Imagining the Nation as a 'Web' of Animals — Affective Entanglements between Animality and (Nation)alism

Abstract

While existing scholarship is largely interested in exploring how a particular (non-human) animal symbol is mobilized to support a specific exclusionary agenda, what happens when the very nation, is imagined as a 'web' of different constituent 'species'? In this article, I examine four non-human animal symbols — the lion, the tiger, the pig and the butterfly which have been mobilized in Sri Lanka to delineate (imaginary) boundaries between different communities that reside there. The article combines critical animal studies and nationalism studies scholarship with affect theory to complicate the current understandings on the relationships between animality, affect and nationalism. A focus on affect, I argue, can open up a line of inquiry that is invisible to our current accounts on the relationships between animality and nationalism by demonstrating how animality can not only be instrumentalized as a tool for domination and subordination, but also as a tool for subversion, refusal and contestation. Tracing the different ways in which animality gets mobilized to represent various communities that reside within the nation, the article highlights the complex ways in which animality can be mobilized within nation-building and how bodies negotiate and respond to such assignations.

Keywords: Animality, Affect, Nationalism, Queerness, Sri Lanka

Author's Bio: Senel Wanniarachchi is a PhD Researcher at the Department of Gender Studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His research is interested in how discourse on 'culture' and 'heritage' gets mobilised to legitimise anti-imperialist but also nationalist, patriarchal and heteronormative frameworks in the postcolony. In Sri Lanka, Senel co-founded an activist organization called Hashtag Generation which works at the intersections of human rights and technology.

Imagining the Nation as a 'Web' of Animals — Affective Entanglements between Animality and (Nation)alism

On October 26, 2018, the then President of Sri Lanka Maithripala Sirisena unconstitutionally appointed former President Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister. However, the incumbent Ranil Wickremesinghe who commanded the majority in Parliament refused to step down, resulting in the grotesque situation of the island nation having two concurrent "Prime Ministers"— one occupying the Prime Minister's office and the other, the Premier's symbolic official residence named Temple Trees. While Sirisena offered a plethora of self-contradictory justifications for this flagrant breach of the law, one that he announced at a large political rally attended by thousands of people in the capital of Colombo was that Wickremesinghe was "a butterfly" and that he lived "a butterfly life" (Colombo Telegraph 2018). *Samanalaya* or butterfly, is a pejorative slur used to mock queer people within the Sinhala language speaking majority in Sri Lanka[i].

In this paper, I zoom in on this particular moment and situate it within the wider "web" of (non-human) animal symbols[ii] that has been mobilized in Sri Lanka to delineate the (imagined) boundaries between different communities that reside there. Demonstrating the various animal symbols that have been deployed to mark different groups (the lion, the tiger, the pig and the butterfly), I examine how such a system of classification can both solidify and pose significant contestations to the vertical structure of the nation as it is imagined. Combining critical animal studies and nationalism studies scholarship with theoretical and methodological contributions made by affect theorists, my intention is to extend and complicate our current understandings on the relationships between animality affect and nationalism.

Existing scholarship has demonstrated the relationship between animality and nationalism by gesturing, for instance, at the ways in which animality has been mobilized across various geopolitical contexts to reify colonialist, majoritarian, (ethno)nationalist, xenophobic and otherwise exclusionary frameworks (Howell 2015, Wilcox and Rutherford 2018, Lambert 2018, Alloun 2019, van Es 2020, Gillespie and Narayan 2020, Rutherford 2020, Narayan 2021). These interventions are largely interested in exploring how a particular (non-human) animal symbol is mobilized to support a specific exclusionary agenda. But what happens when the very nation, is imagined as a "web" of different constituent "species"? Further, while existing work examines the relationships between animality and nationalism in considerable depth, we know little about the ways in which animality can also be mobilized to further queerphobic agendas[iii]. In this vein, the instrumentalization of the butterfly to signify queer people within the Sri Lankan context, I argue, can complicate our current theorizations on animality and nationalism considerably. More centrally, while existing scholarship has demonstrated the entanglements between affect and nationalism (Crang and Tolia-Kelly 2010, Wetherell 2014, Stephens and Angharad 2015, Merriman and Jones 2016, Militz and Schurr 2016, Antonsich and Skey 2017, Militz 2019, Sumartojo 2020) as well as animality and nationalism, the nexus between affect, nationalism and animality remains unexamined. In this vein, I combine the important contributions made by scholars of animal studies and nationalism studies alongside affect theory to open up a line of inquiry that may not be visible to existing accounts. A focus on affect, I argue, can demonstrate how animality can be instrumentalized by humans as a tool for domination and subordination, but also for subversion, refusal and contestation. Tracing the ways in which animality gets mobilized by various actors within the Sri Lankan context, I highlight the complex ways in which animality can be mobilized within nation-building and how bodies negotiate and respond to such assignations.

Animality and (Nation)alism

The animals that appear in our flags, emblems and (national) monuments, in endearing soft toys we play with as well as in some of the most hurtful slurs we hurl at those we profoundly dislike, can be generative sites to understand what it means to be human and what it means to identify and disidentify with other humans. In this vein, critical animal studies scholarship has made important interventions on the complex entanglements between (settler) colonialism, capitalism, racism, racialization and patriarchy with speciesism, anthropocentrism, animal domestication, productification and medical experimentation (Jackson 2010, Ogden 2011, Chen 2012, Cederholm et al 2014, Kopnina 2017, Govindrajan 2018, Burton and Mawani 2021). This fluorescence of scholarly interest in animality has been called by some, the "animal turn" in the humanities and the social sciences. Critical animal studies scholars have also helped us to move beyond exposing how racialized and otherwise marginalized people are rendered sub/non-human through animalization (Deckha 2010, Jackson 2010, Chen 2012). For instance, Haraway (2008) has challenged human anthropocentric delusions of inherent supremacy over non-human animals, by demonstrating how parasites, bacteria and insects commonly exercise dominance over human populations. The special issue on "Animal Nationalisms" by Gillespie and Narayan (2020) has been an important intervention on how animals themselves are used to reproduce and sustain nationalist logics and practices. However, "the instrumentalisation of the nonhuman animal in…socio-political contexts" still remains "radically under-theorised" (Gillespie and Narayan 2020: 1).

Animality, it has been posited in these interventions, can become a productive framework that allows human collectives to mark their difference from an imagined other. As Anderson (2006) points out in his canonical theorization of the nation, as an "imagined

community"; since "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members" (6), fictions of a shared past and sense of sameness in the present, can operate as important ingredients in the invisible glue that allows individuals to feel that they are a part of a larger whole. In this vein, Walzer (1967) has argued that the nation "must be personified before it can be seen, symbolized before it can be loved, imagined before it can be conceived" (84). Seen this way, symbols allow groups of individuals who are inherently different from each other to think of themselves as those that share some kind of essence, no matter how large the grouping. Further, since nations often derive a sense of legitimacy by invoking a continuity from a "glorious" ancient past, these symbols make this past present in the present, especially by allowing its members to imagine themselves as the "proud" decedents of a long line of ancestors that preceded them (Smith 1995, Geisler 2005). The nation thus imagined is "repeatedly" (Elgenius 2011) re-constructed and "renewed" (Geisler 2005: XVIII) not only in violent and militarized ways but also in profoundly "banal" (Billig 1990), phantasmic and everyday (Fox and Miler-Idriss 2008) ways — in the form of national anthems, flags, emblems, stamps, monuments, ceremonies, banknotes, novels, songs, plays and hashtags for instance. Thus, "in a very real sense, national symbols become the nation" as we see it, recognize it, know it and feel it, for it is these symbols that make the nation accessible, visible and material (Cerulo 1995: 4). (Nation)alism needs such iconography to self-sustain, circulate and thrive (Billig 1990, Breuilly 1993, Cerulo 1995, Anderson 2006, Bhabha 2013). Symbolism then, does not perform a mere decorative or secondary function within the nation but constitutes "a significant element of the nation-building process as it authenticates boundaries" (Elgenius 2011). In doing so, these symbols can also delineate the imagined borders between insiders /outsiders and settlers/ natives within the political order (Barth 1969, Cohen 1995, Eriksen 2007). This kind of hierarchization of the nation's residents is not a by-product of nation-building but is in many ways inherent to it (Antonsich and Skey 2017, Šarić and Luccarelli

2017). Further, these hierarchizations can also go on to grant permissions and prohibitions on how different groups can be perceived and treated within the nation, especially when mobilized by ethnonationalist regimes who intend to solidify their power (Elgenius 2011).

Where do humans turn to, to access the vibrant images that are then appropriated within the nation-building process? While we may turn in many different directions including the divine, the supernatural and ancient myths; nature and more specifically animality, remains a bountiful source which provides a whole repertoire of images that can be appropriated by humans in their nation-building projects. This of course is not by any means a "new" observation. Many before me have examined various contexts to demonstrate how animality can be mobilized and often weaponized by human beings to mark their "difference" from the other and reify supremacist, (ethno)nationalist, majoritarian and xenophobic frameworks across different contexts. For instance, existing work has discussed how cows, by way of being productified within dairy and meat industries as well as in being made to enroll in rodeos, have helped define what it means to be "American" in the United States and Canada (Gillespie 2018, Orzechowski 2012). Rutherford (2020) has discussed the use of wolf images by North American White supremacist 'alt-right' groups while Narayan (2019) has discussed the weaponization of the image of the (sacred) cow by the Hindu(tuva) right especially in anti-Muslim and anti-Dalit violence. Despite these existing contributions, a closer examination of the Sri Lankan case, and this particular spatiotemporal moment of my focus, where the image of the "queer" butterfly was mobilized by President Sirisena, I believe, can considerably complicate our current understandings on the relationships between these partners in crime — animality, nationalism and affect. I hope this analysis can complicate (and if I may, also queer) our current understandings of the relationships between animality, affect and nationalism. In this vein, in what follows, I trace each of the key non-human animal figures, the lion, the tiger,

the pig and the butterfly that constitute a sort of "web" within Sri Lanka's dominant national imaginary. These are not meant to be full and complete genealogies; my intention here is more to demonstrate how each of these symbols emerge within certain histories, based on certain underlying assumptions that generate specific associations. Understanding this context is vital not only to trace how they come together to form a "web" but also to examine how they interact with one another to generate both forms of inclusion and exclusion within the nation. Once I have shed light on the construction of this web of animality, in the proceeding sections of the paper, I will go on to demonstrate how this web also constituted affectively and the broader implications this revelation has on nationhood and nationalism.

The Butterfly

As we have discussed, *Samanalaya* or butterfly, the ephemeral and fragile little bug, is a pejorative slur which is used to mock queer people among the Sinhala language speaking majority in Sri Lanka. A possible etymology for the word is that *samanalaya* sounds similar to *samalingikaya*, which is the Sinhala translation of the pathological word homosexual. The Spanish word for butterfly, *mariposa* is also used to mock queer people in many Spanish speaking contexts, so these transnational connections point to, I believe, an implicit reference to the purported flamboyance of a fickle little butterfly, with its fluttering fairylike wings and what many people think it is like to inhabit and perform queer subjectivity. It may seem like a benign slur, but it can be an extremely violent one. In Sri Lanka, while the term is used broadly to refer to queer people, it is usually hurled at a certain "type" of a queer person, or even someone perceived to be queer. The object is often a man and an "effeminate" man and the objective of such an aggression is usually to shame (*lajja* in Sinhala) them.

Sri Lanka's nation-building project, post-independence from the colonial British, came to be premised on the continuity from a "great" precolonial culture and heritage (de Alwis 2002, Jayawardena 2002, Fernando, Vidhanapathirana and Wanniarachchi 2018). As is common in many contexts within nation-building and statecraft, since queer people posed a direct threat to this national identity through their capacity for "impurity", non-normative sexualities were regulated and criminalized through both penal and social sanction. The country's Penal Code, which is a residue of British Colonialism, to this date contains provisions that are used to criminalize non-heteronormative sex (see Wijewardena and Jayewardena 2020). The circulation of "butterfly" as a slur should be seen as part of the wider queerphobia and sexual regulation within the country.

In his speech on that November evening, Sirisena said that Wickremesinghe's "neoliberal" political beliefs did not place any value in "indigeneity" adding that key decisions in the government were not made by senior politicians, but by his "butterfly swarm" (Colombo Telegraph 2018). Thereby, Sirisena constructs queerness (i.e. the state of being a butterfly) as necessarily incompatible with being an "indigenous" Sri Lankan. The implication is that queerness is a white Western imposition that should have no place in Sri Lankan society; that "true" Sri Lankans share an inherent biological, even ontological essence i.e. "true" Sri Lankans are necessarily heterosexual. *Butterflies cannot be lions.*

However, in Sri Lanka, the circulation of "butterfly" does not occur in straight-forward ways. For instance, upon Sirisena's deployment of "butterfly" as a slur that November evening in 2018, there was a response by sections of Sri Lankan queer groups to appropriate the symbol in defiance. In Sri Lankan "Pride" events, it is not uncommon for participants to be dressed as butterflies or to carry signs that have texts to the effect of "butterflies are also citizens" or "I

am a proud butterfly". I will return to the image of the butterfly and to this possibility reclaim and appropriate animal emblems momentarily.

The Lion

Figure 1: Sri Lanka's National Flag

The sword-bearing lion which is the centerpiece of Sri Lanka's national flag and state emblem is used to reference the country's Sinhala majority. On the flag, the lion is surrounded by *bo* leaves in each of the four corners. These are meant to represent the four *brahmavihārās* or the noble virtues in Buddhism. As Obeyesekere (1970: 45) has pointed out[iv], the symbol of the lion, a predatory, carnivorous animal grasping a sword contradicts the Buddhist doctrinal sentiments surrounding it. The two stripes represent the country's two demographically largest ethnic minority communities, with orange representing the Tamils and the green representing the Muslims. It is also hard to miss how the (Sinhala) lion's sword is facing the Tamil and Muslim stripes.

I do not intend to trace the genealogy of this symbol here at length — for historical accounts see the work of Gunawardana (1990), Obeysekere (1970, 2003) and Strathern (2009). Existing scholarship posits that the emergence of the idea of the lion (*Sinha)* symbolizing the (Sinha)lese, is tied to the emergence of the very idea of a Sinhala nation. For instance, Gunawardana (1990) has suggested that in the pre-colonial period of the island which we now

call Sri Lanka, while identity markers such as kinship, (patrilineal) lineage, caste and clan existed, there was a lack of a shared sense of a "national" identity or consciousness.

It is also widely accepted that the story of Vijaya laid out in the Mahavamsa, Sri Lanka's ancient chronicle, is central to the imagination of the Sinhala consciousness and the role of the lion within it. In summary, the legend suggests that the daughter of the King of the ancient Kingdom of Vanga escaped her castle and joined a caravan. On the way, the caravan was attacked by a lion who abducted the princess. From the human–bestial sexual union of the princess and the lion, a son and a daughter were born – *Sinhabahu* (lion's arm) and *Sinhasivali* (lion's maiden). When the children grow up, they escape the lion's den with their mother and reach their grandfather's Kingdom. Meanwhile, the lion ravages neighboring villages in search of his wife and children. At this point, Sinhabahu goes on to slay the angry lion, his father. On the death of his grandfather, Sinhabahu is offered to become the ruler of his Kingdom, but he prefers to begin his own Kingdom, with a capital named Sinhapura (the Lion City). Sinhabahu reigns Sinhapura with his sister as the wife/ queen. Together, they birth sixteen pairs of twins. Of these, the eldest son is Vijaya (victory). Vijaya who is of a violent disposition, harasses the people of the Sinhapura so much so that the residents begin to complain to their King. In response to the continuous complains, Vijaya along with a retinue of seven hundred are banished in a ship which arrives in the island of Sri Lanka. On the same day Vijaya sets foot in the island, the Buddha, from his deathbed, prophesies that Vijaya will establish his teachings in the island.

This story which brings together parricide, bestiality, incest and criminality, which positions the Sinhalese as simultaneously the progeny of a lion as well as the slayers of a lion, is the most dominant and popular "colonization myth" on Sri Lanka. While lions have never

known to have been part of the island's fauna, as Strathern (2009) has posited "the story of Vijaya has become fundamental to the way in which the Sinhalese think about themselves" (3). The myth of the "Sinhalese lion" continues to sustain itself, on the national flag and crescent, government letterheads, coins and notes, theatre productions, patriotic songs, heritage sites, school textbooks, military insignia as well as viral hashtags and profile pictures on social media. For instance, one of the plays by Ediriwira Sarachchandra, Sri Lanka's foremost Sinhala playwright named *Sinhabahu*, is based on the legend of the lion. Further, the Independence Square in Colombo, which was built to commemorate the island's independence from the colonial British is surrounded by statues of stone-carved lions. The country's Ten Rupee note has an image of a lion and so do many of the country's cricket jerseys and export-quality tea boxes. Lion lager is the most popular brand of beer in the country. Further, one of the most influential regiments in the Sri Lanka Army is the *Sinha* (lion) Regiment. Meanwhile, in May 2022, while Sri Lanka was undergoing its biggest financial crisis in its postcolonial history, the Commander of the country's Army at the time, unveiled a giant statue of a lion in Kuragala, a site of contested histories. A mosque in the vicinity of the temple remains under threat[v]. These of course, are only a handful of examples to demonstrate to the unfamiliar reader, how the symbol of the lion in embedded to very fabric of the Sinhala national(ist) imaginary and its various sociocultural, political and aesthetic manifestations.

Early anthropologists have shed light on what they have called totemism — a system of beliefs in which humans-beings are believed to have kinship or a mystical relationship with a totem such as an animal or a plant (Radcliffe-Brown 1952, Durkheim 1961, Lévi-Strauss 1962). My interest in this paper, is not so much to understand the emergence and sustenance of the lion as a totem for the Sinhalese but to explore the ways in which the symbol of the lion circulates and

interacts with the other animal symbols and what such circulations and interactions go on to "do".

In the context of civil war between the Government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (we will discuss the tigers next) and continuing majoritarianism and social fault lines in the country post-war, especially against Muslims; the symbolism of the lion has had material impacts on the lives of Sri Lankas. With the hyperconnectivity of social media, today, these symbols also circulate online, often in violent and exclusionary ways. For example, one viral hashtag campaign that sought to highlight Sinhalese supremacy within the island while alienating minority communities, especially Muslims, was called *Sinhale* (lion blood). As Ivarsson (2018) has posited, the underlying theme of the campaign which gained virality in late 2015 was that it was only the Sinhalese residents of the island that were "pure-bred (5).

Ultranationalist Sinhala Buddhist organizations such as the Bodu Bala Sena (Buddhist Power Force), Ravana Balaya (Ravana's Force), Sinhala Ravaya (Sinhalese Roar) and the Sinhale Jathika Balamuluwa (Sinhale National Force), with varying levels of state backing, were key to producing these waves of extremist ultranationalism that framed the Muslim minority as "another Other" within the island in the aftermath of the civil war (Ivarsson 2018: 3). The lion features on the logos of both the Sinhala Ravaya and the Sinhale Jathika Balamuluwa. In January 2016, the walls of several Muslim places of residence in Nugegoda in Colombo were spraypainted with the word *Sinhale* (Sri Lanka Brief 2016). Anti-Muslim attacks peaked around at least three events in 2011, 2014, 2018 as well as in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday Attacks in 2019. In many of these incidents the symbol of the lion became the Sinhala ethnonationalists' partner in crime in their ethnoreligious violence.

While I do not wish to summarize all the events that may be relevant here, the important takeaway is that the symbol of the (Sinhala) lion has not only been mobilized to assert and communicate a sort of symbolic superiority of the Sinhalese, for many Sri Lankans, especially minorities, it has had material "life and death" consequences. It is used to mark the Sinhalese, which like any human collective, is a heterogenous group, as a homogenous whole and locates them at the top of the nation's hierarchical imagination[vi]— it is the "Aryan" Sinhalese lions, that are the island's "chosen people" (Wickremesinghe 1985), the legitimate heirs to the nation's territory and finite resources and the guardians of the Buddhist religion. The lion, being understood as the "king of beasts" not only represents the highest positionality within the hierarchical "web" of the nation but also symbolizes the perceived strength, valor and prowess of the Sinhalese. All others are expected to accept this supremacy, no questions asked. Contemporaneously, the symbol is also mobilized in material and violent ways in order to enforce and sustain this hierarchy, such as in hate speech and hate crimes. An important caveat here is that the symbolism of the lion of course never includes "all" Sinhala people, but we will return to this point momentarily.

Of course, not everybody obeys this kind of exclusionary orderings of bodies and communities— while some obey and accept them; others wish challenge, resist, subvert and contest such imaginations. To interrogate this kind of "disobedience", I now turn to the symbol of the "treacherous" (Tamil) tiger.

The Tiger

Figure 2 The Tamil Eelam Flag

It is not only the majority nationalists who appropriate animality in promoting their agendas, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who took up arms against the majoritarian Sri Lankan state and its violent ultranationalism chose a roaring tiger as their totem. The tiger is pouncing forward, with its paws outstretched and is surrounded by a ring of 33 bullets and two rifles with bayonets. It is reported that LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran himself conceived of the logo and that an artist named Natarajan from Madurai in Tamil Nadu produced the first design (Manoharan 2007). It was officially adopted as the "national flag of Tamil Eelam" in 1990 on 27 November which is the Tigers' *Maaveerar Naal* (Great Heroes Day) (Manoharan 2007).

The militant secessionism of the Tigers and other Tamil militant groups emerged in response to the exclusion, discrimination and violence by the majoritarian Sri Lankan state and ultra-nationalist Sinhalese groups who consistently privileged the Sinhalese language, culture and the Buddhist religion in the island. Successive Sri Lankan governments also failed to accommodate Tamil political demands for recognition and representation. Anti-Tamil violence included riots, discriminatory laws as well as harassment and intimidation of Tamils leading to the dispossession and displacement of thousands. The fighting that began in the 1970s escalated over the years into a full-fledged protracted armed conflict. The war was brought to a violent end in May 2009, when the government forces militarily decimated the Tiger leadership

including Prabhakaran himself. Allegations into war crimes by both the Sri Lankan armed forces as well as the LTTE, especially the killing of civilians by Government forces in the final stages of the war have not led to meaningful attempts at accountability. I cannot provide a full account of the conflict and the events leading up to it here. However, what is important for us is that in the face of violent Sinhalese majoritarianism, Tamil ethnonationalism intensified, and the Tamils too needed a symbol for their own aspirational nation-state of Tamil Eelam.

The Tamils shared the Sinhalese "tendency to look back in order to find the key to the present" (Fuglerud 1999: 160–162). Drawing from Tamil mythology and history, the Tiger was picked as the emblem of the LTTE, but also for the aspiring Tamil nation. The choice of the image of the tiger is meant to represent the Tamil nation's courage and resistance to oppression. The Tiger was the royal emblem of the Cholas, a Tamil Empire headquartered in the valley of the Kaveri River in South India. The Chola Empire in different times extended to parts of Sri Lanka as well as the Maldives (Clothey 2006: 3–4). It is believed that Tamil culture and language as well as the Hindu religion flourished under Chola rule (Manogaran and Pfaffenberger 1994: 173). This is perhaps why the Cholas were singled out as the model for Eelam from among the various ancient Tamil Kingdoms. Further, much like adoption of the lion by the Sinha Regiment of the Sri Lankan Army, one of the "elite" wings of the LTTE responsible for carrying out brutal suicide attacks was called the Black Tigers. The LTTE's navy was called the Sea Tigers.

An article in the LTTE newspaper, Viduthalai Pulihal, from February 1991 on the making of the Tiger logo said:

> …Tiger symbol echoes Tamil ethnic patriotic and courageous feelings. This symbol is deeply imprinted in the minds of the people. The soul of the nation is rejuvenated because of this symbol…(as cited in Manoharan 2007)

Further, the lyrics of the song "Look the Flag is Rising", written by the Head of the LTTE's Arts and Cultural Division, Puthuvai Rathinathurai also has a reference to the tiger (Jeyaraj 2020).

In these ways and more, just as the symbol of the lion is repeatedly reproduced within Sinhala ethnonationalist productions, the symbol of the tiger too is repeatedly invoked within Tamil ethnonationalist political, social, cultural and aesthetic productions. The tiger becomes a symbol of resistance, bravery and courage and allows the LTTE to unite its members by appealing both to a shared past and a shared sense of oppression and courage in the present and aspire collectively towards the future. Animality then, can be invoked not only to reify the dominant majoritarian nationalisms but also minoritarian nationalisms that contest dominant national(list) frameworks (we will discuss how animality can also be mobilized in other forms of resistance, more expansively soon). Just as animality can stabilize national hierarchies, the tiger shows us, that animality can also be used in efforts to destabilize them. It can be used as a symbol of unity but also a symbol of dissent and to demonstrate unity in expressing dissent.

The same symbol of the tiger, however, can have radically different implications in different contexts. Contemporaneous to the LTTE's adoption of the image of the tiger as a symbol of their "courage and resistance," in the Southern Sinhala-dominated areas of the country, *kotiya* (tiger) became a hostile slur hurled at Tamils at large. The use of *kotiya* as a slur was widespread at the height of the civil war but continues to this date. For example, it is

not uncommon that Tamil Members of Parliament who make parliamentary speeches (often highlighting issues such as continuing militarization of Tamil-majority areas of the island) find themselves at the receiving end of the "accusation" of being *kotiyas* from across the aisle by some of their Sinhalese counterparts. Whether these MPs actually support the LTTE itself is irrelevant to such a deployment. The general implication is that all Tamils are "terrorist tigers" and "terrorist tigers" need to be "done away with". This kind of aggressions are aimed at delegitimizing and excluding the individual(s) targeted; while giving social, political and material strength to those who hurl it. We will return to this possibility for animality to operate as an exclusionary slur (as this is also the case with the pig and the butterfly) and how this is framed by power momentarily. Seen this way, animality, can simultaneously be mobilized in different ways within the nation— it could be a tool for solidifying various articulations of nationalism, both dominant and minoritarian and could be deployed to both empower and uplift certain groups while harassing, intimidating and excluding others.

Meanwhile, both these "bi-polar" (Rajasingham-Senanayake 1999) Sinhala and Tamil (ethno)nationalisms, excluded Sri Lanka's Muslim minority in order to safeguard their own ethnic "purity*"* (Amarasingam 2019). In this vein, I now turn to the symbol of the scavenging "filthy" pig, which has been invoked to exclude Sri Lanka's Muslim minority from both the majoritarian Sinhala nation as well as the aspiring Tamil nation as they are imagined.

The Pig

In Sri Lanka, the image of the scavenging pig has been used in anti-Muslim rhetoric, especially in the post-Civil War context. The symbol is inspired by the Islamic religious prohibition of pigs' meat (declared *haram*) which means that many Muslims would find pigs'

meat to be not only distasteful and repugnant but also a pollutant of both bodies and spaces. The use of the pig resonates with the use of the same in anti-Muslim hate speech campaigns as well as the use of pigs and pigs' flesh[vii] in anti-Muslim hate crimes in different parts of the world including in India, Myanmar, Europe and the United States (see van Es 2020, Lambert 2018). For instance, the Spanish Inquisition used forced feeding of pigs' flesh to verify whether "New Christians" were "genuine" converts or secret Muslims (van Es 2020). More recently, there have been efforts to serve pigs' flesh in European schools (Dursteler 2020) in explicitly exclusionary moves. Further pigs' flesh has been used to desecrate Muslim places of worship in several contexts, especially in Europe and India (van Es 2020). In a similar vein, Narayanan (2021) has argued, analysing the ways in which the Indian Hindu Right weaponizes the symbol of the pig in efforts to reinforce and solidify caste and sustain nationalisms that "the visceral socio-political contempt the pig evokes is intertwined with their use in performing economic labor as waste scavenger" (1). Further, Ghassem-Fachandi (2009) analysing Hindu nationalism in Gujrat, India has posited that "the substance of meat in its production and consumption not only provides an idiom for stigmatizing the Muslim but also channels visceral and affective expression" (80).

In the aftermath of the civil war, Sinhala-Buddhist ultra-nationalist groups "turned on the Muslim community and began to see them as demographic and economic threats" to the Sinhala Buddhist nation (Ivarsson 2018: 3). Attacks against Muslims escalated in subsequent years resulting in a number of deaths and significant damages to property. In several of these occasions, pigs' flesh was thrown into Muslim places of worship, residence and enterprise. For instance, in 2014, a mosque in Colombo Fort received a threatening letter along with some pieces of pig's flesh. The letter demanded that the refurbishment of the mosque which was underway at the time be halted immediately (Asian Mirror 2014). On another occasion, in 2013,

Muslim devotees at a local mosque in the Mahiyanganaya in the Uva Province, who were engaging in Ramadhan prayers found that the mosque's power was turned off and a shower of stones was being pelted at the mosque. The following day, pigs' flesh was thrown over the mosque walls (Colombo Telegraph 2013). Furthermore, in 2012, Muslim students at a government agriculture school were served pig's meat in an explicitly anti-Muslim move (Alif 2015: 114). In another incident, a group in the North Western Province "carried placards depicting Allah as a pig" (Alif 2015: 7).

As discussed earlier, much of these post-war ultranationalist mobilizations violences were also aided by online viral hate speech campaigns on Facebook[viii], Youtube, Whatsapp and other social media platforms. For example, anti-Muslim hate speech and trolling campaigns which gained virality on social media in the aftermath of the 2019 Easter Sunday attacks featured the image of the pig prominently. Such mobilizations included statements and threats such as "*Go away, you pig!", "You dirty pig",* and "*I am making some devilled pork. Would you like some?"* Many of these aggressions on social media and instant messaging applications were also accompanied with (seemingly benign) pig emojis. (Wanniarachchi 2019). As Imitiyaz (2019) has argued, this kind of aggressions are "not only considered to be offensive to Muslims, but also, in the case of Sri Lanka Muslims, go to the heart of attacking the sense of identity and values they have been practising" (7).

Animality then can be mobilized to reify both dominant and minoritarian (ethno)nationalisms and gets mobilized in violent exclusionary aggressions directed at those perceived as threats to the national(ist) imaginary. The symbol of the pig, like the use of tiger as a slur, becomes a tool for the violent exclusion and oppression of the country's Muslim minority. Further, unlike in the case of the Tiger, the material use of pigs' bodies and flesh in anti-Muslim hate crimes

demonstrates the ways in which, beyond the discursive and symbolic use, animal bodies themselves could be instrumentalized and weaponized within ethnonationalist violence.

Collectively, the lion, tiger, pig and butterfly all show different ways in which animality can be invoked and mobilized within nationalist projects. Each of the symbols emerge and circulate based on specific histories, with certain underlying assumptions that generate specific associations. In many of the cases, the consequences of these mobilizations are not only symbolic but also material and violent (of course the symbolic and the material are never binary categories and always bleed into one another). In this vein, in the next section of the paper, I explore what an imagination of the nation as a web of animals, as in Sri Lanka, can go on to do.

Imagining the Nation as a Web of Animals

Edward Leach in his 1967 Reith Lecture, titled "Ourselves and Others" says, "violence in the world comes about because we human beings are forever creating artificial boundaries between men who are like us and men who are not like us. We classify men as if they were separate species and then we fear the other" (min 30:18). Levi-Strauss (1962) has described how groups, which are otherwise very similar (re)articulate their differences (both real and imagined) and (re)present their "uniqueness" by associating themselves with differences they can find in nature. This is perhaps what Burton & Mawani (2021) mean when they, drawing from the work of Luther Marsh, say "classification systems ...may at first seem trivial, but a sleeping force lies within them, one that organizes, taxonomizes, and potentially revolutionizes the world" (2). A system of animalistic classification such as the one discussed above can play a crucial function in the solidification of human identity categories by allowing each group to mark their

difference from “the other” (the out-group) as well as to identify themselves with “their own” (the in-group). Nationalism relies on such classifications to self-sustain and thrive. These classifications are necessarily hierarchical as different groups that reside within the nation are allotted unequal positions within its vertical structure. Within the dominant Sinhalese conception of the nation, while the “brave” sword-bearing lion, the king of beasts, ascends, the ruthless tiger “terrorist”, the “filthy” Muslim swine, and the effeminate butterfly “faggots” descend. However, such hierarchies, as widespread as they maybe, are not always stable and are constantly negotiated and renegotiated in the face of contestations and resistances to the dominant nationalist project.

Scholars have invested a large amount of labor to demonstrate how animalistic metaphors can be inherently dehumanizing as they construct those described as lesser beings — limiting their aspirations, capabilities and potentialities. An exploration into violent geo-histories of war, genocide, slavery and colonialism unfolds a long genealogy of such invocations with the intention of legitimizing violence, oppression and extermination. When European colonial “masters” first reached the shores of their prospective colonies they exterminated the local inhabitants claiming in justification that these “natives” were non-human, or sub-human at best (Hall 1992). The Apartheid rested on the epistemic foundation that “black people” were members of an inferior species (Van Dyk 2018). Similarly, many Americans were made to see the Japanese as vermin during the second World War (Rapoport 2015). Nazism rested on the logic that Jewish people were undesirable like rats and dogs (Mayersen 2018) and ordinary Rwandan Hutu had been taught to perceive their Tutsi neighbours as cockroaches when the 1993 genocide unfolded (Tirrell 2012). Existing scholarship has also demonstrated how this type of dehumanization lays the groundwork for

violence by granting permissions and prohibitions on how various groups could be treated based on a hierarchical (national) imaginary.

However, within the Sri Lankan context, animality does not just perform a function of dehumanization (not that there is anything *just* about dehumanization) —in Sri Lanka, being called a lion, or calling oneself a lion, is not dehumanizing, it could be a profoundly empowering act. As Chen (2012) has noted, it renders the idea of "dehumanization" paradoxical (14). While these animal symbols dehumanize some groups by constructing them as lesser beings (in relation to the dominant group), they contemporaneously empower the members of the dominant group by rendering them suprahuman. This is because, not every "species" thus categorized occupies an equal positionality within the vertical structure of the nation. The Sinhalese lions are the rightful heirs to the country's throne and its scarce resources. Minoritized others are expected to recognize this supremacy with no questions asked.

Further, the Sri Lankan case allows us to understand the complex ways in which animality can get invoked and deployed within nationalism. Even though we have discussed four different examples of how animality has been mobilized to buttress the scaffoldings of nationalism, they do not all operate in the same way. Within the Sri Lankan "web" of animality, we have discussed above, I identify four different ways in which animality collaborates with nationalism:

1) Animality can be mobilized by a dominant group to reify their supremacist (ethno)nationalism (such as the lion being adopted and deployed by the Sinhalese).

2) Animality can be mobilized by a disenfranchised group to reify a minoritarian nationalism that challenges the dominant national(ist) imaginary (such as the Tiger being used by the LTTE).
3) Animality can be mobilized in violent exclusionary aggressions directed at those perceived as threats to the national(ist) imaginary (such as the use of tiger, pig or butterfly in violent aggressions).
4) Such exclusionary mobilizations of animality could be later appropriated and reclaimed by these very "target" communities in order to challenge dominant national imaginaries (such as the reclamation of the butterfly by some groups of queer Sri Lankans).

My proposition of course, is not that these are the only "models" for an animality-nationalism nexus to exist. My intention here is to demonstrate how the mobilizations of animality within nationalist projects do not always operate in straight-forward ways and do not necessarily generate a consistent set of results. Acknowledging this complexity is crucial for us to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between these two partners.

Further, the Sri Lanka cases is also a reminder that while animality is used to classify human beings into different groups, these are not neat and stable categorizations. For instance, even though the lion is used to represent the Sinhalese and the butterfly is used to represent queer people, a queer Sinhalese person, or a Sinhalese person read as queer, will almost never be seen as a lion. Only some Sinhalese people will be understood as lions. How do we understand this kind of disorder within the animalist imagination of the nation? How do these negotiations happen? Is it sufficient to acknowledge that our categorizations are always already unstable and stop there, or are there ways to disentangle this "web" further? In the next section of this

paper, I turn to the theoretical and methodological toolbox that affect theorists have provided us, in order to complicate these assignations considerably.

Animality, Affect and the Nation

Affect theorists have demonstrated how our bodies are dynamic bundles of undetermined capacities (Timár 2019) with potential to affect and be affected by moments of intensity. Such a turn to affect is not only theoretical and social, but also profoundly political as "emotions do things, and they align individuals with communities – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachments" (Ahmed 2004: 119). Drawing from Tomkins, Hemmings (2005) has analyzed the potential of affect to reverberate between individuals — it is "transferred to others and doubles back, increasing its original intensity" (551-552). Further, as Holzberg (2019) posits "affects are historically constituted forces that circulate between us and are easily shaped and mobilized within public discourse. Once activated, they do important political work in attaching us to as well as disrupting attachments to particular conceptions of the world" (57). In a similar vein, Liu (2017) has demonstrated that a focus on affect can resist "the division between the individual and the social, as well as the dichotomized theorization between biological essentialism and social constructionism" (45).

Both affect theory and animal studies scholarship have made critical contributions to the ways in which we understand nationalism and nationhood. We know from existing scholarly interventions that affect is central to nation-building, nationhood and nationalism (Crang and Tolia-Kelly D 2010, Wetherell 2014, Stephens and Angharad 2015, Merriman and Jones 2016, Militz and Schurr 2016, Antonsich and Skey 2017, Sumartojo 2020). However,

we know little about the nexus between affect, animality and nationalism. A focus on affect I believe, can open up a line of inquiry that is invisible to our current accounts on the relationships between animality and the nation.

In his 1967 Lecture, Leach (1967: min 19:56) says that "human animals, when face to face, behave like any other sort of animal: they react to signals emitted by the other party". What kind of affective responses can animal symbols that are assigned to represent human groups circulate? In what ways do these affects stick to bodies and circulate within the body politic? Ahmed (2004) has demonstrated how affects require signs to attach or stick themselves on to, in order to self-sustain and circulate. Animality provides a productive web of evocative signs on to which affect(s) can attach themselves in ways that delineate the boundaries between the those that belong to the nation as it is imagined (and to what degree) and those that do not. In doing so, affect can further stabilize the existing orders of things. Animal symbols allow the attachment of a range of characteristics and affects to each group — *the proud lions are brave, in the same way filthy pigs are repulsive, the ruthless tigers are vicious, and the effeminate butterflies are shameful*. These affects convey a general understanding of "the type of people" who belong to a particular group. These "qualities" are generally understood as quintessential to both the humans and animal groups in question (for example, both lions and the Sinhalese are brave, both butterflies and queer people are "effeminate") and are informed and upheld by various mythohistories and assumptions that maybe held about each group. Corresponding affects are attached to each characteristic — bravery is meant to invoke pride while effeminacy (especially in "men") is meant to invoke shame and so on. Furthermore, while they assign possibilities (how one may behave), they also delineate impossibilities (how one cannot behave) — *lions are not effeminate, pigs are not brave, and butterflies are not ruthless.* In this way, various affects are assigned to the non-

human animal images, which are in turn attributed to the various human groups these symbols stand to represent. These affects circulate and sediment over time and become memorable, in that they get stuck to the bodies of their respective "species". Overtime, they may be treated as self-evident "truths" about these groups. There is a sense of inescapability/ unchangeability to such an assignation — someone who is described as snobbish or selfish can cease to be so *("they have changed")*. However, this kind of social patterning presumes biological, even ontological differences. This type of affective classification of communities and bodies, I argue, is key to the persistence of the exclusionary logic of nationalism.

Semantists have analyzed "a great chain of being", (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 166) which positions different "kinds of beings and their properties and places them on a vertical scale". Linguists have analyzed animacy hierarchies which produce a type of gradient based on perceptions of animateness, liveness, sentience, or humanness (Chen 2012: 10). My interest here is to understand how human bodies may respond to being assigned to a non-human animal group. Attempting to answer to this question, requires a shift of our analytical gaze from groups and inter-group relations to the realm of the individual and the visceral.

To engage in this analysis, armed with the theoretical and methodological tools developed by affect theorists, I return to the "affective scene" I opened this paper with, where Sirisena engaged in his queerphobic performance. Staiger, Cvetkovich and Reynolds (2010) have described "clusters of action ... that open up for political analysis" as "affective scenes" (3). They define these scenes as "objects, genres or fantasies that fascinate us and break open an entry point into a larger problematic of social and political relevance... Like a camera, we can zoom into a cultural moment that mediates social and political life to understand how larger structures of feeling operate within it" (Holzberg 2019: 66). Similarly, Antonsich and Skey

(2017: 580) have described the need to attend "to the ways in which feelings and emotions emerge through practices, objects and materially heterogenous assemblages which are imbricated with the nation." For them, these could include anything from watching a national air-show to strolling on the high street, in an English town (Antonsich and Skey 2017: 580). By paying attention to such affective scenes, we can attempt to understand how the nation is constituted affectively.

That November evening, upon delivering his queerphobic pronouncement, the President took a brief "break" inviting his audience to break into applause. The initial response by the crowd present at the political rally to Sirisena's proud performance, was to awkwardly chuckle. This timid chuckle gradually developed into a hauntingly loud laughter. Soon, applause rippled through the crowd, almost as if to prove their (heterosexual) allegiance to the gazing President and each other. Sirisena's attempt was to legitimize his fragrant breach of the country's constitution by affectively invoking animality and scapegoating the queer butterflies. Scapegoats, after all "tend to be looked for among the marginal, the criminal, the animal" (Strathern 2009:12). In what ways does such an invocation move bodies in ways that ensure obedience to the hierarchies that are being reified?

Being a large public gathering attended by thousands, it is not unreasonable to speculate that there would have been some "butterflies" amongst the crowd at Sirisena's rally that November evening. How would the bodies of these butterflies respond to this deployment of shame hurled at them/their "kind"? In a deeply personal and reflective essay, Sri Lankan queer scholar and activist Pasan Jayasinghe (2018) suggests that the butterflies amongst the crowd would respond, at one level, by *joining* the applause. By laughing louder and clapping harder, they might align their bodies with the oppressors' in an effort to *pass* as one of them. Laughter

and applause in this moment act as the queer body's defense mechanism to the shame of being exposed/found out. Jayasinghe (2018) here demonstrates the profoundly intimate and political potential of such an affective invocation of animality to regulate and move bodies in ways that submit themselves before the hierarchies that are being upheld —being called a butterfly is shameful because of the implication of effeminacy attached to the image and the corresponding affect of shame attached to inhabiting effeminacy. Shame and/or the fear of the potentiality of being the object of shame, can be a powerful motivation for one to comply with various normative social expectations. Therefore, animality (the deployment of the image the butterfly) and affect, together become effective tools for upholding social order and control.

As we have already discussed, however, to say animality and affect come together to maintain order and uphold hierarchies, is only to paint half of the picture. Just as animality and affect can work together to enforce certain exclusionary hierarchies, they can also, be central to the ways in which bodies can resist and disobey these hegemonic national imaginaries. In order to demonstrate this, I turn my gaze to the activist responses to Sirisena's queerphobic invocation during the 2019 Coup in Sri Lanka. Contestations to Sirisena's statement came from different quarters of society including queer Sri Lankans, LGBTIQ+ rights organizations, human rights groups, and his political opposition. A key stakeholder amongst those engaging in these contestations, was a collective of queer Sri Lankans and supporters who mobilized themselves, in response to Sirisena's display of queerphobia, under a banner titled "Butterflies for Democracy". These activists held weeks of protests occupying the Liberty Roundabout (situated adjacent to the Liberty Plaza and the Liberty Cinema) in the heart of Colombo carrying signs that said, among other things "butterfly power", "the President is afraid of butterflies" and "Mr. President, butterflies are also voters". Some of the protestors wore t-shirts with images of butterflies, others wore pins with butterflies in their hair. Their protest

signs and banners were adorned with images of fluttering butterflies flying across the horizon. The image of the butterfly, which was deployed by Sirisena and others as a symbol of shame, in an attempt to exclude, was appropriated by these protestors as a symbol of their shared unity, solidarity and pride. In doing so, they also demonstrate, the possibilities that animality generates to mobilize counter-affects that resist attempts at excluding certain bodies and groups from the nation as it is imagined.

Speaking to the media at this protest, a queer activist named Tanya said "we are not going to hide anymore. We are going to fight for our rights." (Aththa Withthi 3:53). The following day, queer Member of Parliament Mangala Samaraweera[ix] tweeted "Mr. President, I would rather be a butterfly than a leech" along with the hashtags #ConstitutionalCrisisSriLanka #FakePM and #illegalgovernment (Samaraweera 2020). Contemporaneously, a group of members of the "Sri Lankan LGBTQI+ Community and allies" released a petition with nearly 300 signatures, including mine. Further, in a more personal open letter titled *An Open Letter to President Sirisena by A Young "Samanala" (Butterfly) Sri Lankan*, a young queer man named Mahela Gamage wrote "it's sad that young people here will always have to look outside for inspiration because it doesn't look like they will be able to fly freely, true to their self anytime soon. Certainly not with a President who ridicules them for who they are" Gamage 2018). Meanwhile, another group of queer Sri Lankans convened a media briefing where they condemned this overt display of queerphobia by President Sirisena.

Animality became a symbol around which to rally, organize and mobilize counter-affects. The symbol of the butterfly facilitated the coming together of these queer groups in order to organize themselves as a collective, to form networks of solidarity and engage in forms

of resistance and activism. Animality and affect, became important tools in their efforts to mobilize themselves and others around their cause(s), to attract and retain participants and mobilize affective states and emotions that meshed with the movement's political objectives. The butterfly, then simultaneously operated both as a tool of control, regulation, humiliation, exclusion and shame as well as, in the hands of the queer activists, a tool for visibility, self-definition, contestation, resistance and subversion.

Sirisena's affective invocation of animality triggered two distinctly different bodily reactions. As one group of butterflies cringed back into the cocoon by applauding their President's attack on them, another swarm of butterflies spread their wings unapologetically on the streets of Colombo, on television and computer screens in "pride". In doing so, as the fabled butterfly does with the flapping of its wings, they began a revolution[x] — they challenge President Sirisena's hegemonic invocation of animality by appropriating that same image (*yes, we are butterflies, so what?)*.

An account of the ways in which animality can be mobilized in exclusionary ways to reify nation(alism), then is only sharing half of the account. While animality can get mobilized within exclusionary nationalist frameworks, these assignations as well as the responses to such assignations are dynamic social, affective and visceral processes. A turn to affect then is a challenge to deterministic conclusions on the relationship between animality and nationalism which is often assumed to be solely exclusionary.

Conclusion

In this paper, I described the "web" of animality that reifies Sri Lanka's dominant national imagination. While describing the broader web of animality, I demonstrated how each image emerges from specific histories and contexts, based on a certain underlying histories and assumptions, generating specific affective associations. Such a system of classification is necessarily hierarchical as not all groups occupy an equal positionality within this web. I then zoomed in on an event where an image of a particular animal, the butterfly, was discursively mobilized at a political rally, in order to demonstrate the ways in which the human tendency to invoke animality can operate in complex ways which may not always generate consistent responses. Combining critical animal studies scholarship with contributions of scholars on nationalism and affect, my suggestion is that while animality can be central to the ways in which particular bodies and groups are excluded from the nation as it is imagined, it can be just as central to the ways in which these monolithic imaginaries are defiantly contested and disobeyed. Animality, then, can be mobilized in ways that are both empowering and disempowering towards various groups. It can both reproduce and challenge national hierarchies as well as stabilize and destabilize the exclusionary imaginaries of the nation. Animality can be mobilized to dominate and subordinate as well as to contest and resist. While it allows some subjects to understand their own (supposedly) superior positionality within the vertical structure of the nation, it can also become an important tool for disenfranchised subjects to organize around and perform their own alterity. Acknowledging these complexities is important both for us to nuance our own accounts of the relationship between animality and nationalism as well as to find and test imaginative ways to challenge nationalism's tyrannical control over our societies and bodies.

[i] In the Tamil language which is spoken by about 25% of Sri Lankans, "butterfly" is not a queerphobic slur, even though there are a plenty of queerphobic slurs in Tamil too.

[ii] Critics have debated the subtle differences between terms such as symbol, metaphor and imagery (O'Neill 1956, Wimsatt 1950). In this paper I use these terms interchangeably.

[iii] Queer theorists have shown the complex relationships between queerphobia and nationalism by demonstrating the complex ways in which both the incorporation and exclusion of (some) queer subjects can be inherent to nation-building and nationalism (see Dhawan 2016, Puar 2007, Rao 2014).

[iv] Obeysekere here was not referring to the national flag itself but a roundabout in Colombo where the *brahmaviharas* were engraved on concrete maps of Sri Lanka with a carved lion standing atop each of the maps.

[v] In 2013 Sinhala Buddhist ultra-nationalist groups called for the removal of this mosque with a threat that if not, they would dismantle it themselves. The site has continued to be a site of contention and controversy (see Tamil Guardian 2022, Colombo Gazette 2022).

[vi] In the human anthropocentric effort to appropriate non-human animal imagery to fulfil our own (violent) human desires, we should not forget that animals are themselves complex beings with extraordinary personalities of their own.

[vii] In this paper, I use "pigs' flesh," "cows' flesh" etc. instead of euphemisms like pork or beef, to confront the human tendency to find innovative ways to choose not to think about where the food on our plates comes from.

[viii] In 2020, Facebook apologized for its role in anti-Muslim riots in Sri Lanka.

[ix] On the 17th of November 2019, Mangala Samaraweera, who was Sri Lanka's first and only openly queer politician, passed away due to Covid-19.

[x] On December 14, 2018, Sri Lanka's Supreme Court ruled unanimously that President Maithripala Sirisena's order to dissolve Parliament was unconstitutional. It has widely been acknowledged that while it was the Supreme Court ruling that eventually brought the Constitutional Coup to an end, the resistance by Sri Lankans including queer groups such as "Butterflies for Democracy" were central to generating and embodying public outrage against the coup and signaling the illegitimacy of the Rajapaksa Government that was appointed by Sirisena.

Bibliography

Ahmed, Sara. 2004. "Affective Economies". In *Social Text*, 22(2): 117-139. Durham: Duke University Press.

Aliff, S. Mohamed. 2015. "Post-war conflict in Sri Lanka: violence against Sri Lankan muslims and buddhist hegemony". In *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 59: 109-125. Wollerau: SciPress.

Alloun, Esther. 2019. "Veganwashing Israel's Dirty Laundry? Animal Politics and Nationalism in Palestine-Israel". In *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* 41, (1). Taylor and Francis.

de Alwis, Malathi. 2002. "'Housewives of the Public'. Crossing Borders and Shifting Boundaries. The Cultural Signification of the Sri Lankan Nation". Ilse Lenz, Helma Lutz, Mirijana Morokvasic-Muller, Claudia Schöning-Kalender, Helen Schwenken (Eds.). *Crossing Borders and Shifting Boundaries.* VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Amarasingam, Amarnath. 2019. "Terrorism on the Teardrop Island: Understanding the Easter 2019 Attacks in Sri Lanka". In *CTCSentinel*. West Point: Combating Terrorism Center.

Aththa Withthi. 2018. *Butterflies for Democracy*. Youtube Video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDKIth-N7xM.

Anderson, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined Communities*. Verso: London.

Antonsich, Marco., Skey, Michael. 2017. "Affective nationalism: Issues of power, agency and method. Progress". In *Human Geography*. Sage.

Asian Mirror. 2014. "Fort Mosque Receives Threatening Letter With Raw Pieces Of Pork". *Asian Mirror*. https://asianmirror.lk/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1790:fort-mosque-receives-threatening-letter-with-raw-pieces-of-pork&Itemid=114.

Barth, Fredrik. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries.* London: George Allen & Unwin.

Bhabha, K. Homi. 2013. *Nation and Narration.* London: Routledge.

Billig, Michael. 1995. *Banal Nationalism.* London: Sage

Breuilly, John. 1993. *Nationalism and the State.* Manchester. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Burton, Antoinette., Mawani, Renisa. 2021. *Animala: An Anti-Imperial Bestiary for Our Times*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Cederholm, E. Andersson., Björck, Amelie., Jennbert, Kristina., Lönngren, Ann-Sofie. 2014. *Exploring the animal turn: Human–animal relations in science, society and culture.* Lund: Pufendorfinstitutet.

Cerulo, Karen. 1995. *Identity Designs: The Sights and Sounds of a Nation.* New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Chen, Y. Mel. 2012. *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Clothey, Fred. 2006. *Ritualising on the Boundaries: Continuity and Innovation in the Tamil Diaspora.* Columbia*:* University of South Carolina Press.

Cohen, P. Anthony. 1995. *The Symbolic Construction of Community.* London: Routledge.

Colombo Gazette. 2022. "US says BBS used social media to promote Sinhalese Buddhist supremacy". *Colombo Gazette.* https://colombogazette.com/2022/06/03/us-says-bbs-used-social-media-to-promote-sinhalese-buddhist-supremacy.

Colombo Telegraph. 2013. "Raw Pork Was Thrown Into The Mahiyangana Mosque". *Colombo Telegraph.* https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/raw-pork-was-thrown-into-the-mahiyangana-mosque/.

Colombo Telegraph. 2018 . "Sirisena Sinks To New Low And Passes Sexual Innuendos At Ranil During UPFA Rally". *Colombo Telegraph.* https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/sirisena-sinks-to-new-low-and-passes-sexual-innuendos-at-ranil-during-upfa-rally/

Crang, Mike., Tolia-Kelly, P. Divya. 2010. "Nation, Race, and Affect: Senses and Sensibilities at National Heritage Sites". *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space.* SAGE.

Deckha, Maneesha. 2010. "The Subhuman as a Cultural Agent of Violence". *Journal of Critical Animal Studies, eds*. Anastasia Yarbrough and Susan Thomas. New York: Institute of Critical Animal Studies.

Dhawan, Nikita. 2016. "Homonationalism and State-phobia: The Postcolonial Predicament of Queering Modernities". In Maria Viteri. and Manuela Picq (Eds). *Queering Paradigms: Queering Narratives of Modernity,* 51-68. Oxford: Peter Lang.

Durkheim, Emile. 1961, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life.* New York: Collier.

Dursteler, Eric. 2020. "The 'Abominable Pig' and the 'Mother of All Vices': Pork, Wine, and the Culinary Clash of Civilizations in the Early Modern Mediterranean". In Kirill Dmitriev, Julia Hauser and Bilal Orfali (Eds). *Insatiable Appetite: Food as Cultural Signifier in the Middle East and Beyond,* 214–4. Leiden: Brill.

Elgenius, Gabriella. 2011. *Symbols of Nations and Nationalism.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Eriksen, Anne. 2007. “The Domestication of a National Symbol. The Private Use of Flags in Norway”. In E. Jenkins (ed.), *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and America*: 157–70. London: Routledge.

van Es, Margaretha. 2000. “Roasting a Pig in Front of a Mosque: How Pork Matters in Pegida’s Anti-Islam Protest in Eindhoven. In *Religions*, 11(7): 359. Basel: Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute.

Fernando, Santhushya., Vidanapathirana, Janaki., Wanniarachchi, Senel. 2018. *A Montage of Sexuality in Sri Lanka.* Colombo : UNFPA.

Fox, Jon E., Miller-Idriss, Cynthia. 2008. “Everyday nationhood”. In *ethnicities*. Sage.

Fuglerud, Øivind. 1999. Life on the Outside: The Tamil Diaspora and Long Distance Nationalism . London: Pluto.

Gamage, Mahela. 2018. “An Open Letter To President Sirisena By A Young “Samanala” Sri Lankan”. *Colombo Telegraph,* https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/an-open-letter-to-president-sirisena-by-a-young-samanala-sri-lankan.

Geisler, E. Michael. 2005. *National Symbols, Fractured Identities. Contesting the National Narrative.* London: Middlebury College Press.

Ghassem-Fachandi, Parvis. 2009. “The Hyperbolic Vegetarian, Notes of a Fragile Subject in Gujrat”. In *Being There, The Fieldwork Encounter and the Making of Truth.* John Borneman Abdellah Hammoudi (Eds.). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Gillespie, Kathryn. 2018. *Placing Angola: Racialisation, Anthropocentrism, and Settler Colonialism at the Louisiana State Penitentiary's Angola Rodeo.* In Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography, 50 (5): 1267–1289. Cardiff: Antipode Foundation.

Gillespie, Kathryn., Narayan, Yamini. 2020. “Animal Nationalisms: Multispecies Cultural Politics, Race, and the (Un)making of the Settler Nation-State Journal of Intercultural Studies”. Special issue. In *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 41. London: Routledge.

Govindrajan, Radhika. 2018. *Animal Intimacies Interspecies Relatedness in India’s Central Himalayas.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gunawardana, R. A. L. H. 1990. “The People of the Lion: The Sinhala Identity and Ideology in History and Historiography”. In Jonathan Spencer (ed.), *Sri Lanka: History and the Roots of Conflict*. London.

Hall, Stuart. 1992. *West and the Rest: discourse and power*. Oxford: Polity.

Haraway, J. Donna. 2008. *When Species Meet.* The University of Minnesota Press.

Hemmings, Clare. 2015. “Affect and Feminist Methodology, Or What Does It Mean to be Moved?”. In Devika Sharma, Frederik Tygstrup (eds.), *Structures of Feeling*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Holzberg, Billy. 2019. “Affective Borders: The Emotional Politics of the German ‘Refugee Crisis’ ”. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. London: Department of Gender Studies of the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Howell, A. Philip. 2015. *At Home and Astray: The Domestic Dog in Victorian Britain.* Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press.

Imitiyaz, A.R.M. 2019. The Easter Sunday Bombings and the Crisis Facing Sri Lanka’s Muslims. Journal of Asian and African Studies. London Sage.

Ivarsson, H. Caorlina. 2018. *“*Lion’s blood: social media, everyday nationalism and anti-Muslim mobilisation among Sinhala-Buddhist youth”. In *Contemporary South Asia,* 27(2): 145-159. Oxfordshire: Routledge.

Jackson, I. Zakiyyah. 2010. *Becoming Human Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World.* New York: NYU Press.

Jayasinghe, Pasan. 2018. “Samanalun, Godayas and Our Words”. *Groundviews.* Colombo: Groundviews.

Jayawardena, Janaki. 2002. *Cultural Construction of the 'Sinhala Woman' and Women's Lives in Post-Independence Sri Lanka.* PhD Thesis. University of York.

Jeyaraj, D.B.S. 2020. *Past under Mahinda resurfacing under Gota.* The Daily Mirror. https://www.dailymirror.lk/dbs-jeyaraj-column/Past-under-Mahinda-resurfacing-under-Gota/192-180733.

Kopnina, Helen. 2017. “Beyond multispecies ethnography: Engaging with violence and animal rights in anthropology”. Critique of Anthropology. London: Sage.

Lakoff, G., & Turner, M. 1989. *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lambert, David. 2018. “Runaways and strays Rethinking (non)human agency in Caribbean slave societies.” In Sharon Wilcox, Stephanie Rutherford (eds.) *Historical Animal Geographies*. London: Routledge.

Leach, Edmund. 1967. *Ourselves and Others. Reith Lectures: A Runaway World*. BBC Radio 4.

Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1962. Totemism. Translated by Rodney Needham. London: Merlin Press.

Liu, Wen. 2017. “Toward a queer psychology of affect: restarting from shameful places”. In *Subjectivity*. Macmillan Publishers.

Manogaran, Chelvadurai., Bryan. Pfaffenberger. 1994. *The Sri Lankan Tamils: Ethnicity and Identity*. Boulder: Westview.

Manoharan, N. 2007. Semiotics of Terrorism: A 'Symbolic' Understanding of the LTTE. New Delhi: IPCS. http://www.ipcs.org/comm_select.php?articleNo=2189#

Mayersen, Deborah. 2018. “Cockroaches, Cows and "Canines of the Hebrew Faith": Exploring Animal Imagery in Graphic Novels about Genocide”. In *Genocide Studies Prevention: An International Journal*, 12 (2). International Association of Genocide Scholars.

Merriman, Peter., Jones, Rhys. 2016. “Nations, materialities and affects”. In *Progress in Human Geography*. Sage.

Militz, Elisabeth. 2019. “Towards affective nationalism”. *Gender Place and Culture.* Taylor and Francis.

Militz, Elisabeth., Schurr, Carolin. 2016. “Affective nationalism: Banalities of belonging in Azerbaijan”. *Political Geography*. Amsterdam : Elsevier.

Narayanan, Yamini. 2019. “’Cow is a Mother, Mothers Can Do Anything for Their Children!’ Gaushalas as Landscapes of Anthropatriarchy and Hindu Patriarchy”. In *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, 34 (2): 195–221. Wiley-Blackwell : Cambridge University Press.

Narayanan, Yamini. 2021. “Animating caste: visceral geographies of pigs, caste, and violent nationalisms in Chennai city”. In *Urban Geography*. Taylor and Francis.

Obeyesekere, Gananath. 1970. “Religious Symbolism and Political Change in Ceylon”. In *Modern Ceylon Studies*, 1 (43-63). Colombo: University of Ceylon.

Obeyesekere, Gananath. 2003. “Buddhism, Ethnicity and Identity: A Problem of Buddhist History”. In *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*. Carlisle: Dickinson College.

Ogden, Laura A. 2011. Swamplife: The Entangled Lives of Hunters, Gators and Mangroves in the Florida Everglades. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

O’Neill, Joseph. 1956. “The Metaphorical Mode: Image, Metaphor, Symbol”. *Thought: Fordham University Quarterly.* New York: Fordham University Press

Orzechowski, Karol. 2012. Under What Flag? Identity and Nationalism in Canadian Rodeo. Unpublished thesis. Ontario: York University.

O. Schaefer, Donovan. 2015. *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Puar, Jasbir. K. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred. 1952. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society.* London: Cohen and West.

Rajasingham-Senanayake, Darini. 1999. “Democracy and the Problem of Representation: The Making of Bi-polar Ethnic Identity in Post/Colonial Sri Lanka”. In Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka,

Rapoport, Serena. 2015. “The Japanese race is an enemy race:” Legalized Scapegoating of Japanese Americans During World War II. New York: Columbia University.

Darini Rajasingham-Senanayake, Ashis Nandy, and Edmund, T. Gomez (eds) *Ethnic futures: The State and Identity Politics in Asia*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Rao, Rahul. 2014. “The locations of homophobia”. *London Review of International Law*, 2(2): 169-199. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rutherford, Stephanie. 2020. “Wolfish White Nationalisms? Lycanthropic Longing on the Alt-right”. In *Animal Nationalisms: Multispecies Cultural Politics, Race, and the (Un)making of the Settler Nation-State.* Special Issue. Journal of Intercultural Studies, 41. Taylor and Francis.

Šarić, Ljiljana., Luccarelli, Mark. 2017. *Symbols and Symbolic Meanings in Constructions of Nations and National Identity*. In Družboslovne Razprave, 85 (XXXIII): 5–12. Ljubljana : University of Ljubljana.

Smith, D. Anthony. 1995. Formation of National Identity. In Henry Harris (ed.), *Identity (Essays Based on Herbert Spencer Lectures):* 129–54. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sri Lanka Brief. 2016. *Words “Sinhala Blood” Written on Gates of Muslim Residences in Colombo.* https://srilankabrief.org/words-sinhala-blood-written-on-gates-of-muslim-residences-in-colombo/

Staiger, Janet., Cvetkovich, Ann., Reynolds Ann. 2010. *Political Emotions.* Routledge.

Stephens, C. Angharad. 2015. “The affective atmospheres of nationalism”. In *Cultural Geographies.* Sage.

Strathern, Alan. 2009. “The Vijaya Origin Myth of Sri Lanka and the Strangeness of Kingship*”. In *Past & Present*, 203 (1). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sumartojo, Shanti. 2020. “National potential: Affect, possibility and the nation-in-progress”. In *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space.* Sage.

Tamil Guardian 2022. *Sri Lankan war criminal unveils giant lion at ‘revived’ Buddhist site.* Tamil Guardian. https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/sri-lankan-war-criminal-unveils-giant-lion-revived-buddhist-site

Timár, Eszter. 2019. The body of shame in affect theory and deconstruction. In Parallax, 25. Taylor and Francis.

Tirrell, Lynne. 2012. “Genocidal Language Games”. In Ishani Maitra., Kate McGowan. (Eds.) *Speech and Harm: Controversies Over Free Speech.* Oxford: Oxford Scholarship.

Walzer, Michael. 1967. “The Facsimile Fallacy”. In *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 12(2): 82–6. Taylor and Francis.

Van Dyk, Sebastiaan. 2018. Post- Apartheid Racism Among Afrikaans Speaking Urban Adolescents: A Narrative Pastoral Reflection. Unpublished PhD Thesis. Pretoria : University of Pretoria.

Wanniarachchi, Senel. 2019. *Digital Imagi(nations): An Investigation into the Banality of Evil on Facebook comments made following the Attacks on Easter Sunday in Sri Lanka.* Unpublished Master's Dissertation. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.

Wetherell, Magaret. 2014. "Affect and banal nationalism: a practical dialogic approach to emotion". In Charles Antaki, Susan Condor (eds.), Rhetoric, Ideology and Social Psychology. London: Routledge.

Wickremesinghe, C.L. 1985. *The Gospel in the World.* Madras: Christian Literature Society.

Wijewardene, Shermal., Jayewardene, Nehama. 2020. "Law and LGBTIQ People in Sri Lanka: Developments and Narrative Possibilities". *Australian Journal of Asian Law, Special Issue: Legal Regimes of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Asia,* 20: 135-150. Melbourne: University of Melbourne.

Wilcox, Sharon., Rutherford, Stephanie. 2018. *Historical Animal Geographies*. London: Routledge.

Wimsatt, W. K. (1950). "Symbol and Metaphor". *The Review of Metaphysics*, 4 (2): 279-290. Washington DC: Philosophy Education Society.