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Science, governmentality and community: Tracing a theoretical trope from Indian literature

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1

I try to delineate the apparently disjunctive concepts invoked in the title of this paper: Science, governmentality and community. A number of scholars (Mafeje 1971, Crehan 1997, 1997a, Mudimbe 1988, Apter 1999, Ekeh 1990, and Chatterjee 1993) in the postcolonial settings, all over the world, have tried to work through this relation. In this piece, I try to provide a brief reading of this theoretical outlining, particularly in the context of India.

With regard to questions of identity, or broad 'identification' issues of a community, a question that keeps coming, is, how primordial perspectives have become so popular and commonsensical in the postcolonial world. I suspect answering this question requires us to think through colonialism, in a frame of reference which sees colonial rule, to put it bluntly, not only as a game of coercive power or a power somewhere up and encompassing but more as a subjectification process. (Rabinow 1991) I find Foucault's notion of governmentality and its subsequent elaboration by other authors in the context of Colonial India much powerful to highlight some of the points.

In the pages to follow, I will briefly touch upon governmentality, especially how different authors have tried to explain this largely Foucauldian concept and then go on to trace a theoretical reasoning, much in the offing in the 1960s, in and among the works of social science scholars, working in India. I will try to argue that the

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culmination of this body of literature, and herein I discuss B S Cohn's contribution at a greater length, is what we know today prominently as post colonial theory/ literature.

The paper tries to show the link this prior body of work has in the recent delineations of the idea of community, a term I use in a more general sense to express all the different collective identities found in the sub-continental politics of India. By reviewing some recent work, current in the field, I try to point to a legacy with respect to concepts such as science, community and identity with a hope to contribute to a greater understanding of what is often called colonial governmentality, the effect of which left, as some scholars in politics and history contends an undeniable legacy in the large geo-political regions of what today is known as South Asia (Chatterjee 1993, Chakrabarty 2000).

2

Elaborating on Foucault's notion of governmentality, Inda, notes,

> '...the term "government" ...refers to the conduct of the conduct-that is, to all those more or less calculated and systematic ways of thinking and acting that aim to shape, regulate, or manage the comportment of others, whether these be workers in a factory, inmates in a prison, wards in a mental hospital, the inhabitants of a territory, or the members of a population.' (Inda 2005: 1)[i]
>
> In this, we find a delineation of the new terrains of 'modern' rule: '"government" designating not just the activities of the state and its institutions but more broadly any *rational effort* to influence or guide the *conduct* of human beings through acting upon their *hopes*, *desires*, *circumstances*, or *environment*'. (Inda 2005: 1; my emphases) Underscored here is the need to look at 'modern' political power not only in terms of a centralized figure of state but also in terms of a 'multiple networks of actors, organizations, and entities involved in exercising authority over the conduct of individuals and populations'(Inda 2005:1-2).

One of the allusion of Foucault's work on government is to look at the 'technics' of government – 'that is, how government takes on a technological and pragmatic form'. Technological is the domain, Inda suggests, of practical mechanisms, devices, calculations, procedures, apparatuses, and documents "through which authorities of various sorts have sought to *shape*, *normalize* and *instrumentalize* the *conduct*, *thought*, *decisions* and *aspirations* of others in order to

achieve the objectives they consider desirable" (Miller and Rose 1990: 8, cited in Inda 2005: 9; my emphases).

Inda reminds us that particularly important among these tools are what Bruno Latour calls material inscription. These are 'mundane tools' says Inda such as "surveys, reports, statistical methodologies, pamphlets, manuals, architectural plans, written reports, drawings, pictures, numbers, bureaucratic rules and guidelines, charts, graphs, statistics and so forth-that represent event and phenomena as information, data, and knowledge". (Inda 2005: 9)

In short, these are what we commonly refer to as science and knowledge in ordinary discourse. What is not clear in the ordinary discourse, however, is the role played or how these 'technics' and 'sciences' are implicated in the government, how it directs the actions of 'individuals' and 'populations'. Another very important theme associated with Foucault's notions of governmentality is the 'subjects of government' -that is, the diverse types of self, persons, actors, agents, or identities that arise from and inform governmental activity'. (Inda 2005: 10) In clarifying, Inda quotes a series of questions posed by Dean, another commentator on Foucault work:

> "What forms of person, self and identity are presupposed by different practices of government and what sorts of transformation do these practices seek? What statuses, capacities, attributes, and orientations are assumed of those who exercise authority (from politicians and bureaucrats to professionals and therapists) and those who are to be governed (workers, consumers, pupils and social welfare recipients)? What forms of conduct are expected of them? What duties and rights do they have? How are these capacities and attributes to be fostered? How are these duties enforced and rights ensured? How are certain aspects of conduct problematized? How are they then to be reformed? How are certain individuals and populations made to identify with certain groups, to become virtuous and active citizens, and so on?"
> (Dean 1999: 32; cited in Inda 2005: 10)[ii]

In these set of questions, Dean is clearly pointing to aspects of governmentality and its relationship with the subject population and, admittedly, it hints at a number of topics that concern our contemporary lives. In passing I just note that Dean's questions here point to a binding relation of person, self/ identity and the 'different' practices of government. In a bid to clear the ground for an anti-

primordialist attitude, I think this understanding, is a first necessary step[iii].

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The theme, in Dean's above remark, is taken up and analyzed in the Indian context by a number of scholars. I begin by using a rather powerful quote from one of Chakrabarty's (2002) work. On the governmental practices of Colonial India, he posits:

'the most fundamental and far-reaching innovation …to Indian society was, …, the modern state ---not a nation-state, for that was what the nationalist movement created, but a modern state nevertheless. One symptom of its modernity was that its techniques of government were very closely tied to technique of measurement'. (Chakrabarty 2002)

Readers may note how the complicity between the colonialists and nationalists is being established by the author in this paragraph. He further elaborates:

> "From surveys of land and crop output to prospecting for minerals, from measuring Indian brains (on behalf of the false science of phrenology) to measuring Indian bodies, diets, and life spans (thus laying the foundations of physical anthropology and modern medicine in India), the British had the length and breadth of India, its history, culture, and society, mapped, and classified, and quantified in detail that was nothing but precise even when it was wrongheaded." (Chakrabarty 2002: 82)

Indeed, studies on India's 'communal' politics or 'communalism' [iv]have shown that colonial governmentality (which came along modernity, accompanied by 'techniques of measurement') has given rise to a notion of identity which could be seen in the "enumerable" sense at the expense of the impoverishment of a "fuzzy" sense of the community'[v] (Chatterjee 1993: 223). Other studies broach the idea that 'community' is a colonial knowledge (Pandey 1990). I will briefly touch upon that body of literature in the later parts of this essay but for the moment, will focus on just one author, B S Cohn.[vi].

In Cohn (1987) we see some of the early contentions on the effect of colonial census, especially its scientific exactitudes in objectifying Indian society. He has shown how colonial censuses have played out

a major role in *shaping* different collective identities in India. This includes 'caste' and also 'aboriginal' identities.[vii] With regard to history, and people's agency, Cohn's work shows a critical outlook; especially it shows early signs of criticism of the absolutist and positivist positions that was so common in the social sciences of Colonial India. He shows a very different kind of historicity when he makes statements such as: 'Historians frequently talk of the 'climate of opinion', the zeitgeist, the 'feeling of an age' or the weltanschauung, but infrequently tell us how they are established, maintained, and transmitted.' (1987: 230)[viii].

Cohn's work provided a very fresh idea of Indian caste system, which by the time he was working, was a routine object of analysis for a generation of anthropologists, sociologists and other researchers in the social sciences. He opined with due acknowledgment of his colleagues, Srinivas and Ghury that censuses may have actually made caste opinions stronger. Some of his pieces provide incisive comments on the 'racial' schemas with which an earlier generation of ethnographers, enthusiasts, and census officials were so excited about. He wrote,

'It was felt by many British officials in the middle of the nineteenth century that *caste and religion* were the sociological keys to understanding the *Indian people*. If they were to be *governed* well, then it was natural that information should be systematically collected about caste and religion.' (Cohn 1987: 242; emphases mine)

In Cohn's analysis, 'the census was one of the situations in which Indians were confronted with the question of who they were and what their social and cultural systems were.' (1987: 248) This lead to a situation in Colonial India where different communities in India became highly conscious of their position in the scheme of classification as it always had a scale of hierarchy within it.

Referring to one instance of census operation in Lahore as late as in 1931, Cohn pointed out that the consciousness of the significance of the census operation had reached to a point from where Indians were not merely content to petition and write books. Some groups set out

to influence the answers which people would give in the census. Cohn must have some caricature in mind when he published a hand bill in an article, which was circulated by a census committee of *Arya Samaj* in Lahore in 1931.

Remember!
Census Operations Have Begun

Question	You should answer!
Religion	Vedi Dharm
Sect	Arya Samajist
Caste	Nil
Race	Aryan
Language	Arya Bhasha

Fig: 2 (Reproduced from Cohn 1987: p. 250)

These are, I reckon, signs of early critique of the monolithic and vividly orientalist/ colonialist and also primordialist view of Indian caste system[ix]. Cohn's treatises show ample signs of such engagements[x].

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With all that said I now turn attention to another aspect of Cohn's work. This involves the issue of 'Tribe'. While Cohn is clearly pointing to the issue of classification when talking about Caste, his contentions on 'Tribe' suffer from an evolutionary/anachronistic/ taxonomic schema. Paradoxically, it is the other half of that familiar cliché of colonial inscriptions (following Latour) 'Caste and Tribe'[xi] where Cohn's point of view sounds essentialist[xii].

In a chapter titled 'Regions Subjective and Objective: Their Relation to the Study of Modern Indian History and Society', Cohn looks at region and regionalism in a much different way than as a geographer. The chapter practically shows the difficulty of setting out a definition of region in the context of various single dimensional classifications. Thus, he favors the idea of historical dimension. He shows clear awareness of problems of 'racial' classificatory schemes, thus making this general argument that classificatory schemas and its typological intents have failed to provide a useful understanding of

the presumed relations between 'culture', 'race' and the histories of particular regions other than 'some *self-evident* propositions, that the aborigines or tribals may represent a different racial strain than *most of the rest of the population*.' (Cohn: 116; my emphasis)

What I find problematic in this assertion is his adoption of the word 'self evident'. What is self evident? To me, this does not fit well with Cohn's overall understanding of Indian 'society', and 'culture' and also his analysis of otherwise brilliant objectification process of Indian society and culture.

I try to provide another example of Cohn's analysis, which to me is yet another example of the miss-fit I am looking at. This relates to Cohn's analysis of Risley's work in India. Cohn in a bid to depict Risley's 'scientific' attitude, on 'caste system' provided a brief analysis of an instance where Risley attempted to explain a stone panel from Sanchi. I reproduce Cohn's text below:

Risley published a stone panel from Sanchi, which showed three '*aboriginal women*' and a troop of monkeys praying at a small shrine. (Italics mine) In the background, were shown 'four *stately figures*-two men and two women- of *tall stature* and *regular features*...look with folded hand and apparent approval of this remarkable act of worship.' (Risley. p. I, cited in Cohn 1987: 247; italics mine) And Risley's interpretation of this, as is noted by Cohn: 'a *higher race* keenly conscious of *differences* but on friendly terms with a *lower race*' (Cohn 1987: 247) Risley was of the opinion that race sentiment was not a creation of the intolerant pride of the Brahman, but rested 'upon a foundation of fact which scientific methods confirm, that it has shaped the intricate grouping of the caste system, and has preserved the *Aryan* type in comparative *purity* through out Northern India' (ibid p. II, cited in Cohn 1987: 247). Cohn in the end confides that, all this was done to prove one of Risley's suggestions, that 'social precedence' was based on a scale of racial purity' (Cohn 1987: 247).

While this is an apt example of Cohn's dismissal of objectivist procedures practiced in the census operation, I think, what Cohn misses in the above exposition, is the inadequate attention given to

the historically specific discourse in understanding the 'reality' which was being looked at, in this case a stone panel. In Risley's account, we see the discourse of anachronism at work[xiii].

My argument, thus, is Cohn's invocation of the term 'self-evident' has been subject to a discourse of Wildness Tribe which was already there since the mid-nineteenth century. Skaria reminds us here that by that period colonial officials routinely distinguished between castes and tribes of India, 'seeing the two as fundamentally different' (1997: 727)[xiv].

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What do all these mean to the specific groups of people/ community and their agency? Are all communities in the postcolonial world just at the recipient end of this discursive construction? These questions need to be answered and I ask all these in the spirit of an article written by Charsley (1996) titled 'Untouchable': What is in a Name? It discusses the way the concept-'Untouchable' came to be used in the twentieth century to mark out a category of people, the 'Untouchables'. It shows using minute details of some of the early twentieth century censuses that a *consensus* on the term was never an easy task, as there were considerable variations from region to region. Yet, it was again through Risley and his application of racial theory (distinguishing 'tracts' according to their supposed 'racial' composition, contrary to Cohn's idea of regionalism discussed earlier) that a start for this *key term* in modern India was possible. (My emphasis)

Charsley (1996) argued that the category has a paradoxical role in the Indian history. One the one hand it stands for the humiliations imposed generation after generation on a large section of the Indian population. On the other, it also stands for the empowerment of this people, for the 'illegitimacy of the beliefs and practices concerned' 1996: 1). The study shows how the category was created through censuses and then how it 'shifted significantly, from the British-dominated sphere of *census taking* and *scholarship* on caste to the sphere of *socio-religious* and often *nationalist reform*'. (1996: 5)

Charsley is categorical in pointing out that the progressive members of the educated and the English speaking Indian elite were active in this. This is the beginning of a movement which touched every reformers of the 20th century India, variously known as the depressed caste or class movement. This is also a period when there ensued a wide range of debates about the usefulness of the category 'untouchability' or the 'untouchablness' as some put it. None of its more notable proponents such as M K Gandhi and B R Ambedker were at any ease with the term although they responded differently to the notion of untouchability[xv].

Delineating "the Untouchable" as a twentieth-century construction which became both an interpretation of the past and the basis for affirmative action in the present, Charsley argues that one must give pause to any theorizing which takes the existence of the category as axiomatic rather than problematic. Because the category is on the one hand too arbitrary and on the other too deeply implicated in the processes and values of Indian society so much so that it can confuse the anthropologists in their village-focused studies, for they are the ones who look for technical terms.

Charsley for sure does not argue that categories such as "Untouchable" or "untouchability" were cut from new cloth but following Shah he asserts that something had nevertheless been constructed. (1996: 9) He writes: 'From the complex possibilities of the old, one striking pattern had emerged into conceptual dominance'. (1996: 9) Distinctive about it was that it went on to shape *the social order* of India in the post-independence era of the second half of the twentieth century. Charsley pointed to five distinctive features of this process: it established an *all-India* standard; it subsumed individual castes; it *dichotomized* society; it gave priority to one particular form of disadvantaged; and it characterized the disadvantaged negatively, as victims only. (My emphases)

Charsley's work shows, in this case with respect to the 'Untouchables'[xvi] that how a category attains a certain height due to the work of governmental processes. Charsley's point, however, is to

argue that lot of differences are subsumed under categories such as 'untouchable'.

In a similar vein, albeit in a different context,[xvii] Inda (2000) discusses on 'racial body' and further clarifies the naming issue. He claims, following the works of Austin, Derrida, Butler, and Hall, 'racial body does not exist as a simple biological fact. It proposes, instead, that we need to look at 'race' as an 'effect of discourse.' (Inda 2000: 74). He writes: 'From this perspective, it means that while "race" may have a foundation in biology since "it" divides populations on the basis of physical characteristics, it is really just a name, albeit a very powerful one that retroactively constitutes and naturalizes the groupings to which it refers'. (Inda 2000: 74)

Pointing to systems of "Scientific" (emphasis in the original) classification advanced during the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries, Inda notes how this was responsible in creating 'seemingly immutable *hierarchies* based on the phenomenal and biological differences of the human kind-that is, on the belief that certain physical traits, such as skin color, body type, etc, were tied to attributes of behavior, intellect, and morality'. (2000: 76) He calls this the practice of 'naturalizing racial difference'. This practice has been most conspicuous with the construction of "black" population. (Inda 2000)

From Hall, Inda reminds us that it is typical for racial ideologies to reduce cultures of "black" people to Nature, or to naturalize their difference. (Hall 1997) The logic: "If the differences between black and white people are 'cultural,' then they are open to modification and change or resignification as he goes on to argue later in the chapter. But if they are 'natural -as the slave-holders believed- then they are beyond history, permanent and fixed" (Hall, 1997:245; cited in Inda 2000:245)

Hence, Inda concludes, "Naturalization" is thus a representational scheme calculated to *fix difference forever*, to secure *discursive closure*. It is a practice designed to render the order of things natural, so natural that no one questions the hierarchical relationships between different racialized subjects." (Inda 2000:77; my emphases)

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Returning to Indian literature, I conclude this piece with a discussion of Pandey's (1990) work. This will perhaps indicate how constructivist arguments are shaping the contemporary scenes of social science scholarship and what directions these methodologies are taking up in India.

On 'communalism', Pandey (1990) writes, it 'is a form of colonialist knowledge. The concept stands for the puerile and the primitive---all that colonialism, in its own reckoning, was not'. (1990: 6) He points out that the term has passed into the political and historical vocabulary of India and while one should question the use of it, finding other ways of talking about the experiences and idea sometimes described as 'communalism' is not very easy.

Pandey discusses how in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century when India saw the development of 'modern' politics (emphasis in the original) including nationalism and communalism, the relationship between Hindu-Muslim communities changed.

Pandey writes, 'I have stretched back into the early nineteenth century to examine the record of Hindu-Muslim relations at an earlier stage, and how this was written about; and I have stretched forward into the 1930s and even 1940s where this helped to show how the character of 'nationalism' and 'communalism' has changed in the subcontinent---at times dramatically'. (1990: iix-ixx)

He admits that while there was no escape for the choice of time period for the study, his choice of Bhojpuri speaking tract of eastern UP and western Bihar surely has some *impact on the overall argument of the study*. He writes: 'I should note, too, that the UP/ Bihar bias of this study has led to certain emphases which a Bengal or Maharashtra or Andhra bias is unlikely to have produced.' (pp ix; my emphasis)

Pandey is talking about a research strategy here which has had some impact in the findings which he clearly mentions at the outset of research. I think this emphasis on regionalism or 'fragment' as is put

forward by Pandey elsewhere, should be seen as a new methodology and direction[xviii].

This foregrounding of the 'fragment' is, I think, a response to the nationalist state's universalizing and hegemonic narrative or to paraphrase Chatterjee's (1993), the 'narrative of the capital' which relegates community to its prehistory, as a '*natural, prepolitical, primordial* stage in social evolution that must be superseded for the journey of freedom and progress to begin.' (1993:235; emphases mine) I think the relevance of Foucault's notion of governmentality is lurking again.

Notes

This paper is a revised version of an earlier piece presented at a conference titled 'The Researcher and the Research: Acknowledging Subjectivity or Aiming for Objectivity?' organized by Post Graduate Research Association of Canterbury Christ Church University, UK on 14 June 2007. The conference actively and quite explicitly pointed out that *'In a post-modern era, the nature of what it means to engage in research is in flux. Grand positivistic notions of searching for Truth have been, for many, replaced by a recognition of the limits of research, by the search for many truths and acknowledgement of the influence of the researcher'* (Conference manifesto by Joanna Williams) I must admit that these statements on the part of the organizers have first caught my attention. I am thankful to the conference organizers for giving me the opportunity to present a paper. I am thankful to Glenn Bowman, my supervisor at UKC for supporting my project. Thanks to Dr Ainoon Naher, editor of this volume, for encouraging me to submit in this volume. Thanks are also due to the unanimous reviewer for providing useful suggestions. And finally a big thanks to all the editorial board members of *Nrvijnana Patrika* who would be doing the 'unseen' work, much required, for the successful publication of the journal.

[i] My discussion of Foucault here is drawn from an earlier piece titled 'Anthropologies of Modernity: A review of governmentality and its effect' in Journal of Anthropology Vol 12. However, I have made some changes to the previous text to fit in the present discussion.

[ii] Dean appears to be an oft quoted author when it comes to question of governmentality and Foucault. See: Wikipedia article on 'governmentality' for an example.

[iii] Ahmed's (2008) column in New Age titled 'Our Inheritances' is an example of a critique of essentialism/ primordialism which addressed the issue of some 'Muslim clerics' and 'Islamic parties' in Bangladesh opposing the National Policy for Women's Advancement 2008. Ahmed, following the work of Asad, Anderson, and Mani, tried to point out that all this criticism about the policy, its dismissal on the basis of much emphasis given on the scripture or scriptural

text has a root in colonial discourse. The article's title 'Our Inheritances' is, I think, deeply suggestive and points to the role colonialism played in shaping up the discourse and how this remains alive in the 'imperial-present'. Ahmed's choice of words is important here. For details see: http://www.newagebd.com/2008/apr/28/edit.html

iv An equivalent of such a construct would be what is increasingly meant by the word 'Tribalism' in some of the African counties today. See: Ekeh 1990.

v See Kaviraj (1992) for details. Kaviraj regards enumeration and a particularist narrative, among other things, as vital for construction of nationalism. According to him colonial British history 'wrote of an India that was externally defined, a territory contingently unified by political expansion'. Also see Robb (1997) for a discussion.

vi Cohn wrote several books, among which I think, by the look of the title, 'India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilization,' and 'Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India' are more relevant in relation to reading provided in this piece. Cohn's influence is duly acknowledged by Guha, in his 'Introduction' to Cohn's celebrated book 'An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays (1987) which I have consulted for this write-up.

vii See: Chapter 10: The Census, Social structure and Objectification in South Asia in Cohn (1987) for an elaborate discussion.

viii A number of authors from the Subaltern Studies Collective have provided reviews of Cohn's work. See Guha's introduction in Cohn (1987) and Chatterjee (1993).

xi In recent years these have been taken to a new height by authors such as Fuller, Dirks and Inden.

x Cohn's interest in this subject grew out of his discovery of the preponderance of litigation in small Indian villages, which according to him, was a clear example of the influence of British legal system on Indian villages. See: http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C03E3D7153AF93AA15752C1A9659C8B63&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss

xi Colonial and Missionary documents are full of such clichés. Risley's book *Castes and Tribes of Bengal* is an example.

xii I note in passing that while in recent years we see a lot of works taking up a constructivist argument on Indian caste system, there is not equally a good share of argument with regard to the 'Tribes' and 'Tribal' people of India. An exception is Skaria's (1997) paper in the context of adivasi people of western India. For studies in the African context with similar concerns see: Crehan 1997, 1997a.

xiii Anachronism, adapting Fabian's (1983) argument of the distinctive relationship of time involved in colonial constructs of tribes, is defined by Skaria by making a comparison between anachronism and orientalism. Skaria writes, 'Though deeply intertwined and even constitutive of each other, the two discourses are

fundamentally different. As is well known, orientalism focused most sharply on the cultural essences of subordinated societies, ascribing them singular qualities, and individuating them with reference to each other in order to create a universal typology' (1997: 727). In contrast, anachronistic thought 'ranked ...societies in relation to each other, situating them above all in relation to time, or, more specifically, in relation to the modern time that was epitomized by Europe. The specific time that societies occupied–the question of how "advanced" they were– was measured by various criteria' (1997: 727). Skaria notes that 'levels of technology' and the 'race theories of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' were important means of these classification. Similarly, the four modes of subsistence–hunting, pastoralism, agriculture, and commerce–served after the mid-eighteenth century as a means to rank various societies, he points out.

[xiv] I do not take up Skarias's (1997) work here in any greater detail, but just make this comment in passing that his work is most illuminating in addressing the broad issues I try to tackle in this piece. His study mostly concentrates on the Western 'tribal' regions of India.

[xv] Gandhi tried to keep 'untouchability' within the Hindu fold by resorting to terms such as *Harijan* (a *man* of God) while Ambedker argued for a fundamental nature of Untouchable-Hindu divide. Another lesser known among these protagonists, a progressive ruler from Gujarat, is Maharaja of Baroda, Sayaji Rao Gaekwar III. In a series of papers the Maharaja argued about the harmfulness of the 'theory of untouchablness' (Charsley 1996: 6). The Maharaja saw 'untouchablness' always additional to more widely shared difficulties such as poverty and illiteracy.

[xvi] Das (2004) in a paper reminds us that forms of civility and legal requirements in India do not permit the use of the term such as *untouchable* or *Chamar* because of their stigmatizations. She used it only in relation to her informant's narrative context because she thinks much of the force of this word would have been lost, had she replace it with any other word.

[xvii] Inda's discussion is made in relation to the 'Chicano' movement in the United States.

[xviii] Pandey writes, elsewhere '[W]hat historians might call a 'fragment'--a weaver's diary, a collection of poems by an unknown poet...is of central importance in challenging the state's construction of history, in thinking other histories and marking those contested spaces through which particular unities are sought to be constituted and others broken up' (Pandey 1991: 571).

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