Postcolonial Interventions
An Interdisciplinary Journal of Postcolonial Studies

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Volume VIII, Issue 1

Cover image: 'A small group of First Nations women conduct a smoking and reflections ceremony on the steps of the Victorian Parliament to mark Invasion Day. January 26 - commonly known as 'Australia Day' - is seen as a day of mourning by First Nations people. Photograph by Matt Hrkac. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons < https://www.flickr.com/photos/matthrkac/51870049339/>

Cover design: Souraj Dutta and Abin Chakraborty

Published Online January, 2023

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EDITORS' NOTE

One of the questions which I keep facing in academic circles even now is about the relevance of postcolonialism as an academic discipline. I am told that the discipline is becoming or has become dated. I am told that it creates colonial rule as a kind of false ceiling. I am told that as a framework it focuses more on western theoretical concepts which are not that germane to actual postcolonial conditions. What all such assertions keep missing, however, is that postcolonialism is also at heart an emancipatpory discourse which sought to overcome centuries of colonial trauma and envision a world of plenitude which still remains unavailable. Instead we often find ourselves confronted with a sense of deja vu as various colonial maladies keep impinging upon our contemporary existence, at times under the guise of jingoistic nationalism, at times in the form detention centres for refugees or declared foreigners, at times in the name of otherising minorities, at times in the form of justifying inequality and impoverishment of the majority for the benefit of a select elite or the distortion of history for the sake of a colonial template and much else. And in the middle of all these crises what remains unrealised are all those hopes and dreams of collective prosperity which had fuelled the anti-colonial movements, which had been championed by many ideologues

of the nationalist movements but which which the post-colonial states have failed to realise, often because of their continued allegiance to colonial models of governance or administration or because of the inability of the political processes to assimilate the lessons of the anti-colonial movements. What remains essential therefore is the need for struggles, the need for hope and the continuous endeavour to create those discourses which will shape the unborn future, away from the injutices and the iniquities of the present. Postcolonial studies is relevant because it must not only continually critique the material and discusrive processes which are contributing to the deprivation of the majority but also because it must keep circulating those utopian potentialities without which the march towards a better future becomes and exercise in futility. And these utopian potentialities are there - whether in our literary texts or in our films or in our paintings or in the musical performances. Our jobs as critics, scholars and educators is to identify these reporesentations and then share their insights and promises with others so that we can build on these ideas and ensure the crystalisation of mutiple currents of emancipatory thoughts.

This is one of the basic ideas behind this journal which we have been trying to sustain with our laours of love for the last eight years. some might argue that we are suffering from a kind of vanguardist illusion about our own roles and responsibilities. Our conviction, however,

is that we all have a duty to our times to our futures and some of us must keep the banners flying in the battlefield of ideas, of consciousness so that all that we hold dear and precious do not get sold off in the late capitalist marketplace where everything can be commodified. what makes such an enterprise all the more difficult is the growing clericalisation of the academic community, especially in a country like India where understaffed or incompetently staffed colleges and universities are conistently subjected to various processes of accreditation and administrative data collection which compel academics to move away from their academic acitivities and participate in activities that have nothing to do with pedagogy, dissemination of knowledge or promotion of research. These are often soul-sucking mechanical processes associated with manufacturing of papers and data for the securing of administrative grants designed to improve academic infrastructure. The irony is that infrastructure does not produce results without the intervention of academics and those academics are themselves being drawn away from their academic pursuits because of their entanglement in such bureaucratic rigmarole. Unfortunately, Tagore's precious Vishwa Bharati, which he had established with the dream of discarding such bureaurctic trappings has also been suffering from similar blunders and instead has become a site for political slugfests of one kind or another.

In view of these developments, it becomes imperative to create independent spaces of solidarity and academic

collaboration through which one can develop new networks of knowledge, aesthetics and research which will also gradually infiltrate popular consciousness over the course of time so that discourses of hatred, division, elitism and exclusion can be challenged from the bottom up. This is how critics and scholars can take on the task of public intellectuals who will remain committed to collective material and discursive developments geared towards the aforementioned emancipatory horizons.

With your support we can keep striving towards these emancipatory horizons which are also signalled by the various articles of this issue which deal with entrenched biases and prejudices on the one hand and possibilities of alternate routes of development on the other. We hope you will find these articles stimulating and keep supporting us with your intellectual contributions.

"Doubt is Salutary in our Certainties:" Religious Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Identity in Driss Chraïbi's Post-Postcolonial Detective Fiction

Nouzha Baba

Introduction:

9/11 terrorism, characterized by Islamic extremism, irrationality and unlimited violence, was seen heavily within the historical trope of civilization struggling against barbarism. Islamist terrorists have become the paradigmatic new barbarians of our current geopolitical era. Nevertheless, many Western scholars expressed their opposition to the interplay of religion and terrorism post-9/11. In his article "Countering Ideological Terrorism," Bassam Tibi, as one of many outspoken critics of contemporary

terrorism, defines terrorism in general as "a new kind of warfare," "an irregular war," "an action pursued with religious justification and legitimization" (103). In specific terms, he views Al-Qaïda's terrorism as "a practice of terror in the name of Islam" (ibid). In his book *Ballot and Bullet: The Politicization of Islam to Islamism* (2009), Tibi explains that, unlike Islam as a faith, Islamism is a political ideology: "Islamism is nothing else but the Islamic variety of the global phenomenon of religious fundamentalism" (11). Besides, Tibi is indeed right to remark in his article "Countering Ideological Terrorism" that "September 11 […] paved the way to the revival of established clichés about Islam which relate this religion without distinction to terrorism" (102). According to him, terrorism practiced by Al-Qaïda reveals with clarity the reference to religion involved, "even though in an ill shape" meaning not the essence of this religion. "For Islam is a faith and it by no means supports any kind of action that can be identified as terrorism, it rather prohibits it," as he explains (ibid).

Within this understanding, the Moroccan-French renowned author Driss Chraïbi's novel *L'homme qui venait du passé* (The man who came from the past) investigates the mobilizing force of Islamist terrorism, as a *politics* of its own, only justified and legitimized in the name of the religion of Islam. The detective novel critically reflects on the interplay of religion (Islam), terrorism and identity at the start of the new millennium. Published in

2004, the novel is a case of literature normally referred to as 9/11 literature or post-9/11 literature because it revolves around 9/11 terrorism, the war on terror and the assumed rhetorical clash of civilizations. In their article "Terrorism and the Novel, 1970-2001", Robert Appelbaum and Alexis Paknadel explain the variety of genres in which the "terrorism novel"—the novel that revolves around terrorism—could be written. They states: "[i]f a police procedural can be comic, romantic, tragic, or ironic, […] so can a terrorism novel expressed through the genre of a police procedural be comic, romantic, and so forth" (406). Chraïbi's detective text, as a comic and ironic police investigation, could be included in this category of "terrorism novel" even though I prefer the terms 9/11 literature or post/9/11 literature.

L'homme qui venait du passé marks, then, Chraïbi's literary innovation in both theme and genre after fifty years of literary production. Written in a transparent, direct style and tone, this detective novel extends the author's thought-provoking critique in search for life outside the confines of the globalized drama of terrorism, the ideology of Islamism, and the assumed rhetoric of civilizational clash. The novel is part of Chraïbi's last series of detective novels, which includes *L'inspecteur Ali* (1991), *L'inspecteur Ali à Trinity College* (1996), and *L'inspecteur Ali et la C.I.A.* (1998). Yet, this innovation in genre is not only in L'homme qui venait du passé, but in his literary corpus as a whole. As Chraïbi states in an interview with

the Moroccan weekly French-language magazine Tel Quel "Rencontre: Driss Chraïbi prend position", "[i]t is a routine for a writer who is settled in her/his intellectual or material glory. Take all my works, from *Le passé simple* to *L'homme qui venait du passé*, from one work to another, it's a different style, subject, tone, and register. A writer, can s/he write a linear work, from book to another? But not me." [Un écrivain qui s'installe dans sa gloriole intellectuelle ou matérielle, c'est de la routine. Prenez toute mon œuvre, depuis Le passé simple jusqu'à L'Homme qui venait du passé, d'un ouvrage à l'autre, c'est un style, un sujet, un ton et un registre différents. Un écrivain peut-il écrire une œuvre linéaire, de livre en livre ? Moi non].

The author's detective approach is an adaptation of detective genre conventions of crime-investigation plot that suits thematic developments, too. This innovative approach is intended to dramatize the global disorder, which 9/11 terrorism brought about in the world at large, and offer alternative imagination of the global order. As Christine Matzke and Susanne Mühleisen contend in their edited book *Postcolonial Postmortems: Crime Fiction from a Transcultural Perspective,* "postcolonial [crime novels] suggest that power and authority can be investigated through the magnifying glass of other knowledge, against the local or global mainstream, past and present, or against potential projections of a dominant group and a (neo-) imperial West" (5). In Chraïbi's text, the detec-

tive is an indigenous Moroccan police investigator, but charged with an international investigation; he is often criticizing major world leaders, their global politics and their mainstream manipulation of peace and democracy.

Intriguingly, Chraïbi's detective brings to the fore the problematic issue of religious extremism, terrorism and identity in postcolonial theory. For postcolonial theory is extended and reframed to include new issues due to the aforementioned global changes: religious extremism, 9/11 terrorism, war on terror, etc. These developments brought the rhetoric of the clash of civilizations into the global scene, and which was considered by many Western politicians as a fight against barbarism—attributed to non-Western people, particularly Islamist terrorists. In her article "Neither East Nor West: From Orientalism to Postcoloniality," Kerstin W. Shands underlines this change in postcolonial theory when he claims "while religion and the sacred have not been prominent matters in postcolonial studies until recently, they are now important items on the postcolonial agenda" (22). Nevertheless, the novel's innovation in thematics makes it fits to be classified within post-postcolonial detective fiction, rather than a classic postcolonial fiction, concerned with an investigation in an age of "accelerating globalization," characterized by the aforementioned global changes.

In his chapter "Post-Postcolonial Writing in the Age of Globalization: The God of Small Things, Red Earth and

Pouring Rain, Moth Smoke," in the book *Global Matters*, Paul Jay discusses the relationship between postcoloniality and globalization. He claims that there are two positions: "[w]here the first position insists on recontextualizing the study of colonialism and postcolonialism within the wider framework of globalization, the second position insists that globalization is a contemporary phenomenon, a dramatic rupture in the history of modernity to which colonialism and postcolonialism belong" (95). He shows how this tension between these two critical positions is reflected in contemporary fictional treatment of globalization. As a definition, globalization, characterized by the exchange of cultural commodities central to the fashioning of identity and the exercise of social power, facilitates new forms of agency, identity and subjectivity (Jay, *Global Matters*: 2). This stands in opposition to those scholars who lament what they see as the oppressively homogenizing effects of cultural globalization. With regards to postcolonialism, globalization is often considered as a contemporary post-postcolonial moment, or what Jay describes as "accelerating globalization."

In literary studies, Jay points out that among contemporary literary engagements with the effects of "accelerating globalization" are distinguished as "post-postcolonial fiction" (96). He considers Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997), Vikram Chandra's *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* (1995) and Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke* (2000) as being in many ways different from clas-

sic postcolonial texts, as they pay more attention to the contemporary effects of globalization than they do to the imperatives of postcolonial state-making and the construction of specifically postcolonial identities and subjectivities (95-96). For instance, Jay contends that Hamid's novel treats globalization as a contemporary post-postcolonial moment. In his words, "[i]nsisting that he belongs to a "post-postcolonial" generation of writers, [Hamid] suggests that the category of literature we have been calling "postcolonial" has become dated in an age of accelerating globalization" (96). Like Hamid's fiction, Chraïbi's detective novel, *L'homme qui venait du passé,* which narrates the problematic ills of fundamentalism and terrorism, as well as reflects on the rhetoric of a civilizational clash can be described as "post-postcolonial fiction" that represents the contradictions of the geopolitical states in post-9/11 world.

Importantly, selecting L'homme qui venait du passé to be a subject of analysis in this article originates from the fact that the interplay of religious fundamentalism and terrorism has received much criticism in media and academia alike since 9/11 terrorist attacks. Chraïbi's text responds to this criticism, adding its own coloration to the mythical identity of terrorism. What has attracted my interest, particularly, is not only the representation/ re-narration of terrorism in Chraïbi's text, but also the encounter of this fictional narrative with something in the outside world, which makes the text in an embattled

relationship with the wreaking effects of terrorism. In this context, as Appelbaum and Paknadel claim, "terrorism has been *good to compose with* [their emphasis]. It has been handy subject matter for the composition of plots, the invention of psychological conflict, the discovery of interesting locales, the devising of timely themes, the rousing of political passions. Whatever the reality of terrorism may be [...], fiction has taken up terrorism as a thing of its own" (388). Indeed, Chraïbi's text negotiates the complexity and contradictions of terrorism: as a politics of its own, an ideology and a myth. Situating Chraïbi's novel within Jay's conception of (post-) postclonialism, my analysis will focus on its counter-consciousness in developing strategies of opposition and resistance in its investigation of 9/11 terrorism. I will explore, further, to what extent the text creates an oppositional space to dismantle the politics of Islamist fundamentalism and to denounce the impact of such politics on Muslim populations' identity.

9/11 Terrorism's Impact on Muslim Identity

Replete with humour and irony as its narrative devices, *L'homme qui venait du passé* is a detective text about a progressive story of a police-procedural investigation. The investigation is undertaken in reaction to the subordinate story of crime which revolves around the discovery of a suspected Oussama Bin Laden's corpse. This corpse is found in the well of the garden of a famous

hotel in Marrakech. Inspector Ali as the detective hero of the text is upgraded by the Moroccan authority as the chief-inspector of police and is charged of this investigation to find out the identity of the corpse. Embarking on his inquiry, Inspector Ali executes a transnational investigation in cooperation with Western Intelligence Services; and he finally identifies in a celebratory manner that the corpse is indeed Bin Laden's who looked for all secret services of the world since 9/11 terrorist attacks. With his utmost diplomatic efforts during his investigative journey, Inspector Ali announces heroically that he could root out Bin laden's network of Al-Qaïda for fear of its potential threat of insecurity and instability in the world. The text plays, then, with references of factuality as fictional elements to contest the drama of terrorism launched since the devastating attacks of 9/11, unfortunately, in the name of Islam.

L'homme qui venait du passé is both reactionary and progressive in its narrative structure. The novel reacts to the Marrakech drama through an official investigation, tracing progressively the detective's activities. The text narrates the story of the ongoing investigation while at the same time framing the connection of particular events fitted into a single pattern of time, space and causality. In other words, the story of investigation is not only a search for the concealed story of the corpse-crime, but it is also a journey that aims to regain meaning and coherence in the aftermath of Bin Laden's 9/11 attacks.

Throughout this journey, the narrative goes beyond physical investigative efforts—of finding out Bin Laden's corpse and rooting out his network of Al-Qaïda—to thought-provoking efforts that aim at dismantling the very ideology of fundamentalism which terrorize in the name of religion. For this purpose, Chraïbi adopted the narrative device of doubt as a liberating strategy to counter the rigid and absolute subjectivity of fundamentalism—mainly Islamist, but not restricted to it—and to conceive an alternative, tolerant identity. The author's detective, identifying himself as a moderate Muslim, practices himself doubt which constitutes a critical interpretation of this subjectivity. The implication is to go beyond the confines of narrow thinking and dogmatic subjectivity which eventually leads to terrorist drama and widespread violence.

The narrative traces, then, the changing status of Inspector Ali who started as a successful investigator to end up in a desperate situation of failure and loss. The investigative journey brings meaning to the reader, but the detective himself is affected by the results of his inquiring efforts. While grappling with the effects of Bin Laden's 9/11 drama, the detective realizes at the end of his investigation, which turns out to be disappointing and destructive, that Bin Laden had a profound impact on his personal life and his identity. As a result of this impact, he expresses doubts about his life and his existence as articulated in this passage:

> I do not know who I am or what I am. I lost my bearings through the mistake of a man named Oussama Bin Laden. […] At the end of a long career, I find myself stuck in my job and in my private and personal life. It's that damn Bin Laden who has shattered my foundations and the essence of my existence. […] I struggled, I fooled everyone; I have all the elements at hand. I resorted to every imaginable trick; I traveled thousands of kilometers… back to my starting point. It's this woe Bin Laden to blame. He is dead and buried. But he still lives in me. He calls on my past, to our past, all of us. We are more than one billion Muslims around the world.

> Je ne sais plus qui je suis ou ce que je suis. J'ai perdu mes repères, par la faute d'un homme du nom d'Oussama Bin Laden. […] Au terme d'une longue carrière, je me trouve bloqué dans mon job et dans ma vie intime et personnelle. C'est ce satané Bin Laden qui a bouleversé les bases et les fondements de mon existence. […] Je me suis démené, j'ai berné tout le monde, j'ai tous les éléments en main, j'ai usé de tous les artifices imaginables, j'ai parcouru des milliers de kilomètres… pour revenir à mon point de départ. C'est la faute à ce vieux Bin Laden de Malheur. Il est mort et enterré. Mais il vit toujours en moi. Il fait appel à mon passé. À notre passé à nous tous. Nous sommes plus d'un milliard de musulmans aux quatre coins du monde. (242-3)

Desperately, Inspector Ali's investigation resulted in disappointment, alienation, existential loss due to the im-

pact of the terrorist figure of Bin Laden, who launched his terrorist drama in the name of Islam. The narrative lays emphasis on the fact that the cosmopolitan detective comes to his consciousness: conscious of the unjust impact Bin Laden plays on his personal life and on his identity, as a Muslim. The impact leaves him in a state of profound weariness and melancholy, in moral and psychological uncertainties. This situation displays that the detective fails to regain meaning and coherence after a long journey of transnational investigation to become firmly established in the aftermath of Bin Laden's attacks in New York. What he discovers, instead, is that the "damn" Bin Laden is "dead and buried," but he still "lives in [him]," haunting him, affecting him and his psychology. To put it differently, even if Bin Laden is biologically dead, he is symbolically alive, having a strong impact on the geopolitical stability in the world at large after 9/11. This reinforces the idea that even though small in numbers, terrorists have devastating actions and impacts which can destabilize not only nation-states' security, but also Muslims' identity and psychology worldwide.

With a focus on the question of identity, Inspector Ali's reflection on his identity makes Chraïbï's text a metaphysical detective. In their edited book *Detecting Texts: The Metaphysical Detective Story from Poe to Postmodernism,* Patricia Merivale and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney define metaphysical detective as "a text that parodies or sub-

verts traditional-story conventions—such as narrative closure and the detective's role as surrogate reader—with the intention, or at least the effect, of asking questions about mysteries of being and knowing which transcend the mere machinations of the mystery plot […]. Rather than definitively solving a crime, then, the sleuth finds himself confronting the insoluble mysteries of his own interpretation and his own identity" (6). In this sense, Chraibi's text is indeed metaphysical when the detective addresses himself with Shakespeare's well-known dramatic verse "to be or not to be, that is the question!" (213). This soliloquy is essentially all about life or death: meaning to live or not to live, to exist or to die. As such, the narrator's identity quest implies a state of chaos and disorder not only in psychological, but also in metaphysical sense. As a Muslim, the narrator becomes conscious that his identity is a matter of suspicion and stigmatization in a world overrides by fundamentalist terrorists like Bin Laden, who speak in the name of his identity while addressing the West.

Intriguingly, this impact of Bin Laden's drama transcends spacial and temporal zones, affecting more than "one billion Muslims" around the world, unbounded by the limits of time and space. The impact brings to the fore the question of Muslim identity and its past in the post-9/11 world, which remains difficult to settle into. Inspector Ali's overwhelmingly puzzling situation expresses the mire of 9/11 terrorism and suggests that its

devastating impact is quite complex to resolve even in fiction and to bring justice to all Muslims around the world. The implication is that launching terrorism in the name of the religion of Islam affected Muslims' identity, culture and history. This is well implied when the detective says: "William Shakespeare wasn't a cop, certainly, but he had expressed the same evidence: a tree could hide the forest." [William Shakespeare n'était pas un flic, certes, mais il avait exprimé la même évidence: un arbre pouvait cacher la forêt. 111]. "[A] tree could hide the forest" is quite a significant statement in that it expresses how the terrorist Bin Laden as a single fundamentalist tree could affect a large community of Muslims symbolized by the *forest*. Through the detective's imagination, the text attempts to deconstruct the wrong image that the 9/11 terrorist events imposed on Muslims in the West and the Muslim world in general. The novel is, then, an attempt not only to condemn terrorism as an ideological fundamentalism, but also to denounce its long-running negative impact on the image of Muslims. In a nutshell, it reflects on how the terrorist attacks of 9/11 have changed the way people look at Muslims in the West, viewed as "terrorist," "violent" and "barbaric."

Countering the Ideology of Islamist Terrorism

Inspector Ali narrates Bin Laden's 9/11 drama as a moving incident, as history's material evidence which exists beyond the bounds of the narrative frame. As I have

mentioned in the introduction, the detective narrative is an attempt to counter Islamist terrorism and to deconstruct its totalitarian ideologies. While claiming that he knew Bin Laden in Sudan and his activities at the time, Inspector Ali narrates 9/11 drama as an outcome of Al-Qaïda's power and grievance in the world at large. The detective tells that according to Bin Laden's "brilliant idea," the powerful network of Al-Qaïda is constituted from wealthy people who are sick of the West and sick of their own countries. In an episode entitled "Ali" in which he chronicles his experiences which marked his investigation, the detective states in the following congruent historical narrative:

> I knew some times ago Bin Laden in Sudan. He moved around the drops, schemed with the CIA and the oil majors. And one day, he had an idea; a brilliant idea: Al-Qaïda network. He had at his disposal money and men to constitute this powerful network: people trained in the West were sick of the West and sick of their own countries. But he committed an unpardonable sin: he spoke in the name of Islam and he launched his men to attack America.
>
> J'ai connu jadis Bin Laden, au Soudan. Il a navigué entre les gouttes, magouillé avec la CIA et les majors du pétrole. Et un jour, il a eu une idée. Une idée géniale: le réseau Al-Qaïda. Il avait à sa disposition l'argent et les hommes pour constituer ce réseau très puissant: des gens formés en Occident, qui en avaient marre de l'Occident et marre de leurs propres pays.

> Mais il a commis une faute impardonnable: il a parlé au nom de l'islam et il a lancé ses hommes à l'assaut de l'Amérique. (252)

This detective narrative enunciates that Bin Laden and his people launched terrorism with no ties to any nation-state, to neither the West nor their home countries. Their "[t]error is a kind of metastasis of war, war without spatial or temporal bounds;" it is indeed "terror [that] divorces war from the idea of the nation," to use Appadurai's statements in *Fear of Small Numbers* (92). As I mentioned in the beginning of this section, terrorism is a sort of "'irregular war' of non-state actors waged without honoring rules," as Tibi puts it in "Countering Ideological Terrorism" (102). Tibi considers Al-Qaïda's terrorism as ideological warfare articulated in religious-cultural terms undertaken by non-state actors (ibid). As non-state actors, Bin Laden and his allied people, perform *politics* of their own, stripped of any national ties, essentially adrift. Exclusionary to both the West and their home countries, these people are positioned in a mythical symbolic community that has no basis other than that of exclusion, terrorism and fear. Their politics is forged from inside this community exclusionary to any outside ties, antagonistic to both the West and to the home countries.

In this context, Chraïbi's detective novel offers critical intervention in the issue of Islamist terrorism in the world

at large in an attempt to subvert totalitarian ideologies and imagine instead order and peace. While discussing history as material evidence in detective fiction, in her article "Detective Fiction and Historical Narrative", Ellen O' Gorman contends that "[f]iction […] does not challenge history; the two (insofar as they are two) are inter-dependent. Moreover, the materiality of evidence in both detective fiction and historical writing is […] sustained as material by the congruence of narratives. Most chillingly, those narratives are only congruent, only work as narrative, when they are seen as appropriate or permissible by a given social order" (1999, 25). Chraïbi's text falls into this conceptualization of narrative that intervenes in both social and global matters. If the fundamentalist figure of Bin Laden provides the materiality evidence in history, in the fictional work it is a fictional figure that acts in a particular social order/disorder, as O'Gorman articulates it (1999, 25). As an emblematic figure of Islamist terrorism, Bin Laden is killed, his network is deconstructed and his Islamist ideology is contested by Inspector Ali. This innovative thematics in Chraïbi's novel implies that the complexity of social and global circumstances requires a particular genre. The adoption of the detective genre to combat the drama of terrorism distinguishes the novel from Chraïbi's other literary works.

Further, the narrative denounces the fact that the fundamentalist Bin Laden spoke in the name of Islam during

his terrorist attacks on America. This incident presents Islam as a religion which promotes terrorist violence and views Muslims as "fundamentalists," "terrorists" and "barbaric." Inspector Ali refutes Bin Laden's terrorism in the name of Islam, suggesting that the Muslim world is so diverse, represented by those who are either liberal, conservative or a tiny-minority of fundamentalist Muslims. Endowed with agency, Inspector Ali contends that Bin Laden and his network of Al-Qaïda—grounded on the rhetoric of polarization between Islam and the West—committed the "unpardonable sin" to launch drama of violence behind the religious mask of Islam. This demonstrates the fact that religion is victimized or hijacked by Bin Laden and his violent men to serve ideological ends; it is misused to forge their non-state politics, which sees terrorism as its means of power in its war against both Western and non-Western states. Consequently, the detective's challenging voice articulates the text's engaging counter-discourse to dismantle Al-Qaïda's terrorism as politics of its own. His condemnation of Bin Laden and his people to speak in the name of Islam breaks down, thus, the interplay between Islam and terrorist violence, provoked since the incident of 9/11.

This detective imagination situates the text in agreement with Tibi's remark in "Countering Ideological Terrorism" that "September 11 […] paved the way to the revival of established clichés about Islam which relate this religion without distinction to terrorism" (2008, 102). According

to him, "terrorism practiced by Al-Qaïda reveals with clarity the reference to religion involved—even though in an ill shape" meaning not the essence of this religion. "For Islam is a faith and it by no means supports any kind of action that can be identified as terrorism, it rather prohibits it," as he explains (2008: 102). Based in Germany, Tibi's books often address Muslims in the West, but also non-Muslim Westerners who conflate terrorism with Islamic religion. In his book *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder*, Tibi expresses that religious fundamentalism which seeks to terrorize is not "a spiritual faith, but "a political ideology" based on politicizing religion" (20). Similarly, Chraïbi's narrative engages the detective's critical imagination and his intervention in negotiating the impact that the terrorist network of Al-Qaïda played on Muslims in the West and in the Arab world alike. Through his labor of imagination and his counter-discourse, the detective attempts to subvert Islamist ideology, its launch of terrorism in the name of Islam and its impact on the image of Muslims particularly in the West.

Throughout the novel, Chraïbi's detective exposes the sophisticated accusation of the religion of "Islam" by the West as being a driving force behind fundamentalism practised by Bin Laden. An interesting aspect of Chraïbi's cynical narrative is a consideration of the problematic and complex interplay between fundamentalism, terrorism and the religion of Islam. Squaring with Tibi,

Inspector Ali narrates that Bin Laden's 9/11 drama was legitimized in religion, "even though in an ill shape." In his ironic voice, the detective claims:

> The Koran asked in the Surat (chapter) of flamboyant, the same one that was found in Marrakech: Is it possible that, when returned to the state of dust, you become then a new creation?" a man of the present time [Bin Laden] believed. He was dead at the bottom of a well. He came from the past… hey there, hey! Wake up, Ali! You're a cop. The only certainty in this world is doubt.
>
> Le Coran demandait dans une sourate flamboyante, celle-là même qu'il avait trouvée à Marrakech: "Se peut-il que, retournés à l'état de poussière, vous deveniez ensuite une creation nouvelle?" Un home des temps presents y avait cru. Il en était mort, au fond d'un puits. Il venait du passé… Hé là, ho! Réveille-toi, Ali! T'es un flic. La seule certitude en ce monde est le doute. (159).

Inspector Ali claims mockingly that Bin Laden performed his unquestioning loyalty to the religious traditions. The verb in the past tense "believed" indicates that Bin Laden's belief is a literal, direct knowledge of the religious statement, without to be situated in the right context and accurate interpretation. Inspector Ali's satirical claim, addressing himself: "hey there, hey! wake up, Ali!" challenges indirectly the "man of the present" whose literal reading of religion and his ideological be-

lief led him to commit devastating attacks in New York. In other words, the detective's imperative statement and his mockery spotlight on the illusion and myth of terrorist violence, unfairly legitimized in religion. Besides, the quote brings to the fore juxtaposition between a fundamentalist (Bin Laden) and a cynic (Inspector Ali): one believes in literal sense, the other mocks religious scriptures. If we consider the whole narrative intervention, this juxtaposition reflects on a resisting discourse which counters the man's wrong religious understanding, as a belief of illusion and a myth. Thus, even though in a cynic's mocking tone, the text refutes literal understanding and flawed reading of religion, as well as politicizing religion for ideological and political ends.

Chraïbi's narrative seems to suggest that both the fundamentalist Bin Laden and the detective as liberal cynic lose "the ability to believe in the proper sense of the term," in Žižek's words (348). In his book *The Parallax View* (2006)*,* Žižek theorizes best "the formula of fundamentalism" as opposed to the liberal-sceptical cynicism. Žižek's drawn comparison between fundamentalism and liberal-sceptical cynicism is based on the common point which is "the loss of the ability to believe in the proper sense of the term." (2006: 127) He considers that while the cynic mocks religious statements, the fundamentalist accepts them as direct knowledge which both distort the proper sense of belief. About this issue, Žižek writes as follows:

> [w]hat is foreclosed from the symbolic (belief) re-
> turns in the Real (of a direct knowledge). A funda-
> mentalist does not believe, he *knows* directly. Both
> liberal-skeptical cynicism and fundamentalism thus
> share a basic underlying feature: the loss of the abil-
> ity to believe in the proper sense of the term. For
> both of them, religious statements are quasi-empir-
> ical statements of direct knowledge: fundamentalist
> accept them as such, while skeptical cynics mock
> them. […] In short, the true danger of fundamental-
> ism lies not in the fact that it poses a threat to secular
> scientific knowledge, but in the fact that it poses a
> threat to authentic belief itself. (348)

Žižek considers, therefore, that the fundamentalist does
"not believe," but "knows directly" which threatens au-
thentic belief and appropriate faith. Chraïbi's above cit-
ed narrative seems to raise the same point as far as this
danger of fundamentalism is concerned—as far as Bin
Laden's drama of terrorism is launched in the name of
Islam, part and parcel of Muslim populations' culture
and identity. We detect in the cited quote an emphasis
on the dichotomy between Bin Laden who "believed"
in the religious statement as direct knowledge in a liter-
al form and Inspector Ali who expresses his cynicism
through doubt as the only certainty in this world. This
brings to the fore the two figures in a juxtaposing man-
ner: Bin Laden's direct belief without any critical reason-
ing versus Inspector Ali's skeptical subversive attitude

while mocking Bin Laden's fundamentalism. Yet, does this mean that Ali as a cynic does not believe also, as Žižek considers both the fundamentalist and the cynic? Identifying himself as a "Muslim," Inspector Ali's belief appears associated with his critical mind through replacing rigid *certainty* with doubt as a strategy of critical reasoning, of reading things beyond their literal confines.

Read in this way, the author calls for critical thinking that goes beyond the literal interpretation of the religious text and that transcends the narrow literal representation of Islam. This argument is supported when Inspector Ali expresses that today Islam is as strange as it started out, illustrating with the following prophet Mohamed's saying: "[i]n Mecca, [prophet] has told his followers in a clear and intelligible voice: "Islam will become strange as it has started." [À la Mecque, il avait dit à ses fidèles d'une voix Claire et intelligible: "L'Islam rediviendra l'étranger qu'il a commencé par être." 158]. This narrative reference to the prophet's saying illustrates that Islam today is at its utmost strangeness. Yet, the saying implies that between the first period of strangeness (as it started) and the second period of strangeness (today) Islam has known light and glory. The detective's recourse to this saying suggests, thus, a reconciliation of Islam's past, its history and civilization, with Islam's present, to be rescued from the intolerance of fundamentalism and dogmatism. In his interview to *Tel Quel*, the author himself states in a debate about Islam:

> [d]o you remember the most famous saying uttered by the prophet three days before his death: sayakoun al islam ghariban kama kana min gabl (Islam will become strange as it has started.) Currently, the letter has taken over the mind and there is a perfect dichotomy between the two. Islam is for me a goal to achieve.
> Souvenez-vous de la phrase très célèbre qu'a prononcée le prophète trois jours avant sa mort: sayakoun al islam ghariban kama kana min gabl (L'islam redeviendra l'étranger qu'il avait été). Le prophète était très lucide. Actuellement, la letter a pris le dessus sur l'esprit et il existe une dichotomie parfaite entre les deux. L'islam est pour moi un but à atteindre. ("Rencontre: Driss Chraibi prend Position") (2005: 157)

Chraïbi's detective novel is thus a severe critique of the fundamentalist terrorists' misuse and abuse of religion to launch the drama of violence. The critical questioning of Islam is common in Chraïbi's works, the most of which is *L'homme du passé*. Chraïbi lays emphasis on the importance of reason or rationale in reading and interpreting a religious text. He even considered that Islam is a goal to achieve, of course through achieving moral standards: peace with one's self and the other, justice and dignity, etc. The word "Islam" itself means peace, and Islamic religion teaches Muslims how to approach others with love, peace and tolerance. All throughout the text, Chraïbi's detective assumes the role of a sub-

ject who strategically and self-consciously manages to dismantle the problematic interplay of fundamentalism and terrorism; he represents a moderate Muslim who defends morals and principles against the dogmatic certainties of fundamentalists; the implication is that Islam promotes tolerance, peace and security, instead of terroristic violence.

In this context, in "Countering Ideological Terrorism," Tibi considers Islamist fundamentalism as an ideology that seeks "the invention of tradition, not the tradition itself" to serve ideological and political ends (103). The idea here is that Islamism is at stake with modernity, contrasting and rejecting each other in today's globalized world. The detective narrative's mise-en-scène of the past shows that seeking the "invention of tradition" over modernity is the main factor behind Bin Laden's 9/11 attacks. Interestingly, both the title and the cover of the novel conform to this mise-en-scène of the past in the present time. The title *L'homme qui venait du passé* (The man who came from the past) reinforces that the text's main plot and its central theme, which are about a particular man, represented as an identified person, "*the man*": The definitive article lays emphasis on a unique, single man, attributing an absolute, totalitarian character to this man. The article presupposes, also, that the man is already identified because he came from the past, already known, who acts in contrast to the present. The front cover is significant in the sense that it portrays or

rather identifies an old man with a Moroccan *djellaba* (traditional dress) as a sign of traditions, which signals cultural and civilisational significance of the ancient past. The detective's claim that "the man of the present" "came from the past" suggests that the challenge is to discover a balance between the preservation of past identity and dwelling in the present, between traditions and modernity.

The front cover's other metanarrative signs reinforce the ideology of Islamist fundamentalism represented by Bin Laden's belief of illusion or ideology. On the right side where the man sits leaning on the wall of a house is a shadow of a palm tree reflected on the house, hiding the day light. The palm tree is actually an emblem of the Islamic world to which the man who came from the past—always a reference to Bin Laden—belongs. But it is a shadow, why not a real palm tree? The shadow opposes light and it never reflects the object it represents in its real form. It signals, rather, darkness, evil, ghost and illusion. In this sense, the shadow of the palm tree could symbolize Bin Laden's terrorist network launched behind the "shadow" or the mask of "Islam." For this shadow comes close to the house as darkness to settle on the light and to hide it. The light here could symbolize Islam itself masked by the shadow of the palm tree, masked by the ideology of Islamism represented by the old man. The subversive symbol of the shadow of the palm tree, however, connecting the earth and the sky as

well enunciates that the man's fundamentalist belief is an illusioned belief, a myth, or rather an ideology. The shadow demonstrably symbolizes the dark side of the ideology/politics of fundamentalism which seeks the "'invention of tradition,' not the tradition itself," in Tibi's words (103).

"Doubt is Salutary in our Certainties:" Rationale *versus* Certainties

Against the illusion of fundamentalism, the detective proposes that the only certainty in this world is doubt which offers sceptical space for critical reasoning. His oppositional voice serves as a subversive strategy of the fundamentalists' rigid certainties, implying that absolute knowledge is impossible. In his ironic voice, the detective expresses doubts himself the existence of God, the religious "contortions" and the significance of the word "believe". In his diegetic voice, the sceptical detective contends as follows:

> Illusions die hard, mirages, self-interested love of the neighbour. Beginning with God, I do not know his name, Jehovah, our Father in heaven, or Allah. I do not know if he really exists. If he exists, I reckon he looks a bit like my back: I cannot see him, even in a mirror. And in this case, I would get a stiff neck because of twisting myself. (Voice of a cop) This is what we call religion, contortions, I blaspheme? What does the word "believe" mean? Doubt is salu-

tary in our certainties; our old certainties came from the past. That's why you write. That's why I'm a cop; a cop is no soft touch. Fortunately, I am not Catholic. There are too many mysteries, which I cannot solve; nobody has ever solved them.

Les illusions ont la vie dure, les mirages, l'amour intéressé du prochain. À commencer par Dieu. Je ne sais pas comment il s'appelle, Jéhovah, Notre Père qui est aux cieux ou Allah. Je ne sais pas s'il existe réellement. S'il existe, m'est avis qu'il ressemble un peu à mon dos: je ne peux pas le voir, même dans un miroir. Et dans ce cas, j'attraperais un torticolis à force de me contorsionner. (Voix de flic:)C'est cela qu'on appelle la religion. Des contorsions. Je blasphème? Que signifie le mot "croire"? Le doute est salutaire dans nos certitudes, nos vieilles certitudes venues du passé. C'est pour cela que tu écris. C'est pour cela que je suis flic, un flic à la redresse. Heureusement que je ne suis pas catholique. Il y a trop de mystères, je ne peux pas les résoudre, personne ne les a jamais résolus. (247).

If Žižek points out that both the cynic and the fundamentalist do not *believe* in the proper sense of the term, Chraïbi's detective interrogates the verb "believe" as a problematic concept without giving a definitive answer to it. In other words, Ali questions everything, but does not answer his interrogative questions perceptibly to give space to the practice of doubt. While confronting the embedded narrator—the pseudo of the author—the detective reinforces that doubt is *salutary* in our certain-

ties that belong to the past. Doubt serves here as a liberating, subversive strategy from past totalitarian knowledge. It is articulated as a remedy to the mystery of religious fundamentalism in the present modern world. As the author himself expresses in his interview to *Tel Quel* "Rencontre: Driss Chraïbi prend Position:" "doubt is salutary in lifetime. If we do not doubt, we are sheep. You let yourself be fooled by thinking of others" [Le doute est salutaire au sein d'une vie. Si on ne doute pas, on est des moutons. On se laisse berner par la pensée des autres. J'ai cherché à avoir ma proper pensée au niveau social, politique, et même religieux]. For doubt signifies a constructed process rather than a given essence, opening a space for one's rationale; doubt is adaptable to new contexts and environments, a rethinking process of life issues.

Chraïbi's text does not only refute Islamist fundamentalism, but all other religious extremism, too. Reinforcing the state of doubt, the detective stresses the difficulty of being Catholic as a religious identity which constitutes "too many mysteries." He views these religious-based certainties and mysteries as being complex, "contortions" beyond one's understanding. As such, Inspector Ali expresses openly his non-religiosity. Earlier in the novel, in the first chapter, the detective defines his spiritual dimension ascertaining his non-religious identity: "I am not religious, I am a non-religious person" [Je ne suis pas "culte," moi. Je suis inculte. 36]. His non-religi-

osity or rather moderate religiosity—"a Muslim without beard and without turban" [un mahométan sans barbe et sans turban]—is a liberating force which expresses a sort of resistance to the fundamentalist "bearded" Bin Laden [un barbu, 87]. The juxtaposition introduces different faces of reading "Islam" ranging from extremism to moderation. This situation leads Amartya Sen to claim in his book *Identity And Violence* that "the recognition of multiple identities and of the world beyond religious affiliations, even for very religious people, can possibly make some difference in the troubled world in which we live" (79). For "violence is fomented by the imposition of singular and belligerent identities on gullible people, championed by proficient artisans of terror" (ibid), as Sen contends. This narrated diversity in the perception of "Islam" suggests that the detective text argues against the singular and primordial view of fundamentalist religious identities.

Chraïbi's narrative makes clear that fundamentalism exists in all religions, be it Islam, Christianity, Judaism, etc. In an attempt to confront the proficient artisans of terror, Inspector Ali opposes all kinds of fundamentalisms ranging from Islamist to Christianist and Judaist. While his old friend David Moine-Moïse—presented as the officer in Moroccan DGSE (Service Action)—comments on the five attacks which took place in Casablanca that the Islamist are behind these terrorist violence, the detective confronts him in a challenging voice:

— I know. These are the Islamists who have made the shot? [David]
— Islamists? Cried Inspector Ali hiding his face. What does that mean, Islamists? Why not the Judaists or the Christianists while you are there? The underlings exist everywhere. Think it over, David. [Inspector Ali]

— Je sais. Ce sont des islamistes qui ont fait le coup de feu?
— Des islamistes? Se récria l'inspecteur en se voilant la face. Ça veut dire quoi, islamistes? Pourqoi pas des judaistes ou des christianistes pendant qu'on y est? Les lampistes existent partout. Réfliéchis, David. (186).

David's accusation of the Islamist to be behind the five attacks in Casablanca seems based on the fact that several of his Jewish family members are died and other injured in this incident. The detective, however, undermines David's accusation as he simply doubts that it is done by the Islamists since the Judaist and the Christianist fundamentalists exist as well. Since they exist, Ali seems to say, they could be behind these attacks, too. His doubt urges David to admit that today we do not only face the Islamists' terrorism but also the Judaists' and the Christianists'. The implication is that all kinds of religious fundamentalisms foment intolerance and violence. Thus, Chraïbi's narrative warns, as Amartya Sen reminds

us, that "the artificial diminution of human beings into singular identities can have divisive effects, making the world potentially much more incendiary" (ibid). The belief in religiously fundamentalist identity makes the extremists recognise only their "own politics", opposing any other lifestyle. Through its counter-discourse, the text subverts any religious fundamentalism as a "politics of its own", resisting a state of incendiary world.

In contrast to these divisive, religiously fundamentalist identities, Chraïbi's text proposes a fluid, flexible and moderate identity able to interact with differences and accept other cultures. It offers the example of Inspector Ali and his friend David who shared the misery and the joy of their childhood and their adolescence in a popular neighborhood in Casablanca despite their different religions. The narrator comments on their friendship as follows:

> David Moine-Moïse was a Jewish at heart, without kippa and faithless, as Ali was a Muslim without beard and without turban. […] And both, beyond the Mediterranean, the confessions of faith, the ideologies, the space and time, shared the most precious thing in life: friendship."
> David Moine-Moïse était juif dans l'âme, sans kippa et sans foi, tout comme Ali était un mahométan sans barbe et sans turban. [...] Et tous deux, par-delà la Méditerranée, les confessions, les idéologies, l'espace et le temps, avaient en commun le bien le plus

précieux de la vie: l'amitié. (184)

This analogy between Ali and David unfolds the text's aspiration to a tolerant identity that goes beyond the religious affiliation and primordial differences; it addresses an appeal to a "human identity" which is charachterized by a sense of humanity, tolerance and respect. In his aforementioned interview, "Rencontre: Driss Chraïbi prend Position," the author stresses this point when he claims: "above the differences of countries and beliefs, for me it is a human being. […] We have to get out of the self, of one's country, one's identity to have a greater identity." [Au-delà des differences de pays et de croyances, pour moi c'est un être humain. […] Il faut sortir de soi, de son pays, de son identité pour avoir une grande identité]. This view is well expressed in his epigraph of the novel as he writes: "It suffices that a human being is there, at the crossroads, at the right time, so that our destiny would change" [Il suffit qu'un être humain soit là, à la croisée de chemins, au moment voulu, pour que notre destin change, 10]. This epigraph summarizes best the author's argument against religious fundamentalism, its ideological certainties which foment terrorist violence. He proposes, rather, that it suffices to be religiously moderate, respecting and accepting other religions, beliefs and convictions. This attitude counters the fundamentalist's tendency for the rigid, literate "invention of tradition". It proposes, instead, an alternative form of tolerant, human identity, at peace with other cultures, religions. As such, Chraïbi's detective makes an essen-

tial contribution to countering the politics of religious fundamentalism, be it Islamist, christianist or Judaist, promoting instead tolerance, peace and security in the world.

Conclusion:

L'homme qui venait du passé is remarkably innovative in style, genre and theme. The detective novel offers critical intervention in post-9/11, as painful times that were a turning point in the world at large. The text dramatizes, first, the murder of the network's chief, Oussama Bin Laden who launched 9/11 attacks, as an aspiration to a world less imprisoned by the drama of terrorism and the enormous fear it inspires. In disclosing the ideology of Islamism, Chraïbi's novel deconstructs the contemporary rhetoric of the interplay between terrorism and the religion of Islam. The text engages a counter-discourse that opposes and challenges the ideological or illusion-based fundamentalism which unfairly legitimizes terrorism in the religion of Islam. Criticizing Bin Laden's 9/11 drama, the text creates an oppositional space in which it dismantles Islamist fundamentalism as an illusioned "invention of tradition," not the real tradition, and as *politics*, not faith. The text propels, then, its argument through considering the concept of doubt as a liberating and thought-provoking strategy to the rigid certainty of Islamist fundamentalism. Out of the need to establish a much more rational discourse on cross-cul-

tural and inter-religious contacts, the text goes further in opposing all sorts of fundamentalisms, Islamist, Christianist, and Judaist that inspire the drama of terrorism or any other violence. Even though the text's focus is on Islamism, Chraïbi's message is that all kind of religious fundamentalisms should be resisted and their terrorist violence should be condemned.

L´homme qui venait du passé demonstrates deconstructive efforts undertaken to unfold the counter-discourse that Chraïbi engages in his narrative to subvert the ideological forces of fundamentalism as the roots of today's terrorism. Through the detective's agency, authority, power, the text offers a productive and challenging poetics in search of life outside the confines of these ideological forces. In this sense, Chraïbi's text seems underlying the fact that it is not the case that "all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and un-monolithic," as Edward Said assumed in *Culture and Imperialism* (xix). The novel shows that since 9/11 drama, cultural pluralism is rather withering, paving the way for the emergence of narrow and chauvinistic identities, of religious and political fundamentalisms alike. The text's critical opposition is, therefore, a mechanism engaged to transcend the barbarity of violence; it counters the intolerance which terrorists promote to serve their ideologies and political agendas. Chraïbi proposes, rather, that one should be at the cross-road where identity is constructed

and reconstructed in moderate terms to pave the way for alternative forms of human identity. As such, Chraïbi's detective novel is a fully engaged philosophical practice, a productive post-postcolonial text that responds to the world's global matters.

Indeed, if the category we call postcolonial requires a political engagement with the history of decolonization and its ramifications, Chraïbi's detective novel which narrates the interplay between religious fundamentalism and terrorism can be described as "post-postcolonial fiction." I consider all 9/11 or post 9/11 literatures as "post-postcolonial fiction" that represent the contradictions of the geopolitical states and their conflicts in an age of accelerating globalization. Importantly, Chraïbi's detective suggests that power and authority can be investigated through adopting narrative strategies of opposition and resistance. The text positions its chief-inspector of police, its single questing detective as a centre of consciousness to contest the power of Bin Laden's network of Al-Qaïda, as well as to undermine the ideology of Islamism. This literary innovation distinguishes, indeed, the text from Chraïbi's previous non-detective works. Chraïbi's text is, thus, a case of post-postcolonial detective fiction that offers critical negotiation of today's global matters, aspiring for tolerance and peace in an age of accelerating globalization.

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Les Sacrées Vaches: Cow Vigilantism and the future of Indian Democracy

Sunayan Mukherjee and Sayantani Chakraborti

In any country the faith and the confidence of the minorities in the impartial and even functioning of the state is the acid test of being a civilised state.

—Justice Rajinder Sachar

The supporters of caste who would allow liberty in the sense of a right to life, limb and property, would not readily consent to liberty in this sense, in as much as it

involves liberty to choose one's profession. But to object to this kind of liberty is to perpetuate slavery. For slavery does not merely mean a legalized form of subjection. It means a state of society in which some men are forced to accept from other the purposes which control their conduct.

—B.R. Ambedkar

There is only one way to protect Indian culture: to protect gau (cows), Ganga and (goddess) Gayatri... Only the community that can protect this heritage will survive. Otherwise there will be a huge crisis of identity, and this crisis of identity will endanger our existence.

—Yogi Adityanath

Till cow is not accorded the status of 'Rashtra Mata' (Mother of the Nation) I feel the war for gauraksha (cow protection) will not stop even if gaurakshaks (cow protectors) are put into jails or bullets are fired at them.

—T. Raja Singh Lodh

We won't remain silent if somebody tries to kill our mother. We are ready to kill and be killed.

—Sakshi Maharaj

The year 2014 which saw the ascension of the ultra-right-wing Hindu fascist party BJP in power splintered the Indian society in two halves- those who worship

cows and those who are dependent on it in terms of food, trade, commerce, and agriculture. The RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha) a bigoted proto fascist Hindutva organisation (the ideological scaffold of the Bhartiya Janta Party) professes to make India the land of the Hindus. This land is exclusively for the Hindus. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, one of the main ideologues of Hindutva (a militant version of Hinduism) had clearly defined the identity of a Hindu in his book, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* (1923) as someone who considers Hindustan as his "matribhumi" (motherland), this land as the land of his ancestors "pitribhumi" (fatherland) and his "punyabhumi" (holy land). In this vision, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism are also qualified as part of the Hindu culture who had been converted recently. They can be reintegrated into the fold of Hinduism if they pay their allegiance to the Hindu culture. However, the Muslims are the "Other" as they are the descendants of foreign invaders, whose "pitribhumi" (fatherland) lay elsewhere in Arabia. This theory of "Otherness" is amalgamated with a classical touch of M.S. Golwalkar's idea of racial inferiority of the Muslims in contrast to the Hindus. Golwalkar, following closely Hitler's idea of eugenics, felt "race is by far the most important ingredient of a nation" (Jaffrelot 2007, 98). The Muslims posed the greatest threat towards achieving a racial unity as they will always remain "foreign body" lodged in the Hindu society.

Within this imagined Hindu *rashtra*, which is concep-

tually separated from the state and is defined as a cultural idea which embraces a community that resides upon a piece of land with which it shares an organic and an emotional relationship, the Muslim is first declared a free and equal citizen and then his survival is made conditional upon a number of criterions imposed by the Hindus alone. The Muslim remains eternally an outcaste, a pariah who is essentially outside the social fabric. Following the violent partition of the country, they were looked as the main culprits for the execution of the quartering of the holy land, disrupting its sacred integrity. As part of the postcolonial legacy of divide and rule, these two communities remain forever divided, riveted in mutual dispute and community antagonism. The syncretism of cultures, the pluralism of religious faith that symbolised India's democracy is only a veneer, a masquerade of lies. The spectral archetypes of colonial violence have erupted once again with the proclamation of reviving the figure of the "holy cow," held sacred by the Hindus. Imposing a majoritarian politics, Muslims (read beefeaters) are once again targeted as a menace, a threat to the Hindu and to the existence of cows. Various cow vigilante groups, spearheaded by Hindu right wing activists are openly lynching Muslims, browbeating them and making their lives miserable. Law and order is made a mockery and the memories of colonial violence are a lived reality among the Muslim community. In the light of these tensions, William de Tamaris's graphic novel originally published in French as *Les Sacrées Vaches*

(*Holy Cows* in English translation) becomes a very criti-
cal work. Written in a gonzo journalistic technique and
covertly following the trail of beef ban in certain North
Indian states, it attempts to ascertain the actual impact
of such a restriction upon the lives of the common peo-
ple. From the peasants who are finding it difficult to deal
with sterile cows, the sudden closure of Muslim slaugh-
ter houses, the onset of black marketers who stash cattle
in jeeps and transport them secretly in the dead of night
and finally the rise of Hindu militant groups (gau rak-
shaks), mob lynching and murder, it portrays the other
side of a democratic Bharat, beyond the reach of the
city intelligentsia, slouched in the "false consciousness"
of liberalism, freedom of speech and secularism. In the
words of Tamaris, "La vache sacrée n'a pas fini de divis-
er la société indienne" (The holy cow has not finished
dividing the Indian society) (Sengar 2017).

Was Cow always considered sacred?

Though "cow" has played the crucial role of integrat-
ing the Hindu identity, historical texts and evidence have
evinced the fact that cow meat was a very popular food
item, haute cuisine during the early Vedic period. Beef
eating remained a fairly common practice for a long time
in India and the arguments for its prevalence are strewn
in our own scriptures and religious texts. The sacrifice
of the horse or of the cow, the *gomedha* (cow meat) or
asvamedha (horse meat), appears to have been common

in the earliest periods of the Hindu ritual. P.V. Kane in his monumental work, *History of Dharmasastra* (1930) refers to certain passages in the Vedas which speaks about cow slaughter and beef eating. Cattle trade and breeding were the most important occupation of early Aryans. The Rigveda refers to slaughter of ox for offering to gods, especially Indra, the greatest of the Vedic gods. However, in the law book of Manu *Manusmriti*, there comes the first interdiction to cow slaughter. This book like the earlier law books, contains several passages on meat albeit with an exception. It legalises the eating of the flesh of animals such as porcupine, hedgehog, iguana, rhinoceros, tortoise etc but forbids devouring the flesh of the cow. Interestingly, during this time, other religious groups such as Buddhism and Jainism had gained immense popularity in the subcontinent. The virtues of "ahimsa" (non-violence) preached by Gautam Buddha and Vardhaman Mahavira attracted a large number of lower caste groups who converted to this religion to escape the persecution of the tyrannical caste system practiced in the Hindu society. The Brahmins were quick enough to appropriate the symbol of the "cow" and bestowed it with the qualities of a mother- nurturer, feeder who looks after the well-being of the community. They too wanted to practice "ahimsa" or non-violence in their religion. Thus "cow" entered into a symbolic order; where preserving and caring for the bovine represented an act of sacredness and consumption of beef became profane. By consecrating the cow, the Hindus

began protecting their identities and themselves transformed into a sacred community. Moreover, a dietary prohibition enabled them to maintain this sacrosanct social order.

The cow became a "totem," and by worshipping the totem, the clan members partook in the formation of a holy order. As per Durkheim's definition of religion which is based on the idea of sacred and profane, construction of the Hindu social order rests upon this essentialism, this binary and the concomitant sacralisation of beef renders other religions, which sanction its consumption, impious. Later, in the 19th century, when the Hindu nationalist resistance forces gained pre-eminence, the myth of the holy cow was reified once again. It became a key symbol to construct the image of a glorious Hindu past, challenge the colonial discourses of enlightenment, science, reason, and rationality. The embedded discourse around cow quickly became contagious as thousands of people joined in the call of Swami Dayanand Saraswati's "back to the Vedas" when he founded the Arya Samaj (1875). The first cow protection association (*gaurakshini sabha*) was established in 1881 in Agra under his tutelage to oppose cow slaughter. The upper-class elites, majorly belonging to the Hindu community, declared the worshipping of cows to unify the Hindu cultural groups, promote a strong cultural bond with the nation thereby engineering racial superiority over the other minorities. Even post-independence, when there was a concerted

effort by them to ban cow slaughter permanently in India through promulgating it in the Constitution, B. R. Ambedkar placed this contentious issue under the Directive Principles of State Policy. The provision under Article 48 entitled "Organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry" reads: "The State shall endeavour to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle" (Illaiah 2019, 22). He ensured that Article 48 cleverly elides any religious lines.

BJP, "Cow" and the Politics of Hindutva

In the year 2014, BJP saw a meteoric rise to power based on the rabble-rousing talent of the current Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi. The admixture of populism and the rhetoric of militant Hindutva carved a niche in the hearts of the majoritarian sect. The twin ideas interlaced together to give birth to a new form of democracy-"ethnic democracy" by repelling "electoral democracy." Modi stressed upon the revival of Hindu rituals, vowed to protect the cows and act strongly against the abattoir industry, cattle trade, and leather industry. It is to be noted here that a large portion of the Muslim populace are interconnected with this business. Muslim minorities were targeted by Hindu vigilante groups. These groups started to play a key role in making the de facto major-

itarian Hindu Rashtra (Hindu nation). The panel below represents Modi's incendiary electoral speech where he declares, "Si je suis élu, le gouvernement ne donnera plus de subventions aux bouchers!" (If I am elected, the government will not grant subsidies anymore to the butchers).

William de Tamaris starts off his comic by mentioning the decree issued by the local government of Buldana, a district in Maharashtra regarding the closure of abattoirs and the sale of cattle and beef. This interdiction has its root in the rise of fanatic Hindutva emblazoned by the electoral campaigns of the BJP. Of the twenty-eight states in India, twenty-four have adopted for a total ban on beef and cow slaughter is a punishable offence. Interestingly, all these states are controlled by the BJP.

The announcement of beef ban was a cause of rejoice and celebration among the hardliners. But it made the lives of peasants miserable who were reeling under debt and poverty. In addition to the double whammy of drought and ban on sale of unproductive cows, the common villagers were forced to starve.
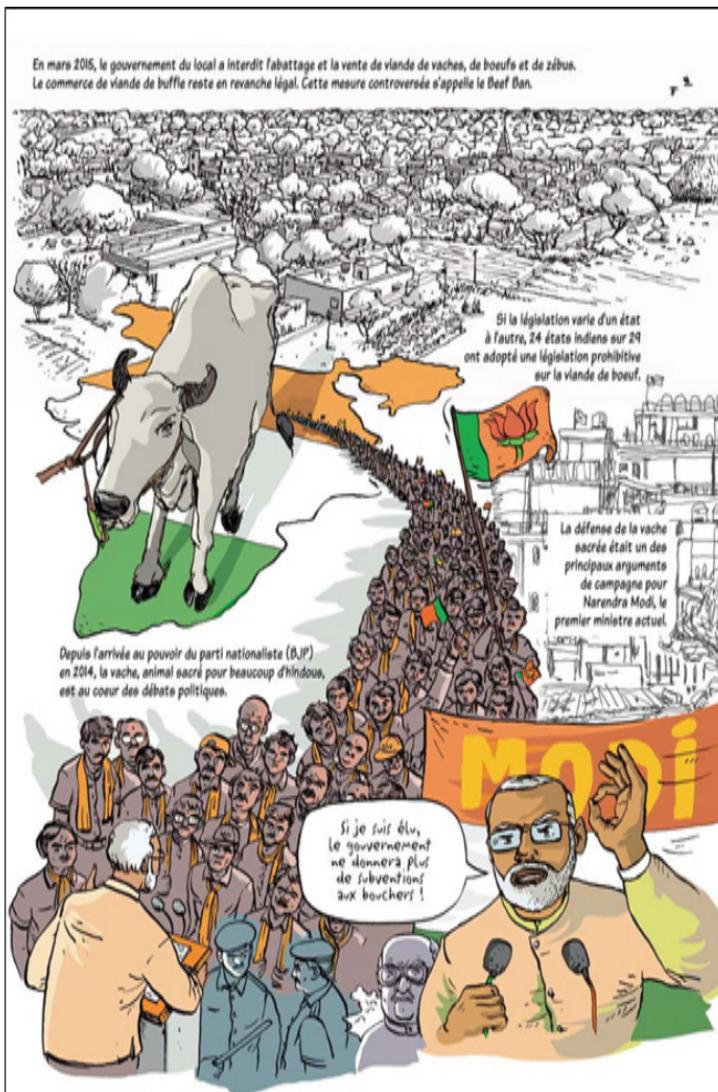
India's cattle slaughter laws

Some states in India have completely banned cattle slaughter, while others allow it with a 'fit-to-slaughter' certificate, issued when an animal is unfit for breeding, milking or work purposes.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, India; Al Jazeera

'Cow vigilante' attacks on the rise

Cow-related violence has seen a sharp increase in India since the Hindu far-right government led by Bharatiya Janata Party came to power in May 2014.

63 incidents since 2010, with 61 occurring after May 2014

28 killed (mostly Muslims)

124 injured
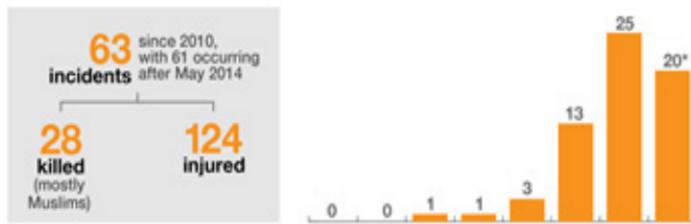
Going clockwise the five panels talk about the distress and suffering of the peasants, 1st Panel- "Une vache produit du lait pendant huità dix ans. Mais elle ne meurt que plusieurs années plus tard" (A cow produces milk for eight to ten years, but she dies only years later). 2nd Panel- "Avant la loi, on échangeait nos bêtes improductives au marché, contre un veau" (Before the law, we could exchange our barren cows in the market against a cow). 3rd Panel- "Puis l'acheteur les revendait aux bouchers musulmans, qui s'abattaient" (Later, the buyers would sell them to Muslim butchers). 4th Panel- "Tout le monde s'y retrouvait" (Everyone was in it). 5th Panel- "Aujourd'hui, soit nous nous occupons d'elles jusqu'à leur mort...soit nous les donnons à des ONG" (Today we either take care of them until they die... or we give them to the NGOs).

The bellicose Hindu nationalists have spawned numerous vigilantes, and here we meet a character called Vijaykant. He describes himself a hardcore vegetarian with the only goal of protecting 'la mere de tous les Hindous" (the mother of all Hindus) i.e the holy cow. Fig 1.5 depicts the creation of "gaushala" (cow shelter) for the cows who are retrieved from slaughterhouses and at the end a character named Vijaykant introduces himself to the readers. In Fig 1.6 he describes his mission of rescuing cows and looking after their welfare thrice a day. At the end he vociferously declares his passion towards cows, "Les vaches c'est toute ma vie" (Cows are my life).

In the above panels Vijaykant explains that eating beefs is a provocation to the Hindus and whenever he receives any information about any Muslim about to kill any cow, his team reaches there immediately, and they communicate with each other through WhatsApp (a popular social media). His fierce avowal of covering himself with the blood of the Muslims rings an alarm of fear, "Je me couvrirai avec honneur du sang des tueurs de vaches. Nous devons nous protégerdes Musulmans" (I will cover myself with honour with the blood of the cow killers. We must protect ourselves from the Muslims). He proudly shows his new cow ambulance which transports injured cows to the shelter. Fig 1.8 represents the creation of RSS, and how India's economy stands upon beef export all around the world. In 2015, India was the premier exporter of cow meat in the world followed by Brazil and Australia. However, the impact of beef ban had blown into smithereens this burgeoning industry and mostly the Muslims.

In the figure in the next page the fear of Ansar Qureshi, who runs a business associated with the selling and slaughter of beef is reflected deeply. The Muslims are worried about their livelihood. He compares their status before the ban on beef and the aftereffects "Avant, nous abattions 300 boeufs par jour, et nous employions 600 personnes. Depuis, seulement 50 personnes travaillent à plein temps, et nous tuons rarement plus de 50 buffles par jour" (Earlier, we used to slay three hundred
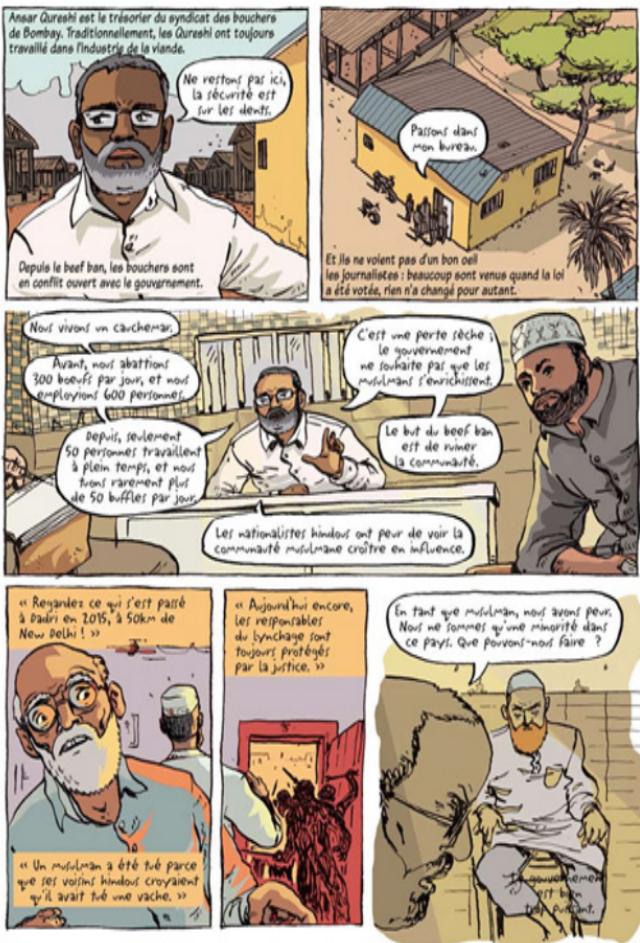
cows every day and we employed six hundred persons. Since the ban, only fifty persons are working full time, and we rarely kill more than fifty buffaloes every day). The mob lynching incident of Mohd Akhlaq at Dadri,

in Uttar Pradesh in September 2015 petrified the Muslim community. "Un Musulman a été tué parce que ses voisins hindous croyaient qu'il avait tué une vache. Aujourd'hui encore les responsables du lynchage sont toujours protégés par la justice" (A Muslim was killed because his neighbours believed that he had killed a cow. Even today, the people responsible for the lynching are always protected by justice). Gruesome incidents of mob lynching episodes are reported in some states of India. Celebrations of such heinous acts are shared and spread all through the social media to teach a lesson to the "Other" community about their status in India and why they should keep a distance from the sacred mother of the Hindus, i.e., the cow. Below we have listed some major case studies.

Cow and Mob Lynching Episodes in India

The Muslims are the largest target of attacks in all the cases of mob lynching. Based on suspicion, they are brutally beaten up, hands tied, gagged, and in certain cases even murdered in cold blood by the mob. "As of February 2019, India Spend, a policy research think-tank, reported that of 123 instances of cow related violence between 2010 and 2018, 98 percent occurred after the BJP came to power in 2014. Muslims account for 56 percent of the victims of such violence and for 78 percent of those killed because of it." (Ilaiah 2019, 24).

• Mohammad Qasim, 45 years, was beaten to death on June 18, 2018 by a mob that accused him of attempting to slaughter cows near the village of Pilkhuwa in the Hapur district of Uttar Pradesh. Qasim was a trader in bulls and goats.

• Akbar Khan, 28 years in Rajasthan was killed by a mob in the Alwar district on July 21, 2018. Akbar and his friend Aslam, residents of Nuh district in Haryana were returning from buying two cows when they were attacked. Aslam Khan managed to flee, but Akbar was brutally beaten up by the mob.

• Mustain Abbas, aged 27 years, a resident of Saharanpur district in Uttar Pradesh, was killed in Kurukshetra district in Haryana, where he had travelled to purchase cows.

• Pehlu Khan, a dairy farmer in Rajasthan was attacked by a rampagaing mob on April 2017. Khan had officially purchased cattle but the miscreants tore his receipts and he died after two days.

• Finally, the case of Mohammad Akhlaq, 52 year old resident of Bisara village near Dadri in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh was lynched to death with his 22 year old son critically injured. He was purportedly alleged to have slaughtered a cow and had stored beef in his house. Police rounded up 18 suspects in the case but

even after seven years the case did not progress. The marauders are still at large

Such cases of lynching are a part of the "instrumentalist strategy" as Christophe Jaffrelot observes in his book *Modi's India: Hindu Nationalism and the Rise of Ethnic Democracy* (2021). Cow acts as a symbol to keep the Hindu nationalist movement alive, marching slowly towards the transformation from a secular state to a saffron state. The Muslims represent the exogenous threat to the community. Therefore, punishing them forms the very essential rubric of creating the brand of Hindutva.

Cow Trafficking and the Role of Black Market

The ban on beef which was put by the BJP under the garb of ill treatment of animals, animal cruelty and unregulated animal trade was finally revoked by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in July 2017. But in the meanwhile, several illegal cattle transport corridors started functioning where illegal beef mafias whisked cows in trucks in the dead of night to carry them to those states where cow slaughter was legal. The business involved high risk as "gaurakshaks" or those enlisted in cow protection army would waylay these vehicles and violently torture the people. The interception videos would be publicly circulated through social media. The messages would be lauded by the nationalists. The panel below describes one such scene.
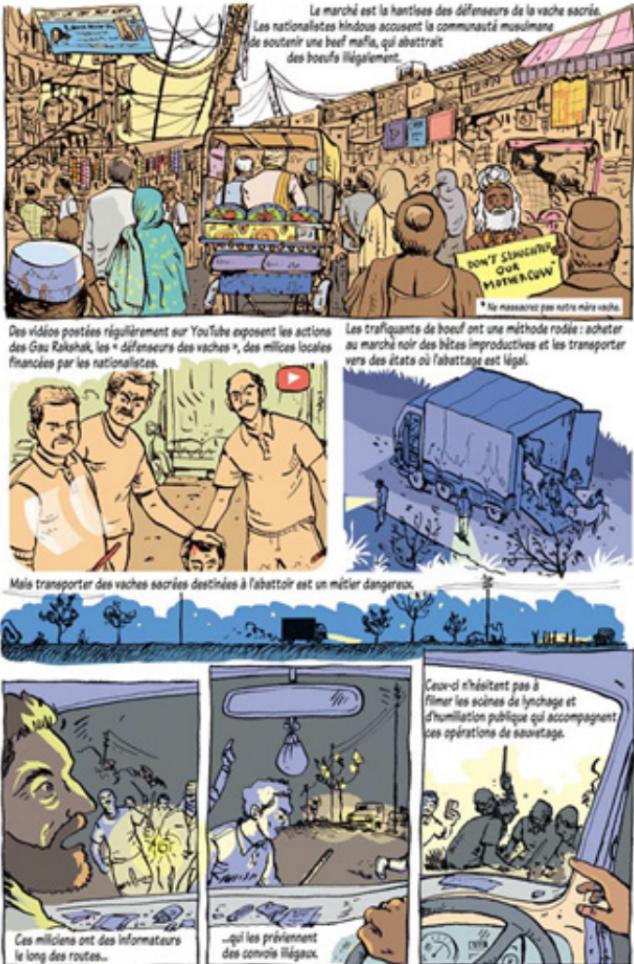
Brutal scenes of violence by the cow vigilantes enfolds in the daily columns of newspapers where victims were chained, stripped, beaten and in some cases even hanged from trees. Police stand as mute spectators. They are forced to say "Bharat Mata ki Jai" (Glory to Mother India) and pay with their blood the sin of touching the "cow." Even in some cases the traffickers pay huge bribes to the police to reach their destination. This increases the cost of beef in total. This saffron agenda of rabid nationalism has not been witnessed previously. This has stoked the interest of the writer of this graphic novel to probe into the cause and depict the real situation of India's democracy to the outside world. As he says, "People from my country are acutely surprised that Indians fight and kill over the holy cow. French are now introduced to the current India and how much it has changed since Modi came to power. It is hard to understand how Centre can build policies over religious ideologies."

Cow Slaughter and the scenario in the Liberal States

Compared to the states of the North, in South India, beef is a popular gastronomic flavour among the people and is savoured as a delicacy in states such as Kerala, Hyderabad, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The food is enjoyed especially by non-Hindu communities such as Christians, Muslims, and Dalits. But tension has started to brew in these states as well. Restrictions are imposed

upon the gustatory appetites of people and pockets of Hindu militant groups are bent on upsetting the liberal air blowing in these states. Veneration for beef has made forays in the vote bank of political parties. Therefore, even the reigning Communist Party is forced to reckon with the threat of Hindutva politics.

In the panel above, Sebastian Paul, who was a deputy in the Assembly in Kerala, affiliated with the Communist Party voices his chagrin about BJP and its divisive politics, "Notre devoir est d'entretenir la flamme laïque qui habite le Kerala. Les nationaliste ont fait des tensions communautaires leur fond de commerce. Lors des elections municipales de 2016, ils ont voulu faire du boeuf un enjeu electoral. Mais nous sommes trop attaches au bœuf" (Our duty is to maintain the secular flame that inhabits Kerala. The nationalists have made community tensions their trade. In 2016 municipal elections, they wanted to make beef an election issue. But we are too attached to beef).

Perilous Democracy: India in the Western Eye

The uprising of Hindu nationalist forces and the unleashing of sectarian violence has dented deeply into the idea of India's democracy and Western perception. Tamaris in an interview with the India Times remarks:

> Westerners have a lot of stereotypes about India. French don't know all the history of BJP, where it comes from etc. Basically, we all think that the entire India is still supporting Gandhi and Nehru's political ideology. So, while I was working on Hindutva, I was willing to show that India's recent history and politics are way more complex than we believe. And, that non-violence and yoga isn't what India is made of. (Sengar 2017)

India's democracy is increasingly being threatened day by day. Incidents of beef-ban, implementation of CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act wherein Hindu refugees from other countries will be given citizenship status in contrast to the Muslims who will have to prove their citizenship status based on domicile documents post-independence of the country), tight controls and restrictions imposed on press and media to throttle its voice, continuous interference with state administration where the government is run by non-BJP political parties, an effort to debilitate the judiciary, distortion of electoral mechanisms usher in the new age of India's democracy, the transitioning from a Hindu rashtra (Hindu nation) to Hindu Raj (Hindu Empire). This is a dangerous trend. Memories of colonial violence and incarceration are revived once again. The draconian Sedition Act (Section 124A) drafted by Thomas Babington Macaulay in 1837, a colonial act is revoked once again. Further UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) is slapped upon anyone who dares to raise question against the State machinery. Dissents and critics are gagged and the labels such as "anti-national," "urban naxals" are thrust upon instantaneously. Rationalist voices and thinkers who challenged this bigotry are silenced. M.M Dabhoklar, M.M Kalburgi, Gauri Lankesh were assassinated by the right wing Hindu fundamentalists because they dared to raise their voice against the Hindu religion. Father Stan Swamy, an 83-year-old Jesuit priest suffering from Parkinson's, who worked relentlessly for the cause of upliftment of

the tribals in Jharkhand for more than thirty years was accused of fomenting violence in the Elgar Parishad case. The minorities are bearing the brunt of these state sponsored violence. Again, in the words of Tamaris, "Minorities have the right to exist and live freely in this country, as anywhere else in the world. It is a major asset for India. Propaganda and lies will never be sustainable to build modern policies" (Sengar 2017).

The transformation from a liberal democracy to an illiberal one, from an open, inclusive culture of mutual tolerance to sectarianism, fanaticism and bigotry is a dangerous trend facing India today. As B.R. Ambedkar once said, "Bhakti in religion could lead to salvation. But in politics, Bhakti is a sure road to eventual dictatorship" (Ambedkar 2020, 10). The father of our constitution had warned the people about such blind jingoistic zealots who create a fiefdom of their own and become fascists, suppressing the rights of others. Sadly, each day we see a violation of the freedom of speech and expression which emblazoned the true essence of our democracy, "...freedom of expression is very important. Without it, a country cannot be democratic. The government should be able to accept and acknowledge critics and criticism. Also censorship is vague, people will anyway acknowledge the truth" (Sengar 2017).

Ironically, in a special summit held in Germany titled G7, among the presence of other world leaders from In-

donesia, South Africa, Senegal, Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi, has vouchsafed for the freedom of press, media and reiterated the importance of freedom of expression both "online" and "offline." However, we have seen in recent times how in our country crackdown operations are meted out upon the whistle-blowers. This comic book had tried to lambast and shred this veneer of India's liberal visage and unmask it in front of a global audience. Quoting Tamaris again, "People from my country are acutely surprised that Indians fight and kill over the holy cow. French are now introduced to the current India and how much it has changed since Modi came to power. It is hard to understand how Centre can build policies over religious ideologies" (Sengar 2017).

The hour has come to question the ongoing exclusionary practices implemented by the rise of a hegemonic Hindu Brahminic culture which is trying to stymie the growth and progress of the nation. In the Vedic society, Brahmins wielded absolute authority and power over the other castes. We have once again reverted to that time by valorising and creating a public space which will be the sole prerogative of the upper caste elites. Such discrimination has made the public space into the private space for these extremist forces. That is the reason for the intolerance and the imposition of a majoritarian politics. If the motto behind striving for independence was about to create equality in terms of wealth and opportunities, justice and achieving a common brotherhood

among all the people, the brand of religious extremism espoused by the BJP and its allied forces, will make this mission a far-flung dream, an impossible idea to achieve. We must relook into the hearts of men to find an answer and rise above the malaise of hatred. That is the greatest postcolonial challenge.

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Sinhala nationalism and Sinhala-Buddhist imaginaries in post-colonial Sri Lanka

Subhasish Guha

Introduction

As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, the British colonial period was marked by continuity and rupture, both of which formed the basis of the Sinhala responses to the Other. Models of inclusivist subordination and exclusivity were present before the period. But the balance between the two shifted as British power became more entrenched and the spatial exclusivism of the missionaries more pronounced. The following discussion will try to examine how these models developed in the post-independence period, focussing particularly on the growth

of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism and spatial articulations of what Coomaraswamy has termed a sense of "injured innocence or injured nobility" (Coomaraswamy 2000, 31) among Sinhalas. Both of these were linked to what Rāghavan called, "an ontological insecurity" (Rāghavan 2016, 13) in the face of threat. The discussion begins with relevant arguments from the pre-independence period and then moves on to the popular nationalism of the 1950s and spatial models suggested by key articulators of this nationalism. It then turns to the contesters of this nationalism – Buddhist monks and lay people who sought to challenge the ideas of inclusivist subordination and exclusivism which were implied through the 'models' discussed.

The aim of this paper is to examine inter-religious and inter-communal conflict in post-colonial Sri Lanka through the lens of space, focussing particularly on exclusion and inclusion of the religious 'Other', in the conviction that such a strategy will help in forming a nuanced understanding of the post-colonial and particularly the post-war period.

The beginning of the narrative

Paul Pieris tapped into the concept of the Sinhale in two historical narratives about the Kandyan Kingdom. He assumed that the Sinhale referred to the whole country. His linguistic choices were in consonance with and

appealed to an educated, largely middle-class Buddhist group which was united under the belief that the Buddhists and the Sinhalese suffered under colonialism. Three reports were commissioned to analyse the state of Buddhism in the post-colonial polity. Each of them voiced a sense of victimhood in the face of a threat.

A 1953 conference of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress resulted in the first of such a report in 1954. Its task was to "inquire into the present state of Buddhism in Ceylon and to report on the conditions necessary to improve and strengthen the position of Buddhism and the means whereby those conditions may be fulfilled" (Buddhist Committee of Inquiry 1956, Foreword). The report represented the island as "the oldest living Buddhist nation in the world," which had prevented "confused and conflicting accounts of the Master's teaching dominating the world" (Buddhist Committee of Inquiry 1956, iii). It stressed suffering at the hands of "Indian hordes" and under the Portuguese, Dutch and British (Buddhist Committee of Inquiry 1956, vii). It argued that the colonial land policy of the British resulted in the impoverishment of the vihāras. This is what the report had to say on the present:

> Most strange of all it has become possible to build Christian Churches on land dedicated to temples. One recent case is the proposed Roman Catholic Church at Yayamulla in the Kurunegala District on

> land dedicated to the Kataragama Dewale in Kandy.
> (Buddhist Committee of Inquiry 1956, vii)

The common refrain through the report was that Christian bodies had influence and privileges that made them "a serious threat to the State" (Buddhist Committee of Inquiry 1956, 16). The report also detailed how Catholic action was supposedly infiltrating political structures and how the Roman Catholic church was starting colonising missions. The report made it very clear that the threat here – to Buddhism's spatial superiority and to the state – was Christianity and the report's recommendations were geared towards ending what it perceived as the dictatorship of the Church (1956, 23).

The second such commission was that of the Commission of Inquiry, a Sinhala Commission, appointed in December 1996 to examine Sinhala grievances in the previous two centuries, including the appropriation of Buddhist ancestral lands. However, the interim report of 1997 focused entirely on the devolution proposals of the then government of Chandrika Kumaratunge, presenting them as "the biggest threat faced by Sri Lanka in its entire history of more than 2500 years" (National Joint Committee 1997, 1) because of their stance that accepted the "Northern and Eastern Provinces' as 'the traditional homelands' of the Tamils" (National Joint Committee 1997, 24), thus rendering the central government almost impotent. The final report presented the

Sinhala people as victims of vicious colonial policies that had robbed them of their livelihoods, their environment and their land, and also brought in "alien people (South Indian labour) to the lands expropriated" (Harris 2018, 146). The threat here, in addition to oppression by British colonisers, was the state itself, because it was about to sacrifice the unity of the land. The third report, commissioned after the 2004 tsunami focussed particularly on whether Buddhists affected by the tsunami had become victims of unethical conversions.

1953 also marked the publication of *The Revolt in the Temple*, designed to commemorate the 1956 Buddha Jayanti celebrations, which marked, within Sinhala Buddhist consciousness, the Buddha's death, 2,500 years of Buddhism and 2,500 years of the Sinhala 'race'. The work contained a history of Sri Lanka, an account of Buddhist practice and principles, remarks on 'Sinhalese Nationalism', and a chapter on Christianity and Civilization. With its motif of Tamils as vicious destroyers of Buddhism, the text was rife with the theme of victimhood. One such instance was its claim that , in 1215, "They [Tamils] killed man and beast, broke images, destroyed temples and books and libraries, made dwelling-places of vihāras, and tortured the rich for their wealth" (Amunugama 1953, 72). The British administration was called a "yoke" (Amunugama 1953, 98). The 1840 Crown Lands Ordinance was mentioned as the "dispossessor of Sinhalas from their lands" (Amunugama 1953,

106), condemning them to serfhood. The writers called for a Sinhala nation as a response:

> Just as in the spring-time of life the same message bursts from the unconscious to the conscious self and becomes objective, so to the Sinhalese there had come a reawakening, a desire to create a State which should be Sinhalese, reared up by Sinhalese hands, and breathing a Sinhalese atmosphere in the land of Sinhalese tradition. (Amunugama 1953, 438)

As a work *The Revolt in the Temple* gave voice to the popular nationalism that linked nation, religion, language and land, which moved centre stage in the 1950s. It is important to note the double-sided lineage of the consciousness that informed it. On the one hand, there was a motif, refined in the colonial period, of the Sinhalas besieged and victimised by the British. On the other hand, there was a yearning for continuity with the perceived polity of "the pre-colonial Sinhalese kingdoms" (Arasaratnam 1998, 44), when the whole island was claimed for Sinhala Buddhism.

A common refrain in the post-colonial period, connected to the theme of victimhood was "We [the Sinhala] only have one country. All other ethnic groups can look to other countries" (Harris 2018, 148). Such a feeling of victimhood is expressed in the following speech by a monastic Sangha when he says that:

> Sri Lanka is a Sinhala Buddhist country, although non-Sinhalese and non- Buddhists have lived here for a long time.… For the non-Sinhalese even if they do not have Sri Lanka as their home, their races have other countries of their own. Hence these races will never get annihilated. But the Sinhalese have one and only one country and that is Sri Lanka. (Schonthal 2016, 106)

In the face of the possible fragmentation of this idealised hierarchical model at the hands of the Tamil separatist Other from the 1970s onwards, many other spatial models emerged within Sinhala consciousness. The paper, as mentioned earlier will explore two such models: one geographical and one cultural. While the geographical model deals with the re-ordering of demography and geography to assert Sinhala dominance, the cultural model asserts that there was an underlying and unifying cultural ethos throughout the country, *Jāthika Chintanaya*, and that this extended to minorities.

Asserting Sinhala dominance through re-ordering demography

The proposed re-ordering of demography had its roots in the inclusivist subordination in the Kandyan Kingdom. It put forth the proposal that Sinhalas and Tamils should live throughout the island in numbers proportionate to their national ratio. Malinga Gunaratne, once involved with a colonisation project in Madura Oya, south of

Trincomalee, from 1983 to 1988 articulated it passion-ately. Gunaratne's position was rooted in the assumption that the ethnic conflict was land-based; that the unity of the country must be maintained and that separatism must be defeated. His solution was for Tamils to live alongside Sinhalas, as fraternal citizens, in the South and the North, in the overall national domain. This was done to avert any possibility of a separate state. However, his plans to make this happen failed. Gunaratne's following speech reveals the imaginary logic behind the project:

> You are assembled here today, not only to get a piece of land for you to live on, but for a more lofty pur-pose. This country is going through her worst peri-od in history. We are being threatened from all sides by separatists. What the separatist wants is land. A contiguous block of land which they propose to call Eelam. You are going to break that contiguity. You are going to live among the innocent Tamil people as brothers and sisters. Not as enemies. Please re-member that. That is my first lesson. We go into the midst of the peace loving Tamils and we live with them. We will protect them. It is only then that there can be a united Sri Lanka. We cannot allow anyone to draw a line across this country and say this is Sin-hala land, this is Tamil land. The land of this country belongs to everybody – Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, Malay, Burgher. This is our heritage, every inch of it has to be looked after jealously. Anyone has a right to live wherever he wants. We cannot allow separatist terrorists to carve out a part of this country for a dif-

ferent state in Sri Lanka.… United Sri Lanka should
be defended to the last drop of blood of her people.
(Gunaratne 1998, 80–81)

Interestingly enough, the national ratio model was also
advocated by the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP – People's Liberation Front) before their failed insurrection
of 1971 when they had come up with the idea of "the
reallocation of the country's population so that Sinhalese and Tamils would be dispersed all over the island"
(Jayawardena 2003, 66).

Another version of this proposal was brought forward
by C.M. Madduma Bandara. He proposed that Sinhalas
should control the riverbanks and rivers, and that each
province should have access to the sea. He proposed
a re-drawing of provincial territorial boundaries to accord with "the hydraulic logic of river basins" (Korf
2009, 101). The Northern Province would be smaller
and the East would be split into three provinces, each
with a Sinhala majority. Korf termed it 'cartographic violence' or a "Sinhala kind of geography" (Korf 2009,
101), a nationalist solution "to exert spatial control over
the island-space" (Korf 2009, 113). Liyanage, accusing
Madduma Bandara of having an "abstract, narrow and
empty" notion of space that ignored its socio-cultural elements called it "racism disguised in space" (Harris 2018, 152). Both these models can be seen in the
light of a Sinhala imaginary that pre-dated the arising of

full-blown nationalism. Both attempted, in line with the conceptual framework of inclusivist subordination, to integrate a potentially threatening Other into the ethos of the majority.

Jāthika Chintanaya

Jāthika Chintanaya, a concept theorised by Gunadasa Amarasekera and Nalin de Silva, with its assertion that there was an underlying and unifying cultural ethos throughout the country became popular in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Amarasekera defined it as "a culture based national ethos, and all-pervading national psyche peculiar to each nation" (Harris 2018, 153) – "a transcendent culture". In Sri Lanka's case it was "primarily a product of the humane, civilised way of life of the Sinhala Buddhists of this country over the centuries" (Harris 2018, 154). While he did not argue that Sri Lankan minorities did not have their own culture, he did assert that if they "went back to their own cultural roots and moorings", they would be led to "this transcendent culture" (Harris 2018, 151), namely they would find that they were, in their hearts, in tune with Sinhala Buddhist culture. De silva, for his part argued that this culture could be contrasted with 'Yudev Chintanaya' (Jewish Chintanaya), which was conditioned by rationalism, and an inability to live in harmony with nature or to see that phenomena were interconnected. Although this was idealistically advocated as a solution to ethnic division and racism,

it was nevertheless a further attempt at subordination through ideological assimilation. It meant that S.L. Gunasekera could accuse Tamils of racism for wishing to divide the island, violating its *Jāthika Chintanaya*.

The Other as threat or object of ridicule

The models just outlined represented the Other as friend provided that it was subordinate to Sinhala consciousness. However, this does not take away the fact that early on in the post-independence polity the Tamil and the Christian Other was portrayed as the outright threat. Jayawardena has demonstrated that, in the 1960s, Sri Lanka's left parties, which had supported minority rights, played a communal card, through appealing to the Sinhala perception that they were victims surrounded by "aliens" (Jayawardena 2003, 51). She focussed on the exploitation of two perceptions: that "foreign or minority-owned business ventures" had adversely affected Sinhala traders; that non-Sinhala people had an unfair share of government jobs and university places" (Jayawardena 2003: 50). In the mid-1960s, leftist newspapers carried anti-Christian articles, raised antipathy towards plantation Tamils and also opposed the Dudley/Chelvanayakam Pact on the grounds that it "betrayed the birthright of the Sinhalese" (Jayawardena 2003: 60). A stress on the archaeological aspect whipped up the fear that archaeological remains in the North and East linked to Sinhala Buddhism were being destroyed.

Sasanka Perera has demonstrated how art and comedy played into this by stereotyping Tamils- as the Other that could be ridiculed. He drew attention to a buffoon-like Tamil character, beloved of Sinhala theatre goers – Sergeant Nallathambi, created in the 1980s by the comedian, Nihal Silva. If the wider context of Tamils being represented as a threat is considered, this can be seen as another method of subordinating the Other. However, such an attempt would never be tolerated if it was directed at Buddhism or the Sinhala nation. The mass hysteria that arose in reaction to Stanley Tambiah's book, *Buddhism Betrayed?* was such an example. According to Perera this demonstrated both that non-Sinhalas writing about Buddhism would not be tolerated and that criticism, or even a questioning of actions undertaken on behalf of the Sinhala nation, was analogous to 'blasphemy'. (Perera 1995, 27)

Historiography designed to affirm or contest the Sinhala Buddhist hegemony

Historiography was used both in independent Sri Lanka and the colonial times to construct and augment the imaginaries just outlined. In his work examining the inscriptional and literary evidence Paranavitana argued that the "final abandonment" of the Jaffna peninsula, by the Sinhala "seems to have taken place in comparatively recent times" (Paranavitana 1961, 190). He further argued that a separate kingdom in the North only emerged

in the thirteenth century under the name Jāvaka, because of a Malay lineage (Paranavitana 1961, 193–204). Interestingly enough used the term "traditional homeland" (Paranavitana 1961, 217) to describe the relationship between Sinhalas and the North. Serena Tennekoon argues that it was after the anti-Tamil pogrom of July 1983 that historical discussions of this kind assumed the proportions of a national obsession with political and religious leaders "reconstructing the Sinhala past" (Tennekoon 1987, 1) in newsprint media. Tennekoon examined three debates in the Sinhala newspaper, the *Divayina* one of which was concerned with whether an independent Tamil kingdom existed in the North. The debate began with Gamini Iriyagolla, who judged the idea a "blatant lie concocted by Tamil politicians" (Tennekoon 1987: 3). Carlo Fonseka challenged this position and argued that historical evidence suggested that an independent Tamil kingdom existed in the North in the thirteenth century. The heated and long debate that ensued eventually morphed into one that echoed a colonial debate: the antiquity of Sinhala presence in the North and whether the 'Dravidians' had always been invaders of an essentially Sinhala island. The side that seemed to win was the one stressing that it was the Sinhalas, with an unbroken culture now under threat, which had historical priority. And when in 1991 the Vallipuram gold plate re-emerged in the media, Malini Dias of the Department of Archaeology claiming that it proved that by about the second century the whole of Sri Lanka was Sinhala dominated.

Anuradha Seneviratna was one such historian whose historiography justified this discourse. He argued that Sinhala and Sri Lanka were coterminous in history; Sri Lanka was the land of the Sinhala. Drawing upon the Vijaya myth he stressed that the princess whom Vijaya married might not have been Tamil but Pandyan and, therefore, Aryan (Seneviratna 1999, 12). He insisted that when Buddhism was strong in South India, Tamil was taught in Sri Lankan Buddhist monastic schools and South Indian Tamils were used as mercenaries, only later becoming invaders. He then goes on to argue that that Tamil settlements in Sri Lanka were not numerous until the tenth century and that, before the thirteenth century, there were only pockets of Tamil habitation. He pointed to the changing of place names in the North from Sinhala to Tamil and the eclipsing of Buddhist devotional centres because of Tamil migration after the thirteenth century. His solution for peace in Sri Lanka was assimilation: "The people who migrated to Sri Lanka from South India over thousands of years must assimilate into the majority community by sharing each others' cultural features and living together making the whole of Sri Lanka their only home" (Seneviratna 1999, 68–69). While lamenting the lack of this, particularly that Sinhalas could not live in 'Tamil areas,' he pleaded for Sinhalas to respect the language and culture of the Tamils, and for Tamils to respect the majority culture in order for "harmonious living" to be established (Seneviratna 1999, 69).

In such a context, when the Tamil nationalists used the phrase "traditional homelands of the Tamil people" to denote the North and the East of the island, it became a particular Sinhala grievance. This was seen as a falsification of history and a violation of the ideal ordering of the country, namely inclusivism rather than exclusivism. All this crystallised on the eve of the 1994 elections, when a letter, signed by monastic and lay Buddhists, stated as an "inviolable" principle that the Northern and Eastern Provinces should not "be accepted as the traditional homelands of the Tamils" (Harris 2018, 152). Then in 1999, the person who wrote as Kumbakarna, lambasted with moral indignation the possibility that "not even a footprint of a Sinhalese" would be allowed on the "sacred soil of the Tamil homeland" (Harris 2018, 152).

The author of this text argues that within Sinhala consciousness, the term "federalism" carried the same connotation as 'traditional homelands.' Gunadheera explains this in linguistic terms. He argued that the word federalism has no equivalent in Sinhala. He also highlighted that a notable Sinhala-English Dictionary stated that it was the joining together of "two separate entities" (Gunadheera 2011, 67). Therefore federalism for many Sinhalas implied that a separate state in the North and East would precede federalism – an idea that was anathema to the imaginary just elaborated upon.

Ellawala Mēdhānanda Thera, a leader within the Jāthika Hāla Urumaya (JHU), practised this form of historiogra-

phy, through archaeological researches into what he saw as the Sinhala Buddhist heritage of the North and East. He tried to establish that Sri Lanka "from its early history" was a unitary State, administered justly by Sinhala Buddhist kings. Early Tamil inscriptions in the North were explained through the need to cater for South Indian traders. He claimed that in the Jaffna peninsula alone there were 45 sites with Sinhala Buddhist ruins (Fernando 2016, 268) and, in the East, Hindu temples had been built over 100 Buddhist *vihāras*.

Mēdhānanda insisted that this heritage was under threat- not only from Tamils but, in the East, from "a future Muslim Fundamentalist rule" (Mēdhānanda 2005, 30). The LTTE were doing further damage, for instance taking bricks from stūpas to build huts. Nevertheless, Mēdhānanda did speak enthusiastically about a friendship with a Hindu priest in "Kadurugoda". The caption under a photograph of them both stated, "He wanted to pose with me. Then who wants to separate?" (Mēdhānanda 2005, 391). According to him inter-religious harmony was possible and necessary but on condition that this Sinhala Buddhist heritage was recognised.

The vociferous opposition mounted by the monastic Sangha, particularly from members of the JHU and the JVP, to any form of agreement between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE to enable co-operative delivery of aid to the victims after the tsunami of December 2004 should be seen in the light of this, since it appeared

to recognize these "homelands" and the LTTE as a legitimate ruler of them. A prevalent fear was that it might have enabled the LTTE to convince the international community that it was capable of administering a separate state.

Contesting the Sinhala Buddhist imaginary

Such a representation of history however did not go unnoticed and unchallenged. R.A.L.H. Gunawardana, in a classic study of historiography, contested the two historical imaginaries that he believed underpinned the ethnic conflict – that there had been a golden age of Tamil culture in Jaffna, and that Sinhala language and ethnicity had existed in Sri Lanka from the beginnings of its history. He argued that Sri Lankan Buddhism between the fifth and ninth centuries was pan-Asian and cosmopolitan by showing that Buddhists from many Asian countries, including India, lived in the island or visited pilgrimage sites. Therefore it was a false question to define Buddhist remains in the North and East as proof of Sinhala dominance. Roberts, in his article provocatively titled "History as Dynamite" similarly condemned the "retrospective romanticism" present in both Sinhala and Tamil reconstructions of the past, for instance those connected with the Vijaya narrative and the defensive Tamil reclamation of Rāvana. He pointed to the dangers of equating the "history of Sri Lanka with the history of the Sinhala," that is, those who became Sinhala (Roberts

2000, 11). Obeyesekere also called for a deconstruction of myths of racial purity in Sri Lanka, "the freezing of categories" (Harris 2018, 154), citing numerous examples of porous boundaries between Sinhala and Tamil. Two edited collections published by the Social Scientists Association (SSA) in 1984 and 1987 were hugely influential in contesting fixed, non-porous racial boundaries in Sri Lanka's history.

As far as media is concerned, James Rutman's article which appeared in 1998 arguing for Tamil and European "blood" within the ruling Bandaranaike family is a prominent example. The article went a long way in contesting essentialized ethnic categories. The idea of Jatika Chintanaya, was also challenged. Reggie Siriwardena contested the idea and argued for a multi-ethnic consciousness rooted in "tolerance, openness and pluralism". He argued that these qualities had been present in the borrowings that Sinhala culture had made throughout its history. H.L. de Silva, in 1991, called for a "higher nationalism", which rose above group nationalism to embody "a concept of co-existence and solidarity among all the different groups" (De Silva 1991, 6).

Even many monks from the Sri Lankan Buddhist monastic Sangha have contested the nationalist imaginary. Delgalle Padumasiri was one such monk who had worked in the North risked his life for the defence of Tamils. This is what he has to say in this regard:

> The solutions are crystal clear in Buddhism. The first step is to ask what caused the war in the North and East. Why did the young people take up arms? The same thing happened in the South. The key to the solution is rooted in this basic question. We must tackle the causes. (Harris 1998, 113)

The following is an excerpt from a speech by a monk Kumburugamuve Vajira:

> The Sangha, as an intellectual and inspirational community must enable the Sinhalese to rid themselves of avijja [ignorance] – of misconceptions that they are the superior race on the island and that other ethnic groups have to be subordinate. (Harris, 2001, 208)

These are but a fraction of the monks who diverged from the dominant discourse represented in the Sinhala and English press.

But still the Sinhala imaginary demonstrates a "holding on" to a historiography that can tolerate the non-Sinhala and non-Buddhist Other only if it is subordinated within a united whole. If subordination of the Other is threatened within this imaginary, then the Sinhala people are seen as in danger of extinction. It was to this that movements such as the Movement for the Defence of the Motherland (Maubima Surakeeme Viyaparaya), formed in 1986, the National Movement Against Ter-

rorism (NMAT), formed in the late 1990s and the Sinhala Veera Vidhana (SVV), formed in 1995, appealed. Their consistent position was that there was no ethnic problem in the country, only a problem of "Tamil racist terrorism" that had to be defeated militarily, if the Sinhala nation was to be saved. Without a harmonious resolution of such fissures, the fissures within the Sinhala nation-space are unlikely to disappear.

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Limits of Justice in a Welfare State: The Curious case of Bengali Muslims

Arju Khatun

Introduction: A note on Justice

How would we define Justice? Philosophers of every age have tried to negotiate with the definition of justice. It has been discussed in every platform of philosophy, political, ethical, moral and legal. Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book V has spoken of justice as 'virtue as a whole', relating justice to the notion of morality; Hume in his *A Treatise of Human Nature* understands justice as some set of rules assigned to us; Utilitarians think of justice according to the best usages of objects and

maximum happiness principle; Libertarians might think of justice in accordance to private property; Egalitarians think of justice as equality; and the contractarians would think of justice based on some social contract to enjoy common goods by the citizen. These schools of philosophers, mostly political philosophers, have addressed the issue of justice while taking into consideration their contemporary political, economic and social injustices and inequality. A conflict of interest between an individual and the group has always remained. While earlier, justice was more reckoned to be economic justice and liberty-equality quandary, gradually the ideas of justice have been trying to grasp social justice in its plural form. With the changes in our society both in terms of economic developments, and coming out of different individual groups, the formula of justice has to renew itself. The consequences of identity politics, which gained its prominence during the second half of the previous century, led the political philosophers of justice to think of new ideas of justice that would address the identity politics, economic inequality, injustices, cultural violence, free-market and its effect on minority groups and gender issues. Cultural and racial violence in the developing states have been eye opener to the philosophers and theorists to contextualize justice in accordance with empirical evidence, bringing it back from the metaphysical realm. With the independence of the colonial states and imperialism and blooming global market, the patterns of injustices take new forms, which have been influencing

the lives of individual subjects like never before. On the other hand, the once colonised country has the burden of running its democratic state. The case of India and its pattern of injustices has become more specific in the present political-economic developments, and deeply affecting and regulating the social lives of individual-subjects. Philosophies and theories of justice, which have now become "a master concept" (Freeden 2013, 18)[1], are mostly produced by the developed countries specifically for their immediate contexts. The paper will try to negotiate with those discourses of justice in the context of Bengali Muslims, and explore various possibilities and approaches that might be helpful for a better understanding of discrimination and inequality experienced by them. The paper follows Iris Marion Young arguments on not offering a theory of justice as its methodological framework. In the introduction of *Justice and the Politics of Difference* Young has shown why she prefers to offer a social critique above a theory of justice. Social critique allows the author to engage with the society she is presenting, it does not demand distance from the social problems which are the objective of discussion. On

1 India, too has formulated philosophies of justice and democracy, as pointed out by Amartya Sen in his Idea of Justice, in its historical time but how much these are practiced and appreciated in the present times would be a matter of enquiry. Although, the references to those events, not replicating them as both time and space have changed since the rule of Ashoka or Akbar, might help us in a better tackling of contemporary injustices.

the other hand, a theory of justice demands a position of universality and impartiality, and considers the given norms as necessary. It does not listen to the actual social context of the subjects of justice and mostly relies on the "impartiality" of the bureaucrats. The following discussion in this paper does not offer any ultimate resolution of justice for the Bengali Muslims, but it attempts to foreground the problems of the said social group, the differences they inhabit, and the effect of just ideals and norms on them.

The Bengali-Muslim Oxymoron(?):

The subject of this paper, the Bengali Muslims, are native to West Bengal, who speak Bengali language and practice Islam. The friction in the former sentence is, in general, the fact that Muslims speaking Bengali is not considered as an independent category. The grand argument on this dispute is that they belong to Bangladesh, the country of Bengali Muslim citizen-subjects. In West Bengal, although they speak a form[2] of Bengali language, their religion derails them from being accepted in mainstream culture. It gets more critical owing to the fact that the language Bengali has become synonymous with

2 The language spoken by Bengali Muslims is not considered authentic, and charged with the claim that it is a hybrid form combining both Bengali and Urdu lexicon. It is different from the Sanskritized language of Hindu Bengali.

the Hindu religion and culture[3] . The Bengali Muslims are discriminated against and by both the Hindu Bengalis and elite *Ashrafs*. Under the current Central Government of the nation, Muslims have gradually become infiltrators. The Bengali Muslims would be labelled as infiltrators, similar to the North-eastern Muslims. Bengali Muslims, who belong mostly to the working class, do not form a homogenous class, they are scattered in different parts of the state. The few sprinkles of educated-public workers are disintegrated among themselves, always contending to assimilate with the majoritarian hegemonic culture, and they are nowhere in the business class[4] . The economic and cultural factors of a group have significant effects on the status of the subjects in the citizenship policy. The poor would become illegitimate children of the state as failing to contribute in the

3 To the Hindu Bengalis, their 'Bengali' culture is interchangeable with their nationality. In the rest of the India Bengalis are seen as different from other socio-cultural communities. The possible reason could be the political ideologies and unending pride of the Bengalis in their great liberal culture. This differentiation got recently reflected during the Amphan cyclone, when the national media and central government were accused of not being supportive enough.

4 See "Indian Muslims and the Radical Democratic Project" an essay by Maidul Islam. Here he has discussed about Muslim businessman of India. The essay points out that only 2.2% of Indian Muslims belong to the "high income category" and only 1% belongs to the corporate executives. None of the 2.2% and 1% is from the Bengali Muslim group. They are mostly from South India.

economic market they would be considered to be a burden upon the state. Along with this, islamophobia and the compulsion to decimate them can bring catastrophic holocaust upon the poor Bengali Muslims. Violence revolving around religion is not unfamiliar in India. But even after the progressive repeating slogans of assertion of democratic, secular, liberal ethos of the country and implementation of free market, neo-liberal policies, privatization, and reformations, the spectre of religion and caste hierarchy still lingers. This has been producing patterned injustices not just in the forum of larger politics, but in their social and economic spheres too.

Bengali Muslims do not form a coherent group of citizens. They at best can be referred to as political subjects[5] . Niraj Gopal Jayal in his article "Reconfiguring Citizenship in Contemporary India" (2019) discusses the various forms of injustices and patterned violence that the Muslims and Dalits are experiencing in the wake of CAA-NRC upheaval. Muslims all over India are addressed as 'termites', 'infiltrators' in the political speeches by the ruling party. Jayal referring to National Crimes Record Bureau shows in the article that a ninety percent surge is noticed in 'cow related hate-crimes', the targets of which are Muslims and Dalits (Jayal 2019, 7). The Dalits and Muslims are becoming targets of

5 "Individuals are always already subjects", says Althusser. But the Bengali Muslims' process of subjection is intrigued with debates and conflicts.

intersectional injustices and inequality. The relief policies and funds that are made to address the inequality among the poor also need specific documents. ". . . the citizen was rendered a user or consumer of services than a right-bearing citizen", says Jayal (2019, 9). They are in a contractarian relationship with the state, where they have to tackle all the abrupt changes related to documentary, only after which they can have the opportunity of having rights. Referring to Hannah Arendt, Jayal distinguishes between "stateless" and "right-less" in which Arendt defines "right-less" as "the right to have rights". In this category, the minorities in India have been striving to find their rights[6] .

The Welfare State of India (or a utopia?):

The Part IV of the Indian Constitution considers India as a welfare state which follows 'Directive principles of State policy'. A welfare state follows the principle of equality of opportunity, equal distribution of wealth, protection of economic and social well-being of citizens so that they can enjoy rights of equality. The government under the welfare state has the responsibility to look after the well-being of those who do not have the minimal sustenance. Under the banner of Fundamental rights and constitutions of liberal democracies, every

6 In recent times, the discontinuation of Maulana Azad National Fellowship and 'Padho Pardesh' for minority students are the two latest examples of such discrimination.

citizen will have equal equality before law, basic rights and civil liberties. Along with this the government also would take care of the social and economic democracy of the citizens. As a welfare state then the nation-state should take care of the minority and backward classes so that they can prosper in an egalitarian society. Jayal in his article notes that other than the time of Emergency, the citizens have not been deprived of their civil and political rights. These rights were legally available if not always had the same value, but then Jayal notes, "today, regrettably, that is no longer true, and civil and political rights, as much as social and economic rights, stand imperilled." (Jayal 2019, 8) With the privatization of everything, the state is providing welfare to one section of people while leaving others to take care of themselves. The welfare slogans boast for equality of every citizen, but these come with certain limitations. To avail the opportunities subjects, one has to belong to some designated groups, BPL, OBC, SC, ST, retired public workers, disabled category and others. For example, the Jan Dhan scheme requires the pensioners to deposit money in their Jan Dhan accounts otherwise the system would automatically debit money from the accounts and if they fail to "contribute", their accounts will cease (Jayal 2019, 11). The schemes are for those who can earn and most importantly contribute to the economy. Maidul Islam in his essay shows, "84.5% of Muslim households spend no more than Rs. 20 per day and Rs. 609 per month" (Islam 2005, 71). Muslim representations in landed class

and private sectors are also very miniscule. The state in order to include these subjects in their welfare schemes is also marking or labelling them as distinguished, vulnerable classes of subjects that need aid, unlike the "unmarked" first-class-citizens who are already equal.

In the last few years, young and middle-aged men alike from parts of Murshidabad and Malda have been going to the Gulf States to work as menial labourers. The young boys are mostly educated but for lack of employment and any form of symbolic capital they have to opt to become labourers. The families generally sell some land to get the required money for visas and agents who would connect them with foreign companies. While the remittance is reasonable to keep the family going, this comes at a cost. The labourers work there for at least five years to save, so that they can start a business when they return. The state too enjoys its own share from the remittance, but in times of crisis the state does not always positively respond. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic the migrant labourers of India in Gulf States were severely affected, many companies had refused to pay them any allowance and the threat of sending them back has always been lurking. Jayal rightly says, India practices "productivist welfare capitalism", in which the state acknowledges productive works that can contribute in the economic development (also who can donate in political campaigns) (2019, 90) rather than the <u>classical welfare</u> schemes of well-being for all [7].

7 This note on migrant laborers to Gulf States from these two districts are based on my knowledge of the process, observed

Critique of Welfare State:

John Rawls, the renowned political philosopher of liberal tradition has criticised welfare state policy in his *Theory of Justice* (1971). He examines that in the welfare state "while some effort is made to secure fair equality of opportunity it is either insufficient or else ineffective given the disparities of wealth and the political influence they permit." (Rawls 1971, xv) He offers his theory of liberal socialist regime which would conceive both the classical libertarian principle of "property-owning democracy" and the subjects in this society would be in a fair system of cooperation. Denying utilitarian and Locke's contractarian theory, Rawls proposes his "Difference Principle". In a position of 'veil of ignorance' where no one would know about themselves, their origin or desires or needs, or even their position in the actual society, in this hypothetical situation the subjects would form principles of justice in fair terms. Since no one knows about their present positions, Rawls thinks, there would be no partiality. The subjects are to be believed as moral, equal, rational and free individuals and must agree on the benefit of society as a whole. He offers two basic principles to be followed by the subjects. The first principle is about basic liberties: political liberty, freedom of speech, liberty of conscience, thought, individual liberty, personal property and other basic rights. The second

around my place in Murshidabad over the years. This has not been documented as of now. Although, the migration literature from Kerala-Gulf might help us understanding the overall conditions of the minority labourers.

principle includes distribution of justice, where Rawls writes, "while the distribution of the wealth and income need not be equal, it must be to everyone's advantage . . . positions of authority and responsibility must be accessible to all" (Rawls 1971, 53). Rawls in his theory of 'justice as fairness' allows inequality, he adds, as long as it is for the benefit of the least well-off. He believes that since the subjects in the first principles have agreed upon equal liberty, the well-off would ultimately help the worst-off to fight inequality. Philosophers and theorists of most schools of Justice have criticised Rawls. But if we try to think of this 'justice as fairness' concept, what would be the consequences? Rawls asks to create a 'veil of ignorance' or a hypothetical position where everyone is equal. That might not be possible here, but what if we imagine the Indian constitution as the moment of "justice as fairness". The constitution has indeed much emphasis on democratic liberal society. But even after independence an elite-nationalist rule pervades in India. Although everyone is considered equal then how come India is struggling with injustices and inequalities because of religion, caste, gender? How come minorities, in this case the Muslims, are treated as second-class citizens, always in fear, and discriminated against for practicing "illiberal"[8] religion?

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8 See the works of the religious anthropologist Talal Asad for a better approach to the question on why with the coming of modernity, Islam had been categorized as an illiberal religion.

Even when the richest investors of India donate for the least well-off, do they (the people of lower strata) become equal or even closer to equal?[9] Not only economic inequality, but they have been struggling to live with the basic formal respect in their own society. Chantal Mouffe[10] while critiquing Rawls, remarks on the point of rationality. She points out that reason or rationality is itself a hegemonic concept, because this is determined by the ruling elite class. And in Rawls's theory only those who can practice rationality, can understand liberalism. Rawls would agree upon the principles which are reasonable to his political liberalism, and he excludes ill-legitimate demand. Then, if something does not suit the principles of the rich well-off, would those others be excluded. (?) The central government's emphasis on creating a Hindu nation can very well be the result of a "liberal-rational" dream, which does not want to share space with the "illiberal" Islamic religion. This is an inversion of the original position and the constitution, and shows the failure of liberal-socialist regime which does not have space for dissent and complex pluralism.

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9 The recent Oxfam International report on Indian economy shows that the richest "10% of Indian population holds 77% of the total national wealth. 73% of the wealth generated in 2017 went to the richest 1%, while 670 million Indians who comprise the poorest half of the population saw only a 1% increase in their wealth." Refer to https://www.oxfam.org/en/india-extreme-inequality-numbers for further details.
10 See 'The Limits of John Rawls' Pluralism'. (1997)

Ideologies of the Subjects:

Periyar E V Ramasamy (1879-1973), a Dalit social activist, had criticised Indian nationalism because of its Brahminical attitude. Periyar argues that the Indian state is an articulation of Brahminical *Ramraj*. Karthick Ram Manoharan in his essay "Freedom from God: Periyar and Religion" says that Periyar believed that "an elite class in India stood in the way of the law of equality. The elite class, the Brahmins, used the Hindu religion to ensure their superiority in society and the state was an instrument to cement this." (Manoharan 2019, 5). The elite class, the rationales among the subjects, chooses religion over morality, ethics and liberty principle. Periyar in response to the rule of Brahmin elites believed that science and rationality can save the subjects from the oppressing rule of elites. He gave much emphasis on 'rationality' believing that it would eradicate religion and caste hierarchy. But religious morals overpowered scientific rationality. Interestingly, Periyar was never against the practice of religion and believed that this could give the lower castes and minorities a "resource for organization". But as it seems religion is also providing feelings of togetherness to the Brahmins in their adventure of subjugating the lower castes, Dalits and impure religion.

But what Periyar observed about the state and Brahmin hegemony decades ago when India was struggling for independence, remains intact and has become more lay-

ered. Althusser observes in his extrapolation of 'ideology' that "the whole of the political class struggles revolves around the state" (Althusser 2008, 14). The state is the repressive state apparatus which functions primarily by repression and violence, and then ideology. On the other hand, the ISAs function predominantly by ideology and, in a symbolic way, also function by repression. The state, which is above the law, rules on the ideologies of the bourgeois ruling class. While the ideological state apparatuses belong to the public institutions, these also follow the ideas of the ruling class. Althusser says, "no class can hold state power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and, in the State Ideological Apparatuses" (Althusser 2008, 20). To sustain its ruling position this class has to reproduce its ideas in every sphere of a society. Be it school, religious institutions, family, courts, media, arts and others. The ISAs are the space of struggle and contradiction. Althusser notices that earlier religion was the predominant ISA which is now replaced by education[11] .The recent changes in the syllabus of CBSE board on chapters on secularism, nationalism and others, is an example of the State's controlling its ideologies, and so has become the National Education Policy. The state is helping the elite, providing them cheap labour. The policies of trade unions have more focus on the business than the well-being of the workers. Under the privatization

11 Although in the case of India, both religion and education are going hand in hand while complementing each other.

regime the state is no more liable to address the crises of workers. This privatization is helping the elites in securing their surplus and capital to themselves only. In this mode of business production, the rich will become richer, and consequently the workers will be eradicated. Maidul Islam notes that 92.6% of Indian corporate board members belong to the "forward castes" (Islam 2005, 73). The state with its ruling class is forcing for a homogenized culture that is based on the principles of Brahminism and relegates other culture to the margin. The state, using media and police, is targeting the Muslim and Dalit youths. These sections of subjects are already discriminated against in educational and employment opportunities. They mostly are self-employed, work as small peasants and as workers at construction sites and small business owners. Lack of cultural and economic capital does not allow them for higher studies. The ISAs are the place where the ruling class with the aid of the State is reproducing the relations of production and exploitations of the workers. These are the sites of class struggles.

Carl Schmitt in his critique of liberal justice or injustices says that the concept of "humanity" in liberal discourse does not do any help. They can no longer sell the trope of humanity. Citizens need to be seen as "political unity" where the emphasis would be on "demos" and "people". In the liberal theory, from the very beginning subjects are thought as "equal", which is not so. This universal at-

titude suppresses the subjective defences of groups and individuals. The process of "cultural plurality" in liberalism makes way for cultural imperialism, where one group of people, generally the elite class's culture and identities suppress others and at the same time it tends to coerce others to follow the hegemonic culture and rules. This tends to reproduce the forms of hierarchy, which has its effects on the political and social lives of others. This does not help in representing differences which are subsumed by the pressure of consensus. Liberalism stands for pluralism only in the form of diversity of interests and calls for a negotiation among themselves. But this needs to be included in the political constitutions, where it would acknowledge multiple possibilities of identities and practice of those identities. According to Mouffe, we have to think of a form of commonality strong enough to institute a "demos" which is simultaneously compatible with pluralism and recognise the inclusion/exclusion paradigm. Mouffe in her definition of citizenship says, it must be a "system of rights constitutionally guaranteed to all members of a political community, and to affirm that these rights should not only be political but also social". (Mouffe 1997, 4).

Recognising difference for redistribution:

How should we define 'politics' and 'social' with respect to the diverse identity politics and their justice? Iris Marion Young in her *Justice and the Politics of Difference* gives

impressive definitions of 'politics' and 'social'. To her, 'Social' is process of identification of people by themselves and others, "which lead them to associate with some people more than others, and to treat others as different" (Young 2011, 9) and 'politics', concerns with "institutional organization, public action, social practices and habits, and cultural meaning insofar as they are potentially subject to collective evaluation and decision making" (Young 2011, 9). Young stresses that the philosophies of justice have emphasized on political institutions, on distributive policies and most of them are formulated away from empirical experiences. She offers a post-structuralist understanding of the justice theory [12] which emphasises on 'difference'. This might be an influence of radical feminist movements of 70s and 80s seeking recognition and justice for women, workers, LGBTQs, Blacks, ethnic and racial minorities. Nancy Fraser too gives importance to the politics of recognition. Fraser argues that the dominant narrative of justice is limited to the economic distribution which comes from the liberal tradition. Recognition, on the other hand, comes from the Hegelian philosophy of consciousness, where the subjects are in a reciprocal relationship with each other, and sees the other as equal and at the same time as different. Recognition, under the realm of identity politics, has been seen as different

12 Young prefers 'theory' over 'philosophy'. She believes that theory has a more critical distance and an understanding of objective reality than the philosophy which is often created in abstract forms.

from "class politics"[13] . While Young does not directly insist on the combination of recognition and redistribution, Fraser shows that as long as we do not recognize the social groups in its difference, and respect them for their status, we cannot properly address injustices. A group's status in a society influences its economic conditions and political unity. Recognition, in the traditional theories of justice, is discredited with the allegation that it belongs to 'ethic' and self-realization. But for holistic development of any group, it is important to see recognition and redistribution together. Young says recognition of the differences is not an opposition to the norm, and if we think so we are actually discriminating and stigmatizing those subjects as marginal and outsider.

Nancy Fraser prefers "two-dimensional social differentiation" [14] that combines both "recognition or status dimension and "redistribution or class like differentiation" [15](Fraser 2003, 21). Exploitation, violence, powerlessness, marginalization, cultural imperialism, the five faces of oppressions[16] need to be addressed to un-

13 Class politics sees the economy as the primary remedy for justice.
14 Fraser discusses this in the sphere of gender inequality and injustices.
15 Her concept of status is derived from Max Weber, which defines people on 'non-economic' particles.
16 Marion Young describes these five points to recognize an oppressed class suffering discrimination in political, economic and social life.

derstand the patterned injustices faced by the minority groups who are different from others in terms of their way of life. Bengali Muslims are not a typical Marxist class; they are dispersed as different groups in capitalist society, united by their religion, way of life and their political non-unity. They have become the exception, a category that cannot be a part of universalism. Their cultural and religious differences from the Hindu Bengalis, their status, are affecting their socio-economic life. Their misrecognition in the social sphere does not help them to proliferate in other political and economic spheres. Unless they represent themselves in political institutions and are allowed to make policies, they cannot positively reduce injustice. If the state does not understand the various inequalities and injustices suffered by a specific social group, it cannot possibly throw policies of welfare and well-being from an upper-class vantage point. The process should be a bottom-up approach. For an economic transformation of the different social groups the state has to recognize the cultural attitudes of the working people without stereotyping them as "cultures-of poverty" (Fraser 2003, 24).

The citizen-subjects too have to make themselves recognised. Althusser says that the ISAs are the site of class struggle which also comprises contradictions. The ISAs are the space of possibility. The Bengali Muslims have to utilise these apparatuses as a space of dialogue with the state. He says:

the class (or class alliance) in power cannot lay down the law in the ISAs as easily as it can in the (repressive) state apparatus, not only because the former ruling class are able to retain strong positions there for a long time, but also because the resistance of the exploited classes is able to find means and occasions to express itself there, either by the utilization of their contradictions, or by conquering combat positions in them in struggle. (Althusser 2008, 21)

Although the Bengali Muslims do not form a site of coherent class struggle in the Marxist definition of class, nonetheless to address the exploitation in different social and cultural spheres they need to consider the high road of fighting recognition[17] . Chantal Mouffe in her concept of 'radical democracy' refers to Michael Walzer's 'complex equality' and Etinne Tassin's idea of disassociation of citizenship from nationality. Tassin's idea of the need to break the public policies from the dogmatism of nationalism seems difficult to realize in our current political scenario. While it is always desired that public and private spheres, state and religion, civil law and religious law keep distance between themselves, these necessities of enlightenment and secular modernity have failed to blossom. In Michael Walzar's 'complex unity', equality is

17 The recognition of Bengali Muslims is also becoming more important than ever in the present times of the crisis of citizenship. They need to be recognized not only because of their economic justices but also to withstand the conflict of legal identity.

the central objective which also respects liberty (Mouffe 1997, 7). Success of one group does not allow them to dominate other groups or other parts of cultural life. Walzer adds that distribution should be done in a way that reflects the diversity of the groups and their social meaning.

Recognition of plurality on part of the state becomes crucial for distribution of justices. They have to make way for practices and policies that have a consensus on plurality. This plurality can combine differences of individuals, gender, working class, religion, language, caste and other such things that form the status. While it is not possible to address all of them at a time and get the best result, still initiatives should be taken step by step. The professional of a social group can help in escalating the process. Young shows that the professional middle class gets benefit from the relations of production and exploitation, however moderate it is, because of their certain position in the structure of labour division.

They have the position to exercise power over the powerless, which do not have any autonomy or authority over themselves or any other. The professionals in one way or other are bound with the exploitative terms of capitalism. If they recognise those and stand for a good reason for the inequalities of the oppressed group, it will have a positive effect. Most of the Bengali Muslims, who are associated with any professional-respected job, do

not care much for the lower section and they themselves have no unity. The lower section is belittled because of their working-class identity. The middle-class professionals, rejecting the backward status and label of illiterate group, seek to ascend to the hegemonic culture with the desire to be assimilated. This is a genuine drawback in the Bengali Muslim social group. To emancipate themselves from the clutches of misrecognition and maldistribution the workers have to lead the way. Philosophies of justice or theories of justice should include voices of the subjects who are battling injustices. The question is not 'can the subaltern speak?', it should be 'do we listen to the subalterns?'. Listening in a sense to understand and positively engage with them. Methodologically, the native representing herself is not much celebrated. It is assumed that their representing themselves would not be an objective observation and analysis. But similarly, the outsider representing and assessing the native runs the risk of prejudice. The possible way could be to make space for their agency so that they can actively participate in policy making.

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Redefining the Concept of Democracy in the New Latin American Constitutionalism: Legal Pluralism and Communitarian Systems

Antonio Carlos Wolkmer & Lidia Castillo

Introduction

The beginning of the twenty-first century (roughly, 2008 to 2018) witnessed profound changes in law and political culture in numerous Latin American countries. In many cases, the foundations of constitutional theory in Latin America have been questioned. For the first time, political systems began looking to democratic and popular movements for guidance in achieving social change. Countries heavily influenced by the Constitutionalism of European tradition (such as Bolivia and Ecuador), set on a new political-constitutional trajectory by expe-

riencing a political process of decolonization through a general recognition of communitarian values inherent in their indigenous traditions. This paper relies on case studies to argue that old European notions of constitutional law can be rejected and new versions of constitutional democracy and Constitutionalism can emerge.

The theoretical issue that is addressed in this paper is the extent to which the constitutions of Latin American countries can be transformed into political visions that embrace a pluralistic vision of the state, judicial pluralism in law and communitarian democracy. Contemporary changes to the constitutions in Bolivia in 2009 and Ecuador in 2008 demonstrate that change is possible, although never easy. In these countries, change only occurred when normative tools were used to challenge the secular liberal-capitalist model, creating a new political theory that embraced the needs and values of the people living in these countries. In short, what was needed was a complete rejection of European colonizing theories that centered on elitism and the historical exclusion of local values. Challenging political ideas that enhanced inequality needed to occur in order to allow for social, political and legal change.

Thereafter, this paper will address three issues: (1) how a theoretical methodology of historical-critical analysis can reveal the distinctly liberal foundations of Nation States in Latin America (in South and Central America). This methodology will reveal the contradictory process

of the independence movements which are better described as the emergence of oligarchic practices, conservative forms of dominance and historical exclusions of indigenous populations, Afro-descendants communities and peasant masses; (2) how the examination of constitutional documents reveals the political foundations of what can be referred to as "a new Latin American constitutionalism". A specific focus on the Bolivian institutional order will reveal how institutional innovations that broke with the Western constitutional tradition were achieved and how a formal recognition of another state organization occurred (that is, the plurinational state) – how pluralism can emerge as a unique political system; (3) finally, grounding politics and history with theory, by considering the written works of local academics in the context of the 2009 changes to the Bolivian constitution, it will be shown that currently, the European vision of liberal democratic representation is failing. What is emerging is a process of decolonization that introduces and legitimizes a model of communitarian democracy. This study will therefore reveal and conceptualize the changing nature of Latin American political society, as it moves away from old European notions of political control that are better described as colonialism.

The Dependent National-State: A Brief Historical Background

Modern Nation States in Latin America developed differently than European Nation States. The first ones did

not form and develop through the European model of politically ordered national societies [1] or through liberal economic policies[2]. Numerous Latin American scholars have proven that Latin American Nation States began to form in the early part of the nineteenth century (Cardoso 1977; Rubeinstein 1988; Garavaglia 2011; López-Alves 2003). Contradictory political ideologies and the rise of nationalist independence movements sought to oust the Luso-Hispanic colonial settlers and set Latin America societies on a unique trajectory (Kaplan 1983, 55; Cardoso 1977, 80; Rubinstein 1988, 07-11; Garavaglia 2011, 153-4; López-Alves 2003,11-19). State formation in Latin America started with the independence of colonies and gradually consolidated independent political bodies through a complex process of national unification. There were numerous power struggles between liberals and conservatives, centralists and federalists, Catholics and lay people (Bruit 1985, 12). Eventually, bourgeoisie classes managed to consolidate power and impose their will on other social segments. National unification movements utilized their new found political strengths and established new forms of social stratifications that allowed them to find strength by oppressing all other groups who opposed them, setting the path for state-building in Latin America (Bruit 1985, 12). In further complicating the development of Nation States, Iberian bureaucratic colonial systems had a significant role in the formation of peripheral societies in the re-

1 Kelsen's Theory of Law.

2 Brief History of Neoliberalism.

gion (Kaplan 1983. See also Uricoechea 1978; Schwartz 1979). They administered governmental functions by centralizing all political, social and economic decisions: it was an "integral and participant element of production of those social relations that gave structure to the colonies." (Bruit 1985, 11).

The Latin American model of state building then developed out of a model that saw local political elites succumb to the demands of the Spanish colonizers. Colonized land was exploited so that capital could be accumulated, thus legitimizing a new way of organizing civil society. This was done by implementing social changes in society that ignored the legitimate interests of indigenous peoples and other localized communities. Public space was 'captured' so as to ensure the interdependency between rural oligarchies and foreign bourgeoisies and to ensure the consensus of subordinates through policies aimed at attracting and building 'clientelistic' loyalties into a system of distribution of privileges and advantages.

The post-independence movements that later developed were built off a system that defined itself by the very constrictions that made it so unstable. An 'idealized' theory of a republican liberal State sought to encompass numerous political and institutional factors that could not be placed into a stable political paradigm. These complexities have led to numerous academic interpretations of political and economic domination in Latin

America's historicity of state building.[3] In addition to the traditional Latin American experience, characterized by external dependency and inner centralism of the State, there are some paradoxes inherent in the formation process of certain countries in the region that must be acknowledged. In this respect, there was indeed a desire to create a liberal State which "ended up deteriorating in practice (...)", making it impossible to consolidate the classic European State model (Cardoso 1977, 80). Cardoso argued that behind the liberal formulation was an oligarchic structure expressed in the form of a "traditional power of authoritarian nature" (Cardoso 1977, 81). Therefore, the Latin American Nation State is either an abstract, homogenizing and arbitrary body resulting from social antagonisms, or a phenomenon produced by the deterministic set of economic structures, instrumentalizing the domination of a corporate segment of one class over another (Martner 1986, 142-153).

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3 "The Oligarchic State", Torcuato di Tella, Gino Germani, OtavioIanni, Francisco Weffort); "Capitalism Dependent Sate" (Fernando H. Cardoso, EnzoFaletto, AnibalQuijano etc.); "Underdeveloped Capitalist State" (Theotonio dos Santos, Rui M. Marini, André Gunder Frank etc.); "Pretorian or Military State" (Samuel Huntington, Alain Rousquié); "Patrimonialist or Bureaucratic- estamental State" (RaymundoFaoro, Simon Schwartzman) "Authoritarian-Bureaucratic State" (Guillermo O'Donnell, David Collier etc.); "Corporate State" (Alfred Stepan, Howard J.Wiarda, Philippe C. Schmitter); and "Plurinational State" (Alberto Acosta, Alvaro Garcia Linera , Catherine Walsh, Boaventura de S. Santos, etc.)

There is evidence to support the claim that there are some common historical developments that led to a common 'peripheral Nation State' across the region. Weffort indicates the 'specificity' of the dynamics of the building processes of some States and their necessary relationships with developments of the liberal-individualist Nation State tradition (Weffort 1980, 97-100, 107-113. See also dos Santos 1978, 108-109; Mazzeo 2015, 105-106). In examining the peripheral Nation State in Latin America, it can be observed that there are two models in the region that have guided the development of the building of national identities in fragile and disjointed societies in Central America and Brazil.

During the independence movements of the early nineteenth century, two case studies highlight how economic interests sought to create the Nation States that exist today. Central America is distinct from the contradictions that characterize the Latin American state model (particularly in South America sub-region) of Spanish colonial administration, especially when it comes to the way the crisis and decay of the colonial power occurred in this particular geopolitical space. Authors such as Rivas argue that the postcolonial process was peculiar because "… in Central America there were no independence wars. Civil wars did not occur before, but after the political act (of independence)– which was a pacific, elitist, and condescending one…" (Rivas 1977, 62). The State was built upon the fragments of colonial power after

several civil wars. In Central America, the State was not organized to maintain territorial integration but to start it. It was the result of a process of disintegration of the colonial administrative space. With the absence of mineral extraction and because of extensive poverty in the region, the state building project became a process of managing power, through which individuals and officials linked to the state (for instance priests, soldiers and bureaucrats) became extraordinarily rich, while the majority of the population were excluded from the wealth that was created.

Equally unique is the case of Brazil. During the period that elapsed between the power transfer from the Imperial Portuguese State to an independent Brazil in 1822, an 'independent' and 'sovereign' State formally imposed its power upon the people living within the territorial boundaries of the 'new Brazil.' These people were not represented nor did the State consider the interests of the general population. The Brazilian 'State' was truly a conservative elitist society and not one institutionally organized around a national identity (Pires 1986, 47-8). The imperial State encouraged the professionalization of bureaucratic social sectors, which were already trained in the traditions of mercantilism, patrimonialism and Portuguese absolutism (de Carvalho 1980, 177-9. See also Schwartz 1979). These people were 'socially recruited' from sectors linked to mining, trade and land ownership (Weffort 1980, 178). From its origins and

throughout Brazil's development, oligarchic 'elites' and landlords played an influential role. The State, being the all-powerful force, dominated all aspects of society. Brazil's development is based on two fundamental pillars: first, the rise of oligarchic elites, who built a bureaucracy of magistrates (justices) and law professionals during the Monarchic Empire (1822-1889); second, the establishment of a bureaucracy of civilian technocrats in alliance with military groups during the Republic (from 1889 onwards).

In building the 'new Brazil', economic elites incorporated the patrimonial and centralist system of the Lusitanian administration, resulting in a State with no real national identity and completely detached from the objectives of mainstream society, grass-roots organizations and peoples of African and indigenous offspring. The new State failed to encompass the cultural diversity that existed among the population. Despite genuine attempts of self-determination of indigenous and local communities, colonizing Lusitan powers [4] shifted real power to colonial elites by creating a monarchical system that transferred recourses to a stratified bureaucratic elite, formed by owners of slaves and land. This declining

4 The Portuguese powers in the colonial period aimed to utilize the trafficking and exploitation of slave labor, to develop an economic monoculture based on sugar cane, to administer politically through a centralizing and exclusionary patrimonialism, and to impose a Jesuit Christian culture of the "Contra-Reform". Wolkmer, 2018, p. 76-83.

system of aristocratic power of the Brazilian monarchy and the rise of local agricultural elites simultaneously advanced the independence of the country while consolidating the national project of those social segments comprised by property owners, bureaucrats benefited by the State and an internal bourgeoisie dependent on the foreign market.

The result was an unequal, inert and fragmented society, politically and economically divided, leading to events such as Independence (1822), the Proclamation of the Republic (1889), the Oligarchic Revolution (1930), etc., moments when shifts in the hegemonic, imperial and republican social strata emerged. However, the Brazilian peripheral National State maintained the paradigm of the European National State, being disconnected from much of society.

Moving into twentieth century Brazil, political dissent turned to constant conflicts, with the presence of military corporations and the increase in social inequality processes. A dissident bourgeois sector, a large number of excluded groups (due to the non-recognition of their native cultural, ethnic, and racial autonomy), and the fragmentation of political body into regional powers, led to the structuring of a peripheral National State (especially during the period after 1930). Power was projected from above as an attempt at unifying political project (Pires 1986, 51) that sought legitimacy through undemocrat-

ic practices while advancing a project of conservative modernization that was aimed towards a national unification of an oligarchic society (represented by white and slave-owner elites), thus causing the widespread discrimination and exclusion of culturally distinct social sectors, whether indigenous communities, or the majority presence of the Afro-descendant legacy.

Such experiences can be described as peripheral Nation States. When considered from a regional perspective, require an in-depth contextualization of political practices and instituted regulations of the centralizing traditions of Eurocentric colonialism that influenced its initial development. The historical absence of the excluded masses is a common characteristic that must be highlighted due to its prevalence amongst most Latin American countries, since it formed a general practice of concealment that lead to a culture of marginalization and segregation., preventing the development of truly democratic States that were representative of the Latin American multicultural societies.

To avoid falling into the classical model of reductionism proposed by liberal theorists, statist collectivism or authoritarian corporatism, it is necessary to think beyond the traditional models of State building, which were developed in the West in the seventeenth and eighteen centuries and cannot be applied to the Latin American experience. Political and legal principles that built on ideals

of rationalist Illuminism and liberal-individualistic ideas say little about the Latin American multicultural experience. As will be discussed in the next section, a different model of political-constitutional shaping will allow for a new look at Latin American State building, a reordering that is critical, decolonial and based on a 'new' Latin American constitutionalism, arguably more appropriate.

II. Legal Pluralism and the (re)foundation of the State

The first section of this paper demonstrated that the political, legal, economic, and social homogenization of States was formed by a particular version of Western modernity, which was based on a liberal idea of the Nation State. The 'liberal Nation State' first served the interests of monarchies and then of the bourgeois economic elites. In Latin America, this model served the whims of the dominant classes in the new colonial regimes. The driving force was the liberal-individualist idea of capital accumulation that fostered the expansion of a dependency capitalism (da Silva 2014, 131). Despite the successful imposition of Western liberal constitutionalism, some Latin American countries successfully resisted the liberal expansion into Latin America. The new constitutional design of the 1999 Venezuelan Constitution, the Ecuadorean Constitution of 2008 and the Bolivian Constitution of 2009 are examples of Nation States that departed from the European traditions. These constitu-

tional changes have proven to be significant in changing the social and legal dynamics of the old colonial regimes in the region. In short, they have created a new framework that can be described as 'New Latin American Constitutionalism' (Pastor and Dalmau2012, 11-49).

This vision of 'New Latin American Constitutionalism' has been challenged by some (Gargarella 2015, 169-172; Santos 2010; Schavelzon 2012) and is rarely acknowledged in the international literature. However, new versions of constitutionalism in Latin America can clearly be seen when looked at from a structural perspective. Indeed, the very philosophical and political foundations of the colonial regimes are now being openly challenged. Today, the sociological and political interest groups that are shaping a new Latin America are distinctively different from the old political powers that formed a Western version of State-building in Latin America.

To truly understand the constitutional changes/innovations that are shaping a new Latin American version of State building, it is important to look beyond the actual constitutional text, its terminology and organization of State and government and focus instead on the different symbolic meanings that underpin legal reforms. Constitutional innovations can then be examined from a socio-legal and historical-political perspective. The benefit of this new approach is that it acknowledges the influence that social movements and indigenous com-

munities have in the new constitutional debates. Interdisciplinary approaches further capture the sociological, historical, and political momentum that gave rise to new constitutional theory.

Latin American countries are increasingly looking to reopen and redraft their constitutions, drawing heavily from new theories that are based on legal and political pluralism. For example, the Republic of Venezuela adopted its new constitution in 1999, which was anti-colonial in nature and prioritized political independence. The traditional liberal idea of rights did not fit in the new Venezuelan constitution, that was politically popular as it decentralized power and created new institutional structures that focused on the common good of people and society. The idea was to reform Venezuelan society. Article two of the new constitution confirmed political pluralism as a guiding value. This new constitutional experiment set Venezuela on a new political trajectory and paved the way for constitutional reform in Ecuador and Bolivia (Pisarello 2014, 112-4).

The new Ecuadorian constitution of 2008 can be considered another turning point in the Latin American experience as the new constitution further recognized the importance of legal pluralism and confirmed the importance of indigenous communities. Article 57 recognized the plurality of the State. Article 171 formally recognized the rights of indigenous people, stipulating the impor-

tance of respecting traditional lifestyles (Wolkmer and Wolkmer 2015, 42). Legal pluralism, as recognized in the Ecuadorian constitution, confirms the rights of indigenous peoples to coexistence and self-determination. The constitution must therefore recognize different conceptions of justice. The legal recognition of pluralism does not depend exclusively on the formal constitutionalizing of rights, but on the eradication of "power differences between the groups that come from different legal systems […]" (Freire 2009, 27-54).

The new Bolivian constitution of 2009 is another example of a constitutional change that was the result of a constitutional process that built on a deeper understanding of anti-colonial resistance and the political struggles of numerous social movements. Indigenous and labor groups were motivated by the need to take back control of government and economic resources. Although these movements date back to the Aymara rebellion and the siege of the city of La Paz, performed by Tupac Katari in 1781(see Thomson 2002), it wasn't until the early part of the twentieth century that a true independence movement could be realized. Independence was achieved by drafting a new constitution that reflected the need for decolonization and the significance of an independent Bolivia (Alcoreza 2013, 408). Some of the social and economic struggles that put Bolivia on a new path include the conflict over the privatization of water supplies in the department of Cochabamba in April

2000, over natural gas reserves ("the gas wars") in the department of Tarija in October 2003, and the new constitutional debates that informed the text of the new Bolivian constitution.

The Bolivian constitution is more than the expression of anti-colonial indigenous resistance struggles. It also draws from principles of non-western Andean Philosophy known as cosmovision (Estermann 1998). This philosophical foundation is "(...) a thought centered on Andean harmony and pragmatics" (...) whose "rationality is organized and corresponds with principles (...) that develop in laws and practice (Ullauri 2015, 128). Estermann, who has called this same philosophy as 'ecosophy', emphasizes the holistic conception of life (Estermann 2013; Estermann 2015, 1998-9). In its political context, this theory is meant to express the relatedness of everything and the order which guarantees this energy flow (-cha) in the polar complementarity (step). The Andean approach provides a viable alternative to the capitalist model and requires constant growth. From a constitutional perspective, the defending principle is "living good" (*vivir bien*, or *buen vivir*). While the Constitution of Ecuador uses the quechua version: *sumac kawsay*, the new Constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, uses the aimara term suma qamaña as a general term which would also include the Quechua version of *allin kawsay*. However, the latter term is not literally used in the Bolivian Constitution. It is mentioned in Article 8, paragraph

I, as qamaña sum and the Spanish translation of "living well" has been added. In the same paragraph, the Andean ethics trilogy was added (*ama qhilla, ama llulla, ama suwa*- "do not be lazy, do not lie, do not steal"), another expression in Quechua, to balance the monopolistic use of Aymara with *qamaña* type: *qhapaj ñan*, translated into Spanish as "noble path or life." (Estermann, 2013).

The explicit and implicit introduction of the principles of Andean philosophy are not just mere romantic acknowledgments or understandings of the indigenous traditions and cosmovisions. They demonstrate that Bolivia is already on a path of decolonization, leaving behind the historic uncritical reproduction of European liberal paradigms by strongly recognizing the subjectivity of its people. Thus, the Bolivian constitutional text mirrors deliberate political choices. For example, it denies the concept of the Republic, not because of its meaning in political science, but due to its meaning in the collective imagination of the Bolivian people, since for them it refers to a centralist, monocultural, homogenizing, and liberal State. The political significance that emerges from this symbolic use of language is key to understanding the popular appropriation of this feeling and potential transformative actions (Leonel Júnior 2014; Leonel Júnior 2018).

Among other novelties introduced by the Bolivian constitution is the contextualized model of "plurinational

State". This new re-organization of State powers has been considered a (re) foundation of the State and has a significant relationship with the pluralistic understanding of social, political, and legal relations. Legal pluralism in the Bolivian constitution therefore involves a transition from a monistic understanding of law to a pluralistic one.

Key to understanding the new Bolivian political system is understanding Bolivia's territorial structure. One of the main achievements of the new constitution is the transition to decentralized governance. The new territoriality/social pact provides for the following constitutional compromises: a) the pluralistic re-organization of the central State powers; and b) the four types of autonomies: departmental autonomy (art. 278); grassroot peasant and indigenous autonomy (arts. 290 – 297); regional autonomy (arts. 281-283) and municipal autonomy (art. 284-285) (Fernández 2009, 244).

The Plurinational State is therefore a new model of political organization that reaffirms and strengthens territorial autonomy in order to achieve the wellbeing of the populations historically excluded, by following the principles of the Andean philosophy. The preamble of the Bolivian constitution clearly States the basic principles of the Bolivian version of pluralism: "…We, the Bolivian people, of plural composition, from the depths of history, inspired by the struggles of the past, by the

anti-colonial indigenous uprising, and in independence, by the popular struggles of liberation, by the indigenous, social and labor marches, by the water and October wars, by the struggles for land and territory, construct a new State in memory of our martyrs…We have left the colonial, republican and neoliberal State in the past. We take on the historic challenge of collectively constructing a Unified Social State of Pluri-National Communitarian law, which includes and articulates the goal of advancing toward a democratic, productive, peace-loving and peaceful Bolivia, committed to the full development and free determination of peoples" (Bolivia 2009; Alba and Castro s/d).

Continuing with an analysis of the new Bolivian constitution, the first article further introduces the fundamental bases and model of the State: "Bolivia is constituted as a Unitary Social State of Pluri-National Communitarian Law (*Estado Unitario Social de Derecho Plurinacional Comunitario*) that is free, independent, sovereign, democratic, inter-cultural, decentralized and with autonomies. Bolivia is founded on plurality and on political, economic, juridical, cultural and linguistic pluralism in the integration process of the country" (Bolivia 2009; Teófilo 2014; Arkonada 2012). According to the above provision, the Bolivian Plurinational State is based on plurality and pluralism which manifest themselves as "legal pluralism" and eventually originated the notion of the Plurinational State.

Legal pluralism in Bolivia can also be seen in secondary legislation and in judicial decisions. The organization of territorial autonomy (Statute nº 031, 19 July 2010, called in Spanish: "*Ley Marco de Autonomías y Descentralización -Andrés Ibáñez*") and in the jurisprudence of the Plurinational Constitutional Tribunal, as seen in the case law related to the conflict of indigenous peasant jurisdictions, have given rise to new discussions on legal pluralism. In this regard, the dispute raised by the communities of Zongo (La Paz, Bolivia) has been emblematic.

The most ambitious project aimed at achieving a consolidation of legal pluralism in the context of the new constitutionalism, when compared to the previous State traditions in Latin America, was instituted by Bolivia in 2009. It implemented "a plurinational State not only in formality – through metaconcepts – but, materially, with the affirmation of indigenous autonomy (articles 289 et seq.), of legal pluralism (article 178), and of a system of indigenous jurisdiction, not subordinated in relation to the State law (articles 179, II, 192)" (Pastor and Dalmau 2010, 36-7). The ordinary jurisdiction described as "heavy colonial heritage" (VARGAS 2009) has now a wide and innovative catalog of rights of the Indian peoples (articles 30 et seq.), such as the election of its representatives through their own forms (article 211), and the creation of a Plurinational Constitutional Court with the presence of indigenous jurisdiction (article 179)" (Pastor and Dalmau 2010, 36-7).

The 2009 Bolivian Constitution became the leading force for the institutionalization of legal pluralism. Key to this movement was reforming the Bolivian State so that it recognized and included indigenous, anticolonial, and plurinational principles. The political process that represents the most authentic Pluralist Constitutionalism also values the strength of indigenous rights, the right of an intercultural education system, and the unprecedented version of legal equalitarianism. The colonial imposition of a uni-national state failed in destroying the roots and identities of the many indigenous peoples, who recognize themselves first as Quechua and Aymara, and later as Bolivians (Wolkmer and Wolkmer 2015, 42). In addition, the Bolivian Constitution achieved material results by clearly recognizing it and hierarchically equating the State law with indigenous and peasant Justice (Article 179, I, II, III).

Section II of the Bolivian constitution is where legal pluralism is truly realized: it recognizes that pluralism originates from the diversity that exists in society and codifies pluralism into State law. Due to countless polemic discussions generated by the constitutional text about judicial egalitarianism, the Bolivian legislator published Law n. 73 on the 29th of December, 2010 (*Ley de Deslinde Jurisdicional)* in order to regulate dispositions of equal judicial function. However, it did not reach its legislative objective and ended up becoming an element of restric-

tion and limitation on the applicability of legal pluralism. Becoming an instrument of controversy, it was rejected by many sectors of the indigenous communities (Wolkmer and de Almeida 2013, 36)[5].

The latter description of the Bolivian Plurinational State, which recognizes the existence of different nations and indigenous peoples within it, shows a portrait of an innovative alternative to the traditional liberal paradigm of the Nation State. Such changes are remarkable. Since colonial times, there have been conflicts between competing state interests. The Spanish colonizers attempted to quell such conflicts through the use of repressive laws that attempted to reorganize pre-Hispanic communities. While indigenous communities resisted, they were never able to overcome the repressive power of the State. The changes in the new Bolivian constitution represented a new era that was characterized by a new contextualization and reorganization of State power within a structure that absorbs and legitimates the "forgotten" and excluded indigenous communities. This was a major accomplishment for the resistance movements that unsuccessfully fought to reimagine their place and voices in State formation and in the nation building process.

Looking beyond the constitutional changes in Bolivia, some Latin American countries, such as Peru, Venezue-

5 See also BOLIVIA. Statute nº 031, 19 July 2010. Ley Marco de Autonomías y Descentralización "Andrés Ibáñez" (2010).

la, and Ecuador, have welcomed legal pluralism into different areas of public life. There experiments have had varying degrees of effectiveness. However, such changes are not immune to contradictions, distortions, and inefficiencies in their institutionalized processes (Wolkmer and Ferrazo 2016, 63). It should not be forgotten that the demand for a new legal order originated in the cultural, political, and legal plurality defined by autonomous communities. The Unity Pact brought together many popular organizations, such as indigenous groups and workers unions, to push for change. A common goal was the realization of legal pluralism, which can be defined as:

> We understand as the coexistence, inside the Plurinational State, of the original and peasant legal system with the occidental legal system, on an equal footing, respect and coordination. Thus, legal pluralism is the normative core, founding of this new model of Plurinational State, politically and constitutionally institutionalized. (Pacto de Unidad. Garcés 2010, 71).

The recognition of the pluralist State set the stage for other advances in the new constitutional project, such as a new version of democracy, one that valued communitarian and autonomic powers.

III. Redefining Democracy: Communal Power and Pluralistic Society

Unlike the Western European tradition that values liberal democracy, Latin American versions of democracy

have embraced grass-roots initiatives that value customary democratic practices in communal societies. There are numerous collective groups with community narratives in Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Bolivia (Villoro 2006, 7).

Various autonomic communities form the structure of the Plurinational State. Self-government is key (Wolkmer and Melo 2013, 35; Fernández 2008). Article 11 of the third Chapter of the Bolivian constitution formalizes another version of communitarian democracy, specifically referencing the importance of equality between men and women. One of the great achievements of this project is that communitarian values are reflected in the electoral process (Wolkmer and Ferrazo 2014, 224). Such systems represent a substantial break from the past, moving away from the former oligarchic liberal democracy and hegemonic political representation. In Bolivia, change is achieved by embracing a new legal/political system that allows for "binding referendums and new mechanisms of popular participation and equal consensual democracy to include indigenous communities and their decision procedures" (Wolkmer and Fagundes 2011, 385; Linera 2006, 71-82).

This system is a victory to indigenous peoples who have been fighting to change the liberal representation model of the past that was 'transplanted' by criollo oligarchies of the Iberian metropolis into the Latin America colonies and was never really an authentic democracy. Instead, it was a patriarchal and segregationist. It was

a bourgeois representative democracy at the service of a white and elitist population, founded on a Eurocentric individualistic liberal conception that was so deeply embedded into the social constructions that even after the formal independence of the Latin-American States, those colonial structures remained practically unchanged. Despite this, the limits of liberal oligarchic democracy in their colonial political trajectory after independence must be acknowledged in order to understand the process of 'reinterpretation' of the political and legal concepts through the historical specificity of the Andean constitutional experiences.

This decolonial transitioning to a Plurinational State goes hand and hand with the new communitarian and pluralistic democracy, directly linked to the interests of indigenous and peasant populations, which opposes itself radically to 'imported' model of representative democracy (Wolkmer and Ferrazo 2014, 214). This liberal model was unable to fully overcome inequality and segregation in the Latin-American societies that permanently experienced populist dictatorships and other forms of authoritarian governments. In this sense, the Nation State hastily called 'Latin American democracies' are actually "oligarchies" and the term "democracy" does not match with the content of these political regimes, which were in fact, a succession of dictatorships experienced in the continent (Borón 2009, 27).

In fact, the new pluralist constitutionalism present in

the Bolivian Constitution of 2009 and its decentralizing and autonomic mechanisms seeks to overcome the limitations and perversions of liberal democracy and expand participatory practices, bringing and consolidating traditions of the grass-roots autonomic communities. Progress was achieved through referendums as they allow citizens to decide on issues of national importance. Citizens are able to present a bill directly to the legislature. People have the ability to revoke the mandate of a government official. Popular assemblies exist and are known as 'cabildos'. Although the decisions made in these meetings do not automatically bind, the State is required to consider these directives. These examples serve as evidence of a viable system of participatory democracy in Bolivia (Leonel Júnior 2014).

Conclusion

Pluralistic societies, such as those found in Bolivia, demonstrate that a new model of constitutional democracy and legal pluralism can exist in Latin America. The significance of these new movements is that they put into praxis a new understanding and/or reframing of the concept of democracy. This new version of democracy is needed so that collectivities can practice autonomy while the State recognizes the aspirations of diverse national populations and their identities. The concept of communitarian democracy, understood as the administration of communal power, exercised directly by the

community, is, then, the result of a praxis and not just a "new" terminology; the product of direct engagement and participation of the population in constitutional debates and constituent processes; the proof that it is possible to transcend the limits of State legal centralism, representative liberal democracy, and capitalist economic rationality to empower collective subjects formerly excluded. On the other hand, such redefinition (and resignification) of democracy carried out by the Bolivian constitution paves the way for the establishment of a new version of communitarian democracy by other communities (Wolkmer and Ferrazzo 2014, 225).

This type of democracy also comprises the representative modality but with important particularities: "… however, unlike representative democracy, here, the representative does not monopolize the Law nor technically controls the autonomous ability to decide. Sovereignty is not delegated, it remains at its source: the social will… belongs to a collective entity that undertakes projects in common. The decision is exercised by collectivities through collective deliberation" (Patzi 2014).

A second characterizing factor that distinguishes the classic forms of representative democracy from communitarian democracy is the total untying of collectivities from the traditional political parties. Communal representatives "are elected directly, which means that deputies, departmental and municipal councilors are

elected by a mechanism of shifts and rotation, and not by political parties. This does mean the end for political liberalism or of representative democracy" in Latin America (Patzi 2014).

In short, due to the colonizing, elitist, and conservative legal traditions of Latin America, and regardless of what may be diagnosed and affirmed in the near future as to the institutional directions of countries such as Bolivia, which is subject to retraction processes, to the return of "internal colonialism" and to "deconstitutionalization", it should not be denied or minimized that the advanced model of Latin American Pluralist Constitutionalism was formalized and enshrined for the first time by the Bolivian Constitution of 2009.

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Review of Theodora Dragostinova's *The Cold War from the Margins: A Small Socialist State on the Global Cultural Scene*, **Cornell University Press, 2021, pp.330., $19.95 (paperback), ISBN13: 9781501755552, ISBN10: 1501755552; $0.00 (Ebook) Open access version is available for download from Cornell University Press web site: https://www/cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/9781501755552/the-cold-war.**

Gvantsa Gasviani

What can the small country of Bulgaria tell us about the inner political and social dynamics of the global world order during the Cold War? The history of the Cold war has been studied from multiple perspectives; however, it has been rarely explored from the margins of the former superpowers. Historian Theodora Dragostinova takes up this challenge in her latest book *The Cold War from The*

Margins: A Small Socialist State on the Global Cultural Scene. Dragostinova uses a "pericentric" approach, a method that puts the periphery at the center of analysis to investigate how the small state of Bulgaria traversed the intricate dynamics of the late Cold War. The pericentric method resembles postcolonial methodology, bringing the voices of marginalized groups at the forefront of academic research. Nevertheless, Dragastinova does not use the term 'postcolonial' in relation to Bulgaria since Bulgarian experiences of Soviet domination is not like European model of colonization.

Similarities between postsocialism and postcolonialism have been widely debated (Tlostanova 2015). Sharad Chari and Katherine Verdery (2009) have closely analyzed connections between two 'posts' and have eloquently summarized that "Post-Cold War ethnography could build upon work by "natives," as analysts of their own condition, in their own terms" (p.29), which Bulgarian born Dragostinova does excellently in her book. Postsocialist Bulgaria is a space where postsocialist, postcolonial, and other post-dependance factors are closely intertwined (Tlostanova & Mignolo 2009). This under-explored situatedness is at the forefront of Dragostinova's book. Her work complicates the dichotomous scheme of west versus east, or north versus south, and demonstrates the agency that is hidden underneath the notions of 'coloniality' and 'smallness.' Similar to Bulgarian historian Maria Todorova, who argues that post-

colonial theory cannot be applied to Balkan states such as Bulgaria, Dragostinova demonstrates that despite certain similar experiences (Moore 2001), postsocialism cannot be equalized with postcolonialism.

In Chapter one, Dragostinova offers background information on the internal situation in Bulgaria during the l970s. Combining Bulgarian and international perspectives, the chapter investigates long-lasting stereotypes associated with Bulgaria's image of an obedient Soviet ally and "the master satellite." (24). With a rich detailed analysis of Bulgaria's 1300th anniversary celebration, Dragostinova depicts a more complex picture of late socialism in Eastern Europe and demonstrates the role of official culture in upholding state socialist regimes. She argues that Bulgarian cultural policies revived Bulgarian "patriotism" and helped Todor Zhivkov's "benevolent dictatorship" (25) to reestablish relations with its citizens and undercut dissident movements.

In chapter two, Dragostinova explores cultural relationships between Bulgaria and its Balkan neighbors. She argues that while cultural nationalism provided more legitimacy on the domestic front, it complicated Bulgarian international affairs, especially in the Balkans. Bulgarian officials encountered complications in their attempt to promote Bulgarian cultural repertoire in the Balkans because Bulgaria's neighbors had different interpretations of their mutual past. However, Bulgaria's successful

encounters with Greece demonstrated that ideological alignment was not the necessary component for successful relationships between neighbors during the late Cold War.

Chapter three demonstrates how Bulgaria used the 'master's/Western tools' to promote its image. Through harnessing their closeness to Europe and imitation of European image and values, Bulgaria was able to develop relations with the capitalist West, particularly Western Europe and the United States. Dragostinova also underlines that, from the Eastern European perspective, the official culture represented an ideological tool that could be used to spread socialist ideas and underline the superiority of the socialist state. Bulgarian diplomats had to walk a fine line between culture, ideology, and propaganda. Depending on their location, they utilized different languages: at home, Bulgarian cultural exchanges with the West were presented as propaganda of the socialist ideals, while abroad the emphasis was primarily on the Bulgarian historical and cultural contributions.

Chapter four continues the theme of Bulgarian cultural interactions with the West; however, it focuses specifically on the interactions between Bulgarian officials and Bulgarian immigrants to the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Dragostinova's analysis of the Bulgarian diaspora in the West complicates the simplistic picture of an unambiguously oppressive state

of Bulgaria that was portrayed by sources such as Radio Free Europe (RFE) and the Voice of America (VOA). The chapter concludes that Bulgarian officials were able to connect with Bulgarian emigres through the promotion of cultural nationalism, which once again underscored the role of national ideology under late socialism. However, it would have been interesting to see how Bulgarians were perceived in the US and FRG and whether their position as representatives of the Second World led to feelings of Otherness in the First World.

The fifth chapter takes the reader away from the European continent and explores unusual examples of East-South communication and adds to the scholarship of alternative global connections established during the Cold War. These connections between Bulgaria, Mexico, and India demonstrate how actors on the margins were able to create unconventional cultural geographies on a global scale. Throughout their trips to India and Mexico, Bulgarian officials frequently used the categories of North and South instead of the predominant Three Worlds model, underlining the importance of South-South communication. Bulgaria presented itself as a newly developed socialist country and argued that the Bulgarian model could serve as a successful alternative to capitalist modernization. Dragostinova concludes that Bulgarian engagement in the Global South demonstrates the ability of a small state to use unusual ways of communication to affect the cultural and political

imaginations. These dynamics further demonstrate the challenging position Bulgaria had in the Cold War. One the one hand, Bulgaria associated itself with the Global South, however, it did not see or treat all members of Global South equally, which is demonstrated in the fifth chapter.

The final chapter continues the discussion of the multiple geographies of global contacts and exchanges. Dragostinova analyzes Bulgarian involvement in Nigeria and argues that its interest was twofold: access to a booming petro-state and the promotion of Bulgarian culture. The Soviet-backed policy of peaceful coexistence between different socioeconomic systems became the foundation of Bulgarian policy in Africa. Bulgarian official rhetoric in Nigeria used the language of anti-imperialism and condemned western neo-imperial practices. However, despite anti-colonial sentiments, Bulgarian officials often showed a paternalistic and condescending approach toward the Nigerian population, which is not surprising considering the phenomenon of postcolonial mimicry (Bhabha 1984). Bulgarian officials mimicked the Eurocentric approach and spoke of Nigeria as a developing state in need and offered the Bulgarian experience as a model for a successful transformation.

In the epilogue, Dragostinova summarizes that from the perspective of a small Bulgarian state, the 1970s presented a time of opportunity for small countries from

the margins to enter the global stage. She underlines one more time that cultural nationalism played a crucial role in promoting Bulgaria's image both domestically and abroad. Unfortunately, it also contributed to a growing pressure on Muslims to assimilate, especially the Turkish communities. Dragostinova concludes that our knowledge of the 1970s is much broader if we include the experiences of so-called peripheral actors, while our perception of late socialism is fuller when we analyze it in a global context.

The historical narratives of the Cold War continue to shape our perception of the past, present, and future. Thus, it is crucial to have more complex and nuanced studies of Cold War realities. Dragostinova's account of Bulgarian cultural politics in the 1970s represents a brilliant analysis of the history of socialism from the pericentric perspective. *The Cold War from the Margins* is a book for anyone who is interested in alternative ways of studying history and culture. The book also identifies future research sites such as the Global South perception of small socialist states like Bulgaria and the racial dynamics of their encounters, thus, this work can be particularly beneficial for emerging scholars and graduate students.

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Review of *From Marx to Global Marxism : Eurocentrism, Resistance, Postcolonial Criticism* ed. Kerstin Knopf, Detlev Quintern, Inputs: Trier, 2020. Paperback. pp 269. € 34.50

Mursed Alam

> Inheritance is never a given, it is always a task. It remains before us just as unquestionably as we are heirs of Marx, even before wanting or refusing to be…. – Derrida, *Specters of Marx*

> Every seeing has a direction, every seeing is done from a particular place and time…Marx wrote from a particular historical context, we are reading him from a different historical context…. Marx has not been analysed from the perspective of India. – Sudipta Kaviraj, *Marx and the Search for Heaven*

> I am no ist or cist. Marx is my brother. - Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *The Other*

Karl Marx never saw the much anticipated revolution happen during his life-time. And we are living a time that witnessed almost all the experiments in socialist revolution arguably fail. Does this mean the end of the road for Marx's thoughts and Marxist politics? Certainly Marxism has lost its aura in the academic circle, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the onset of neoliberal hegemony across the world. Marxism is generally criticised for pontificating a grand narrative- therefore impervious to difference- of human liberation, for it's supposed Eurocentrism, it's Enlightenment legacy in providing a blueprint of universal telos of history, class exclusivity etc. Much of the criticism is valid. But that does not mean that Marxism has lost its analytical purchase? On the contrary, since the global financial meltdown in 2008 - and in the post-COVID 19 world- there has been a renewed interest in Marxism and Marx' thoughts. Recent experiences have shown that even during the pandemic global inequality has increased exposing the sinister and exploitative nature of capitalism. Rather than a thinker of socialism (Marx did not write much on the nature of a future socialist world), Marx is better known for his prognosis of capitalism. Certainly capitalism today is not what it used to be during Marx and Engels' time and the changing dynamics of exploitation and imaginaries of human liberation also call for a critical engagement with Marx's ideas today. Kerstin Knopf and Detlev Quintern edited *From Marx to Global Marxism: Eurocentrism, Resistance, Postcolonial Criticism* is an

important contribution in the ongoing debates on the relevance and possible horizons of Marxist politics today. The book does not treat Marx as a prophet while never losing sight of the critical relevance of Marx's ideas today and thereby perhaps does the best service to Marx and Marxist politics.

Marx Today: Questions and Return (?) to Marx

Marx, as Lenin wrote, combined three traditions in his thinking- the German critical-theoretical tradition with which Marx engaged as a Young Hegelian, British political economy and French utopian socialism. He, however, critically engaged with these traditions of thought- deconstructing their aporias and lacunas for a materialist understanding of the human condition and liberation from exploitation. As is well-known, Marx's ideas of liberation of humanity inspired 'the wretched of the earth'- both in Europe and outside. In fact, the first socialist revolution happened outside of industrialised Europe- in a semi-feudal society like Russia. Needless to say that Marxism also animated the hopes and utopias of most of the former colonised countries- from Africa and Asia to the Middle- East. However, much before the fall of the USSR, the reports of Stalin's excesses, and the attack on Tiananmen Square in China made many disillusioned about the actualisation of the Marxist utopia. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union bemused the Marxists across the world

while enthusing the capitalist block with triumphalism. However, the triumphalist march of neo-liberal economy has pushed millions across the world to precarious existence as there have emerged greater and sharper ways of disenfranchisement and exploitation with the continuation of primitive accumulation and violence. Trickledown economics have failed and global inequality, as shown by Thomas Picketty and the recent Oxfam report, has sharply increased. There have emerged enclaves of the North in the Global South and South in the Global North. The spectre of Marx is therefore haunting the world. But how to respond to this hauntology of Marx? How to re-animate our politics today? Does that need an uncritical return to Marx, as some advocate, or do we need to, if necessary, think beyond Marx and incorporate the critical voices both from within Euro-American contexts and from the former colonised countries in order to pluralise our understanding of Marxist politics today? In fact, the Marxist tradition is rich with diverse critical voices ranging from Gramsci, Rosa Luxemburg, M N Roy etc. How to profitably make use of such critical voices? Marxism needs renewed and auto-critical immunity to assert its relevance and that involves new hermeneutics of Marx that rescues him from being bracketed within closures of isms. Such deconstructive understanding of Marx will enable a real homage to him as done by important interlocutors like Badiou, Zizek and Derrida.

The Book under Discussion

The questions, therefore, that animate the discussions on Marx and Marxist politics today are many. We can mention some of them here - Why is there a right-wing shift of the working class across the globe? What Marx can offer in a time when the very existence of the planet Earth is threatened? How to re-envision and reenergise class politics? What about the implicit historicism in Marx's thought? How to overcome the Eurocentrism of Marx and of dominant Marxist thinking even today? Some of these questions provide the philosophical and political arch that holds the chapters of the present book together.

'Dirty Capitalism' and Marx's Prognosis

Apart from the introduction and a preface by Ranabir Samaddar, the book is divided into five thematic sections. The first section, *Critical Re-reading of Marx* comprises of three essays by Jakob Graf, Kolja Lindner and Urs Lindner, and Hans S. Brass that scrutinise some of the basic tenets of Marxism in the light of recent theorisations and current geo-political conditions.

Jakob Graf start off by drawing our attention to the ambiguities in Marx's conceptualisation of capitalism as found in Critique of Political Economy. Marx, in order to provide a general notion or an "ideal average of capi-

talism" abstracted from the prevailing conditions in England and other western countries. As abstractions do, Marx in his conceptualisation tends to ignore the specificities to understand the "laws of motion" and provided what Graf calls "clean capitalism" with real subsumption of labour to capital , "free" wage labour and the laws of "perfect competition" (53). Thus, questions of existence of direct, personal force, slavery or forced labour are put aside, despite evidence to the contrary, in order to abstract a "general case" of capitalism. But this "general case" which is applicable for understanding capitalism across the globe smacks of Eurocentrism. Graf calls for an understanding of capitalism as "dirty capitalism" that takes into account the persistence of multiple modes of production, various forms of subjugation of labour to capital and different forms of exploitation and power relations regarding control of labour and in markets to overcome the Eurocentric biases of such a general theory of capitalism.

Kolja and Urs Lindner further question the very centrality, even validity of historical materialism by taking into account the philosophical breaks in Marx's thought towards the end of his life. Instead of projecting Marx as a theorist of historical development, they highlight Marx as a materialist philosopher and critical social scientist who overcame, even revised his teleological and Eurocentric notions of historical growth. They identify significant problems of historical materialism, such as

its "linear directionality" to world historical development that robbed the proletariat of agency in the inevitable course of history, as well as its Eurocentrism as in this schema of history the West seems to provide a model or standard for pre-capitalist societies to follow. Marx was influenced by Hegel's idea of world history and his understanding of non-Western countries were based on the travelogues of Bernier. Thus, in India the lack of private property made it stagnant socially and China appeared to be "living fossil". Thus, the British rule in India was thought to be ultimately bringing India to the course of historical development. But Lindners emphasises Marx's openness to learning and revising his position throughout his life. They point out that Marx in his later writings, such as *The Eighteenth Brumairre, The German Ideology, The Civil War in France* and in his letters to Vera Zasulich show greater sensitivity to the non-western experience and ways of living. Thus, late Marx develops a "conception of a multi-linear, path-dependent historical development" (70) while "Orientalism is replaced by a more realistic account of non-European societies" (70). He could, therefore, see in India "act of English vandalism, pushing the native people not forwards but backwards" (69), and how 'Russian agricultural commune could appropriate the fruits "of Western capitalism production" "without subjecting itself to its modus operandi'" (69).

Hans H. Brass critically analyses the critical legacy of Marxian utopia of building a just society with human

dignity and equality. Marxian utopia is marked by concreteness with three clear objectives- mass prosperity, freedom of the individual in harmony with the community and the restoration of the dignity of work by ending alienation. However, the twentieth century experiments in state-socialism failed in countries such as Russia, China or Tanzania with untold suffering for the millions. Does that mean that every experiment in Marxian utopia is bound to fail? Brass, however, does not think so. Rather, he points out that the Marxian utopia has 'lost nothing of its justification, namely "to overthrow all relations in which man is debased, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being'" (94) and suggest middle range social utopias for the 21st century based on the economic theories of Burczak, Gibson, Ostrom or Amartya Sen.

The three chapters of section one, therefore, critically engage with the continuing importance of Marx's thought and lead us the creative dialogue between Marx and the non-European, something which does not often feature in volumes Marx.

Creative Osmosis: Marx in Conversation

The second section contains examples of the ways non-European thinkers rethought and re-imagined Marxist politics. Hikmet Kivilcimli (1902 -1971) was the leading politician and thinker of the socialist Left in Turkey. During the fifty years (half of which he spent in prison) of his political activities, he wrote numerous

works on Marxist theory. Opposed to Eurocentric interpretations of Marxist theory, he tried to 'localize it and thus strengthen its universality' (103). His 'thesis of history, based as it was on L. H. Morgan's classification of barbarism as lower, middle and upper stages and Ibn Khaldun's (whom Kivilcimli saw as the "Marx of the Islam") dichotomy of "'barbarians versus civilizations'", saw historical changes in pre-capitalist and non-European societies as a result of the conflict between the barbarians and civilizations. The barbarians, as the bearers of primitive socialism and community life in contrast to degraded civilizations marked by private property and high stratification, bring about historical changes in the conquered civilizations. Kivilcimli's historiography, therefore, goes beyond official Marxism in order to theorise historical and social changes in the non-European societies.

Seyed Javad Miri analyses Ali Shariati's reading of Marx to examine whether an Iranian Marxist perspective tuned to the social realities of Iran is possible. Shariati was an important Iranian thinker whose critical approach to Marx's ideas provided an alternative to the official Leninist-Stalinist approach of the dominant Tudeh Party that had isolated it from the common masses. Shariati took issue with Marx's materialist critique of religion as Eurocentric and points out the importance of religion as "a force in the Iranian context which could be utilized in the uprising of the masses" (Shariati quoted by Miri). He

distinguishes between the religion as prevalent in a given historical period and religion as the existential –ethical form of self-consciousness that can serve as an antidote to atomism of modern society while its extra-material orientations can help build a just society.

Yakov M Rabkin acquaints us with a different iteration of Marxism in his discussion of the 'uneasy relationship' between Marxism and Zionism. He points out how the socialist ideas that inspired the early Zionist movement were gradually compromised to achieve the objectives of Zionist settler colonialism of Palestine.

The thinkers such as Kivilcimli and Ali Shariati, and their Marxian ijtehad , point towards an important direction for taking Marxian ideas and politics forward. They never rejected the critical value of Marx's ideas of human liberation and justice while at the same time were grounded to their historical –social context and did not hesitate to re-fashion some of Marx's ideas from their vantage point.

Marx and Social Struggle in the Postcolonial World

The formation of the working class has been a topic of much debate in the Marxist quarter- something replayed in Chibber's (2013) criticism of Dipesh Chakrabarty's study of the jute workers of Calcutta. Two opposing approaches are at loggerheads here- whether class is a

product of objective material conditions; or apart from material issues, socio-cultural and political issues play a part in the formation and continuity of class. Marx in *Capital Vol-I* discussed how the process of primitive accumulation dispossessed the mass of people from their means of subsistence turning them into workers. However, he did not deny the importance of subjective factors as it is through the struggle to defend their class interests that 'class in itself' becomes 'class for itself' (we may use the term 'class for themselves' as well to refer to the subjective content). E P Thompson, in his seminal study *The Making of the English Working Class* pointed out that class is not a structural fact but the outcome of a historical process of struggle, experience and consciousness. Thus, while material and economic factors play a seminal role in the formation of class, the importance of cultural issues can hardly be undermined. Keeping this debate in mind we may approach the chapters under this section which provide a complex picture of continued exploitation and struggles.

Najeeb V. R. in his study of the making of the Mappila Muslim working class shows critical role played by the religious and cultural practices of the Mappila Muslims of the tea plantations in Tatamala and Cherakara in the formation of class solidarity. Apart from the obvious issues of exploitation and mistreatment by the management and the middlemen, such religious-cultural practices, Najeeb argues, strengthened the class solidarity by

creating platforms for inter-religious dialogue and co-living. The intervention of the trade union in the daily affairs of the community also helped build trust among the Mappila Muslims on the unions thereby strengthening the labour unity.

How does capitalism reproduce itself? Is capitalist accumulation in the designated spaces such as the factory where relative and limited surplus value can be appropriated is sufficient for its reproduction? One Marxist approach built on ideology critique and Gramsci's concept of hegemony point towards the survival of capitalism through the consent of the subordinate. Opposed to this ideology specific approach Chibber (2022) brings in political economy approach to point out that the workers are forced to participate in the capitalist process because there is no exit option, because the alternative is starvation. So, instead of consent they are coerced or compelled to participate in their own exploitation. Additionally, the concept of continued primitive accumulation of Marx, the incorporation of non-capitalist "exterior" into the circuit of expropriation (Luxemburg) or the accumulation by dispossession (Harvey) whereby the commons are privatised involving violence, plunder, war, colonisation etc. provide the necessary fillip to capitalism in its reproduction. G.L. Goncalves and Sergio Costa in their study of the financialisation of the port district of Rio de Janeiro after the declaration of the space for the 2016 Olympics, point out how the entan-

gled nexus of state and private players, together with the discursive formation of a degraded/ empty space that needs developmental intervention, led to the accumulation of capital. erasing the history and memory of the space.

Ramzi Darouchi further points out the inadequacy, rather inapplicability, of the concept of 'Asiatic Mode of Production' as a methodology for studying the non-European societies. He analyses the history, economy and politics of Egypt to point out how during the Mamluk Sultanate, Egypt developed "autonomous capitalist tendencies" that departed significantly from the Eurocentric and static conception of the non-European societies such as Egypt as found in the concept of AMP. Such capitalist development was stalled by imperialism in Egypt. He also calls our attention to the history of resistance to foreign rule in Egypt tracing its present outburst in the Arab Spring Movement of 2011 that was caused, apart from socio-economic reasons, by the demand for dignity of a country trapped in foreign debt under neoliberal reforms. Both the facts, such as the autonomous development of capitalist tendencies in Egypt before Napoleonic take over and the history of resistance premised on social change call for the recognition of independent paths for the development of non-European societies. Ramzi, however, does not call for a particularistic approach to the differentially articulated capitalism in different regions of the world, rather he calls for a "global

frame in which social realities reproduce in the face of globalised capital" (165).

Beyond Marx: Marx and the Location of the Critique

The final section, "Beyond Marx: Critical and Decolonial Readings" opens with Aditya Nigam's essay 'Uneven Development and Historical Time'. As the title suggests, Nigam engages with the question of 'epistemic violence' underlying the philosophical discourses of capitalism and modernity premised on the idea of historical time as totality. In such a totalising understanding of capitalist modernity, the persistence of pre-capitalist modes of production- and of being- are either relegated to the past or written off as the outcome of the inherent logic of capitalism, denying them any agency. Rather than reducing the pre-/non-capitalist modes of production- being as appendages of capital's history, Nigam talks about the necessity of holding onto the "idea of their chronological priority and externality to capitalism" without "delegitimize[ing] their existence and their agency- for they continue to offer resistance to capitalism throughout its history and into the present moment" (216). Nigam hints at an important theoretical breakthrough- in distinction to "capital", he views capitalism as "a disposition, a mode of being, a way of relating to the world" (203). Therefore, the modes of being that reside outside the accumulative logic and rational-ontological way of

relating to the world need to be given its due theoretical legitimacy.

The Spectre of Decolonisation: Marx as Synecdoche of Socialism and Pluralisation of Ideas

Since the Fall Campaigns of 2018 that rocked the universities and public spaces adorned with figures associated with racism, colonialism and white supremacism, the spectre of decolonisation has come back to haunt academic and intellectual debates. How does Marxism fare in this debate? Deborah Nyangulu alerts us to the structural Eurocentrism inherent in nomenclatures such as Marxism. She points out that the eponym Marxism- that refers back to the proper name Marx as founding figure of revolutionary and socialist thinking – does reiterate the violence of Eurocentrism by sidelining other figures and their thoughts on socialism. Even such hyphenated formulations such as Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian or Marxist-Leninist-Maoist are trapped in "euro-diffusionist" model in which revolution flows in a supposedly matrilineal fashion from Marx through Lenin to Fanon or Mao reducing them to "derivative adaptations"(224). She thinks that "any reclamation of socialism in the present must take place via way of decolonisation" (225). The solution does not lie in annexing the non-western thinkers to Marx but "by fostering collaboration, solidarity, and building collective movements of resistance, in which the circulation of ideas is not linear but circu-

itous" (224). She calls for clearing an intellectual space "to centre African thinkers as key ideopraxists of social thought" (220). She critically engages with African socialist thinkers and politicians such as Franz Fanon, Julius K. Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah and their male centric views to finally draw our attention to the inclusive ideas of intersectionality theorised by practiced feminists of African descent that ground multi-axis subjugation and social justice causes.

Anthropocene- Capitalocene- Imperiocene & Justice

 In the face of climate crisis staring the earth, the social scientists have come up with various neologisms to characterise the human shaped age such as anthropocene, capitalocene or imperiocene. Since Dipesh Chakrabarty published his essay on the anthropocene in *Critical Enquiry*, there have been debates on the role of capitalism, which Chakrabarty is said to have downplayed, that plunders the earth and fuels people's greed leading to the present crisis. The age of capitalism has also been an age of imperialist wars and colonialism. Any discussion on the anthropocene, therefore, cannot be complete without addressing issues of imperialism. Detlev Quintern returns to this issue of imperialism vis-à-vis the thinking of Marx and Engels. During the 19th century imperiocene, writes Quintern, began to shape life's future, leaving a devastating imprint on earth and progressively

destroying the balanced macrostructure of the cosmos. How does Marx and Engels' thought fare vis-à-vis the imperialist plunder of the world by the western countries such as England, France, Germany etc. and the anti-imperialist struggles in Africa, Asia and America? Quintern points out that the deterministic and "the linear model of historic-societal development" not only lead Marx and Engels to accept imperialism as necessary that would revolutionise "backward" societies in Africa, Asia and America, but even characterise the anti-imperialist movements as misguided and self-defeating . The brutal suppression of anti-imperial struggles such as the Taiping Resistance in China, the 1857 War of Independence in India does not draw much sympathy from Marx and Engels for the unprecedented human casualty because "capitalism was necessary for these territories to achieve communism, inescapable and therefore colonialism was preferable" (240). Marx, therefore, trumps "morality and ethics for economic theory" (239). Such "technology based salvation ideology" and "stereotypisation of modes of living" in Asia, Africa and the Americas lead Marx to ignore the spiritually or religiously inspired anti-imperialist struggles in the colonised countries. Religion, therefore, is not just the "opium of the masses" but can also be "a driving force for anticolonial resistance" (235) which needs to be understood and given its due valence. Instead of an industrialised-modernised world leading to communism, as Marx and Engels hoped, we have witnessed the development of a military-industri-

al complex with continuous militaristic violence against the South. Therefore, justice after Marx has to "revive a universal commemorative culture of the long histories of anti-imperialist resistance" as well as "the heritage of Asian, African , and American cosmovisions and philosophies (e.g. Buen Vivir in Abya Yala/America), which, in written or oral forms, are in clear contrast to the Aristotelian hierarchising of live" (245).

The final section of the book focuses on Engels' years in Bremen and an important interview with the editors of the book. Those interested in Engel's formative years may look up to the chapter in this section.

Theologisation of Marx and Marxian *Ijtehad*: Towards Epistemic *Samata*

The book, therefore, cautions us against a theologisation of Marx and encourages us to engage with his ideas critically and creatively to imagine newer horizons of emancipatory politics in changing historical and geographical contexts. Such an ijtehadik or hermeneutical approach to Marx is recently offered by Sudipta Kaviraj in his Bengali book *Marx O Swarger Sondhan (Marx and the Search for Paradise)*. Commenting on Marx's methodology of historical analysis, Kaviraj points to Marx's open minded acceptance of the different economic modes in his very naming of diverse socio-economic conditions in such geographical settings such as Russia, Germany,

Slavic countries or Asia- as Russian, Germanic, Slavic or Asiatic Mode of Production. This gives us a Marx who was open to difference and willing to learn from different modes of economic/ historical conjuncture. On the other hand, Kaviraj points to the famous line in T*he Manifesto of the Communist Party* – "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class conflict". Does Marx mean, asks Kaviraj, that there was already a developed class politics in the feudal society? Or does he point towards the hierarchical and exploitative nature of such societies where the term 'class' can be viewed as an empty signifier that can be interpreted as 'general division' in society. Class, therefore, stand for two things in Marx- the economic division in capitalist society and as any division that is manipulative in a particular historical conjuncture. If such a hermeneutical approach to Marx is taken, we may creatively re-envision Marx's views on emancipatory politics by aligning with different articulations of exploitation and oppression in different historical, geographical and social settings. We may, therefore think of a dialogue between Marx and Ambedkar in the Indian setting where 'class' may mean caste or the issues of minority rights in an increasingly right-wing populist age or migrant's plight in the exploitative and war-ridden global capitalist world-order.

Kaviraj further directs us towards the synchronous imaginary between the communist and theological emancipation. Both- communism and religion- searches

for a *swarga* or a paradise where humanity is liberated from exploitation. We may therefore find allies in those thought antithetical to prevalent Marxist politics - Marx may sit in willing conversation with Kabir or Lalon in a search for liberation of humanity. Such an opening to the thought traditions of the heterodox and divergent religious practices that question and go beyond the institutionalised religion might suggest ways to salvage religion from being weaponised by fascist and right-wing political forces.

With and Beyond Marx

In 2018 the world celebrated two hundred years of Marx's birth anniversary and naturally there were monographs published, books edited and discussions held in remembrance of Marx. The present book, too, is an outcome of such an effort. Here in South Asia we would be remembering the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of India in 2025. In a time that is witness to the triumph of fascist forces in India and the hold of the communist parties is receding every day, we perhaps need to think our politics creatively- with Marx and beyond Marx. The future is not given and the location of the critique- therefore of politics- needs to be kept in mind. Marx should neither be reduced to a metonym of Europe/ Eurocentrism nor should he be viewed as a prophet. The book calls for many Marx (es), not the monolithic deified Marx who is ossified as the

fountainhead of orthodoxy but a Marx eager to learn – and importantly change his views. Marxism is no doxa, the book seems to be suggesting for critical Marxism. Perhaps this would be a proper way to remember 'brother Marx'.

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