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South Asian Nationalisms

Concluding Reflections

In this concluding commentary, the overall theme of the special issue as well as the collective contribution of the individual articles are addressed and elaborated upon. In particular, it focuses on the manifold commonalities that exist between South Asian states—both in terms of shared traits or dynamics and the recurrent attribution of negative connotations to neighboring states—and how these impact on nation-building and the possibility of actuating more peaceable state relations in the region. By extension, this concluding article argues that while enquiring into contemporary South Asian nationalisms there is a need to not only map the particularities of individual attempts at making the nation complete and integral. It is equally crucial to pose and try to answer questions about the limits of political community as grounded in shared nationhood—especially in a region concurrently marked by majoritarianism, cross-border affinities, and transnational patterns of community-making.

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One question that is worthwhile to ask at the end of the special issue is what we would gain from a comparative rather than an isolationist or insular approach to South Asian nationalisms. On the one hand, each national context is evidently highly distinct; yet, on the other hand, there are such a high number of commonalities between cases and shared regional patterns that it would be a missed opportunity not to reflect on what these similarities and congruent traits tell us about South Asian expressions of nationalism. However, drawing out such shared lessons on the basis of the special issue is not an easy task, given that the individual articles do not start from the same theory, method, problem, and so on. Cohesion needs to be largely construed and imposed, rather than neatly derived from the individual contributions. The articles, hence, do not extensively reflect either on the comparative qualities of the neighboring states nor on the possibility of utilizing South Asia as a tenable regional delimitation and scope in the first place. That is, what traits of uniformity and coherence do we attribute to South Asia, and, can South Asia be assumed to constitute an integrated whole or do we need to posit the question of its unity more explicitly? Even though the commonalities across states and the cohesiveness of the region are implicitly part of all of the articles in this special issue, there is, thus, a need to enquire more immediately into these matters.

Regional commonalities

In terms of commonalities, I note as a basic starting point, with Katharine Adeney, that majoritarian nationalism is gaining in prominence in the region (2015), with India since the last general election as the most obvious example. The term is associated with "majoritarianism, the demonisation of certain groups within the political discourse of the state and the lack of access to effective power" for minority communities (ibid., 7). In Mara Malagodi's article included in this special issue, we encounter two ways of further nuancing the context in which such majoritarianism is on the rise as well as its manifest objectives. First, her observation that contemporary Nepal and India are both marked by a "historical context of deep pluralism and politicized identities" is applicable to most other South Asian states, with the possible exception of the Maldives and Bhutan. Second, across South Asia, we find "increasingly violent attempts to impose a nation-wide uniform, majoritarian, hegemonic, and communal ideology on those who do not subscribe to it."

The latter is evidently not entirely novel. On the contrary, what Malagodi points to might even be considered close to requisite dynamics of postcolonial statehood in the region, if we conceive of a need to project a unified and singular notion of the nation as part of the very transition from a regional order dictated by imperial rule to one dominated by nation states. The endeavor to decide on how to demarcate "the people" and to establish criteria for membership has indeed often turned into a violent undertaking with long-term consequences for the place of minorities in or vis-à-vis such a singular envisioning of the nation—irrespective of whether nation-building has been carried out in the name of religious or secular aspirations. In his contribution to this special issue, Peter van der Veer, for instance, asks, "if the Indian sovereign nation has its roots in violence against Muslims, what is the place of secularism?" The present politics surrounding the National Register of Citizens in Assam, according to which close to two million people will be deemed unentitled to Indian citizenship, is a testament to the continuing centrality of minorities and their alleged links to neighboring states in attempts to project the nation as whole and complete. It is also an evident case of a global trend where contestations surrounding claims to citizenship—if thought of as "the materialization of sovereignty"—often are dealt with through a conception of law that "epistemically privileges state archives and identity papers over information gleaned from more immediate, concrete memories and relations" (see Stevens 2017, 219).

Malagodi's second claim, nonetheless, rightly acknowledges and brings attention to how present calls for uniform conceptions of nationhood seem increasingly incompatible with notions of "unity in diversity" within individual states (for more on this relating to Bangladesh, see Frank J. Korom's contribution to this special issue) and with a recognition, or at least a pragmatic acceptance, of the many transnational patterns of collective identities that exist in the region. Such transnational affinities are not, as twentieth-century and present-day South Asia demonstrate, easily reducible to state-centric views of political community and citizenship, and they remain near-impossible to "make manageable" or bring to an end without the deployment of violent and repressive means.

An alternative way of conceiving individual cases as comparable beyond pointing to a set inventory of concrete similarities—either the ones already mentioned or such things as dynasticism, the criminalization of politics, and the highly pronounced fear of balkanization and of "small numbers," to use Arjun Appadurai's term (2006)—would be to stress the role neighboring states fill as constitutive and contrasting outsides. That is, as tropes of undesirable behavior, inverted mirror images, and significant others. In some instances, neighboring states are even imbued with the connotation of having been responsible for or participants in the original and founding violence. This is how Pakistan and India, for example, depict one another, and it is also the significance attributed to Pakistan in the case of Bangladesh (for details on the latter, see Korom's article included herein). Another common imagery is that of neighboring states as engaged in conscious attempts to incite and fuel internal disorder and subversion by way of training, funding, and supporting sub-nationalist movements or extremist organizations. South Asian states are, in general, highly suspicious of "neighborly transgression" and acts that seem to represent a violation

of the idea of nonintervention in domestic affairs, which, among other things, has the consequence of limiting possibilities for engaging in regional cooperation. An apt illustration is available in Boris Wille's article included here on the Maldives, in which Pakistan, as part of a SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) summit held in November 2011, contributed a commemorative monument that, contrary to the original intention, was perceived by the Defend Islam campaign to be a case of "idolatry." As an example, it is especially noteworthy since it confirms how neighboring states are often perceived foremost negatively even when, as in the case of the Maldives, "a significant other religious [national] community is absent."

The negative attributes that are ascribed to neighboring states do not only tell us something significant about the particular nationalisms that operate in distinct state settings, they also allow us to reflect on the viability of more peaceable state relations. South Asia is, more than most regions, marked by entrenched state conflicts and, as noted, a lack of regional cooperation. There is, as Jürgen Schaflechner maintains, a lot of "mutual vilification" taking place between distinct South Asian nationalisms—in his own case between Pakistan and India, by way of how religious minorities are represented in popular culture. At times it goes to the extent that neighboring citizenries and internal minorities associated with these equal an "abject" in relation to which conceptions of nationhood assume a sense of completion, continuity, and actuality. Given what the idea of abjection signifies in terms of rejection, fundamental negation, and misrecognition (for more on this, see Kinnvall and Svensson 2018), Schaflechner's analysis and the broader lessons drawn from it do not bode well for the progression toward mutual understanding, rather than mutual vilification. The latter is particularly worrying given that the material Schaflechner focuses on, that is, the "contribution of vernacular popular culture [to] solidifying [stereotypes]," stands out as a core constituent of what Michael Billig would designate "banal nationalism" (1995), the quotidian inculcation and reproduction of a sense of shared national identity.

Schaflechner's article convincingly conveys how ostensibly insignificant and pulp stories have the effect of disseminating and reinforcing ideas about "the incommensurability of Hindus and Muslims," even to the degree of turning "Pakistan's horror genre" into "a suitable stage for representing [an] ambivalent and frightening relationship of 'the Hindu' to and with Pakistan's founding ideology." In Korom's article here, we find an analogous instance of "banal" nationalism, and a related display of incommensurability, in the form of a rickshaw panel that "depicts a woman hiding in the jungle to protect her innocent child from the onslaught and ravages of the Pakistani army during the war for liberation." As Korom (this volume) germanely notes, "every ride . . . becomes a poignant reminder of the horrors encountered during the struggle for freedom."

In our collective renderings of South Asian nationalisms, it is the exact significance of this very domain of nation-building that we are yet to fully study—and which many of the articles in this special issue are a great step toward. What, in other words, are the micropolitics and the everyday agency that uphold and inform state relations and state activities relating to sovereignty claims and status seeking (for more on this need in general, see Björkdahl, Hall, and Svensson 2019)? How do we successfully commit to analyses that integrate and reconcile the very lived experiences of

individuals and collectives and the large-scale processes that drive majoritarian nationalism and state rivalry in the region? In the case of Hindu nationalism in India, we, for example, seem to have a reasonable grasp of its ideological foundation, the appeal of the BJP as a political party and how it compares with other similar parties globally, the type of leadership Narendra Modi represents, and so forth. There is, however, a need for even more empirically oriented work when it comes to the ways in which these factors resonate with and are shaped by ordinary "people's ongoing work in the making of lifeworlds" (on the latter, see Mannergren Selimovic 2019).

In the face of the already mentioned everyday reproduction of incommensurability, which is underpinned by rigid and potent stereotypes that are applied to those who are either seen as equaling internal or external abject others, and at times to those who are perceived as occupying a liminal space that traverses both of these, it is exceedingly hard to conceive of state interactions and majority-minority classifications and relations in positive terms. It is undeniable that South Asian nationalisms, if placed in a regional and comparative frame, in many ways act as an everyday molding of distinct, discrete, and often irreconcilable ideas of the nation and nationhood. This holds true both for what is conventionally designated religious and secular nationalism. While the latter remains more open to diversity within each state, it remains closed to the transcending possibilities of community-making that is not foremost or exclusively bound to state-centric territoriality.

Let us here take the recently opened Partition Museum in Amritsar as our example. Even though the museum—which describes itself as a "people's museum" with a specific focus on the experiences of migrants and survivors of the Partition violence—amounts to a clear effort to critically inform and educate visitors about the event as a dark or dissonant heritage that is shared equally between India, Pakistan, and today's Bangladesh, it deliberately refrains from framing its content in relation to contemporary South Asia. Put differently, while the museum traces the long-term legacies of the Partition on the individual and community levels, it stays silent on how the event relates to and continues to impact on present-day state relations and expressions of majoritarian nationalism in the region. By extension, it does not then ask important questions concerning the frail underpinnings of state-promoted nationalisms and the manifold sub-national affinities that exist or have existed across current state borders. The museum, then, like many of the articles that make up this special issue, does not take seriously the question of what, if anything, to speak with van der Veer, "transcends the nation." In the particular case of the Partition Museum it is reflected in an unwillingness to fully address the question of what it might mean to undo the Partition, whereas in this special issue it surfaces in the form of an acceptance of the given*ness* and assumed rigidity of individual nation state projects. This is the issue that I turn to next.

The nation's transcendence or transcending the nation?

As mentioned, in his article included here, van der Veer articulates the important query of "what transcends the nation," to which he then adds the response, "nothing, perhaps, since the nation itself is transcendental." However, if he is right, it is surely

a very limited and limiting transcendental quality that we are able to attribute to the nation. It means that we—consonant with modernist accounts of nationalism as, on the one hand, a means for making sense of the ways in which the modern state induced new conceptions and sensations of time and space and, on the other hand, an instrument for superseding local and traditional forms of identification—view the nation as a vehicle for turning distant relations into kinship-like affinities, even across and beyond different generations. Accordingly, the nation both acts as a vessel for and propels collective agency—an agency, if we accept Jacqueline Stevens's account (2009), that is not only intimately linked to the active preservation of membership as foremost inherited, but also is recurrently the root cause of large-scale conflict, violence, and suffering. It is, thus, easy to concur with van der Veer's critique of the portrayal of nationalism as principally "immanent and secular" and as foremost connected to "the collective will of autonomous, rational subjects." It has—as he brings attention to—since its very inception as a mode of political mobilization been entwined with affect and the emotive positing of the nation's calling or destiny. In other words, the "enchanted world" never went away (see also Closs Stephens 2014, 41–42).

If we build on this recognition of the entanglements of nation as community and affective states, it might—as attended to in the final part of this article—offer us important clues to the appeal of religious nationalism in South Asia. What it does not do, however, is impel or force us to see how the nation as such might be transcended, which is an urgent issue considering how presently hegemonic conceptions of South Asian nations are worryingly minimalistic in the transcendence that they offer. While the articles in this special issue provide many and good answers to the question "where is the nation," they do not sufficiently address the equally imperative query concerning "why the nation" in the first place.

In a regional context such as South Asia where there are myriad examples of how the nation state adopts colonizing, imperial, and marginalizing expressions, it would be a mistake not to consider the alternatives that might exist if we were to transgress, transcend, or deny the primacy of extant forms of nationalism. While it might be pertinent to ascribe certain transcendent abilities to Hindutva notions of a Hindu *rāṣṭra* (for details, see Khan et al. 2017), most would surely be inclined to rather accentuate the many exclusions and demotions that they effectuate. After all, each articulation of a unifying idea of the nation—as even Mari Miyamoto and colleagues' case study of Bhutan in this special issue attests to—concurrently works to forcefully accommodate or overwrite pluralist and syncretic practices and cultural expressions. In Bhutan, there is, for instance, a clear drive toward replacing animistic practices with Buddhist rituals, as they demonstrate. A crucial point of the analysis of changing practices relating to meat consumption and slaughter of animals in Bhutan is that promoting "Buddhist doctrine" is entirely compatible with "the notion of the modern nation state." It is not an unexpected finding, however, if we take the entire special issue into account: religion effectively affords the modern nation state the enchanted qualities it otherwise finds hard to exhibit.

Given the nation's ability to reduce multiplicity and to align such a reduction with ideas of state territoriality, van der Veer appears to be correct while insisting that the

apt answer to the question of what transcends the nation is nothing. With Angharad Closs Stephens, it might even be argued that there is no way out of the nation as "form" at present; that is, as the principal form of structure to assume and conform to for any political community that desires to be sovereign and to exercise self-determination, articulate legitimate claims to a delimited territory, and claim to be able to represent the will of its members (2014; see also Balibar 2004; Samaddar 2012). A manifest example of the present limits of transnational social formations is the commitment by Dalit activists to build and act on solidarity across nation state borders in their efforts to counter caste-based discrimination. Even though Dalit activists across the region increasingly base their work on the insight that caste is not exclusive to India or to Hindu communities and that external pressure, built through a global layer of activism, is needed to make sure that individual states commit to the eradication of casteist practices, it has proven very hard to turn the struggle against caste-based discrimination into a regional or international, rather than a domestic, issue.

Nevertheless, what we risk forgetting or blinding ourselves to if we hold on to a conception of the nation form as impossible to transcend is that it has a clear history—or many concrete histories, to be precise. It is not given or predetermined as the only way to conceive of political unity and community; and we should not, of course, forget that until the actual establishment of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) as independent nation states in the late 1940s, it was imperial relations that dominated much of the region. Hence, instead of a direct correspondence between the yearnings for nationhood and territorial statehood, notions of paramountcy, overlapping authority claims, and divisible sovereignty prevailed. There is, in addition, an undeniably transnational dimension to anti-imperial and postcolonial nationalism that we need to consider. Much of the inspiration of individual instances of postcolonial nationalism was not specific to the context in which it was achieved. If viewed in this light, it should be possible to critically ponder the historicity, and thus the particularity and chance character, of the sense of sameness and shared community that is supposed to underpin present-day nation-building efforts. The nation as the principal mode of enacting and envisioning community is, hence, clearly not unique in a transhistorical sense, and it is not unique nor does it hold the status of exclusivity in the lives of many people now living in South Asia.

Yet if it is not principally a European construct, diffused and globalized through acts of mimicry and emulation, what then is the nation in a South Asian context; and what makes it so hard—even in a South Asian setting—to ask about the potential to transcend, replace, or make redundant nation as form? It is not, as the articles in this special issue show, a direct consequence of a neat entwinement or coherence of nationality and territoriality. Nation as form is, however, as we know, predicated upon identifying sameness and difference; and although it is ill-suited to name this sameness in concrete and conclusive terms, it is well-suited for sorting out difference, for marking and distinguishing distance, estrangement, and subordination. Nation as form in its present guise in South Asia, like everywhere else, effectively establishes distance between neighboring states, draws distinctions between majorities and minorities, and hierarchizes societies domestically.

There is, of course, also an international dimension at work here. Even though there has been a momentous expansion of the global layer of political and social life, international order—if read through the lens of international law—clearly places an expectation on states to prove and exhibit a congruence of territoriality and nationality in order to be recognized as sovereign units with the right to self-determination. As Jens Bartelson stresses in an ongoing project on the long nineteenth century and the transition from empires to states as the dominant units of the international system, it is a congruence that is not given, however (Bartelson 2018). It was, as he argues, conceptualized into being during the nineteenth century and accordingly acted upon by influential elites and broader populations alike. The lesson to be drawn for South Asia is that we—while considering the often taken-for-granted nexus of nationality, territoriality, and community—always need to be attentive to the particular histories out of which present South Asian nation states emerged. In India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, for example, there was no immediately corresponding unified state prior to 1947 and then 1971. South Asia under British imperial rule consisted of a combination of direct and indirect rule, which meant that large parts of the region continued to exist as "princely states" until decolonization.

It has, moreover, always been the case that South Asian states find it very difficult to attain the aforementioned congruence, and many would argue that it is the very impossibility of achieving a concurrence between community and territoriality, and to, thereby, effectuate real and proper popular sovereignty, that is the cause of most internal and external conflicts. Pakistan is perhaps the most obvious case, signified by, first, its partitioning in 1971 that led to the undermining of the nation's supposed religious underpinning and, second, by the vague sense of and commitment to Pakistani nationhood in many border areas—but the same argument applies to India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan (not included in this special issue). It is also, one might argue, what manifests itself in the embodiment of the nation, and the embodiment of resistance to it, which Susan A. Reed writes about in her contribution to this special issue. Through her analysis, we both come to reflect on the crucial question of how the nation might be embodied in more inclusive and desirable ways, and come to realize that the analyzed performance revolves around the very tension put in place by a lack of equivalence between community and territoriality. The latter, as Reed expounds, does not simply lead to exclusionary practices enacted toward "outsiders" or what is perceived to be lesser members, it also entails and reproduces gendered asymmetries and clearly assigned roles and responsibilities within the assumed boundaries of the nation.

What this affords us then is a picture of the nation as always-already transcended or, portrayed differently, hollowed out from within. It remains incomplete. There are those on the inside—those recognized as members—who feel estranged; it is always, even on the most willing members, to some extent imposed and decided upon by someone else (see Nancy 1991). There are, in addition, a host of liminal subject positions that keep on haunting it. Some examples of this would be the supposed anachronisms of Biharis in Bangladesh, pastoralists in Bhutan, and Hindus in Pakistan. It then seems as if the "daily plebiscite" (to echo van der Veer) aimed at affirming the nation is, at the same time, a recurring confirmation of its deficiencies

and limitations. South Asian nationalisms, as the individual contributions have demonstrated, are a great and perceptible example of this, as they do not allow for settled and totalizing views of the nation. It is therefore imperative to attend to why the present moment, despite this, equals a seemingly crucial juncture for the congealing and success of religious nationalism in the region.

The concurrent prevalence of religious nationalism and nation-building as "empire-making"

It needs to be acknowledged that religious nationalism is what dominates the field of available projections and manifestations of the nation as a basis for political community in a contemporary South Asian context; and, as argued, there is an apparent trend in the region as a whole to turn to majoritarianism and, as a consequence, to demote and heavily police and limit valuations of minority claims and the slogan "unity in diversity," as indicated by Korom and Jan Magnusson in the introduction to this collection of articles. The present significance of these aspects is confirmed and elaborated upon in all of the articles included herein. With van der Veer it is, then, possible to claim that what we bear witness to on a regional scale is how "religious divisions" are "reinforced through political mobilization," and very deliberately so. Wille is, consequently, right when asserting that we need to pay attention not only to the ideological content and societal resonance of specific religious nationalisms but also to "the religious commitment of the state, which captures the ways the state engages in managing, maintaining, and monitoring religious nationalism." Two important questions that he asks pertain to the role of states in fostering and upholding limited access to communities and individuals not subscribing to the, at present, dominant form of religious nationalism; that is, "what work do states do to forge or disentangle religion and nationalism" and "how do states mediate between religious and other normative orders"?

If we, for instance, used to be able to speak of a specific Indian brand of secularism, today we need to admit that the Indian state is committed to advancing a highly particular interpretation of Hinduism and, by extension, of what it means to be Indian. It is clear—whether we think of Jammu and Kashmir's recently reconceptualized status, the governing of the Ganges, the writing of history books, and the steering of higher education in general, and so on—that many of the Indian state's actions at present align with an envisioning of India as a Hindu nation state. In his article on Bangladesh, Korom observes a very different content to how the state manages, maintains, and monitors religious nationalism. He writes that, "by visibly projecting an image of the country as celebratory, happy, peaceful, and, most importantly, secular, Bangladesh continuously attempts to manage its religious, linguistic, and ethnic diversity through large-scale public displays of nationalism." Although Korom here portrays religious nationalism as being held at bay through "large-scale public displays of nationalism" with inclusive characteristics, the depiction also implies that more particular and restrictive versions of nationalism always, to some extent, threaten the maintenance of such a secular envisioning of the nation.

If we are to build on this reasoning, two readily detectable explanations for the intensified turn to religious nationalism and majoritarianism are available. The first emphasizes historical developments and a certain path dependency arising from these: either in the form of an original synthesis between majority religion and nationhood, as in the case of Pakistan, or in the form of an imagery of fundamental desires that were suppressed at the time of the founding moment (that is, at the time of decolonization) that are now resurfacing, such as in the case of the ban of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in the late 1940s. The second explanation (which is fully reconcilable with the first) would instead foremost stress how a more integrated world has—somewhat paradoxically at first sight—led to inward-looking needs and propensities, and how perceived uncertainties of significant groups in society result in a loss of what Anthony Giddens and others have referred to as "ontological security" (for more on this, see Kinnvall and Mitzen 2017). This, in turn, leads to an ensuing need to "regain" or "restore" a sense of stability, continuity, and predictability. However, this search for completion through "restoration," as well as the aforementioned "fear of small numbers" (Appadurai 2006), is—as scholars of South Asia very well know—not new. Simply think of the communal violence that India has periodically suffered since its inception as a postcolonial state in 1947 or the treatment of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan. In the present special issue, Schaflechner's study of how the Hindu minority is rendered in Pakistani popular culture is another example of this. South Asia should, thus, not only make us attuned to how territoriality, nationality, political authority, and political community never fully coincide but also make us wary of those who claim to be able to make such an overlap possible.

This brings forth two additional insights: first, that there will always be mobilization attending to this intrinsic mismatch and, second, that the nation is never ubiquitous, omnipresent, and totalizing. The first point appears, then, to put us in partial opposition to Korom's more limited view of what counts as violent expressions of nationalism. In his contribution on Bangladesh to this volume, he writes that "when . . . displays of nationalistic unity fail, violence results, which challenges the notion of the nation's unity and harmony." In the construal advanced here, violence is instead seen as an ever-present facet of the endeavor to achieve or display "nationalistic unity." It then seems that, particularly in a South Asian context, an overly benign faith in the possibility of separating "peaceful, celebratory modes of nationalistic performance" from their antonym makes us less sensitized to the experiences of marginal communities and individuals than we ought to be. As Magnusson evinces through his article on the Baltis of Pakistan, there are numerous border regions beyond the effective exercise of sovereign control and legibility, and the same might be said about many urban and rural areas not located along state borders. There are, in other words, a multitude of communities that exist on the margins of or even "outside the nation state framework," to echo Magnusson in this volume, as well as a lot of liminal spaces occupied by communities that display a transnational expansion across state borders.

Although the overall focus of this special issue has been on South Asian nationalisms, in conclusion it remains possible to enquire about the extent to which

what we see foremost resembles nation-building practices, or if it is more aptly conceptualized in terms of a continuation of empire by other means. This reflection does not solely apply to internal colonialism in the form of state attempts to, on the one hand, reshape and mold what citizens relate to as shared cultural traits and to, on the other hand, gather and classify knowledge about all inhabitants and their place within a conjectured whole. It represents a broader and genuine concern about the long life and lingering relevance of imperial notions of governance and political authority that initially emerged as part of British rule. Do we, in other words, still find traces of ideas about paramountcy and of the ways in which direct and indirect rule were varyingly practiced in different parts of South Asia? The answer, at least in the case of India and Pakistan, is yes.

In his article, Magnusson, for example, attends to how Baltistan in both India and Pakistan "became an object of internal colonialism and state- and nation-making, [and] part of a new geography with a new geopolitical agenda." Hence, "for the Balti community, Independence, Partition, [and] division [in 1947] meant the transition from one mode of colonial domination and subalternity to another" (this volume). If there is a need for enhanced and further knowledge about the population, the nation state, as Magnusson contends, foremost exists for administrative purposes, with the core undertaking being "to bring the communities living in [inaccessible] areas under administration, incorporate them into the national economy, and tax them." Next to majoritarian nationalism there is, thus, if we concur with Magnusson, a parallel and intersecting postcolonial colonialism at work. In Magnusson's article, this is, with James C. Scott, recognized "as a massive reduction of vernaculars of all kinds." In particular, he emphasizes the epistemic practices that are required "to bring the periphery into line." What this suggests is that it is not sufficient to conceive of South Asian nationalisms solely on the basis of an attempt to differentiate between "religious" and "secular" nationalism, or between more or less desirable nationalism, without considering how all state-centric imaginings of nationhood and political community are committed to bringing margins and peripheries "into line."

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