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Table of Contents

Volume 4 • Number 2 • Fall 1997

Sources of Intolerance: The Modern Discourse of the Self in the Bharatiya Janata Party
OMAR KUTTY 1

On the Origin of the Ergative in Indo-Aryan Languages
GABRIELA NIK. ILIEVA 22

Sustainable Development: Unwitting Ally of Nationalism and Bane for Ethnic Minorities
JUDE FERNANDO 31

Book Reviews

Sonia Nishat Amin, *The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal, 1876-1939* 52
DINA SIDDIQI

James Brow, *Demons and Development: The Struggle for Community in a Sri Lankan Village* 55
CAITRIN LYNCH

Mishirul Hasan, ed., *India Partitioned* 57
SARAH GREEN

From the Editor: Toward a More Diverse Approach

Too often "South Asia" is a catch phrase for India. While a thorough understanding of South Asia includes knowing India, it is not necessarily where "all the action" is occurring. The diversity that is South Asia is reflected in the newest edition of Sagar: it contains submissions that cover not only India, but also Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. South Asia's diversity is also reflected in the topics appearing in Sagar: this edition contains contributions on gender, development, nationalism, literature, tribal populations, and historical linguistics. We are proud of this list, and the geographic variety it evokes because it reflects Sagar's commitment to academic diversity.

I would like to thank Sagar's contributors, editorial board, and staff for their patience with changes in recent months. Foremost, Sarah Green (our managing editor) has left to pursue full-time work on her Ph.D.. We will greatly miss both her skills and her enthusiasm. With Sarah's departure, some new personalities have been responsible for Sagar. Scott Harvey has joined our staff as Sagar's assistant editor. Another recent edition is Karline McLain from Asian Studies who joins us as an editorial assistant. I look forward to working with these new staff members, as well as with our more seasoned veterans to produce a high quality journal in coming months.

Matthew A. Cook, *Editor*

Sources of Intolerance: The Modern Discourse of the Bharatiya Janata Party

Omar Kutty

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

This paper reveals that Hindu nationalist discourse depends on a modern notion of "self" and "nation" that defines India's "national character" as the sum total of her individual constituents. BJP intolerance is rooted in the same discourse as Indian secular nationalism and Western culture--two forces the party claims to oppose. Further, the essay argues that the tension between the universal and the particular that is inherent in modernity manifests this contradiction.

The Bharatiya Janata Party's victory in the 1996 Indian Parliamentary elections has made it obvious that there is a powerful new voice in the struggle for ideological hegemony in India. The fact that they have emerged as the largest single party in the parliament--in spite of several blemishes on their reputation--only confirms that this voice is enduring and substantial.[1] Any attempt to dismiss the party as "fundamentalist," "communalist" or opportunist obscures the complexity of their agenda and the significance of the cultural changes that it represents.

This paper's central argument is that the BJP's discourse of Hindu nationalism is fundamentally rooted in modern culture. I will take up Charles Taylor's thesis that the predominant feature of modern culture is the conception of a singular, autonomous self. I argue that this leads to a tension between *universalism* and *particularism* in modern culture and that Hindu nationalism is a product of that tension. Finally, I demonstrate how their proposed policies are legitimated through this discourse of the self.

My goal in this paper is to demonstrate that the BJP's intolerance is rooted in the same discourse as Indian secular nationalism and the

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[1]The party was blamed for the fiasco at Ayodhya in December, 1992, which reinforced the negative perception of them as a "fundamentalist" party. One of their most popular attributes, the image as a disciplined party, was ruined by an internal power struggle in their Gujarat branch. To top it all off, their president at that time, L.K. Advani, was implicated in the Hawala scandal which tarnished the party's other strong selling point, their image as "clean."

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"Western" culture the party claims to be opposing. The implication is that it is not with "non-modern" discourses, namely "traditional" religion, that we must find fault for the violence and intolerance of our world in the late twentieth century. Rather we must look to how modernity itself creates these problems. Along the way it will become evident that the BJP represents the ultimate contradiction: in their goal of "modernization without Westernization" they ineluctably accept Western forms of identity in the very process that they resist identification with the West.

Nations, Nationalism, and Modernity

Before I proceed with this argument I must clarify the use of some controversial terms I employ. I operate with a conception of the nation as a political identity that seeks to be autonomous and a conception of the nation-state as the geo-political expression of the nation. I assume two things about nations and nation-states. First, as the often quoted Benedict Anderson has argued, nations are imagined communities.[1] That is, the bonds that exist between their members are not necessary, but are created by highlighting commonalities and forgetting differences. Second, as Ernest Gellner argues, nations and nation-states, unlike their dynastic predecessors, strive to be socially and geographically unified.[2] By this I mean that the prevailing ethic of those who accept nations is that neither class (or caste), race, religion, nor region is to interfere with the functioning of the nation-state as a polity and the nation as an identity.

Nationalism, then, is the attempt to *create* a nation. This means two things: it is the process of imagining oneself to be part of a group that is internally homogenous and harmonious and externally free from the control of any larger entity, as well as the attempt to realize the former.

In the existing literature one might find Hindu nationalists described as fundamentalists, religious nationalists, or conservative nationalists.[3] This paper categorizes Hindu nationalism as *cultural nationalism*. This is done partly because that is what they call themselves, but more importantly because, while religious nationalism may be an appropriate term for

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[1]Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991).

[2]Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983).

[3]For the use of the term "fundementalist" see Robert Eric Frykenberg, "Accounting for Fundementalism in South Asia: Ideologies and Institutions in a Historical Perspective," in Scott Appleby and Martin Marty (eds.), *Accounting for Fundementalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). For an explanation of "religious nationalist" see Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), and Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War: Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). For a discussion of conservative nationalism see Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed Books, 1986).

Muslim nationalism in South Asia or other movements around the world, it is not appropriate for the BJP. My main objection to the term is that it implies legitimation from forces greater than humanity and society. While sacred texts, gods, and deities are invoked, they are not done so because of their divine authority. They are invoked, as we shall see, when they are perceived to be relevant to India's current needs as determined on the basis of rational reasoning. Hence they are correct in describing themselves as cultural nationalists because religion is secondary within their ideology.

The argument advanced here contrasts cultural nationalism with *secular nationalism*. The latter is defined as a movement that seeks to create an autonomous state legitimated by rationality and impartiality. It is basically the project of Rousseau's *Le Contract Social*, in which each person is fundamentally free but as a citizen is willing to sacrifice certain rights knowing that he or she must live in society. In India this is represented by Nehru and the Congress party with their emphasis on secularism, centralized economic planning, rapid industrialization, and socialism.

My thesis draws its definition of "modernity" primarily from the works of Frederic Jameson and Charles Taylor. Because of their ability to cut into the deepest assumptions of 20th century Western culture their analyses are extremely useful. Unfortunately both are also guilty of serious Eurocentrism: they make claims about the "culture of modernity" on a global scale while disregarding the non-Western world, the impact of the West on the non-West, *and* the impact of the rest of the world on the West. Their insights can be rescued from that shortcoming and made applicable to South Asia by modifying Jameson's concept of the "cultural dominant," which is the hegemonic culture that defines an era or period (*i.e.* modernity or postmodernity).[1] Since the subaltern studies group has demonstrated that large sections of the South Asian population impute signifiers of modern society with very different meanings, it is scarcely possible to claim anything as a cultural dominant in that part of the world. Thus I propose that the category of modernity be used to denote a *cultural formation* that exists as a discourse (or sets of discourses) and vies for dominance with other cultural formations. Modernity's cultural formation can be identified by the following nexus of characteristics: the valuation of instrumental reason, a belief in a knowable, positive reality, and--most importantly for this study--the conception of the self as a disengaged subject that is singular and autonomous. With this definition it becomes possible to construct modernity as present in any given time or place, however its presence and status must be demonstrated empirically through discourse analysis. So defined, the category can account for difference while still allowing us to make generalizations. Differences engendered by

[1] Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 3-4.

a pluralistic society and the experience of colonization are especially germane to this discussion.

While some may take nationalism's concomitance with modernity for granted, it is not well accepted in the literature on Hindu nationalism. Peter van der Veer argues that religious nationalism, or what the BJP calls cultural nationalism, is a "merging" of discourses, which I take to mean an equal fusion of the modern and the traditional. In this paper it will become apparent that Hindu nationalism is not a fusion at all, but a *subordination* of traditional categories and symbols to modern discourse. While his concern that "modernization" theory is a master narrative is well founded, his assertion that Hindu and Muslim nationalism work by rules unique to the sub-continent is no less a master narrative.[1] It is simply a master narrative for India rather than the world. Similarly Mark Juergensmeyer puts the BJP under the rubric of antimodernist religious nationalism.[2] But while antimodernist may be appropriate for the other movements he describes, it is not appropriate for the BJP.

I like to think of this argument as an extension Partha Chatterjee's seminal work on nationalism in the post colonial world which puts all forms of nationalism in the context of modernity.[3] Chatterjee argues that the Indian independence movement's discourse of secular nationalism was caught up in a contradiction between what he calls the *problematic* "level" of text—its stated project of opposition to British Imperialism—on the one hand, and the *thematic* level on the other:

> its justificatory structures *i.e.* the nature of the evidence it presents in support of those claims, the rules of inference it relies on to logically relate a statement of the evidence to demonstrate the existence of its claims as historical possibilities, and finally the set of ethical principles it appeals to in order to assert that those claims are morally justified.[4]

In other words the independence movement was resisting British rule while at the same time imitating their culture, the culture of modernity. Though secular nationalist discourse *does* represent a contradiction when compared to Gandhi, who resisted modernity as well as to British imperialism, it is not in and of itself contradictory. This fact is particularly evident in secular nationalism's criticism of the colonial contradiction

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[1]van der Veer, 1994, p. 202.

[2]Juergensmeyer, 1994, p. 5.

[3]Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*? (London: Zed Books, 1986).

[4]Ibid., p. 38.

which denied non-Europeans the "rights of man" through the racist discourse of Orientalism.

Chatterjee argues that the recent rise in separatist ethnic movements and ". . . anti-Western strands of politics, rejecting capitalism too for its association with modernism and the West and preaching either a fundamentalist cultural revival or a utopian millennialism [this includes Hindu nationalism]"[1] are rooted in the tension between the elite, modern discourse of secular nationalism and a radically different peasant consciousness. I submit that Hindu nationalism is not rooted in the tension between nationalism and an external alternative. Rather it is a manifestation of the same tension that exists within the independence movement: the tension between the thematic and the problematic. But for Hindu nationalism it *is* a contradiction because, unlike secular nationalism, they *do* claim to be opposing the West at a cultural level while their discourse of cultural nationalism is deeply rooted in modernity. Furthermore, the possibility of Hindu nationalism arises in the tension between universalism and particularism that exists squarely within modern discourse; truly alternative discourses are either obscured or subordinated into the modernity of Hindu Nationalism.

In order to make this point we must turn our attention to a category which remains in the background of Chatterjee's analysis. Chatterjee focuses mainly on secular nationalism (what he calls "progressive" nationalism), but he also briefly discusses cultural nationalism (what he calls "conservative" nationalism) and describes as those who place ". . . an ideological emphasis on what is distinctly national, i.e. culturally distinct from the Western and the modern [Gandhian intervention does not really qualify as nationalism at all because of its radically different nature]."[2] Cultural nationalism, according to Chatterjee, also based itself on a modern thematic and therefor was equally guilty of imitating the oppressors in the very act of resisting them.[3] Yet secular nationalism and cultural nationalism are clearly not the same: one advocates respect for cultural *particulars*, while the other is the application of proclaimed *universals*. If the electoral performance of the BJP is any measure, then secular nationalism is rapidly losing ground to cultural nationalism. The problem with Chatterjee's argument is that it doesn't help us explain the shift from one stream of nationalist thought to the other. Since these two streams of nationalism are the players in the biggest contest of Indian politics and society since Independence, it is their relationship that must now receive our attention.

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[1] Ibid., 1986, p. 169.
[2] Ibid., p. 81.
[3] Ibid.

Universalism and Particularism in Modernity

Thus it is time we shift the analytical emphasis from the tension between the problematic and thematic to the tension between universalism and particularism within modern discourse. The disengaged subject at the heart of modernity can be the source of the ultimate universalism, namely the scientific consciousness, as it allows the belief in an objective, positive reality, independent of any human or divine consciousness, that is knowable, albeit mediated by perception. The belief in a positive reality as an ontological condition as well as faith in science to bring humanity greater good, leads also to the dominance of social science: universalizing claims about the nature of humanity. But Charles Taylor has pointed out that the same subjectivity can lead to relativism, or particularism. Modernity, he argues, engenders a conception of the self that is an autonomous, singular self.[1] The implication is that the self demarcates an "inside" and an "outside," where the inside is the self's zone of control that it alone can define and that should not be interfered with from the outside; in other words the self has space for autonomy. Within this space the self exists as a unified entity acting of its own volition. The institutions of Modern culture, argues Taylor, center this "inside." The "outside," all social and/or cosmic forces that are larger than the self, is of secondary importance. Taylor provides several cultural examples of the modern emphasis on the self. European Protestantism insists that personal moral commitment is more important than religious ritual; democracy claims that people should be free except where that freedom impinges on others; and free market capitalism valorizes personal achievement and control of one's economic destiny. Furthermore this sense of self tends to produce a belief that each person's "inside," their unique character, should shape their lives, hence the emphasis on personal space, privacy, choosing a career and self-expression, and the concern for "human" rights. The extreme of this ethic is the maxim that "everyone is entitled to their opinion" which results in the total rejection of universalism.

I am arguing that Hindu nationalism is a modern discourse that attempts to resolve the tension between universalism and particularism. Taylor also points out the connection between nationalism and the modern sense of self with reference to European romantic nationalists.[2] He asserts that nationalism comprises the values of modern selfhood transferred to whole cultures, but does not discuss how that transfer is made nor its larger connection to the tension between universalism and particularism. In the analyses that follows I will demonstrate that the BJP's discourse of cultural nationalism revolves around the metaphor "culture is a self;" in other words it is a discourse of the self transferred to India (or more

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[1]Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989). See especially chapters 1 and 17.

[2]Taylor, 1989, p. 376.

precisely, Hinduism) as a cultural whole. I will then demonstrate that within this discourse are a gamut of Enlightenment ideals directly demonstrating the connection between cultural nationalism and modernity. Special attention is given to individualism because it forms a discursive bridge between universalism and particularism. Finally, I will point out how this transferred discourse of self allows space for legitimating the intolerant political policies the Hindu right is famous for.

An admission of weakness is in order before I proceed. This paper relies on a notion of "traditional Hinduism" which will remain inadequately defined. However, I do ask the reader to accept that it denotes something inherently plural and diverse. I doubt anyone (except perhaps certain sections of the BJP) would deny India's historical diversity in terms of language, custom, religious belief and practice, but I claim that diversity was *inherent* because diversity was engendered by an epistemic freedom that modernity has destroyed among large sections of the population.[1] Furthermore, to the extent that a singular, autonomous conception of the self existed at all it was a marginalized part of "traditional" India's discourses. It could be argued that certain strands of Hinduism, such as Bhakti, had conceived of such a self. My response would be that if they coexisted with India's version of feudal hierarchies, the caste system, and strictly defined family roles (gender and otherwise) then that sense of self could never have been centered or privileged.[2]

Culture as a Self

Before we can begin breaking down the discourse of Hindu nationalism we must take a look at the history of the BJP and its affiliated organizations. It is a history notable for its connection with universalizing secular nationalism and its goals of social transformation. The BJP has its roots in one of the oldest and the most powerful "communal" organizations in India, the Rashtriya Swayemsevak Sangh (RSS), which has always been famous for its Muslim intolerance but has rarely been recognized for its goals of social change. The RSS was founded in 1925 by a disgruntled member of the Congress, Dr. K.B. Hedgewar, who felt that a psychological transformation was necessary to return strength and vitality to the Hindu community. The weakness, evident in Hindu submission to the Muslims and the British, was said to be rooted in disunity and lack of masculine values. As a political party, Congress was incapable of affecting the cultural changes Hedgewar deemed necessary. His alternative was to

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[1] For a similar argument see Ashis Nandy, "The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance," in Veena Das (ed.), *Mirrors of Violence* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[2] For some evidence of this phenoomena see Anuradha Kapur, "Diety to Crusader: The Changing Iconography of Ram," in Gyendra Pandey (ed.), *Hindus and Other: The Question of Identity in India Today* (New Delhi: Viking, 1993).

organize local day camps for boys and young men where they would be instilled with anti-caste, disciplined, and militaristic values.[1] These boys were to be the vanguard of Hedgewar's new India. It was not until 1951 that the RSS founded a political party called the Bharatiya Janna Sangh which was never a significant force in Indian politics and finally collapsed in 1981, when it was reincarnated as the BJP. Another organization, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, formed in 1964 by RSS members, took on a much more visible religio-political role. In the 1980's they gained widespread public attention by organizing all-India political "rituals" (which used religious symbols such as Ganges water) that were designed to develop both vertical (*i.e.* between castes) and horizontal (*i.e.* between regions) integration.[2] VHP activity often directly supports the BJP, and visa versa.

As we shall see the BJP continues that tradition of social change in the name of strengthening Hinduism and India. They like to think of themselves as a party that offers a fundamentally alternative way of life based in a uniquely Hindu philosophy. Contrary to popular belief, the BJP's political and social platform extends well beyond intolerance of minorities. In fact their policies cover a wide range of social issues, of which the status of minorities is just a part. They envision a nation based on a set of supposedly Hindu values called Hindutva, or Bharatiya (the latter is a more neutral term meaning "Indianness"). What is significant for us is that this is much more than a rabble rousing slogan. It is a utopian ideal set in a larger context of social theory expounded in an array of pamphlets and books. The overall message this literature gives is that modernization can be achieved without Westernization. In order to make such a goal conceivable special meanings must be imputed to these words that make sense only within the discourse of the self.

In the years between the Babri Masjid incident and the 1996 election the party has toned down the anti-Minority voice of its literature and focused more on issues of corruption, of economic sovereignty, and of making India into a world power. I hope to reveal in this paper that their new liberal attitude puts them no farther from the sources of their intolerance. One representative of this diluted Hindu nationalism is the former editor of the *Times of India*, Girilal Jain, who was an outspoken and influential supporter of the BJP and Hindutva. His 1994 book, *The Hindu Phenomenon,* was reprinted three times in that year alone. He openly calls himself a cultural nationalist and openly criticizes secular government:

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[1]Walter K. Anderson and Shridhar Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism* (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1987), Pp. 30-35.

[2]Peter van der Veer, "Hindu Nationalism and the Discourse of Modernity," in Scott Appleby and Martin Marty (eds.), *Accounting for Fundamentalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

> The secularist-national position is that the Indian state embodies an ideal, and is there to serve it; that while it is a creature of the Constitution, it is above the people; that in our multi-religious society, there is no other choice. In the Hindu view, the state has to be an expression of the Hindu ethos and personality. Such a state cannot either discriminate against any religious group or seek to impose a uniform pattern on the inhabitants. Indeed, it would feel obliged to look after their well-being and the preservation of their way of life. But the state would see itself as an instrument for the promotion of Hindu civilization.[1]

ain here promotes a culture that is uniquely and singularly Hindu that has s own mindset, spirit, and character which the state, as an integral part of society, must be in harmony with. Furthermore, speaking of the liberal-ocialist model of the state as being "above" culture versus one that is an expression" of culture presumes that culture is something with a definite oundary--in other words, something with an "inside." For anything outside" to affect the inside of that enclosure is illegitimate, in this case a Vestern style state is considered on the outside. Jain, probably conscious f the BJP's reputation as a "Hindu fascist" party, stresses that "other" roups living within the geographical confines of India are allowed to xist, but cannot play a role in shaping the state and are to be the passive harges ("looked after") of the dominant group. Here we have the basic amework of Hindu nationalist thought: like modern individuals, cultures re seen as beings that have a defined space, mental as well as physical, hat should not be encroached upon. Jain is not an isolated example. The ame metaphor of "culture as a self" is used by K.R. Malkani who has eld several top level posts in the BJP and is also a Hindu nationalist heoretician. In his 1993 book *The politics of Ayodhya and Hindu-Muslim Relations,* he describes Hindutva as follows:

> Basically "Hindutva" is India's agenda for coming into its own after centuries of vicissitudes. Even Indian economy will come into its own and register a quantum jump—like the Pacific Tigers—only when the nation finds its past and has faith in its future. But even more because nations cannot live by GDP alone; they have to live by the spirit of their inmost being. That spirit is "Hindu." And "Hindu" is

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[1]Girilal Jain, *The Hindu Phenomenon* (New Delhi: UBS Publishers' istributors), p. 13.

> a culture, a whole national ethos, and not a creed or a catechism.[1]

The nation's vitality, witnessed by its economic success, is seen as being dependent on getting in touch with the "inner" self. Interestingly, this process happens in linear time: the nation knew itself in the past, somehow lost touch with itself in the present, and now must move into a better future by rediscovering its inner-self. Again it is a metaphor for the modern self, culture is seen as a singular agent that moves through time and is in control of its destiny.

In order to understand just how deeply the metaphor permeates the discourse we must not only look in single passages, but also at the more general references to the nation. Jain for example generally refers to "Hindu Civilization" in the singular, either with a pronoun ("it or "her") or as Hinduism/India (the two are indistinguishable for Jain). These singular references are then used as the subjects of verbs such as mobilizing, marching, assimilating, throwing out, and suffering.[2] Such usage is a discursive device that allows "Hindu Civilization" to be seen as acting, thinking, and feeling as a singular whole. Beyond the assertions that Hinduism is inherently plural,[3] it is otherwise treated as singular. Similarly, Malkani makes Hindus and Muslims the subjects of verbs—such as adjusting, conceding, and fearing—that imply the existence of two distinct, collective psyches.[4]

Ironically the "culture as self" metaphor is an extremely useful tool which allows the BJP to mitigate its hard-line reputation with an image of themselves as tolerant and open minded. Jain, in addressing the applicability of the term "secularism" writes: ". . . Hinduism is tolerant and therefore secular. . . it is sheer dishonesty . . . to suggest . . . that Hinduism can admit of theocracy. That is a Muslim privilege which no one else can appropriate . . . ."[5] Here secularism and tolerance are reserved as values of the eternal Hindu self while theocracy and intransigence are imputed to the Muslim other.

This conception of culture as an individual self is not only applied to Hinduism, but is posited as an ontological fact for all cultures of the world. This allows them to say that Hinduism is not necessarily superior to any other culture, but that it provides the appropriate "paradigm" for India. They explain this paradigm through Hindu categories but ultimately legitimate it with post-Enlightenment ideals. The BJP economic theorist D. B. Thengadi writes:

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[1]K.R. Malkani, *The Politics of Ayodhya and Hindu Muslim Relations* (New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1993).

[2]Jain, 1994, p. 4, 11, and 114.

[3]Jain, 1994, p. 15.

[4]Malkani, 1994, p. 92, 103, and 115.

[5]Jain, 1994, p. 105.

> Perceived oneness in the midst of all diversities (*Avibhuaktam Vibhakteshu),* has been the eternal message of the Sanatana Dharma. It is more pertinent today, than ever before. Diversities are neither to be steam rolled nor pampered. Dharma envisages autonomy of each human group to seek its social self-fulfillment through its own unique paradigm, and psychological integration of all such groups in a common framework of harmonious and mutually complementary, inter-relationships of One World (*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam),* each group enriching the common, human by making its own characteristic contribution to the collective wisdom of humanity.[1]

Dharma becomes a theory which allows one to conceive a type of democracy of cultural units. But as Enlightenment democracy depends on the individual, the democracy of cultures depends on singular cultural units. The "oneness" of Hinduism must be stressed so that it can project a singular voice outward, and decide--as one--what is allowed inside. The BJP uses this image of democracy to make themselves seem liberal, yet they are blind to the fact that their assertion of Hindu nationalism levels all diversities within it. In other words the BJP is advocating respect for the particular on the inter-cultural scale, but demanding universalism within its own culture.

Self to Nation: The Mechanism of Transfer

I have argued thus far that Hindu nationalism is a discourse that treats whole cultures as selves, and that even when tolerant and open it still sees itself as a singularity. I must now tie this into my larger argument that this is ultimately the modern discourse of the self being transferred to cultural units and thus representing the tension between particularism and universalism within modern discourse. The connection between modern ideals and the discourse of the self cannot be illustrated absolutely through the discourse itself. So, like Taylor, my argument rests on the assertion that modern methods of reasoning coexist with the discourse of the self (as applied to individuals) which indicates a connection between modern subjectivity, modern selfhood, and modern universalism. However, the mechanism of transferring that discourse from individuals to whole cultures *can* be shown clearly, and it is in the act of transferring that the tension within modernity is revealed.

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[1]Dattpant Thengadi, *Third Way* (New Delhi: Janaki Prakshan, 1995), p. 33.

The BJP's most vehement denouncement of the West is for its individualism.[1] This critique, however, is confined by the assertion that it is a social evil that leads to alienation, family and community breakdown, etc. When we take a close look at their historical narratives, social theories and proposed policies we find that they are all predicated on the existence of autonomous individuals.

A major part of their manifesto, for example, is concerned with improving the situation for women and lower castes. Many of the proposed policies are vague promises to end discrimination, but they also make many concrete plans for economic and political empowerment. With regard to women, for example, they promise to reserve a third of the seats in all elected bodies, make laws which are equal to those of men, enforce equal pay for equal work, and create employment opportunities. The manifesto also promises to rectify caste inequities:

> The BJP will ensure that the place of an individual in society will not be determined on the basis of his birth.

And this promise is backed up with an astonishingly practical proposal:

> The BJP views the provisions of special facilities and special opportunities, including reservations, in the Constitution as practical steps to advance the deprived and under-privileged sections of society. The BJP will continue with the existing policy on reservations till social and economic equity is achieved.[2]

The premise here is exactly the same as that of the Enlightenment: individuals should be able to determine their lives themselves according to their own abilities and desires, *i.e.* according to what is inside them and unhampered by outside forces. Reservations, affirmative action type policies for lower castes that guarantee places in universities and government jobs, are designed to compensate for cultural and economic realities that inhibit individuals.

And their individualism reveals itself in the more general socio-economic patterns they envision:

> They will have, further, to give up the western values of life, and (i) evolve a coordinated system of wage

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[1]Thengadi, 1995. p. 237.

[2]Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), *Election Manifesto* (New Delhi: The BJP Central Office, 1996), p. 60.

> differentials and status-differentials which would ensure reconciliation of equality with incentive, in view of the fact that if values of life are purely economic or materialistic, equitable distribution of wealth would remain incompatible with incentive for highest individuals development and (ii) generate, consequently, the psychological, cultural environment in which there would invariably be an inverse ratio between social status and personal wealth.[1]

A world in which the wealthy are seen as having low status sounds quite appealing, especially to those of us on the left, but at the core of this policy is the individual. Whether in terms of status or wealth it is still individual achievement which is valued, *i.e.* individuals moving *themselves* up the social ladder ("developing" themselves) is considered socially beneficial and morally acceptable.

Individualism also reveals itself in the common theme that nation's uplift is tied to the masculinity of the people. Jain expresses this when he advocates restoring the "missing Kshatriya [warrior] constituent of the old Hindu personality."[2] Thengadi expresses a similar sentiment when he argues that there must be an "inner" revolution before the nation can improve itself. He quotes an earlier Hindu nationalist to elucidate his point:

> Our real national regeneration should, therefore, start with the moulding of "man" instilling in him the strength to overcome human frailties and stand up as a shining symbol of Hindu manhood embodying within himself all our traditional virtues of love, self-restraint, sacrifice, service and character. We should unfailingly keep this vision, this real essence of our glorious nationhood before our eyes, so that we can again rise to our original pedestal of world preceptor.[3]

The discourse of masculinity is simultaneously a discourse of control, that is, the individual's control over himself and the world around him (use of masculine pronoun is deliberate). Moreover, in keeping with the RSS tradition, Thengadi links national progress with the transformation of the character of every man, on an *individual* basis. The assumption being that if each man takes on these masculine characteristics, the nation as the sum total of these men will also become "manly."

This is a pivotal point for understanding how Hindu nationalism is a purely modern discourse. It is in this relationship between individuals

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[1] Thengadi, 1995, p. 241.
[2] Jain, 1994, p. 104.
[3] Thengadi, 1995, p. 16.

and groups that nationalism becomes possible. The "collective" is seen as a conglomeration of *individuals*. Each distinct, discontinuous person has the qualities of the nation *within* them. The Hindu nationalist projection of those qualities out the collective is also seen to exhibit those qualities. This is the discursive space for transferring the discourse of the self from the individual to the group. Once the group is equated with its constituent members it is possible to conceive of each individual as a mini-nation, and each nation a macro-individual. The character of the nation is the character of the individual and visa versa. This is where the tension between the universal and the particular is resolved. The self is able to imagine itself as something unique, demarcating its borders with the West, all the while maintaining the universal claims of modern science and reason, and moreover claiming Hindu nationalism as the universal for all of India.

This modern sense of the group self then leads to a conception of culture that finally allows Hindu nationalism to make sense of its goal of "modernization without westernization." To the BJP the term culture represents a reified and well defined entity that is not an inherent part of the self but an external object that the self is in control of. One chapter of their manifesto entitled "Our Identity, Our Culture" is devoted to promises regarding culture. They promise to "strengthen and revitalize our cultural institutions," to "include Indian cultural studies . . . as a part of school curriculum" and "to declare all places of pilgrimage as national heritage centres."[1] Culture is seen as something the government can consciously "increase" as if it were a commodity and can teach in schools because it is something definable that can be put in a textbook. Another illustrative example is from a commentary in the RSS newspaper in which the author praises some young men who, on their way home from work in a Maruti (the Suzuki built car that has become a symbol of the country's economic liberalization and the growing urban middle class), stop at a temple:

> Who says that we get alienated from society as we get "modern?" Some of us certainly do but most of us Hindus don't. These two young men, were not an exception. They were modern young men, dealing perhaps with computers and management games in their ultra-modern offices, and earning five figure salaries. I would not have been surprised to see them watching tennis in Wimbledon or polo in Chichester. But visiting a temple in the evening on your way home? It is not something that modern young men do in a city like Delhi.
>
> But I was not at all surprised. We Hindus are getting more and more Hindu as we progress. For the first

[1]BJP Manifesto, 1996, p. 69.

> time in many years, the Hindus are asserting their Hinduness, whether they are big shot computer programmers or merchant bankers. It is not a manifestation of fundamentalism but of sense of pride in one's culture and history, a bold manifestation of ones nationhood. We are Hindus, our society is Hindu, our country is Hindu. And for the first time in modern history, we have begun to rejoice in our Hinduness.[1]

Hinduism is something one can pick-up on the way home from work. In this conception, Hinduness is separate from the rest of everyday life. Working for a wage labor, owning material comforts, believing in modern science, and for that matter objectifying the natural world and attempting to control it are all irrelevant to being Hindu. What is relevant is doing prayer at a temple. Hinduism is seen as a positive reality outside the self that one can and should actively take into the self. This is Hindu nationalism's contradiction at its deepest. On the one hand an inner revolution of man is advocated, but that revolution is defined in accordance with the modern values of progress, science, reason, and individualism; values that cannot be seen as uniquely Hindu; thus they must also advocate an assertion of Hindu traditions and practices to demonstrate their peculiar Hinduness, but in order to reconcile those practices with the modern world they must be emptied of their meaning as a cosmological order and turned into mere symbols of being Hindu. The more the BJP attempts to modernize without Westernizing the more distant they get from traditional Hinduism, and the closer they get to the source of their intolerance.

Manifestations of the Self in Policy

What is significant about the discourse of the self is that it provides the BJP with a framework for legitimating its policies of uniformity and autonomy; policies that have become difficult to maintain in recent years. With globalization not only forcing economies open but justifying *laissez faire* economics to many countries of the former colonized world and with "identity politics" becoming more widespread, the BJP finds its nationalism being questioned from within and from without. They find themselves forced to reconcile with the two, but they ultimately manage to create space for both within the discourse of the self.

We have already discussed at length that Hindu Nationalism is a discourse of the self transferred to a whole society. This is not true only of abstract musings about the nature of society and culture but forms the basis of their policies. In the introduction to their manifesto they set singularity

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[1] *The Organizer*, July 16, 1995.

as one of their fundamental principles.[1] Obviously the BJP is trying to avoid internal conflict, but their commitment to maintaining the current level of reservations suggests that they are not simply trying to "trick" the masses. On the contrary social equality is seen as part of revitalizing the nation:

> From this [social philosophy] stems the BJP's commitment to the eradication of social and economic disparities that have prevented India form emerging as a modern, dynamic nation; to the creation of a socially integrated Bharatiya society which can proudly enter the new century. The BJP will help all socially and economically weak and backward sections of society, through special welfare and other schemes, to reach their full potential.[2]

With egalitarianism being so central to their project of modernization it becomes difficult to see them as an "upper caste party." Though statistically their main support base is the urban upper castes of the north, their stand on an important issue like reservations indicates they are not trying to bait votes with promises of immediate economic gain. Theoretically they could do so and solidify their support among the upper castes as many parties have done with the lower castes. But in fact they revile this kind of politics as the following castigation of V.P. Singh shows:

> The timing of Mandal issue exposes the malintention that for Shri V.P. Singh's chair was more important than violent disharmony. Shri VP Singh has never called for social harmony and sacrificed it at alter of caste vote bank politics.[3]

Once again "harmony" is used as the ethic with which other parties are criticized. A politics of conflict and separation is denounced in favor of a politics of singularity and harmony. This is not intended to portray the BJP in a positive light, it is rather to demonstrate how the discourse of the self gets turned into a political platform of a party known for intolerance and jingoism.

In a fashion similar to its denunciation of caste politics the BJP denounces coalitions and promotes itself as worthy party based on its independence. This was of particular relevance in the last election as it was

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[1]BJP Manifesto 1996, p. 7.

[2]BJP Manifesto 1996, p.59.

[3]BJP press release, Feb. 4, 1996.

the National Front, a coalition of leftist and regional parties with widely variant platforms, which finally formed the government. Atal Behari Vajpayee, the BJP's prime-ministerial candidate, said at a rally in north India that "The myth that the BJP is anti-backward caste has been shattered . . . We have cooked enough khichdi [a mix of rice and lentils] in the past with two Janata governments, let us feast on Kheer [a desert, uniformly white in color] made from asli [pure] buffalo milk."[1] The BJP frequently lauds itself as the strongest *single* party available to the voters. Singularity of purpose is something that the BJP assumes people valorize and therefore uses it to sell itself.

Where the BJP finds itself most confused is on the issues of minorities. While the call for national unity can justify reservations for the lower castes (i.e. for members of the Hindu community) minorities, backward or not, are not granted the same privilege. Through the discourse of individualism the BJP can promise to "Guarantee all minority communities equal opportunity for development."[2] This includes incentives for those who set up small businesses or are self employed, where the legitimating principle is that one's community within the nation should not have bearing on one's rights or prosperity. Yet the same call for national unity which legitimizes reservations for backward castes makes them illegitimate for Muslims (statistically one of the poorest communities in India):

> The logical conclusion of this shortsighted approach is bound to be the repetition of the demand for a communal award and political reservations culminating into the demand of another partition of India on communal basis.[3]

Partition, always referred to as a violent split of the "whole" India, is recalled to discredit reservations for Muslims. At a rally meant to garner support from Yadavs, a caste that benefits from reservations, Kalyan Singh, vice president of the BJP, denounced the reservation demand for Dalit Christians, saying it would eat into the quota earmarked for Hindu backward castes.[4] Though present, the concern for equality is taken far less seriously when applied to groups labeled as "minorities" (*i.e.*, those outside the cultural enclosure), because the ideal of "equal rights" is given second place to the ideal of unity. This has always been a problematic issue for them. The BJP claims that Muslims could be Indians as long as they feel culturally a part of India and also why they advocate economic

[1] *The Telegraph*, December 11, 1995.

[2] BJP Manifesto, 1996, p. 64.

[3] Press release issued (January 29, 1995) by K.L. Sharma, BJP member of parliament and party General Secretary.

[4] *The Telegraph*, December 11, 1995.

based reservations so that all communities and castes could benefit. Surprisingly, it is this very confusion over the question of minorities that affirms my argument. The BJP contradicts itself, sometimes including minorities sometimes not, however they consistently legitimize their position within the logic of self.

The "culture as self" metaphor finds its expression in political geography as well. Under no circumstances will the BJP entertain thoughts of the state of Kashmir, which has always had special semi-autonomous status under the Indian constitution, gaining any degree of sovereignty. A press statement in response to the Anandpur Resolution and the Jammu and Kashmir Agreement declares:

> according to the considered opinion the party both these documents are declaration of disintegration of the country and no patriotic party or person could accept it. All said and done, to concede to the demand of creating a state within a state with two constitutions, two flags, two prime ministers and two presidents in one country is untenable for BJP, unacceptable for the nation and a total sell out for achieving petty political ends by the congress.[1]

Neither a break in the borders of India nor the idea of a state within a state is acceptable to the BJP. No indication is given that if the people of Kashmir were to choose to secede by plebiscite that this would be a legitimate reason to grant autonomy. Rather they have opposed elections in Kashmir (said to be "pre-mature") indicating that the "will of the people" takes second place to "unity of the people."

Another example of the discourse of the self being turned into policy is their stand on the Uniform Civil Code. Since Independence, minority communities in India have been allowed separate sets of laws regarding marriage, inheritance, and other family related matters. The constitution, however, contains a clause demanding that the Uniform Civil Code be implemented over time. The BJP accuses the Congress of deliberately ignoring this clause to "appease" the Muslim community and use them as a vote bank. This has been a running theme in BJP literature for a long time, but interestingly in the recent Manifesto the call to implement the Uniform Civil Code comes in the chapter devoted to women's rights. Their concern over the issue is said to arise from the fact that Muslim civil law does not grant equal status to women. The legitimization is then on the basis that all women should be equal to all men, regardless of community. One wonders why a male dominated party

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[1]Press release issued (November 5, 1995) by K.L. Sharma, BJP member of parliament and party General Secretary.

is so concerned about the rights of minority women. Manohar Joshi, Chief Minister of Maharashtra's Hindu nationalist government, offers some answers. Speaking about Hindu nationalism's wish to implement the uniform civil code in that state, Joshi said the objective of the uniform civil code was not to antagonize any community but to infuse a sense of nationalism and patriotism among the citizens by making them feel that the law was common for everyone. Justification comes from the call to unity.

Globalization is perhaps the most serious challenge to the Hindu sense of self because the BJP not only wants India to be independent but to be an economic power. The BJP realizes that in order to fulfill its goal of carving out an "international role that befits this great and ancient nation" it must accept capital and technology from abroad.[1] This marks a significant change in their prior economic policy which they called "swadeshi," a term used to mean national economic self-sufficiency. But the new, more open policy nevertheless tries to minimize dependence on external capital. Their economic policy has been modeled after the successful Asian "tigers:" a shift in emphasis away from post-World War Two import substitution to export promotion. Foreign capital will be welcomed as long as it promotes exports and technological development; in other words something from the outside may come in as long as it is under the control of the self.[2] A speech given by BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi at the annual convention of the Confederation of Indian Industry is another example of their difficulty in the era of globalization. In response to the Congress's plan of attracting foreign investment, Joshi avoids the term swadeshi but asks "does India have the Capability to absorb this level of investment" agreeing that India needs more capital for industrial growth he says, "we urge the corporates and the government to save more."[3] Domestic savings are given priority. In other words internal strength is sought before external help, a marked contrast to *laissez faire* economic theory which claims that free trade is beneficial to all.

More importantly for my purposes is that this policy has a cultural dimension, and their conception of culture is consistent with what I have described above. The BJP has promised not to allow corporations that sell consumer non-durable goods at all. The recent incident of a Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise being closed in Delhi, where the BJP is in power, is an example of them enforcing this policy. Investment in areas of technology, infrastructure, and other industries that involve billions of dollars are considered acceptable, but investment that affects the area of "culture" is not. This is policy predicated on the idea that culture exists in a particular zone and can be shielded from outside influence.

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[1]BJP Manifesto, 1996, p. 33.
[2]BJP Manifesto 1996, p. 24.
[3]*Times of India,* April 18, 1996.

Conclusion

The argument of this paper has been twofold. First I have tried to show that the BJP's discourse of Hindu nationalism is a discourse of the self. As such it is rooted in the modern systems of thought and value that arose in the West. Thus Hindu nationalism is a contradiction because the very process of defining difference with the West accepts the Western form of identity.

Secondly, I have tried to show that this contradiction is a manifestation of the tension between the universal and the particular that is inherent in modernity. Being rooted in modernity, Hindu nationalist discourse unwittingly accepts the universals of science, reason, and the objectifying consciousness on which they are based. But the concomitant sense of self engenders the desire to demarcate a unique Hindu culture—a particular. Since modernity affects the most basic levels of life (as read through discourse), Hindu nationalism falls into an irresolvable contradiction. If Hindu nationalism accepts the depth of change involved in modernization, they must reject that their particularity has any significance. If they want to give their particularity any significance they must give up their modernity. However, they can avoid facing this contradiction by defining culture in a way that being modern and being Hindu are two separate but compatible things. This definition of culture moves Hinduism outside the self and makes it a reified object which the self can use as a symbol of its particularity while leaving its modernity in tact. As a reified object, culture becomes positively defined; in other words it becomes an immutable, discontinuous object: a *universal* with a border drawn around it. Hindu nationalism is now armed with the criteria for defining who is Hindu and who is not.

Thus we have arrived at that notorious source of intolerance, the distinction between "self" and "other." And we have come there solely through a discussion of modern discourse. What I have identified as the modern aspects of Hindu nationalist discourse are on the level of the thematic and therefore can be said to "control," or form the "base" of the discourse. Hence Hindu nationalism should not be thought of as a meshing of the traditional and the modern, as van der Veer argues, or as arising directly from Hindu culture as Juergensmeyer implies. Nor should it be thought of as being rooted in the tension between secular nationalism and a true alternative, as Chatterjee suggests. Instead it should be seen as a modern discourse which appropriates the language of tradition for use as a symbol of modern selfhood.

This is not to suggest that it is only under conditions of modernity that "self" and "other" can be delineated. But it is only with an individualistic conception of the self that cultures can be treated as enclosed, singular, and autonomous entities thereby creating the potential for violence to other nations when they threaten autonomy, and violence to the other within when they threaten singularity. Furthermore, the cultural

definition of the self, as an object, has the status of positive knowledge which means that it is something anybody can identify and act upon, thus making the violence possible on a mass scale.

I have also shown that cultural nationalism is just one type of modern identity. I am not arguing that modernity inevitably leads to such movements. My argument is meant to implicate modernity for creating the conceptual space for cultural nationalism, and, as I would assert, for having little to offer in way of preventing that type of intolerance.

On the Origin of the Ergative in Indo-Aryan

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In recent years there has been an increased interest in the historical development of the Indo-Aryan ergative. Much of this interest revolves around the widely accepted theory that the ergative originates from passive verbal forms in Old Indo-Aryan. This paper explores the historical debates whirling around this linguistic construction and suggests an approach which conceives varying degrees of ergativity.

According to R.M.W. Dixon, the concept of ergativity occurs in languages that treat intransitive subjects in the same manner as transitive objects.[1] Ergative forms in New Indo-Aryan (NIA) languages derived from Sanskrit employ past passive constructions that are marked as past participles instead of finite forms. In these constructions, transitive agents that appear in the instrumental and the participle agree with the transitive object, or, alternatively, the transitive object is promoted to a subject (*e.g.*,, *mandire tena darsanam labdham* or "he had a vision in the temple").

In recent years, there has been an increased interest in the historical development of the ergative in Indo-Aryan (IA) languages. Much of this interest revolves around the widely accepted theory that the ergative originates from passive verbal forms in Old Indo-Aryan (OIA), and more specifically from the past passive participle in *-ta*. This theory was first introduced during the nineteenth century in studies on historical grammars.[2] It was later revisited and revived during the twentieth century.[3] While this theory's diachronic approach is not restricted to IA

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[1]R.M.W. Dixon "Ergativity," *Language* (55): p. 61.

[2] See the following texts: John Beames, *A Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages of India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1879); and Berthold Delbruck, *Introduction to the Study of Language: A Critical Survey of the History and Methods of the Comparative Philology of Indo-European Languages* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1897).

[3]See the following texs: V. Miltner, "From OIA Passive to NIA Active," *Asian and African Studies* (1): Pp. 143-46; L.A. Pireyko, *Osnovnye Voprosy Ergativnostina Materiale Indoiranskix Jazkow* (Moscow: Nauka, 1968); and Bruce Pray,

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languages, studies of the ergative in this particular language family yield excellent examples of this approach. In recent years, this diachronic understanding of the ergative, or "passive" origin theory, has been challenged by linguists of IA who suggest the ergative existed in OIA itself.[1]

This paper examines the debate around the ergative in IA languages. First, it outlines and gives examples of the ergative in IA. Second, the paper summarizes arguments for the "passive" origin of this phenomenon. Third, it examines arguments that question the "passive" origin theory. Throughout this paper I argue that Bernard Comrie's notion of "degree of ergativity" is important because it helps account for ergative-like constructions in OIA, as well as for the diachronic change exemplified by these constructions as they move from OIA to NIA.[2] In other words, instead of classifying OIA (or a particular stage of its development) as being ergative or not, I suggest an approach that asks to what extent is a form ergative. In this approach it is useful to differentiate syntactic constructions that operate on a nominative-accusative basis and those that operate on a ergative-absolutive basis. This proposal means (1) examining cases in which intransitive subjects and transitive agents (i.e. nominatives) are grouped together against transitive objects (i.e. accusatives), and (2) distinguishing them from situations in which intransitive subjects and transitive objects (i.e. absolutives) are grouped together against transitive agents.[3]

South Asian languages that exhibit the ergative construction include Konkani, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi, Punjabi and Hindi-Urdu. However the ergative construction is supposedly not present in all IA languages. For example, according to Bruce Pray in "From Passive to Ergative in Indo-Aryan Languages" the Eastern IA languages of Bengali, Oriya, and Assamese reflect a "loss of ergativity." Because ergative-absolutive syntax is rare in Indo-European (IE) languages, one explanation of this phenomena is that it is not inherited from older stages of IE, but is rather an internal development within a particular subgroup of IA and therefor

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"From Passive to Ergative in Indo-Aryan," in M. Verma (ed.), *The Notion of Subject in South Asian Languages* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1976).

[1] See the following texts: H.H. Hock, *Principles of Historical Linguistics* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyer, 1986); M.H. Klaiman, "Arguments Against the Passive Origin of the Ergative," in D. Frakas (ed.), *Papers from the Fourteenth Regional Meeting* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978); Colin Masica, *The Indo-Aryan Languages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[2] Bernard Comrie, "Some Remark on Ergativity," in M. Verma (ed.), *South Asian Language Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

[3] For a further discussion see: Bernard Comrie, *Langauge Universals and Lingustic Typology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

fashioned from linguistic material already present in OIA.[1] In the majority of cases when this construction is present in NIA, the past participle is part of the verbal form.[2] Linguists have traced this participle to Sanskrit's past participle in *-ta*.[3] There is a tendency in Sanskrit to extend the noun style which favors the verbal forms in *-ta*. Later the nominal phrase system replaced the highly inflectional verbal system of earlier Vedic and in the Epic age the grammatical categories of the verb were reduced. The finite preterites (in spite of the frequency of their use) were increasingly supplanted over time by the present or by the *-ta* participle accompanied by the verb "to be" and a personal pronoun in first and second person.[4] It should be noted that the *-ta* participle agreed with the subject in intransitive sentences (example 1a), and in transitive sentences with the logical object of the action (example 2a). In the later of these two forms, logical subjects or agents appeared in the instrumental while objects were nominative.

In NIA languages, the participle verbal forms and the rules of agreement are inherited. Some of these NIA languages (such as Konkani, Marathi, Gujarati, Eastern IA groups, as well as certain speeches of the Himalayas) have enlarged participles by adding the declinable suffix *-la* (examples 1c, and 2c) to the stems of the past and/or present tenses. This enlarged participle is extended from the Prakrit adjective suffix *–alla*; a variant of the more frequent *-illa*. The alternative form inherited by other languages such as Hindi-Urdu is derived from Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA). In this case the intervocal stops were voiced and the participle in *-ta/-ita* was changed into *-da/-ida*, and later the suffix was spirantized to *-ya* (examples 1b, and 2b). These rules of agreement, as well as the forms of the participle are given (in Classical Sanskrit and NIA) below:

(1) Intransitive

a. Classical Sanskrit: *sa gatah*
"he went"

b. Hindi-Urdu: *woh gayaa*
"he went"

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[1]Bruce Pray, "From Passive to Ergative in Indo-Aryan," in M. Verma (ed.), *The Notion of the Subject in South Asian Languages* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976).

[2]Interestingly the future gerundive in *-tavya* also exhibits ergativity.

[3]According to scholars such as Stephen Anderson, "On Mechanisms by Which Languages Become Ergative," in C. Lin (ed.), Mechanisms of Syntactic Change (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), it has a perfective sense, but the close study of the Panini Grammar (III.ii.102) has shown that the use of the *-ta* participle was not governed by any specific conditions, which governed the use of the perfect tense (III.ii.115). The *-ta* participle was used unconditionally to express past time.

[4]Jules Bloch, *Indo-Aryan from the Vedas to Modern Times* (Paris: Adrien-Maissonneuve, 1914).

c. Konkani: *to gelo*
"he went"

(2) Transitive
a. Classical Sanskrit: *tena roTikaa khaaditaa*
"he ate the roti"

b. Hindi-Urdu: *usne roTii khaaii*
"he ate the roti"

c. Konkani: *taNe roTii kheli*
"he ate the roti"

The special marking of the agent in Konkani and Hindi-Urdu (a phenomena also found in Punjabi and Marathi) is a vestige of the OIA instrumental case or of a "reinforced" version of the instrumental which is distinct as an agentive from newer instrumentals (*ne* vs. *se* in Hindi-Urdu). Other languages have developed new forms, such as *-le* in Nepali and Kumauni.[1] A particular case of the ergative construction was extremely frequent in Sanskrit and Prakrit when the participle was in the neuter singular and not accompanied by any opposition expressed by the logical component. This phenomena also existed in NIA:

(3) a. Classical Sanskrit: *tena uktam*
"he said"

b. Hindi-Urdu: *usne kahaa*
"he said"

c. Konkani: *taNe mhuLe*
"he said"

Furthermore, this construction was enlarged with a logical object in the oblique case when used as the name of a person, an animate object, or an object with a high cognitive status:

(4) a. Hindi-Urdu: *usne maataa ko dekhaa*
"he saw the mother"

b. Konkani: *tine mhatarek polayle*
"he saw the mother"

[1] Masica, 1991, Pp. 257-327.

c. Hindi-Urdu: *usne chiTThii ko paRhaa*
"he read the letter"

Some later NIA languages developed personal terminations which were added to the participle. It should be noted that apparently one feature of the Sanskrit construction was not passed on to NIA: intransitives (for example the construction *devadattena suptam* or "Devadatta slept" (a literal translation is "it was slept by Devadatta").[1]

Word order is also important to understanding diachronic changes in IA languages. In Sanskrit word order is fairly free and the general hypothesis is that, like Proto Indo-European (PIE), word order in Sanskrit is of the subject-object-verb (SOV) type. NIA languages also belong to the SOV type and in the ergative construction the logical subject retains its place in the beginning of the sentence. Thus, the development of the ergative construction in the historical process leading from OIA to NIA languages does not require the reordering of its constituents. Conventionally, this form is recognized as a past "passive" participle because of its passive meaning when formed out of a transitive verb.[2] Moreover, it is considered the basis of a periphrastic passive construction with a clear past sense, which served as an alternative to the primarily inflectional passive forms in *-ya* and the passive uses of the middle forms.[3] This reasoning has lead scholars to propose a diachronic perspective toward the ergative that states in NIA the ergative has a "passive" origin from OIA. This claim states that past passive forms increased in frequency relative to the active forms of the OIA stage, until eventually in NIA the active forms became obsolete and were replaced by the ergative constructions. Another factor contributing to the historical development of the ergative in NIA was the gradual loss of distinctive case endings for nouns and pronouns in MIA, an event that blurred the difference between passive and active sentences.[4]

In contrast to the "passive" origin theory W.K. Mathews, in "The Ergative in Modern Indo-Aryan," claims that formally and historically the ergative itself is inherently passive.[5] However, Mathews is misled by the

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[1]H.H. Hock cited in Colin Masica, 1991, p. 341.

[2]W.K. Mathews, "The Ergative Construction in Modern Indo-Aryan," *Lingua* (3): 391-399; V. Miltner, "From OIA Passive to NIA Active," *Asian and African Studies* (1): 143-46; L.A. Pirejko, *Osnovnye Voprosy Ergativnostina Materiale Indoiranskix Jazykow* (Moscow: Nauka, 1968); J.S. Speijers, *Sanskrit Syntax* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1973); William Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1973).

[3]Anderson, 1977, Pp. 316-366.

[4]Pray, 1976, Pp. 195-211.

[5]W.K. Mathews, "The Ergative Construction in Modern Indo-Aryan," Lingua 3: 394.

Masica investigates whether or not the patient, as the controller of verb agreement, is the subject in NIA.[1] He points out that in ergative constructions it is the agent (which remains the first noun phrase) that still controls, or that is uniquely accessible to, operations that (1) make crucial reference to the subject as reflexivization (example 5), (2) make coreferential subject deletion in conjunctive participle formations (example 6), and (3) raise the subject to an object in an embedded sentence (example 7). In addition, it is important to emphasize that (1) these operations are not applicable in the case of the passive construction in *-ya*, and that (2) the first two operations are also possible in Sanskrit. This occurrence, together with the fact that the agent is normally not moved from the first subject position, shows that (unlike the passive construction) the ergative follows an SOV syntactic order that disputes the "passive" origin theory. For example, Colin Masica, in *The Indo-Aryan Languages*, illustrates this point with regard to Hindi-Urdu:[2]

(5) Hindi-Urdu: *gopaal ne apnii chiTThii likhii thii*
"Gopal had written his (own) letter"

(6) Hindi-Urdu: *andar jaakar gopaal ne chiTThii likhii*
"(Gopal) going inside, Gopal read a book"

(7) Hindi-Urdu: *mohan ne gopaal ko chiTThii likhte hue dekhaa*
"Mohan saw Gopal write the letter"

It is also worth considering the split category "voice" in OIA's participial constructions, which depend on the transitivity of the verbs forming the *-ta* participle. M.H. Klaiman, in "Arguments Against the Passive Origin of the Ergative," suggests two approaches to this phenomena.[3] The first, argues that there are two *–ta* constructions: one is passive for transitives, and the other is active for intransitives. In this argument the surface marker *-ta* is presumed to be a case of accidental homophony. The second, urges a reanalysis of the *-ta* construction. It states that if the abstract category "voice" is rejected and the construction treated as a single unit, then its characteristics are covered by Dixon's definition of ergativity, and the differences between "passive" origin proponents and opponents therefor become mute. Hock supports this conclusion stating that the meaning or function of this construction is not

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[1]Masica, 1991, p. 341.
[2]Masica, 1991, p. 342.
[3]Klaiman, 1978, p. 207.

specifically passive, but rather results in a contrast between active and passive in which the two forms are neutralized.[1]

Thus, it is plausible to claim that the ergative construction gradually became prevalent only in the early MIA stage where it (in comparison to active and highly inflectional verbal forms) expressed both passive and active meanings. Simultaneously, grammatical simplification of the noun and verb categories also resulted in the gradual loss of the finite passive forms in *-ya*. Importantly, such arguments lead to the suggestion that ergativity was present in Sanskrit and maybe even in PIE itself (however, such a claim requires the gathering of further relevant data from Greek, Latin, and Hittite). In contrast to such accounts, I contend that OIE had a low "degree of ergativity," and that gradually, with diachronic change (from OIA to NIA), the "degree of ergativity" also increased. An analysis of these constructions in other IE languages supports this claim and indicates that certain ergative characteristics still exist and can only be accounted for by the notion of "degree of ergativity." For example, the *-ta* participle occurs in IE and is used not only in this form, but also in a form in which its meaning depends on the transitivity of the basic verb. For example, this participle in Latin is formed from a intransitive verb (*i.e.*, *mortuus est* or "he died") that has an active value, however it also has a passive sense when used with transitive verbs (*i.e.*, *laudatus est* or "he was praised").[2] The past participle in this example operates according to the rules of ergativity found in a wide variety of IE languages. In English—a nominative accusative language—phrases like *conquered heroes*, undoubtedly, have an ergative function that contrasts with instances from intransitives, like *fallen heroes*. Similarly, in French the intransitive past participle in *l'annee passee* (or "the passed year") has an active meaning, while the phrase *le film presente;* (or "the presented film")—is passive. A further example of English exhibiting degrees of ergativity is illustrated by compound nouns of the noun-verb-ing type which are interpreted according to whether the verb is transitive or intransitive. In the first case, the noun is the object (*e.g.,*, *fox hunting*) while in the second the noun is the subject (*e.g.,*, *bird chirping*). Similar to these compound nouns are deverbal nouns in *-ee* that refer to the object of the transitive verbs (*e.g.,*, *employee*) or to the subject of the intransitives (*e.g.,*, *escapee*).

To conclude, I have reviewed the use of the ergative in IA and shown there is a lack of creditable evidence for the claim that it has a "passive" origin that results from an internal development limited to the IA language group. It is clear that in IE there are constructions, just like the ergative, in which verb transitivity or intransitivity is the determining category of interpretation. Based on this phenomena, I claim that the ergative originated not from a passive-like but from an ergative-like

[1] Hock, p. 431.
[2] Klaiman, 1978, Pp. 207-208.

construction that existed in OIE. Such a claim is supported by Comrie's theory of "degrees of ergativity" which asks to what extent are languages ergative (i.e., which constructions operate on a ergative basis and which ones don't). Finally, such a methodological conclusion questions scholars such Bruce Pray in "From the Passive to the Ergative in Indo-Aryan," who assert, that Eastern IA languages reflect a "loss of ergativity." The larger implication of Comrie's theory of ergativity for Eastern IA is that this construction can no longer be glibly dismissed as not being characteristic of this language group. Such glib statements can longer be accepted because, as both I and Comrie show, ergativity is based not on whether or not a language is comparatively ergative, but rather on the degree to which it is internally ergative.

Sustainable Development: Unwitting Ally of Nationalism and Bane for Ethnic Minorities

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Land and forestry practices of South Asian states and of Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) often impinge upon small indigenous communities. One such community is the Garo of Bangladesh whose encounters with sustainable development projects in the Madhupur Forest exacerbate their socio-economic marginalization. This paper argues that international donations and government control of NGOs do not allow NGOs to contest the very problems they were formed to alleviate.

Since the colonial period, development has primarily been a state responsibility and an important source of its legitimacy.[1] In turn these, among other things, brought diverse social groups under state authority and control through systems of social networks and regulatory frameworks extending from local to international arenas.[2] However, in the 1970's many began criticizing state-centric models of development for their inability to reach the poorest of the poor, their top-down and bureaucratic approach to development, their failure to build institutions bringing structural changes to society, and for their failure to create the conditions necessary for a sustainable environment and democratic forms of governance. Sustainable development (SD) by non-government organizations (NGOs) was a response to these criticisms[3] that became

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[1]David Ludden, "India's Development Regime," in Nicholas B. Dirks (ed.), *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), p. 251.

[2]Aturo Escobar, "Discourse and Power in Development: Micheal Foucault and the Relevance of his work to the Third World," *Alternatives X*: 385-338.

[3]David Reid, *Sustainable Development: An Introductory Guide* (London: Earthscan, 1995); United Nations, *Sustainable Development Finance: Opportunities and Obstacles* (New York: UN Press, 1996). Development Alternatives and Palni Hills Conservation Council, *Sustainable Development Program, Palni Hills, India: Planning for Interventions in the Palnis, Phase I* (New Delhi: Development Alternatives and the

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increasingly popular because of their alleged capacity to both overcome the failures and limitations of the state, and to respond to the needs of marginalized groups.[1]

I believe, however, that NGOs' have reinforced and legitimized the very institutions and practices considered responsible for the problems the NGOs seek to assist.[2] For example, in Bangladesh NGOs have eroded the traditional material bases of social formations and authority relations, a fact increasingly reflected in the control of tribal lands by the state and by the majority Bengali community. Through this transfer of land, NGOs have unwittingly transformed social relationships--such as class and gender--among Bangladesh's tribal populations, changed tribal relationships with the State and the larger Bangladeshi society, weakened kin based solidarity, increased migration to urban areas, aggravated social inequalities, and placed tribal social and cultural heritage under threat of total disintegration.

SD has become an arena in which the interests of the state, NGOs, and international development agencies converge. NGOs play an important role in facilitating this process because the state continues to maintain a dominant position, while NGOs have neither the flexibility nor the capacity to act in ways contrary to state interests. In legal terms, NGOs are considered a "non-political institutional formation." They do not have a mandate by their donors or by state laws to directly engage in activities that would have direct "political" implications. Thus, NGOs' power to challenge the state derives from their association with international donors rather than from than a social base comprising the people whom they assist. International donors, however, are not interested in challenging the state's legitimizing ideology if it does not disrupt the progress of liberal

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Palni Hills Conservation Council, 1991); William C. Clark and R.E. Munn (eds.), *Sustainable development of the Biosphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Sustainable Development: OECD Policy Approaches for the 21st Century* (Paris: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1997).

[1]Bishwapriya Sanyal, *Cooperative Autonomy: The Dialectic of the State-NGOs Relationship in Developing Countries* (Geneva: International Institute for Labour Studies, 1994). Thomas G. Weiss and Leon Gordenker (eds.), *NGOs, theUnited Nations, and Global Governance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996). David Potter (ed.), *NGOs and Environmental Policies: Asia and Africa* (London: F. Cass, 1996); Richard W. Timm (ed.), *Indonesia Asian Workshop : From Assistance to Partnership in Self-Reliance* (Aachen, Germany: Misereor, 1993); R.B. Jain (ed.) *NGOs in Development Perspective* (Delhi: Vivek Prakashan, 1995); / John Farrington, Anthony Bebbington, Kate Wellard, David J. Lewis, *Reluctant partners?: Non-Governmental Organizations, the State and Sustainable Agricultural Development* (London: Routledge, 1993).

[2]For a discussion of this phenomena see Jude Fernando's "Credit and Empowerment of Women: NGO Performances in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka," which was presented at The Silver Anniversary Conference, of the Association For Research on Non-profit Organizations and Voluntary Action on November 7-9, 1996.

economic reforms. To put this differently, the nature of the political regime that the international donors endorse is one that is embedded within the discourse of mainstream development. I argue that international donors are using NGOs to "discipline" the state into articulating its form and relationship with society in accordance with the interests of liberal economic reforms. NGOs are compelled to articulate their interests according to the parameters of "cultural nationalism" and international capital, which censors and mutes the radical aspirations of their agendas. This process leads to increasing "centralization" and "domestication" of state power—hence legitimization of the very institutional practices that are considered to be reasons for problems faced by the indigenous populations and obstacles for the realization of SD's goals.[1]

One tribe that NGOs have had a profound affect on are the Garo of Madhupur Forest. The Garo, also known as *Mandi*, are one of 27 tribes in Bangladesh and number about 100,000.[2] Garo are a matrilineal social formation centered around family (*nokma*).[3] A typical household consists of extended nuclear family: a married couple with unmarried siblings and married daughter with husband, along with their unmarried children. Men cannot inherit property—even when it is given as a gift—or keep money in their possession beyond that needed for expenses known in advance. Once a married man moves to his wife's home, he cannot bequeath property at anytime. In situations of divorce, a man has to leave with only his clothing. When a son lives in the house of another or dies unmarried away from home, the mother has total claim over property and distribution decisions. The relationship between men and women is primarily shaped by institutions of matrilineal decent, matrilineal inheritance, and uxorilocal residence.[4]

Although only women can own property, management of property is often vested in the hands of the husband who resides in the wife's

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[1]By centralization I mean the increasing and over whelming control of state power in an ever increasing number of areas in society. Domestication refers to the legitimazation of state practices.

[2]There is much confusion as to the actual exact of tribal populations in Bangladesh. C. Maloney in "Tribes of Bangladesh and Synthesis of Bangladesh Culture" documentes 36 tribes in Bangladesh. The government after 1947 never made any attempt to take a census of tribal people on the basis of language or religion. Generally, tribal groups belong six linguistic categories, Indo-Aryan; Dravidian; Austro-Asiatic or Mon-Khmer (this includes Khasi and Munda), Tibeto-Burmese (i.e., Kubi-Chin), and Bara languages.

[3]The term *nokma* refers to land or the house, which are inseparable for the Garo.

[4]For details on the Garo's social, cultural, and economic organization please refer to Robbins Burling, *Rengsanggri: Family and Kinship in a Garo Village* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963) and Kibriual Khaleque, *Social Change Among the Garo: A Study of a Plain Village and the People*, (Australian National University: Canberra (unpublished masters thesis in anthropology).

home.[1] Men hold the key leadership positions within the community's customary associations. Increasing interactions between the Garo and the larger Bengali community, in which opportunities for Garo women to participate in the public sphere are severely circumscribed, tend to undermine the relative bargaining power of Garo women vis-à-vis women within their community. In comparison to women in the majority Bengali community, Garo women face fewer constraints acting in the public sphere. Largely due to missionary and NGO intervention, the Garo women's educational and reproductive health standards are remarkably high compared to other ethnic communities in the country. However, within the Garo community there is a clear gender-based division of labor, and the amount of work performed by Garo women tends to be higher than that performed by men. Both men and women legitimize these practices as symbolic of their community, as "sanctioned" by Garo tradition. Within the context of larger Bangladeshi society, women also symbolize the status and prestige of the family. As a result, certain patriarchal notions about women's behavior impact gender relations within the Garo community and Garo women are expected to conform to those standards. This suggests that celebrating matrilineality by men and women alike as a defining feature of the Garo community identity can actually work against relatively high level of social mobility that women in matrilineal groups enjoy. However, the centrality of women's property ownership and other matrilineal practices have placed Garo women in a higher bargaining position vis-à-vis their men.[2]

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[1] Apart from direct economic benefits, ownership of property has a significant impact on the ideologies and practices shaping relationships between groups (e.g. majority and minority groups) and within groups (e.g. class, gender and social status). For example, both propertied and propertiless households may espouse the ideology of female seclusion, but the former group may be in a better position to enforce its practice, and in doing so reinforce its emulation by unpropertied houses as a mark of social status. These may be enforced by external agencies such as the State and customary institutions within a given community. In some cases ownership of land may be merely a legal or customary matter which is not effectively enforced. The benefits associated with property for a social group or individual stems not from ownership alone, but also from effective control over it. Effective control is a result of ideologies that shape relations between social groups (e.g. nationalism, ethnicity, and religion) and between members within a given group (e.g. patriarchy, age, and marital status). What I am interested in this paper is the effective control of property, that is not just rights given by law or custom but in practices of everyday life which control of property as a basis for social and economic equality between different social groups. For more information on ownership and control of land and natural resources by women see, Bina Agrawal, "Rural Women, Poverty, and Struggle for Change," *Economic and Political Weekly* 28(10): 46-65, and *Cold Hearths and Barren Slopes: The Wonderful Crisis in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986).

[2] Access and ownership of property is not a sufficient condition for equal distribution of power relations between men and women. One needs to take into account

The majority of Garo are Christians but their conversion did not result in their traditional social system's total disintegration. Instead, missionary efforts revitalized most important aspects of the Garo social system and solidified their group identity.[1] For example, many traditional social practices are currently being incorporated into Garo expressions of Christian faith which continue to reinforce some elements essential for the reproducing their social formation.[2] The majority of the Garo are also a part of the wider Bengali Christian church. This has produced some contradictory results. On the one hand, in contrast to the non-Christian minority groups in Bangladesh (*e.g.*, Biharis), issues faced by Garo get wider international coverage and provide relatively more institutional possibilities to resolve them.[3] In several occasions international pressure on the government prevented the implementation of some forestry policies by the government and international development agencies. On the other hand, the increasing "Bengalization" of the Garo church has led to increasing assimilation into mainstream Bengali culture.[4] Some Garo feel this tendency toward assimilation is reinforced by Bengalis replacing foreign missionaries. The implication is that "Bengalization" of the Garo church constrains its flexibility to pursue "specific interests" of their community. This, in turn, has forced the Garo to function within the same institutional constraints faced by the church as a minority in Bangladesh.

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the control of property. My study into the later aspect has shown that it has led to undermining of women's bargaining power vis-a-vis men and also led to social differentiation of the community along class lines. This complex interplay between gender and class in relation to dynamics of ownership and control of property is crucial for a sound inquiry of the Garo community. In this paper I have truncated my discussion of this very important aspect of Garo life because of limitations of space. I have examined this matter in some detail during my field research. For further information please refer to Bina Agarwal, "Gender and Command Over Property: A Critical Gap in Economic Analysis and Policy in South Asia," *World Development* 22: 145-78, and "The Gender and Environmental Debate: Lessons from India," *Feminist Studies* 18(1): 119-58.

[1]Polygamy and divorce were institutionalized as "sins" and taboos, yet marriage remains exogamous and matrilocal. The ownership and secession of property also continues along the lines of the matrilineal tradition.

[2]The priesthood continues be remains in the hands of men, despite the celebration of matrilineality by the missionaries and women's leadership in Church activities .

[3]Biharis migrated to Bangladesh after Partition. After the creation of Bangladesh they were not accepted into Pakistan and the Bangladesh Government is yet to recognize them as citizens. Perhaps, Biharis are one of the most marginalized groups who do not receive much attention even by the NGOs.

[4]More over, Bengali is the medium of education and the use of the vernacular is limited to the domestic and social spheres, and unless it is incorporated into the educational process the extinction of Garo language could happen within a short period of time.

This is one of the reasons why CARITAS, a Catholic NGO, is not in a position to pursue—and was forced to abandon—programs (*e.g.*, legal aid) that challenged the interests of the majority Bengali community and the State.

Colonial rule had far reaching consequences for the social organization of Garo: for the "first time in the history they became a minority" and the kin-ordered authority structure underwent radical change when local chiefs were made into agents of central authority.[1] Yet at the same time the Garo were able to maintain much autonomy in managing their local affairs as a result of the colonial government's policy to revitalize and subordinate traditional forms of governance. Under the British *Zamindari* system, the Garo land in Madhupur Tract came under the Raja of Natore. Within this system, Garo could register low land under their own name and lease high land for cultivation. Interestingly, as Fr. Timm notes, "in 1978, the Mandi [or Garo] recorded their low lands (and some of the high lands) under the Indian Tenancy Act of 1878, which is their oldest claim in written law. The annual Tax is still paid to the Revenue Department, the successor of the zamindar and the British *Raj*." Governments after independence made several attempts to repeal these laws in order to eliminate the special rights and privileges enjoyed by the Garo and to bring their land and social life under the state's central control. For example, the enactment of the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act of 1950 (EBSATA) excluded Garo from the special protection given to tribal groups by preferential legislature since the Colonial period.[2] This led to large influx of Bengalis—first from Tripura and then from others parts of East Pakistan—settling in tribal owned lands. The government classified these lands as *khas* (public). In 1962, the government declared the Madhupur forest as a National Park which led to the Revenue Department taking control over thousands of acres of land cultivated and inhabited by the Garo. In several traditional villages Garo families were evicted and no compensation was paid to them. The Enemy Property Act of 1965, which resulted from the war between India and Pakistan, was reinstated by the Bangladeshi Government in 1971 as the Vested and Non-Resident Property (Administration) Act (XLVI) of 1974. This act was indiscriminately applied to all minorities. Tribals who fled to India during the 1971 war as refugees found that their land had been appropriated under

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[1] This fact is noted in Willem Van Schendel, "The invention of the 'Jummas:' State Formation and Ethnicity in Southeastern Bangladesh in Bengal," Sekhar Bandyopadhyay (ed.), *Communities, Development, and States* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1995), 135-173.

[2] There are significant continuities of policies toward tribals between the Colonial State and the post-Colonial State. For a detailed discussion on this colonial predicament see, Jude Fernando's "A Story of Nationalism and a Tragedy of A Forest," a paper given at the 12th Annual Berkeley Conference of Asian Studies on February 16th, 1997.

this Act.[1] Since then the Garo have been continuously losing land to Bengalis through forced evictions and settlements; their land has also been appropriated through false court cases and sold due to poverty. In trying to assert their legal rights to land, Garo are constantly subjected to physical harassment.[2]

In 1971, Bangladesh became an independent nation. In the 1972 constitution, "secularism" was enacted as a one of the fundamental principles of the state. The rationale behind the secular identity was to prevent any religious group gaining political status. However, from its inception, contradictions in the claims of secularism were evident. In 1975 the slogan of *Joi Bangla* was replaced with *Bangladesh Zindabad* and subsequent amendments to the constitution declared "absolute faith in the Almighty Allah." Bangladesh officially ceased to be a secular State. Governments since then have either taken steps to further the country's Islamic identity or remained neutral toward similar activities carried out by politically motivated Islamic interest groups. A noteworthy feature of the relationship between Islam and the State in Bangladesh is that governments in power have attempted to present themselves as the "true defenders" of Islam, thereby preempting such claims from their rival political parties.[3] This is why it is not the *Jammat-i-Islami*, a group considered a "fundamentalist political party" responsible for the Islamization of the Bangladeshi state and its adverse consequences for the minorities, but the state and the mainstream political parties themselves who occupy this position.[4]

When Bangladesh gained independence the Garo became redefined as a minority for the third time.[5] This results in both "secular" and "Islamic" versions of Bangladeshi nationalism distorting the country's cultural plurality because they are embedded in a notion of a "greater Bengali community." It creates an artificial homogeneity between the Bangladeshi and Non-Bengali communities (*e.g.*, Biharis, Tribals, Hindus, Christians, Buddhists etc.), thereby forcing a notion of

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[1] The Study conducted by BRAC/*The Net*, found that in one Thana 75% of the "enemy property" was false or wrongfully declared.

[2] For many years religious figures and journalists (i.e., Fr. R.W. Timm (of CARITAS), Fr. E. Homric (of Pirigachcha Parish, Madhupur), and Philip Gain and Shishir Moral (the editors of the *Earth Watch*) have documented the details of human rights violations in Garo areas.

[3] I would argue that the Islamization of the Bangladeshi state and society is not so much due to the pressure of the Islamic fundmentalist political parties such as Jamaat-i-islami, but a result of mainstream political parties competing to use religion as a source of legitimizing their respective claims.

[4] It should be noted that since independence Islamic "fundementalist" political parties performed poorly in the local government and national elections in Bangladesh.

[5] First under the British and Second under the Pakistani Government.

Bangladeshi citizenship on groups that resist it.[1] In this process, various political groups overlook identity differences and unequal power relations between different social groups. Moreover, political mobilization and a flexible space for articulating demands contrary to dominant discourses of nationalism are denied. Even the most progressive NGOs involved in tribal issues function within the ideology of "Bangladeshi nationalism." In other words, the NGOs operate within the context of the state's dominant legitimizing ideology and their practices facilitate bringing diverse social groups under state authority and control. In contrast to Chakama tribals in the Chittagong Hill Tracts who have resorted to militancy as a means of gaining autonomy from the Bangladeshi State, Garo political response to this exclusionary nationalism has been one of assimilation and passive resistance.[2] The conditions that generally lead toward demands for political autonomy are not present within the Garo community. Any such attempts are likely to worsen their present situation. This is precisely the reason why the Garo in Bangladesh are helpless to help themselves.

After independence in 1971 when "national" development became a central responsibility of the State, areas inhabited by the Garo were brought under governmental control and became accessible to Bengali settlers, government departments, and international development agencies. In 1975 Kader (Tiger) Siddiqui persuaded Garo youth to join an insurrection on the promise of establishing a "Garo homeland." The rebellion was short lived. Perhaps as a response to this uprising, President Ziaur Rahman later proposed establishing The Tribal Cultural Academy in Birisiri and weaving centers at the *upazila* (local) level.[3] Seats were reserved in the Bangladesh Agricultural University and in medical colleges for Garo, and they were also recruited as Border Guards. In 1977, Ziaur Rahman proposed a Tribal Welfare Association (TWA) to allow the Garo to represent their own issues. TWA soon submitted fifteen demands, none of which were

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[1] In 1975, President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in response in his address to tribals in Rangamati, "addressed the tribals as brethren and told them to become Bengalis, to forget the colonial past and join the main stream of Bengali Culture." This plea was rejected by tribals in the Chitagong Hill tracts. For more information please see Kazi Montu, "Tribal Insurgency in Chittagong Hill Tracts," *Economic and Political Weekly* 6 (September).

[2] For details on Chakma rebellion see A.B. Chakma, "Looking back from exile: A Chakma Experience," in Wolfgang Mey (ed.), *They are Now Burning* (Amsterdam: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 1984), and Willem Van Schendel, "The Invention of the 'Jummas': State Formation and Ethnicity in South Eastern Bangladesh" in Sekhar Bandhyopadhyay (ed.), *Communities, Development and States*, (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1995), 135-173.

[3] Some possible reasons for the positive responses of the Garo are international pressures exerted by NGOs and the proximity of Bangladesh to the Indian State of Assam where a large percentage of Garo live. Garo still continue to maintain relations across the border. Those involved in 1975 rebellion were in exile in Assam.

answered. In August 1990, President Ershad announced that the vested property illegally seized from the Garo would be restored to them. A survey of land was begun but was halted.[1] An important outcome of this was that the Garo were forced to settle their grievances within the boundaries set by the State. Hence, one cannot foresee a situation in which the Garo evolve a "political formation" to assert their rights like the Chakama tribe have in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

After the 1980's, issues faced by indigenous peoples began receiving greater attention from the international community. These concerns converged with the debate on sustainable development (SD) drawing attention to the failure of mainstream development approaches to satisfactorily address mass poverty and environmental degradation.[2] Survival of the indigenous populations and protection of the cultural identity began to be viewed as an integral part of development. Although the Bangladeshi State may have endorsed the basic concerns of SD, it is yet to recognize the presence of "indigenous," or *Adivasis* populations in Bangladesh. State intervention in SD is carried out through projects such as community forestry, farm forestry, social forestry, participatory forestry, agro-forestry, etc., and mainly funded by international aid agencies.[3]

Madhupur Forest, traditional homeland of the Garo, is the third largest forest in Bangladesh and is famous for its towering fragrant *saal* trees (*Shorea Robusta*). Its total coverage has been reduced from 20,000

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[1]Paradoxically, a substantial number of Bengali Muslims voted for a Garo candidate. This is because of a combination of three factors: the convergence of interests between Garos and landless Bengalis, alliance between elite groups within Bengali and Garo community, and the result of change of political power from one party to another. It is difficult to know which one of these factors play a dominant role in shaping Garo relationship with the State and the Bengalis.

[2]The discourse on SD encompasses biological, economic and social systems, and it is aimed at the construction of alternative development styles based on economic decentralization, ecologically sustainable production, and political pluralism. Driven by the principles of participatory management, rights of marginalized groups, a reappraisal of "productivist" approaches to development, and aesthetic values of nature SD claims to defend the autonomy of diverse eco-social groups, differences in their economic cultural and political practices, and options against totalitarian and universal demands placed on them. Especially, SD promises to create the material and social conditions necessary to generate a potential political force to address concerns of marginalized groups. See the following texts: Andre Gorz, *Ecology as Politics* (London: Pluto Press, 1983) and *Capitalism, Socialism and Ecology* (London: Verso, 1994); Rudolph Bharo, *Socialism and Survival* (London: Heretic, 1982), Edward Barbier, "The Concept of Sustainable Economic," *Environmental Conservation* 14: 101-10; and Robert Goodland and George Ledec, "Neo-classical Economics and Principles of Sustainable Development," *Ecological Modeling* 38: 19-46.

[3]The Forest Department, in 1981 implemented Community Forestry from an ADB loan and a grant from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

acres in 1970 to 10,000 acres in 1991.[1] Although the present Garo population in Madhupur is only about 16,000, they constituted the single majority soon after Partition in 1947. Since then, encroachments by Bengalis have reduced them to minority status both in numerical and political terms.[2] In 1989, the government amended the Forest Act of 1927, which brought the entire forest area under the control of the Forest Department (FD) by classifying the land as "forest land" and "government trust land." Proclaiming the entire forest a "national" asset nullified Garo claims for distinctive affinity with the forest and thereby forced them to secure their rights within the context of "national interests." This created serious problems for the Garo as only a few indigenous people actually have title deeds for high land in their possession, and the majority of them did not care to preserve tax receipts from the British period as a proof of their land ownership. In 1986, the government expropriated 6,000 hectares of land claimed by the Garo as ancestral land. The government allowed the people to contest the listing within the duration set by the Act, but this time scale has long since expired.[3] The Garo claimed that FD land appropriation was based on false maps and they have challenged the FD's claims with evidence of documents, maps, and tax receipts dating to the colonial period.

A fundamental reason for the Garo protest against government policies is their difference over the definition of property. In Garo culture the distinction between "private" and "public" land and between "legal rights" and "ancestral rights" is not as evident as the government thinks. The government does not recognize the existence of *Adivasis* (indigenous populations) nor do Garo have formal recognition of their distinct cultural rights. Indeed, "for tribal groups, the problems beings [are] at a basic level: they do not as yet have formal constitutional recognition of their distinct cultural identities. Clarification of this issue is essential for programs of participation mandated by statue involving . . . the Garo people."[4] Interestingly, the 1987 Task Force Report of the Ministry of Agriculture reflects this representation of the Garo :

> The Garo are descendants of swidden cultivators who migrated to Madhupur Garah from the Garo hills of Assam,

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[1]The annual deforestation in Bangladesh is 3.8%, 0.6% in South Asia. See Philip Gain, Shishir Moral, and Canton Rozario, *Impact of Commercial Fuel Wood Plantation on Forest Communities and Environment in the Madhupur Forest* (Dhaka: Society For Environment and Human Development, 1994), p. 6.

[3]Jeremy Cooper, "The Garo of Bangladesh: A Forest people's Struggle to Survive," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 15: 85-101.

[4]Abdul Hannan, *Final Report of the Policy Analyst Including a Draft Agro-forestry Policy, December 1994*, p.12

> India at least one hundred years ago. They are mostly converted Christians (more than 90 percent) and, like their ancestors, used to jhum or swidden cultivation. With the increasing population pressures, wet cultivation on the low land within the forest was adopted to complement the jhum cultivation on the elevated forest land. Ethnic Bengalis also moved to the area, as many were able to get leases for the low-lying land from the present day Ministry of Land. In the early 1950s, the forest department, who took over the management of the tract following the abolition of Zamindari system, prohibited jhum cultivation. This led to the evolution from a subsistence economy to a market-oriented one with pineapple plantation (often associated with ginger and arum crops or, more recently, with saal) as the main feature. An inevitable consequence of this evolution has been the polarization of wealth and development of landless among Garo who did not posses *pattan*, a right of ownership which is granted only for wet-rice fields by the Zamindars in exchange for royalty and later recognized by the Forest Department, who took over the management of the tract following the abolition of the Zamindari system.[1]

This distortion of history has far reaching implications for the relationship between Garo and Bengali communities, and State policies toward these communities. The Garo are represented as recent migrants from India as opposed to "ethnic Bengalis" who acquired their land through legal means. The application of the term "migration" to Garo is a nationalist construction because they have been living in the area several hundreds years before the present national boundaries of the Bangladesh state was defined. The report also ignores the unique relationship between the forest and the Garo. It is widely acknowledged that the Garo relationship with the forest is one of "stewardship," meaning that there responsible use of the forest, instead of its ownership. In Garo culture, the forest is venerated and in the process of cultivation the land is not denuded. It is customary to leave trees that take a long period for regeneration and to plant a tree for every tree cut down. As a result, the maintenance of ecological balance is built into the cultural and economic traditions of the Garo community.[2] In contrast, the Bengali attitude toward the forest is anthropocentric: It places human beings in a superior position over nature and therefor nature must be dominated, conquered, or managed for human

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[1]Ministry of Agriculture, *Participatory Forestry In Bangladesh: Concepts, Experiences And Recommendations* (Dhaka: Ministry of Agriculture, 1987), 49-50.

[2]Kibriaul Khaleque, *Prospects of Social Policy in the Garo Villages of Madhupur* (Dhaka: Department of Sociology at the University of Dhaka, 1984).

needs. To state this differently, sustainable environment is an integral part of the Garo social formation, rather than something that needs to be imposed from outside.

The Forest Report further points out the transformation of Garo society "from a subsistence economy to a market-oriented one with pineapple plantations, and states that "an inevitable consequence of this evolution has been the polarization of wealth and development of a landless class among Garo who did not posses *pattan*, a right of ownership." Apart from the lack of a factual basis for this assertion, the 1987 Task Force Report ignores the special protection provided to the Garo by various official acts. Yet other official documents represent landlessness and polarization of wealth among the Garo as the result of factors internal to the Garo community and not as a result of encroachments by Bengalis or land appropriation by the Forest department. They ignore the fact that land encroachment takes place mostly after trees are cleared by commercial loggers who operate under the government's patronage and local authorities; they forget that the poor do not have the infrastructure necessary to cause large-scale deforestation. However, it is easier to enforce laws on settlers than on loggers who operate with the patronage of the FD and powerful institutions. Hence the main issue the government faces in implementing policies beneficial to the Garo is that it lacks the political willingness and institutional means to bypass local power structures.

In 1986, the Forest Department for rubber planting acquired 15,000 acres under planning and funding by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The private sector was given an opportunity to implement the program.[1] Most of this land belonged to the Garo, the majority of whom did not receive any of the promised compensation. The project, which was to be funded by the ADB, was stopped during the second phase due to protests by local communities, human rights and environmental groups. The FD countered this pressure by filing false legal cases against the Garo and by subjecting them to physical harassment. In order to cover legal costs, the Garo are forced to mortgage land to the Bengalis. This not only encourages encroachment by Bengali settlers in the Madhupur forest, but also destroys the very material base upon which Garo social formation lies.

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[1]According to annual report for 1991 its loans to Bangladesh was $3.21 billion and the private sector industries got $13.36 million. Agriculture and Agricultural sector received 36 loans amounting to $1,468.54 million or 46% of the total. According to R.W. Timm in an unpublished paper, the ADB's strategy in Bangladesh focuses on three priority areas (1) economic growth by promoting the private sector, (2) improving people's to employment opportunities, (3) environmental protection through natural resource management, and (4)increasing the institutional capacity of the Forest department. Philip Gain, "An Interview with the Chief of the ADB office of Environment, Dr. Kazi F. Jalal," *Earth Watch* 1 (May 1995): 34.

In the midst of the controversy over rubber planting, the ADB provided another loan (loan No-956-BAN (SF) of 1989) to Bangladesh for implementing "social forestry" under the Upazila Aforestation and Nursery Development Project.[1] The objectives of the project were to increase production of biomass fuel and enhance the institutional capacity of the Forest department and the Upazila Administration to implement a self-sustaining forestry program. The "social forestry" program consisted of three components addressing agro-forestry, wood-lot plantation, and strip plantation.[2] In response to past criticisms, the loan agreement stated that the tribal people be allowed to continue their cultivation of rice, sugar cane, and pineapple in the "government" forest. The project staff was instructed to minimize the size of activities in the areas inhabited by the Garo people. The Bangladesh Government also made similar pronouncements because it is a signatory to the International Convention on Biological Diversity and its entire forest development program is based on external funding.

There are significant differences between various types of forestry programs and their impact on the inter and intra-community relationships of Garo and Bengalis. Agro-forestry projects pay for the plantation of trees while maintenance and protection are the responsibility of the owners of the plot. The FD also provides fertilizer and participants receive one years' security of land tenure which needs to be renewed every year. The FD is not enthusiastic about agro-forestry as it takes a long time to yield profits and provide land tenure rights to the people. Neither the Garo and poorer Bengali not trust the FD. Many have pointed out that the FD can at any moment cancel the renewal of the tenure rights under the pretext of mismanagement and can also confiscate the trees when they are ready for sale. The Garo argue that this is just another Bengali attempt to take over their land. The guarantee of tenure rights promotes a Bengali rush to make new claims on forest land and reinforces these fears. The FD and the local power elites are likely to encourage these claims in order to strengthen the patron-client network between them and the Bengalis because forest land and resources play a crucial role in distributing of political patronage.

Administrators of reforestation projects prefer using exotic species (*Eucalyptus, Camaldunesis, Acacia, Mangium, and Auriculae*) capable of generating quick commercial profits. Although many countries have discouraged these species due to their adverse environmental impact they are the dominant reforestation species in Bangladesh. Various studies also criticize the ADB's production-oriented forestry policies for their neglecting

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[2]Woodlot refers to growing of softwood for trees for fuel wood and agro-forestry refers to growing of hard wood for commercial purposes. In both projects (1) trees and crop species were chosen by the FD to meet their objectives, not the objectives of the local residents, (2) the agreement was drafted without consultation of the local residents, (3) in most cases the participant were given the opportunity to share profit, not security of land tenure. See Kibriaul Khaleque, *Prospects of Social Policy in the Garo Villages of Madhupur* (Dhaka: Department of Sociology at the University of Dhaka, 1984), p. 75.

to return the forest's benefits to the local people. In theory, implementing this policy requires the participation of the local people in all stages of the project.[1] But the ADB Review Mission noted that the participants were not consulted during the drafting of the agreement. This was partly due to the local people's rejecting the project and to the absence of an institutional environment to promote "genuine" participation of the local populations.

In wood-lot projects people do not get land tenure, there is no agreement on inheritance of trees after a participant's death, and the agreement needs to be renewed every year. According to the Garo this opens even more room for the FD to encourage non-tribals into the area in order to make legal the ADB have officially given many assurances that forest development projects will not displace tribal people, but there are no institutional mechanisms to enforce these provisions. The government has repeatedly failed to make the FD comply with the policies that were aimed at safeguarding the interests of Garo and preservation of forests. For example, in 1994, the FD forcibly built a Forest Office in Chandimandap. Local protesters were arrested and criminal charges were filed, although the FDs actions are consistent with the ADB agreement that no such policy would be carried out in places other than denuded and degraded land. When Akbar Hossain, the Environment and Forest minister and the top official in the Thana Aforestation project, visited the area he pointed out that:

> Many of you have been claiming that you have *pattan* of these land in 1962. But the fact is most people who have been claiming so do not have any *pattan* of land. You have been using the forestland as Khas lands. You do not have any ownership right of forestland that you have taken possession of. So you do not have the right in the Beat Area.[2]

The local people responded by arguing that they have been cultivating this land--now classified as "forest land"--for decades without legal documents.

How, then, do we interpret the contradictions between the FD, the Bangladesh Government, and the ADB? Why is the Government unable to pressure the FD to comply with the stipulations to safeguard the rights of the indigenous people? ADB is one of the main international donors to the government. It is also a bank whose primary purpose is to lend to projects promising returns. Repaying an ADB loan requires investing in ventures that yield "quick" profits. Due to the international concern about safeguarding the rights of indigenous communities and demands for protection of the environment by the NGOs, the FD has no choice but to

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[1] "Forest, Forest People and Forest Culture," *Earth Watch* 1 (May 1995): 25.
[2] "Madhupur Tract: Assurance and Denial," *Earth Watch* 1 (May 1995): 19.

resort to clearing the land using illegal means and the assistance of loggers who collaborate with local authorities. This also forces the FD to acquire land that can be classified as denuded, degraded, and encroached.[1] The lands that have already been denuded are settled by Bengalis and are not suitable for commercial forestry. It is also politically counterproductive to classify Bengalis as encroaches.

These factors inevitably make land belonging to the Garo the FD's first choice. However, stipulations in agreements between the FD and international donors do not allow the FD to appropriate land directly from the Garo. The FD follows two strategies. First, it files false legal cases against the Garo and threatens them with eviction. Garo inability to meet legal costs without selling or mortgaging their land force them to comply with the FD. Secondly, the FD collaborate with commercial loggers who for a long period have been working with the FD in extracting forest resources. Local government officials are not in a position to enforce laws against the loggers who are also powerful actors in the local and national political scene. Although one of the objectives of decentralizing of power to the local level was to mitigate these consequences by increasing people's participation, it has led to the incorporation of established power elites and social networks into competitive party politics at the national level. It is here that power brokers use forest resources as a means of negotiating patron-client relationships. Therefore, intrusion of national level party politics intrusion into the local arena has made it difficult for any regime to act against the local power structure while maintaining that regime's legitimacy.[2]

The claim that NGOs have a comparative advantage over the State in overcoming the State's limitations supports increasing NGO involvement in SD. NGO interventions in development and forest resources in Madhupur began a long time before the Bangladesh State came into being. Missionaries used various methods to revitalize indigenous forestry methods and to develop alternative income generation programs in order to prevent the rapid depletion of forest resources. Initially, CARITAS, a Catholic NGO, provided legal assistance in terms of finances and a system of "bare foot lawyers." They carried out numerous educational programs in order to make the tribals aware of their land rights. CARITAS field workers surveyed the tribal land and collected whatever documents they could use as evidence of legal ownership. In

[1]It should also be noted that in areas where the Bengalis are settled, the land has been cleared leaving no trace of natural forest and is mostly used for paddy cultivation. In contrast, Garo houses, paddy, and pineapple plots are not in land entirely cleared of trees and their cultivation practices are an indigenous method of agro-forestry.

[2]For a further analysis of the politics of local government reforms see Florence McCarthy, "Upazila-Level Development in Bangladesh"(Cornell University unpublished paper, 1987), Pp. 7-10; Atiur Rhaman, "Rural Power Structure—A Study of Union Parishad Leaders in Bangladesh," *Journal of Social Studies* (November 1990).

1977, 136.8 acres of land were recovered and 94 cases were settled in court and 134 outside court. In 1984, the government stopped NGOs' giving legal assistance without any reason. Since then NGOs have become increasingly reluctant to involve themselves in programs that are politically sensitive. However, there is increasing competition among NGOs to invest in Madhupur forest due to the availability of international aid for programs concerning the environment and welfare of the indigenous populations. There are serious conflicts of interests between the NGOs currently involved in the Madhupur area and several attempts towards coordinating their efforts have failed.

Currently, one of the largest NGOs involved in Madhupur Forest, Proshika, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the FD and the government, but similar agreements were not made with the local authorities and the local people were not consulted prior to its signing. The MOU states that Proshika is the "First Party" and the Government of Bangladesh represented by the Secretary of the Forest Division is the "Second Party."[1] This not only constrains Proshika's flexibility to carryout its programs, but also has led to much ambiguity about the specific role different institutions play in the Madhupur Forest. It is extremely weak and ambiguous about the legal and institutional framework within which the SD programs are to be carried out. The Final Report on Agro-Forestry noted a gap between current policies and out-of-date legislative frameworks and that "the present benefit sharing mechanism[s] employed by the Forest Department are, [sic] technically illegal." The MOUs signed between the Government and Proshika "falls into this category." Therefor Proshika is unlikely to make any significant difference for the forest and the Garo because these agreements are "only executive orders but they operate within full contractual bindings on the signatories. Current forest legislation does not provide the Forest Department with any such mandate to initiate and maintain such undertakings. These benefit-sharing [sic] are therefore ad hoc instruments, falling short of official leases."[2]

The decisions involving planning, implementation and evaluation of Proshika's development interventions are made by a hierarchically structured administrative system, which negotiates with international donors and the government. Therefor, the scope available for the incorporating the local population's interests and participation into SD programs was constrained prior to Proshika's making contact with them. When NGOs enter into an area they bring with them institutional relations in which the state and the international donors occupy a central place, and local groups are forced to function within these institutional boundaries.

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[1]This term is used in the contract between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forest Division and Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra, especially p. 1.

[2]Abdul Hannan, *Final Report of the Policy Analyst including a Draft Agro-forestry Policy, December 1994,* Pp. 9-10.

ike the state, NGOs problematize the issues faced by the Garo in relation deforestation and poverty. The conceptual categories NGOs use, *i.e.*, andless," "poor," and "community," obscure differences in perceptions community, tenurial rights, and related tensions between the Garo and e Muslim community. The only difference between the state and the GOs is that the latter are more accountable to international donors and aim to be placed in a relatively better position to overcome limitations of e State. Yet evidence of NGOs satisfactorily using this leverage for the enefit of Garo is rare. For example, in 1978, CARITAS introduced legal d programs for indigenous groups to recover the land illegally taken over the Bengali settlers and by the FD. After three years of assistance in lyminsingh District, 228 cases involving 1092 acres of land led to covery of 458.5 acres. However, the government, without giving any ason stopped the legal aid project, which was scheduled to run three ears.[1] Thereafter, neither NGOs nor international donors have shown uch interest in dealing with legal issues pertaining to landlessness. This precisely why there is a wide gap between the needs of the Garo and the als of NGOs, and a lack of enthusiasm among the Garo to join NGO ograms.

Generally, Garo are placed in a contradictory position with respect their relationship with the NGOs. On the one hand, the Garo are not nfident of the NGOs' ability to overpower the actions of the state and the cal elites. There is widespread suspicion among the Garo that NGO ograms would further force them to comply with the policies of the FD e to the fact that NGO-mediated SD interventions are ambiguous about e legal and customary land rights of the Garo and are implemented within e framework of the existing local government administrative system. deed, Proshika recognizes that "the agreement in Dhaka is not being plemented back at grass-roots. Local forest officers are resisting the idea participatory forest management because it disrupts its lucrative rangements with the forest abusers."[2] However, it does not have a ategy to deal with the malpractice of the FD. On the other hand, NGOs the only means through which the Garo can express their concerns to international community and exert any effective pressure on the policies the Bangladeshi government. Moreover, being an ethic minority, NGO sistance for education and economic activities is indispensable. The main sue raised by the Garo is how Proshika proposes to overcome the oblems previously faced by CARITAS regarding legal aid to tribals.

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[1] R.W. Timm, "The Adivasis of Bangladesh," *Minority Rights International*: ecember 1991): 26.

[2] See Robert Mitchel's appraisal on January 1994 on the "Proshika Manobik nayan Kendra, Bangladesh", *Phase V* (July 1994-June 1999), especially p. 136.

Like the state, NGOs problematize the issues faced by the Garo in relation to deforestation and poverty. The conceptual categories NGOs use, *i.e.*, "landless," "poor," and "community," obscure differences in perceptions of community, tenurial rights, and related tensions between the Garo and the Muslim community. The only difference between the state and the NGOs is that the latter are more accountable to international donors and claim to be placed in a relatively better position to overcome limitations of the State. Yet evidence of NGOs satisfactorily using this leverage for the benefit of Garo is rare. For example, in 1978, CARITAS introduced legal aid programs for indigenous groups to recover the land illegally taken over by the Bengali settlers and by the FD. After three years of assistance in Myminsingh District, 228 cases involving 1092 acres of land led to recovery of 458.5 acres. However, the government, without giving any reason stopped the legal aid project, which was scheduled to run three years.[1] Thereafter, neither NGOs nor international donors have shown much interest in dealing with legal issues pertaining to landlessness. This is precisely why there is a wide gap between the needs of the Garo and the goals of NGOs, and a lack of enthusiasm among the Garo to join NGO programs.

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All NGO programs have to be approved by the government and legal aid programs are generally not permitted.[1] Provision of legal aid to tribals inevitably invites conflicts with Bengalis. In resolving these conflicts, social and cultural differences between the two communities play an important role. However, in Proshika's programs there is no explicit recognition of the differences between Bengali and Garo aspirations for emancipation. Moreover, there are no strategies for dealing with conflicts that emerge from such differences. From Proshika's perspective, there needs to be greater awareness among the people about the issues they face. They also need to mobilize into a powerful mass movement capable of challenging the oppressive structures. However, there is much ambiguity as to how Proshika proposes to reconcile the program of social mobilization with existing powerful players in the local and national arenas. The ADAB code of ethics stipulates that NGOs' will not become directly involved in politics, and the international donors do not favor NGOs getting involved in politically sensitive issues. Moreover, it is unlikely that Proshika would be willing to act in ways contrary to the interests of state and local power-holders in Madhupur as it would jeopardize many of the programs it carries out within the majority Bengali community.

One of the reasons for Garo suspicion of NGOs' sincerity is the latter's political affiliations. For example, from the time of Former Prime Minister General Ershad, NGOs (especially some of the leading NGOs that are associated with the Association of Development Agencies (ADAB), the main NGO-coordinating body) have earned a reputation as "power brokers" for political parties. Their partisan bias became even more evident during the 1996 General elections when they directly supported the Awami League that came into power. This led to conflicts between various NGOs and further undermined the possibility of their acting as a unified body in situations where they need strong support to withstand the State's challenges. Some of the larger NGOs have extensive partnerships with the State and have received a larger percentage of overall funds allocated to the NGO sector. The competition between state funding and patronage raises many thorny issues about NGOs' capacity to overcome the State's limitations. Increasing collaboration between the government and the NGOs, and the pressure by the international donors for it to continue, underscores the NGOs' declining capacity to act in ways contrary to state interests. It also forces them to function within the cultural and political boundaries set by the State.

A noteworthy development during the past two years is the progressive shift of NGOs interests from education, health, and social mobilization toward micro-credit based income generation programs.

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[1]In 1977 and 1978 CARITAS (a leading member of the ADAB) legal aid program enabled Garo to recover 458.5 acres of land involving 1092 court cases. The government without giving any reasons stopped this legal aid project. See R.W. Timm, 1991, p. 26.

Sayed Hashemi describes this change by the Grameen Bank as the "demise of the conscientization paradigm," forcing even those NGOs once opposed--on ideological grounds--to include credit as an important part of their agendas. The rationale is that economic empowerment is an essential prerequisite for dealing with economic, social, and political issues related to forest. NGOs are expected to make credit programs commercially viable. The methods (*e.g.*, Logg Frame Work introduced by Overseas Development Assistance) used to evaluate credit programs place more emphasis on quantitative outcomes, such as repayment rates, than on qualitative changes. The qualitative changes are postponed until the groups become economically self-sufficient. This economic approach to SD does not give much attention to whether institutional practices responsible for the marginalizing the Garo reinforce the process of their participation in the micro-credit programs.

Indeed, there is a high demand for credit and new sources of income. However, implementing income generation projects requires assistance from a wide array of institutions in addition to the loans given by NGOs. Some of these institutions are also responsible for economic and cultural marginalization of the Garo. From the Garo perspective, the "opportunity costs" of straining their relationship with these traditional institutions are higher since they consider NGOs as temporary institutions that cannot substitute for those institutions' meeting their needs on a daily basis. NGOs--being primarily accountable to international donors whose main concern is the financial self-sufficiency of credit programs--are not in a position to act in ways contrary to the interests of the local institutions. That is NGOs are free to use any means to ensure that people repay their loans. For example, they use "peer group pressure" as a substitute for collateral of conventional Banks. This leads to nothing but further legitimization of the very institutions considered to be an obstacle for Garo empowerment. This is why the Garo argue that micro-credit does not present any challenge to individuals and institutions responsible for encroachment of their land and large scale deforestation. Instead, the availability of credit eases the economic difficulties of those families who are settled in the forest land, and thereby further encourages the very institutional practices that the NGOs desire to transform. Proshika argues that such changes need to take place through a broad based social movement in which people are economically and politically self-sufficient and powerful. However, from the Garo perspective conditions for such solidarity do not exist and many such attempts have been suppressed. They argue that micro-credit and other related programs lead to increasing collaboration between the Garo and Bengalis which in turn restricts the space for articulating of interests specific to their community.

From the Garo perspective, international donor agencies (particularly the Asian Development Bank (ADB)) are primarily responsible for facilitating the increasing control, and therefor the encroachments, of their land. Despite the continuing NGO and human rights groups'

criticisms of ADB, the ABD has not changed its policies in the FD to the satisfaction of Garo. The ADB has shown a remarkable capacity to reorganize its programs under various guises and through different institutions without undermining its commercially driven assumptions and goals. For example, NGO-Government Consultative Council (GNCC) was formed in 1996 aided by the ADB's Technical Assistance grant and the Association of Development Agencies of Bangladesh (ADAB) which played a crucial role in collaboration with ADB appointed consultants. The present Executive Director of Proshika is also the chairman of ADAB. Hence, ADB seems to be making intrusions into Proshika through the government and the ADAB despite Proshika's criticism of ADB policies. Therefor, ADB policies regarding SD are far from a "matter of scientific knowledge, a body of theories and programs concerned with sustainable development . . . . rather [the are] a series of political technologies intended to manage and give shape to the reality of the Third World."[1]

Increasing urban migration by Garo in search of employment exacerbates the Forestry policy's impact on the Garo Community. First of all, additional income coming from urban kinsmen creates wide economic differences between Garo families in Madhupur. Migrations have caused even greater difficulties for Garo women. On the one hand, they face greater hardships in finding employment outside their community,[2] for in urban settings they are forced to subscribe to the dominant culture's values. On the other hand, a higher rate of male out-migration resulting in male-absentee households has increased women's agricultural workload. In the case of landless families, men become the sole bread winners. This in turn undermines the power traditionally held by women in matrilineal communities. In situations where women cannot cope with agricultural work, especially in the case of widows, the Garo must lease or mortgage their land to Bengalis. Increasing FD encroachment and policing make women's mobility more difficult even within their own localities. For women, collecting firewood has become dangerous as forest officials harass them increasingly. Finally, loss of land deprives women of the very basis on which they commanded authority and power within the family.[3]

Migration of youth has shifted much of the Garo cultural activity from Madhupur to urban areas. While larger Bangladeshi society celebrates these cultural performances as evidence of the nation's secular identity and its tolerance of minorities, Garo remaining in their traditional villages feel that they are leaning toward degeneration of the local culture and depriving their community of young leadership to carry out the struggles against land

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[1] Aturo Escobar, "Discourse and Power in Development: Micheal Foucault and the Relevance of his work to the Third World," *Alternatives X*: 338.

[2] There is high preference for Garo women as domestic servants among the expatriates in Bangladesh as they consider Garo women are more "trust worthy" and "educated" compared to the Bengali Women.

encroachment. Further, Garo youths' growing apathy to engage in issues concerning land, due to their disinterest in agricultural related activities and greater assimilation within Bengali culture, reinforce these trends. However, it is unlikely that availability of income generation programs alone will address these issues surrounding migration. Such programs are unlikely to have any impact on individuals and groups responsible for the specific issues the Garo face nor on environmental problems resulting from deforestation and commercially-driven aforestation programs.

Contrary to the rhetoric, SD seeks to create an artificial homogeneity among diverse social groups with different degrees of power and conflicting economic and political interests. It also ignores differences in the goals of emancipation different social groups hold. Its approach to environment as a physical space, as opposed to one in which social relations are inscribed, obscures the co-evolution of human societies and nature. What we witness today is how discourse on SD has become an arena in which state and social relationships change in response to the needs of neo-liberal economic reforms. The NGOs role in this process is one of facilitating the state to articulate and legitimize its relationship with the larger society. Increasing collaboration between NGOs and the State suggest declining possibilities for NGOs to function outside institutional boundaries. In this process, even though SD gives special emphasis to indigenous interests, it operates within a framework of dominant nationalist discourse. This is why one wonders whether reversing social hierarchies and idealizing the feminine principle in traditional subsistence forms of agriculture in fact legitimizes the very implications of masculine environmental discourse that they hope to transform.[1] What I am suggesting is that a sound appraisal of the implications of SD needs to be situated in an analysis of the process that shapes social change in general.

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[1]Here I am referring to the positions taken by eco-feminists such as Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies whose romantic idealization seem to legitimize the extremists nationalist parties policies toward the ethnic minorities. Shiva locates notion of "feminine principle" in Hindu Cosmology's meanings of life-giving force. The issue needs to be raised that to what extent this essentialism is different from the ideologies of "fundamentalist" groups. See Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Ecology and Development* (London: Zed Books, 1989), and Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, *Ecofeminism* (London: Zed Books, 1993).

Book Reviews

The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal, 1876-1939, Sonia Nishat Amin. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996. Pp. 313.

The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal fills a major gap in the prolific literature on gender in colonial South Asia. Existing research on colonial Bengal either marginalizes or completely ignores Bengali speakers who were Muslim.[1] Indeed, in some historiographic traditions, the Bengali Muslim is an oxymoron. Amin's pioneering research complements and challenges the work of scholars such as Meredith Borthwick and others by claiming *Bhadramahila* status for Muslim middle class women in colonial Bengal. That Bengali-Muslims saw themselves as part of the *Bhadralok* may come as a surprise to many readers. Amin's study is located against the backdrop of the emerging bourgeois Bengali-Muslim community in the late 19th and early 20th century. Those belonging to this new middle class, drawn from the intermediate rank of landowners and administrative and judicial service holders, consciously distinguished themselves from the North India oriented and Urdu-speaking traditional elite or *shurafa*. They turned increasingly to indigenous cultural idioms of self-expression, most explicitly by embracing the Bengali language.

The book's first chapters map reforms within family and educational institutions, all framed by professionalizing Bengali-Muslims' desire to recast their social identities. Here the author finds strong parallels with earlier Hindu/Brahmo discourse on women and social reform. Muslim women in Bengal not only signified their community's civilizational status but they also carried the responsibility of upholding the sanctity of the homes of the new professional classes. In addition, as Amin briefly notes, the reformers of Muslim Bengal had to prove themselves doubly, to both the colonial state and the Hindu community.

Colonial politics impinge only indirectly on the central narrative—a refreshing perspective in many ways. For one, this allows the voices of the Bhadramahila, in all their contradictions and inconsistencies, to emerge without too much distraction. Drawing on both oral history and archival material, Amin documents in rich detail the prolific world of literate Muslim women, most of whose names until now have been missing from Bengali historical texts. The best known of these women, Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, is only one among many writers who were actively publishing

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[1]See, for instance, Meredith Borthwick, *The Changing Role of Women in Bengal, 1849-1905* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) and Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The "manly Englishman" and "effeminate Bengali" in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).

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during this period. Clearly, Muslim middle class women were not simply passive victims of illiteracy and *purdah*, as their invisibility in the literature might imply. One of the book's most valuable aspects is the collection of interviews with women, now in their seventies and eighties, looking back on their lives and careers. In addition, Amin has unearthed an impressive array of previously neglected periodicals, journals, instructional manuals and religious texts, certain to be useful to future generations of scholars.

The author's choice of dates for the study reflects her desire to foreground Bhadramahila's creativity and desire for education. Eighteen sixty-six was the year the first full-length book by a Muslim woman in Bengal, Nawab Faizunnessa, was published in Dhaka.[1] Nineteen thirty-nine marked the founding of Lady Brabourne College, primarily for Muslims, in Calcutta. A central argument of the book is that the ability and desire to write was emblematic of the modern sensibility of the New Muslim Woman, as well as a way to circumvent the strictures of purdah without openly challenging them. "For it was in the creative act of writing and publishing that she declared her social presence" (p. 212). This line of arguing has the added benefit of decentering *parda* or seclusion as the fundamental axis around which Muslim women's identities were structured.

Although she does not make it explicit, the author seems to be taking issue with Lata Mani and others by insisting that Muslim women were not only the sites on which tradition was produced, but also the agents of change.[2] Their voices were prominent in the vociferous debates on questions of early marriage, polygamy and parda, as well as in the flowering of modern Bengali-Muslim literature. Following their male counterparts, the Bhadramahila wrote primarily in Bengali although many spoke Urdu at home. Their subject matter was suitably modern, ranging from poetry celebrating moonlit nights to novels of love and betrayal, or the pleasures and upheavals of domestic life.

In her conclusion, the author maintains that the time period under consideration marked a significant change of mentality which warrants the label *Nari Jagaran* or women's awakening. That tremendous change in the public imagination did occur is captured by the changing logo of the women's page of the progressive literary journal, *Saogat*. In 1928, under the Urdu title *Zenana Mahfil*, this featured several women sitting in the *andarmahal* or inner quarters, dressed in Persianized/North Indian attire, chatting among themselves. By 1940, the caption had been replaced by the

[1]Eighteen sixty-six was, incidentally, the year the first novel by a Bengali woman was published.

[2]See Lata Mani, "Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India" in K. Sangari and S.

Vaid (eds.), *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History* (New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1989).

Bengali *Mohila Jagot*, accompanied by a sketch of a sari-clad woman behind the wheel of a car, head uncovered and hair flying in the wind.

Amin's writing is elegant and precise, as is her story. The story, however, is incomplete. In the first place, Amin does not interrogate the terms "Bengali" and "Muslim," which are highly unstable and historically (and often historiographically) defined in opposition to each another. Such a move is critical since it was during the period under scrutiny that Bengali-Muslim identity was for the first time under active construction and contestation. In what ways were discourses on Muslim women critical to this reimagining of community boundaries? Simply equating the New Hindu Woman with the New Muslim Bhadramahila, as Amin does, is problematic since the former was constructed not only in opposition to English women, but also to Muslim women.[1] How then did the latter see themselves in relation to their Brahmo/Hindu "precursors?" Moreover, it appears that Bengali-Muslims were trying to consolidate a regional identity distinct from North Indian Muslims through the conscious use of the Bengali language. Consequently, for both men and women, the choice to write in Bengali was a political choice. Amin tells us that women had much to say about the issue of language but does not elaborate. This is a curious absence since the relationship between writing and middle class women's subjectivities is highlighted in the text.

I want to end by underscoring the pioneering nature of the book, which presents a fascinating account of the everyday world of middle class Bengali-Muslim women in colonial India. I look forward to reading more from the author.

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[1] See Barbara Metcalf, "Reading and Writing about Muslim Women in British India," in Zoya Hasan (ed.), *Forging Identities: Gender, Communities and State* (New Delhi: Kali For Women, 1994), p. 2.

Demons and Development: The Struggle for Community in A Sri Lankan Village, James Brow. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1996. Pp. 218.

A creatively designed study of the effects of a state sponsored development program on community relations in a Sri Lankan village, Brow's book will appeal to a broad readership of anthropologists in general, Sri Lankan or South Asian specialists, and students of development, nationalism, and state and local community formation. Following Max Weber in defining "community" as "a sense of belonging together," Brow examines the results of a nationalist-inspired program to propagate nationalist sentiment by incorporating even remote villagers into an ideologically charged nation of villages.

This is the story of Sinhala Buddhist state and party politics' 1980 intrusion into the everyday lives of a community of Veddas, a minority community which at times identifies itself as Sinhala. When the Veddas of Kukulewa learned that sixty new houses were to be allocated to their village of one hundred and twenty five families, questions arose as to how to distribute them. Some villagers, appealing to a sense of kinship, argued that the houses should only go to the sixty "root families." Others, appealing to new forms of solidarity, advocated that they be given to supporters of the reigning political party. When the houses were distributed according to political affiliation, older forms of community solidarity were sacrificed and the community torn in two. This change in community dynamics was subsequently articulated among the villagers in terms of their relations with gods and demons. Instances of possession by gods and demons were interpreted by villagers either as appeals to mend the rifts in the community or as instances of sorcery directed by one faction against another. Brow argues that villagers used this local alternative idiom of community, which was comprised of indigenous cultural resources, as a response to the state's hegemonic practices.

The first half of the book is mostly in Brow's words, as he provides the context for understanding the details of what occurred in Kukulewa from 1980 to his research period in 1983. This includes compelling coverage of the historical meaningfulness of kingship and community, changing agricultural and market relations in rural Śri Lanka, and the politics of nationalism in contemporary Sri Lanka (including an insightful discussion of the moral significance of the village). This in-depth contextualization is a welcome alternative to ethnographies which tend to give portraits of villages frozen in time. In the tradition of reflective ethnographic writing, the second half of Brow's book allows villagers to tell their own stories about what took place in Kukulewa. This change in narrative style is achieved by submerging the author's voice into the choppy discursive waters of Kukulewa and its inhabitants. In the final chapter, Brow concludes his analysis of Kukulewa by reflecting on the development of community and nationalism in modern Śri Lanka.

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An overall excellent monograph, there are still issues which I would have like to have seen further analyzed. Throughout the book Brow mentions how women and men have different relationships with the dominant sense of community, and that women's roles change with the increasing importance of capitalist modes of production in the village. Brow also highlights how disputes within the two village factions at key times focused on the behavior of women and, more specifically, their sexuality. But he neglects to bring gender relations into his larger argument. It seems to me that Brow could support his argument further by addressing how changing gender relations are crucial to the story of identity in Kukulewa. For instance, at one point villagers and a god seem to draw a parallel between the strained relations within the community at large and those between a husband and a wife. This parallel warrants further exploration.

Likewise, gender and domestic relations provide an interesting entry into another unexamined aspect of Kukulewa which begs analysis. The disputes in Kukulewa were instigated by the building of houses. Houses are an important site for the development of identity and for the staging of intimate gender relations and socialization. It would be fruitful to examine the cultural significance of houses in Kukulewa by addressing what roles they played in the development of individual and community identity.

Brow's story of national politics' drastic effects on village life is chilling when read in the context of the violence which took place throughout Sri Lanka in the late 1980's during a revolt by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). The story of party politics in Kukulewa opens up interesting questions that help clarify how, in this later period neighbors turned each other in to government agents for being JVP members. Neighbors disappeared, and while the purported reasons had to do with party politics these were often undergirded by older jealousies, rivalries and fractured senses of community exacerbated by party politics. All told, Brow has written an excellent description of how party politics enters a village, why villagers have strong adherence to one party over another, and the effects of such politicization on community relations at the village level.

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India Partitioned: The Other Face of Freedom (Volumes I and II), Mushirul Hasan, ed. New Delhi: Roli Books, 1995. Pp. 256 and 279.

> There was a desire to dream, but what was there safe to dream about? . . . It was possible to go alone to the mosque inhabited by jinn, or the burning ghat, but no one could tread alone the crooked pathways of dreams. (Rahi Masoom Reza, "The Feuding Families of Village Gangauli," vol. I, p. 70)

Reading *India Partitioned: The Other Face of Freedom* is similar to experiencing a serial nightmare in which the plot is always much the same but the settings and perspectives of the dreamer keep changing. As with the experiences of the Holocaust, Partition stories have a quality of improbability and one keeps asking, "How could these events really have happened?" But happen they did, and fifty years later we are left to tread the "crooked pathways of dreams," the surreality of a very real Partition. *India Partitioned* is Mushirul Hasan's effort to gather companions on memory's threatening path so that, out of the collected micro-histories and fictions of ordinary participants, Partition's broader determinants may emerge.

Hasan protests that he did not edit *India Partitioned* in an attempt "to impose a perspective" [vol. II, p. 10]. However, on the same page, he freely admits that his choices reflect both his "own preferences" and his "concern to locate the hitherto neglected theme of Partition outside the magisterial debates on nationalism versus communalism" . Hasan intends, first, to provide a forum for the multiple voices of individuals who, torn from a pre-Partition society that functioned at the local level as an integrated whole, were helplessly swept along in the horrific and confusing events of 1947. Second, he wants to pin the blame for Partition firmly on the upper echelons of the political edifice, particularly the activities of the Muslim League: "India's Partition was an epic human tragedy, a man-made catastrophe brought about by cynical and hot-headed politicians who lacked the imagination to resolve their disputes and the foresight to grasp the implications of dividing the country along religious lines" [vol. II, p. 10].

Because of the editorial intent, or perhaps--as Hasan appears to believe--because of a universal viewpoint that inheres in the stories of ordinary citizens, the selections show little divergence of opinion regarding Partition's root causes. Almost without exception, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh contributors report, relive and retell what they experienced without insinuating communal blame; nor would one want them to. The selections repeatedly emphasize that India's religious communities were united at the level of village and neighborhood life; until politicians, political activists and the criminal element began to arouse the emotions of a naive populace, communities coexisted respectfully and interdependently. Further, the selections indicate that the average person did not grasp the abstract concept

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of Partition and its eventual concrete outcome. I fully agree with the concept of pre-Partition India as a whole body torn brutally sinew from limb and applaud the effort to downplay communal divisions. But the editorial viewpoint is ultimately disturbing for two reasons. First, segregating national from local communal politics is an untenable construct because decisions of national leaders ultimately take root in the soil of the village. Fixing accountability chiefly on national politicians implies a uni-directional process that works from top to bottom instead of one that is complex and multi-directional. Second, does blaming the political machine in a wholesale manner not claim for it a kind of absolute power that divests the ordinary person of agency? And of responsibility?

In his recollection, "Hindu-Muslim Social Relations, 1935-1947," Istiaq Husain Qureshi describes the progressive breakdown of Hindu-Muslim social relations in New Delhi before Partition. His paper is perhaps the only exception to the collection's non-partisan spirit in that he emphasizes the provocative activities of Hindu nationalists. Recalling an incident occurring around 1939 in a Delhi University seminar addressing World War Two developments, he says that a young Hindu nationalist student "blurted out without any provocation that the treatment meted out to the Jews in Nazi Germany was fully justified in view of their anti-national activities" and that "if the minorities in India were not careful they would have to be dealt with precisely in the same manner" [vol. II, p. 187]. This outburst uncovers an apt comparison: the genocidal horror of Partition rivals the genocidal horror of the Holocaust. For years we have reflected on the question of how individual Germans--through circumstance and naiveté--could relinquish their powers of agency to a ruthless political machine. I fear that, by primarily blaming politicians and emphasizing a pre-existing unity at the common level, the editor sidesteps complex issues that involve not only the moral dilemmas of individuals but also the psychological and historical aspects of how interconnected communities become blood enemies.

Perhaps through counterposing the operations of national politics against local life, Hasan intends to indicate that individuals in villages and neighborhoods can claim, against the machinery of mega-politics, a kind of power that is more human, more personal. Several of the contributions poignantly describe the actions of those who rose above communal hatred. "Love is Stronger Than Hate: A Remembrance of 1947" by Khushdeva Singh documents the successful attempts of a tuberculosis doctor to foster peace and defuse potential violence in a volatile refugee camp. After Partition the kindness shown to him by police constables at the tense Karachi airport prompted him to repeat over and over to himself, "Love is far stronger than hatred" [vol. II, p. 121]. "In the Shadow of Freedom" tells the story of Shafi Ahmed Kidwai, a government servant who lost his life in Mussoorie because he chose to remain at his post to "provide relief and succour to those uprooted by the riots" [vol. II. p. 174]. Yet why does one person react like Dr. Singh or Shafi Ahmed Kidwai and another

like the seemingly harmless Babu who brutally killed a man trying to board the train in Bhisham Sahni's fictional story, "We Have Arrived in Amritsar." This remains a complex problem that demands a fusion of personal histories--psychological dispositions, beliefs, education, and family backgrounds--with political and communal histories.

The collection is organized in two volumes broadly divided into categories of fiction and non-fiction. Volume one consists of poetry, short stories, creative retellings and excerpts from novels. Diaries, interviews, parts of autobiographies, personal reflections and accounts of riots comprise volume two. The strength of the anthology derives from the proximity of the voices to ordinary life. Even famous contributors speak with an immediacy that is simple and moving. One outstanding selection, "Who Killed India?," is from the autobiography of the famous film producer and writer, Kwaja Ahmad Abbas. He describes a scene in which patrol groups from two *muhallas* in Bombay met on the beach at night only to discover they carried *lathis* out of the same fear--each other. Many of the fictional selections are outstanding. "How Many Pakistans?" by Kamleshwar describes the wrenching disjunctures of mind and heart caused by Partition and asks, "what is Pakistan?" The answer? "Its abode is in the mind" [vol. I, p. 162]. The black humor of "The Vultures of the Parsi Cemetery" by Ali Imam Naqvi and "Black Margins" by Saadat Hasan Manto provide a surprising twist of the anthology's sharp knife. By the end of the brilliant selection from "Black Margins" what started as humor morphs into cold horror.

India Partitioned achieves its goal of revisiting the dreamscape from many individual and local perspectives. Even though we must continue to live with the complex issues of responsibility, Hasan's anthology draws us closer to the reality of Partition and provides copious opportunities to reflect and to be educated through proximity to authentic experience.

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