CHAPTER II:

Conceptualizing the Nation

Since the Uprising of 1857 has been an event studied and represented from various viewpoints from time to time under the banner of history, it therefore becomes mandatory to understand the complex connotations of the terms ‘nation’ and ‘national’, i.e. whether at all these terms may be associated with the event of 1857, and if yes, then up to what extent. A close scrutiny of the Uprising and the various reactions which followed it in the different regions of the country from the second half of the nineteenth century itself, be it the form of analysis, documentation or representation, till today, will reveal that this area has been the subject of great controversy and various scholars and historians have supported or opposed the idea of perceiving the Uprising as a national event with their own logic and reasoning. A study of the representations of 1857 in the context of the 21st century diaspora necessitates a knowledge of these various arguments in order to fathom the real nature of the complexity of India as it came into being as a nation in the eyes of its own inhabitants through the transitional period of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, because only then will it be possible to comprehensively analyze the reason behind these shifting perspectives of representation, in literature as well as popular culture, over the years.

The first ever records of the Uprising are found in the form of personal memoirs and diaries and the immediate analyses which followed and could be recorded in print were those of the
onlookers, not the sufferers or the survivors which could come to light only after a certain span. An Indian perspective required much more time to develop in this case since the Uprising completely altered the nature of British rule in India – from the East India Company to the British Raj, and brought about a major shift in understanding the change of power with the focus of the British administration being altered from Calcutta to Delhi – initially in the form of Delhi Durbar and later with the relocation of the capital. Since this shift in the centre of power from eastern to northern India was one of the major causes in the later perception of the Uprising as an event of national dimension, it needs to be understood and analyzed clearly in order to comprehend the role of the memory of the events of 1857 in shaping the Indian national identity and the collective subconscious of India as it came to be constructed to stand to be what it is today.

When the rebellion broke out at Meerut and spread to the northern parts of India, the British capital at Kolkata remained absolutely unaffected by this tumult. Mangal Pandey did initiate the process at Barrackpore a couple of months back, but that is what the representations of history would lead us to believe today. As per the chronicles of history, Mangal Pandey’s reaction was inspired by a strong sense of his casteist identity as a Brahmin and not his nationalist identity as an Indian, because India was yet to discover itself as a nation during this period of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the majority of the Bengali intelligentsia never showed the slightest inclination towards this event. The reason behind this was however not simply slavish submission to the orders of the English masters.
The 19th century was an altogether different time for Bengal. It was the time when the Bengali intelligentsia were rising against the orthodox practices of religion, such as the Sati system, and striving hard to bring it to an end. However, from the religious perspective, when the British passed a law abolishing the practice of Sati, it was also perceived as encroachment upon the native religion by a vast majority of people. Benoy Ghose observes in his essay entitled “The Bengali Intelligentsia and the Revolt” – “To support the rebels and their cause would have amounted at that time to a negation of all principles and ideals for which the intelligentsia had fought for over half-a-century. They stood by the British rulers because they had won their battles against the immense resources of reaction mainly with British support” (Joshi 122). Even among the common people, the rebelling sepoys did not generate much confidence and were looked upon as mainly harbingers of absolute anarchy, as found in Hutom Penchar Naksha.

The situation was much the same in southern India. The intensity of regional feelings and religious sentiments behind the uprising was probably one of the major reasons why it failed to create even the slightest stir amongst the kingdoms and people of the southern provinces. R.C. Majumdar observes in his book entitled The Sepoy Mutiny & The Revolt of 1857 – “The whole of Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan, and greater parts of Panjab, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, as well as the whole of India, south of the Narmada, hardly witnessed any overt act of rebellion on the part of the people” (Majumdar 413). In fact, the first such mutinous attempt was made at Vellore in 1806 when the rebel soldiers broke into the Vellore fort and killed over 200 British troops – later referred to as the Vellore Mutiny. The reasons there, too, revolved around resentment among the soldiers against changes made in Sepoy dress.
code in November 1806. However, though directed against British rule, the Vellore Mutiny was completely confined to that particular area. It did not generate any ripples in the rest of the nation and lasted only for one day.

It would be worthwhile here to recollect also the two Anglo-Sikh Wars in 1845-46 and 1848-1849, respectively, where the British defeated the Sikhs when they waged a war against the Company in their attempt to establish an independent Khalsa state, and brought an end to the Sikh dynasty with the help of the Bengal Army, which in turn, became the main reason why the soldiers of the Punjab Irregular Force had little sympathy for the mutineers and the identification of Bahadur Shah Zafar as the symbolic head, alienated them even further. They were, therefore, used by the British to bring about retribution. Ironically, retribution could refer to both – the killing of the British men, women and children at the primary level as well as the killing of the Sikh soldiers during the Anglo-Sikh Wars, at the secondary level – thereby citing yet another reason why it would not be proper to use the term national in association with the Uprising. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru records in his *The Discovery of India*: “this Revolt strained British rule to the utmost and it was ultimately suppressed with Indian help”, and further: “there was hardly any national and unifying sentiment among the leaders and a mere anti-foreign feeling, coupled with a desire to maintain their feudal privileges, was a poor substitute for this” (Nehru 353).

On the other hand, the events during the Uprising at Delhi and in the northern regions of India necessitated a stronger grasp over the city of Delhi after retribution — the capital of Mughal India, which had so far been overlooked by the British administration, probably due
to the presence of an octogenarian titular king on a symbolic throne of an otherwise obsolete
glory of the Mughal dynasty.

The sepoys needed a seal and shelter to justify their cause and selecting Delhi, the seat of the
Mughal empire, for this purpose was probably due to the fact that while other kings and
kingdoms might have brought in their own terms and conditions in order to extend support to
this cause, the old king indulging in music and poetry while surviving on British allowance,
could be taken unaware and forced to do so unconditionally, if all his correspondence with
the British could be effectively shut out. Whether national or regional or religious, whatever
the nature of the Uprising of 1857, it is true that the crisis was existential, both for the rebels
and the onlookers. Therefore, the need to chalk out a well-planned measure of organizing
themselves under a representative banner in order to project solidarity must have been
absolutely essential on the part of the sepoys. That Bahadur Shah Zafar had no clue of the
events of 10th May 1857 when the sepoys reached him the next day is mentioned clearly in
the diary of Munshi Jiwanlal2 – “Many of the men forcibly intruded into the presence of the
King, who was seated in the Dewan-i-Khas...From time to time more troops arrived. The
court of the Palace became a scene of the wildest confusion, quarrellings, and disputes”.
(Majumdar 230-231)

The reason behind examining these facts is to understand how and why the epithet of
‘national’ got associated with the Uprising. When Delhi was taken by the British once again
in 1858 and gradually the colonizer’s emphasis shifted from Calcutta to Delhi as the capital
of what they perceived to be India, it was probably at that time, gradually that through the
literary and political germination of ideas and through the spread of English education amongst the educated people of the country that the concept of a single identity as a 'nation' found its being in the minds of the natives and its existence was visibly asserted, perhaps for the first time, with the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1886, 29 years after the uprising. According to R.C. Majumdar “…the Mutiny of 1857 did not evoke any sense of national feeling at the time, nor was it regarded as a national war of independence till the rise of national consciousness at the close of the nineteenth century.” (Majumdar 412).

Literature substantiates this reading in the form of personal memoirs and diaries. Immediately after the uprising, when the event was recorded by various writers in different regional languages, whether or not they supported the uprising, the act was referred to in the regional context, and bore no mention of the nation. Even if a reference to the nation did arise, the implication was more often than not, a single province or state and not what came to be understood as India as a single nation later in terms of cartographic boundaries. However, literary pieces in the form of poetry gradually gained currency amongst the writers highlighting the event as an act of patriotism and played a vital role in forming a strong public opinion against the foreign governance and organizing the common people for the freedom struggle later towards the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, a glimpse of which is provided by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan’s ‘Jhansi ki Rani’.

Attainment of freedom remained a long arduous struggle against various hardships in the context of India. When finally achieved, the realization of being politically liberated from foreign rule could be cherished only after accepting the bitter fact of partition. Violence,
bloodshed and terror formed a part of every Indian's memory who had lived to see the hoisting of the tricolor on 15 August 1947. In a newborn country comprising 22 states then, the essence of unity in diversity had to be embedded urgently. Besides, there was also the struggle to establish its own identity as an independent nation, more so, after having paid the price of partition to gain political freedom. Delhi continued as the capital of the nation, as in the previous order, and probably with the doctrine of unity in diversity, an event was required to solidify this sense of nationhood – an independent self-governed nation with its political headquarters at Delhi.

While the 20th century saw innumerable nationalist movements and regional manifestations of the concept of nation perpetuated through songs, newspapers, meetings etc, the newly independent nation needed an identified locus of origin. The only event of major importance which affected maximum number of people, states and provinces, so far, had been the uprising of 1857, undoubtedly. Moreover, it had already been established as an event of national significance, not only by scholars like Marx and Engels, but also by V.D. Savarkar, a man intimately linked with the nationalist struggle of India who had published a book hailing the Uprising of 1857 as the First War of Indian Independence as early as 1907, in order to mark 50 years of Indian Nationalism.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar completed his originally Marathi manuscript of *The Indian War of Independence 1857* to mark the golden jubilee of the Uprising, and in the Introduction, he wrote: “When...I began to scan that instructive and magnificent spectacle, I found to my great surprise the brilliance of a War of Independence shining in “the mutiny of 1857”. The
spirits of the dead seemed hallowed by martyrdom, and out of the heap of ashes appeared forth sparks of a fiery inspiration" (Savarkar ix). This statement provides a wonderful example of history being made to flow out from the compartments of chronicles through individual interpretation and offering itself to be construed as an open text. The epithets "instructive and magnificent" clearly explain the authorial perspective, while "sparks of fiery inspiration" and "martyrdom" hint at the urgency to find within the Uprising the seeds of a nationalist movement in order to endow an integrated spirit to a nation otherwise comprising diverse languages and cultures.

That a meaningful sense of past was extremely important for India at the turn of the century in order to attain a meaningful future is stated by Savarkar himself in the later part of the introduction: "The nation that has no consciousness of its past has no future. Equally true it is that a nation must develop its capacity of not only claiming a past but also of knowing how to use it for the furtherance of its future. The nation ought to be the master and not the slave of its own history" (Savarkar ix). It is in these lines that the Uprising is re-invented and the water-tight compartments of history and literature are gradually dissolved, delocalizing the Uprising and its representations from the plains of history into the terrains of inter-disciplinarian studies.

A glance at the page comprising the details of the publication of the various reprinted versions of Savarkar's text testifies the role played by this book in the construction of an alternative counter discourse with reference to the Uprising. First published in England,
The page showing the details of publication of Savarkar’s *The Indian War of Independence 1857*
followed by a second edition in Holland “with the efforts of Madam Cama”, the book had its third edition in U.S.A, published by the “Ghadar (Rebellion) Party under the supervision of L. Hardayal”. The book was regarded as highly controversial and therefore, banned by the British Government in India. Under the proscribed period, it could be first published in India only in its fourth edition by “Sardar Bhagat Singh at Lahore in Punjab” in 1928. The fifth edition followed in Japan “by the Indian National Army under the supervision of Ras Behari Bose and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose” in 1944. The book could be published for the first time in India declaratively at Bombay only after the ban was lifted, as late as 1947. These details point at the trans-national nature of the book which could draw support from all other fronts and remained a highly significant and inspiring text to those who fought actively against foreign governance.

First published in England in 1909, the Original Publisher’s Preface records “This book on the history of 1857 was originally written in an Indian vernacular. But owing to the unique nature of the book which, for the first time ever since the great War was fought, proves from the English writers themselves that the rising of the Indian people in 1857 was in no way an insignificant chapter in, or a tale unworthy of, a great people’s history, pressing requests were made from many quarters to translate the work into the English language, so that by translation into the other vernaculars, the whole of the Indian nation might be enabled to read the history of the ever memorable War of 1857.” It further states “Fifty years have passed and those who died for the honour of their soil and race are looked upon as madmen and villains by the world abroad; while their own kith and kin for whom they shed their blood, are ashamed even to own them! To allow this state of public opinion, born of stupid
ignorance, and purposely and systematically kept up by a band of interested hirelings, to continue any longer, would have been a national sin” (Savarkar xi-xii). In this manner, “soil and race” get transformed into “national”. Apparently eager to assist the cause of establishing the Uprising as a National war, the Publisher’s note, at the same time, embodies the ‘white man’s burden’ to educate the people of the east out of their “stupid ignorance”.

It must be noted, however, that when Savarkar traced in the ashes of 1857 the sparks of a national War of Independence, the country had already gained its consciousness of a single identity as a nation, with the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. It must also be noted that the Uprising of 1857 found no mention in the speech delivered by W.C. Bonnerjee on the founding of the Indian National Congress in Bombay in 1885, wherein he owed its origin and existence to “the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava when that nobleman was the Governor-General of India” as he thought that “it would be very desirable in the interests as well of the rulers as of the ruled that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respect the administration was defective and how it could be improved”, thereby suggesting that the formation of an integrated voice representing the political views of a single unit called India was yet another administrative strategy adopted by the British towards the end of the 19th century (Sen 30).3

Though it may be said that such democratic allowance on the part of the British administration in the form of the Indian National Congress was a fall-out of the Uprising of 1857 – the violence, the resistance and the criticism of the British administration by a section of important international intellectuals including Marx and Engels, yet it must be considered
at the same time that when in 1909 Savarkar glorified the Uprising as the first War of Indian Independence and appropriated the diverse causes and events of the Uprising to the context of India as a single nation, the grounds had already been set for him to do so by the British themselves in bestowing a diversity of multiple cultures and provinces with one integrated identity – India. Therefore, in channelizing the multifarious streams of resistance of 1857 under the umbrella caption of a ‘national’ revolution, the impetus is but that of the administrator – white or native.

However, the Uprising of 1857 continues to be an event of great significance in the history of India despite the doubts whether or not it may be studied as a national revolution, solely due to the role of the loka or the mass. Pankaj Rag observes in the Preface to his book entitled 1857 The Oral Tradition that the works on 1857 “generally emphasise the ‘elitist’ level of Indian society”, while the work by the subaltern historians “to ‘invert’ these official sources in order to arrive at a knowledge of rebel mentality – seems to move within a framework of binary opposites, which is problematic”, and in this process “the common rebel is totally denied a mind and rationality of his own” (Rag ix, xiii, xi). All the changes and transitions of the time had a deep impact on the day-to-day lives of the masses. The reactions were thus recorded in colloquial sayings and songs of the time which form the vast corpus of folk lore and folk literature.

Though primarily oral, some of these songs and sayings were later recorded by Amritlal Nagar in his work entitled Ghadar Ke Phool to mark the occasion of the first centenary of 1857. However, a huge bulk is still unrecorded and thrives in the local folk tales, passed over
through generations. All the authors, such as Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, Ruskin Bond, Mahasveta Devi et al, who have later chosen to represent a certain area of the Uprising in their works, mainly historical fiction comprising all literary genres, have relied upon these resources in order to form an idea about the untold chapters of mainstream historiography.

It would be worthwhile to remember here that the Uprising of 1857 had completely altered the nature of British rule in India as the East India Company gave way to the British Raj. The actual importance of the Uprising probably lay in the fact that it had been successful in spreading through a large geographical span, uniting the rebels, however different their causes and motives may have been, into the same action – anti-British violence. This was perhaps the reason which necessitated the Delhi Durbar and the subsequent shift in the capital of colonial India from Calcutta to Delhi. In retrospect, it might therefore be said that the Uprising of 1857 restored the glory of the past to Delhi which had been the capital to almost all the major dynasties in India, and bestowed the nation with a defined centre, which would henceforth continue to be the capital of the country, even after independence.

With the gradual rise of the 20th century nationalism, as the nation derived recognition in terms of cartography even from its own people, the folk tales and folk songs about the Uprising became instrumental in spreading the consciousness of national integrity through diverse regions, languages and cultures. For instance, Subhadra Kumari Chauhan’s famous poem called Jhansi Ki Rani which celebrates the heroism of Rani Lakshmibai, is clearly based on a Bundeli folk song – “Khoob ladi mardaani, are Jhansi baari raani”\(^5\). Though the issues of the time were different, yet the strong feeling of love for one’s soil could be
propagated easily through these songs and literature based on these local tales and songs as these were the memories of the then not-so-distant past which continued to live in the minds of the people.

The common people constitute the base of every country, be it for a mass movement or the establishment of a new order, more so when the newly formed nation declares itself a Sovereign Democratic Republic state. In the context of post-Partition independent India, the Rising was not just an event which spread through probably the largest area of the country geographically during the British regime, but also and more importantly, it was the only instance of mass struggle so far which had united the Hindus and the Muslims for one common cause under one flag and seal.

Probably these were the factors which led to the appointment of a Steering Committee for rewriting the history of the Uprising of 1857 to be released on the occasion of the centenary celebration of the uprising, which R.C. Majumdar refers to as “an officially sponsored history of the Mutiny” in the Preface to his book (Majumdar xi). The book published by the Government of India was entitled *Eighteen Fifty Seven* by Sarendra Nath Sen. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his Preface to the book opines “…no Indian of that period has written anything which can be regarded as an account of the struggle from the Indian point of view” and therefore emphasizes “the need of writing a new history of the great uprising of 1857, generally described as the Sepoy Mutiny” (Sen x).
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Azad further states that there are "two facts" which "stand out clearly in the midst of the tangled story of the Rising of 1857", namely, "the remarkable sense of unity among the Hindus and the Muslims of India in this period" and "the deep loyalty which the people felt for the Moghul Crown" (Sen xvii). In the light of the historical accounts of 1857 maintained hitherto, it may be said that these observations in the Preface imply to a certain extent deliberate politicization of historical facts, especially when he writes immediately afterwards "India faced the trial of 1857 as a united community. How is it then that within a few decades communal differences became an obstacle to Indian nationhood? It is a tragedy of Indian history that this problem became more and more serious till at last a solution had to be found by partitioning the country on a communal basis" (Sen xviii). This perhaps indicates that the Uprising of 1857 called for glorification and recognition in 1957 mainly in order to institutionalize an event exemplifying communal unity in a country where people still struggled to recover from the pain and loss of life and property as India came to complete the first decade of its independence and also that of the Partition. Moreover, a "new history" was probably also needed to ensure the acceptance of the newly formed centralized State by the independent citizens of India, if required, by calling upon the collective sense of having unitedly submitted to the Moghul Crown once upon a time.

It would be interesting to recollect here that in the same year the Uprising was read in yet another light by P.C. Joshi in his book entitled 1857 in Our History where he calls upon the citizens of India "to respect anew our common people and their leaders who did their duty in the anti-British national rising of 1857". He alludes to Marx’s letter in the New York Daily Tribune and justifies the Uprising as a national revolt due to "the sheer vastness of area
covered” and the fact that “during 1857 people of various castes, tribes, nationalities, religions, who had lived under different kingdoms rose to end the British rule”, thereby exhibiting “an unprecedented unity of the Indian people” (Joshi 191). Though partially true, historically it is seen that Joshi covers up the diverse motives behind the widespread resistance against British rule during the Uprising under the motif of a single unified nation, thereby again, in a way, appropriating history to match the needs of the present.

Differing from Sen and Azad in his approach, Joshi observes “there were other social forces of the common people in action during this struggle and they had brought new factors and ideas into play”, and further, “it is a pity that Drs. Majumdar and Sen and Pandit Nehru have given no thought nor weight to them” (Joshi 137, 196-97). Though the roots of difference lay in the socio-political ideologies of the authors, yet what emerges even more clearly from these different approaches towards the same historical event is that the Uprising of 1857 in the 20th century India had already been metamorphosed into a sort of open text, which could now be read and interpreted variously for the sake of the cultural evolution of the citizens of this country.

Joshi further follows Marx in locking upon the rebellion as “intimately connected with the Persian and Chinese wars” and concludes “thus, the great national uprising of 1857 laid the foundation for the world-wide democratic solidarity with the Indian struggle in its next phase and our new national movement built itself on healthy internationalist traditions” (Joshi 233). This statement not only relocates the historical event but also illustrates Lemon’s concept of
Speculative Philosophy of History, i.e. tracing an intelligible pattern in history in order to predict or shape a future. Read in this light, the Uprising of 1857 is woven into the string of international Communist ideology and movements inseparably and creates a common platform for furtherance of friendly liaisons with the other countries on a common ground.

If history is based on factual events, then interpretations of the same event in different manners may be seen to be multiple truths based on the subjective perceptions of the authors, rooted in the respective individual subject positions. The books released on the centenary of the Uprising therefore stand out to be subjective historiography of individual authors, and therefore come to form somewhat a parallel to the various literary representations henceforth, which either agreed to disagreed, or at times, even sought to combine multiple readings of the event into a complex text based on the Uprising of 1857. The same reason would apply to the primary records of the Uprising maintained by the British administration on the one hand, and propagated by the people of India in the form of written records or oral literature on the other, because in this case too, the records are mingled with subjective interpretations of the authors, lending to the same historical incident multiple perspectives.

With the collective impact of these various perspectives, the Uprising of 1857 came to be gradually embedded within the Indian national psyche as an integrated sense of national identity. The nation derived a renewed identity and flourished upon the images of Mangal Pandey, Rani Lakshmibai, Tantia Tope and Nana Sahib, who now stood to be read as the patriots who had sacrificed their lives fighting for their land – the land which now was India. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica’s Guide to Black History, “literature is atomized,
fragmented history”. Read with these socio-cultural and political backgrounds in mind, the representations of 1857 offer no longer just subjective versions of particular protagonists, but a whole new range of nationalist perspectives and discourse with respect to the changing needs of self-reflection of India as a nation, from time to time.

While it may be argued thus that the Uprising of 1857 bears a link with the epithet ‘national’ only when the historical facts are read in the subjective light where the multiregional, multireligious and diverse reasons behind the uprising coalesce to imply a strong sense of a united nation, it may also be said that the Uprising being so widespread and catering to so many different interests of the people involved – the sepoys, the rulers etc cannot be termed ‘national’. However, either of these two approaches miniaturizes the picture of the nation by segregating a whole into multiple fragments, thereby provoking a binaristic tradition of argument.

In *The Argumentative Indian*, Amartya Sen talks about “the inclusiveness of pluralist toleration in India” – a concept holding within it the essence of India as a nation (Sen 34). Though the Uprising did take place at a time when India was yet to arrive at a consciousness of its existence in terms of geographical boundaries or an accepted centre of administration, yet the event which swept over such a large area, found expression in oral as well as written historiography/literature, could be used in the later nationalist movement for uniting common people across various regions and cultures, could be referred to for promoting communal harmony after independence and has been inviting creative artists to rediscover the sense of solidarity and love for one’s soil and identity across a century and more into this era of
diasporic existence, even if by virtue of calculated institutionalization – such an event ought to be read as a historical event with extraordinary dimensions, raised to the level of a national Uprising by its very nature which has enabled it to survive the dust of the accumulating years and metamorphosed the regional into the national, the fact into a plurality of truths. Read against this diversity of historiographic/subjective interpretations, the representations of the Uprising in literature and popular culture would further enhance the understanding of the complex totality called India, over the ages.

Notes:

1. In November 1805, certain changes were made in the Sepoy Dress Code which were considered by the sepoys as encroachment upon their religion. This included forbidding the Hindu sepoys from using any watermarks on their forehead and declaring that the Muslim soldiers would have to shave their beards.

2. “Jiwanlal and Minuddin, both of whom were in Delhi at this time, wrote accounts of what they saw or heard during those eventful months. These accounts, written in Persian, were translated by C.T. Metcalfe (CTM).” (Majumdar 248)

3. “He said that there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty’s Opposition did in England. The newspapers, even if they really represented the views of the people, were not reliable and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and their policy in native circles, it would be very desirable in the interests as well of the rulers as of the ruled that Indian politicians should
meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved; and he added that an assembly such as he proposed should not be presided over by the local Governor for in his presence the people might not like to speak out their minds.” (Sen 30-31)

4. “There has been no real attempt to study the vital elements of popular consciousness, how the people worked out such perceptions and gave meanings to them in terms of their own cultural codes, symbols and value systems.” (Rag x)

5. “Кхооб лади мардаани, аре йханси бари раани
burjan-burjan top lagaa dai, golaa chale aasmaani
are йханси вари раани, khoob ladi maraani
Well fought like a man, O Rani of Jhansi/ On every parapet of the fort she fixed canons and the shots pierced the sky/ O Rani of Jhansi, how well like a man she fought.” (Rag 64)

6. Later modified to Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, w.e.f 03-01-1977. (india.gov.in)

7. In one of his letters home, Ashton Warner, an English officer caught in the Siege of Lucknow records thus: “Who would have thought, that the Hindoos and Mussulmen would have coalesced to extirpate us, this was always our great standby, the hatred of the two classes”, which re-asserts the point made (Bush 78). This text has been discussed in detail in Chapter 3.