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# Nationalism and Music

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**Abstract:** *It is a well-known fact, that music alone of all the arts and sciences has that dominating note of supreme mastership which compels unquestioned universal recognition. In painting, in sculpture, in architecture, in poetry, and in general literature in all its varying and varied moods and modes of expression, Indian music has won fame and occupied the highest place of appreciation in the world. It is admitted that Music is the last art to develop in any civilization, it must also be admitted that Indian civilization and culture have reached a point that would predicate a degree of development in Music, commensurate with our progress in other and kindred fields of creative activity.*

**Keywords:** *Music, Nation, Nationalism, Creative, Anthropologists, Ethnomusicologists, historiography, ethnography.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Music developed the capacity to articulate nationalism in 18<sup>th</sup> century. Local and even national musical styles have been around for much longer, national traditions needs to be distinguished from nationalism. Modern theories of nationalism differ widely from one other, most are unanimous that nationalism is a dynamic process of cultural identification with a nation and national qualities. The oddity of regional musical styles can and has been incorporated in discursive efforts to create and define the nation but are not necessarily in themselves nationalized. Nationalism and music interconnect whenever music is employed in the building of nations, both political and cultural.

“Folk” music became the first nationalized genre, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to represent the authentic voice of a people group, defined as a nation. The history of nationalism in Western music has largely revolved around folk idioms and their incorporation into high art. The concepts of nationalism and the social function of music have largely expanded the alleged spheres of nationalism in music. All genres of music, composition techniques in music, and composers, regardless of national intent, participate in the formulation and negotiation of national unity and identity. Music and music-making, as well as music journalism, are now considered important facets of nationalism in music. Giving the importance to both amateur and folk music in nationalizing Western music, this article necessarily includes selective works of ethnomusicology that illuminate the complicated, and often nationally inflected, the relationship between high and low music.

Scholars attempted to address the nationalism of music in an intercontinental context. Folk songs were indicative of an older tendency in erudition to judge the degree of nationalism in Western music. Dahlhaus argued for the nationalist qualities of all late 19<sup>th</sup>-century music, not limited to folk settings, and including the supposedly universal traditions from German, Italy, and France and explains how and why music reflects national identity. There are so few overviews of the techniques and processes of nationalization which were different from country to country and composer to composer. The two recent (2004) most wide-reaching introductions to the topic are from Bohlman and Francfort. Francfort analyzed the effects of popular forms of music-making, focusing on a specified chronology from 1870 to 1914. The best introduction to European music and nationalism is the large edited volume of Loos and Keym. The essays by Stokes on music and nationalism provide multiple perspectives on music's ability to generate a sense of place. Curtis and Steinberg offered two conceptually useful methodologically different introductions to nationalism in music; as well as the most critical. Curtis observed and expressed how composers aggressively and intentionally participated in the invention of nations and Steinberg provided the analysis expressing how music itself articulates and confronts national identity. The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the rise of Nationalism in Europe as a successful political force, it emerged from two main sources: the Romantic exaltation of "feeling" and "identity" and the Liberal required that a legitimate state is based on "people" rather than, a dynasty, God, or imperial domination. "Identity Nationalism" and "Civic Nationalism" were fundamentally middle-class movements. There were two ways of exemplification: "inclusion" the French method of whereby anyone who accepted loyalty to the French state was a "citizen". In practice, this meant the enforcement of a considerable degree of uniformity like the destruction of regional languages. The German method under the political circumstances was to define the "nation" in ethnic terms. Nationalizing ethnicity in practice came down to speaking German and sometimes just having a German name. Largely for German-speaking Slavic middle classes of Prague, Agram (Zagreb), etc. accepted the nationalist ideal; the ethnic aspect became even more important than it had been for the Germans.

The music here illustrates one common line developments: generally from a "cultural nationalism" to a more overtly political "liberal nationalism", and then, all too often, to an exclusivist "triumphal nationalism". It is existed in order of stages rather than in order of date of composition as at any given moment, nationalist movements were at different stages in different countries.

Working on the ideas of Herder, the Romantic folklore movements of the early nineteenth century, classical composers sought to revalue the heritage of their "people" by using "folk" themes. German composers did take such an approach and it is seen clearly.

The national anthems being sung at mass events, political rallies and the use of pop music and established musicians providing endorsements at political rallies suggest that the relationship between music and the spirit of nationalism is as strong as it has been since its emergence as a feature of 19<sup>th</sup> century western classical romantic music. This paper aims to bring together interdisciplinary research perspectives on the relationship between music and nationalism.

Political changes and visions of the configuration of political landscapes at the local and global scale provide the opportunity for a new critical reassessment of the relationship between music and nationalism. Music became such a transnational force that the effect of music as a tool to engender nationalism in the public psyche no longer has any efficacy. The trends in the relationship between music and political movements thus established, sentimentalized as a counter to intellectualism in nationalistic music as it was in the romantic period. The relationship between music and nationalism burdened with the dangers common to the political propaganda in the glorification of the nation.

Nationalism in the making of Indian Classical Music Tradition is an ambitious project that offers a critical reading of the contributions of two of twentieth-century Indian music's most important figures, V. N. Bhatkhande and V. D. Paluskar. In the transition of music from a system of court patronage to one of public acceptance and commercialization, Indian music underwent fundamental changes in content and mode of transmission.

Anthropologists and ethnomusicologists extensively discussed the role music plays in forging nationalism in India. Music can articulate both distinct regional identities and a broader pattern of national assimilation incorporating religious, class, and caste differences. The classification of Indian musical traditions has often been seen as a nationalist response to colonialism. In religious contexts music can evoke nationalist sentiments and ideologies, as well as expressions of identity that have political meanings. Education and economic development and the media presence of rising middle classes have contributed to the widespread dispersal of popular music, strengthening the possibilities of greater collective sharing in national identities as expressed through musical forms. Their focus and perspective vary, all the authors frame music as a significant social force that generates conflict, change, and meaning. The authors address the various aspects of Indian music in nationalist discourse through the lenses of regionalism, religion, and class conflict, utilizing a diverse range of methods including historiography, ethnography.

Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860–1936) was primarily a secular nationalist with an objective to standardize music and make it accessible to the larger public. He traveled extensively throughout India to collect thousands of compositions and subsequently published the *Kramik Pustak Malika*, a well-known pedagogical tool for learning Indian classical music. Bhatkhande's primary criticism of Muslim Ustads was that they did not have complete knowledge of classical texts, and furthermore, the Gharana system jealously guarded repertoires. However, his criticisms seem to be leveled at musicians in general rather than Muslim musicians in particular.

The practice of music in India is mixed and both historical and contemporary examples illustrate how the diversity of musical styles from region to region strengthens positions of regionalism and conceptions of local identities. These conceptions can be rooted in ethnic, religious, or class-based differences. Sub regionalism, however, was subsequent to initial, broader assertions of a widely shared, homogenized Indian national identity that strengthened in the wake of British colonial rule. Dennen and Rahaim noted that historically colonialism sparked a widespread desire to assert an "authentic" heritage of music in response to dominant oriental attitudes towards Indian music. These authors refer back to the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, post-colonial period of nation-building in India's history, agreeing that nationalism, more so than regionalism, was a stronger cultural force, with distinctions between India against the west being emphasized at that particular point in history. Music became a nationalist tool against colonialism through processes of legitimizing traditional musical practices as "classical," whether through standardization, notation, or the institutionalization of music. This became a way to delineate and claim a uniquely national, Indian identity. However, such processes take place under many layers of contestation, for example, in making classical music, several authors observe that the Indian elite was simultaneously rejecting and appropriating aspects of Western colonialist discourse.

The concept of a national anthem came to India from Britishers where it was taken from Christian hymnody, songs sung in churches as part of the service. The word anthem refers to a musical composition set to sacred music. Thus in this mode of spirituality, standing is a gesture of respect, church hymns are sung standing up. There is nothing universal about respect and standing up for

sacred music. A kirtan or a qawwali the form of sacred music are performed sitting down and, one would assume, the singer or the audience means no disrespect.

Nationalism and faith are not new to India, British political scientist Frank Wright, said, “Nationalism is a religion not merely ‘like’ religions. Similarly, Carolyn Marvin and David Ingle argued in their article ‘Blood Sacrifice and the Nation’ and ‘Revisiting Civil Religion’ that: “Nationalism is the most powerful religion in the United States.” They wrote, “Structurally speaking, nationalism mirrors sectarian belief systems such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and others, conventionally labeled as religious.” This is frequently repeated in Indian nationalism, where identities such as religion or language are seen to be below the Indian identity. The 1959’s Bollywood movie *Dhool ke Phool*, Urdu poet, Sahir Ludhianvi, wrote-

“*Tū Hindū banegā na Musalmān banegā, insān kī aulād hai, insān banegā.*” (*You will neither grow up to be Hindu nor Muslim; you are the child of a human and that’s what you’ll grow up to be*).

Ludhianvi had deprecated any identity other than Muslim, for the Indian identity.

Consensus exists among the scholars cited in this paper about the regional, religious, and economic significance of music within discourses of Indian nationalism. Dennen, Fiol, Rahaim, and Linden provided a historical context for a discussion of how and why certain forms of music became a nationalist and regionalist force in India. Schultz, Manuel, Dutta, and Asthana scholarly focus on the ways music portrays nationalist contemporary sentiments. Future research on the links between music and nationalism could take various directions. While several authors succeed in explaining why the classicization of music was a movement of political import, the consequences, and implications of standardization and homogenization of traditional music merit further exploration. More ambiguous folk music traditions and religious music that reside on the margins of the dominant national Hindu/Muslim antagonism are neglected in this literature sample survey but may be a useful subject of future research.

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