

THE

NATION AND ITS CITIZENS



TALES OF
BONDAGE AND
BELONGING

‘This is a book of considerable theoretical acuity, courage and scholarship...’

—**Achin Vanaik**, *Author and Retired Professor of International Relations and Global Politics, University of Delhi*

FP

SUKUMAR MURALIDHARAN

Praise for the book

This is a book of considerable theoretical acuity, courage and scholarship, which shows how important it is to view the nation as a modern construct, contrary to all the claims currently in vogue. Nationalism is both cultural and political, and can refer to a movement, doctrine, ideology, sentiment or identity, either singly or in combination. All of these aspects are given deep and thoughtful interrogation. This makes the book a very important study that helps us better understand the rise and spread of authoritarian nationalisms and how to join the struggle to make India, and the world, more inclusive, humane and just.

Achin Vanaik,

Retired Professor of International Relations and
Global Politics, University of Delhi

This important and timely book provides a critical account of the often tortuous relationship between the nation and its citizens. The author deploys his wide-ranging and granular scholarship of the recent history of the Indian republic, to illuminate the urgent needs of the future. This is a book that needs to be widely read.

Sanjay Kak,

Documentary Filmmaker and Writer

THE
**NATION
AND ITS
CITIZENS**

TALES OF BONDAGE
AND BELONGING

SUKUMAR MURALIDHARAN





FP

320-954

MU-N

2
A

-9 SEP2022

First published by
Rupa Publications India Pvt. Ltd 2022
7/16, Ansari Road, Daryaganj
New Delhi 110002

Sales Centres:
Allahabad Bengaluru Chennai
Hyderabad Jaipur Kathmandu
Kolkata Mumbai

Copyright © Sukumar Muralidharan 2022

All rights reserved.

The views and opinions expressed in this book are the author's own and the facts are as reported by him which have been verified to the extent possible, and the publishers are not in any way liable for the same.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in a retrieval system, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

ISBN: 978-93-5520-638-1

First impression 2022

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The moral right of the author has been asserted.

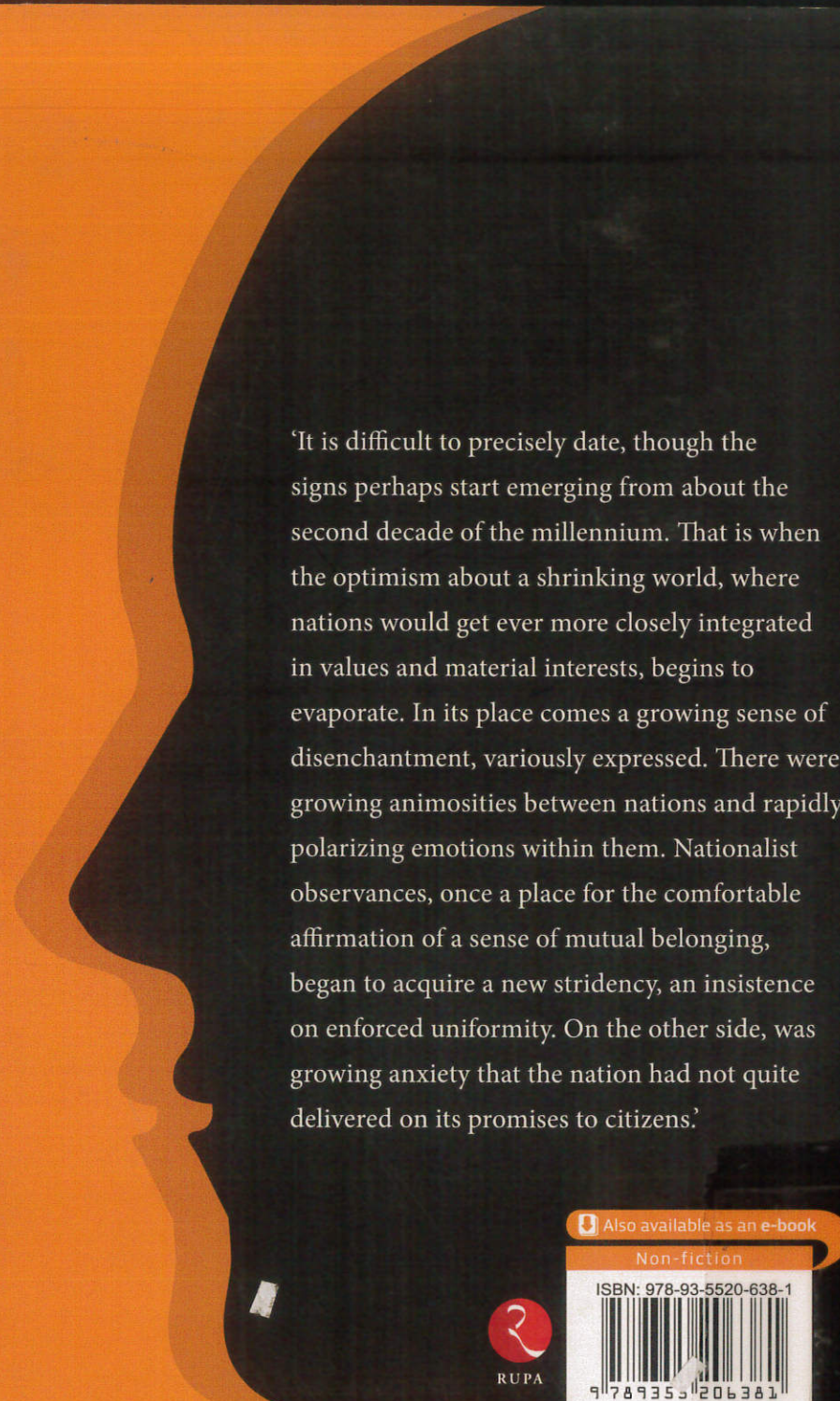
Printed in India

CONTENTS

<i>Introduction: Bondage and Belonging</i>	vii
1 Identity and Citizen Loyalty	1
2 Nation in Action: The Rituals of Democracy	25
3 Violence and Forgetting	64
4 The Many Perceptions of India	118
5 Nation, State and Civil Society	168
6 Networks of Populism and the Unequal Nation	209
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	255
<i>Index</i>	257



Sukumar Muralidharan teaches at the school of journalism, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat. Prior to this, he worked for many years in the print media, heading editorial desks and news bureaus. Since 2004, he has worked as a freelance journalist, trainer, and press freedom campaigner. He began his professional life as a science and technology reporter, before moving onto the themes of economics and current political affairs. He has published research papers on the media industry and contemporary politics and worked in conflict analysis, both domestic and global. As a fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, he worked on the Indian development experience and on modes of theorizing on technology. He is also the author of *Freedom, Civility, Commerce: Contemporary Media and the Public* (2018).



'It is difficult to precisely date, though the signs perhaps start emerging from about the second decade of the millennium. That is when the optimism about a shrinking world, where nations would get ever more closely integrated in values and material interests, begins to evaporate. In its place comes a growing sense of disenchantment, variously expressed. There were growing animosities between nations and rapidly polarizing emotions within them. Nationalist observances, once a place for the comfortable affirmation of a sense of mutual belonging, began to acquire a new stridency, an insistence on enforced uniformity. On the other side, was growing anxiety that the nation had not quite delivered on its promises to citizens.'

Also available as an e-book

Non-fiction

ISBN: 978-93-5520-638-1



9 789355 206381

₹395



RUPA