



IMPLANTING NATION/ALISM, PROBLEMATIZING ANGLO-INDIA/NS¹

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INTRODUCTION

This article takes off from my earlier work, (Chew, n.d.; Chew, 2010; Chew, 2002) where my findings were that gender representations of Anglo-Indian women, and men to some extent, flowed from the perception of them as Others. Examined in the context of colonial and post-colonial India, race and racialisation featured significantly in my analysis. But 'nation', along with its corollary, 'nationalism', while implicit in my formulations and conclusions, remained untheorized. Much has been written and continues to be written on the intersections of nationalism and race and gender, but there is still little in this regard with respect to Anglo-Indians – on their identification, or lack thereof, with nationalism, or the way the construct 'nation', has usually been framed and understood in India and South Asia, which precludes or excludes them (as well as many Others). In this respect, the marginalizing or othering of Anglo-Indians, while not always identical, has parallels with processes and realities of metissage in other geographical regions. While earlier contributions dating from the nineteenth century till today, by Anglo-Indian community activists and scholars, have often had nationalism and nationalist historiography as backdrop to dilemmas of identity often experienced by them, what I attempt to do here is focus on the tendentious relationship of Anglo-Indian to 'nation'. By using the construct 'nation' and 'nationalism', I hope to problematize, nuance, enrich and make more comprehensible, Anglo-Indian history, experiences and current realities. To do this I focus on three intellectuals and writers – Derozio, Tagore and Manto, as well as the cataclysmic event of Partition. In order to retain a chronological order of sorts, the discussion of Partition precedes the section on Manto.

DEROZIO

I begin in Bengal in the early nineteenth century, with Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, (1809-1831). By this time, there existed in India a mixed-race community, self-identified, as well as characterized as such by Europeans and Indians. Derozio, as is well-known, was an Anglo-Indian poet and iconoclast, who in a short and meteoric life, left his mark, becoming assistant headmaster of Hindu College (later Presidency College and now Presidency University). Less well-known is that he was a prolific poet and writer, who in the span of a very short life left behind a large body of work. He has been described as an ardent nationalist, though it might be argued that the term may be somewhat anachronistic for that time. Perhaps 'cosmopolitan', with strong feelings for the land of his birth, would more accurately describe him. Derozio was a radical thinker and one of the first Indian educators to disseminate Western learning and science among the young men of Bengal. His influence lived on among his former students, who came to be labelled 'Young Bengal', and many of whom became prominent in the fields of social reform, law, and journalism.

Why Derozio is of such great interest for me as I explore 'nation' and 'nationalism' with respect to Anglo-Indians, is that both today and during his lifetime, he was not seen as an Other, particularly in Bengal where he is known and counted among its luminaries as a reformer and patriot. In the state of West Bengal, there are numerous reminders of this – memorial plaques, statues, auditoria named in his honour – the impetus for which, with few exceptions, coming from the majority community. He is embraced as Bengali, Indian and Anglo-Indian. Very importantly, for this discussion on Anglo-Indians and nationalism, Derozio himself never seemed conflicted. He straddled many worlds. He was very conversant with the debates and ideas of the day. He followed developments in Europe and other parts of the world, where Enlightenment thinking and the ideals of the French Revolution were sowing seeds of radical change, liberation and individual rights from Europe to Spanish America and British India.² Derozio was of a time and place where, along with young men like Simon Bolivar, he was inspired by freedom. But while he embraced currents from without, he also identified strongly with the land of his birth. He articulated an identity as a son of the soil. He was born in India, but since his father was of Portuguese descent and his mother, English, even though his father's family had lived in India for generations, and it is quite possible that there was some

racial mixing, he could have opted like others did, to assert a country-born European identity, placing him higher in the colonial hierarchy.

However, Derozio proudly identified as 'East Indian', a term in use by the mixed race population.³ Rosinka Chaudhuri who has done exhaustive work on Derozio, has very deftly presented the nuances and tendencies of the day in this respect (2012b). "The warmth of feeling in Derozio for an ideality of country and community was commented upon by a nineteenth-century critic (Thomas Benson Laurence), who, on the evidence of the poems, appropriately identified 'The most prominent feature of his character [as] an ardent and exalted patriotism'." Chaudhuri quotes further from the early Indian anthology of English poetry that Laurence had edited and which was published in 1869:

Unlike others of his class he gloried in the name of "East Indian" and was proud to be called a native of this country. He did not appear to see, as others did, that there was any merit in being descended from an English or foreign ancestry, and gladly assimilated himself with the legitimate [sic] sons of the soil on which he was born. The fervour of patriotism breathed through most of his writings in the *East Indian*, and endeared him much to his countrymen, who, with such a noble representation before them, began to feel less ashamed of being East Indians. (Chaudhuri, 2012b, p. 84)

Laurence continues, conveying how Derozio, by choosing "East Indian" reclaimed it, while at the same time dismissing "Eurasian", the term favoured by "his countrymen", who'd rather intimate they were half Europeans (Chaudhuri, 2012b, pp. 84-85). Derozio often signed letters to the editor as 'An East Indian', and when he was fired from Hindu College he set up the publication called *The East Indian* (Chaudhuri, 2012b, 80-82). Of additional interest for me in the text above, is Laurence's explanation of how Derozio proudly used 'East Indian' and by reclaiming it, he also made his community proud of their Indian birth and belonging.

Derozio was an associate of John Ricketts, who along with James Kyd and others, were the first to articulate a sense of community identity for the mixed race population in India, and organize for political rights for them. Derozio eventually came to support these efforts, even though initially he had opposed Ricketts' journey to London to petition parliament to intervene in the negative treatment of East Indians by the East India Company. And he was one of the speakers on the podium when Ricketts returned and there was a mass meeting to commend him for what he

had undertaken on behalf of the community. It is at this moment that Derozio gave what has been described as “one of the great speeches of national awakening ever to have been made in modern Indian history”, for which he “deserves a place at the very head of all nationalist speeches made in India”. Regrettably, few know of its existence (Chaudhuri, 2012b, p. 83).

Why then am I here this day: why have I offered myself to your notice?
I have already answered that question. I have intimated that I am called here by duty; and that is a voice which I dare not disobey. I am an East Indian, and therefore I ought to be here; I am interested in the welfare of my countrymen, and therefore I ought to be here; I am anxious to know what measures have been adopted to promote that welfare, and therefore I ought to be here; I love my country, and therefore I ought to be here....
(28 March 1831, Chaudhuri, 2008, p. 343)

Derozio uses “countrymen” with specific reference to East Indians, but because he also states that he loves his “country” it would suggest that he includes the East Indian sub-group within the larger construct of country or ‘nation’. Confirmation of this can be found in the most read and studied poem of Derozio, “To My Native Land”, where we find his emphasized identification with the land he inhabits.

My country! In thy days of glory past
A beauteous halo circled round thy brow
and worshipped as a deity thou wast—
Where is thy glory, where the reverence now?
Thy eagle pinion is chained down at last,
And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou,
Thy minstrel hath no wreath to weave for thee
Save the sad story of thy misery!
Well—let me dive into the depths of time
And bring from out the ages, that have rolled
A few small fragments of these wrecks sublime
Which human eye may never more behold
And let the guerdon of my labour be
My fallen country! One kind wish for thee!
(1828, Chaudhuri, 2008, p. 173)

Derozio was a Calcuttan, he lived in Bengal, he was East Indian, he was a public intellectual and active in the political life of the time. He challenged orthodoxy and oppression and was a bane for both conservative elements of Hindu society as well as East Indians who were loyal to a fault to Britain. He earned their ire in equal measure. Even before full-fledged ‘nationalism’ in the sense that we use the term today became evident in the country, Derozio appears to have instinctively linked the

interests of the East Indians with those of other native inhabitants of India. That all this happened seemingly effortlessly, without any apparent self-consciousness on his part, I ascribe to what some have identified as the 'cosmopolitanism' of Calcutta at the time. International currents and influences were familiar to the reading public and intellectual life – publishing in reviews, discussion groups - was very vibrant. But the construct 'nation' was not framed in the political space, the way it later came to be. Derozio's "country" then would seem to be a geographic space inhabited by people with a common destiny.

In the poem, in the words, "In thy days of glory past" Derozio is alluding to his 'country', that enjoyed a golden classical age. While it is always problematic to gild the past, in India the effects of British influence on historical periodization, also meant that the so-called "Muslim" or "medieval period" got excluded from this 'glorious past'. However, for us, what is important is that Derozio does not distinguish between an Us and Them with regard to race, even though there may be communal overtones to some of his writing.⁴ Curiously, while he saw military subordination as evil, the defeat of "Hindoostan" by the "Mussulman" (Chaudhuri, 2008, pp. 130-131), he does not characterize British colonialism in the same way, despite his criticisms of colonial policies, with regard to East Indians, for example.

The twinning of race and marginality was not evident in the ways it later came to be. If anything, for Derozio, Us and Them may simply be about like-mindedness or not. Definitely, for those who were inspired by him and later took up the cudgels of reform, his students of Hindu College, or Young Bengal, there was no Othering of Derozio. Later, all this changed. Imperial policies of heightened racial distancing had economically adverse effects on the East Indian community. As well, racial distancing had an overall negative impact on relationships within the colony. By the time we come to the later part of the nineteenth century, the seemingly utopian visions of shared interests between East Indian, Bengali and all who lived in and identified with the "country" had been eroded.

TAGORE

But there continued to be exceptions. Poet, writer, philosopher and humanist, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), who does not spring to mind right away when one thinks of Anglo-Indians, is one of them. Writing at a time when there was

growing consciousness of what can by this period be called 'nationalism', Tagore's thinking on the subject eventually became characterized by inclusiveness. But he travelled personal journeys before reaching there. In the late nineteenth century, he was influenced by the currents of neo-Hinduism, derived from a rejection of Western superiority. This was framed as a 'spiritualism' versus 'materialism' dichotomy. As well, his essays of the 1890s show a "personal sense of racial humiliation" (Subramanian and Ray, 1988, p. 244; Subramanian and Ray, 1988, p. 248). But by the start of the twentieth century, the lessons he drew from the *swadeshi* movement left him disillusioned, as he watched nascent nationalism degenerate into communalism⁵ and class oppression. We find the change expressed in his writings of the period, *Gora* (1910), "Gitanjali" (1910; 1912),⁶ and *Ghare Baire* (1916), where he gravitates from an East versus West dichotomy to internationalism.

WHERE THE mind is without fear and the head is held high;
 Where knowledge is free;
 Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
 Where words come out from the depth of truth;
 Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
 Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
 Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action-
 Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.
 (Tagore, 1912, p. 35)

Tagore's appreciation for the liberatory aspects of nationalism – freeing the mind and the soul from shackles – share similarities with the cosmopolitan nationalism of Derozio. Tagore's nationalism was about freedom from colonial degradation, which he perceived in East-West, spiritual-material, feminine-masculine dichotomies.

By 1916-17, reflecting specifically on nationalism as he travelled in the USA and Japan, lecturing on India, Tagore situates 'nation' within the context of British colonialism in India. He distinguishes the British from earlier invaders and migrants into the sub-continent. Unlike them, he saw the British as a 'nation' that colonized, bolstered by industrial technology and trading zeal, there being no semblance of anything similar with which the colonized sub-continent could respond in kind.

We had known the hordes of Moghals and Pathans who invaded India, but *we had known them as human races*, with their own religions and customs, likes and dislikes,—*we had never known them as a nation*.

We loved and hated them as occasions arose; we fought for them and against them, talked with them *in a language which was theirs as well as our own*, and guided the destiny of the Empire in which we had our active share. *But this time we had to deal*, not with kings, not with human races, but *with a nation—we, who are no nation ourselves*.
(Tagore, 1917, p. 19 emphasis added)

Tagore distinguished 'nation' from 'society', the former resulting deliberately from set objectives, while the latter arose spontaneously from human interaction. He saw the development of the nation as leading inevitably to greed, jealousy, power struggles and other negative consequences.

Now let us from our own experience answer the question, W [sic]hat is this Nation?

A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose. Society as such has no ulterior purpose. It is an end in itself. It is a spontaneous self-expression of man as a social being. It is a natural regulation of human relationships, so that men can develop ideals of life in co-operation with one another. It has also a political side, but this is only for a special purpose. It is for self-preservation. It is merely the side of power, not of human ideals. And in the early days it had its separate place in society, restricted to the professionals. *But when with the help of science and the perfecting of organization this power begins to grow and brings in harvests of wealth, then it crosses its boundaries with amazing rapidity. For then it goads all its neighbouring societies with greed of material prosperity, and consequent mutual jealousy, and by the fear of each other's growth into powerfulness. The time comes when it can stop no longer, for the competition grows keener, organization grows vaster, and selfishness attains supremacy. Trading upon the greed and fear of man, it occupies more and more space in society, and at last becomes its ruling force.* (Tagore, 1917 pp. 19-20 emphasis added)

In his discussion of nationalism, of 'India' and who comprises 'India', we see his sensitivity to how 'race' was problematic from earliest times. But even in his disquiet, he cannot overcome his tendency to universalism.

...the Dravidians and the Aryans, the ancient Greeks and the Persians, the Mohammedans of the West and those of central Asia. *Now at last has come the turn of the English to become true to this history and bring to it the tribute of their life, and we neither have the right nor the power to exclude this people from the building of the destiny of India.* Therefore what I say about the Nation has more to do with the history of Man than specially with that of India....(Tagore, 1917, p. 27 emphasis added)

and

To India has been given her problem from the beginning of history —it is the race problem. (Tagore, 1917, p. 14)

Tagore's gradual transition from earlier support for nationalism to internationalism suggests that concerns with contradictions in nascent nationalism in India, led him to reject narrow parochial parameters of identity.

While Tagore, appreciated the creative potential of nationalism – “the mind... without fear”, “the head... held high”, “where knowledge is free” and “words come out from the depth of truth”, where there is “perfection” and “the clear stream of reason”, looking around him he warned in many writings of the negative impact, the “narrow domestic walls” that nationalism could throw up. For him, ideas had to be constantly refreshed and contextualized and not fall into “dead habit”. We get to see this in his novel *Gora*. It is richly-textured and brings out the discussion that Tagore has with himself about tradition and change, inflexibility and the need for openness, including with respect to race and identity, central to our exploration of ‘nation’, ‘nationalism’ and Othering.

In the novel, the eponymous character Gora, (unbeknownst to him, till the very end of the novel), is an orphan of Irish parentage who is adopted by a Bengali Brahmin couple, after the death of his parents during the war of 1857. This is hinted at to the reader earlier on, who thus gets to appreciate the many ironies that unfold. We are also exposed to Tagore's view of how birth and race are accidental and meaningless in terms of character, morality and ethics. Gora grows up staunchly Hindu and, ignorant of his origins, fiercely nationalistic. And ‘nationalistic’ is a term we can start using by this juncture. Towards the end of the novel, Gora's adoptive parents reveal to him for the first time his real origins.

“Then where did you get me?” inquired Gora looking towards Krishnadayal again.

“It was during the Mutiny,” began Krishnadayal, “when we were at Etawa. Your mother, in fear of the Sepoys, took refuge one night in our house. Your father had been killed the previous day during the fighting. His name was----“

“There is no need to hear his name!” roared Gora. “I don't want to know the name.”

Krishnadayal stopped in astonishment at Gora's excitement. He merely added: “He was an Irishman. That very night your mother died after giving birth to you. From that day you were brought up in our home.”

In a single moment Gora's whole life seemed to him like some extraordinary dream. ... He had no mother, no father, no country, no nationality, no lineage, no God even...Gora was speechless in the midst of this strange void in which he had lost all sense of direction... (Tagore, 1910, p. 562)

Yet this was a release for him, and in the next chapter of the novel, in conversation with Paresh Babu, Gora exultantly declaims,

“Can you follow what it is that I am trying to say? That which day and night I have been longing for but which I could not be, to-day at last I have become. To-day I am really an Indian! In me there is no longer any opposition between Hindu, Mussulman, and Christian. To-day every caste in India is my caste, the food of all is my food! ... I have been carrying about with me an unseen gulf of separation which I have never been able to cross over! ... Because I loved India better than life itself I was quite unable to bear the least criticism of that part of it which I had got to know. Now that I have been delivered from those fruitless attempts at inventing such useless decorations I feel, Paresh Babu that I am alive again!” (Tagore, 1910, p. 568)

By the end, when Gora finally discovers his origins, he has already started moving towards inclusivity with respect to caste and we might assume, by default, inclusivity regarding race. Gora's earlier identification with an aggressive Hindu nationalism is eventually subsumed by the religious and universal humanism of Paresh Babu, a character based on Tagore's own father (Subramanian and Ray, 1988, p. 244). Gora comes to the realization that a true “Indian” is not determined by the factors that nationalism is often bound by – ethnicity, race, religion, language, etc. One can discern an eliding of ‘nationalism’ with inter-‘nationalism’.

If we compare the views of Derozio and Tagore, in the context of their times, we see them embracing openness. Derozio, in the early part of the nineteenth century was cosmopolitan, and almost a century later, Tagore was internationalist. You also see in Tagore, ideas similar to those of Derozio, that race, parentage, origins, etc. are immaterial. It is who or what one identifies with that is significant, rather than being defined by birth. And of course, in Tagore's novel, the hero's nickname, Gora, shortened from his proper name Gourmohan, means ‘white man’, which we know from early in the novel to be fitting in more than one way!

PARTITION

I bring the partition of India, into India and Pakistan in August 1947, to this discussion of nationalism and Anglo-Indians for a several reasons. It is an event that

is the culmination of decades, if not almost a century, of a growing sense of national identity and voice, which reaches fruition with the withdrawal of the British and the emergence of two nations; a spectacular unfolding of bifurcated nationalism. But while Partition has almost always been framed⁷ as something that affected Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, Christians (all Anglo-Indians would be included in this category), Parsis, Buddhists and other religious minorities, also had to opt for one country or the other and at times were witness to horrific violence.⁸ While the reason for this silence in the literature is most likely due to the fact that minority populations did not suffer in the same way, *all* who lived through those times, to greater or lesser degrees felt the impact of this cataclysmic event.

In the build-up to independence, and after, Anglo-Indians were another Other. 'Minority', in the context of Partition, usually connotes Muslim, if speaking of India, or Hindu or Sikh, when speaking of Pakistan.⁹ Anglo-Indians are absent from the literature because as a community, they did not actively oppose the anti-colonial and nationalist movements. But another possible reason for their absence, and this is central to my argument, is that Anglo-Indians (and some other minorities) were not seen as part of the either India or Pakistan. The context had changed since the early nineteenth century and the kind of patriotic sentiments articulated by Derozio and his associates were mostly absent in the decades leading up to 1947. In addition, Anglo-Indians had become increasingly marginalized over the course of a century due to colonial policies of emphasized racial distancing and for the most part lived in an enclaved Anglo-Indian world. During Partition, Anglo-Indians were never deliberately targeted in acts of violence that have become so emblematic of the times. In fact though they may have been present and witness to brutal massacres in which they were helpless to intervene, they were often left unharmed. Dorothy McMenamín (2006, 2010) has made valuable contributions to enriching our knowledge of Anglo-Indian experiences of Partition.

One of the consequences of Partition that Anglo-Indians shared with many other communities, was migration between India and Pakistan. Connie Grindwall, for example, whose father took up a job with the Post and Telegraph service in Pakistan moved from Calcutta to Sukkur with her mother and six siblings. Another Anglo-Indian couple travelled with them.

Connie only remembers a man with a sword outside her train compartment window saying “*sab mar gaya*” [all are dead]. She and her sisters had been giggling on the bunk and her mother told them to remain quiet. They heard a lot of noise for a long time, but stayed in their compartment. The train eventually moved off and reached its destination. Connie’s father was awaiting its arrival, and had been told that everyone except the driver and guard had been killed. He was astonished when his family and the Anglo-Indian couple disembarked unharmed. Everyone else on the train had been massacred. Connie Grindwall’s account is an extraordinary one, demonstrating that even as passengers, Anglo-Indians were excluded from violence in which all the other passengers, presumably Muslims entering Pakistan from India, were slaughtered. (McMenamin, 2006, pp. 90-91)

Anglo-Indians were not the objects of attack, but were implicated or marked in other ways. Those who witnessed violence suffered what is now recognized as post-traumatic stress disorder. Some sheltered people trying to hide from murderous mobs (Lumb, 2006, pp. 82-84). Other Anglo-Indians, such as those in service with the police were on active duty during episodes of communal violence, such as the massacres of 1946, that have come to be called the Calcutta Killings. Bill Barlow narrates that Anglo-Indian police shot to kill, “...that or get killed yourself because there were so many thousands of them” (McMenamin, 2006 p. 77). Cecil Anderson, a medical student in Calcutta recounted, “We used to go out and see them on the street, dead. Yes, Muslims and Hindus. ... I must say they left us alone” (McMenamin, 2006, p. 81). And many of the drivers and guards on trains carrying migrants across the new borders that were attacked and whose passengers were massacred were Anglo-Indians. Brian Birch, born in 1936, who was living in Rawalpindi “remembers his father returning from work, regularly in the depths of despair, having been the helpless train driver of special trains carrying refugees assigned from Peshawar via Rawalpindi to Lahore to assist with the exodus of Hindus and Sikhs. The passengers were massacred but the Anglo-Indian drivers and guards were untouched” (McMenamin, 2010, p. 142). Dorothy McMenamin asked him, “...*why do you think they left the Anglo-Indian drivers and Anglo-Indians?*” He responded, “I think they felt it was because it was nothing to do with them, *it wasn’t their country.* . . .” (McMenamin, 2006, pp. 88-89 emphasis added).

Partition was so steeped in Hindu-Muslim religious nationalism that Anglo-Indians, as Christians, remained safe. That they may have also been clubbed with the colonizers did not adversely affect them when it came to Partition violence, for

Partition, though very much a product of colonialism, was in that cusp of colonial/post-colonial moment, much more strenuously arbitrated and fought on the misconception of primordial Hindu-Muslim incompatibility and hatred. As mixed race and Christian, Anglo-Indians were excluded – they were not part of the nation, whether it was the homeland for Muslims or self-declared secular India. Exclusion and marginalization ensured their safety. Many Anglo-Indians themselves were ambivalent with respect to Partition. Families remained where they were living. Those who moved to India or Pakistan, did so because of career and economic opportunity.

This brings us to the second point that Partition serves to illustrate – overseas migration. Anglo-Indian migration on a large-scale out of both new post-colonial states began and continued into the 1990s. Some migrants might have been motivated because of closer identification with the colonial Raj and Britain. Even though India or South Asia might have been the only home they had known, which they loved and to which they were deeply attached, their identification was with 'British India'. But when it became clear that the British were leaving, some saw no option but to leave the Indian sub-continent. Those who stayed might have done so because they identified with India, or because for a variety of reasons, they could not leave (Almeida, 2013,n.p.; McMenamain, 2008, p. 124). But much more than identity, for many Anglo-Indians, as with the vast majority of migrants irrespective of race, ethnicity, historical time period or context, economic considerations were dominant (Williams, 2008, p. 76). Anglo-Indians were anxious about potentially circumscribed employment opportunities in the post-colonial era, with the loss of quotas in public sector employment such as the railways. And, it is important to note here that Anglo-Indians were not the only ones migrating out of the Indian sub-continent. Members of other communities – majority or minority - also did so, often for the same reasons; improved economic prospects and career opportunities.

However there were Anglo-Indians who consciously saw themselves as Indian as any other community. They chose to remain in India and were vociferous in defending their choice (to other Anglo-Indians). But they also addressed the majority communities, asserting their birthright as natives, to remain and be who they were, with regard to language, culture and lifestyle. In fact, even before the actual moment of Partition, but when the countdown had begun, Anglo-Indian leaders asserted that

the community was an integral part of the soon to be born India. In his presidential address to the All India Anglo-Indian Association, published in the *Anglo-Indian Review* (May 1947), Frank Anthony said:

Neither dress nor language form any preconditions of patriotism [and] we yield as a community to no one in our love for this country and in our desire to promote her real greatness. Equally, we yield to no one in our claims to complete equality as citizens and as natives of this country. Equally, we intend to cling and cling tenaciously to our form of dress, to English which is our mother tongue and to everything which we regard and hold dear as representing our way of life.
(Blunt, 2006, p. 56)

A nationalist, Anthony was the pre-independence negotiator for Anglo-Indians and long-standing post-colonial Anglo-Indian MP. Even earlier, in 1942 he implored his fellow Anglo-Indians thus:

Let us cling to all that we hold dear, our language, our way of life and our distinct culture, but let us always remember that we are Indians. The community is Indian. It has always been Indian...The more we love and are loyal to India, the more will India be loyal to us.
(Anthony, 1969, p.150)

For most Anglo-Indians, however, it would be correct to say that the nationalist movement and the communal violence that preceded Partition and continued after it, was something that happened to others. As human beings they felt sympathy for the victims, some experienced trauma and horror at the violence, but it wasn't something that they identified with or that touched them in a political way. Subjectively they felt removed from these events and objectively they were marginalized in the newly-emerging nations.

MANTO

No discussion of Partition, nationalism and minorities would be complete without discussing Saadat Hasan Manto (1912-1955). An Urdu writer, a member of the nationalist and pre-Partition Progressive Writers' Association, he had a reputation for exalting the marginalized and pillorying the middle-class he belonged to, laying bare their hypocrisy, whether with regard to religious fervour, class or gender. Many of his stories deal with the violence and tragedy of Partition, the ironies that were inherent to it and the tragic realities it generated.

For him, the concept 'nation', and the consequences of the efforts to create the 'nation' were very problematic. Nationalism and Partition disrupted his personal and familial life and tore him asunder.¹⁰ Unlike Derozio and Tagore, for whom 'nation' took on broader, cosmopolitan or internationalist dimensions, Manto totally rejected the concept of 'nation' as it developed and unfolded in his time; he ascribed the tragedies he witnessed in his day to the monstrous dimensions of nationalism.

In "Mozail", the eponymous character is a Jew and in "Mummy" Anglo-Indian/Christian. While it is not clear that "Mozail" is actually set during Partition, communal violence is an integral part of the story and "Mummy", while not a Partition story *per se*, presents a view of nation. Both Mummy (Anglo-Indian/Christian) and Mozail (Jew) were regarded as outside the pale by mainstream society. It is no accident that Manto, who perceived nationalism as a plague, and a source of unending tragedy, cast these women, who are not part of the 'nation', as heroic. In much of his writing he focuses on those excluded, because of race, gender, class or profession. In these two stories, we have an Anglo-Indian woman and a Jewish woman, both coming from communities with norms of social interaction between the sexes that are different from those of Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs. Manto's Mummy and Mozail have strength of character. They are authentic and honest. These important characteristics are what makes them noteworthy and laudable. In the context of the frenzy of nationalism, Manto saw them on their own terms, and not as 'Others', even though the pictures he paints of each, single them out as visibly different in dress and aesthetic from the mainstream. Mozail's "brown hair was cut short and always looked dishevelled. She wore thick lipstick and a loose white dress, cut so low at the neck that you could see three-quarters of her big, bouncing breasts, tinged with faint blue veins" (Manto, 1987, p.99). And when the narrator first meets Mrs. Stella Jackson or Mummy, he says, "I couldn't guess her age, but I noticed that despite her heavy make-up the wrinkles on her face were visible. It was so grossly painted that it hurt the eye" (Manto, 1987, p. 196).

Mozail's death at the end of the story can be read as the ultimate sacrifice the minority makes to enable the nation to be born; the minority gets erased, so a majority can define itself as a nation. The nightmare of Tagore's "narrow domestic walls" is realized. Manto embraced humanity and he rejected the nation and all it

personified and generated – violence, tragedy, political hypocrisy, sexual double standards, and the narrow prescription of who belongs.

In...Manto's collection of vignettes and sketches about the 1947 killings [*Siryah Hashye*]..., none of the bloody participants is identified by religion because to Manto what mattered was not what religion people professed, what rituals they followed or which gods they worshipped, but where they stood on a human level. If a man killed, it did not matter whether he killed in the name of his gods or for the glory of his country or his way of life. To Manto, he was a killer.... (Hasan, 2008, p. xviii)

In similar vein, a biographer of Manto commenting on the cosmopolitanism of the characters in "Mummy" writes,

Gharib Nawaz is a Muslim, and Ram Singh is a Sikh, and all the girls, namely, Elma, Thelma and Kitty are Christian girls. In other words, his story is a microcosm of the whole of India, inhabited by Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. ... In Manto's stories, his characters are first and foremost humans. (Wadhawan, 1998, pp. 120-121)

With "Mozail" and "Mummy", Manto also challenges formulaic gender dimensions of nationalism; the nation being constructed on its women, on the twin and contradictory constructs of honour and shame. By deliberately choosing an Anglo-Indian and a Jew in "Mummy" and "Mozail" he rejects narrowly-based definitions of nation constructed on homogeneity, i.e. limited to Hindu, Muslim, Sikh. Furthermore, once he chooses women who are not part of the dominant communities of the national narratives, he celebrates them, their naturalness in contrast to the hypocrisy of middle-class sensibilities and their pre-occupations with sex and sexuality. He questions nationalism that demands compliance with patriarchal norms of female chastity. For example, while Mummy's neighbours believe she runs a brothel, the narrator is ambiguous on this count, because it is unimportant to Manto. And when he focuses the reader's attention on Mozail's plunging neckline, it is not for some voyeuristic aim, but in order to make the point that she is being objectified by her admirer Tarlochan; his gaze moves to her breasts and then to her bare thigh as her shift rides up her leg. What disturbs Manto is that the nation demands the elimination of Mummy and Mozail. Mummy is literally driven out from her town, sacrificed on the altar of the newly- cleansed nation. And the so-alive and compassionate Mozail dies, naked, a sacrificial lamb, so that the young Sikh woman, Karpal Kaur, who symbolizes the new virginal and chaste nation can live. And it is

the nation that eventually in the final act of violence, demands the repeated violation of woman and Other. The nation is born of violence and exclusion. This is obscene and immoral. At the end, Other women have been sacrificed as pawns and symbols. Manto, coming at his narratives from a place of difference, with the objective of challenging and disrupting, rejects the nation that emerges with blood-letting and ethnic cleansing, and valorizes caring and compassion. Mummy and Mozail are intrinsic to Manto's 'community'. It is no coincidence that in the terrible labour pains of the birth of the nations of India and Pakistan, communities that are seen by Manto as so integral, are regarded by a majority as outsiders and marginal. It his denunciation of 'nation' that permits space for Others.

CONCLUSION

While 'cosmopolitan' might characterize Derozio, and Tagore is an 'internationalist, Manto, with his rejection of a narrowly-defined nation put much more value in what we might call 'communitarianism', a community of people who are honest, authentic, caring and compassionate. Like Tagore who transcends the narrow boundaries of nation, Manto too, finds 'nation' very problematic. Today, more than six decades after independence and partition, while identity questions remain, (Sen, 2010) they are not identical to those of the immediate post-independence era. As the once newly-minted post-colonial states have matured, they are still plagued with inequalities, not the least, those faced by many ethnic and religious minorities. Today, Anglo-Indians as a community would perhaps be just another one of these minorities, identified more as Christian (a religious minority) than Anglo-Indian (an ethnic one). As such, they might still be regarded as Others in the nation. Derozio, Tagore, Partition and Manto demonstrate how broader, more inclusive definitions of 'nation' (or 'community') created space for Anglo-Indians and Others.

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NOTES

¹ This paper continues to be work-in-progress. Earlier versions were presented at the Anglo-Indian Workshop, St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, held immediately after the 9th International Anglo-Indian Reunion in Kolkata, January 2013 and at the Derozio Forum for Anglo-Indian Studies Round-table and Panel in July 2013 at Central Library, University of Calcutta, Kolkata. I thank the editors, Robyn Andrews and Brent Otto for their valuable comments and suggestions. All responsibility of course rests with me.

² For example, Derozio was well-versed in the writings of Hume, Tom Paine, Locke, to name a few.

³ 'East Indian', 'Eurasian', 'Anglo-Indian' – these terms all refer to mixed race populations and usually reflect nomenclature that changed with time. There were also nuanced differences of less or more positive connotations with respect to mixed race that the different use of these terms might indicate at different historical moments.

⁴ A consequence of the Western tradition of glorifying the Classical Age of ancient Greece and Rome while denigrating the post-Classical Age as a dark interregnum, a medieval period, especially the earlier Dark Ages, before the birth of early modernity, the so-called Renaissance. This framing and naming got transferred to India where the Classical Age was celebrated, in no small part due to the work of British Orientalists like William Jones, and the interregnum before colonialism – the 'Muslim' period – was deemed medieval and regressive.

With Derozio his communalism was not an outright denigration of the Muslim and Persian. In fact like other well-educated people of his day he draws on Persian literary traditions, but denounces the "aggressive and bloodthirsty" character of Muslims which he held responsible for the destruction of India's glorious past (Chaudhuri, 2012a, pp. 54-55). This paradox can be attributed colonial publications and policies.

⁵ 'Communal' and 'communalism' is used throughout this article in the way it is understood in the Indian sub-continent – tension and violence based on religion-defined identities, usually Hindu or Muslim, sometimes Sikh.

⁶ *Gitanjali* was published in Bengali in 1910. Tagore's English translation was published in 1912.

⁷ Historiography on Partition in the last couple of decades confirms that partition was not an original objective of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and definitely was not inevitable.

⁸ It is important here to mention Dalits. Theoretically, a casteism places Dalits outside the caste system, though religiously they are included under the umbrella 'Hindu'. Dalits however have rejected such identification. And so, a reading of Partition that takes caste into account, would see Dalits as Others. And their experiences would bear this out. See Bacchetta (2000). Also for example see "The Nation and Its Outcasts" in Chatterjee (1993).

⁹ As my concern in this study is with Anglo-Indians and nationalism, I will not deal other minority populations, whose specifics regarding histories and contexts are somewhat different, even though there might be some similarities. See for example, "Flower—Meeting India at the Midnight Hour" (Silliman, 2001, pp. 117-128). In Sri Lanka, where the Burgher (mixed race) population had somewhat different experiences, there are some notable similarities. And it has been suggested that Charles Lorenz (1829-71), a promoter of Young Ceylon was inspired by Derozio (Jayawardena, 2007, pp. 145-166).

¹⁰ The heightened communalisation – between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs -- of society in the run-up to Partition and the actual Partition took a heavy toll on him. Eventually his wife and children moved from India to Pakistan, and very reluctantly, soon after, Manto also made that journey. As he wrote, "I found it impossible to decide which of the two countries was now my homeland—India or Pakistan?"

(Manto, 2008, p. xiv). And, "My heart is stepped in sorrow....when I said goodbye...." (Manto, 2008, p.xiv). Pain, sorrow, tragedy, the absurdity of it all comes through repeatedly in his writings.