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Guest Editors' Introduction

Indigeneity, Performance, and the State in South Asia and Beyond

The articles included here are based on a conference held in Upper Bavaria in 2011, convened with the purpose of fleshing out how Indian "tribal" populations use expressive culture to bolster claims of indigeneity. Within India, the focus is narrowed to Middle India and the Nilgiri Hills of South India, despite the fact that the issues collectively addressed here transcend local and regional issues. After providing a survey of the literature on "tribes" in India, the authors pinpoint areas of intersection that weave the enclosed articles together thematically. Further reflections on the concept of indigeneity as a global phenomenon conclude this introduction.

keywords: cultural representation—ethnicity— indigeneity—Middle India—Nilgiri Hills—social classification—tribes

THIS VOLUME is the fruit of an interdisciplinary symposium that the guest editors of this special issue organized on an island monastery in Frauenchiemsee, Upper Bavaria, in January 2011.[1] Originally entitled "Making Indigenous Polities in India," the point of departure for that symposium was the idea that those who retain or put forward claims to indigenous status do so, in part, through the creation, manipulation, and interpretation of their rituals, forms of art, and uses of language. The editors have been thinking about indigenous issues from anthropological and musical perspectives since they (henceforth "we") first met during fieldwork in the Nilgiri Hills of South India in 1990. While Frank Heidemann was researching the ritual and politics of the numerically dominant Badaga community who were advocating for tribal status, Richard Wolf was conducting fieldwork among the Kotas, an ethnic minority who were highly protective of their privileges as a Scheduled Tribe. Recognizing that the actions of both communities—not limited to but including advocacy and protectionism—have involved performances of various kinds, we thought it productive to investigate more broadly and from a wider range of disciplinary perspectives the ways in which performance contributes to the production of indigeneity. Because the historical, political, and social conditions informing notions of indigeneity and tribe vary widely across the subcontinent (not to mention internationally), we decided to focus on Middle India and the Nilgiri Hills of South India. The issues our participants have raised, however, transcend these regions.

PolITICAL AND ACADEMIC VIEWS ON INDIGENEITY

Indigeneity is a highly charged and sensitive topic in political and academic spheres. From a political perspective, the banner of indigeneity has enabled a great number of populations around the world to lobby for their collective betterment in contexts in which they have historically been the victims of violence, exploitation, cultural suppression, and other forms of discrimination. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has tended toward inclusivity in seeking to identify indigenous peoples without defining them *a priori* (see BÉTEILLE 1998, 189). The forum acknowledges that indigenous peoples prefer to be known by a variety of practically interchangeable terms in different parts of the

world, some of the most important of which in the Indian context are *ādivāsī*, tribe, and hill tribe (UNPFII n.d.).

A UN "fact sheet" on indigeneity emphasizes an individual's "self-identification" as indigenous and acceptance by a community that also recognizes itself as indigenous as the two most important criteria for identifying an indigene. Members of the UN Forum have also based their "modern understanding" of indigeneity on the following additional criteria: indigenous peoples maintain "historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies," have "strong link[s] to territories and surrounding natural resources," possess demonstrably "distinct social, economic or political systems" and "distinct language, culture and beliefs," "form non-dominant groups of society" and "resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities" (UNPFII n.d.).

Academic perspectives on the concept of indigeneity—not limited by the criteria in the UN document cited above—are varied and at times work at cross purposes. Some scholars have found the term "indigeneity" of dubious analytic use because it specifies only a family of resemblances, not a means for determining who is and who is not indigenous. For example, indigeneity implies long-standing habitation in a place, but no definition of the term specifies exactly how long is long enough— many "indigenous" populations have histories of immigration themselves, albeit in the distant past. The term "indigenous" has also been criticized on the grounds that it connotes premodern life ways and as such serves as a euphemism for the pejorative term "primitive" (KUPER 2003).

Even if attempts to define the term have failed to satisfy critics, indigeneity remains an important category of cultural and political identity—Western in origin perhaps, but no less real in the twenty-first century because of it—to which individuals, communities, and states of the world relate dynamically (see BAVISKAR 2005, 5106; BROSIUS 1999, 280–81; SHAH 2007, 1821). These relations, reactions, and interactions between local communities and the purveyors of indigeneity will always be legitimate objects of study—even for those who would wish away the term "indigeneity" altogether. In our view, we should not lament the global career of Euro-American terms but interrogate the ways in which they have become objects of appropriation. It becomes possible to investigate the processes of communities' claiming indigeneity and even their "becoming indigenous" (CLIFFORD 2013). As the politics of belonging continue to play out at the national level, what the so-called indigenous people do with their own cultural resources merits special and renewed attention.

If it is possible to become indigenous it must also be possible to lose indigenous status, and indeed according to the controversial Indian Act in Canadian federal law, a (native Canadian) Indian woman will lose her tribal status if she marries a non-Indian man.[2] In this way, the problems of determining who is indigenous are similar to the problems of race in determining who deserves compensation in the slavery reparations debates current in the United States. In the broadest terms, would it be misguided to say that most of us have lost our indigeneity in the

course of the development of human societies?[3] Perhaps the only forces preventing indigenous peoples from losing their indigeneity are the conscious efforts of the peoples themselves and such entities as NGOs, political organizations, and states.

To be or not to be indigenous in this way remain conditions of possibility. Occupying one position in a spectrum are the aforementioned Badagas, who, as "Ancient Hindu Refugees" (HOCKINGS 1980) of varying backgrounds, left their earlier homeland in what is now the state of Karnataka. Even without primordial claims to the land, then, they seek to be recognized as a Scheduled Tribe—the Badagas became who they are, Badagas, after they reached the Nilgiri Hills; the term, meaning "northerner," indicates the direction from which their forebears arrived. Occupying another position are populations who feel that they need to demonstrate their tribalness in the public sphere even though their autochthony is generally assumed. Nicolas Prévôt in this volume shows how the Gonds of Bastar (Chhattisgharh) stereotype themselves as tribals in public contexts, even though wielding such self-stereotypes helps Hindu right-wing groups elide the differences between "Hindu" and "tribal" indigeneity. Many tribals also engage in activities that articulate tribal values in intra-community and intimate domestic settings and not in public. A Kota man or woman, for instance, might chastise another woman for wearing Tamil clothing or a *poṭṭu* (dot on the forehead worn by Hindu women) in the village. Nowadays it is generally acceptable to adopt modern South Indian sartorial styles in town, but at home it is important, for women especially, to look Kota—and that means, by Kota standards, to look tribal or indigenous.

The process of creating and manipulating such signs of indigeneity holds pride of place in this volume's title: "The Bison and the Horn: Indigeneity, Performance, and the State of India." The bison evokes weight, rootedness to the land, and strength, as well as the importance of bison and other bovines in the ritual lives of many Indians. The horn is not only the bison's defense but also its artistic mouthpiece, whether found on headgear or as a musical instrument. In an academic world fond of titles with colons, the placement of "the bison and the horn" to the left of the colon is significant. Rootedness to the land, the need for "voice," and a proclivity for bovine imagery are straightforward values strongly but not exclusively associated with the Indian continent and epistemologically prior to modern notions of indigeneity and the state. The bison and the horn are images stressing "indigenous indigeneity" (Berger, this volume) and life on the ground. To the right of the colon, "indigeneity, performance, and the state of India," brings ethnography into a broader conversation. What is indigeneity in relation to local concepts and movements in India? What forms of action coded here by the word *performance* transform local identities—senses of "we-ness" with strong or loose attachments to ethnonyms (Bird-David, this volume)—into entities called *ādivāsī*s, tribes and Scheduled Tribes (ST), as well as Backward Castes (BC), Other Backward Castes (OBC), and other such administrative labels used to delineate populations in need of governmental protection?

It will be useful at this juncture to provide some background on the classic anthropological notion of tribe and how this notion informs the administrative

categories for related social formations in India. The relationship of anthropological concept to state category raises a topic of general concern in anthropology and one addressed specifically in several of the contributions.

Tribe

The anthropological concept of tribe became central to the professional study of societies in the second half of the nineteenth century when colonial expansion was at its peak and evolutionary thought was blossoming. The term "tribe" originates in early references to the Twelve Tribes of Israel and ethnic divisions of the Holy Roman Empire. When anthropologists made "tribe" a technical term in their field, they defined "tribals" in ideal terms as endogamous clusters of people who lived in their own territories, enjoyed political autonomy, spoke their own languages, possessed distinctive systems of religion and economy, and implemented local forms of technology (FRIED 1975). Early anthropological understandings of tribe emphasized autonomy—lack of integration into a larger social unit.

In the evolutionary terms prevalent in anthropological discourses of the nineteenth century, tribes were pre-state societies. According to MORGAN (1877), kinship, rather than political office in the modern sense of the term, was the basis for social organization in tribal societies. MAINE (1861) made a similar distinction between what he called status societies, organized largely on the basis of kinship and consensus, and contractual societies, in which individuals could freely choose with whom to enter into associations and agreements. In the view of these nineteenth century polymaths, the movement from archaic to state-like societies based on ideas of freedom and law was a matter of evolutionary advancement. In the 1870s and 1880s scholars seldom questioned the view that societies developed in a unidirectional manner from the primitive to the complex.

Although Boasian anthropologists in America were critical of evolutionary schemas, many European and American anthropologists continued to view tribes as living specimens of earlier societies. In the mid-twentieth century, American anthropologist Elman Service constructed an influential neo-evolutionary model in which man evolved from hunter-gatherers to tribes who did not recognize individual land rights, to centrally organized chiefdoms, and finally to states possessing administrative systems (SERVICE 1962). Further suggesting that tribalism was inherently incompatible with the creation of modern states, French anthropologist Pierre CLASTRES (1976) and other anarchists of the 1970s referred to tribals as enemies of the state. Although Clastres took issue with Rousseauian notions of the noble savage, in public opinion, the idea of the tribal as an evolutionary holdover was complemented by a romantic vision of people living in a premodern paradise.

One of many critiques of these concepts of tribe was launched by Aidan Southall, who proposed to use "tribe" only for social formations in early historical periods and for stateless societies, but not for populations living in the contemporary world, for the idea of a tribe as an autochthonous and self-sufficient autonomous unit does not correspond to ethnographic findings concerning actual living peoples

(Southall 1970, 48; see also Fried 1975; Sahlins 1968). Those who have been called tribes have been neither discrete units nor static entities, although they may have appeared to have been so as a result of the administrators and anthropologists who named and classified tribal groups and fixed their territories on maps. In time, scholars began to argue against the pejorative connotations of the term "tribe" and questioned the idea that tribalism is incompatible with the modern nation-state. Indeed, in India entities termed "tribe" are part of the nation-state, and many of its leaders proudly announce their membership in specific tribal communities.

Castes and tribes of india

As anthropologists and administrators informed by academic writings on Africa began to take up new posts in British India, they applied the term "tribe," which had been conceived to describe African social configurations, to some of the populations they encountered in India (Cohn 1987, 200–23). While anthropologists were continuing to develop the term "tribe" as a technical designation for a kind of society, India's colonial administration began to undergo a transformation in response to the Indian Rebellion of 1857. British imperialists were becoming increasingly interested in the true nature of India—who were the Indians who could be trusted and who were those who could not? British administrators commissioned and compiled sociological manuals that would help them to understand and monitor their subjects, thereby also assisting them in their "divide and rule" strategy. They were convinced that anthropological knowledge would be useful in this mission. The "colonial state" thus became the "ethnographic state" (Dirks 2001, 43) and anthropological study came to overshadow history as a means of illuminating local knowledge. As colonial classifications grew in importance, so too did the "native" classification of caste come to have new meaning and more fixed a form in the imperial period. Decennial censuses and listings of caste names turned a somewhat fluidly articulated society into one that appeared to have rigid internal boundaries. Although colonial administrators and anthropologists scrutinized caste societies more closely than tribal ones, the ideas of tribe that they developed have had a lasting impact on the subsequent ways in which scholars, the public, and the state have viewed India's marginalized populations.

In 1931 the Census of India differentiated castes from tribes. Four years later, the term "Scheduled Tribe" was introduced to designate a legal status, soon to be enshrined in the Constitution of India. In the last eight decades, each decennial census listed tribal communities for each state and for each union territory (Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs 2010–2011). Speaking tribal dialects, the practice of "animism," and dwelling in geographical isolation were among the criteria to be included to determine authentic indigeneity (Xaxa 2003, 377). Anthropology and administration merged in a gigantic mutual project, often sullied by political considerations. To include a named group as a Scheduled Tribe was to make a commitment to allocate material benefits to that group, and it therefore had implications for broader economic planning. The product was a

list of Scheduled Tribes and a list of Scheduled Castes—one of the most highly contested artifacts of postcolonial India. These lists covered more than a quarter of the Indian population and became a major tool for the implementing of social policies in India. Now, for the first time in an officially printed form, tribals were represented as occupying the lowest rung of society. The government offered tribal communities support, usually education and employment opportunities; in all, more than a quarter of a billion people became the objects of such affirmative action.

The social hierarchies inscribed and to an extent created through colonial projects of classification persist to the present day, in part through the availability of books that colorfully describe tribal otherness (which are still assiduously reprinted). Multi-volume compilations that sought to catalog "Castes and Tribes" from the northwest provinces, the central provinces, Cochin, and South India (some more than a hundred years old) are available in bookshops throughout India in reprint editions for anthropologists and especially for foreign and domestic tourists to so-called tribal areas. After a century, these editions continue to be quoted in publications of public-servant anthropologists as if they were authoritative sources for contemporary understandings of tribal populations. At the end of the twentieth century, new books with similar titles and organization were continuing to be published (see, for example, SEN 1992).

A more recent move to capture the complexity of Indian cultures has been the "People of India Project" (1988–1996), carried out by the Anthropological Survey of India. In three volumes on the "People of India" (vols. IV–VI) over the course of 4,144 pages, the editor K. S. Singh reports on 4,693 communities out of an original list of 6,748 (SINGH 1998, x), based on ethnographic information gleaned from 25,000 "learned informants." Among them were members of 636 Scheduled Tribes and 751 Scheduled Castes (SINGH 1998, xv). Despite the social reality of such tribes and castes today, it should not be forgotten that their original objectification as bounded social entities owes much to colonial lists of *ādivāsī* and jungle tribes.

The delineation of "Scheduled" classes of people has had several effects. Those groups who were not included for preferential treatment in these lists launched protests that continue today (see KAPILA 2008, and Heidemann in this volume). Conflicts have inevitably arisen among those who were listed, as some have been more successful than others in securing governmental benefits. Some have felt misrepresented or subsumed under the wrong umbrella group.

Not surprisingly, given the emphasis on the connection between *ādivāsī*s and their land, problems of labeling Scheduled Tribes have often involved territorial distinctions, whether man-made or natural. Anthropologist Nurit Bird-David in this volume, for instance, illustrates the more general problem of identifying a tribe as unitary at some level when its putative members are known by multiple ethnonyms and straddle state borders. In extreme cases, one and the same group may be recognized as a Scheduled Tribe in one state but not in a neighboring one. In the northeast of India, tribals not living in their "native" habitat, defined as either

hills or plains, have not been included in the Indian census at all (Baruah 2008, 16). Sanjib Baruah has recently proposed the idea of "multi-level citizenship" as a way to break free from the limitations of national classification systems and the colonial legacies they carry (Baruah 2008, 19).

In the long run, the awareness of being supported on the basis of specific cultural traits led to new forms of what Gayatri Spivak has aptly called strategic essentialism (Ashcroft et al. 1998; Kapila 2008, 119). The government has provided support for some ethnic groups to build their own museums and encouraged a variety of music and dance performances. The tribes themselves are eager to display distinct tribal features while marching in public parades on Independence Day in Delhi. Although many have argued that the process of creating lists of castes and tribes has itself contributed to reifying the distinction between castes and tribes, anthropologist Georg Pfeffer (this volume) demonstrates that there are substantial differences between caste and tribal societies in Middle India, especially on the ideological level, that cannot be attributed to colonial processes of description and classification—indeed he points out, members of "academic social anthropology of Commonwealth universities" ignored India even though they "knew perfectly well that the kind of 'primitive society' they liked to study could be found among many millions of people everywhere in the vast hill tracts between the Ganges and Godavari" (Pfeffer, this volume, 261).

The state

One cannot fully understand what it means to construct the idea of tribe without also understanding the construction of the tribe's various complements, which include not only caste in the case of India but also more broadly the state. Akhil Gupta has developed a subject-centered model for understanding the state that provides a useful starting point for considering the particular contexts in which the tribal populations discussed in this volume encounter it. Citizens develop their ideas of the government's workings not so much through formal reflection and political analysis as through everyday processes of interacting with administrative personnel and political representatives—so, for example, acts of participating in private discussions at tea stalls about how to avoid paying off corrupt officials are ways of experiencing the state. Bureaucratic procedures like paying taxes and waiting in line also form part of the practice-representation dialectic in ordinary experiences of it (Sharma and Gupta 2006). Such beneficial schemes for scheduled populations as agricultural loans, medical care, and handouts before elections, as well as intimidating enactments of governmental power, especially the Forest Act and banishment of tribals from the lands of their ancestors, are all examples of the ways Indian indigenous peoples experience the state on a quotidian basis. More often than not, tribal peoples of India have experienced it as a threat; for that reason they often prefer to avoid the tribe-state social field entirely. Moving beyond these interpersonal contexts, the mass media convey the idea that the state is a

"translocal institution" by focusing on the ways nations interact in world politics (Gupta 1995).

Like Sharma and Gupta, who adopt the twofold approach of studying everyday practices and representations of the state (Sharma and Gupta 2006, 5), the contributors to the present volume also focus on both the interactional and representational spheres in their respective chapters. In considering issues of Scheduled Tribes and indigeneity, however, a third sphere concerned with state-linked terminology merits special attention, for the word "state" points to multiple referents. In India, the state is both the historical successor of the kingdom and other forms of local rule and is also fundamentally different from these predecessors. The state is a democratic institution, whereas the king's legitimacy derives from his genealogical status in relation to other rulers. The term *pañcāyat* refers to an institution that has similarly transformed. Originally a village council, many *pañcāyat*s are now elected bodies. A further example of state-linked terminology is the District Collector, the name of the highest political office in a district. Under colonial rule his main tasks were to "collect" revenue, administer the local government, and maintain the rule of law. Today he or she is the head of the local administration, overseeing the collection of revenue and the police, as well as addressing citizens grievances. The collector (appointed by the center) neither represents the state directly, nor does he or she usually figure prominently in everyday experiences of citizens; rather, the office of the collector relates to the state in a quasi-metonymic fashion. The collector's vehicle carries signs of his or her authority, for example, which is an extension of governmental authority. The position of the collector articulates aspects of state hierarchy and the offices within that hierarchy, which are independent of the individuals that occupy those offices. In places such as the Nilgiris, the term "collector" also evokes for many a form of almost natural authority, independent from village or caste politics, to which individuals have recourse. The semantic field of "the collector," then, bridges the realms of practice and representation.

Alpa Shah has called the relationship of the state to the tribe the "dark side of indigeneity." The "tension of protection and assimilation" (Shah 2007, 1814) reflects the state's long-standing, ambivalent attitude with regard to minority politics. According to Shah, "being indigenous is a new way of placing oneself in the world and as such pursuing a new type of politics, a cultural politics" (Shah 2007, 1820). The question mark in the title of her article, "The dark side of indigeneity?," hints at the danger that the poorest of the poor might be further marginalized.

Who are the tribals and indigenes of india?

The term "indigenous" in English has come to refer not merely to those who have lived in a place for a long period and who possess a strong attachment to the land, but to those long-term dwellers who have also been the victims of oppression. As the United Nations fact sheet concerning indigeneity put it, indigenous peoples maintain "historical continuit[ies] with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies" (unpfii n.d.). These colonial and settler societies, the state-

ment implies, have marginalized and caused harm to the populations that are here termed "indigenous."

However, those involved in the larger conversation on indigeneity have understood "colonial and settler" in multiple ways. It is easy to imagine the ways in which an Indian might extend the idea of the settler as an invader or a foreigner to direct criticism beyond the obvious target, the British colonials. The proponents of Tamil nationalism, for instance, view "Aryans" as something akin to settlers in a land that was originally inhabited by Dravidian language speakers. Many Hindu nationalists in turn view Muslims, even those who converted to Islam or were descended from converts, as nothing more than foreigners. For that matter, according to the Sangh Parivar (a cover term for multiple Hindu nationalist organizations), Hindus are the "only" indigenous people of India (Baviskar 2005, 5107). The government of India has itself argued that neither Scheduled Tribes nor any other group can be considered indigenous without considering all Indians as indigenous (Karlsson and Subba 2006, 5). The government acknowledges that Scheduled Tribes and Castes present unique challenges and believes that these populations require their assistance, but this is not tantamount to equating the tribe with the indigenous. As such, it is not surprising that Ajai Malhotra, in his capacity as Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in New York, prevaricated in his explanation of the Indian government's position in signing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

> While the Declaration did not define what constituted indigenous peoples, the issue of indigenous rights pertained to peoples in independent countries who were regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region which the country belonged, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retained some or all of their socioeconomic, cultural, and political institutions.[4]

Many tribal people in India define themselves in relation to other Indian citizens in a manner akin to "native" versus "settler," and indeed, ample evidence exists of how the marginalization of some so-called tribal populations took place not only before the colonial period (Béteille 2006, 19) but in some ways for millennia (Thapar 2001). Evidently, however, Malhotra supported the Indian government's understanding of the document such that "settler societies" must be "foreign." As a representative of the government, Malhotra was careful to portray India as a place supportive and protective of its tribal peoples, while also clarifying that the decision to sign was not tantamount to condoning separatism on the part of Scheduled Tribes: "The right to self-determination [in the Declaration] applied only to peoples under foreign domination … the concept did not apply to sovereign independent states or to a section of people or a nation, which was the essence of national integrity" (UNDPI 2007).

The study of indigenous polities in India today is particularly significant in light of growing political-religious movements that emphasize Hinduism as the quint-

essential marker of true belonging to the Indian nation—a state in which Muslims, Christians, and others are simultaneously embraced and held at a distance. Amita Baviskar, for instance, has documented instances of the right wing RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) Hindu national group coopting *ādivāsī*s in acts of violence against Muslims (BAVISKAR 2005, 5106). The government of India has implicitly facilitated the equation of "indigene," "Indian," and "Hindu," by assuming that tribal people were Hindu unless they indicated otherwise on the census. Only after Ram Dayal Munda succeeded in getting *ādi-dharam* ("original religion"; see MUṆḌĀ 2000) listed as an alternative to "Hindu" on the census did *ādivāsī*s have meaningful non-Hindu choices for self-identification (unless they happened to be Christian).

As this discussion has emphasized, whether one studies the history of scholarship on tribes in Middle India (Pfeffer), agitation for tribal recognition in the Nilgiris (Heidemann), or relationships of local tribal communities with different categories of outsider (Berger, Prévôt, Wolf, and others), the study of indigeneity in India necessarily implicates aspects of several interrelated but non-isomorphic categories: "Scheduled Tribe" as an administrative category in India, "tribe" as an anthropological concept, and "tribe" as a cross-cultural romantic concept. Although the wider international discourse on indigeneity focuses on the history of dominance and oppression between (usually) foreign and colonial forces and their victims, the articles in this volume demonstrate that this is not the only aspect of indigeneity with local cultural relevance.

Attachment to the land—in ideal terms, primordial habitation in a place—has always been an irreducible component of the idea of indigeneity (for example, CLIFFORD 2013, 63; VENKATESWAR and HUGHES 2011, 53), and claims to land are key markers separating scheduled tribes from Dalits (BAVISKAR 2005, 5109). Almost invariably, thought on indigeneity relates land and primordiality metonymically to hunting and gathering, to knowledge of medicinal plants, and to distinctive languages and practices of rituals, dance, music, and languages.[5] Although James Clifford and Thomas Buckley may refer cynically to the effect of Boasian notions of culture on the ways Native Americans "struggle for cultural survival" and construct "their own accounts of the … past," by stressing language, music, rituals, and other cultural forms as signs of "authenticity," no such direct link exists in India, where the impact of American anthropology and its Boasian notion of culture is significantly weaker than in the United States.

Nevertheless, the successes of tribal Indians in selling indigeneity to tourists and in using performances to attract government attention to address their claims owe something to stereotypes of the tribe that have trickled down from colonial studies of India and the international field of anthropology. It has not escaped the notice of contemporary critics that those who wish to claim, maintain, or bolster their indigenous status in local, national, or international contexts will emphasize or develop aspects of their culture, if not create practices anew, in order to present a full complement of so-called indigenous traits. But aspects of what Anglophone readers might recognize as indigeneity are also identifiable in the ways some tribals in India

think about themselves and react to one another, and these are not reducible to the effects of images and ideas the state or the international community has thrust upon them. In the intimacy of face-to-face relations among tribals in their homes, hamlets, villages, cities, bus rides, train rides, or plane rides, individuals may discuss aspects of their day-to-day behavior in relation to norms of what it means to be a member of a particular (tribal/indigenous) community—a point to which we alluded earlier with the Kota anecdote about the *poṭṭu*. Their terms of discussion will often overlap with broader conceptions of indigeneity, even if these are not locally recognized in such terms (see Wolf and Coelho in this volume). It is the NGO or the researcher who notes that those who "preserve a sacred grove"— to take a stereotypical example—possess an ecological sensibility common to all indigenous populations. As Baviskar points out with regard to *ādivāsī* mobilization in the 1980s and 1990s, "Asserting an indigenous identity by naturalizing the connection between *ādivāsī*s and their environment was a powerful way of claiming sovereign rights to natural resources" (BAVISKAR 2005, 5109). In Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia, agents in the politics of indigeneity have gone a step further by attempting to make what Marisol de la Cadena calls *earth beings*—"willful mountains, lakes, winds"—active participants in the public political arena (DE LA CADENA 2010).

Such forms of what James Clifford calls "indigènitude" exist at the nexus of local self-conceptions and generalized notions of indigeneity that states, media, tourists, NGOs, and other institutions and agencies have long propagated (CLIFFORD 2013, 16). An unintended consequence of the neoliberal politics that have empowered indigenous movements is what Lucas Bessire calls hypermarginality, whereby those "ex-primitives" who cannot or will not perform their stereotypical parts as indigenes are excluded from the benefits that the systems of quotas and affirmative action were meant to provide, and in extreme cases, become the wretched victims of drug addition and unspeakable violence (BESSIRE 2014; see also GEERTZ 2001).

For a state such as India, the idea of indigenous people as being those who are native or originating in a place does not help much in the effort to separate out the complex strands of local history that have led to the demarcation of, and inequalities among, different communities. The idea that indigeneity is not essential but emergent is not merely academic, it is a practical result of individual communities operating in the context of the modern nation-state. Those in India who take on the tribal appellation interact with one another in a variety of forums in urban and country settings, often creating new forms of celebration and ritual while exploring new venues for the practices of music, dance, and forms of material culture they consider traditional. Members of these communities are socialized with a variety of peoples who, together with them, participate in the ongoing forms of discourse that perpetuate the idea that tribal peoples are essentially different from non-tribals. As alluded to earlier, the idea of distinction itself is not modern; some of the very early Sanskrit and Tamil sources singled out characteristics of particular classes of persons, and stereotypes of today's tribal people find superficial corre-

lates in such ancient descriptions of dark-skinned forest people and colorfully clad hill people (THAPAR 2001). It was rather in modern times that colonial classifications of Indian populations led to the creation (in 1935) of the administrative term Scheduled Tribe. One should not be misled into thinking that the administrative term describes an ancient social reality.

This volume brings together a unique configuration of researchers in the fields of anthropology, ethnomusicology, and linguistics who provide a variety of perspectives on the creation, maintenance, and ontological status of indigeneity in India. The tribal populations in the regions in which the contributors have conducted fieldwork, the Nilgiris and Middle India, present interesting parallels in some of their cultural institutions and uses of music and dance, while differing in their numerical scale and geographical spread, the forms in which they have mobilized politically, and the positive and negative treatment they have received in the course of interacting with neighboring populations and governing bodies. In each of their pieces, the authors treat indigeneity and related issues in complementary and overlapping ways.

Each article begins with an abstract and list of keywords, and the afterword also includes a summary of each article from the perspective of the dean of Nilgiri studies, anthropologist Paul Hockings. The articles stand on their own as self-contained micro-studies; hence, the order in which one reads them does not matter much. (This holds true for the afterword as well, which could easily have served as an introduction.) Nevertheless, the sequence does follow a particular logic. Geographically, with the exception of Peter Berger's opening piece, the articles proceed from south to north, from discussions of societies in the Nilgiri Hills of South India to those of tribals in Middle India. The volume is bookended by articles from anthropologists Peter Berger and Georg Pfeffer, Berger providing a useful framework for thinking about how explicitly and from what perspectives actors identify and construct indigeneity, and Pfeffer presenting a broad, critical history of ethnography, tribes, and states in highland Orissa.

The linguist Gail Coelho, in her article, uses oral narratives to explore ways in which the Betta Kurumbas of the lower Nilgiris (northwest Tamil Nadu) view their connections to the land and to neighboring populations. Coelho's lucid elaboration on the concept of indigeneity in the Indian context and the centrality of land in her case study serve literally and figuratively to ground the volume as a whole. Coelho's focus on the nuances of tribal-language texts and discourse links her piece to the article by Richard K. Wolf. His ethnographic and humanistic approach to explaining how Kotas of the upper Nilgiri plateau view themselves with respect to both indigeneity and modernity draws upon analyses of sound, song, and discourse. Frank Heidemann's article focuses on discourses and performances associated with the annual celebration of Badaga day on the Nilgiri plateau and the politics of creating memoranda that argue for tribal status.

Returning to the lower Nilgiris, anthropologists Ulrich Demmer and Nurit Bird-David provide two studies of the "same" tribe, known as Jenu Kurumbas, Kattu Nayakas, and by other names as well. Demmer focuses on performances in

the form of ethical debates with shamans who speak in the voices of the ancestors. Linking this local system of rituals to aspects of the state, Demmer reads Jenu Kurumba ethics against the notion of the "good life" the government of Tamil Nadu has presented in public political performances. Bird-David examines the problem of considering this tribe a single named entity when its members refer to themselves not by an ethnonym, but by the relational term "our own," versions of which are used by many—if not all—Dravidian-language speakers in South India.

Lea Schulte-Droesch's and Markus Schleiter's articles appear in sequence because they too consider a single tribal people, the Santal, from different perspectives. Schulte-Droesch focuses on the performance of indigeneity and other aspects of identity in the rituals of the "flower festival" that Santals carry out on small and large scales in the wide region they inhabit. Schleiter's article complements this analysis of primary action by focusing on media and their reception. Examining viewer responses to Santal vcds, Schleiter argues that the concept of indigeneity, while helpful for creating political unity to agitate for rights, masks the great diversity of ways individuals understand themselves to be indigenous. Schleiter's piece connects to that of ethnomusicologist Nicolas Prévot, in that both are concerned with tribal peoples creating consumer products of one kind or another. (Berger's article is also related in this regard.) Prévot uses music and dance performances of the Muria Gond to explore the circulation of tribal stereotypes in touristic and political contexts in the Bastar region of central India. Maoist guerrillas, who station themselves deep in the forest near the youth dormitories (*ghoṭul*) in which Gonds once traditionally participated in music and dance, remain a constant security threat.

The final two studies in this volume by anthropologists Burkhard Schnepel and Georg Pfeffer approach issues of sovereignty, state, and tribe in Orissa from historical perspectives. Schnepel investigates kingship in the Bhuiya tribal domain. Whereas other authors have stressed the unequal and inferior positions of tribals in relation to various social others, Schnepel uses historical accounts of royal installation ceremonies to show that the Bhuiya tribe has had the power to grant kingship—in fact they have chosen outsiders to the region as their rulers. Nevertheless, they remained in relations of submission to the very kings they had enthroned. Pfeffer emphasizes the deep divide between Orissa's highland peoples and the Hindus of the plains. This would seem to be at odds with the theme of indigeneity-as-process in this volume—the idea that ethnic groups can acquire or lose their indigeneity—however, it must be remembered that the idea of tribe originates from observations of such stark contrasts. Our understanding of indigeneity is enhanced by comparing the situation in Orissa with that in the Nilgiris, home of the historically exoticized Toda tribe, about whom anthropologist Anthony Walker published a "new look" in 1986, "revealing them as essentially within, not outside, the Hindu world of South India... ." (Walker 1986, 8). In the broadest sense, it is through micro and macro comparisons of these kinds that we understand the significance of indigeneity, both for the actors involved in the political arena, and for the scholar trying to make sense of a rich array of protean social relations.

Notes

1. The contributors are grateful for the sponsorship of the Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft and the University of Munich. Some of the original participants were unable to prepare articles for this volume, and it is with great regret that we note Ram Dayal Munda was diagnosed with his terminal illness shortly after the conference. Two former graduate students of our contributors were not at the original conference but prepared articles for this volume: Markus Schleiter and Lea Schulte-Droesch.

2. See "An Indian woman who married a non-Indian man (whether non-Aboriginal or non-status) would lose her status." http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/home/government -policy/the-indian-act/bill-c-31.html (accessed 22 May 2014).

3. Some may argue that the earliest humans were not indigenous in the modern sense, because they were not marginalized by foreign or colonizing powers. But such an argument assumes that at some stage in the past, human societies existed in a bland sameness, without stratification, without division of labor, without social or cultural difference—in short, without relations of dominance. Even if this were shown to be true, the evolution of mankind, it would have to be acknowledged, involved processes of change whereby some populations became recognized as indigenous (or in terms of some related idea in the past) and others did not. KUPER (2004, 265) flippantly asks whether the English would qualify as indigenous people under the UN guidelines.

4. Sita VENKATESWAR inexplicably wrote, "India was one of the abstaining countries at that event [the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples] on the grounds that all its inhabitants are indigenous" (2011, 242). However, the statement released by the United Nations Department of Public Information News and Media Division (2007), dated 13 September 2007, clearly states that India "voted in favour of the adoption of the Declaration" (see UNDPI 2007).

5. In the context of discussing native American attempts to stress their own indigeneity, Clifford discusses the work of Thomas Buckley:

> Buckley invokes "two kinds of salvage." Kroeber's purified, pre-contact California reconstructions implied the nonexistence of valid contemporary cultures. The members of these very cultures, while resenting his assumptions, have nonetheless adopted many of his ideas of authenticity. In the eyes of contemporary traditionalists, native culture is defined "in the Boasian terms most tellingly introduced, in California, by Kroeber: language and music, traditional narratives, religious rituals, and material culture. Yuroks, for instance, have long used an objectified understanding of 'culture' both in constructing their own accounts of the Yurok past … and in the continuing struggle for cultural survival that has, so far, been successful to a degree that would perhaps surprise Kroeber himself."   (Buckley 1996, 293, cited in CLIFFORD 2013, 172)

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