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Tyranny without a Tyrant: Conquest of Knowledge and Politics of Criminality in Colonial India

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Introduction

The British came in India, took political control of Bengal through the battle of *Polashi* and later colonized India completely. But two century of colonial conquest of India was also a conquest of knowledge by the British. Knowledge production was an essential part of colonial governmentality in India. The British had produced a huge number of writings on India which some scholars call a 'textual take over' of the non-western world by the colonialism (Boehmer 2005). If we look at the process of how the knowledge production was worked on Indian population, we can tell many things about the history of colonialism from a different perspective. Historical anthropologist and South Asianist, Bernard Cohn (1928-2003) is very much keen to understand this process by looking at the history of British colonialism in India. While Michel Foucault's famous sentence 'it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power' (quoted from Mills 2003: x69) invites us to rethink the relationship between power and knowledge, perhaps, it is Bernard Cohn who suggests us to think in that way in a specific historical context even before Foucault. Paul Rabinow, one of the chief promoters and interlocutors of Michel Foucault in Anthropology, writes 'Bernard Cohn, at the University of Chicago, was teaching us about the relations of knowledge and power, spaces and colonies, long before I ever heard of Foucault (Rabinow 1989: x)'. Cohn's writings are also intellectually adorable to the Subaltern Studies Group (Guha 1987: vii-xxvi). So, long before the emergence of 'Foucauldian' perspective on knowledge-power nexus and 'Saidian' perspective in colonial discourses and Orientalist scholarship, Bernard Cohn had begun to apply an anthropological perspective (Cohn 1987, 1996) to the history of colonialism and its

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form of knowledge (Dirks 1996: ix). Because of Cohn's influence, Dirks not only read Said's *Orientalism* but also tried to understand its 'major implications throughout and across the disciplines of history and anthropology, as well as across contexts and cultures' (Dirks 2010: 101).

Despite two hundred years of rule in India, British colonialism lacked the ability to produce self-governing, submissive population through governmentality and this failure is metaphorically called 'long arms and weak fingers' (Cooper 2005: 197). This problem brings up some important questions about the nature of colonial power and its limits. In order to achieve complete submission over the subject population, formulation of colonial laws, particularly Criminal Tribe Act, played a critical role in British India. The British colonial government in India declared some indigenous communities of North India, Bengal Presidency and Madras Presidency as 'criminal tribe' by enacting Criminal Tribes Act in 1871. The Lodhas of Midnapore, West Bengal, had been declared as 'criminal tribe' in 1916 (Bhowmick 1994).

This article looks at how the 'investigative modalities' (Cohn 1996) of Bernard Cohn worked on the construction of criminality among the Lodha community of West Bengal in colonial India. It argues that politics of criminalization and its knowledge production through disciplinary practices like anthropology, criminology among the 'native' populations consolidated the imperial ideology in colonial India. In fact, one of the weakness of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) is that although he is concerned with form of knowledge that constitutes orientalism, 'he does not specify how exactly the orientalist knowledge project and the colonial project of domination and extraction were connected' (Appadurai 1996: 114). This article intends to fill the gap. Beyond introduction, it is divided into two major parts. The first part sets the background and details the conceptual framework of Bernard Cohn. The second part tries to answer these questions: How did colonial conditions produce criminals? What are the politics behind this criminalization? How does the law shape who we are and how we behave? How was the emergence of disciplinary practices like anthropology, criminology closely linked with colonialism in British India? This article concludes with a hint of different perspectives on the issues of criminality in South Asian historiography.

Cohn's 'investigative modalities'

Colonialism and its form of Knowledge (Cohn 1996) is a continuation of Cohn's arguments on Indian history and society which was germinated and developed in his previous writings (Cohn 1987) from the early 1950s. The British faced enumerable and bewildering 'facts' in India and tried to know Indian society through a series of 'facts'. The identification and collection of these 'facts' required several intellectual apparatuses. This process was also a fundamental aspect of colonial state building in India by the British. They believed that they could conquer the spaces by establishing correspondence with the unknown and strange world. Cohn developed five investigative modalities to identify those spaces: historiographic, observational/travel, survey, enumerative, museological and surveillance modality (Cohn 1996). By investigative modalities, Cohn specifically means 'a body of information that is needed, the procedures by which appropriate knowledge is gathered, its ordering and classification, and then how it is transformed into usable forms such as published reports, statistical returns, histories, gazetteers, legal codes, and encyclopedias (Cohn 1996: 5).' In fact, Cohn loved to do 'fieldwork' in the archives and saw colonial texts 'as cultural grammars that unlocked the larger discursive-ideological structures of colonial states and societies' (Dirks 2005: 751).

Historiographic modality is the most pervasive, complex and powerful modality. According to Cohn, historiographic modality has three different strands. In 1770s, British deployed massive apparatus to collect revenues from all the corners of Bengal. During that time, the collection of customs and local histories was done with great care by the British officials. Second strand of the historiographic modality rests on the ideological construction of the nature of Indian civilization. The British regarded the Indian subjects as 'white men`s burden' and initiated 'civilizing mission' justified through the writings of James Mills. Mills not only represented India as 'primitive' and 'backward' but also encouraged ideologically the empire for civilizing mission. The third strand was the British initiative to document several events happening during their rule in India such as Black hole of Calcutta, defeat of Tipu Sultan, Sepoy Mutiny etc. Thus, knowledge of the history and practices of Indian states was seen as the most valuable form of knowledge on which to build the colonial state (Cohn 1996: 5). This modality gave birth to colonial historiography of India though which Indian past was looked upon.

Cohn describes travel modality as the creation of those images which were significant to the European eye. Throughout seventeenth, eighteen and nineteen century, Europeans wrote numerous travel accounts focusing on numerous facets of Indian culture and society when they travelled cities and villages through boats, horses etc (Cohn 1996: 6). These travel accounts produced through 'imperial eyes' (Pratt 1992) not only created a long lasting stereotyping image of India in Europe but also revealed much about the culture of the colonial authors. Survey modality encompasses a vast numbers of practices from cartography to collecting botanical, zoological, archeological, geological, ethnographic specimens of India. A systematic survey of India began in 1765 when Robert Clive appointed James Rennell to conduct survey in newly conquered Bengal territories. Similarly, Colin Mackenzie was assigned for extensive survey in South India after the final defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1799. These vast amounts of information acquired by survey were transformed as reports, ethnography, encyclopedia, archives that were deployed by the colonial state in fixing and settling India (Cohn 1996: 8).

The British attempted for a full census in 1861 but dislocations and sensitivity caused by the suppression of the 1857-59 rebellion among the native population postponed this effort until 1871-72 (Cohn 1987). Cohn's enumerative or census modality investigates how Indian society was viewed as numbers. Vast amount of information about age, sex, occupation, birth, death, religion, caste, residence, literacy was gathered by census. Cohn argues that through census, the British gained statistical information about everything but objectified social, cultural and linguistic differences among the people of India (Cohn 1996: 8). Census also created fictitious boundaries between villages and *mouzas*, distinguished between rural and urban population. Perhaps the most complex questions for the census takers arose over the question of castes (Cohn 1987: 241). But enumerating people and its culture has two important dimensions: one is the question of entitlement (what are your rights?) and another is classification (what group do you belong to and where does it fit in the political landscape?) (Appadurai 1996: 114). But colonial census didn't count the issue of entitlement much, rather it stressed on the classification and categorization of people and its culture. The museological modality involves the collection of antiquities of India- its arts, paintings, sacred texts, coins, architecture etc. Archeological survey of

India was established in 1859 by Alexander Cunningham to record important sites, to preserve artifacts for helping to establish several museums in British India (Cohn 1996: 9). Hence, objects were discovered, collected, and classified as part of a larger European project to decipher the history of India (Cohn 1996: 77). For the British, the purpose of museum was not only to show a taste for the past but also to control the narrative of the Indian past.

If the previous investigative modalities used by the colonial authority are called ideological state apparatus, the surveillance modality can clearly be called as repressive state apparatus (Althusser 1971). Under the colonial rule of British, certain categories of Indian people were regarded as 'anti-social', 'dangerous', 'criminal' and hence were regarded as 'threat' to them. British deployed certain instruments to produce surveillance on these people. Certain castes, ethnic communities were stigmatized as 'criminal'. In 1835, a Thagi and Dacoity Department was established to punish gang robberies and murder. Another important job of this department was to collect information about these 'criminal people' which led to the creation of 'criminal ethnography' (Cohn 1996: 11). Besides, advent of photography and use of finger prints as means of identifying and policing individuals made the surveillance more concrete and tight. In British India, some categories of people like "sannyasis, sadhus, fakirs, dacoits, gondas, thags, pastoralists, herders, and entertainers" (Cohn 1996: 10) frequently went beyond the natural boundaries created by the British in India. Let's look at the process of how those investigative modalities functioned as part of the cultural project of British colonialism on Indian population and its culture.

Colonial Perception of Criminality: From Thuggee to Tribe

Scholars find intimate connection between Habitual Criminals Act of 1869 in Victorian England and the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 in imperial India (Nijhar 2009). The production of criminal class in Victorian England during Industrial Revolution would give us details about attitude towards race and criminality. Charles Dickens had an immense interest in criminal law of England and in his novels (*The Great Expectations*, *Oliver Twist* and *Our Mutual Friend*), readers could find that the English laboring class, migrant Iris, the Jews, baggers, gypsy were the chief target of criminality production in Victorian England (Squires 1938). Racial ideology of Victorian England was also responsible for this because criminal activities were seen as hereditary

characteristics of any population. Victorian perception of criminality was also prevalent among the Indians. In his monograph *'The History of Railway Thieves'* which appeared in 1915, M. P. Naidu, a Madras policeman, wrote that the railway thieves were criminal by birth. Naidu claims that their children rushed to the theft in spite of a heavy dose of education by the authority. Through the use of the words like 'false', 'cunning', 'deceitful', 'men of violence', 'habit', 'by birth and training', Naidu's racial views were reflected on railway thieves which he learnt through the discourse of colonial education and administrative training (Lal 1995). Even, in the case of Bengal, not only in the middle class *(bhadralok)* discourse but also an official consensus in the nineteen century was that the lower classes were far more prone to crime than the upper class (Mukhopadhyay 2002: 968). This Victorian racial outlook clearly impregnated Criminal Tribe Act in India.

Also ritual killing of Thuggees was a significant event during the 1820s for enacting Criminal Tribes Act in India. It was claimed that thugs were worshippers of the female Goddess Kali, and it was She who gave their crimes a religious legitimacy. The British authority established Thugee and Dacoity Department in 1829 and Colonel William Sleeman was given responsibility to relinquish the gangs' criminal activities and lootings. Under his direct supervision, thugs were 'discovered', then 'revealed', caught, punished and a massive textual 'thug archive' was developed during the thug campaign of 1829-30 (Brown 2014: 48). So, construction of group criminality was a voluminously reproduced discourse by the colonial apparatus. Although some scholars argues that thuggees were an obstacle for the British to penetrate into the interior of India and criminalization of thuggees and later their elimination from India was an effort to clear the path of imperialism. And this is clear from colonel Sleeman's rejoice when he declared that 'Indian roads are finally safe' (Woerkens 2000).

Who are (were) the Lodhas?

Lodha is an indigenous community of India, presently living in the states of West Bengal and Odisha, but mostly in Midnapore district of West Bengal. The Lodhas speak a dialect composed of distorted Bengali, Oriya and words of Mundari origins. They live generally in a multi ethnic environment where other groups like Santhal, Mahato, Mahali, Munda are numerically dominant (Bhowmick 1994: 8). The

district of Midnapore has a long history of resisting the imperial penetration of the British from its very beginning. The East India Company took over this part of West Bengal from Nawab Mir Kasim Ali by a treaty in 1760. During that time of occupation, some indigenous communities, who were also soldiers in local Zaminder army, stood against the British by sporadic raids and plunders from 1760 to 1816 (Bhowmick 1994: 5). Interestingly enough, Midnapore district also became very violent during the 'Quit India' movement in 1942. The Lodha indigenous community has been living in this disturbed region for a long time which ultimately affected on their life and livelihood. The western part of the West Bengal is covered with hilly forests and livelihood of the Lodha people is predominantly dependent on forest resources from the very beginning. Indian forest lands and its dwellers went through a massive ecological, political and economic change by the two major events during the British rule: one is Permanent Land Settlement Act in 1793 and another is Forest Act in 1878. During the period from 1795 to 1850, the East India Company in India viewed forests chiefly as an obstacle for expanding agriculture and in Bengal; forest was classified as wastelands (Sivaramakrishnan 1997). During that time, agricultural land was the chief source of revenue to the Company and local landlords. After the Great Mutiny, when Queen Victoria took over India, forest was viewed as abundant source of resource.

There were both internal and external causes for this view of the forest. After the depletion of its own forest by several factors like ship making, iron melting, tanning industry and due to Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), Europe badly needed timbers. Besides, introduction and expansion of railway in India also required huge quantities of timber for slipper making (Philip 2004). The Forest Act and the establishment of Forest Department for policing the forest resources made indigenous communities the first victim whose subsistence activities were heavily dependent on forest resources (Guha 1983). In the next morning, when the Lodha men hunted a big game in the forest and women uprooted a timber from the ground, they were caught as 'criminal' for hunting and gathering! All of a sudden, they were called as 'thief' according to the forest law! But the new forest laws were not equal to all. There began a more organized hunting expedition by the British and Indian kings. While one British planter in the Nilgiris killed four hundred elephants in the 1860s, successive viceroys shot down several thousand birds in a single day. The Indian princess was

not far away from the hunting race. The maharaja of Gwalior, for example, shot over seven hundred tigers in the early 1900s. Ironically, these white and princely hunters used the extraordinary skill and knowledge of these indigenous people when they hunted in the forests for fun (Guha and Gadgil 1989: 150). This was how Forest Act did perform against the forest dependent people like Lodhas. After the restriction on forest use, Lodha people tried to adjust with the new situation but many of them failed. That was why they took criminal activities like dacoity, robbery, burglary, theft, arson in the district of Midnapore around 1900. As a result, the Lodhas were declared as 'criminal tribe' under Government Notification No.7022-23 dated 20th May, 1916, Calcutta (Bhowmick 1994: 266).

Criminal Tribe Act: Imposing a New Stigma

The pattern of British colonial rule had been drastically changed after the Sepoy Mutiny when India was taken over by the Crown in 1858. Imperial ideology of 'civilizing mission' got the perfect fertile ground in India when laws were formulated in British parliament and imported to India. John Stuart Mill, the libertarian English philosopher and greatest spokesman in favor of imperialism, once claimed that the British were in India 'because India requires us, that these are territories and peoples who beseech domination from us ...' (Quoted from Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 2001: 86). His father James Mill had never been in India but in *The History of British India*, he represented Indians as 'primitive' and 'backward' (Inden 1990). James Fitzjames Stephen, who was a British lawyer and developed 'Indian Evidence Act' once said "India has passed from being a land of cruel wars, ghastly superstition, and wasting plague and famine to be at least a land of peace, order, and vast possibilities" (Kolsky 2010: 3). These kinds of perception about India were produced by the British scholars that gave the idea that India was 'lawless' society (Cohn 1996: 62). To fulfill this 'lawless space' of the Indian society by creating multiple laws for multiple purposes, the British required huge administrative and intellectual investments on the vast physical and cultural landscapes of India. At the same time, if rule of justice was to be established in India, the law should have been come from the Britain. In this state formation process of the British, colonial laws played a critical role. In this context, criminal laws in the colonies pose a paradox between 'liberal' and non-liberal political discourse. In fact, criminal laws acted as an important apparatus for colonial

governmentality in India and violence was inherent in both colonial governance and its rule of law. Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 in India exposes such explicit violence through colonial apparatus. Law is both a question of ideology and matter of violence. French philosopher Louis Althusser puts this paradox in the following way: 'On the one hand, it rests on part of the state repressive apparatus for support. On the other hand, it rests on legal ideology and a little supplement of moral ideology for support' (Althusser 2014: 67). In this sense, criminal laws are necessarily repressive in nature and needs strong repressive state apparatuses to act over population.

Criminal laws also put stigma on any individuals and groups. Legal and social stigma goes side by side. It is important to understand how the British colonial authority viewed those 'criminal tribes'. In 1932, a British army officer, Lieutenant General George MacMunn, wrote a book called *The Underworld of India*. Here, he has a chapter titled '*Criminal Tribes and Classes*'. Of India's criminal tribes, MacMunn wrote: "[T]hey are absolutely the scum, the flotsam and jetsam of Indian life, of no more regard than beasts of the field (quoted from D'Souza 1999: 3576). F.C Daly, deputy inspector-general of Bengal police, published a manual in 1916 from Calcutta. In his short preface of the book, Daly said that this book was written for the police officers so that they could understand in which methods the habitual criminal tribes commit crimes in Bengal. Four pages of description was allotted for the Lodhas with their origin and history, patterns of gang crimes, their methods of crime, use of the weapons, previous habitats and occupation etc. Describing the origin and history of Lodha in the outset of the manual, Daly writes that Lodhas "still cling to the predatory instincts of their ancestors,... giving great trouble to the authorities and causing terror to the inhabitants of the villages near the jungle tracts" (Daly 1916: 16). Here, Daly's use of 'predatory instincts of their ancestors' clearly indicate the racist perspective on the nature of criminality.

Frederick Booth-Tucker, an Indian civil servant and chief architect of Salvation Army in India, had field level experiences working in several parts of British India like Amritsar, Simla and Dharamsala. In 1932, Tucker published an article on criminal tribes of India in which first paragraph of the article sets the tone of his entire thought on criminality and criminal tribes of India. It says "crime in most countries is committed by individuals, in India usually by tribes, communities and gangs, who are highly organized and trained in it

from childhood as a profession" (Tucker 1932: 159). In this backdrop, Criminal Tribe Act was enacted in 1871. It went through several amendments and at last, the Lodha was declared as 'criminal tribe' in 1916 by the British colonial authority. According to the law, "a criminal tribe was a gang, tribe or class of people addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offenses and with reason to believe a local government could notify using the local gazette that an entire tribe, gang or class of people were criminals" (Simhadri 1991: 121). That means it depends on the local law and enforcement authority whom they declare criminal or not without further investigation. One of the principal features of this Act was that the entire community would intend as criminal. This Act did not only perform on individual crime but also on whole community irrespective of sex, age and gender.

Scienticizing Criminal Body: Tattoo, photography, anthropometry, fingerprint

Law does not achieve its goal alone. It needs the assistance of various institutions, disciplines, experts etc. Law-making is itself a long standing part of a cultural exercise 'in which the colonial state struggled to draw upon existing normative codes - of rule, rank, status and gender - even as it also re-shaped them to a different political economy with a more exclusive definition of sovereign right (Singha 1998: viii). In this regard, some disciplinary practices like anthropology, criminology played a crucial role during the colonial rule. Surveillance had initially been started by the registration and recording the name of the 'criminals'. But the convicts changed their names immediately after being released. So, criminal identification using 'name' was no more viable for the police. Two important changes took place during that time. For the first time, 'criminal' body had been the site for firsthand knowledge production by the Empire. Human body was targeted for introducing various new technological equipments for identification. We must keep in mind that the idea of surveillance is not exclusively associated with digital revolution or information age in 21st century, neither it is associated exclusively with modern western world. It is interesting to note that the predecessor of some highly sophisticated techniques of surveillance had its colonial origin in eighteen century British India. After the - establishment of Criminal Tribe Act, the colonial law and enforcement authority created an elaborated system of surveillance techniques by

introducing tattoo, finger print, anthropometry, photographs (Cohn 1996:11).

Tattooing has been practiced and found throughout the world in almost every culture from ancient time as a marker of identity and preserver of memory. Marking tattoo in criminal body is not also new. We still hear the word *daghiashami* (marked criminal) which means some inscriptions on the body of the criminal as identification. However, in the colonial mode of surveillance, penal tattoo was more a matter of identification rather than identity of 'criminal' people or class. Penal tattoo, which was called *godna*, was inscribed on the body, especially on forehead, cheeks, nose, shoulders, hands or forearms of a criminal and it was a common practice of criminal identification in Madras and Bengal presidency from the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries (Anderson 2010: 05). Alongside with other convicts, penal tattooing was introduced for thugs from the outset when colonel Sleeman started to hunt the thuggees in 1830. But use of penal tattoo on criminal body was abolished in colonial India because other sophisticated forms of technique were on the way to be emerged for the same purpose.

Camera was invented in the West and used in the colony for many purposes. Photography came in India in 1840 (Pinney 1997). Initial purpose of photography was to capture the beauty of landscape and camera quickly became part of aesthetic representation of the colony. It was the most common scene to see white people roaming in the countryside of the colony with a camera and took pictures of everything that interests them. But the same camera also became part of a different history as 'witness' when it went to the hands of police. Advent of police photographs made possible for easy identification of the individual 'criminals' from any criminal community. The most crucial impact of using photography as a surveillance technology for physical exhibition was to denote to the viewer's imagination that this is how the criminals look like!

These surveillance techniques transformed not only the crimescape in British India but also were deliberately transported in the Western world for the same purpose. Photography as a potent technique for criminal identification was only possible when the victim could recognize the criminal. But, sophisticated technology like finger printing for criminal identification was invented in colonial India and later exported to metropolitans for intensive used by the British

(Sengoopta 2003). It was not introduced in Britain by Edward Henry until he was appointed as Assistant Commissioner of Police at London's Scotland Yard. He set up the Fingerprint Branch there in 1901 (Anderson 2010).

Anthropometry has a long history with British Empire, especially for identifying 'criminal tribes' in India and later it became the principal technique of colonial anthropology. Huge amount of anthropomentric data was produced by various colonial anthropologists like James Wise, E.T. Dalton, S. R. Risley. In fact, anthropometry continued to be used in the Police Department as a means of identifying criminals until the introduction of the finger-printing, firstly in Bengal and then in Berar, in 1897 (Bates 1995: 24)."

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the colonial state was well ahead in marking, recording and interpreting the bodies of prisoners, convicts and the criminal tribes. Above mentioned attempts were deployed to render the criminal body legible. Such cultural and scientific technologies might be placed within a broader context of reading the Indian society. In this way, India was 'anthropolized' as much as it was 'tropicalised' and turned into an 'ethnographic state' (Dirks 2001:43). Actually, Indian colony acted as a political and criminal laboratory for the British. With these surveillance technologies on the criminal bodies and their associated disciplinary practices (anthropology, criminology), reduction of physical torture not only reduced in Western Europe but also in British colonial India. Like many, Lodhas of West Bengal were just another pray of massive claws of British imperialism.

Conclusion

Through classification (census) and enumeration (survey), surveillance techniques (tattoo, anthropometry, fingerprint, and photo), production of text (anthropology, criminology) and laws (Criminal Tribe Act) - the British produced the greatest bulk of knowledge on Indian society. Bernard Cohn's writings on Indian colonialism and his conceptual modalities provide us such insights to investigate this process what this article intends to show. The Lodhas had their self-proclaimed identity as community with common language, religion, heritage, myth etc. But identity of a particular group or person does not necessarily entail a self-claim. After the declaration of Lodha as 'criminal tribe' in a legal term, their process

of self-claim identity did not have any value to the outsiders and toward colonial state. Among the Lodhas, the criminal identity had been imposed from the outside and it was the result of a coercive colonial politics of identification among these categories of people. This legal identity also imposes social stigma and leads to a new form of identity formation. This 'ethnogenesis', from 'tribe' to 'criminal tribe', didn't disappear with the end of British colonialism and the stigmatization of the Lodha community as 'criminal' continues in the pos-independent India too (Bhowmick 1981, Devi 1983, 1985, D'Souza 1999). Scholars argue that contemporary governmentality should be understood in the context of colonial (modern) governmentality. Law and knowledge production were (are) part and parcel of colonial (modern) governmentality over the subject population. This greater governmentalization of population attracts greater knowledge production by the (colonial) state. This process deprives political freedom and leaves nobody 'with whom one could argue, to whom one could present grievances, on whom the pressures of power could be exerted'(Arendt 1970: 81) and that's how we have shifted from the 'government of men' to 'administration of things' (Rabinow 1989: 01), a tyranny without a tyrant. Anthropologist Sherry Ortner once suggested us to see theft by the poor as resistance rather than only a survival strategy (Ortner 2006: 44). Now, it is time to theorize Lodha's 'criminality' against the Empire from a different perspective in South Asian Historiography, such as a weapon of the weak (Scott 1985). Similarly, disciplinary practices like anthropology, criminology or history, which had a clear colonial origin, put more emphasis to translate their colonial past 'into a site for the critical and epistemological exploration of their own construction of knowledge (Cohn 1996: 12)'.

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