

## National or International identity

Written by Mitra Ardron  
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Last night I went to a party in Auroville, southern india. Outdoors - lit by christmas lights strung between trees, with a dirt floor and cast concrete tables with inlaid mosaic.

My neighbours over the Middle Eastern dinner were a couple of Australians and she was studying how people relate, or don't, to their national identity. She talked about a couple she'd met, she French/German born in India; he Mexican/Canadian; their kids in theory could have five passports at birth. (Two more than me).

So I looked around - I was sitting with an Ecuadorian; German; South African & Faroe Islander (part of Denmark). The musicians were a Portuguese couple playing West African Kora and Imbira (harp and thumb piano);

About half the party were Indian - mostly Tamils - Indian nationality itself is complex; people identify with the state their family is from. So many are quadri-lingal (the state of their family; their residence; English & Hindi).

Among the other people I knew well at the party were 4 African nationalities; 6 European & 1 South American. I'm sure I could have counted many more if I'd known the nationality of more of the people there, but then I wonder how much each of these people identifies with their country of birth?

We danced on a dirt floor; listening the approaching thunder and lightning of a monsoon storm. Just as I was thinking that I couldn't be further from home, the DJ put on Wild Marmalade, a high energy didgeridoo band from back home in Byron Bay, I know the musicians, have danced to them at many small gigs in village halls. Yes - I identified through them with Byron; identified to a sense of place; to people I know - though not to its location as part of Australia.

I don't know where the DJ got their music, but he obviously liked the band, and played several tracks, so by the time its first few drops arrived we were so hot from dancing we didn't care.

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