ease with which integrity and discipline is linked to the idea of a "good citizen" indicates the limited space or value for a "dissenting" Indian.

What began as a colonial militaristic practice, was affirmed by Constitutional measures and is now an unquestioned more in everyday practice, continues to take new dimensions and leak into other aspects of our lives of being Indian heretofore unrealized. A banal but telling pointer to assess the popularity of the corporeal practice associated with *Jana Gana Mana* is the Facebook community group called 'I am proud to stand up when national anthem is played' which has 32,593 'likes'⁶⁴, and is a number that is steadily growing.

⁶⁴The Facebook community 'I am proud to stand up when national anthem is played' had 32,593 'likes' as on June 3, 2015. https://www.facebook.com/pages/I-AM-PROUD-TO-STAND-UP-WHEN-NATIONAL-ANTHEM-IS-PLAYED/314975315738?sk=timeline&ref=page_internal Accessed 25/5/15

CHAPTER II

AFFECT AND TERRITORIAL IDENTITY

The year was 1999 and the Kargil War between India and Pakistan had ended weeks ago. The Indian broadcasting media that was particularly beginning to enjoy a boom that year, reported the war intricately with 'live' coverage of the happenings at the battlefield throughout the war that had been waged between May and July. National dailies and international newspapers had provided an in-depth analysis of each day of the war, at the frontier as well as of decisions taken by Governments of both nations. The Kargil War and its effects had become the main subject of conversation in all households and social gatherings, with renewed pride towards the Indian nation and a freshly fuelled hatred towards Pakistan. It was in the shadow of this war that the Independence Day Celebrations on August 15th were celebrated in 1999. For the strange milieu of ideas and emotions this day evoked in me, I remember it well.

In the housing colony in Mumbai where I grew up, Lata Mangeshkar's '*Ae Mere Watan ke Logon*' and other songs like '*Mere deshki dharti*' expressing a love for *Bharat*, were being played on loudspeakers. I remember very well the impassioned voice of the local area counsellor, a member of the Shiv Sena. Speaking in Marathi, he called out to the gathered crowd to pray for the souls of 'our' brave soldiers who had perished in the war. He recounted some of the incidents during the war, furnishing details about how Tiger Hill was recaptured by the Indian army from the 'enemy', using a language and aggression akin to that of the broadcasting media of the time. Soon after, the national flag was hoisted and the national anthem was sung.

I remember, as *Jana Gana Mana* was being sung, a buckling in my stomach, my eyes brimming with tears, heart pounding fast, and my throat catching. My body started trembling and shuddered as I tried to control my tears which were now flowing profusely. I remember how much effort I took to clench my fists, stand at attention, stop shaking and sing the anthem without a quiver, lest I disrespect the mores of 'our national anthem'. As I sang, my brain relayed a montage of several images and sounds – some were from my own memory, some weren't. In a random order, these were some of them: the image of Mahatma Gandhi from my Class II Hindi reading book, the image of a soldier at the Siachen glacier from AR Rahman's music video of

Vande Mataram, my mind edited out the man in the video and replaced it with my Uncle's face who had been posted there during the war. An image of Barkha Dutt, a female journalist reporting live from the war as a BM 21-Grad was launching rockets in the background. (At the age of 9, I was already aspiring to become a journalist with Barkha Dutt as my idol.) A photograph of my grandfather as a young boy with his family in Indonesia, before they left for India a few days prior the starting of World War II. People dressed in attires from various parts of India, holding hands to form a contour of the Indian map, as was depicted in the aforementioned AR Rahman music video. A popular song from the film *Border* (1997), a film about the Indo-Pakistan War in 1971. With all these images and sounds running through my mind, I had continued to sing along with the others. I now had a strange intensity in my need to display the association that I felt with the others around me, which I professed by singing yet louder "...*Jaya Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey*". Hiding my tears, I stood in queue for the chocolates that were being distributed to all children - a reward for our patriotism, and the loudspeaker switched back on to playing more songs of *desh bhakti*.

Identifying affect

The spontaneous nexus of images and memories that acted as a force that *moved* me to tears, a force that was visceral, cerebral, emotional, corporeal, visual yet intangible, intense yet ephemeral-may be identified as affect. Affect, at its most anthropomorphic, is the name we give to those forces-visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion-that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension, that can likewise suspend us (as if in neutral) across a barely registering accretion of force-relations, or that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world's apparent intractability.¹In this case, the affect created, sensed, transferred and resonated, indicates a sense-relation to the nation, and it springs from a relationship with a symbol or a system of symbols representing the nation-state.

¹Melissa Gregg and J Seigworth, Gregory, eds., *The Affect Theory Reader* (Duke University Press, 2010). , 1

This chapter's central seed of enquiry is the question of identification with the nation created through the affective force of the national anthem, primarily in sites of contestation, such as sports arenas and territorial borders, where the in-group awareness is heightened on being brought into contact with the out-group. The play between memory of a lived history and imagination, both of which are generated through songs (such as the anthem and other patriotic songs), and how they mould identities and affinities with the nation, will also be explored. This amalgamation of memory, imagination and identification with various apparatuses of the nation-state, form varied interpretations of space and border demarcation, ultimately leading to different territorial identities amongst people who are all said to be 'Indian'. I will seek to understand these transitions between borders of identification in this chapter, through an analysis of the engagement with the national anthem.

The numerous interviews and conversations I had through the course of this research brought to fore that almost everyone has had atleastone memorable incident in their lives involving the national anthem, similar to my own - An incident that displayed their ties to the nation and simultaneously forged it, a moment where they felt pulls and tugs towards the mass of land they hadn't seen, and a bond with the group of people they did not know. They described feeling a force that willed them to act and move their body in a certain way, and evoked postcards of images and markers that may have been resting in their subconscious minds. If, in these moments, they had challenged these interpellations of the nation towards their body or mind, due to any ideological differences, the conflict thus generated, had once again reflected on their corporeal gestures and revealed their complicated tie to the nation.

Although it is often manifested corporeally, reading or identifying affect is a challenge. In a short mere 52-second long occurrence that has a set of codified permitted actions, it is difficult to visually capture the liminal responses, such as a slight twitch in the muscles, a jerk of the feet, a startled eye and even a racing heart. Hence, this chapter will also attempt to identify some aspects of the event of the national anthem as performance and find tools through interviews to read affect in individual as well as the collective performance. Some of the interviews would be unpacking the subjective modalities of the act of singing the anthem, the act of merely hearing it, the act of participating in this act as part of a larger group as well as

isolating oneself and displaying one's separateness from a group.

As is reflected in the above incident, affect is influenced by the interplay of different sensory modalities with memory. While memory influences how events and environments are experienced, they simultaneously create affective forces that further influence events and responses that add to our collection of memory. As Anna Gibbs notes in *After Affect*, "These emergent constellations of experience operate largely outside of awareness but form an experiential matrix for ongoing affective responses to and constructions of the world."² In the case of the national anthem, the affect created is influenced by not merely the memory associated with singing the anthem itself but also associations with other markers of the nation-state. As may be observed from the personal sensorial account of the national anthem described at the beginning of this chapter, the act of participating in the national anthem becomes a hinge upon which memory is lived and further recreated. These associations are part of a kind of 'memory museum' that becomes a passage to connect the present with the past, and ultimately influences the present. Memory, being subjective and present-oriented with a reflection on the past, is veiled by a 'solace of time' to transact lost memories. This transaction recreates and reproduces further memories.³ This memory has surplus meaning that is subjective, beyond and added to the historical value of the event of the National anthem itself, hence lending affective intensity to this event.

Diana Taylor states elegantly in *Performance and/as History* how "performed, embodied practices make the 'past' available as a political resource in the present by simultaneously enabling several complicated, multi-layered processes. ... a performance may be about something that helps us understand the past, and it may reactivate issues or scenarios from the past by staging them in the present. But performance does more than that. The physical mechanics of staging can also keep alive an organizational infrastructure, a practice or know-how, an episteme, and a politics that goes beyond the explicit topic"⁴. Thus the affect produced in the national anthem, which is essentially a declaration of political sovereignty or allegiance, is a layered dynamic one, memories of the past and the experience of the present

²Anna Gibbs, "After Affect," in *The Affect Theory Reader* (Duke University Press, 2010), 196.

³Notes from a class by Sujith Puranthil during the course titled *Visuality* at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

⁴Diana Taylor, "Performance and/as History," *TDR: The Drama Review* 50, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 69.

ricocheting against one another.

Affect could be experienced and reflected varyingly with different aspects appearing and dominating in each situation. It is a physical manifestation of affect that Sukanya (name changed), a teacher at Cluny Matriculation School, in Salem, Tamil Nadu, alludes to while speaking of her attachment to India's National Anthem *Jana Gana Mana*, "I still get goosebumps whenever I sing the National Anthem."⁵ The terms vary but this is affect as emotion or feeling, the folding of broader affective intensities into the nervous system, eventually to become recognizable as the register, eventually the representation, of the ongoing folding of self and world, as the person. Emotion involves physical states (heat and increased heartbeat in anger, trembling in terror).⁶

Here, the affect that Sukanya experiences is a personal familiar emotion that changes the physical state of her being. She associates the sensation of 'goosebumps' as a register that is evoked as a result of her bond with the Indian national anthem or the Indian nation. This is amplified by her memory of singing the national anthem on several similar occasions in the past. Sukanya also shares some of the visual images and associations that come to her mind when she sings *Jana Gana Mana*. "I get visuals of Vindhya Himachal Ganga...how rich our country is...why do we feel the need to move to other countries? Our country is very rich in tradition and culture. 'Unity and Diversity' - for many it is just a proverb, but here, we are living examples."⁷ The spontaneously evoked visual images related to words that together make the anthem, create a mental topography and cartography of the land and nation. This is also evident when Sukanya speaks of the Tamil anthem [discussed in detail in chapter three]. "When it comes to the Tamil anthem, we understand every bit of it as it is the local language, so we are able to relate to it slightly better. Whatever it is we are Indians, but when we sing the *Tamilttay Vazhthu* we are able to relate to it. Every Wednesday when we sing that song, we remember how rich our land is, and how good our culture is...it crosses my mind everytime. Nevertheless, both songs equally move me in their own way. When you ask whom do you like the more - father or

⁵ Mrs Sukanya (name changed), (Computer Science teacher at Cluny Matriculation School, Salem, Tamil Nadu) in discussion with the researcher, August 2014

⁶ Lone Bertelsen and Andrew Murphie, "An Ethics of Everyday Infinities and Powers: Felix Guattari on Affect and the Refrain," in *The Affect Theory Reader* (Duke University Press, 2010), 140.

⁷ Mrs Sukanya (name changed), August 2014

mother? A comparison between *Tamilttay Vazhthu* and *Jana Gana Mana* is like that (sic).”⁸ An association of the two anthems to personal relationships is reflective of how in a void, these songs are not mere songs of praise but ones that the citizenry grow to form a bond with- associating them with familial relations.

It is contemplating this very emotional attachment and response to the anthem that BharatBala Productions produced “*Jana Gana Mana*” –a commercial DVD set of 25 films that featured the most prominent Indian classical musicians singing the Indian national anthem with each musical maestro belongs to a specific school of music, a *gharana*. It may be noted that these are all classical singers and musicians, and the folk and popular traditions of India are not represented. At a time when a process of classicization is visibly taking place in the dance and musical forms of India, such choices may not be overlooked as lacking any intention or consequence. Each video is preceded by details such as the musician having been given honorary awards by the Government of India such as a *Padma Vibhushan* or *Padma Shree*. Such information grants recognition to what are merely representations and appears to justify the choices made by implying that the artists featured in the DVD presentation are not just any artists of this nation, they are those that are recognized and awarded by the nation’s government. Throughout the videos on the DVD, the anthem is accompanied by images of these singers along with the national flag. There are frequent and exclusive depictions of the Indian defense forces hoisting and saluting the national flag. Interestingly, the artists take liberty with the pace and tune of the anthem, adding their own nuance (referred to as *harkat* in Hindustani classical music) to it. Their posture, not held in attention during the anthem, is relaxed; appearing akin to how one would appear while singing an enjoyable tune, with appreciation and hand movements. Bharatbalam who initiated the idea, shares his intentions behind the idea for this production, clearly articulating the affective and emotional appeal of the anthem. - “The idea of the musical production was born out of the fact that we couldn’t find a cassette or CD (of the national anthem) that was emotionally endearing. It’s a vast country with such diverse classical, folk and musical talent available, but we still didn’t have the national anthem produced with the depth of

⁸Ibid

music which inspires the nation.”⁹

However, this does not discount that the citizenry is an unequal one, with some dominant groups benefiting from greater privileges, respect, better lifestyle and access to opportunities. From the wide political spectrum thus created, also emerge other affects sparked off by the anthem. One such person, who formerly headed an NGO for Dalit rights and a self-claimed “ex-communist”, Balachandar expressed that in his days as a communist, he felt a wave of disgust and aversion¹⁰ through him when he would hear the national anthem. Due to a sense of distrust and unhappiness with the nation, he was averse to institution-established symbols of the nation-state, and hence would not stand up during the national anthem.¹¹

Another teacher in Madurai, Jaya, who has also especially been working for the empowerment of Dalit women, spoke about her association with the Indian national anthem. Although she has been singing *Jana Gana Mana* for years, she still hasn’t thought about what the anthem’s words mean. Singing the song for years has created an attachment but this is marginal as compared to songs about the struggles of a poor Dalit woman in a rural area, which she claimed, truly revitalizes her.¹²

Siva (name changed), a professor in the Tamil Department in the Government Arts College, Sivagangai district (Tamil Nadu) shares a similar vein of ignorance regarding the national anthem. He says, “The music is very grand and listening to it makes the hair on my skin stand on end, yet I am not sure what it means.” Siva’s colleague Kailash (name changed), a professor in the same department, expressed his active dissent to the Indian national anthem, saying, “Tamil *desiyam* (nationalism) is the true nationalism, my language, my mother tongue is Tamil. Tamil stirs my emotion and spirit...and my emotion cannot change or shift easily. On any occasion when the national anthem is played, I either walk out or just stand up without any instinctive

⁹Bharatbala Productions, “*Jana Gan Mana*” 2006

¹⁰The word Balachandar used here was the tamil word ‘verruppu’, a word that emanates a sense of mental/emotional antipathy that even permeated into his body language. Although he said during the interview in August 2014, that he no longer believed in Leftist politics, he spoke of the anthem and the state in an angry tone with his fists clenched.

¹¹Balachandar (name changed) (Ex-communist and Former head of NGO for Dalit Rights), Quote from an interview with the researcher, Madurai. August 30, 2015

¹²Jaya (Class VIII-XII teacher, Government school, Madurai), Quote from an interview with the researcher, Madurai. August 30, 2014

emotion or affective reflection, never joining to sing along.”¹³

In order to further understand affect, it is essential to examine the affective tremor originating from the singing of the anthem together and in unison. On most occasions, anthems are sung by large groups in unison as a collective. Section III of the Ministry of Home Affairs’ ‘Orders relating to the National anthem of India’ is dedicated to codes regarding ‘mass singing of the anthem’. It declares the various occasions when the full version of the anthem shall be played, and very specifically had to be accompanied by mass singing. The anthem had to be sung en mass on the unfurling of the national flag, on cultural occasions or ceremonial functions other than parades. The orders suggest that “this could be arranged by having a choir or adequate size, suitably stationed, which would be trained to coordinate its singing with the band etc” and further that “there should be an adequate public audition system so that the gathering in various enclosures can sing in unison with the choir”¹⁴. It cannot be ignored that the affective impact of such mass singing, especially in the case of the anthem, is greater than a solitary voice singing a song. Hence, mass singing the national anthem in unison, to sing a declaration of an ‘imagined community’ as one voice, may have been constructive in the notion of “unity in diversity”. In this unison, there is little space for dissent and floundering, faltering and silent tongues are all over-powered by the dominant tune.

Performing the nation in the sports arena

One such space that the nation through the national anthem is evoked, is in the sports arena, the dynamics of which the forthcoming section explores. In 1969, El Salvador and Honduras fought the Hundred-hour War that lasted for four days and cumulatively led to the loss of hundreds of lives on either side. Although the reasons behind the war were long-standing economic and political differences, this war, also known as the Football War¹⁵, was sparked off by the goings on at a football match

¹³Prof Siva and Prof Kailash (names changed on request) (Teachers at the Tamil Department, Government Arts College, Sivagangai). Quotes from interviews with the researcher, Sivagangai. August 31, 2014

¹⁴Section III, (1), (i); ‘Orders related to the national anthem of India’; Ministry of Home Affairs

¹⁵Vincent Cable; “The Football War and the Central American Common Market” in *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* Vol. 45, No. 4 (Oct., 1969) : 6.

between the two countries at the North American qualifying round for the 1970 FIFA World Cup.

Such is the power of sports and its ability to forge and ignite an awareness of belonging to a nation, that not only has it led to a war such as the one mentioned between Honduras and El Salvador, but also allowed many nation-states and its people to largely invent their identity around the sporting culture in their country. Within Indian sports itself, where cricket dominates, there are several iconic moments such as the 1983 cricket World Cup victory and that one iconic photograph of Kapil Dev with the trophy that is recalled and relived by even those who were not born at the time. Not only does the memory of a specific match of the sport revolve around the victory or loss that the country encountered, but also goes beyond, to the mass spectacle, affect and emotional arousal felt en masse by the spectators. This kind of spectacle is not just created by the action and antics of the sportspersons on the field, but also by the spectators. In time, all sports and tournaments have incorporated certain traditions as part of the game, involving the spectators as well as players, that unfurl sentiments and an affect within everyone in such a way that it instigates them to respond to it and further create and be part of the spectacle. This spectacle, that returns to be entrenched in the individual and collective memories of the viewers, creates associations for future events.

Those who have ever been to a national sports event, especially that of cricket in India, or football in any part of the world, will be able to testify the thrill and energy one feels in the stadium. Since those early years, this simultaneity of experience has been perfected through the televised broadcast of sporting competitions such as the European Championships - ‘media events’ that ‘*electrify very large audiences* — a nation, several nations, or the world. They are gripping, enthralling ... They are shared experiences, uniting viewers with one another and with their societies’. The viewers’ communal belonging is not confined to those assembled in cafés, bars, and dorm lounges, but extends via the airwaves to others tuned into the same broadcasts at the same time.¹⁶

¹⁶Jon E Fox; “Consuming the Nation: Holidays, sports, and the production of collective belonging” in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, March 2006, 29(2) : 16

These lived moments and actions of the sport are part of memories that are relived in future events and these are also moments when a latent imagination of the community one belongs to is hailed. These actions by being habitual in nature are essentially repertoires and can be related to Diana Taylor's writings on embodied memory. In *Archive and the Repertoire*, Taylor writes of the repertoire as "embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing- in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, non-reproducible knowledge. Repertoire, etymologically 'a treasury, an inventory' also allows for individual agency, referring also to 'the finder, discoverer', and meaning 'to find out'. The repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by 'being there', being a part of the transmission. As opposed to the supposedly stable objects in the archive, the actions that are the repertoire do not remain the same. The repertoire both keeps and transforms choreographies of meaning."¹⁷

The repertoire of the sports arena especially in international sporting games demands recall to eke out their performative impulsive. At the beginning of the Cricket World Cup, each team walks into the stadium with the captain wielding the flag of the respective nation. During football and cricket matches, large flags of both the participating nations are displayed prior to the match. There is also a ceremony when the national anthems of the two participating nations are played, sung and performed by the team players and the spectators in the venue. Even during the match, there are several moments such as sixes, fours, 'out', 'not-out' in cricket and a goal or foul in football. These are all moments when emotions are riding high and one can see many kinds of performative acts and responses, more often than not expressing a consciousness of nationhood, each of them worthy of detailed analysis.

During many sports matches such as the Cricket World Cup Final between India and Pakistan in 2011, the players enter the stadium ground holding the hand of one child each. Already at such a momentous instant, when each spectator is living out the present moment that is heavy with excitement and suspense, there is also possibly a passing memory of a wish to be at the stature of the sports persons. Representing the nation, selected from several thousands or millions, cheered upon by a huge crowd, in

¹⁷Diana Taylor, *Archive and the Repertoire* (Duke University Press, 2003), 20.

that moment, the sports player becomes a desired body. At this point, there is also transference of ideals and feelings of pride and camaraderie, perhaps even a wish to suitably represent the nation and make one's presence felt in that instant. The spectating body does this by engaging with national symbols available to him/her at that point such as the anthem and the flag.

Some spectators can be seen vehemently waving the flags in their hand. Others might even have part of their faces or bodies painted with the colours of their national flag. Sudhir Kumar Chaudhary who attends every cricket match played by India with his entire body painted in the Indian tri-colour, with 'Tendulkar' written across his back, waves a huge Indian flag, as he cheers for the players during the matches. The politics of the body within Indian society that deems it disrespectful to wear the Indian tricolour printed on a bikini or on any clothing such that the tricolour is near the feet¹⁸, would be another allied debate worth exploring.

It is when the national anthem plays, that one can experience and witness the way in which a hitherto latent or passive passion is awakened. It is not uncommon to see spectators and even sportspersons crying as the tune of the national anthem is played- perhaps due to the pressure and momentousness of the event, or the affective influence of the anthem, but probably, due to all of these and more reasons.¹⁹ The sudden surge of emotions generally seen at a sporting event during the anthem can be equated to what Victor Turner calls *communitas spontaneous*²⁰ when there is a great sense of communal awareness and solidarity. This experience of unity and togetherness, breaches barriers that otherwise exist even just outside the sports arena. In her essay on the contra dance, a folk dance form popular in the United States and England, Doreothea Hast writes about how the contra dance community is constructed

¹⁸ This is in reference to a controversy in April 2007 during the Cricket World Cup that triggered when anchor Mandira Bedi wore a *sari* with the flags of all participating nations and the Indian tricolour fell just near her feet.

"Madira's sari rases a storm", Rediff.com, <http://www.rediff.com/wc2007/2007/apr/28man.htm>. Accessed 21/3/15

¹⁹ Sportspersons such as Brazilian Neymar Jr in the FIFA World Cup 2014 and North Korean Jong-Tae-Se during FIFA World Cup 2010, both cried during different matches on listening to their respective countries' national anthems.

Ishaan Tharoor, "A score that counts: Anthems are key in big games". New York Post. <http://nypost.com/2014/06/30/a-score-that-counts-anthems-are-key-in-big-games/>. Accessed 11/5/15

Jonathan Watts, "Why North Korea are in a league of their own". The Guardian. <http://www.theguardian.com/football/2010/jun/20/north-korea-world-cup-army> Accessed 21/3/15

²⁰ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*; Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969

through the micro-entity of the performance and that the dance event ‘forms the social context through which community is created’²¹. Using a similar understanding, it may be said of the national anthem- that the specific act of singing the national anthem together even in a larger event- becomes a crucial moment when the group or gathering becomes a community instantly. The national anthem becomes the declaration of each possessing common knowledge and belonging to common social systems, hence forging an instant community – a micro-representation of the nation.

The way this community solidarity and fealty to the nation is transferred to bodily expression varies greatly according to the codes that the nation-state has set for such an event as well as according to other influences- while some stand in attention position with their hands to the side, some keep their right hands over their heart, and yet others dance and hop in celebration. In both the matches mentioned above, the players as well as the spectators display different responses to the anthem, where all of them are being orchestrated by the anthem, and at the same time are orchestrating each other’s movements. One often comes across discussions on the relevance of national anthems during international sporting events. Ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2014, the coach/manager of the English team insisted that his players show pride in their nation by singing the national anthem at the World Cup. ²²In many cases, the not singing of the national anthem by a player has brought forth questions of his/her motivation, commitment and patriotism towards the nation. For instance, France’s star striker Karim Benzema faced a lot of flak for refusing to sing the French national anthem ‘La Marseille’. The reasons for the discomfort with his dissent may have been multi-fold but the primary one was because of his North African origin. In the FIFA World Cup 2014 in Brazil, while the national anthems of well-represented South American countries could be heard echoing around the stands for even longer than the 90 seconds allotted by FIFA, other nations that are hesitant to display any patriotism through the national anthem. The German football team, akin to Germany as a nation since World War II, has been shy to express overtly patriotic gestures. During the FIFA world Cups in 2010 and 2014, this became a subject of debate. It is significant that when particular players were specifically pointed out for not singing the anthem-

²¹Dorothea E. Hast, “Performance, Transformation and Community: Contra Dance in New England,” *Dance Research Journal* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 4.

²² Phil McNulty, “World Cup 2014: England players told to sing anthem”, <http://www.bbc.com/sport/0/football/27658211> Accessed 11/5/15

it was pointedly observed that these were not just sportspersons bodies- but bodies of players who had immigrant roots.²³ Hence by singing the national anthem, and being adequate subjects to the viewing German audience, they had to prove their allegiance to the German nation.

Body as a canvas of the nation's memory

The forthcoming section shall map how the body of the citizen becomes a receptacle of an experiential personal memory and a national past. In the sports arena, the participating body of the citizen corporeally engages with this existing pool of history and memory to further create an intertwined national memory that does not sufficiently problematize political inconsistencies within the nation-state.

The Boxing Day Test between India and Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground²⁴ can be seen as a case in point to understand the various ways in which this orchestration takes place somatically. It also reflects how a re-assertion of history and memory become central to how the nation defines itself during a sporting event. The opening ceremony begins with a welcome address by Dr. Joy Wandin Murphy, who is a Wurundjeri Elder, a leader of one of the indigenous aboriginal people of Australia. She inflects her welcome note with words from the Woiwurrung language and during her speech, offers a branch of leaves as a traditional gesture of welcome and friendship to the incoming Indian team. In her speech she also emphasizes that her ancestors have lived on that land for thousands of years and immediately evokes the memories and imaginations for the spectators of various descents, about the history and culture of Australia. In his work *How Societies Remember*, Paul Connerton offers that “the production of more or less informally told narrative histories turns out to be a basic activity for characterisation of human actions. It is a feature of all communal memory.”²⁵ Through her action of speaking in the dialect Woiwurrung and carrying out a gesture of community bonding, she also recalls a bodily practice shared by her

²³Vanessa Fuhrmans and Laura Stevens, “For German soccer, a lyric debate”. Wall Street Journal <http://www.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052748703340904575284720357621884> Accessed 11/5/15

²⁴ Boxing Day Test between , India vs. Australia, - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nC35gX6RJs> Accessed 20/4/15

²⁵Paul Connerton. *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge University Press; 1989) : 16-17

community. Following this action, the singing of the national anthems, the Indian anthem first followed by the Australian anthem, is another act that displays bodily practices emerging from social memory. In categorising three kinds of memory viz a viz daily practices as personal memory, social memory and habit-memory, he provides us with a way to understand the various levels at which the past is lived and enacted in these moments.

The body of the sports persons, who are idealised, themselves become sites of representation of nationhood. At an international sporting event like the EuroCup, Olympic Games or any World Cup, the colours of the national flag become markers of what distinguishes them from all the other sportspersons from other countries. As Eric Hobsbawm observes in *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, the international sports matches were a possible way of diffusing tensions between nation-states through friendly rivalry and engaging in physically driven struggles. Nevertheless, here too, one sees almost fanatical team loyalty, exhibited by twelve-year old children (as in the case of an example cited by Hobsbawm) as well as adults such as Sudhir Kumar Chaudhary who we have encountered earlier in this paper. Political tensions between India and Pakistan as well as their common violent history, has led to several peace matches in various sports. Yet, one can see that the awareness and enactment of the two teams and its supporters being from distinct nations is displayed by the spectators, simply in their frantic desire for victory. Hobsbawm recounts how the World Cup and the Olympic Games unmistakably became occasions for competitive national self-assertion. “What made sport so uniquely effective a medium for inculcating national feelings, at all events for males, is the ease with which even the least political or public individuals can identify with the nation as symbolized by young persons excelling at what practically every man wants, or at one time in life has wanted, to be good at. The imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven people. The individual, even the one who only cheers, becomes a symbol of his nation itself.”²⁶ In that moment, the sporting body, or the team members, represents the sense of superiority and pride that the nation imparts. The sporting body represents the entire nation and at the same time, obscures the internal divisions that might otherwise be present. For instance, the deep rooted problems and

²⁶Eric Hobsbawm. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge University Press, 1991)

prejudices against people from lower-caste and minority communities that exist in India will not be projected on any player even if he/she belongs to that community. The sporting body becomes a hyperbole- a part for the whole- of all the ‘good’ values and morals that the nation represents, with the sense of duty and discipline that the nation demands, and represents all the citizens in the colours of the nation. ‘Sporting bodies can spontaneously connote agency, individuality, freedom and resistance, while also producing a *habitus* characterized by self-surveillance, obedience and social control.’²⁷

The bodies of spectators, who are physically attending and witnessing the sporting event, in those moments of singing along the national anthem passionately, cheering for their nation or the sports team and waving the national flag, validate the representation of the teams as being on the basis of nationality and also allow for the successful production of the sports economy. Their own presence as spectator /consumer is needed in equal measure with the presence of the sportsman, in the production of nationalism. The need to make one’s presence felt through assertions such as loudness, largeness are well documented but not recognized as thus. For instance, the Brazilian team and the spectators during the FIFA Confederations Cup were seen to take great pride and were visibly emotionally invested in the singing of the national anthem as loudly as possible.²⁸ This is instantly compared by the media to another previous loud rendition by the Mexicans during the FIFA U-17 World Cup 2011²⁹. In several documentations of sports events, the flags that are displayed become larger and grander, filling the spectators with a great amount of pride and honour to be associated with the country itself. During the NFL’s opening season in 2011, when the Bears were hosting the Atlanta Falcons in Chicago, the organizers arranged for a flag that covered the entire playing field of the large stadium.³⁰ As the massive flag was rolled open, chants of “U. S. A., U. S. A.” could be heard from the spectators in the stadium. Of course everyone in the crowd as well as the organizers recognized

²⁷Toby Miller et al “*National Symbolism and the Global Exchange of Sporting Bodies*” in *Globalization and Sport* (Sage Publications, 2001) : 31- 32

²⁸ Loud Brazilian National Anthem during FIFA Confederations Cup
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7va-k1ER9E> Accessed 03/04/15

²⁹Loud Mexican National Anthem during FIFA U-17 World Cup 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_2ohLGVVAc Accessed 04/04/15

³⁰Jim Comelison singing the American Anthem at the Chicago NFL stadium on 9/11/11-
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIO9DLe_-rY Accessed 04/04/15

that this was a significant moment in the history of USA , as it was the 10th anniversary of ‘9/11’ , the day of the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York. The fact that historic moments in the history of the nation are directly acknowledged within the sports stadium shows how sports and the nation implicate each other.

Ethnomusicologist Nancy Guy characterizes an anthem as being a dynamic symbol, unlike more static national symbols such as monuments or flags. An anthem can only be brought to life through performance, where it is then filled with meaning which extends beyond the notes, silences, and words. The music is interpreted and realized by the performer(s), situated in a socio-cultural and historical context, and reconstructed by the listeners - who might also be the performer.³¹ On this particular day in the opening ceremony, the singing of the national anthem was also a special tribute by Jim Comelison, a tenor whose full time job is to sing the national anthem for the Chicago Bears. His rousing renditions of the anthem are well known and was considered as a sign of resilience and unity displayed by the American people on the occasion. This reminds us that in the sports arena, the subject is confronted by the ‘other’, either literally in the form of supporters of the opposing team, or symbolically, when the event is used to refer to the state’s political affiliations.

It ought to not be ignored that the event of the national anthem is often used as an opportunity for display of militaristic strength. There have been numerous occasions, when aircrafts and planes are flown in various formations just as the final notes of the national anthem are being sung. For instance, during the American football match between New Orleans Saints and Indianapolis Colts, at the 44th Superbowl, military fighter jets flew over the stadium as the watching crowds cheered.³² In the case of the United States of America, the show of their militaristic might and the repeated reference to the soldiers fighting wars in faraway lands reflects an attempt to inculcate a sense of awe and pride at the strength and sacrifice displayed by the soldiers, and by implication America itself. At a time when nationalist sentiments might be at their peak just through the aforementioned affect of engaging with national symbols in that frenzied atmosphere, triggering an immediate association with the wars (/occupations)

³¹Carlos Abril, “ Functions of National Anthem in Society and Education” in *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* , No. 172 (Spring, 2007) : 6

³² Military Jet flies over stadium after National Anthem at the 44th Superbowl <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLez7tp96HM> Accessed 05/04/15

for the spectators, implicates them in their will towards militarism. Even when international sports is used as a substitute for warfare, such as cricket matches between India and Pakistan that are used to break the diplomatic ice, the notion of nationhood is not lost upon the citizenry.

The contagious affect of performing the nation live

Through the various debates made in this paper, an idea that keeps recurring is that of a charged presence that engulfs the sports arena. This ‘presence’ can be associated with the ‘live’ nature of the spectacle performed and viewed during the sporting event. The national anthem performed and participated in ‘live’, almost always in the presence of other bodies allows for its affect to be contagious.

In his work *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, Phillip Auslander begins with the regular definition of live performance as one in which the performers and the audience are physically, spatially and temporally co-present to one another. He further regards the definition of ‘live’ from its common usage in terms of broadcast technologies that are available today. One commonly hears the terms ‘live radio broadcast’ or ‘live television broadcast’. Here the understanding of ‘live’ is understood as an event where the performers and the audience are not spatially or physically co-present but are temporally co-present. During sporting events, especially international events happening in different time-zones, the availability of a live broadcast is of great essence. Not just those present at the sports arena, but all the million eyes and ears, hearing and listening to the proceedings at an important match can partake in the ephemeral sense of unity that engulfs everyone at the stadium when they sing the national anthem in unison. The imagination of a people, expanding beyond the sports arena, through the television screens into the houses and minds of millions of others like oneself, an entire nation-breathing out a song, common to them all, can indeed be overwhelming. Even if one does not see all the fellow citizens at any time, there is a sense of affinity and an imagination of belonging to one community³³. In 2011, when India won the Cricket World Cup against Sri Lanka in the final match at Wankhede stadium in Mumbai, not just the spectators in the

³³This brings us full circle to Benedict Anderson’s central idea of the nation as an imagined community. *Imagined Communities*, 1983.

stadium, but lakhs of people across the country, spilt out into the streets to celebrate India's victory. The idea of unity was not limited to the confines of the physical space of the arena but to the geographical boundaries of the nation. In itself, the simple imagination that what is being experienced by oneself at the present moment is simultaneously experienced by another in a faraway edge of the same nation is extremely powerful.

This experience of shared simultaneity of the nation is echoed even in the reporting of these sporting events in the sports pages of newspapers every day. Michael Billig while analysing the role of newspapers in repeatedly creating a discourse of nationhood, focuses on the sports pages of newspapers. By selecting a day at random for surveying the language and semiotics of the newspaper, Billig culls out the way in which the newspapers' reportage assumes that the space of the nation is the primary subject of interest to the newspaper reader and that she must empathize with a sense of patriotism and civic interest towards the same nation. This is heightened in the sports section of the newspaper where Billig points towards the manner in which these pages invite readers to celebrate 'our team', 'our heroes' and 'our victories', and hence demarcating a clear idea of 'us' (and by extension 'the other'). He also addresses the association that newspapers carve between sports and masculinity in the nation. "The sports pages are men's pages, although they are not presented as such. They appear as pages for all of the nation, like the British pub was presented as an institution for all persons British. On foreign fields, the men win their trophies, or lose their honour, doing battle on the nation's behalf. The readers, mainly men, are invited to see these male exploits in terms of the whole homeland, and thus, men's concerns are presented as if defining the whole national honour." This is indicative of how everyday routines, something as mundane as reading newspapers, are part of the meaning-making process for symbols of the nation-state.

The manner in which these symbols of the nation-state have acquired almost a status of piety are worth exploring. The immediate and spontaneous response that it evokes, indicates the way in which citizen-subjects identify with these symbols and actions. In her book *Beyond Belief: India and the politics of postcolonial nationalism*, Srirupa Roy writes about the modalities, rationalities and techniques that enable nation-state formation. She argues that the reproduction of the nation-state rests not on the

existence of individuals who identify with the nation but rather on their ability to *identify the state* as the nation's authoritative representative. Instead of the assumed understanding of the citizenry carrying an "internalized" national identity, she turns to belief being established through a consideration of external effects and public practices - the public actions, performative displays, spatial interventions, and political discourses of consent and dissent that repeatedly accord recognition to the existence of the state and its claim of representing the nation. . It is through recognizing the sights and sounds of the state rather than 'buying into' into mythologies, that the nation-state is formed and reproduced.³⁴ These sights and sounds of the nation are encountered most in commemorative ceremonies and events, where individuals and collectives, together perform their national identity and belonging, thereby acknowledging and perpetuating the system of nations.

One such ceremony that commemorates the nation and attempts to declare its sovereignty is the Beating Retreat ceremony at the Wagah-Attari Border. This border post, which is only a part of the approximately 3323 kms of border between the countries of India and Pakistan³⁵, marks the Zero Point. This 'Zero Point' is the only part of the border where one is allowed to cross into the other country, over land. Denoted by a simple white line across the tar road, the absurdity of partition and the hostility between the two countries deepens when one watches rituals of the 'Beating Retreat' ceremony that takes place here every evening. 'Haunted by its own inadequacy, the border rituals require magnified and exaggerated performances to establish and augment their authority and reveal themselves as anxious performances of nationalism.'³⁶ During the ceremony, the soldiers and commanders of the Indian Border Security Force and the Pakistani Rangers, march upto each other and shake hands. The national flags of the two countries are lowered simultaneously, with a precise measurement of the rope, so that it does not appear that either country is surrendering. Throughout the ceremony, the goose-stepping of the guards, that is, a high stiff marching style, their shouted commands, their aggressive mannerisms and

³⁴Srirupa Roy, *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism* (Duke University Press, 2007), 14-15.

³⁵[http://mha.nic.in/pdfs/BM_MAN-IN-PAK\(E\).pdf](http://mha.nic.in/pdfs/BM_MAN-IN-PAK(E).pdf). Accessed 21/4/13

³⁶Jisha Menon, "Bordering on Drama: The Performance of Politics and Politics of Performance," in *The Performance of Nationalism: India, Pakistan and Memory of Partition* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 47.

gestures, are all in sync. Every evening, hundreds of tourists on each side, visit the Wagah-Attari border to witness this ceremony and cheer the officers for their mastery of what has been called ‘choreographed contempt’³⁷.

At the Wagah-Attari border, which is a popular tourist destination and an extension of anyone’s visit to the nearby city of Amritsar, there are visitors from all over the India and the world, Indians as well as foreigners, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians of all sub-sects. With such a mixture of regional and linguistic variation in one place, in order to appeal to the sentiments of all or at least most of the groups, a popular nostalgic kind of music with affective value is used. Being the Indian frontier to Pakistan, the automatic choice is to use songs that might make the lay Indian recall the visions of India as it is imagined. Romantically constructed golden landscapes, fertile lands and abundance are evoked as being representative of India with songs like ‘*Mere deshki dharti sona ugle, ugle heerey moti*’. Feelings of competitiveness and difference from the ‘other’ are generated, and memories of the hardships faced by Indian soldiers during the Kargil war (1999) and other conflicts are recalled through songs like ‘*Suno gaur se duniyawalon.. .sabse aage honge Hindustani*’. These are enough to excite the large crowd in this space with feelings of patriotism towards India, but do not evoke the memory of the history of Partition. The Wagah-Attari border, therefore becomes a “site for packaging and performing cultural nostalgia”³⁸ through the orchestrations of the State, however limited this nostalgia may be.

At the Wagah-Attari Border post, the mob performs the nation collectively, by reiterating and responding to the symbols of the nation that scatter the space. The numerous national flags (of India), the zero point, the photograph of Gandhi on the gate, overseeing the proceedings of the entire ceremony, and looking across at the photograph of Mohammad Ali Jinnah on the Pakistani gate are all indicators and repeated reminders of the same theme of the nation being defined, and each of these symbols and objects emit and transmit affect. Affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, and in the

³⁷ As quoted by Michael Palin in BBC Documentary on the Wagah-Attari border ceremony- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YeSX6AZ5xEI> (Ref- 1:04)

³⁸ Sumaina Marr Maira .*Desis in the House: Indian American Youth Culture in New York City*;(Temple University Press; Philadelphia, 2002): 120

very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves.³⁹ Hence, an emotion of heightened love and belonging to the nation infects the gathered audience, passing from a flag, to the reminder of an Independence Day speech, to an echoing slogan of '*Bharat mata ki jai*'. In her essay on the daily performance carried out at the Wagah Border, Jisha Menon notes how a group of school students in their uniforms who were enthusiastically brandishing the national flag, performed and evoked a civic, Nehruvian nationalism that produces citizens with a strong national sentiment but also with confidence in liberal values of 'equality' and 'composite' culture. Their civic nationalism located the 'anti-nationals' outside India, on the other side of the visible border.⁴⁰ Even the emcee of the Beating Retreat ceremony, who is a Border Security Force Officer, encourages the crowd to dance and cheer with more vigour and respond with a loud '*zindabad*' every time he shouts '*hindustan*', so that they can collectively drown out the sound of the cheering from the Pakistani side of the Border. Anna Gibbs also elaborates,

Contagion is everywhere in the contemporary world It leaps from body to body, sweeping through mediatized populations at the speed of a bushfire....Consumer economies actually rely on contagion for everyday functioning, connecting people, money, goods, resources, ideas, and beliefs in global flows of communication and exchange in ways that fundamentally alter relations in the process. This calls for a new understanding of what I term "mimetic communication." By "mimetic communication" or mimesis, I mean, in the first instance, the corporeally based forms of imitation, both voluntary and involuntary (and on which literary representation ultimately depends). At their most primitive, these involve the visceral level of affect contagion, the "synchrony official expressions, vocalizations, postures and movements with those of another person:" producing a tendency for those involved 'to converge emotionally' (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson 1994. 5).⁴¹

The viewing spectators at the Wagah-Attari border Beating Retreat ceremony physically and emotionally mime each other in their cheers and claps. An affect that

³⁹Gregg and J Seigworth, Gregory, *The Affect Theory Reader*, 1.

⁴⁰Menon, "Bordering on Drama: The Performance of Politics and Politics of Performance."

⁴¹Gibbs, "After Affect," 186.

singes through this space, brings hitherto resting territorial identities to the fore with an added sense of confrontation with the 'other' and thereon an escalated need to assert this identity. The ceremony and the actions of the soldiers itself, provides several occasions to do so, merely by an aggressive, repeated use of the visual and aural symbols of the nation. Located at the national territorial border, it also actualizes the official special imagination and territorial identification through these symbols. However, considering the plural shifting identities of individuals and communities, this official special imagination may be contested by alternative ones. The forthcoming section shall consider the subjective notions of space and the anomalies from among the dominant nostalgias for space that hence ensue.

Subjective space and anomalies in nostalgia

In literary and cultural practices, one can observe several references to an affirmation of a territorial identity especially derived from topographical features, natural landscapes and social practices. KS Singh notes the way in which identities bound to territory and ecology, and the idea of *kshetra*(space) may be based on objective realities in postmodern anthropology, but there also exists a subjective notion of space among individuals and communities. This subjective notion of space is also demarcated according to perceptions of the self and the other.⁴² During the struggle against colonialism, many literary figures used descriptions of ecological features, ethnicity or culture, in a way that was fused with emotion and created affect. These were instrumental in the creation of new territorial identities and consciousness that may be at a wider scale compared to previous territorial allegiances that were limited to local cultures and provinces.

In *Jana Gana Mana*, Rabindranath Tagore combines mountains – the Vindhya, the Himalayas, rivers- Yamuna, Ganga, and linguistic identities – Punjab, Sindh, Gujarat, Maratha, Dravid, Utkal, Banga. This bringing together of identities and landscapes, expressed a sense of unity. In another composition titled *Amar Shonar Bangla* Tagore writes an ode to the united Bengal region (West Bengal and East Bengal), indicating towards the parallel presence of a regional affinity and attachment. Interestingly,

⁴²KS Singh, "Ecology, Identity and Culture," *India International Centre Quarterly* Vol. 27/28, Vol. 27, no. 4/Vol. 28, no. no. 1: The Human Landscape (Winter /Spring 2001 2000): 1.

Amar Shonar Bangla is the national anthem of Bangladesh, adopted during its liberation war in 1971.

In other languages as well, one can find numerous songs and writings eulogising regional ethnic identities, often placing it within the ‘imagined community’ of ‘Bharat’ as a single unit. For instance, Subramania Bharathiyar (1882-1921) who was a poet, writer, journalist, social reformer and Indian freedom fighter from Tamil Nadu wrote nationalist songs in Tamil, envisioning an independent Bharat. Known in Tamil as *desiya geetham*, these songs envisioned freedom from colonial rule and were infused with patriotic fervour. At the same time he wrote several songs about the glory of the Tamil language and the beauty of the landscape of the Tamil region. Another song by Manonmanian Sundarannar Iyer, titled *Tamil Thai Vazhthu*, written as an ode to the Tamil language, region and people, built a bond based on a strong regional identity, and was declared as the Tamil Nadu state anthem in 1970. In Urdu, Muhammad Iqbal wrote *Sare Jahan se Achchha*, a song that contained references to the Indian landscape and poetically evoked a cultural memory of all its people, irrespective of different religious affiliations, being united, sharing a cultural memory and all belonging to ‘Hind’.

“Geographies of the mind” can and do find expression in the way space is structured; landscapes as perceived by the occupants can have powerful symbolic links to a group's territorial identity.⁴³ At the Wagah-Attari border, the invoked territorial identity that is otherwise only imagined through topographies or explained cartographically through maps, becomes visible and reified. *Jana-Gana-Mana* echoing in space such as this, especially following the hour-long ceremony preceding it, creates the ground for a nostalgia that is restorative. As Svetlana Boym theorizes, Restorative nostalgia spouts a national memory that is based on a single version of national identity.” The rhetoric of restorative nostalgia is not about “the past,” but rather about universal values, family, nature, homeland, truth.⁴⁴ The repeated tropes of a unitary form of nationalism, with little space for expressions of alternate and parallel histories, nationalisms and social formations, makes the Wagah-Attari border

⁴³David B Knight, “Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 72, no. 4 (December 1982): 517.

⁴⁴Svetlana Boym, “Nostalgia and Its Discontents,” *The Hedgehog Review*, 2007, 8, http://www.iasc-culture.org/eNews/2007_10/9.2CBoym.pdf.

ceremony an event that confirms restorative nostalgias.

However, looking closely through the tropes of nationalism that inflect the nation, one can find several parallel nostalgias, that present traces of alternate nationalisms, ideologies and understandings of the world. For instance, Mr. Ramachandran, a 94-year old hailing from Tirunelveli district in Tamil Nadu⁴⁵, vaguely remembers his school days in Kadayam village and their engagement with the song. He describes the proceedings of the morning assembly of the school that he studied in up to Class VIII. Born in 1920, he proudly shares that the Tamil poet Bharathiyar's wife belonged to the same village as him, Kadayam, and it is she who taught them several nationalist songs written by Subramaniya Bharathiyar. Belonging to the Brahmin community, he was privileged with education and a life free of the need to make a living, As it was located deep south, this area was also not in the vigilant gaze of the ruling British and Ramachandran claims he had never seen a British officer in his life. Yet, inklings of a notion of a nationhood seemed to have reached them, evident in the morning assembly routine of this school in the village of Kadayam (undoubtedly similar to many in the area). They started with a few Sanskrit *slokas* and continued with a song written by Bharathiyar titled *Bharatha Samudaya Vazhgave (Live long Indian society)*⁴⁶. This was followed by a slightly longer version of Tagore's *Jana-Gana-Mana*⁴⁷. Mr Ramachandran recalled that next, they sang the *mangalam*, - the word for holy or sacred in Tamil. He elaborated that he was referring to the British national anthem 'God Save the King', in praise of and praying for the prosperity of the British Royal family.⁴⁸

From the interviews recorded with Mr Ramachandran, one can hear the tone and enunciation of these songs, especially 'God Save the King' which he sings loudly in

⁴⁵Mr Ramachandran (Nonagenarian from Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu), Quote from interview with the researcher. Madurai, Tamil Nadu. August 31, 2014

⁴⁶The song goes on to say 'Live long Indian society...30 crore people together, united can overcome any barrier and bring a new era for the world..' According to the 1921 census of India, the population of India which then included what is now Pakistan and Bangladesh, had a population of above 31 crore. This indicates, as we know, that songs by Bharathiyar, demanding independence were all with an imagination of erstwhile India as one nation.

⁴⁷The added sentences to the present version being '*Premohaara Hawye Gaanthea/ Jana Gana Oikya Vidhaayak Jaya Hey/ Bharat Bhaagya Vidhaataa*'

⁴⁸Further interviews with others who went to the same school revealed that the practice of singing 'God Save the King' during the morning assembly was changed to singing it at the end of the day at school. This practice continued till 1946.

perfectly accented British- English. This once again, brings forth the relevance of the mimetic codes used in educational institutions that go on to become part of habitus, recalled by an individual, in this case, even 82 years later. Presently, he didn't remember what these songs meant, but he did recount that there was no prescribed posture to sing the *Jana-Gana Mana*. They could stand straight in attention if they wished to or fold their hands, like the Hindu Namaste gesture. For them, it was still just a prayer song.

Another theme to be reiterated here is the possibility of alternate memories and an alternate nostalgia that is presented here through these very national anthems. There is a transgression in the dominantly accepted idea of the nation through one who has sung the same anthems and songs in another time and a different historical situation, with another cartographic imagination and thereby alternate understandings of community such as one of Bharathiyar's '*Bharata samudaya*'. In her musings on the kinds of nostalgia in *Nostalgia and its Discontents*, Svetlana Boym has elaborated on restorative nostalgia and reflective nostalgia. In Mr Ramachandran's casual recalling of alternate maps, communities and anthems, he digresses from the prescribed collective pictorial cultures and oral culture that are part of what Boym calls restorative nostalgia. Instead he alludes to a nostalgia that 'is more oriented towards an individual narrative that savors details and memorial signs, yet perpetually defers homecoming itself. If restorative nostalgia ends up reconstructing emblems and rituals of home and homeland in an attempt to conquer and spatialize time, reflective nostalgia cherishes shattered fragments of memory and temporalizes space.'⁴⁹

Seeking and breaching territorial imaginations

In the case of the national anthem, these varied cartographic imaginations have often sought legitimization through legal sanction such as in petitions to Jawaharlal Nehru in 1950, and two well-known Public Interest Litigations filed in 2004 and 2011 to various courts of law. All these petitions requested a change or replacement of the word 'Sindh' in the second verse of *Jana Gana Mana*, with a different word in each case. The points stated in the memorandum and petitions demonstrate the

⁴⁹Boym, "Nostalgia and Its Discontents," 15.

consciousness that the citizenry were beginning to have, already in 1950, in the territory of the nation-state and the value of their place in it. In asserting their own geographical location through the words of the national anthem, their own identity is found and defined, stating who one is and also who one is not.

In 1950, a memorandum presented by Pandit D.V. Subba Sastry on behalf of the Loka Seva Sangh of Kurnool, to Nehru and Sardar Vallabhai Patel (former Deputy Prime Minister of India) requested for the replacement of the word ‘Sindhu’ with ‘Andhra’.⁵⁰ Subba Sastry writes in his memorandum, “After the partition of the country, ‘Sindhu’ has become a province of Pakistan. It is not a part of Indian Union. According to the Inter-Dominion Agreement concluded in April 1948 at Calcutta, it was decided that no propaganda should be done in either countries for reunion. So it is wrong to keep SINDHU (sic) in the National Anthem. Some people may argue that ‘Sindhu’ indicates the name of the river. But the word is mentioned when the names of several provinces are recounted.”⁵¹ The memorandum further cites reasons why ‘Andhra’ should be put in its place, stating that “the people who speak the Telugu language occupy the second place in population. It is not proper that those who have such a great population should find no place in the National Anthem” and that “further the substitution of ‘Andhra’ does not affect either the music or the rhythm of the song.”⁵² Distinguishing the Telugu-speaking community from the other South-Indian languages, scholarly works were also cited to state that Telugu could not be categorized as ‘Dravida’ – a word that is mentioned in the national anthem, and hence it was demanded that rightful representation had to be given to Andhra Pradesh.⁵³

⁵⁰ National Archives of India, Delhi - F. No. 8/2/50; GOI, MHA, Public Section; Previous references: 8/1/49- Public and 41/18/49- Public

⁵¹ Ibid,

⁵² Ibid,

⁵³ Ibid, In response, it was stated that “the question regarding the National Anthem – Jana Ganga Mana- and changes therein viz. Substitution of 'Sindhu' by 'Utkala' or 'Andhra' etc was raised by Shri Sri Prakasa in 1949, when he was Governor of Assam. In support of his argument that 'Sindhu' may continue to be included in the National Anthem (Jana Gana Mana) he had cited the example of the 'Statue of Strassburg' of France.” The point whether 'Sindhu' occurring in the third line of the song – in the changed political conditions-is appropriate or not and if not, what is the proper substitute is a matter of opinion and controversy. It therefore, seems desirable that we should not allow any alterations (such as suggested by our Commissioner at Mauritius viz. 'Oudh' for 'Sindhu' or by Shri DV Subba Sastry viz. 'Andhra' for 'Sindhu') to be made in original text of the National Anthem – Jana Gana Mana. MHA (PUBLIC SECTION);13/12/1950; E.A Ministry note F. No. 7689/50- AFRII dt 28/10/50

In the Public Interest Litigation filed in 2004, the petitioner asked for the word ‘Sindh’ to be replaced by ‘Kashmir’ as it argued that reciting the word Sindh while singing the anthem was 'violative of the sovereignty of Pakistan' and was also 'hurting the feelings of more than 100 crore people in India'.⁵⁴ In the PIL filed in 20011, the petitioner requested for ‘Sindh’ to be replaced by ‘Sindhu’ – a river in India. In both cases, the PILs were dismissed, with an affidavit filed by the Union Ministry in response to the latter case. The affidavit declared that both the versions of the national anthem, one using 'Sindh' and the other with 'Sindhu' are correct, stating that "both the words refer to either the river or the Sindhi Community"⁵⁵. Hence, the usage of the word became a matter of interpretation, a play of the imagination- to mutate the meaning of what is, to conveniently match the political and territorial imagination of the citizenry.

Nostalgia produces subjective visions of afflicted imagination that tend to colonize the realm of politics, history, and everyday perception.⁵⁶ At this stage it would be relevant to examine how politics and history, and therefore everyday perception in the present day provide a ground for alternate nostalgias outside of the realm of the dominant narrative. Jayalakshmi, 37, a maid working in Madurai⁵⁷, presents a case in point. Belonging to Theni district, she has been living with her husband - a construction worker - and her college-going children in Madurai for the past 21 years. During her interview she revealed that she did not know the national anthem at all. She had heard it when she used to take her children to school and if she had happened to still be within the school premises at that that time, the school staff might have asked her to stand still. *Jana Gana Mana* was outside of the realm of her everyday life to such an extent that even if it is played on a loudspeaker or television she would not be able to recognize it as the national anthem, and would certainly not stand up in

⁵⁴R. Venkataraman; ‘Kashmir vs Sindh in anthem’ ; September 20, 2004;

‘http://www.telegraphindia.com/1040921/asp/nation/story_3784128.asp’ Accessed 23/4/14

⁵⁵Outlook magazine; ‘HC rejects PIL for change in words of national anthem’;

<http://www.outlookindia.com/news/article/hc-rejects-pil-for-change-in-words-in-national-anthem/737542> Accessed 23/4/14

⁵⁶“Nostalgia and Its Discontents,” 9.

⁵⁷Jayalakshmi (Housemaid and cook), Quotes from interview by researcher, Madurai, Tamil Nadu. August 29, 2014

attention to honour it. It is noteworthy that while making this statement, she was quite unabashed about it and did not feel the need to be embarrassed or ashamed.⁵⁸

On being probed about any patriotic emotion she might feel when the flag is hoisted during a public celebration on Independence day or even when she sees a film where the hero pitches the national flag, Jayalakshmi replied that she does not feel any emotion or feeling. All she knew was that ‘Gandhi *thatha*’ (Grandfather Gandhi) got independence for the *nadu*⁵⁹ and this was why the flag was hoisted.

Finally, when she was asked what ‘*nadu*’ she belongs to, Jayalakshmi replied, in an unsure way ‘Theni’. When asked which ‘*nadu*’ she is in presently, she replied ‘Madurai’. A school-going 5-year old child near her prodded her to say ‘India’, which she immediately echoed. On being probed further about what she imagined to be her *samuham*, her community, she said she hadn’t thought about this question before.

Jayalakshmi’s responses on her idea of *nadu* direct ones attention towards the difference between the differences in the ideas of a community coming from the variations in the discourse of territory authorized by the nation and an individual spatial imagination. A germane example of the possibilities of how a spatial imagination can shape the idea of community is through Nirad C. Chaudhuri’s autobiographical work titled *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*. The author begins by speaking of his early childhood that was spent in his birth place, his ancestral village and his mother’s village.- all three of which influenced his spatial imagination and hence, his sense of community. However, there was a fourth place – England- that shaped the environment of his early life. It was a place that was evoked by his imagination simply from life in colonial Bengal and it was a place that Chaudhuri says he ‘enjoyed emotionally’⁶⁰. This understanding that territorial absence or presence can be entirely dissociated from individual emotional identification and belonging, demands an expanse in theoretical possibilities such as those offered by

⁵⁸Jayalakshmi and Anjalai were unlike several other interviewees (mostly college students and middle aged adults in Tamil Nadu), who said that they did not always stand-up during the national anthem if they weren’t being observed. Their tone as well as immediate explanatory/defensive explanation for it revealed that this was a source of guilt or embarrassment for them.

⁵⁹The Tamil word for country or land. The different words for land in regional languages such as *nadu* in Tamil and *desh* in Bengali also lead to nuanced understandings and concepts that are denoted by those specific words in every language, lacking an equivalent in another language.

⁶⁰ Nirad Chaudhuri, ‘Prefatory note’, *Autobiography of an unknown Indian*, (NYRB Classics, 1951)

fields such as psycho-geography that may provide more pluralistic approaches towards understanding notions of nation and community.

In her ignorance of the mainstream modes of thought and her autonomous understanding of ideas of nation and community, Jayalakshmi's case indicates the presence of reflexive nostalgias that carry alternative narratives. Her varied understanding of *nadu* also presents the presence of different territorial identities outside that of the dominant Indian nationalist ideology offered (and allowed) by the state-mechanism today. It cannot be ignored that Jayalakshmi comes from an impoverished Dalit family, and thereby was deprived of opportunities for education and growth. However, this has allowed her to be outside the dominant moralizing coercive modes of thought and practice that permeate institutionalized education and the language of popular culture. Her position, especially as a woman of a lower caste in Tamil Nadu, may keep her outside public sphere, but by not recognizing symbols of the nation-state, she becomes an agent that destabilizes the notion of territory, nation and state – that is being reinforced through state mechanisms.

In the present world of nations, borders dictate modes of movement and transgression; while some lines lie along the frontier, others run across immigration desks in airports. It is significant that irrespective of where these frontiers lie, it is human beings that enliven these cartographies, giving them meaning. What appear as thin lines on a world map, on zooming in become grainy contours of what are anyway territorial abstractions. Either by choice or circumstances, there are some who live with limbs across various borders, some who live at the periphery of these lands, and some at the heart of the nation-states. The world of nations requires the people to forge a political community within these borders. Bhikhu Parekh writes,

A political community needs to, and as a rule tends to, develop some idea of the kind of community it is, what it stands for, how it differs from others, how it has come to be what it is, and so forth; in a short a view of its collective or national identity... Its sense of national identity bonds these individuals and generations, and articulates and explains why they all form part of a single community. It unites its members around a common self-understanding and gives focus and energy to their sense of belonging. It also inspires them to live

up to a certain collective self-image and cultivate the relevant virtues, facilitates the community's self-production and intergenerational continuity, fosters common loyalties, and orders their moral and political life. It does not remain purely cerebral but becomes embodied in national rituals, symbols and ceremonies, and engages their emotions.⁶¹

The analyses of the role of rituals and symbols such as the national anthem, hence, becomes relevant in understanding what indeed may be the nature of this political community and the scale of autonomy it offers to a heterogeneous polity to shape national identity. In India, there are multiple religions followed, hundreds of languages or dialects spoken, and multiple caste identities deeply entrenched. These differences lead to a remarkable imbalance in power structures. The language and nature of these political communities need to be constantly revisited.

⁶¹ Bhikhu Parekh, 'The political structure of multicultural society' in *Rethinking Multiculturalism*; Pg 231.

CHAPTER III

RUPTURES IN THE NATION AND THE QUESTION OF CITIZENSHIP

What the eye is to the lover — that particular, ordinary eye he or she is born with — language — whatever language history has made his or her mother-tongue — is to the patriot. Through that language, encountered at mother's knee and parted with only at the grave, pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined, and futures dreamed.

Benedict Anderson,

*Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*¹

So far, we have observed the manner in which the national anthem along with other national symbols, in its role in affirming the nation-state, works as tangible symbols to create a sense of identity through territorial identification. However, simultaneously, these are also contested by alternative identities held by the same polity. These parallel modes of identification, be it of class, religion, caste, region, language, gender or others, create a distinct sense of belongingness to the nation, as well as affect the manner in which this belongingness is performed. While in the case of the national anthem, there is a prescribed strict corporeal code, the affect induced and therefore the way it is performed is varied and subjective, depending on all the above factors. Often, these identities, sometimes viewed as sub-identities, are at conflict enough with the dominant identity to create ruptures in the nation, these 'sub'-nationalisms, 'dream of shedding this sub-ness one happy day'².

In the Indian territory, there lie several fault lines that challenge and disrupt the constructed idea of one nation- there have been demands of separate nationhood by several ethnic groups in the north-eastern states, there is constant fight for *azadi* in Kashmir and the Khalistan in Punjab for recognition of its distinct regional and religious identity. Apart from ethnic and religious identities, language- what Anderson states as being encountered at the mother's knee and parted with only at the grave- has long evoked strong territorial affinities and allegiances distinct from the Indian

¹Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Speard of Nationalism* (Verso, 2006), 168.

²Ibid., 3.

nation. With Hindi being the language of the movement for independence in North India, its domination was felt by other regional languages, and strongly opposed by leaders in the Madras Province in South India. Even in the years following independence, and after the demarcation of states on the basis of language in 1956, there has been a continued (diminishing yet present) voice demanding a separate Tamil nation.

This chapter seeks to unpack the history and presence of this Tamil identity in the state of Tamil Nadu today, especially how it is experienced through the language and expressed to varying degrees of autonomy from the Indian state, all displaying an alternative nationalism- a Tamil nationalism. The fact that Tamil Nadu, since 1970, has an official Tamil anthem called *Tamilttay Vazhthu*, that is sung every day in schools and at all official state functions among other events, provides multiple registers of comparison with the Indian National anthem- in terms of the corporeal performance and affective tremor left by the Tamil Nadu state anthem. This chapter will also seek to understand the fault lines that further run within this identification with Tamil Nadu, and how various communities or groups perform the rupture of their discontent by engaging with symbols of the nation-state. These ruptures become entry-points to discuss the discourse around citizenship and how the understanding of belongingness to a space becomes constricted to being merely the citizenship of a state, in the present world –order.

Language, state-ness and citizenship

As discussed before, *Jana Gana Mana* , a song written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1911 in Sanskritized Bengali, was adopted as the national anthem in 1950 by the Constitutional Assembly. At this time, the song was already known to a few involved in the freedom struggle such as the members of the Azad Hind Fauj. Tagore himself had also translated the song from Bengali to English while visiting Besant Theosophical College in Andhra Pradesh in 1919. In a land where hundreds of languages and dialects were spoken, the meaning of this song that mobilised populations for the independence movement, was still not known to many. As it was discovered during the several interviews conducted by this researcher, the situation

largely remains the same even today. While repetition of the words and tune over generations, in schools and public ceremonies, has allowed the song to be rote learnt, the meaning of the song is not taught or learnt. The song being in a regional language spoken only by a section of the population in Eastern India, might be attributed as a reason for this alienation. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that, through its manifestation as the national anthem, the song has become a means of validation for citizens of India. The national anthem through the action of utterance, becomes a declaration of one's belongingness to the nation, and of the nation belonging to oneself. For many in the Indian diaspora, irrespective of which linguistic community they may belong to, the national anthem becomes a tool to revoke and celebrate a homeland. However, it would be a valid question, to ask if all individuals belong as equals, in a state that attempts to homogenize the populace. In a space where different heterogeneous entities are pulled together to form a single unit, causing several erasures and silences, the tokens that are used to unify the space also become tools to assert difference.

For instance, in the case of the Indian national anthem, the original being in the Bengali language, it is noticed that members of the Bengali community sing *Jana Gana Mana* in a pronounced Bengali accent. By enunciating the national anthem in a Bengali accent – noticeably rolling the 'a' sounds to an 'au' - a member of the Bengali community may be attempting to establish or display a greater ownership over the national anthem or the nation itself. This may not necessarily be to state that "I am more Indian than you". Rather it may mean to express that "We are both Indian, but I am Bengali and this song is in *my* language". In this manner, the national anthem becomes a tool to express multiple layers of identification- an identification with the nation, and for the Bengali it may further signify affinity and belongingness to the language. In a conversation about the essence and condition of the present structure of states, presented in *Who Sings the Nation-State*, Gayatri Spivak and Judith Butler eke out poignant observations about the politics of language and belongingness. Spivak notes that although the national anthem of India was written in Bengali," it has to be sung in Hindi without any change in grammar or vocabulary. It has to be sung in Hindi, because the national anthem must be sung in the national language."³ Making

³Judith Butler and Gayatri ChakravortySpivak, *Who Sings the Nation-State: Language, Politics and Belonging* (Seagull Books, 2007), 79.

the above mentioned point about *Jana Gana Mana* being sung in a pronounced Bengali accent by some Bengalis, she reiterated that “the anthem remains Hindi, although it is Bengali. The nation-state requires the national language.”⁴

While explaining the various elements in *Jana Gana Mana* such as regions and languages, Spivak points out that the language of the anthem cannot be negotiated. Through this, she connects the idea of language and belonging to that of citizenship. This becomes a useful tool of analysis in the discussion on the matter of language and politics that has been a subject of a lot of controversy and contestation in India.

Language and Tamil identity

G Aloysius, in *Conceptualising the Region*, writes about how “language is seen as more encompassing than ever, of social reality. It is the terrain of contestation, communication and communion as well as of constitution. It is the medium in which the 'organic filaments' of social relations are woven, creating a sense of totality, unity and also continuity.”⁵

In India, while the independence movement brought together peoples of various communities together to a certain degree, there existed a deep awareness of linguistic identity and affinity in many regions. After independence, when the need for demarcation of administrative states arose, this was done along linguistic lines. Although the States Reorganisation Act was passed only in 1956, the movement for linguistic states had been going on for long, even during the British rule.

With the passing of the States Reorganisation Act 1956, the contours of Madras State (formerly Madras Presidency) changed with some districts being moved to Kerala and the northern Telugu-speaking area separating to make the new state of Andhra Pradesh. The Kanyakumari region of Travancore-Cochin was added to the Madras State which consisted of the Tamil-speaking areas. In 1968, the Madras State was renamed as Tamil Nadu, meaning ‘Tamil country’. The change in name of the state,

⁴Ibid., 74.

⁵G Aloysius, *Conceptualising the Region*, (Critical Quest, 2013), 22..

was only a part of a long-running movement in the region that asserted linguistic identity and pride in the Tamil language.

The Tamil-speaking people belonging to multifarious religions and castes were influenced by various groups with their own agendas, which cumulatively generated an ecology creating pride, attachment and a sense of belonging among the Tamil-speaking community to the Tamil language. Sumathi Ramaswamy in her work in *Passions of the Tongue* (1997) and other essays on the subject has charted some of the factions, often rivalling ones or in disagreement with each other that were key players in inciting and nurturing the language movement in Tamil Nadu. There were the Saiva revivalists who wished to ‘revive the religious fundamentals of their community by invoking the divinity of their language’⁶. There were also the Tamil nationalists who wanted to secure the political freedom of their nation, but also of their community, by rescuing it from the ‘vernacular’ colonized state it had been relegated to due to the classical throne given to Sanskrit. There were the ethnicists who thought of the Tamil community as a distinctive racial entity, united by a common descent from a Dravidian/ Tamilian community, not a religious sacral community, but a secular one. The Tamil language was used as a tool in the social mobilization and political activation of the people in this region, making the language, as Ramaswamy claims, an object of devotion. This *Tamilpatru*– what can be translated as devotion, love, affection, pride and passion for the Tamil language, became one of the factors that produced the ‘modern Tamil subject- *tamilan*, the “Tamilian”- an entity whose subjectivity merges into the imagined self of Tamil’⁷.

This identification of the essence of the self with the Tamil language, is visible in the literature to varying degrees already from the end of the nineteenth century. For instance Bharatidasan writes in a poem titled “Without Language, What are We?”:

⁶Sumathi Ramaswamy, “En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35, no. 4 (October 1993): 700.

⁷Sumathi Ramaswamy, *Passions of the Tongue: Language Devotion in Tamil India, 1891-1970* (University of California Press, 1997), 6.

Language is our very breath;
Language is our very consciousness;
Language is our life;
Language is our pleasure;
Language is man;
Language is our creed;
Language is our very world;
Without Language, what are we?⁸

Sumathi Ramswamy⁹ surmises that Bharathidasan, like others who she categorises as ethnicists, through their writing created an idea of who a true Tamilian was- a blend of bodily substances, a soul and the glorious language of Tamil, he declared that it would be impossible to sever the language from the Tamil person:

It is possible for us to transform a mountain into a mound of sand;
It is possible for us to fill up ocean beds;
It is possible for us to fly speedily through the skies;
It is possible for us to cause rains to fall on this earth;
It is even possible to bring the dead back to life.
However to separate Tamil from the Tamilian,
This cannot be contemplated even for a moment.”¹⁰

Be it Saivites such as Maraimalai Adigal and K. Subramania Pillai, be it Tamilians who supported the Indian nationalist cause such as Subramania Bharathiyar or be it the Self-Respecters who had been galvanized by EV Ramaswamy Periyar- collectively the impact of all these factions was that the questions of Tamil identity and a Tamil past was being constantly reiterated in the first few decades of the 20th century. Language as a central mode of thought was used by all these groups to generate a discourse on the need to search for and assert the position of Tamil

⁸Bharathidasan, *TamilukkuAmutenru Per [Tamil, Verily, Is Ambrosia]* (Madras Pumpukar, 1978), 108. Translation from Ramaswamy, “En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity,” 707.

⁹Ramaswamy, “En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity,” 707.

¹⁰*TamilukkuAmutenru Per [Tamil, Verily, Is Ambrosia]*, 76. Translation from Ramaswamy, “En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity,” 707.

language in the life of the Tamilian. Many Tamil scholars were opposed to the use of Sanskrit and English technical terms in the field of science as well as daily life. The Non-Brahmin movement also instigated measures to purge Tamil language of its Brahminical Sanskrit influences and hence lent a political urgency to such demands. AR Venkatachalapathy notes that by the 1940s, there was consensus “about the existence of a common Tamil past that was rich and independent (especially of Sanskrit) and, as a direct result to demands that the development of the Tamil language on modern lines be free of all foreign influence... The question, then, was not just about coining words but also about the fundamental definition of Tamil identity.”¹¹

This Tamil identity was discussed and debated much, in the numerous conferences that were called upon by each of the groups. The subjects at the conferences ranged across matters of political, cultural and social relevance of the life of Tamilians, such as the rituals in marriage practices, the usage and coinage of Tamil words, the value of various Tamil classical literary texts, etc. The importance of the Tamil language, Tamil *thai* (Tamil mother) and *thai mozhi* (mother tongue) was brought forth repeatedly in the many political demonstrations and speeches, that used rhetorical language and a tone of poetic incitement and interpellation.

The impact of this literature and its use in political mobilization can still be heard in the voices of many Tamilians/ Dravidians who display a strong affinity and love for Tamil language. In an interview, Mr Vijay (name changed), an advocate practicing in Ootacamund in Tamil Nadu¹² where he was born and brought up, shares that although he is originally from Kerala, he feels proud to say that he is a Tamilian, more than a Malayali. “I respect my Malayalam, but am very proud to call myself a Tamilian. Some kids are attached to their grandmother...I am proud of my grandmother Tamil, more than my mother. I am a Keralite, settled in Tamil Nadu, in the Nilgiris. Being settled here I could read more Tamil books, especially those that shaped my ideology such as Periyar, Bhagat Singh and Ambedkar. This made me very conscious of my

¹¹AR Venkatachalapathy, *In Those Days There Was No Coffee*, New Perspectives on Indian Past (Yoda Press, 2006), 177.

¹²MrVijay (name changed) (Advocate), Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher in Tamil and translated to English by the researcher. Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu, August 20, 2014

language, my place and my people.” This emphatic articulation of an identification with a land and language is indicative of the kind of association with the language that was inculcated through the political culture, especially in the 20th century.

Sumathi Ramaswamy claims that the language Tamil “had been laden with its own set of extraordinary attributes- divinity, youthfulness and immortality, purity, classicality, and "mother-ness"- with which it has been empowered to combat all rival dialects and languages within and outside the borders of the Tamil country.”¹³ Advocate Vijay’s action of figuratively associating Tamil as a grandmother figure to him, is an extension of the ‘mother-ness attributed to the language.

EV Ramaswamy ‘Periyar’ and the Self-Respect movement initiated by him in 1925 against Brahmin hegemony played an extraordinary role in bringing about an awareness of a Tamil/ Dravidian identity. Periyar’s radical politics and the performative means¹⁴ to bring out and overturn the hegemonic dominance in spaces that the public engaged with every day – such as temples, festivals, modes of schooling and festivals. MSS Pandian writes in *Brahmin and Non-Brahmin* about movement’s propaganda as being unconventional and directed at forming a subaltern non-Brahmin public. “This public was qualitatively different from those produced by other critics of the Brahmin who preceded the Self-Respect Movement- such as [Iyothee] Thoss and his neo-Buddhism, Adigal and his Saivism, and even the non-Brahmin subalternity of the Justice Party. This difference was the basis of new subaltern alliances against the power of the Brahmin and Brahminic Hinduism in the Tamil region.”¹⁵ Periyar was elected the President of the Justice Party (a political party that was formed in 1917 already consciously working towards the improvement of the status of Non-Brahmins in Madras Presidency) in 1938, which he renamed as ‘DravidarKazhagam’ (DK) in 1944. Pandian notes that DravidarKazhagam consistently engaged with the Congress at the centre and challenged its practices that they considered to be prefacing Brahminic Hinduism and the Indian nation, both of which Periyar equated to be the same. To validate this point, Pandian refers to an

¹³Ramaswamy, “En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity,” 4.

¹⁴Periyar’s mobilization of the non-Brahmin community and towards a rational politics was performative in nature where he visibly breached the mores of the times such as breaking Ganesha idols (on Buddha Purnima, 1953) and burning portraits of Rama (1956).

¹⁵MSS Pandian, *Brahmin and Non-Brahmin: Geneologies of the Tamil Political Present* (Permanent Black, 2007), 210.

incident in 1955 when EV RamaswamyPeriyar advocated a public burning of the Indian national flag, by declaring:

“Why shouldn’t we burn [the Indian National] flag? I sit because [Thiruppur] Kumaran saved it? Is the cloth so soiled that it will not burn? All that is need is little more kerosene and it will burn. Or is it made of some fire-proof cloth? A lump of clay Vinayaga. Isn’t it the same story when a cubit length of cloth becomes the flag? We have proved that Vinayaga had the same worth as a lump of clay. Similarly we will prove that your flag has the same value as a cubit length of rag.”¹⁶ Under the leadership of Periyar, the Self-Respecters and later the DK cadres led the anti-Hindi movement in Tamil Nadu which irrigated the sentiments of the demand for a separate Tamil nation.

The demands for a Tamil nation

In the process of imagining an independent united India, the leaders of the nation in the early 20th century regarded Hindi as the language that should be used for the purpose of creating this discourse and to displace the position of English that had been imposed thus far for all administrative and civil structures in the colony. In his speeches and writings, MK Gandhi actively advocated the learning of Hindi and its use as the national language, where the provincial languages and Hindi would complement each other. “Hindi alone can become the national language. It presents some difficulty in case of the learned classes in Madras. For men from the Deccan, Gujarat, Sind and Bengal it is easy enough. In a few months they can acquire sufficient command over Hindi to enable them to carry on national intercourse in that tongue. It is not so for the Tamils. The Dravidian languages are distinct from their Sanskrit sister in structure and grammar... We have a right to appeal to their patriotic spirit and expect them to put forth sufficient effort in order to learn Hindi. For in future when Hindi has received State recognition, it will be introduced as a compulsory language in Madras as in other Provinces, and intercourse between

¹⁶Ibid., 208–209. The declaration was made in the newspaper *Viduthalaion* August 5, 1955. The reference to Kumaran is regarding a nationalist ThiruppurKumaran who refused to let go of the British-banned Indian national flag in the face of a brutal police attack. He died on January 10, 1932 because of the injuries he sustained.

Madras and them will then increase. English has not permeated the Dravidian masses. Hindi, however, will take no time.”¹⁷

Ever since a move for implementing the compulsory learning of Hindi in the Madras Presidency was proposed by the C. Rajagopalachari-led Government in the Madras Presidency, the Dravidian movement which was then contained in the Justice Party mobilised an anti-Hindi movement. Until 1940, when the decision was revoked, there were widespread agitations in the Presidency. Between late 1937 and 1940, the anti-Hindi demonstrations led to the incarceration of close to 1200 and the death of two men. Following active contention from regional language states, this order was withdrawn in February 1940. Nevertheless, the Congress continued to promote the teaching of Hindi in schools into the 1950s. Sumathi Ramaswamy notes that the anti-Hindi cause was clearly linked to the DK and DMK’s separatist demand for a sovereign Dravidian or Tamil nation throughout this period. The form of their protests had also become more demonstrative – beyond protest and speeches. They were performatively engaging with symbols of the nation-state as a means of protest and associating it with the hegemony of Hindi language - they “tarred Hindi names on official name boards, picketed stores run by North Indians, burned facsimiles of the Indian map and the Constitution (itself characterized as the material manifestation of Hindi imperialism), obstructed train services, and so on. Following a 1963 constitutional amendment that banned political parties with separatist agendas the overt demands for secession were muted in Madras, although not entirely absent.”¹⁸

In 1965, when the question of ‘compulsory’ learning of Hindi in the states was brought forth again in 1965, Tamil Nadu state was rife with agitation that was displayed not just in the form of mob-protests but a realisation of the idea of dedicating one’s life to Tamil- *Tamilpatru* at its zenith - with multiple suicides to protest the oppression of Tamil language, with some swallowing insecticides and another setting himself on fire for the cause. The slogan of ‘*Inti Olika! Tamil Valka!*’

¹⁷Speech delivered by Gandhi at Second Gujarat Educational Conference at Broach on 20 Oct 1917. The *Collected works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol 16: 88

¹⁸Ramaswamy, *Passions of the Tongue: Language Devotion in Tamil India, 1891-1970*, 121.

(Death to Hindi! May Tamil flourish!) was resounding in the dramatic and active protest against the imposition of Hindi upon the Tamil speakers.

M. Lakshmanan notes that ‘the direct consequence of the anti-Hindi movement was the demand for a separate Tamil Nadu. The Justicites argued that the best way to protect economic and cultural interests of the Tamils was to establish an independent Tamil nation. The executive committee of the Justice Party met on 28 October 1939 and passed a resolution demanding a separate Tamil Nadu.’¹⁹ According to Lakshmanan, since EV Ramaswamy initiated the Justice Party, the concept of a Tamil nation had also been part of the outline. However, it was only in 1937 when the Congress supported Brahmin hegemony was increasingly voiced as a threat to the cultural and economic growth of non-Brahmins that this notion of the Tamil nation was declared as a political slogan. The geographical boundary of the Tamil nation, which was equated with the 'Dravidian' nation was approximately the territory that was called the Madras Presidency. However some of the adjoining areas in the princely Travancore state, like Kanyakumari where Tamils also lived, was excluded from this conception of the Tamil nation.

Even literary works addressing the question of the Tamil nation can be found – for instance, in one of Bharatidasan's poems, the poet (who in his earlier nationalist years had composed passionate eulogies on Bharata Mata) ridiculed the Tamilian who was confused about who his real mother was in the following terms:

O mother! When I ask the Tamilian to name his country, he sheepishly says
that it is "India"!

O mother! How will this child ever reform if he confuses the evergreen Tamil
land with India?

And thinks that the evil one who destroys his own mother's country is his
mother,

Will that person ever improve?

¹⁹Lakshmanan M., “Language and the Nationality Question in Tamil Nadu . 1938-42,” *Indian Historical Review* 28, no. 128 (2001): 17.

O mother! How can he lie down in his mother's lap and drink the mother's milk that is Tamil and not know who his mother is?

Does not the Tamilian realize that the Tamil language is his mother tongue? and that the Tamil country is his motherland?²⁰

The name Madras State was changed to its present name - Tamil Nadu translating to "land/ nation of Tamil" - officially in 1969. However, the territorial space where Tamil was spoken was referred to as '*Tamilakam*' (Home of Tamil) or '*Tamilnatu*' (land/nation of Tamil)' from the earliest days of *Tamil patru*.²¹ Since 1938, and throughout the 1940s and 1950s when the *Dravida Kazhagam* and *Dravida Kazhagam* members were raising the call for 'Tamilnadu for Tamilians', they referred to his territorial space as Tamilnadu or 'Dravidanadu' (when they began the demand for a separate Dravidian nation). Sumathi Ramaswamy comments that at least until the early 1960s, the state renaming was linked to a separatist project for creating an independent Tamil nation. In the late 1950s, two political parties called the *Naam Tamilar Katchi* (We Tamils Party) and *Tamil Arasu Kazhagam* was launched whose principal agenda was the founding of a sovereign state of Tamil Nadu out of the Madras Presidency, even conducting state-wide protests in 1960, marked by burning of the Indian map (with Tamil Nadu left out). Observing the exchanges between the Congress at the centre and *Dravida Kazhagam* on this matter, Sumathi Ramaswamy elaborates that "for its devotees, the very "fundamentals" of life and livelihood were invested in Tamil. The honour shown their language by renaming their state after it was far from an incidental matter that would follow after the "basic questions affecting life" had been tended to. For Tamil, as they had repeatedly asserted, was life itself."²²

Considering the history of the attempts of identity assertion of Tamils with respect to the Indian nation, it is essential to explore the presence of such a sentiment towards the Indian Union and the demand for a Tamil Nation in contemporary Tamil Nadu. The *Naam Tamilar Katchi* (which was initially started as *Naam Tamilar Iyakkam*, or We are Tamil Organization) was re-launched by Tamil film director Seeman in 2010.

²⁰Bharathidasan, *Tamilukku Amutenru Per [Tamil, Verily, Is Ambrosia]*, 26. Translation from Ramaswamy, "En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity," 705.

²¹Ramaswamy, *Passions of the Tongue: Language Devotion in Tamil India, 1891-1970*, 110.

²²*Ibid.*, 115.

The resurgence of the party was a direct result of the end of the Civil war in Sri Lanka which caused the death of thousands of Tamil civilians belonging to northern Sri Lanka, and the military subjugation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). In its present form, the *Naam Tamilar Katchi* has declared that their goal is the establishment of a *Tamil Eelam* which they see as their moral duty as well as that of Tamils in Tamil Nadu.²³ Their slogan “Long enough have you lived as an Indian, Long enough have you been a Dravidian, Come back as a Tamilian”,²⁴

There does appear to be a strong resonance with this idea among many Tamilians with support for a Tamil Eelam. Advocate Vijay voices his reasoning- “I am in support for a separate Tamil Nadu. If we unite as Tamilians, caste-ism can be alleviated. But this central Union is cheating Tamilians. The concept of a Tamil Nation is entirely different- it has so many positive cultural aspects, it is socially self-sufficient and we have the natural resources for it in terms of variations in topography, The Tamil nation takes into consideration the origin of the Tamil region right from the Sangam period.”, he says, indicating once again towards the central role of Tamil literature and language in influencing the Tamil consciousness. Returning to make a point about his grievances against the mainstream Indian union, he says “India has given us such a bitter experience when we are crying for our Eelam. I crave for it but they don’t address it. When I am Tamil, how can I love India? We have not been shown courtesy and freedom. This is an independent country, sovereign country. We think that Gandhi ‘*thatha*’ (grandfather), and Nehru ‘*mama*’ (uncle) went nearby to a shop and got independence. But they have not given it to us. In Tamil there is a saying - ‘*vanginen, vanginennasollarel..yaartekuduthel?*’ (You claim, I have got it! I have got! Who have you given it to?). The history of the struggles of Periyar, Bharathi and Bharathidasan have totally been turned and tattered.”

²³“New party to be launched in Tamil Nadu with leaping tiger as its flag” ; 12 April 2010 ; <http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=31531>. Accessed 25/6/15

²⁴The slogan is taken from the official website of the NaamTamilarKatchi where it is oft-couted , especially in the header images. <http://naamtamilar.org/> Accessed 25/6/15

Tamil mother and the *Tamilttay Vazhthu*

In the process of galvanizing the Tamil public, the political and cultural figures indulged in heavy use of rhetoric and lexicon to highlight the intimate value of the Tamil language as the language of the home and of the mother. As Ramaswamy notes, this shift in the representation of language as mother – as *Tamilttay*, as *taymoili* (mother tongue) or as simply *tay* (mother) – surfaced within a colonial context in which image of the Indian woman was shaped to take the position of the authentic, chaste and pure belonging to the domestic space, against the binary of the foreign and alien. The domination of English and its adverse impact on Tamil created the conditions to establish a link between language and the nation. Ramaswamy also argues that this projection of *Tamilttayas* mother and of all Tamilians as siblings bonded together by sharing her womb and milk, allowed for a de-historicizing of the relationships between the Tamilians- displaying it to be timeless and essential. With the melange of these various tropes, *Tamilttay* was not “merely a goddess of learning... (but) goddess of polity as well, as a queen who rules over the Tamil land and community. The power (*sakti*) that adheres to deity in this culture is thus harnessed to constitute devotion allegiance to the language and to the community that is imagined around it.”²⁵

In Tamil literature too, several verses were written in praise of *Tamilttay*, of which a song written by Sundaranar Pillai in 1891 is among the important ones to be considered in the context of the assertion of a Tamil landscape. The song called *NeerarumKadalUdutha* was part of a play called *Manonmaniam* written by Sundaranar Pillai, and was an ode to *Tamilttay*, hence called *Tamilttay Vazhthu* (Invocation to Mother Tamil).

With rivers flowing within and lapped by the sea of the earth,
Your noble face shines bright amidst the Bharatha land
Etched in the Deccan, thou art the respected Dravidian country

²⁵Ramaswamy, “En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity,” 693.

the middle of your forehead is lit by a crescent-moonlike thilagam
the fragrance of that thilak engulfs the whole world and creation
like thy glorious name and fame spreads in every direction
oh Tamil spirit
oh Tamil spirit!
Regarding your glory and majesty, we are mind blown!
Praise to you! Praise to you! Praise to you!

Under a democratic form of government after 1947, this allegiance to the Tamil language was displayed by political leaders in power in Tamil Nadu through various policy measures, of which one was also directly associated with the *Tamilttay Vazhthu*. In 1970, *Neerarum Kadal Udutha* was adopted as the official Tamil Nadu state anthem.²⁶ The order notes that the government took such a step to ensure uniformity in the singing of prayer songs as well as to authorize a hymn that would have no “religious or sectarian association”.²⁷ A set of codes and rules were put in place stating all the times and event when it was mandatory or appropriate to sing the Tamil state anthem – such as in the morning assembly at schools, all civil and military investiture ceremonies in Tamil Nadu state as well as functions in civil ceremonies of Tamil Nadu in other states.

Ever since then, the *Tamilttay Vazhthu* is sung at the beginning of the school assembly every morning in schools in Tamil Nadu. At the end of the assembly or end of the day *Jana Gana Mana* is sung.

Performing complementary and conflicting identities

During this researcher’s field work visit to various educational institutions in Tamil Nadu, the conduct of teachers and students during the morning assembly in their participation in *Jana Gana Mana* and *Tamilttay Vazhthu* was observed and interviews regarding their notions of language, nation and community were also held. From these observations and interviews, some pertinent points regarding the idea of nation and

²⁶Government of Tamil Nadu Order no 1393 (Public) dated June 17, 1970.

²⁷Ramaswamy, “En/Gendering Language: The Poetics of Tamil Identity,” 686.

belonging-ness can be eked out. It is the opinion of this researcher that a centralized or mainstream nationalist education system employed in Tamil Nadu through the years has changed the attitudes of the student and youth population towards Hindi and towards the idea of the mainstream propagated image of a united India. Regular engagement with symbols of the nation-state, especially through the education institutions has evolved a sense of belonging and identification to India among the young Tamilians, and has stymied the notion of Tamil Nadu (or Dravidanadu) as - being in opposition to the Hindi-speaking North India. Nevertheless, an older generation influenced by the *Dravida Kazhagam* or *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam*'s anti-Hindi movement and pro-Tamil sentiment that held sway even till the early 1970s, has retained some of the vision and vigour of the previously mentioned movements. Further, the resentment against alien tongues has also somewhat shifted among the youth, with the reason for animosity being a knowledge of English, which is rooted in unequal access to learning opportunities due to class and caste hierarchies.

With these myriad identities that some find to be conflicting and others complementary, a spectrum of corporeal and affective responses can be found to be evoked by both, *Tamilttay Vazhthu* and *Jana Gana Mana*. The tenuous nature of this dual identity leaves a mark on the body and in the performance of these identities, especially on occasions when both or all of these are harked upon simultaneously or consecutively.

Mr Vijay shares, his deep discomfort on occasions when he is required to engage with the Indian national anthem on numerous occasions in his role as a public figure in the Nilgiris district. Through his statement, he indicates once again towards the structures of governmentality, the conduct of conduct, observed in the event of the national anthem previously. Speaking about the requisite posture for the Indian national anthem, he says, "Yes I do stand up for *Jana Gana Mana* when I am present at events where the anthem is played, but only as a habit and out of compulsion. This year (2014) I had been invited to go to 8 Independence Day programmes on a single day and everywhere the national anthem was played as is customary and everyone stood up as we are habitually conditioned to so many things. Although I don't believe

in it, I stand up because I want to respect people... If I didn't want to go, I wouldn't go. I don't want to create a controversy, so I stand up.”

On the other hand, the *Tamilttay Vazhthu* and other songs of Tamil pride are closer to his heart which he feels organically translates to how his body responds to these songs. Vijay says, “I feel the emotion and braveness in my voice and body when I sing the *Tamilttay Vazhthu* or Bharathidasan's song in praise of Tamil”.²⁸

Another interviewee, Mr Sadasivan (name changed), an Assistant Professor in the Chemistry Department at Government Arts College in Ootacamund (Tamil Nadu)²⁹ expresses similar sentiments of discontent with the Indian nation-state and further, describes the affective imprint he sense from the Tamil state anthem. “*Tamilttay Vazhthu* is sung in my mother tongue so when I sing or hear it, my feelings and emotions are charged. My nerves get charged up and blood circulation increases. Since it is my mother tongue, I also understand it and get excited by it, and this shows in my bodily involvement and presence. This cannot be compared to how I participate in the Indian national anthem. In the case of *Jana Gana Mana*, I go for the Independence Day celebrations but do not actively participate. I stand up, but only casually in a relaxed manner. I don't know the meaning of the anthem but don't wish to find out either. Because it is something being imposed, this makes one feel all the more uninterested in engaging with the Indian national anthem.”

Despite there being a significant population among Tamilians that identify very strongly with the Tamil language and identity and have a negative association with the Indian state, there is also a large population that identifies positively with both these conceptions of space and community. Varied responses come from educators who, as noted in previous chapters, play an active role in orienting students' attitudes towards the nation-state and its symbols.

²⁸Mr Vijay (Advocate), Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher in Tamil and translated to English by the researcher. Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu, August 20, 2014

²⁹Mr Sadasivan (name changed), (Assistant Professor, Chemistry Department, Government Arts College, Ootacamund), Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher in Tamil and translated to English by the researcher. Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu, August 20, 2014

Mrs.Saishree, a teacher at a Primary Government school in Ootacamund³⁰ says, “For me, National anthem is very important, perhaps even more important than *Tamilttay Vazhthu*. I also like *Thayina Manikodi Pareer*, an emotional song which is written by Barathiyar about the Indian flag long before India got independence. This song is also sung regularly in the morning school assembly. Regarding our national anthem, surely we should have a lot of engagement with it. I definitely stand up if I overhear it and make sure our students do so too. The words for *Jana Gana Mana* is in the text books and it is printed in the Tamil script, so students know the national anthem. Teachers have a lot of influence on the students so we need to be an inspiration to them. Since we have this impact, we stress upon the importance of national patriotism, pride and anthem and flag a lot.”

At a secondary and higher secondary Government school in Mukullam in Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu, the teacher saw reason and practicality in changing attitudes towards the language policy³¹. Sivakumar, the maths teacher says, “The national anthem and flag are very important and it is our fundamental duty to respect them. Many think of it as a formality, but we should give it importance, appreciation and attention. At the nation level, I am Indian and at state level I am Tamilian. Only if we give respect to the national anthem, our students will give respect to the anthem.” Interestingly, this school, located in the outer most remote areas of rural Virudhunagar district, hoists the Indian national flag, takes the national pledge and sings the national anthem every day in the morning assembly, similar to the schools in Arunachal Pradesh discussed in Chapter One. This allows one to probe whether systems of developing an allegiance and identification with the nation-state through nation-state symbols, are incorporated much more intensively in rural or remote areas as compared to urban areas. Commenting on the language politics in the state, Lata, the social sciences teacher here further adds, “The Anti-Hindi protests in Tamil Nadu, especially in the 1960s, received a lot of support across Tamil Nadu. But

³⁰MrsSaishree (Teacher Government school, Primary section, Ootacamund), Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher in Tamil and translated to English by the researcher. Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu, August 20, 2014

³¹ Teachers of Government school in Mukullam, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu. Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher in Tamil and translated to English by the researcher. , Tamil Nadu, September 1, 2014

now increasingly the situation is such that we need Hindi and English to get jobs. We now accept English but Hindi still not so much. One could say this has been maintained as such for political convenience. The Central Government also takes several steps that shows that they do not really care about us. For instance, regarding the Teacher's Day that is about to come (2014), they have declared that it will be called 'Guru Utsav'. It is unnecessary for the BJP government to bring in Hindi or Sanskrit into our language by making us call *Asariyar Thinam* (Teacher's day in Tamil) as Guru Utsav. At such times, we remember why we are patriotic about Tamil."

Another teacher at the school, reflects on the affect evoked by the singing of *Tamilttay Vazhthu* and hints at something of how memory and experience plays a role in this process. "Nowadays I think *Tamilttay Vazhthu* is not sung as much as recited. The feeling and intensity of singing this ode to Tamil has also reduced. All the struggles of the Tamil state is something we have experienced or seen with our own eyes while the students have only heard of the stories, so their sentiment and consciousness towards being Tamil has certainly reduced."

Incidentally, as the teacher notes, in this Government school, the students recite the *Tamilttay Vazhthu* akin to a poem, rather than singing it in the official tune. They also join their hands in the *Namaste* gesture, rather than keeping their hands by the side as is the norm practiced in Tamil Nadu.

***Tamilttay Vazhthu* and *Jana Gana Mana*: A corporeal comparison**

During the field work in Tamil Nadu, nine schools located in nine different districts of Tamil Nadu were visited by the researcher, with some schools located in remote villages and others in urban centres. The body posture held while singing the *Tamilttay Thai Vazhthu* was similar to the one held during the singing of the Indian national anthem in terms of the posture held by the torso, the position of the hands, the direction of the gaze and the position of the feet.³² A thick description of the morning

³²The only exception was the Government school in Mukullam in Virudhunagar district outskirts where the posture held during *Jana Gana Mana* and *Tamizh Thai Vazhthu* were different with the students

assembly of one school may be to observe how the participation of the students and the approach of the school management towards the two anthems, might be varied.

Jain Vidyalaya School in Madurai district of Tamil Nadu³³ is attended by a mixed set of students from various linguistic and religious backgrounds such as Marwaris, Gujarati, Hindi, Kutchi, Urdu and Tamilians. Its location in Madurai also makes it significant to note as the city, is closely associated with Tamil language as the Tamil Sangams (congregations of Tamil scholars and poets) are said to have been held here upto the 3rd Century BC. As per the norm, the *Tamil Thai Vazhthu* and *Jana Gana Mana* are sung during the morning assembly, with the latter being played only on Mondays. Students of Class VIII to Class XII gathered for the morning assembly at an open ground in the school premises. Once the students have arranged themselves in queues, the assembly begins with the chanting of 3 *omkars* when the students have their palms closed in a *Namaste* gesture and their eyes closed.

Immediately after that, they sing the *Tamilttay Vazhthu* in unison, with all students, changing their posture- gaze open and forward looking, hands to the side of their body with their palms open, feet together. Although that most of the students in this school do not have Tamil as their mother-tongue, all of them sing the *Tamilttay Vazhthu*. Their pronunciation is remarkably clear and precise according to the limited knowledge and understanding of this researcher. Following the Tamil state anthem, the students automatically as they are habituated change their body posture and the National pledge is taken in unison- with the students keeping their hands horizontally in front of their chest, palms facing downwards, gaze straight and feet together. This was followed by the regular activities of the morning assembly – a prayer, the announcement of the day's news-in-brief, recitation of a *thirukurral* (Sangam literature couplets written by Thiruvalluvar) along with its explanation and a debating competition amongst the senior classes as was programmed for that day. At the end of the assembly, the students who had been sitting on the ground during the competition, are instructed by the principal to stand-at-ease and attention, consecutively a few

holding their hands in a Namaste gesture for the latter and keeping their eyes closed, as is the practice during prayer in Hindu customs.

³³Video documentation by the researcher, SDH Jain Vidyalaya School, Madurai. September 1, 2014

times. Once they have returned to the attention position, they are instructed to begin the national anthem by the Principal. During the singing of the national anthem, the posture of the students is exactly as it is when they sing the Tamil state anthem – hands to the side of their body with open palms, feet together but not in the requisite V-formation, and gaze oriented forward. At the end of *Jana Gana Mana*, the students bow together- something that the researcher observed to be unique to this school.

As instructed by the Tamil Nadu state in the declaration of 1970, the Tamil state anthem is treated as equivalent to the National anthem and the same attention posture is to be maintained for both the anthems. However, the kind of spontaneous corporeal response that is demanded by the national anthem is not found in the case of *Tamilttay Vazhthu*. The manner in which someone who hears the Indian national anthem in her vicinity may immediately stand still, does not happen in the case of the Tamil state anthem. This is an indication towards the comparatively lesser coercive demand of the Tamil state anthem on the citizen's body and thus, further underscores the definite constrain on the body that is imposed and demanded by the Indian national anthem.

Anitha Shantakumar, the Principal of Jain Vidyalaya School³⁴, however, establishes that both the songs are seen as being equally important even if *Jana Gana Mana* may have a broader impact because it is significant all over India unlike *Tamilttay Vazhthu* which is only for Tamil Nadu. At the same time, she felt that the state anthem might tend to be articulated better as students also converse more often in Tamil.

Mrs Shanthakumar's observation is astute, in that, students in all the school that were visited during the field work in Tamil Nadu, incorrectly pronounced or enunciated some verses or words of *Jana Gana Mana*. Some of the commonly heard mispronunciations were '*jalasitaranga*' instead of '*jaladhitaranga*' and '*vidada*' instead of '*vidhata*'. These mispronunciation though often can be attributed to the influences of the mother tongue and differences among the various languages in terms of certain syllables and sounds. However, the incorrect pronunciation also reveals the

³⁴ Anitha Shanthakumar (Principal, SDH Jain Vidyalaya school, Madurai), Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher. Madurai, Tamil Nadu. September 1, 2014

lack of understanding of the students of the meaning of the national anthem. As the meaning or translation is rarely explained in schools, the students end up merely imbibing the bodily mores of participating in the national anthem, but do not know the meaning of what is sung in unison every week, or even every day in some cases.

Imbided docility and evolving identity: Education in Tamil Nadu

The many sets of students that were interviewed in the nine schools and colleges in Tamil Nadu expressed their involvement and attachment to the two anthems and the difference they perceive between the two. As mentioned before, the interviews indicated that the educational institutions in Tamil Nadu have played a role in changing the approach of the present generation of students towards the Indian nation state as compared to the 1970s when the issue of secessionist demands in Tamil Nadu were much more active.³⁵

A student from the Tamil department of the Government Arts College in Ootacamund³⁶ said, “*Tamilttay Vazhthu* is like an ode to Tamil Nadu. It is a language we understand, so we love and respect it. When we say we are Tamilian, we are proud and happy to be born here. At the same time we also respect our national anthem and our nation.” Another student added, “I don’t know the meaning of *Jana Gana Mana*. But the national anthem definitely must be respected. Our leaders got us freedom and as respect to them, we need to pay respect to the anthem. It has been our tradition for many generations.” A third student said, “Tamil Nadu is in India. We don’t see it as separate. We live in Tamil Nadu, Tamil Nadu is in India...It was not Tamil Nadu that got freedom, all of India got it together. Hence, more than Tamil Nadu, we feel proud to say we are Indian.”

While interviewing students from Presidency College (Chennai) who were also NCC cadets, a greater insistence on the need to display patriotism was expressed, not

³⁵The idea of education being used as a means to shape docile bodies and citizens can be understood further from MeenakshiThapan, “‘Docile’ Bodies, ‘Good’ Citizens or ‘Agential’ Subjects : Pedagogy and Citizenship in Contemporary Society,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 41, no. 39 (October 30, 2006): 4195–4203.

³⁶Student, Government Arts College, Ootacamund. Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher. Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu. August 22, 2014

without using the metaphorical language that the Tamil political leaders employed in rousing the Self-Respect movement as well as the anti-Hindi protests.³⁷ “According to me, *Jana Gana Mana* is an opportunity for me to think about what I am doing for my nation. Each citizen should want to work for the nation, and the anthem can be a reminder for that. For me, *Tamilttay Vazhthu* and *Jana Gana Mana* are like my two eyes, both of them being equally precious to me.” “We are emotionally bound to the anthem, ordinary civilians themselves feel proud of the anthem. Then we being NCC cadets, feel even more proud and emotionally moved by the anthem. Whether we are ourselves at an event or even by passing by a school when the national anthem is being played, we need to salute it by standing still in attention posture for the anthem.” “*Tamilttay Vazhthu* is only for Tamilians but *Jana Gana Mana* is showing all of us as equal, as Indians. Different people like different songs. But when it comes to the national anthem, everyone gives it respect. We are Indians even if our mother tongues are different. India is a beautiful vast nation and the anthem is a celebration of that. There is not and there can be no other nation like India.”

Another student here also gives a perspective on the demands for secession in different parts of the country including Tamil Nadu. “Some people are demanding a separate Tamil Nadu, separate Manipur, and separate Mizoram. They are saying that we are not for India. If a sense of patriotism is inbuilt, then India will remain as it is. Separatist ideas can spread from person to person and eventually spread across the nation. If everyone goes their separate ways, then India won't remain what it has become in over 60 years. To prevent this, we should build in the idea of India and pride in this nation. Hence, the national anthem and flag should be a compulsion.”

Identities: Complementary or in conflict?

The interviews of the students and youth of these educational institutions indicate a consciousness among the students of being Tamil and a simultaneous complementary identification with the Indian-state. These complementary identifications are also

³⁷Students, Presidency College, Chennai. Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher. Chennai, Tamil Nadu. August 26, 2014

displayed in their corporeal responses to both, *Jana Gana Mana* and *Tamiltay Vazhthu*. With this finding, it would be essential to question how far the secessionist political impulse of a separate Tamil nation is popularly favoured in the present, and if, as the authors of *Crafting State-nations: Indian and other multinational democracies* suggest, the issue of Tamil separatism that was widely supported till the 1970s is now a non-issue.

In *Crafting State-nations: Indian and other multinational democracies*, the authors Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz and Yogendra Yadav suggest that potential issues of “secessionist nationalism” and secession in Tamil Nadu became non-issues because of a politically strategic decisions and policy-level choices on behalf of the Centre and Tamil Nadu state. The authors attribute this to an idea that the Indian state is not structured as a nation-state where one common culture is propagated and forged within the state. Instead they identify India as a ‘state-nation’ which has “a political-institutional approach that respects and protects multiple but complementary sociocultural identities”³⁸. Based on this definition, the understanding of whether the Indian state is a nation-state or state-nation³⁹ would be varied depending on an individual or community’s subjective experience of the state’s policies. In a later section, we will address how some sections or communities of society refute the declaration that the Indian state respects and protects multiple socio-cultural identities and examine how this is performed through their interaction with symbols of the nation-state.

Examining India as a state-nation and especially focussing on the parallel nationalism in Tamil Nadu, the authors trace some of the reasons for the drastic reduction in the

³⁸Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz, and Yogendra Yadav, *Crafting State-Nations: India and Other Multi-National Democracies* (The John Hopkins University Press, 2011), 4.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 7–8.; The authors of the book use following four empirically verifiable patterns to categorize a state as state-nation. 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, citizens of the state will have multiple but complementary political identities and loyalties. Third, there will be a high degree of institutional trust in the most important constitutional, legal, and administrative components of the state. Fourth, by world democratic standards, there will be a comparatively high degree of positive support for democracy across all of the diverse groups of citizens in the country as well as for the specific state-wide democratic institutions through which the multicultural and possibly multinational polity is governed. They argue that this pattern of governance and interaction among citizens is not pre-existing but all about crafting and is very much an outcome of deliberate policies and designs.

demand for secession in Tamil Nadu. They suggest that while most Tamilians were interested in Tamil cultural-nationalist goals for the region supporting movements that articulated separatist aspirations, there were also many Tamilians who were interested in Indian independence. They also attribute the asymmetric federal structure of the Indian state by constitution, where the state boundaries were drawn according to linguistic lines. Thus, Tamil political leaders and parties that initially made demands for secession such as *Dravida Kazhagam* (DK) and *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (DMK), could not sustain the demand due to the coalitions and support that the regional and national parties were interdependent on for getting adequate seats in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies. By 1959, the DMK had won political control of Madras city by campaigning with demands of a local government over the Congress. However, in dealing with secessionist movements, the centre enjoyed a “no exit” situation due to the lack of external state support for secessionist groups and the inability of external intervention if the centre used force to control such aspirations. The Army which was loyal to the centre was also a strong coercive force in making the secessionist aspirations unfeasible.

Stepan, Linz and Yadav explain that the DMK, not wanting to jeopardize their chances to win control of the state of Madras made a decision to implicitly not explicitly drop their secessionist nationalist aspirations in a closed door meeting in 1960. Emerging as the major opposition in the general election of 1962, the DMK ran as a cultural-nationalist party that had notformally abandoned secessionist nationalism, but did not secessionist demands prominently featuring in its campaign. In 1967, the DMK defeated the Congress Party and won control of the state of Madras. From 1967 on, the DMK never gave up its cultural nationalism, but it did become increasingly integrated into the politics and norms of the Indian federation. The Centre also gave up the recommendation to impose Hindi and remove English as a useable language for the Civil Services Examination as this would have significantly reduced chances of creating opportunities for ‘polity-wide careers and multiple but complementary identities that are so useful in maintaining peaceful and democratic federalism in multinational settings’⁴⁰.

⁴⁰Ibid., 129.

Thus, it appears that after 1971, if the regional cultural-nationalist parties- DMK and AIADMK, made any apparent Tamil nationalist statements or policies, it was to an extent rhetorical and to latently keep the flame of a Tamil consciousness ignited for the vote bank this might attract. On the other hand, both parties have been ‘centric-regional’ due to the political alliances that are forged in the centric-regional incentive system.

The three authors also use surveys such as *National Election Study, 2004* and *State of Democracy in South Asia, 2005* conducted by the Centre for Study of Developing Societies in Delhi, to understand the strength of a conscious Tamil identity in Tamil Nadu with respect to an Indian identity. Their findings depicted in the tables here, show that a greater percentage of Tamilians (34%) adhere to have an “only regional” (Tamil or Dravidian) identity than citizens in other parts of India (12%) holding regional identities. Significantly lesser (24%) of respondents in Tamil Nadu identify as being “Only Indian” as compared to 41% in the rest of India.⁴¹

Five-Point Scale of Identity in Tamil Nadu and the Rest of India, 2005

Identity	Tamil Nadu	Rest of India
Only regional	34	12
More regional than Indian	15	11
Equally Indian and regional	15	22
More Indian than regional	12	14
Only Indian	24	41

Source: SDSA 2005, India main dataset, weighted by state electorate, CSDS Data Unit, Delhi.

Note: “Do not know/no answer” responses are not included. The total number of respondents in Tamil Nadu is 391; for the rest of India, the total number of respondents is 4,811.

Question C-16: “When we ask people as to who they are, we get different answers. Some people say that they are only Indian, while others say they are more Indian and less regional (e.g., Tamil). Some people say they are only Indian, while others say they are as Indian as they are regional (e.g., Tamil). And others say they are more regional and less Indian, while others say they are only regional (e.g., Tamil). How do you identify yourself?”

At the same time, through another set of questions regarding the level of trust on the Central Government, Army and Election Commission, it was revealed that respondents in Tamil Nadu had a greater trust on mechanisms and structures of

⁴¹Table depicting the findings of *State of Democracy in South Asia 2005* conducted by Centre for Study of Developing Societies. *Ibid.*, 136.

governance and were also more satisfied with the way democracy functioned in India than respondents in the rest of India. Respondents in Tamil Nadu saying they had a “great deal of trust” in the central government, army and election commission were 58%, 82% and 49% respectively. This was significantly higher than 30%, 64% and 43% for the same categories in the rest of India. While 35% of the respondents in Tamil Nadu said they were “very satisfied” with the way democracy works in the country, in the rest of India this was only 23%.⁴²

*Levels of Trust in Central Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy,
India and Tamil Nadu, 2005*

Level of trust	Tamil Nadu	Rest of India
Respondents saying that they had a “great deal of trust” in . . .		
. . . the central government	58%	30%
. . . the army	82	64
. . . the Election Commission	49	43
Respondents saying that they were “very satisfied” with the way democracy works in our country	35	23

Source: SDSA 2005, India main dataset, weighted by state electorate, CSDS Data Unit, Delhi.

Note: “Do not know/no answer” responses are not included. Total number of respondents in Tamil Nadu is 391; in the rest of India, 4,811. The exact N varies slightly for each question because of some missing cases.

Questions:

C-13a: “How much trust do you have in the Central Government?”

C-13f: “How much trust do you have in the Army?”

C-13j: “How much trust do you have in the Election Commission?”

C-12: “On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in our country—very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, totally dissatisfied?”

Based on these results, the writers conclude that despite having a very strong “only Tamil” self-identification, respondents in Tamil Nadu were also deeply integrated into the Indian political system. Stepan, Linz and Yadav also cited the high degree of recognition of political leaders (such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru) and of shared symbols that forged the Tamil community as being part of the Indian political community.

⁴²Table depicting the findings of State of Democracy in South Asia 2005 conducted by Centre for Study of Developing Societies. Ibid.

This sense of belonging and loyalty to the Indian state, and the idea of being citizens of India as now being an established notion is reflected even among the respondents from the educational institutions of Tamil Nadu who were interviewed during this researcher's fieldwork. A desire for self-determination and sovereign territory for Tamilians, though it may exist in the form of a political party, is increasingly seen as being a political manoeuvre for power. Education policies and various aspects of the structure of governance, has culled alternative nationalist motivations for secession and has developed a sense of belonging to multiple but complementary identities. Thus, as much as students identify as being Tamil, they also identify with being an Indian citizen.

This identification and sense of belonging is corporeally performed by positively engaging with symbols of the nation-state, such as the national anthem and national flag, which the political leaders of Tamil Nadu state previously denounced. It is also through idioms of the body that the idea of a homogenous Indian state is found ruptured when a parallel identity consciousness symbolized by an anthem, such as the *Tamilttay Vazhthu*, is treated with reverence in the same manner as the Indian national anthem. The few other states in India that have its own state anthem are Andhra Pradesh (*Maa Telugu Talliki*), Telangana (*Jaya jaya he Telangana*), Karnataka (*Jaya Bharatiya Jananiya Tanujate*), Kerala (*Vanjibhoomi*), Assam (*O Mur ApunurDesh*) and Orissa (*Bande Utkala Janani*) - all the states in South India having their own state anthem. Although these state anthems mirror the popular *Bharat mata* imagery, there is still a well-developed consciousness of an alternative identity and the anthem can be read as an assertion of this identity. Such an assertion, a rupture, seeks to be investigated and demands questions about the layered nature of 'Indian-ness' of one who is considered to be an Indian citizen while simultaneously adhering to parallel regional identities and her acceptance in the Indian polity.

To be a citizen and performing citizenship

Codes regarding how one can participate in or engage with national emblems such as the anthem and the flag are declared in the Constitution. The constitution, while it derives its authority from the people of India, also lays down a code of conduct and a

set of protocols, granting rights to and demanding duties from the citizens of India. For the official and judicial role it plays in the structure of international law and politics, the category of the 'citizen' is purported and assumed to be a neutral entity, rather than one who possesses layered social and cultural identities and political affinities that are in flux. In *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*, even as Kymlicka and Norman attempt to address the idea of citizenship within multicultural politics, one can trace how citizenship is assumed to be cultureless. Referring to the scholarship of William Galston on citizenship, the authors suggest that "responsible citizenship" should be understood as made up of four distinct types of civic virtues: 1) general virtues: courage, law-abidingness, loyalty; 2) social virtues: independence, open-mindedness; 3) economic virtues: work ethic, capacity to delay self-gratification, adaptability to economic and technological change; and, finally, 4) political virtues: capacity to discern and respect the rights of others, willingness to demand only what can be paid for, ability to evaluate the performance of those in office, and willingness to engage in public discourse.⁴³

In India too, there is a non-neutral, culturally socially and politically-laden image of who or what constitutes an ideal citizen. The citizen who is legally constituted a set of rights through the constitution is expected to be a patriotic loyal subject who would be willing to even sacrifice her life for the nation. Having said this, it would be imperative to note that even among all those who would be included in this last category are not accorded equal status in a country where an individual's movements are manoeuvred by considerations of religion, caste, class, gender, sexuality among several other divisions. 'Citizenship is constituted through the exclusion of cultural others; the cultural other creates the citizen through contrast and negation. The borders of citizenship are always patrolled, whether these borders are national or normative ones that admit and exclude on the basis of behaviour — and so some are always excluded, whether for territorial, moral, or cultural reasons.'⁴⁴

⁴³Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, *Citizenship in Diverse societies*, (Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁴⁴LetiVolpp, "The Culture of Citizenship," *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 8, no. 2 (July 2007): 16.

Systems of inclusion and exclusion through the notion of the ideal citizen are evident in everyday practice and lived experiences indicating one's nation-ness. The national anthem is also one such event, that demands a codified corporeal performative response that is required to be followed by all citizens and yet, through the same act, highlights difference. Rukmini Bhaya Nair indicates towards this ally between citizenship and the event of the national anthem. "A national anthem abounds in cues about 'membership' because it works on a principle of exclusion. Some belong by virtue of birth, others don't. One recalls at this point the Latin root *nasci* (to be born) of the word 'nation'. The nation is, as it were, the scene or setting of a rebirth – an individual's second birth as a citizen."⁴⁵ At this point it would be pertinent to add that the individual subject has to prove her citizenship repeatedly and at every occasion. As has been discussed earlier in a previous chapter, any deviation from the codified norm of participating in the playing or singing of the anthem or its language, is seen as an anti-national seditious act, directly relating this to their value as a citizen of India.

Performing ruptures in the nation

The national anthem and other nation-state symbols, then, have also become tools for oppressed communities and identities to highlight the fact of unequal citizen statuses prevalent in India. For instance, on August 15, 2012, the residents of Kendaiyur in Mettupalayam Taluka raised black flags on the roofs and outside their houses instead of raising the Indian tricolour flag. For several years before this, the residents of this area, a remote rural part of Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu inhabited by a Scheduled Caste community have been requesting the government authorities to provide basic amenities like such as toilets and urinals. Being subject to caste atrocities, oppression and discrimination, the people in the area remain unequipped to be able to build toilets in their own houses and hence have been requesting for the building of public toilets. However, these requests had been neglected by the government and even with the changing of governments in the last 40 years, Kendaiyur has not had access to basic amenities such as sanitation and toilet facilities. This had forced them to defecate in the open, which was also the reason for the high incidence of diseases

⁴⁵Rukmini Bhaya Nair, "Singing a Nation into Being," *India Seminar*, 2001.

such as malaria, typhoid and cholera here. To protest against this discriminatory practice dictated by caste and to make themselves heard, the residents tied black flags on the roofs of their houses on August 15, instead of the Indian tricolour as is the practice on Independence Day. The symbol of a black flag has been used in Tamil Nadu as a symbol of protest for several decades now. Black flags and black shirts were first initiated as a protest tool in Tamil Nadu by members of the *Dravida Kazhagam* and was also used in the anti-Hindi protests. The colour black was chosen for its association with death and bad luck to mock the saffron colour symbolic of the Hindu religious leaders and priests.

Thus, the residents of Kendaiyur, by using a flag for their protest, used a lexicon of the nation-state on a day that was symbolic to the nation-state- a day that marks the anniversary of the nation gaining independence - when every citizen is expected to participate in celebrations and recall a limited and biased account of the movement for independence. Through this act of raising the black flag and participating as a citizen, but in a tangential manner, the protestors of Kendaiyur thereby retrieved the debate on the meaning of independence and citizenship. Mr Rajagopalan, a youth who initiated the black flag protest here commented on the motive behind the black flag protest and how it symbolized the community's grievances. "It has been 68 years since this country got independence, and yet the government has not been able to provide us with such basic facilities, leaving us to live in inhuman conditions. To highlight this discrimination and oppression that has continued for years on part of the Indian state and its political representatives here, we raised black flags to draw attention to our plight as lesser citizens. It was a last minute decision and we had do this stealthily at around 6am. Had we already announced that we were going to protest with a black flag, the police would have stopped us because there isn't any freedom to speak out against injustice here. The black flag is a symbol that identifies our disappointment with the government. It was only after our protest that the police and the local ward councillor arrived there to find out what the reason for our protest was and also told us that to raise a black flag on Independence Day was illegal."⁴⁶Rajagopalan also states further that in this particular area, they have never celebrated Independence Day or

⁴⁶Mr Rajagopalan (Youth leader, Mettupalayam) , Quote from interview conducted by researcher in Tamil and translated to English by researcher. Mettupalayam. August 18, 2014

Republic Day with a flag hoisting ceremony as the people here have always felt that although the country has achieved independence, they themselves have not got independence from oppression of the caste system –be it for access to education or work opportunities, especially for Dalits. On this occasion when they raised a black flag and shared their grievances, the political authorities promised to resolve them, which remain unresolved even a year on.

Another recent incident when a black flag was raised on Independence Day was in Idinthikarrai, the fishing hamlet that is as the centre of the protests against the Kudankullam nuclear plant in Tamil Nadu. The villagers have been protesting against the power plant since 1998 as it poses a great threat to their safety and has also affected their livelihood by allegedly driving fish away from the area. Since 2011, the villagers escalated the level of their protests by staging what they called a *Jal Satyagraha* with organizations such as People’s Movement Against Nuclear Energy (PMANE) also shaping the protests. On August 15, 2012, the villagers of Indinthikarrai, tied black flags on their houses to protest against the building and operation of the nuclear power plant which is 2kms away from the village. As part of the protest, they also all brought out their ration cards and election voters identification to give away to the police or burn. Eventually the identification cards were taken back by the protestors. J. Sundari, one of the protestors here, shared the significance of this act. “Politicians seem to be coming to our hamlet only to ask for votes. But they haven’t heeded our protests and requests. We still do not have the right to say yes or no to something in India, even something that affects us so intimately. Here, there is no value for our life and the way we live or if we live at all. How do we feel a sense of belonging and responsibility for our country then? How is this independence? It is an India for politicians, for their progress and growth and for them to hoist flags. As a protest, we wanted to stage the disposal of our identification cards because these are symbols that mark us as citizens of India. These are the cards through which we participate in governance. The present situation makes us want to give this up. But if they ask who we are. we will say we are Indian. Who is *Nadu*? It is the people who make *nadu*. But there is no freedom for people here. It is only for privileged. But for that we cannot refuse that we are Indian or disrespect the leaders who fought for the country’s independence. So we sing *Jana Gana Mana* on

Independence Day. But we have some grievances. If I can't express my grievance, then what grade of a citizen am I? Now ever since we have started protesting we have understood what is politics and what is *nadu*.”⁴⁷

This incident at Mettupalayam and Kudankullam is an indication of the manner in which citizens engage with tools of the nation-state and participate with governance, to draw attention to unequal living conditions and discriminatory treatment that various oppressed communities suffer from. Yet, when these nation-statist symbols are used as a tool for protest, they become restricted to being a tool for dialogue with the Indian nation-state to bargain for better citizenship rights. They fail to transcend towards and challenge the discourse of the nation itself, as citizenship itself as a concept, belongs to the discourse of a world of nations, in the present time. One may say, that the omnipresent structure of nationhood and citizenship, largely limits the aspiration for emancipation. This reflects in Rajagopalan's statement regarding the Indian nation-state and the subject of Tamil nationalism,. “Even though we protest in a manner that might be against the laws of the Indian state and insulting to its emblems, we only wish to draw attention to our condition through these acts. We are very proud to be Indians and only wish for us to be treated as equals with any other citizen of the country. We do believe in a united India. Ofcourse, we love our Tamil, but know that even if there is a secessionist movement and a Tamil nation is formed, the Brahminical structure of society will still prevail even in that Tamil nation and we will continue to be oppressed. This oppression will continue even if India is broken into a hundred territories. Hence, it will be best if reforms are carried out at a pan-India, at a policy level as well as at the level of lived social condition. ” This was an opinion that was reflected in most of the conversations and interviews this researcher conducted of persons belonging to the Scheduled Tribe and Dalit community.

Such inequalities in social condition are also evident in the treatment meted out to the minority religious communities. A flourishing fundamentalist Hindutva regime has, with legitimate reasons, further increased the insecurities of the minority religions, thereby creating a state of fear. These anxieties are evident in the several interviews

⁴⁷Mrs J Sundari (Protestor, Kudankullam, Tirunelveli) , Quote from interview conducted by researcher in Tamil and translated to English by researcher. Kudankullam. September 3, 2014

conducted of several members of various minority communities, who in the two months after the Bharatiya Janata Party coming to power in May 2014, were already beginning to feel repercussions of a latent Hindu dominance. Ibrahim is a Muslim from Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu who works as a wage worker but on the occasion of Independence Day every year, sells paraphernalia related to mark this day such as India's national flag in various materials and in various sizes. He says, "It is important for people to remember the martyrs who helped this great nation of ours gain independence. I feel that I would like to participate in making people remember this invaluable past and this is why I sell goods such as national flags and other paraphernalia in the days around August 15 every year. I also feel very proud to be singing the national anthem on this day."⁴⁸

It was only off-record that in a long conversation Ibrahim shared his insecurities about the new government considering the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's compliance in the 2002 Godhra riots in Gujarat. Another Muslim youth, Salim(name changed) from Mettupalayam who was soon going to begin his job as a professor also shared his anguish about the communal nature of even very practical representations of the country such as in the case of the Indian cricket team. "The Indian cricket team has maximum Brahmins, or north Indians. The selection process appears to be as per the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's ideology. There is no player from the minority community-no Christian, Buddhist, Muslim....one Muslim actually Mohammad Sami who will be removed in the next match. In some ways I even feel happy when India loses. (Mahender Singh) Dhoni is like a nationally identified idol and ideally all the players should be neutral. But they are not. After a match victory they go straight to Tirupati. The media plays a big role in focusing on unnecessary things and not on what is important. Manual scavenging is still a reality and so often Dalits are forced to live in dumping grounds in the most inhuman conditions. They don't mix with society because they are scared that they will be killed. There is no support from the Constitution. It feels like India is for upper caste upper class Hindus...no one else really, not for any minorities, SC, ST, or any oppressed community."⁴⁹

⁴⁸Mr Ibrahim (Flag seller, Coimbatore) , Quote from interview conducted by researcher in Tamil and translated to English by researcher. Coimbatore. August 14, 2014

⁴⁹MrSalim(name changed)(Youth leader, Mettupalayam) , Quote from interview conducted by researcher in Tamil and translated to English by researcher. Mettupalayam. August 18, 2014

When such contentions are raised, Bhikhu Parekh's comments on the structure of a multicultural society are foregrounded as relevant- Individuals enjoying citizenship rights and officially being accepted as an equal member of society through identity cards or licenses, may still feel like they do not belong to it. When the cultural ethos or the manner in which the community defines themselves is not given sufficient place in a particular society, it fails to generate a sense of moral and emotional identification with co-existing community. 'Belonging is about full acceptance and feeling at home, and justice, which is about rights and interests, satisfies only one of its preconditions.'⁵⁰

“Citizenship as membership of a state only assigns a particular person to a particular nation whose existence is recognized in terms of international law. This definition of membership serves, along with the territorial demarcation of the country's borders, the purpose of a social delimitation of the state. In democratic states, which understand themselves as an association of free and equal citizens, membership depends on the principles of voluntariness. Here, the usual ascriptive characteristics of domicile and birth (*ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*) by no means justify a person being irrevocably subjected to the sovereign authority of that country. They function merely as administrative criteria for attributing to citizens an assumed, implicit concurrence, to which the right to emigrate or to renounce one's citizenship corresponds. Today, however, the expression '*Staatsburgerschaft*' or 'citizenship' is not only used to denote membership of a state, but also for a status defined by civil rights.’⁵¹

From these experiences of citizenship one realizes that though the Indian nation-state claims its territories and the citizens in it, the experience of this citizenship is not equal for everyone in the state. India and her neighbouring nation-states are knit

⁵⁰Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Macmillan Press, 2000), 237.

⁵¹Jürgen Habermas, “Citizenship and National Identity,” in *The Condition of Citizenship*, Politics and Culture (Sage Publications, 1994), 27.

together with complex histories and for several centuries have also had groups migrating internally or across national borders - some by choice and others by force. With some communities in exile and some living as refugees for decades together, a nuanced understanding of the notions of identity, homeland, territory, citizenship and belonging seeks to be framed.

Belonging in flux

In a world of nations, it would be imperative to address the lack on part of the existing understanding of citizenship, to articulate notions that fall within the sensitive realm of belonging to a place. In India, there are several communities that live as refugees. With several decades of cohabitation with the local Indian community, the communities who live as refugees or in-exile and the Indian community have undergone a marked amount of integration.

However, it is when symbols of the Indian nation-state are evoked or engaged with, that the refugee has to prove her loyalty to the Indian state. On these occasions there is limited or no space to enunciate the complex ideas of belonging.

In Tamil Nadu, for instance, there are lakhs of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living in numerous refugee camps. With some of the refugees having come to India in 1983 and having lived with and among Indians, many even being born here, some questions of belonging and citizenship are relevant here- what may it mean to be Tamil but not Indian? Does living among Indian Tamils make one Indian enough? What does the Tamil language mean to a Sri Lankan Tamil and is it different from the value of Tamil for Indian Tamilians? How does a Sri Lankan Tamil value the *Tamil Thai*, a derivation of the image of *Bharat mata*?

When this researcher visited a 19 year old Sri Lankan Tamils' refugee camp in Mettupalayam, teachers and students of a government school in the area were interviewed. Panchayat Union Middle School in a remote part of Mettupalayam is located close to the refugee camp and hence 75% of its students are Sri Lankan Tamils. In this school, *Jana Gana Mana* is sung twice a day- once in the morning assembly and once at the end of the day. During an interview with a group of Sri

Lankan Tamil students, they shared, “We have never wondered why we are singing *Jana Gana Mana*. We feel that this is our *nadu*. That is what we have been taught to do by teachers.”⁵² One of the students vaguely knew the Sri Lankan national anthem as he had lived in Sri Lanka as a young boy, but he had forgotten the anthem at the time of the interview.

When the teachers were probed on their role in assimilating the Tamil students of the two countries through various state apparatuses and about the presence of a Sri Lankan identity among the students, their responses and observations were thus. “There isn’t much patriotism for India among the Sri Lankan students here. This could be because of the difficult conditions they live in. They sing *Jana Gana Mana* by habit, but they don’t understand it. They just take it as a prayer song, so of course there is some emotion.” More teachers added - “99% of the Sri Lankan Tamil students in this school are born in India. So there should be an attachment to the land. Yet, the students from the camp are conscious of their Sri Lankan identity because of their parents’ constant reminder and desire to return to Sri Lanka one day. They carry their parents’ memory of their homeland who are literally waiting for the day when they will be allowed to return back. We, as teachers have spoken to the parents very often requesting them to not poison their child’s mind by creating separatist tendencies, and we emphasized on the education facilities that we provide here.”⁵³

As an example of how deeply this desire for the homeland and the need to gain a concrete identity prevails and is displayed when engaging with nation-state symbols was also shared by a teacher. “For Republic Day celebrations, when the students were practicing a Indian nationalist song, we asked them to sing with a sense of *veeram*. (bold/heroic). When the students went back home and practiced singing there, their parents asked their child to think of Rajapaksa [the president of Sri Lanka at the time of interview] to induce *veeram* while singing.”⁵⁴ Mahinda Rajapaksa, who has been

⁵²Student and resident of Sri Lankan Tamils’ refugee camp in Mettupalayam , Quote from interview conducted by researcher in Tamil and translated to English by researcher. Mettupalayam. August 18, 2014

⁵³Teacher at school with Indian Tamil and Sri Lankan Tamil students, Mettupalayam , Quote from interview conducted by researcher in Tamil and translated to English by researcher. Mettupalayam. August 18, 2014

⁵⁴Ibid.

allegedly involved in several war crimes against Sri Lankan Tamils and the killing of LTTE leaders, was a subject of hatred for Sri Lankan Tamils, and even while engaging in nation-state symbols of the Indian state, their reference point appears to be of their experience as a Sri Lankan Tamil.

Through interactions with the various communities that were engaged with in the course of this research, it was apparent that citizenship to a nation-state and even the development of civic virtue along the lines of that nation-state, does not necessarily reflect on the sense of belonging. Belonging-ness is layered and fluid, fluctuating and shifting with context and time.

Mr Surendran, who runs an alternative education school attended mostly by the local tribal children at Gudalur, a taluka in Nilgiris district says, “ Among all the tribes that inhabit Gudalur, including the Mullakurumba tribe that I belong to, the understanding of where one belongs has very less to do with official borders. Someone who belongs to a tribe, feels that he belongs to the land, the soil, the forest and rivers. This is beyond the meaning and requirements of an official border that only categorizes responsibilities of governance. The benefits of this government do not reach us-the scheduled tribes- in any case.”⁵⁵ The 10 year old students at the school in Nilgiris of which Mr Surendran was part of did not know either *Jana Gana Mana* or *Tamilttay Vazhthu*. But they did know songs in their own tribal dialects apart from songs in the many Indian and foreign languages that the teachers who visit the school had taught them. When the question of feeling and affect through the medium of songs was demanded of them, they unanimously said that they were moved with joy when they sang a song in their own dialect.

It is only a matter of time that notions of identity will solidify enough for them to be articulated in the language of governance and citizenship. Veritably one may say that in India and across the world, ‘there are states waiting to be communities and there

⁵⁵MrSurendran (Teacher, Vidyodaya school, Gudalur), Quote from interview conducted by researcher in Tamil and translated to English by researcher. Gudalur. Nilgiris. August 2, 2014

are communities waiting to be states'⁵⁶. Mr Vijay, a lawyer and activist in Ootacamund shared in an interview, "I am going to fight for the declaration of Nilgiris as a Union territory. It has its own biosphere, its own individual qualities and features. There are 6-8 tribal communities that need protection and we are working for this cause. We want to be unique without disturbing anyone."⁵⁷

Belonging and community-hood are in a state of flux – both internally for individuals and externally according to the power shifts among and within nation-states. The citizens and subjects who experience these shifts, express their own mediations and affiliations corporeally by engaging with symbols of the nation-state. Performative acts to express notions of belonging and nationhood become a mode of negotiation between the citizens and the state, as well as among citizens itself.

This can be traced in the incidents surrounding the agreement between India and Bangladesh in June 2015 to exchange the enclaves that each nation-state has within the other's territory. According to the agreement, India would take over most of the 92 Bangladeshi exclaves in India and Bangladesh would take over most of the 106 Indian exclaves in Bangladesh. After over four decades of attempts at disentangling the complex territorial rights over a complex land agreement dating back to 1713, the inhabitants of these enclaves – more than 50000 together – may somewhat find an anchor in their citizenship status and sense of belonging that has been incongruous thus far. To celebrate this possibility, the inhabitants of both, the Bangladeshi enclaves as well as Indian enclaves chose to a performatively display their allegiance to their respective new nation-states, by physically engaging with nation-state symbols. The residents of Mosaldanga, an exclave of Bangladesh that will soon be part of India after this pact, marched down the main market there, waving Indian national flags and shouting slogans such as "*Bharat Mata ki jai*".⁵⁸ There were similar

⁵⁶These words are a statement shared by Late Prof MSS Pandian as he quoted a student while discussing ideas on nationhood during a lecture in the Course titled 'Caste, Community and Culture' in 2012 in the Centre for Historical Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

⁵⁷Mr Vijay (Advocate), Quotes from Interview conducted by the researcher in Tamil and translated to English by the researcher. Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu, August 20, 2014

⁵⁸Mehboob Jeelani, 'Homeless, no longer'; The Hindu; June 16, 2015;

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/homeless-no-longer/article7318972.ece> Accessed 2/7/15

incidents in the Indian exclaves in Bangladesh where residents hoisted the Bangladeshi national flag.⁵⁹

The inhabitants performed such visceral performative acts, even before they were officially given citizenship. From statelessness when they went to belongingness, the *feeling* of belonging was immaterial because they belonged to *that* land and that land alone already, and only now their belonging would be acknowledged by the state. In a way, through these performative acts, the soon-to-be citizens of India and Bangladesh also had to prove their allegiance to the respective nation-states.

Where on one hand, these nation-state symbols are used as a celebration, they are also used to display ruptures in the nation where citizenship is forced upon those who possess a distinguished sense of belonging. For instance, on June 17th 2013 the students and some faculty members of Kashmir University refused to stand up for the Indian national anthem where the former Chief Justice of India Altmas Kabir was visiting to address the faculty and students of the Law department.⁶⁰ Remaining seated as *Jana Gana Mana* was played, they found a symbolic way to express their struggle against the oppression and brutality that is part of the Indian-state's imposition of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in Kashmir.

These are not just mere mechanical stagings of citizenship. They are proclamations, deeply personal meaningful affective statements of who one *is* and who one identifies with. Whether ruptures or affiliations, there is need to garner a vocabulary to adequately express the spectrum of identities an individual could possess. A performance studies approach along with theorizations and approaches from political science, international relations and social sciences could be used to shape this nuanced understanding of the fissured everyday life in the present system of nations.

⁵⁹Stephen Uttom in Bangladesh and ucanews.com reporters in India; 'For residents of border enclaves, an end to statelessness in sight'; ucanews.com; June 23, 2015; <http://www.ucanews.com/news/for-residents-of-border-enclaves-an-end-to-statelessness-in-sight/73817> Accessed 2/7/15

⁶⁰Press Trust of India, 'Kashmir univ students remain seated during national anthem'; June 17, 2015; http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/kashmir-univ-students-remain-seated-during-national-anthem-113061700735_1.html Accessed 2/7/15

The national anthem in India evokes various kinds of performative responses - affirmation as well as contestation of the idea of India - that are each indicative of the shifting diverse identities and sentiments among its people. Nevertheless, any passage this evolving nation may take, ought to be subject to interrogation, by not just how nationhood and citizenship is declared in terms of civic legislations but also how it is practiced in everyday life.

CONCLUSION

In 1950, soon after India was declared a republic, a question was raised in Parliament: “Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to share what are the national anthems of India?”¹ In the wake of independence from colonial rule and with the process of nation building just having begun, the phrasing of this question hints at a very different socio-political humanistic consciousness prevalent at the time – that there could possibly be *several* anthems of India.

The question here, articulated by a casual use of the plural form, indicates the broad dimensions of how the concept of the nation was imagined in its nascence. There was no assumption that there had to be just one national anthem – there could be two, a few or many anthems to celebrate the lands and its peoples, so there could be many anthems for the many Indias. Rabindranath Tagore, who authored *Jana Gana Mana*, shared this pluralism in vision. In a lecture on nationalism in India delivered as early as 1916, he said, “It is my conviction that my countrymen will gain truly their India by fighting against that education which teaches them that a country is greater than the ideals of humanity.”²

The mere thought of such a pluralism may bring forth a porousness in the perspectives and possibilities that breathe through the idea of India as a nation. However, in the 65 years of existing as a republic, the national flag has been raised and the national anthem has been sung countless times every day across the nation-state and in these countless rehearsals of performing citizenship, this vision of humanistic plurality in the Indian nation has gradually been lost. The present dissertation, by excavating the solidified notions of how nationhood and citizenship are expected to be practiced, intends to retrieve a piece of this fantasy.

The dissertation began with an understanding that the nation-state, although not conspicuously present in our rushed everyday life, has deep repercussions on how the polity conducts itself as citizens and how it regards the omnipresent authority of the

¹ National Archives of India, F. No. 15/25/50-Public. Question in the parliament of India regarding national anthem. Notice received in Parliament on 27/2/1950 by Satish Chandra Samanta

²Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1918), 106.

nation-state. The state does not merely grant citizens' rights and duties or influence their political sovereignty, but infects the very fibre of the individual's being – the body and mind of the citizenry. By influencing and controlling the behaviour of the citizen's body and thereby disciplining their political thought through various nation-state practices, the state ultimately bars the possibilities of even an inkling of a revolution. In this dissertation, the practice of the national anthem in India was used as an entry-point to engage with this understanding of the intimate role of the nation-state in the lives of the citizenry. Performativity is embedded within the body in the case of the national anthem, where the citizen is unable to be a mere spectator, but is required to participate and act in the production of the nation.

Examining the national anthem in India today through the lens of performance studies allowed for an understanding of its practice beyond its historical genealogy, legal implications, or sociological significance. A performance studies approach used in this research provided the tools and vocabulary to inspect the manner in which the national anthem attempts to knit a homogenous canvas of nationhood and citizenship by evoking a patriotic ideal, and thereby masks spectrum-ed and nuanced perceptions of community-hood.

Chapter one examined the colonial militaristic roots of the practice of the national anthem in India, to trace it to the strict corporeal conduct of standing in attention posture it demands of the citizen today. Various judicial engagements with the anthem were unpacked to understand contemporary perceptions towards this symbol of the nation-state. The orders related to the national anthem of India issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs and other laws that regulate how citizens may participate with the anthem were also examined to comprehend how the state sets its limits on the range of responses to the anthem. This chapter traced the inculcation of this corporeal discipline to institutional spaces such as educational institutions and state/civic investiture ceremonies. The morning assembly in some schools in Delhi were closely observed to unpack the systems of governmentality that govern this space, thereby allowing for further entrenchment of corporeal habitudes and establishment of the notion of Indian-ness. The performative display of this Indian-ness is made visible in engagements with the anthem in public spaces such as cinema halls in Mumbai and

celebrations of Independence Day and Republic Day. The participation with the anthem in these spaces was analysed to eke out how constant interactions with symbols of the nation-state are used to emotionally integrate the heterogeneous polity who are offered one dominant narrative of the nation.

Chapter two probed the affective imprints left by the singing or playing of the national anthem – emphasising that it is not a static entity but an active agent that emotionally and viscerally imbues the space where it is sung as well as those present in the space. The impact of the national anthem in spaces of contestation where the people of two or more nations may encounter one another, such as sports matches or the India-Pakistan Beating Retreat at the Wagah-Attari border were examined in this chapter. Here, I also examined the territorial identification that the national anthem in such spaces of contestation momentarily evokes, hence creating an instantaneous bond of a national community while erasing alternative narratives of territorial affinity. This chapter used the anthem as a seed to investigate the alternative cartographic imaginations of citizens who are outside the disciplinary purview of the educational institutions that play a major role in inculcating the idea of the nation. The interviews and oral histories considered here brought to light that there could be variegated definitions of the nation for each individual and hence there could be non-synchronous territorial identifications that supersede the affinities to the official territorial contours of the Indian nation-state.

Interested in examining the manifestations of nationalism in India, chapter three explored the expressions of an alternative nationalism in Tamil Nadu. The language politics in India as well as the enhanced pride in the Tamil language that was generated through the political movements within the state were studied in this chapter to understand the significance of the secessionist demands for a separate Tamil nation and of the state declaring a state anthem of its own in 1970. The corporeal practice and affective tremor of this anthem called *Tamilttay Vazhthu*, which is sung every day in schools and in state legislature functions in the southern state, was examined for its performative essence. This was compared to the performance of school students of the *Jana Gana Mana* to understand the levels of corporeal discipline that either anthem might induce. This chapter also delved into

how sections of society that have different unequal experiences of citizenship and belonging in India contest the nation-state with a performative engagement with the national anthem and other symbols of the nation-state.

Throughout this dissertation, the Indian national anthem was used as a starting point to initiate a reconsideration of the role and position of the nation in the lives of the citizenry. The centrality of the nation-state in modern society is not something that can be singularly contested or overturned in the present system of a world of nations. However, forms of governance, state practices and institutions that are oppressive, or which perpetuate inequality and restrict any possibility for change, need to be critiqued.

The potential and open avenue for change has been the central impulse for this research. Even in practices such as the national anthem, which may only seldom be a part of citizens' everyday lives, one finds that inequalities in society become visible. In chapter one, this research discussed the situation of the president of a village administration in Tamil Nadu, a Dalit lady who has been barred from hoisting the national flag during national day celebrations by the upper-caste community in her village. This highlights the intrinsic caste-based discrimination in the nation-state, where despite being brought to a position of authority through a system of reserved constituencies, change in the social sphere is yet to occur. When a community is still unable to accept a Dalit body hoisting the national flag, then the act of singing an anthem in unison – as one nation – becomes mere tokenism. The recent revival of the demand to change the lyrics of the *Jana Gana Mana* by the Governor of Rajasthan³ pleads for a moment of reflection by those in government roles, to shift the focus of their concerns to the existing hierarchical feudal structures prevalent in India. The

³The Governor of Rajasthan Kalyan Singh demanded that the word '*adhinayaka*' be changed to '*mangal*' as the former is in praise of King George V. This is demand that has been consistently raised since the days of the Hindutva campaign against the Babri Masjid in the 1980s. It may be noted that it is under Kalyan Singh's chief ministership that the Babri Masjid was demolished in Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh) in 1992.

Ram Puniyani, "National Anthem 'Adhinayaka' debate: It's not about King George", The Indian Express, July 11, 2015 <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka-its-not-about-king-george/>. Accessed 15/7/15.

Scroll Staff, "What explains the return of the 104-year-old controversy about Tagore and the national anthem?", Scroll.in, July 8, 2015 <http://scroll.in/article/739703/what-explains-the-return-of-the-104-year-old-controversy-about-tagore-and-national-anthem>. Accessed 15/7/15.

mere change of the words in the national anthem from ‘*adhinayaka*’ to ‘*mangal*’ will certainly not change the social system that humiliates the afore-mentioned Dalit village president every year.

However, symbols such as the national anthem can be used affirmatively and to increase a sense of belonging among all people. For instance, the anthem South Africa adopted in 1997 after the end of the apartheid regime employs lyrics in five of the country’s eleven official languages. Importantly, this anthem is a hybrid of English lyrics, along with 'Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika' (*God Bless Africa*) and 'Die Stem van Suid-Afrika' (*The Call of South Africa*) – the former being a hymn that black South Africans were singing during apartheid as a song of independence and resistance, the latter being a song in the language of white South Africans, who were the oppressors. When the new national anthem was introduced, both groups had to learn each other’s tongue and embrace – in unison – the very words that were formerly the language of their ‘enemy’. While the unequal living standards of the populations of either race in the country were not ignored in this act of singing together, the process of learning and singing the anthem itself became a means to heal, forgive and learn about the cultural other living in the same country as a co-citizen.

The same cannot be said about India, where the idea of nationhood and citizenship – indeed the image of an ideal Indian – is too rigid to initiate a genuine synthesis in knowledge systems that could bring about social equality. In a multicultural society such as India, there is an urgent need for a possibility for change and a pluralistic attitude – not just in terms of public perception but also vis-à-vis governance and policy. The national anthem thus could be a starting point to incorporate this idea of synthesis and pluralism with a conscious attempt to destabilize the dominant systems of power. With the gradual political saffronization, increased religious fundamentalism and a surge in violent nationalism in India, this consciousness is urgently desired. Who is Indian and how is Indian-ness to be performed? Are there *other* ways it may be performed and still be accepted? What makes a community and where do one’s allegiances lie between the community and the nation? How can one understand the binaries of the region and the nation that are evident in performative cultural practices? The questions raised in this dissertation may be directed towards an

exploration of the many possible performative ‘others’ amid the rigid normative nation-state practices prevalent in India today.

In the systems of nation-state and citizenship that make the earth fit like a jigsaw puzzle, there is now less possibility to speak about the romantic notions of homeland and belonging. It is not possible to be the citizen of a melting glacier in the sea with no name if one has to seek the pleasures of modern society. However, the pleasures of modern society are coupled with political greed for power, social disparity and inhumane conditions for some sections of society, functioning in a way such that this status quo is maintained. It then demands introspection from the citizenry of every nation-state – to think as human beings. When there are boats full of refugees floating in the open sea, such as in the case of the *rohingyas* (the minority Muslim community of Myanmar oppressed by the dominant Buddhist community) who are living in pathetic conditions while seeking asylum in another country, it may well be beyond the call of political astuteness and economical incapacity of any nation to refuse them asylum. The inability of the Myanmar government and its majority population to accept pluralism among its polity has chased away the *rohingya* from a land they have called home for generations. This is but an example among hundreds of such cases in the twenty-first century. In such a scenario, it is imperative to find ways to augment the vocabulary of nationhood, citizenship and governance and make it possible to talk about home, homeland and belonging in the same parameters.

In India, a nation-state that is rife with social inequality, religious prejudices, caste discrimination and economic disparity, a symbol such as the national anthem cannot be one that camouflages these issues. Through its very practice, the anthem may not be allowed to impose order and discipline without an equally accessible experience of being alive in a community with a sense of synergy. Until then, Tagore’s song will only be a requiem for a dream.

APPENDIX

I. Text of *Jana Gana Mana* – the national anthem of India – as issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs:

*Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka jaya he
Bharata-bhagya-vidhata
Panjaba-Sindhu-Gujarata-Maratha
Dravida-Utkala-Banga
Vindhya-Himachala-Yamuna-Ganga
uchchala-jaladhi-taranga
Tava Subha name jage, tave subha asisa mage,
gahe tava jaya-gatha.
Jana-gana-mangala-dayaka jaya he
Bharata-bhagya-vidhata.
Jaya he, Jaya he, Jaya he,
jaya jaya jaya jaya he.*

II. A short version of the national anthem played on certain occasions:

*Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka, jaya he
Bharata-bhagya-vidhata.
Jaya he, jaya he, jaya he,
Jaya jaya jaya, jaya he!*

III. Rabindranath Tagore's English translation of *Jana Gana Mana*:

Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people,
Dispenser of India's destiny.
Thy name rouses the hearts of Punjab, Sind,
Gujarat and Maratha,
Of the Dravida and Orissa and Bengal;
It echoes in the hills of the Vindhyas and Himalayas,
mingles in the music of Jamuna and Ganges and is
chanted by the waves of the Indian Sea.
They pray for thy blessings and sing thy praise.
The saving of all people waits in thy hand,
Thou dispenser of India's destiny.
Victory, victory, victory to thee.

IMAGES

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the song "Jana Gana Mana". The title "JANA GANA MANA" is written at the top in large, bold letters. Below the title, the composer's name "TAGORE" is written, followed by "by Herbert Maxwell". The score is written on a yellow background with black ink. It consists of eight staves of music, each with a treble and bass clef. The lyrics are written below each staff. The lyrics are: "JANA GANA MANA ADHINAYAKA JAYA HE BHARAT BHAGYA VIDHATA KAMRUP--PUNJAB MARATHA GURJAR DRAVID VANGA UTKAL VINDYA HI--MACHAL JUMNA GANGA JALADHI TARANGA TABA SHUBA NAAME JAAGE TABASRUBA ASISH MANGE GAYE TAV JAYA GATHA JANAGANAMANGAL DAYAK JAYA HE BHARAT BHAGYA VIDHATA JAYA HE JAYA HE JAYA HE JAYA JAYA JAYA JAYA HE". The score is signed "B.C." at the bottom left.

Figure 1: The original musical score of *Jana Gana Mana* rendered by Rabindranath Tagore.

Source: Bharat Bala Productions DVD Booklet



Figure 2: The national anthem in progress at Tagore International School, New Delhi
Source: Screenshot of a video taken by the researcher



Figure 3: The national anthem in progress at Shanthi Vijaya School, Ootacamund
Source: Screenshot of a video taken by the researcher



Figure 4: Sudhir Kumar Chaudhary, a fan of the Indian cricket team, painted in the colours of the Indian national flag during a cricket match.

Source: Wikimedia foundation



Figure 5: The Indian cricket team singing the national anthem along with the audience members in the stadium before a cricket match

Source: www.timescontent.com



Figure 6: The cheering audience at the Wagah-Attari border retreat ceremony in Amritsar is encouraged to shout back ‘*zindabad*’ as the emcee screams “*hindustan*” into the mike. A similar scene ensues on the Pakistani-side of the border shouting “*Pakistan zindabad*”, as the two sides compete to be louder than the other.

Source: www.thepoliticalindian.com



Figure 7: Teachers and students at SDH Jain Vidyalaya School, Madurai sing the Tamil Nadu state anthem *Tamiltay Vazhthu* during the morning assembly, holding a body posture similar to the one required by the Indian national anthem

Source: Screenshot of a video taken by the researcher



Figure 8: Teachers and students at SDH Jain Vidyalaya School, Madurai sing the Tamil Nadu state anthem *Tamilltay Vazhthu* during the morning assembly, holding a body posture similar to the one required by the Indian national anthem
Source: Screenshot of a video taken by the researcher



Figure 9: Teachers and students at SDH Jain Vidyalaya School, Madurai sing the *Jana Gana Mana* during the morning assembly holding the codified body posture required by the national anthem
Source: Screenshot of a video taken by the researcher

FIELD WORK RECORDS

I. Delhi

- i) The morning assemblies of two schools in Delhi were attended and documented in March and April 2014. Short interviews or conversations of the school's principals were also conducted. Tagore International School in Vasant Vihar and Birla Vidya Niketan in PushpVihar.
- ii) The Republic Day Parade on Rajpath in New Delhi was also attended and observed on January 26, 2014

II. Tamil Nadu

- i) Districts visited :
Nine districts in Tamil Nadu were visited Salem, Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Chennai, Madurai, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai, Tirunelveli and Nagercoil - with a combination of urban, semi-urban and rural areas. This part of the field work was between August 10, 2014 and September 7, 2014.
The morning assembly of 1-3 schools in each district were documented. Principals, teachers or students of the school were also interviewed in various instances.
The field work also included interviews of government officials and political leaders affiliated to different political parties of the state and centre.

III. Mumbai

Residents of Mumbai and visitors to cinema theatres were interviewed. Workers of cinema multiplexes were also interviewed.

IV. List of interviewed persons

Salem: Mrs Sujata, Teacher at Cluny Matriculation School; Sister Nora, Principal of Cluny Matriculation School; Prof Muthukumar, Government Arts College (Tamil department); Prof Thennarasu, Government Arts College (History department); Mallika, Vegetable vendor; Babu , Owner of video shop; Selvanayaki John, Septuagenarian resident

Coimbatore: Mr Arun, Transport Entrepreneur and member of Bahujan Samajwadi Party; Dr Sekhar, Scientist, Forest department; Dr Madhomita, Scientist, Forest department; Mr Ibrahim, Indian national flag vendor; Mrs Shalini, Designer

Mettupalaym: Mr Saravanan, Bharatiya Janata Party leader; Mr Rajagopalan, Initiator of Black-flag protest on August 15, 2013; Mr Sajid , Youth leader; Teachers and Students at Panchayat Union Middle School

Ootacamund: Mr Vijayan, Advocate and part of People's Legal Forum; Prof Sadanandan, Government Arts College (Chemistry Department); Prof Arul Manikantan, Government Arts College (Botany Department), Teachers and students at the Tamil department, Government Arts College; Mrs Saishree, Primary section teacher at Municipality school; Students at municipality school; Mr Anand: Clothes vendor; Mr Suresh, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan supervisor

Chennai: Mr Ambuli, AIADMK Youth leader; Mrs Anjalai, domestic worker; Mr Sadanand Menon, journalist; Mr 'Traffic' Ramaswamy, RTI Activist; Mr Selvan, Political science student at Presidency College; Principal, Mahatma Gandhi school; National Cadet Corps students at Presidency College

Madurai: Mrs Alamelu, Cook and Domestic worker; Mr Muruga Vadivel, teacher; Panchayat Office workers; Mr Shiva, Dalit leader; Mr Gopi, MBA student and ice cream vendor; Mrs Jaya, teacher at government school; Jayalakshmi, domestic worker; Mr Kathir, founder of NGO Evidence; Mr Thi Kannan, member of Viduthalai Chiruthaikal Katchi (Liberation Panther Party); Mrs Anitha Shanthakumar, Principal of SDH Jain Vidyalaya school; Mr Ramachandran, Octogenarian; Mr Balasubramaniam, Lawyer and former NGO worker

Virudhunagar: Headmaster and teachers at government school in Mukullam; Autodrivers in Thirupuvanam

Sivagangai: Prof Pandey, Prof Prabhu et al, Tamil department, Government Arts College; English department teachers, Government Arts College

Gudalur: Mr Surendran, Principal of Vidyodaya School; Students at Vidyodaya School; Ms Kamala – Sri Lankan repartee

Kudankullam: Mrs J Sundari and other protestors at Idinithikarai; Headmistress at missionary school at Idinithikarai; Students of missionary school at Idinithikarai

Mumbai: Gaurav Kukreja – resident movie-goer, Mumbai; Suresh Tambe, Security guard at cinema hall

V. Questionnaire

The interviewees were asked different questions depending on their age, occupation, location, political affiliations. Interviews were in a conversational format with some key questions used as a starting point:

- i) Do you remember, when you first sang the national anthem or do you have a memory of any one significant event when you sang *Jana Gana Mana*?
- ii) Do you attend Independence Day/ Republic day celebrations in your locality or work place?
- iii) Can you describe what happens at these celebrations and if you participate in them? What do you feel in these moments towards your nation? What do you feel in these moments towards your community?
- iv) If you imagine your 'community', who are the people you would include in this category?
- v) Is there an instance when your imagination of who you include in your community would be different, such as an important international cricket match?
- vi) How does it feel to sing the anthem loud with others? Do you feel like standing up/in attention? Do you ask others to stand up?
- vii) Tamil Nadu also has its own state anthem- *Tamilttay Vazhthu*. Are you familiar with the song?
- viii) Do you have a significant memory of singing this anthem?
- ix) How do you participate in the singing of the song?
- x) What do you feel in these moments towards the Indian nation? What do you feel in these moments towards your community?
- xi) Comparing *Jana Gana Mana* and the *Tamilttay Vazhthu*, how would you describe the difference in the way either song affects you?
- xii) Have you observed a difference in how the students in your school participate or are involved in either song? (Question only for teachers)
- xiii) Have you ever tried to influence the practice of the singing of either of the songs among the students in terms of body practice, enunciation etc? (Question only for teachers)

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