

Gendered nationalism in India and Poland: postcolonial and postsocialist conditions in times of populism

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Introduction

All intellectual collaborations have an autobiography. Similarly, all knowledge productions are embedded within a given time and space. This particular essay has been challenging in the sense that it was written when the phenomenon it seeks to study especially in the Indian case was still evolving and remains so and also the advent of pandemic of Covid-19 globally, which has forced us to rethink about some of the basic assumptions of contemporary social sciences. This is true especially in the case of analysis of nation-states and their relevance in the period of globalization. The pandemic brought the nation-state, already in ascendance on the back of conservative nationalism firmly at the centre of analysis as a primary locus of political power. The impulse of this chapter and the authors was the conviction that the experiences of postcolonial and postsocialist nation-states around the issues of citizenship, nationalism, and emergence of majoritarian identity politics provides a vantage point for an analysis that reveals the conjunctures of political power and praxis in the Global South and Eastern Europe. This conjuncture has the potential to create the possibility for a spread of decolonial politics which was essentially seen as a movement restricted to erstwhile colonies and rarely Europe not too long ago.

This chapter is about nationalist politics aimed at excluding the nations' Others in India and Poland. The choice of studying the political conjunctures of these two countries is not merely idiosyncratic depended on the putative nationalities of the authors of this chapter. The historical experience of both Central Eastern Europe and the Indian Subcontinent point towards definite processes of colonization, partition, war, and nation-state formation. The contemporary experiences with relation to the question of refugees, immigration, gender rights, and religious identities especially in case of religious minorities have interesting points of convergence.

In this chapter, through the study of a nationwide popular protest against amendment to citizen laws in India primarily led by Muslim women and the political discourse around refugees, immigrants and Muslims in Poland we discuss how the bodies of the 'alien' and the 'foreigner' are rendered dangerous and malignant to the nation's body politic. The chapter is based on a critical discourse analysis of media coverage, policy- and public documents such as the Polish migration policy and the Indian Citizenship (Amendment) Act. Also, we trace the genealogy of right-wing populism to understand its emergence in the foundational moments of the nation-state. A particular focus is directed at how women's bodies become central to these mobilisations, adding to the already existing work on gender and the global right (Graff, Kapur and Walters 2019). Our contribution seeks to tease out how the internal terrors of each nation-state take centre stage under populist right-wing political regimes and what role gender plays in the control and exclusion of bodies through sexual-racial biopolitical management of lives and deaths.

Postcolonial and postsocialist dialogues and the re-entrance of populist right-wing nationalism

"How might thinking between the posts clarify the biopolitics of modern racisms in various contexts, and what possibilities might such analysis suggest for anti-racist and democratic political imaginings in the present?" (Chari and Verdery 2009:25)

In this section we briefly sketch out the historical contexts of India and Poland and discuss the recent shift in political rule in both countries following the 2014 and 2015 electoral victories of populist right wing parties: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India and Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS) in Poland.

India

Such a foundational moment in the case of India is unequivocally the partition of the Indian Subcontinent into two nation-states of India and Pakistan in 1947. It should be remembered that this partition and massive forced migration occurred in the backdrop of unprecedented communal violence (Butalia 1998). The constitutional promise of secularism, socialism,

justice, and equality emerged from this foundational postcolonial political moment. The argument we are making here is that it is possible to trace the contours of popular politics in India in this moment in the nation-state where communalism, communism, nationalism, and secessionism were in a relationship of overdetermination. It is from these overdetermined relations of mutually contradictory and even hostile political forces and formations that it is possible to trace the two strands of populism—left populism and right populism— that has animated Indian politics from the time of its inception. We argue that it is possible to divide the political chronology of India into four phases where we can look at four distinct movements in competition between left-wing populism and right-wing populism: first phase (1947-1975), second phase (1977-1992), third phase (1992-2014) and fourth phase (2014-2020).

The first phase immediately after independence was a period of decolonization which saw an intense ideological struggle between constituent political currents within the Congress Party. This period saw the version of Nehruvian Socialism based on Non-Alignment in foreign policy, state-led mixed economy with Indian version of Five Years Plans in political economy, and Secularism based on religious tolerance in social relations as forming the dominant ideology around which the political and intellectual elites of the postcolonial state coalesced (Das 2001). However, there were two major currents which went against this elite consensus. One was the extreme left-wing that proclaimed that independence was counterfeit as the ruling elites were still under the dual dominance of foreign capital and native feudal powers (Ghosh 2013). The culmination of this political current reaches in 1967 in Naxalbari Movement which galvanized a large section of peasants and lower middle-class intellectuals. This current now exists as the Maoist Movement under various political formations, which is now under tremendous decline. The other current was the Hindutva nationalist political current which saw independence as betrayal too because *Akhand Bharat* (United India) was not attained and the ruling elite was seen to have compromised by agreeing to the partition of India. It is this current which culminates in the formation of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). It does so on the social and cultural level through the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangathan (RSS) which remains the parent organization and operates in the field of electoral politics through the BJP (Andersen and Damle 2018). It is as a result of this dynamic and evolving relationship between institutional social activism of RSS through a massive network of several grassroots

organizations and electoral politics through the BJP that right-wing populism of Hindutva in India appears to be more stable, deeply entrenched, and hugely legitimate in the polity than other right-wing counterparts elsewhere around the globe. This first phase lasts until 1975 till the declaration of emergency in 1975, which remains in Indian political history a singular political event of state oppression and suppression of opposition.

The second phase and third phase are marked by a continuation of identity politics separated by a radical shift in political economy with the advent of globalization in 1991. Of course, it is extremely schematic and stylized account of vast vicissitudes in politics and social movement. However, there is also more than just a grain of truth when we say that these phases were marked by assertion of dignity and identity in terms of caste, gender, ethnicity, language, and even ecological movements found articulation largely within the vocabulary of identity movements. These phases also were similar in the sense that the dominant mode of popular movement was based on the vocabulary of rights. This period also saw a gradual and incessant decline of working-class politics with only a few and sporadic movements breaking through into the political centre stage. The culmination of the first phase is the demolition of the Babri mosque in 1992 (Singh 2017). In this phase, the BJP enters into various electoral alliances increasing its political footprint across the country but really embraces populist politics with the movement against the mosque which was at once a social, cultural, and political movement. The third phase is marked by some of the boldest innovations in neoliberal governmentality under the Congress regime (1999-2014), where rights-based discourse propelled by market economy became the elite consensus. This phase ended with coming into power of the BJP under the leadership of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

There are two reasons why the fourth phase is shown to be abruptly ending in the relatively short period of six years in 2020. The first one is the Shaheen Bagh Movement discussed in detail below. The second is the laying of the foundation stone of the Ram Temple at the site where Babri mosque stood till 1992. During this period, the political arrangement in Jammu and Kashmir has been changed irretrievably and Triple Talaq has been abolished and the act made a criminal offense. These two issues also found resonance in the Shaheen Bagh Movement. We discuss both issues in relation to gendered nationalism below.

The point we are trying to make through this rather, admittedly, quaint chronology is to demonstrate how right-wing Hindutva nationalism is not an aberration but something that is foundational to the way in which nation-state has evolved and politics and governance conducted. Similarly, in Poland, the right-wing nationalism that has now truly established itself across political and public discourse has got roots that go back to the formation of the Polish state. We focus next on the period of the Partitions in the CEE region and subsequent state formation to point to how colonial and exclusionary ideas of Polish nationalism were formed and now resurfaced.

Poland

Central and Eastern Europe has always had a precarious relationship with Europeanness and the West (Buchowski 2006). This will be discussed through a focus on four phases; Partitions (1772-1918), Communism (1945-1989), EU accession (2004) and the aftermath of the 2015 electoral victory of PiS. The region has historically been imagined as lesser Europe including by prominent thinkers such as Hegel that narrated Eastern Europe as subordinate, backward and irrational and contributing little to world history and Enlightenment (Tibebu 2011). Ideas around 'catching up' with the West were already being formulated during Partition and, together with themes of colonisation, remained central in the formation of a Polish national identity that reverberates today.

The Partition of Poland (then the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) lasted over a century from the end of 18th century when the country was split between Russia, Prussia and Austria, until 1918 when Poland regained independence as a state. The ambition among Polish nationalists that formed the National Democratic Movement (Endecja) was partly to resist a colonial overtake of Polish territory and partly to find a place for Poland in the global capitalist economy (Snochowska-Gonzales 2020). During this period, the movement for Polish sovereignty against Russian and German colonisation of Poland as well as plans of colonisation of overseas territories were formed. The leader of Endecja, nationalist Roman Dmowski, set out to unite 'the Polish body and soul' by uniting Poles in partitioned Poland with the masses that had already emigrated (Snochowska-Gonzales 2020: 112). As Claudia Snochowska-Gonzales (2020) shows through analysis of the early writings of the Endecja movement, Polish colonialism was more a fantasy than an actual plan of overtaking other

countries militarily, economically and culturally (Snochowska-Gonzales 2020, Ureña Valerio 2019). Even after Poland regained independence and did make moves towards establishing colonies in Africa in the 1930, it was unsuccessful (Balogun 2018). Instead, as Snochowska-Gonzales argues (2020:128) what became central to the nationalist movement was the manufacturing of 'a dynamic, masculine subject proudly entering the world of modernity'. Racial thinking was also central to the early nationalist thought in Poland, focusing on establishing racial hierarchies between the Poles and the Polish Jews who were Othered and described as 'mould' and 'parasite' that was polluting the Polish body. These themes are returning today in the racial Othering of Muslims. Muslims in India comprise around 14% of the population while in Poland it is less than 0.1% although Poles believe that the number is closer to 10% and growing (Narkowicz and Pędziwiatr 2017c).

From 1945 to 1989 the Polish People's Republic (PRL) was a satellite of Soviet Russia. This period has been recognised as another colonisation, with Soviet Russia acting as a coloniser, or as a semi-coloniser since Poland was officially an independent state, but its internal and international politics were profoundly controlled by the leaders of the Soviet bloc countries (Mayblin, Piekut and Valentine 2017). As Chari and Verdery (2009:15) argue, the incorporation of countries in Central Europe into the Soviet empire was aimed to create a 'buffer zone' that separated the Soviet imperial territory from Western Europe and the 'polluting effects' of capitalism. The creation of Central Europe as a distinctive entity also allowed Poland and its neighbours to construct distance from a Slavdom that was less desirable than the West which Poland aspired to be closer to, thus rejecting its position in the European East (Todorova 1997, Janion 2016, Hagen 2003).

The European Union accession in 2004 is another significant point when Poland's position in Europe shifted and impacted its sense of national identity. Leaving its fellow ex-Soviet neighbours behind and making what seemed to be a long sought-after step towards the West, this journey was already predicated on an uneven hierarchical relationship. Debates around EU accession was split between liberals who couldn't wait to become Europeans and rid themselves of their Polishness and right-wing conservatives that with equal passion wanted to defend the national identity against foreign threat. As Maria Janion (2011:2) describes the process, joining the EU was imagining as 'defending another Ordon's Redoubt'. Ordon's

Redoubt (*Reduta Ordona*) is a name of a poem about the last line of defence against the Russian Empire during the Polish uprising by Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz. Interestingly the very same redoubt became one of the reasons of opposition to a mosque in a Warsaw neighbourhood in 2010 where the redoubt apparently was stationed – again, serving as a symbol defending Polishness against foreign threat, whether European or Muslim. The parallel discourses of Poland as on the one hand always lagging behind the West, but on the other hand being morally superior and, in contrast to Western countries, able to resist ‘Islamisation’ of their country have gathered strength since 2015. The election that saw the populist right come to power was largely underpinned by exclusionary ideas of strengthening Polish Catholic identity, building borders and keeping out (Muslim) immigrants. Such visible tensions around Muslims in Poland started around the mosque conflict and has since intensified. This marked a sudden shift from a long history of predominantly peaceful relationships between the Christian and Muslim communities stretching back to 14th century to a climate in which Muslim presence is considered with increased suspicion, mirroring the global intensification of Islamophobic discourse (Narkowicz and Pędziwiatr 2017c).

The 2015 election victory of the *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (PiS) meant a shift to right-wing politics in the country and further deepening of anti-Muslim rhetoric. Like the Indian case, the new ruling party promoted a nationalist politics that aimed to cleanse itself of unwanted foreign intervention. The enemy here was partly the liberal elite of Brussels (EU) and its Western-gazing allies, and partly the refugee hovering at European borders. While Poland needed both, the government took drastic steps to assert its anti-colonial stance through refusing the previously agreed EU quota on the number of refugees to be accepted into Poland and, what is more, banned all Muslim refugees from entering the country (Narkowicz 2018). The justification used was fear of a terrorist attack posed by Muslims if they were welcomed to Poland. The security arguments were frequently weaved in with more openly racialised comments about refugees. For example, in the quote opening this essay the leader of the Law and Justice party Jarosław Kaczyński issued a statement where he warned of the danger of disease that could be brought in with the refugees (Rettman 2015). This of course echoes the earlier *Endecja*’s anti-Semitic rhetoric that has now shifted focus. In 2016, a year after the Polish election, the *Endecja* movement made a re-entrance to Polish politics with the aim of re-invigorating the core ideas of nationalist Roman Dmowski. Even today colonial

rhetoric is central to the movement that fights against Polish subordination and colonial condition and continues to evoke biopolitics by re-focusing on building a strong national body, cleansed of those considered to be polluting it. While 19th century *Endecja* excluded Jews as un-assimilable and parasitical, the *Endecja* of the 21st century focuses on the exclusion of Muslims from its body politic. One of the leaders of the movement, also the President of the far-right nationalist All-Polish Youth organisation, spoke about Islam as civilisationally different and in conflict with 'our European civilisation'. The central justification of Islam's perceived backwardness was gender and the rights of women. This discourse gathers prominence among the populist right-wing in the midst of the country's withdrawal (at the time of writing) from the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Women's rights being invoked like this by the patriarchal right-wing in Poland is a prime example of femonationalism, where gender is strategically evoked for racist purposes (Farris 2017).

The increasing popularity of right-wing nationalism with its focus to reimagine the nation as purely Hindu and Catholic respectively, cleansed of 'foreign invasion', is part of a broader 'anti-colonial' movement in the sense that they lay a claim on an imagined pristine and glorious past of sovereign nationhood based on religious and racial identity, which has taken centre stage in right-wing politics of both the BJP and the PiS but that, as we observed earlier, harks back to the colonial history of each context. These discourses, noticeable in both India and Poland, while remaining Western-oriented simultaneously resist Western imposition in their anti-colonial politics, whether it is through EU paternalism and by restricting the role of foreign-funded NGOs. Below, we explore the ways that each nations' Others are excluded through gendered techniques.

Femonationalism in Poland and India

In this chapter, we draw on the concept of 'femonationalism' developed by Sara Farris (2017) and inspired by Jasbir Puar's (2007) term 'homonationalism' to make sense of the role that feminist discourses play in anti-immigration/refugee/Muslim political discourses in Poland and India. Femonationalism encompass processes whereby women's rights are invoked in order to further nationalist, racist, anti-immigration politics. The relationship between women's rights and racist discourses is a complex web of collusions that has a long history,

prominent not least within the early women's movement in the context of slavery (Davis 2011). Femonationalism has the support of distinctive, and often politically and ideologically opposed groups, such as the nationalist far-right and the liberals, who reproduce colonial rhetoric of saving women from brown men (Spivak 1988, Abu-Lughod 2002, Bhattacharyya 2008, Bracke 2012, Thapar-Björkert & Tlostanova 2018). In this chapter we focus primarily on groups that are not the likely champions of women's rights and who, on the contrary, often lobby against what they call a 'gender ideology' that according to them undermines traditional (religious) values (Korolczuk 2020, Verloo 2018). This is part of a wider trend of 'global antifeminism' that feminist scholars have already observed in the USA, Brazil and across Europe (Graff, Kapur and Walters 2019). Despite being opposed to feminism, the global political right invokes women's rights discourses, particularly in their opposition to immigration and to Muslim migrants. As such, the tired discourses of saving (brown) women from brown men are recycled.

Anti-refugee and anti-immigrant discourses more generally, and security and gender more specifically, feature heavily in both countries' exclusion practices, representing ideas about threat to women's safety and by extension, the safety of the nation. It also reinforces control over women's bodies by positing Muslim refugees as threats to the respectability and security of Polish Catholic and Indian Hindu women. In both country cases, it works at the dual rhetorical level of liberating Muslim women from Islamic patriarchy and protecting the honour of the Hindu/Catholic women who are lured by Muslim men through what is in India termed '*Love-Jihad*'. The focus is on the control and protection of women's bodies as reproducers of the Polish (Catholic) and Indian (Hindu) nation. Both countries place strong emphasis on idealised motherhood (Hill Collins 2005) with Mother Poland and Mother India framing national identity of each country (Janion 2006, Dasgupta 2019). Patriarchal ideas about the centrality of women's role in the reproduction and maintenance of borders is part of efforts to re-build the nation in its purer form, reconstructing an idea of what it once was (Mostov 2012), or imagined to be. Historically efforts to maintain boundaries that relied on the mobilisation of gendered narratives were prominent already in the post-Civil War Reconstruction era in the USA when former slaves were making claims to the public sphere as citizens yet their attempts at suffrage were increasingly challenged with racist ideas of black criminality (Davis 2011). The myth of the 'black peril' was constructed around ideas of

white female vulnerability as well as her purity which translated to the responsibility of keeping the nation white (Ware 2015). Today in India and Poland the myth of the black rapist is resurfacing with the Muslim male body posing as primary threat to women's purity and the nation. In this way we situate the engagement with women's rights discourses on the side of the populist nationalists in both Poland and India as a continuation of racial exclusions justified in threat of violence against women (Graff, Kapur and Walters 2019).

Patriarchal Nations Saving Women from Muslim Men

The manner in which femonationalism plays itself in the Indian context under the Hindutva rule is two-fold. There is the rising and awakening of the Hindu women embodied in the discourse of the *Bharat Mata* (Mother India) rising to claim her rightful place after the 'centuries of cultural oppression' by Muslim and British rule both identified as foreign. This rhetoric is evident in the case of the Ram Temple Movement. Yet this awakening is within the rule set up by the patriarchal nation-state. In the case of Central and Eastern Europe, feminist scholars have argued that the 'anti-colonial' move by right-wing parties has little to do with colonialism and simply opposes what it refers to as arrogance of liberal elites (Korolczuk and Graff 2018). Yet there is more to the popularity of anti-colonial rhetoric in postsocialist countries than simply an appropriation of anti-colonialism. Almost three decades after postsocialist countries underwent Western-imposed shock therapy with neoliberal policies aimed to transform the economy, those groups that did not benefit from the transformation have become increasingly critical of the continuous catching-up rhetoric that they see dictated by the West, and particularly the EU. A symbolic tipping point seem to have been the EU quotas on refugee reception that the 2015 election campaign monopolised on. Growing numbers of people found themselves supporting a nationalist agenda promoted by the ruling party and its far-right allies that had as goal to close off borders to Muslim refugees and reassert a patriarchal order amidst growing calls for gender equality. In Poland, the debates around Muslims as ultimate Others and the justification of these discourses in narratives of women's rights, became more pronounced in the simultaneous context of the refugee crisis and the victory of the right-wing nationalist party PiS in 2015. In India, the victory of the BJP in the same year ushered in a more directed campaign at curbing the rights of Muslims within the nation as well as Muslim refugees as was seen in the case of Rohingyas. Contemporary nationalistic politics of the two parties, PiS and BJP, invoke women's rights in order to further

their political goal towards a Catholic and Hindu nations respectively. The connecting elements, also visible in other national contexts, is a focus on violence or the potential of violence to women of the country (Polish Catholic women and Indian Hindu women) where the perpetrator is racialised and Othered. In the cases of India and Poland, the threat to women's safety is posed by the Muslim man. In this set up, the Polish and Indian right is able to construct traditional religious patriarchal masculinity as the ultimate protectors of 'their' women and thus undermine feminist work towards greater gender equality between the sexes. We draw next on examples from Poland's migration policy and its response to the refugee crisis, and India's Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the events that unfolded in Shaheen Bagh in response to the CAA.

Poland

'The reception of Muslim immigrants is a greater security threat in Poland, especially for women.' (Anna Maria Siarkowska, member of conservative movement Kukiz'15 in 2016).

Femonationalistic narratives run through policy, media and popular culture in Poland. Gendered narratives, doing the work of justifying Poland's role in criminalising migrants' bodies and passing it off as equality work, point to an inherent tension to the nationalist 'anti-colonial' project currently promoted by the PiS government. On the one hand, Euroscepticism and a distaste of liberal Western values is core to the state project of taking back control from what is perceived as foreign interference in a country that has always been narrated as in, but not quite part of, Europe (Hall 1992). On the other hand, and in order to justify the criminalisation of racialised migrant bodies as threat to the nation, the government embraces as its own the European civilizational rhetoric of women's liberation. A shift in right-wing discourse from religious language of morality to one of human rights has been understood by feminist scholars as a strategic move (Korolczuk 2020). Gender and sexual politics are central themes in the current government's nationalist project, usually as part of a mission to resist progressive politics on abortion and gay rights, also understood by the right as threat to children, women and 'traditional values' (Korolczuk 2020). Yet when the threat is an ultimate racialised outsider, gender equality is also evoked as a moral justification of the exclusion of the Other.

Discourses of danger attached to bodies of migrants, refugees and Muslims (often considered as interchangeable and homogenous) run through the Polish society, from public attitudes to media stories and government policy. In the media, migrant/refugee/Muslim Others are frequently represented through orientalised discourses of invasion of Poland and Europe (Kotras 2017), often and paradoxically treated as one and the same by the Euro-sceptic government. In the context of the 'refugee crisis' in 2015, right-wing magazines *wSieci* and *DoRzeczy* published stories with headlines such as: *'They are invaders not refugees'* (Pędziwiatr 2017). Within these racialised representations there is a link to gender and the subtext is that the migrants will pollute the white Catholic nation. The 2016 sexual assaults on New Year's Eve in Germany's public spaces served as a convenient trigger to populist right-wing debates on the assimilability and commitment to gender equality of the new migrants (Vieten 2018). One of the right-wing magazines published a story that made global headlines called the 'Islamic Rape of Europe' [Islamski Gwałt na Europe]. On the cover was a white blond woman dressed in an EU flag, screaming, because hands of brown men were assaulting her by ripping apart the EU flag. Such representations of threat to white women by 'dangerous brown men' (Bhattacharyya 2008) are familiar to the Western European vocabulary and have long been an important component of Western imperialism (Kuntsman, Haritaworn, Pretzen 2011). In 2014, right-wing Catholic magazine *Frona*, known for their anti-feminist politics, ran a section on Islam and gender which has become a common feature of both right-wing and liberal groups in Poland since the early 2010s. On the cover was a woman covered in a black burqa holding a gun (echoing narratives of threat) and inside the magazine were stories about women's liberation evoking the familiar saving narratives. The magazine argued that *'Arab girls (...) know that it is only in Europe that they will be respected'* (Narkowicz and Pędziwiatr 2017a). Similarly, orientalised narratives of Muslim women's journeys from oppression to freedom, or from Islamic culture to Western culture, are popular bestsellers in Polish bookshops. These themes are now creeping into official government legislation.

Polish migration policy has in recent years increasingly focussed on securitisation of borders, immigration and Islamic radicalisation. Despite very small numbers of Muslims living in Poland the public attitudes towards them are generally hostile which maps on to the extremely exaggerated sense among the Polish public of the numbers of Muslims in the country (Narkowicz and Pędziwiatr 2017b). In June 2019, a draft of the PiS government's new

migration policy was published with a disproportionate attention focussed on safety concerns around immigration and Islam (Pedziwiatr 2019). A particular focus was placed on perceived cultural differences of Muslims and ways in which this poses a threat to gender equality in Poland and Europe. Again, a commitment to women's rights imagined to be enshrined in Polish/European/Western culture is interesting here considering the aforementioned Polish resistance to an international convention on the prevention of violence against women. The migration policy refers to the need for control of migrant inflow from 'Africa and some Asian countries' and of migrant assimilation, portraying Muslim migrants as culturally alien and incapable of integration. The document reads: *'It seems that there are particular difficulties associated with the admission and integration of the followers of Islam'* (MSWiA 2019:48). Even here gender is brought in to make sense of the ambition to limit the presence of Muslim bodies in Poland. The policy reads, for example, that the *'different culture'* of potential migrants is a factor of concern, particularly in connection to the impact of *'traditional gender roles'* on labour participation which is inconsistent with the nationalist politics that the PiS government has led since 2015 that have focussed on attacking what is seen as a 'gender ideology'. As part of the increased anti-gender agenda the ruling party have emphasised traditional family values of the heterosexual family and heavily critiqued feminist politics (Korolczuk and Graff 2018). As Vieten (2018) has argued in the case of Germany, the violence against women becomes problematised when the perpetrator is non-white and non-Christian. Considering the ongoing government onslaught on gender equality in Poland, the co-optation of feminist vocabulary might seem contradictory, yet is consistent with the broader ways in which femonationalism functions on a global scale.

India

In India an interesting political move, which has elements of similarity and distinctiveness from the Polish case is an attempt to provide and create a gendered and segregated space for women of the Muslim community within the body politic. This is evident in the so-called "triple talaq" issue, where the incumbent nationalist government, following the judgment by the Supreme Court of India, declared a criminal offence the customary practice of divorce by Muslims in India through three utterances of talaq (divorce) by men. The government introduced The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill in 2019. The Act not only deemed the practice illegal in keeping with the judgment of the Supreme Court but also

criminalized the practice in which legal provisions were made to prosecute the erring husband with an imprisonment of up to three years. This was widely critiqued as a malevolent attempt to render criminal Muslim men for what was simply a civil offense. The government on the other hand claimed that there has been a decrease of 82% in the cases of Triple Talaq (The Hindu 2020). Triple Talaq was done deploying a strident rhetoric of gender justice in a religious community that was portrayed as deeply orthodox if not fundamentalist. At once, this move made clear the distinction between women belonging to majority Hindu community with putative legal rights and the Muslim women who were devoid of such rights and must be protected by the state against the orthodoxies of their community. Even with rights, there is a differential relation between the state and Muslim women in this case. Also, in this move the implicit assumption is that of a religiously aggressive and pathologically fundamentalist men of Muslim community that need to be kept at bay in much the same way as the infiltrators and illegal immigrants at the border. Muslim patriarchy becomes, in this state sponsored gender justice discourse, an insider-infiltrator of the body politic of the nation. The similarity between the illegal immigrant as a parasite and termite with the citizen-Muslim is complete. The Shaheen Bagh Movement turns this discourse on its head by making the claim that the way the BJP-led Indian government has defined illegal immigrant exclusively in terms of her identity as a Muslim bearing the scars of the political and territorial partition of India, actually is the first illegal act morally and constitutionally malafide. Shaheen Bagh Movement then sees itself as foundational in a sense that it radically wants to break the aporia that underscored the overdetermined relations of political forces at the moment of political freedom of India, which we alluded to in the beginning. When the protest against the Citizenship Law began the implementation of Triple Talaq was constantly invoked by the protesters as a proof that the government at the Centre is threatening the Muslim identity. It is clear that gender especially the discourse on women's rights have found qualified acceptance in the larger Hindutva ideology as it simultaneously can control the extent of Hindu women's participation in the public sphere and can through state action intervene in the "personal laws" of the minority community, a practice that is embedded in Indian politics.

The Movement against CAA at Shaheen Bagh, a neighbourhood in Delhi, started on December 14, 2019 immediately after clashes between students of Jamia Milia Islamia, a

university in Delhi and the Delhi Police over the passing of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 in the parliament. According to this amendment:

Any person belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian community from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, who entered into India on or before the 31st day of December, 2014 and who has been exempted by the Central Government by or under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 or from the application of the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 or any rule or order made thereunder, shall not be treated as illegal migrant for the purposes of this Act.

This amendment also mentioned that these immigrants 'shall be deemed to be a citizen of India from the date of his entry into India'. This was a momentous decision that sought to radically challenge the political consensus, explicit and implicit, around the issues of granting citizenship. India is not a signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention and has exercised autonomy in providing asylum, care, and citizenship. These have been informed by complex calculation of politics and governmentality (Samaddar 2003) giving the regime of citizenship a degree of flexibility in the Indian context. This stance is also a result of the peculiar condition of the Indian Subcontinent where creation of nation-states following a partition has been witnessed twice and borders between nation-states for all purposes are increasingly porous.

The protest at Shaheen Bagh should be seen as the culmination of the contradictions of nation, citizenship, and gender in the biography of the Indian Nation (Samaddar 2001). The immediate reason for the protest was the Citizenship law but a closer look at the composition of the protesters makes it clear that it not only brought together at a given space several strands of established oppositional politics but also indicated towards some emerging trends in the formation of oppositional politics. The fact that this movement was constituted mainly by the presence of Muslim women added to the radical nature of the political movement. The Shaheen Bagh movement and its replication across India should be seen as the claim on constitution, citizenship, and politics by a group that has been increasingly been made redundant in the arena of electoral politics. Abhay Kumar Dubey in his work *Hindu-Ekta Banam Gyan ki Rajneeti* (2019) has made a powerful claim that the social engineering done

by the Hindutva forces that is in power today in India where it has been successful in combining disparate identities under the larger Hindu umbrella has led to such a large scale consolidation of Hindu votes that it is no longer important for them to take into account the demands of the Muslim communities. In a way, this is disenfranchisement of an entire community through a precise calculation. In other words, the politics of election has been turned deftly into a politics of population and governmentality. It was this political calculation that Shaheen Bagh movement challenged. The fact that Shaheen Bagh movement to a great degree was against this disenfranchisement and the fact of being pushed away from the electoral arena that the claim on Constitution of India by the protesters took on an immediate and urgent articulation. Ranabir Samaddar has powerfully argued about this movement as the fifth moment of insurgent constitutionalism in India starting from the First War of Indian Independence in 1857 (Samaddar 2020). Also, unlike other insurgent movements either Maoist or Sub-nationalist the women protesters of Shaheen Bagh firmly located their struggle within the constitutional fold thereby making the movement within the 'prescribed' and 'tolerated' forms of claim-making (Tilly 2006). The fact that the government could not find a solution to the impasse and it took an organized communal riot and the pandemic to remove the protesters from the site is a clear indication that the Hindutva government was unable to resolve the political dilemmas for the state inherent in the movement. It is for this reason we are calling the movement an unfinished challenge.

Conclusion

This chapter explored postcolonial and postsocialist conjunctures by exploring contemporary expressions of gendered nationalism and femonationalism in India and Poland. Through the analysis of media coverage, policy- and public documents focusing on cases of Triple Talaq, CAA and Shaheen Bagh (India) and the refugee ban and the new migration policy (Poland), we teased out the anti-Muslim sentiments at the centre of exclusionary politics of current day populist governments. By tracing the genealogies of right-wing thinking and evolution of national identity in the two countries, we are able to find convergences between postcolonial and postsocialist countries under study, particularly in the ways that they make use of gendered techniques. This chapter contributed to existing work on dialogues across the postcolonial and postsocialist world by bringing together two seemingly different national contexts in dialogue, connecting both their colonial histories and their current gendered

mobilisations. Going forward the challenge is to explore resistance to these overlapping right-wing developments and forge meaningful decolonial global politics across postcolonial and postsocialist conditions.

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