

# GLOBAL SOUTH

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## Content

### 3 Editorial Articles

**7** Arindam Samaddar, Prabir Kumar Das and Stephen R. Morin, *Technology Adoption and its Constraints: The Cascading Effects in Two West Bengal Villages*

**20** Erick Tejada Sanchez, *Social Movements, Democracy and Nation in the Southern Andes of Peru*

**31** Lipi Mukhopadhyay, *Governance in the Neo-liberal Era of Globalisation*

**40** Jabiru Muhammadou, *Bamum-Hausa/Fulani Historical Ties in the Western Grassfields of Cameroon 1880-1920*

### Across the South

**51** Pratyay Nath, *Sourcing the Story: The Archive Anew and Archives New*

**54** Jishnu Dasgupta, *Remembering Anjan Ghosh*

### Reviews

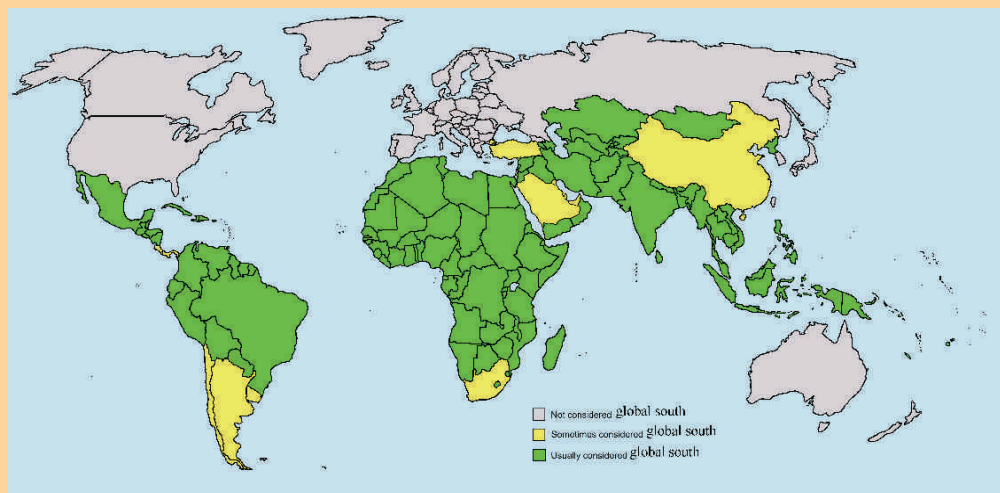
**57** Florencia Levin, *A Puzzle of Repression: On 'Memories of the City. Signals of State Terrorism in Buenos Aires'*  
**Memoria Abierta**, *Memorias en la ciudad. Señales del terrorismo de Estado en Buenos Aires*, y Editorial Eudeba, Buenos Aires, Agosto de 2009, 270 pages.

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# eDITORIAL



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## Editorial for Global South 7.1

The articles of the present volume may seem to have no apparent connecting thread, given that the range of topics covered is sweeping – starting from political repression in Buenos Aires to the adoption of agricultural technology in villages of eastern India. As such, any search for a common theme may seem futile. However, on closer examination, it will become clear that there is a concern that binds these contributions together. It is the common agenda of exploring the internal dynamics of different parts of the Global South. People of these south countries may have diverse civilisational roots and historical dynamics, but at present they all share a common tie. They all form the less developed regions in the world's map, while, thanks to colonialism, the North has attained a 'developed' status. The present volume of the *Global South* e-Magazine focuses on the internal dynamics of these south countries, with themes ranging from stories of political repression to attempts at working out a practicable combination of agricultural technologies, and to moulding traditional societies to the pulls of neo-liberal governmentality. All these bring alive the Global South from diverse angles.

Historians have long held the Industrial Revolution as the turning point of European economic history, which shot the West from being a lesser partner in the world economy to the status of a big brother. The roots of this Industrial Revolution have been traced to what has been called an

‘Agricultural Revolution’ – increasing investments in the land by an increasingly enterprising peasantry and a new class of landlords. This increased the production of the primary sector rapidly and led to the accumulation of capital that could be invested elsewhere. However, when the countries of the West established their colonies throughout the South, this model could not be replicated. A draconian land-revenue system virtually destroyed any probable investment in land on the part of the indigenous peasantry. By the time the Europeans left, the peasantry in most former colonies was in a worse condition than ever before. In the post-colonial times, governments have sometimes tried to improve the condition of cultivation by investing in the primary sector. However, it soon became clear that agricultural development could not be achieved through a top-heavy developmental plan. It is against this backdrop that the article ‘Technology Adoption and its Constraints: The Cascading Effects in Two West Bengal Villages’ takes a plunge into the realm of the agricultural sector in present eastern India. Basing its study on two villages in the state of West Bengal, one from a drought-prone region and the other from a wet zone, the article attempts to understand how the farmers of these villages use, modify or fail to adopt various new agricultural techniques. The authors consider the usage of such technologies as pesticide, chemical fertiliser, High-Yielding Variety (HYV) seeds, tractor and power tiller and try to understand how difference in ecology and, emanating from it, various socio-economic and cultural factors, influence the adoption of these techniques in the two villages. It goes without saying that the article, which bases itself on two small villages of West Bengal, is relevant to a wider realm of agricultural production across the Global South that continues to struggle to find a proper path of balanced development. In the piece ‘Bamum-Hausa/Fulani Historical Ties in the Western Grassfields of Cameroon, 1880-1920’, Jabiru Muhammadou Amadou traces the history of the interactions of the Bamum and Hausa-Fulani communities of Cameroon. Based on archives and interviews, he shows how the Hausa and Fulani communities arrived in the Bamum kingdom in early twentieth century and slowly got integrated into the socio-cultural matrix of region under the auspices of King Njoya. The kingdom of Bamum existed in modern north-west Cameroon from late fourteenth century. Under Njoya (1883-1931), the kingdom entered its last phase of brilliance. Allying himself with the German colonisers, he actively endorsed modernisation following the Western model. Influenced by the Hausa immigrants, he converted to Islam along with his court in 1897, an event that was destined to influence the history of Bamum ever after. Amadou’s article contextualises this turn of Bamum towards Islam in the light of the long history of the coming of the Hausa and Fulani people to Bamum kingdom. The article opens with a brief discussion of the Hausa and Fulanis of northern Cameroon and how factors like trade and religion impelled them to migrate into Bamum land. He then goes on to demonstrate how this process of immigration was facilitated by a friendly attitude on the part of King Njoya and the good relations of both the communities with the colonial powers. By charting out the history of the ties of friendship between these communities, the article contributes immensely to our understanding of the social history of

Cameroon.

Lipi Mukhopadhyay, in her article 'Governance in the Neoliberal Era of Globalisation', explores how neo-liberal models of governance have yielded bitter results in different parts of South countries. Basing her study on the Indian situation, she points out that, in spite of the government professing an increased national prosperity, thanks to globalization, the number of farmers' suicides, the difference between the rich and the poor as well as food prices, are increasing faster than ever before. Although the government has adopted different strategies in order to salvage the situation, most of them have failed. Developmental projects have more often than not proven to be top-heavy and formulated without any basic understanding of the ground realities. In spite of what might appear to be positive policy initiatives, farmer suicides continue in India and prices of basic products continue to escalate even after the world financial crisis has petered out. In addition to these problems, attempts by the neo-liberal state to acquire agricultural land in order to set up industries have faced severe opposition from peasants and the urban intelligentsia alike. All these presage the imminent failure of neo-liberal developmental schemes if they continue to operate at a remove from the ground realities of different regions of the Global South.

In the article 'Social Movements, Democracy and Nation in the Southern Andes of Peru', Erick Tejada Sánchez takes a look at the brewing political movements in Latin America in the recent past. Tracing the origin and development of a new-found indigenous-identity consciousness and a popular movement in the urban space in the last decade, Sánchez charts out how these diverse, but essentially complementary, socio-political forces have come together to challenge the neo-liberal regime of Peru; how they have destabilized the very basis of the existing form of government itself. In a political trend not witnessed before the late-1990s, there have been unparalleled mass-participation and a growing level of political consciousness and dissatisfaction with the existing form of democracy. Sánchez shows how in the face of intolerance and repressive violence on the part of the Peruvian state, the people have mounted various forms of resistance as well. One notes that such popular movements have been the feature of not only Peru, but large parts of Latin America in general. Under the leadership of men like Carlos Saúl Menem of Argentina, Fernando Collor of Brazil and Alberto Fujimori of Peru, popular movements have exploded in a context of economic stagnation, political repression, rise of commodity prices, increasing landlessness of farmers and so on. Across these different countries such popular movements have steered clear of any existing political parties, attracting severe repression from the state. Sánchez's article in this volume brings us closer to such movements through his detailed analysis of the Peruvian situation.

Florencia Paula Levín has reviewed the book *Memorias en la ciudad. Señales del terrorismo de Estado en Buenos Aires*, which has probed the political repression of the 1970s in Argentina and its continuing memories to the present day. In our 'Across the South' section, we have a report of the Annual Conference organised by the History Association, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. The Association is

principally a general body of students of the Centre. Apart from holding regular film-screenings and seminars, it organises such conferences once a year to provide budding research scholars a congenial platform to share their findings. Further, Jishnu Dasgupta has rendered a sensitive report of the two memorial lectures that followed the untimely demise of sociologist Anjan Ghosh. The Sociological Association of West Bengal organized the first Anjan Ghosh Memorial Lecture at St. Xavier's College Auditorium. Historian Ramchandra Guha was invited to speak on 'The Tragedy of the Indian Adivasi'. The other lecture in memory of Anjan Ghosh was delivered by Gyanendra Pandey at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. He spoke on 'Subalternity of Difference or the Difference of Subalternity'. We hope that the thematic variety of the articles would do justice to the historical diversity of the south countries themselves. At a time when the homogenising forces of globalisation are bulldozing its way through our cultures and economies, the exploration of the specific historical developments of the different regions and cultures of the global south may prove to be a pertinent endeavour.  
Happy reading.

# Technology Adoption and its Constraints: The Cascading Effects in Two West Bengal Villages

Modern technology adoption in agriculture is a complex process. It has its own characteristics, which are qualitatively different from that of its application in the manufacturing and service sector. This study is a precise analysis of the technology adoption process, specifically the Green Revolution, and its subsequent constraints in the field of agriculture within a distinct theoretical framework. The study was conducted in two villages from the drought and wet zones of West Bengal, India. Observed results in this context show some cascading effects. In the drought zone there is a distinct stagnant pool of attitudes due to inadequate availability of the components of human capital endowment as well as a dearth of infrastructural facilities, skill and motivation. On the other hand, in the wet zone village, there is a flowing movement of adoption of such technology that appears to be blended successfully within the parameters of existing traditional knowledge and modern practices. However, there also appears to be an apprehension in terms of long-term use of chemical inputs in the same village. On the whole, the balance of adoption and constraints seems to depend upon a proper application of flexibility, adjustment and moderation of agricultural extension, policy and infrastructure investments.



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## Introduction

Technology is a set of social and physical relationships, modes of interaction between man and the mechanisms that operates within a given frame of society.<sup>1</sup> It is a body of human knowledge that can be passed from one place to another and from one generation to the next. It is also the knowledge of tools and machines to do tasks efficiently.

In today's modern parlance, general technology has been defined as complexity, dependence, valence and scale.<sup>2</sup> In terms of agricultural technology, we use these concepts to describe new seed technology, better management of soil nutrients, improved pest and weed control, proper application of tools and machineries as well as a proper irrigation system. Complexity in agriculture includes the use of modern tools like a tractor, power tiller etc. But apart from tools, complexity also involves the understanding and use of High Yielding Variety Seeds (HYVs) and chemical management. HYVs are a major input of agricultural production under the Green Revolution. The major characteristic of these varieties is their responsiveness to fertiliser, a shorter maturing period which enables double cropping, dwarf stems which can carry the load of a heavy dose of fertiliser and to resist wind damage, and erect large leaf surface to facilitate photosynthesis.<sup>3</sup> Also, complexity cannot be considered in isolation because it involves ecological, social, cultural and psychological processes as well.<sup>4</sup>

Dependence involves the understanding of proper use of technology, where one needs to acquire the skill and knowledge that can only be obtained from demonstrative programmes organised by the concerned authority and the agricultural extension workers.

Valence means the understanding of HYVs, chemical fertiliser and pesticides. It also means a proper understanding of tools and machineries such as tractor, power tiller, etc. Wherein the characteristic of the land has to be equally understood. Lastly, scale in this sense will be the magnitude of production yield per acre, cost of input output ratio and the size of final productivity.

**In this paper, the general technology constraints in agriculture have been divided into four parts, namely economic, social, cultural and psychological. But to understand this division in its proper perspective we have also set a group of constraints as markers of these divisions. These are: 1) attitude and complexity; 2) nature of outcome; 3) cost of production; 4) belief and opinion; 5) motivation; 6) relevance of new technology; and 7) risk and change.**

From the preceding points, it is clear that technological change is not a linear process; one needs to consider a multitude of factors that may affect adoption. The general aim of this paper is to analyse the mechanisms and pathways of technological adoption by looking at how farmers in two ecozones faced or adapted to these constraints or factors.

In this paper, the general technology constraints in agriculture have been divided into four parts, namely economic, social, cultural and psychological. But to understand this division in its proper perspective we have also set a group of constraints as markers of these divisions. These are: 1) attitude and complexity; 2) nature of outcome; 3) cost of production; 4) belief and opinion; 5) motivation; 6) relevance of new technology; and 7) risk and change. The above seven constraints are the subgroups<sup>5</sup> associated with main division and the authors intend to utilise these subgroups while analysing the practical field data culled during their extensive data collection in the two villages of West Bengal.

## Methodology

The study was conducted in two villages belonging to two different districts of West Bengal during 2001 to 2003. Village Bandhbohal from Puruliya district is from the penneplain and plateau region of drought prone West Bengal and village Narendrapur from South 24 Parganas



district is from the wetland region of deltaic West Bengal.<sup>6</sup> Both villages were purposively selected to understand the level of adoption of the new technology i.e. green revolution and the HYVs. The drought prone village of Bandhbahal has been intentionally selected to find out and offset the criteria 'HYVs by definition is a technology unsuitable for drought prone areas.'

Bandhbahal village is situated 48 kilometres southeast of the district headquarters called Puruliya. Bandhbahal is mainly an agricultural village; the main crop is rice, which is totally dependent on rainfall. There are three cropping seasons for rice cultivation in West Bengal. These are Aman or Kharif (July to October), Boro (October to February) and Aush or pre-Kharif (March to June). Of these, Kharif is the traditional cultivating season and is wholly dependent on rainfall. Bandhbahal farmers have no other option but to cultivate rice during this season (See Table 1). Scarcity of water prevents farmers from cultivating rice in the other two seasons, pre Kharif and Boro. Both male and female members of the majority of the families work on their own farms, as well as those of others.

**Table 1 Farmers by Different Agricultural Seasons of Four Villages (%)**

Name of the village	Agricultural Seasons		
	Pre-kharif	Kharif	Boro
Bandhbahal	-	100.0	-
Narendrapur	17.2	100.0	71.2

Of the 208 families in the village, a majority (74 per cent) own less than one hectare of land, and for the purposes of brevity they will be referred to as marginal farmers. Quite a few own land between one and two hectares (12 per cent), who shall be referred to as small farmers, while a minimal number (3.4 per cent) of the families own more than two hectares up to four hectares of land, who are referred as medium farmers. A few families are landless (10.6 per cent). There are no farming families in the village that own more than four hectares, or those who belong to the large farmer's category.

Village Narendrapur is located 35 kilometres south from Jaynagar-Mazilpur town. This village lies within the limits of the Gangetic delta and has low-lying Sundarbans towards the seaboard on the south, which has the network of tidal channels and rivers. Cultivation and agricultural labour are the primary occupations of the people in Narendrapur. Most of the adult male members are engaged in rice cultivation. All the farming families in this village cultivate Kharif rice. Almost forty per cent of the farmers also cultivate rice during the Boro season, while a few farmers cultivate rice during the pre-kharif season. Land distribution among the 248 families shows that 12.5 per cent have no land. Among the land holding category, marginal farmers (below one hectare land) are the highest in number (64.1 per cent), 15.7 per cent of the farming families belong to the small farming category (one to two hectares). While less than ten per cent own more than two hectares of agricultural land.

On the eastern side of the village there is the Mridangabhanga river, which flows from the Raidighi and continues towards the south of the village. Villagers use this water for irrigation especially during the Boro season. The villagers do not need irrigation during Aman rice cultivation since the volume of rainfall is quite high in this area during monsoon time.

These two villages represent two different ecozones and cultural milieus. The present

authors have selected these two particularly to understand the role and interaction of ecology, cultural tradition and production system in the technology adoption processes and their constraints in the micro level and broader farming perspectives. In addition, we have also tried to understand the attitude behind the degree of technological adoption and the choices expressed by the farmers.

Data were mainly collected from the informants selected from the total functional farming families in both villages. Total number of informants is 65, of which 30 are from Bandhbohal and 35 are from Narendrapur. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to collect the data through participant observation. Some agricultural practices were directly observed, while bulk of the data were collected through case studies supplemented by schedules, open-ended interviews and focus group discussions. The field enquiry was over a period of sixteen months including the recall visits.

Considering the duration of work, funds and manpower, the authors restricted themselves to two West Bengal villages. The current micro-study, within a limited population, examined some emerging character of technology adoption processes and its constraints in a rural setting.

### Literature review

An extensive literature review has revealed that the markers detailed above have equal and comparable findings in spite of slightly magnitudinal and variable expression. Wheeler and Ortmann, as well as Roché, argued that the most important success-determining factors for technology adoption are those relating to human capital endowments and economic status of the farming household.<sup>7</sup> Lyne, Venter, Vink and Viljoen, Norton and Alwang, Gibbons et al., and Peres have all stressed the importance of education highlighting how development and utilisation of new technologies are critically dependent on an educated and developed workforce.<sup>8</sup> Cederroth and Gerdin, Kohnert, Nagy et al., Pritchard and Owens have discussed the importance of training for the success and fruitful adoption of new technologies.<sup>9</sup> Charreau and Rouanet, Pinstrup-Andersen and Pandya-Lorch, Kahn, Peres, Sanders et al., Madramootoo, et al., Selvaraj and Ramasamy on the other hand pointed out management skills for significant impact on new agricultural technology and production.<sup>10</sup> Gibbons, et al., Mills, Bembridge, and Clarke highlighted the level of entrepreneurship and creativity in adoption of new technology.<sup>11</sup> Their study showed that entrepreneurial farmers would adopt new technologies at a higher rate than the non-entrepreneurial farmer.

**Knowledge, skill and availability of extension workers are quite interrelated and interconnected. Technology adoption is impossible unless the farmer is adequately introduced to the inputs of technology and given the correct information and support by extension workers. Among other things, the extension worker needs to be knowledgeable, and understand the given ecology, the texture and nature of the soil and other infra-structural facilities available in that area.**

The next important factor in technology adoption is the size of the farm. It is indeed an important feature that has to effectively deal with the aforementioned seven markers. There are conflicting opinions regarding the relationship of land size with technology adoption.<sup>12</sup> The authors contend that the degree of adoption is not dependent on the size of the farm.<sup>13</sup> Small farm holders may adopt technology in its fullest sense while a larger farm holder is unable to adopt fruitfully. Adoption of technology and its application will depend wholly and fully on the degree of managerial skill (entrepreneurship) and availability of infrastructure such as irrigation, labour, and cost of input output and transparency of credit facility. In the current study, the authors will consider land size and the viability of technology adoption in view of past studies.

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The crucial question of financing comes next. This involves cost and scale of production, credit availability and the marketing facilities. Of these, credit is a vital necessity for a farmer who wants to avail himself of the advantages of technology. Cost of production is equally related with credit facility and the magnitude of finance involved. Therefore credit availability needs to be transparent, easily accessible with a flexible repayment system. Pinstrup-Andersen and Pandya-Lorch, Birowo and Qasem, Charreau and Rouanet, Sohatsky Coetzee, Kirsten and Van Zyl and Venter et al. have mentioned the role of credit in adoption. Desai et al. also showed how agricultural progress and the volume of credit, credit payment among co-operatives and agricultural progress are positively related in Indian technology adoption.<sup>15</sup>

Feder and Slade, Bhattacharyya et al., Putler and Zilberman, and Zepeda showed how important information sources could play a role in decision-making.<sup>16</sup> In more advanced farming areas, slide shows, documentaries, mobile vans, etc. play quite a significant role in acquiring knowledge and skills in the agricultural field.

Overall, studies on modernisation of agriculture and its impact hold three views: that the modernisation of agriculture, instead of removing the earlier inequality have created further inequality;<sup>17</sup> that the new measure of technology has reduced the earlier inequalities by improving the economic condition of poor peasants and landless agricultural labourers;<sup>18</sup> and lastly, that modernising measures as a package have mixed effects.<sup>19</sup> From the above three propositions, it may be observed that technology adoption generally depends on the ground realities in spite of ecological risks, size of the farm, and the scale of production.



A farmer in Bengal with his tilling machine

### Experiences in Drought and Wet Zones

For the past decade, Bandhbohal farmers practiced the traditional pattern of cultivation based on rainfall. Another important factor aside from water resources is the nature of the soil. Their farmlands do not belong to the so-called fertile variety of gangetic West Bengal. The soil is less productive and farmers toil harder to achieve a minimum subsistence level. Most of the land especially during the drought season remains unused and remain fallow.

The farmers in Bandhbohal cultivate two types of HYVs in 59.7 per cent of their available farmland (Table 2). Only these two varieties are available in the local cooperatives and seed shops. By experience they have learned that these seeds are less drought-tolerant and require more water. These farmers have now become reluctant to use these seeds in their entire

farm. According to our markers we found that the attitude of the farmers towards these HYVs is rather lukewarm and has not reached optimum level. But the beliefs and opinion of the farmers in this regard have remained traditional and whatever experimentation has been done with their HYVs have remained within the permissible domain of minimum risk and minimum change. The components of human capital endowment particularly in the field of management skill, entrepreneurship and creativity have not been attempted at all.

**Table 2. Land Planted Under Modern Variety by Agricultural Season in Four Villages (%)**

Name of the village	Agricultural Seasons		
	Pre-kharif	Kharif	Boro
<b>Bandhbohal</b>	-	<b>59.7</b>	-
<b>Narendrapur</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>39.9</b>

The same set of argument is also applicable in adopting chemical fertiliser and pesticide. We found that whenever the farmers plant HYVs, they use chemical fertilisers and pesticides without the proper knowledge or application information. In fact the management skill required for an optimum use of chemical fertiliser and pesticide is absent in absolute terms reflecting a total lack of managerial skill. They are now in a situation of flux whereby they can neither embrace the component of new technology nor can they modify their traditional method in the light of these new advances.

In contrast to Bandhbohal, Narendrapur village in the district of South 24 Parganas shows a variable degree of technology adoption that has manifold characteristics. There are three rice cropping seasons here namely pre-Kharif, Kharif and Boro. Of these, Kharif is the main rice-cropping season while Boro is the summer cropping season. All farmers cultivate rice in the Kharif season and two-thirds of the farmers cultivate rice during Boro season. Incidentally, Boro rice is completely dependent on irrigation for which both surface water and ground water irrigation in general are available.

The farmers mainly cultivate HYVs during the Boro and pre-kharif seasons. However, HYVs have limited adoption particularly during the Kharif season and only one-fifth of the land (21.2 per cent) in this village is planted under HYVs. However, the picture is radically different during the Boro season where almost forty per cent of the available land is planted with modern varieties. Taking the three seasons concurrently, the Narendrapur farmers cultivate HYVs in 67.8 per cent of land compared to 59.7 per cent of cultivable land in village Bandhbohal (see Table 2 above). The farmers agree that the HYVs are more productive but in spite of this high return, the HYVs are cultivated only for domestic consumption. In fact the traditional varieties are much preferred by the Narendrapur village people due to their higher market price. To obtain maximum profitability the farmers of Narendrapur plant traditional varieties especially during the Kharif season, not only for the high rate of profit, but for the cost-input factors, which are much less than the cost involved in cultivation of HYVs. Interestingly the farmers who have smaller land area cultivate modern varieties to maximise productivity and ensure a stable supply for their household consumption. Thus there is a dichotomy of attitude, which on the one hand shows a favourable inclination towards the adoption of new technology and on the other hand evaluates the risk element; the cost input-output ratio as well as the scale of

production that may suit their plot of land. The farmers clearly do not want to undertake the bigger risk of planting the whole land with HYVs during Kharif season because of this attitude and supply demand factor in the market. The smaller fields have produced larger yield per acre, which have radically changed the belief and opinion of the farmers' traditional thinking. Thus the dichotomy mentioned earlier has been resolved amicably. The farmers' decisions for using small fields for planting HYVs also prove the contention that it is easier to adopt new technologies on small compact land than larger plots.<sup>20</sup>

Chemical fertilisers and pesticides are widely used in this village compared to Bandhbohah. The farmers in Narendrapur apply chemical fertiliser and decide its dosages according to the season and variety of the crop. In general they prefer to use more chemical fertilisers during the Boro season and less during the Kharif season. The reason behind this is simple, HYVs and its growth are more stridently dependent on chemical fertiliser and since the HYVs are generally planted in Boro season, the farmers' use of chemical fertiliser in this season is quite rational and logical. The survey of chemical fertiliser application reveals that around forty per cent farmers fall in the category of medium users and 51 per cent farmers are low users. The remaining nine per cent fall in the category of high users. These high users are those who cultivate a considerable amount of land during the Boro season.

Therefore the attitude towards chemical fertiliser in this village may be termed as quite favourable. The complexities regarding the use of chemical fertiliser have been firmly understood by these farmers through extensive knowledge acquired from the agricultural extension workers whose recommendations are recognised as valuable and trustworthy. The knowledge and managerial skill thus acquired is quite logical if we compare these with the components of human capital endowment namely education, knowledge, management skill, entrepreneurship and creativity.<sup>21</sup>

In general, pesticide application is more intensive during Boro season than Kharif. Fortunately, farmers have developed enough knowledge to differentiate pests from harmless insects through everyday field experience. On the whole they have acquired a quantum of practical skills to protect their crops just as human beings protect their children.

The other two factors of tools and machineries such as tractor and power tiller have comparatively low usage in this village. The farmers do not consider the use of tractor as an essential component of cultivation because of their land size and soil component. As mentioned earlier, HYVs are planted in small compact plots lying in the low areas. The use of power tiller also has some practical difficulty in this village. The farmers generally plough their field thrice before transplantation, but according to their view the power tiller can only be used during the first tilling when the soil is dry and hard. Using it extensively has an adverse effect on the field itself. In subsequent tilling, the power tiller makes the soil harder and dry at a certain depth of the soil. Transplantation becomes difficult and the growth of the crop is adversely affected. The adverse knowledge that they have acquired from the tools and machineries thus is a measure of their managerial skill with regard to adoption of new technology. They have adopted only those components that are logical, helpful and essential in their field of cultivation and also those that have helped them to gain higher productivity notwithstanding the higher cost of production.

### **Constraints and Cascading Effects**

If we now look into the larger scenario of four divisions of economic, social, cultural and psychological aspects it may be seen that due to drought and water scarcity the Bandhbohah village could not adopt the full spectrum of new technology in the economic and social spheres. Due to very sporadic acceptance of HYVs, chemical fertilisers, and pesticides there appears to be a psychological barrier among Bandhbohah farmers.

The farmers of Bandhbahal village are in perennial need of water resources; for that very reason most of the agricultural rituals are associated directly or indirectly with an appeal to the Gods for monsoon rains. These rituals therefore crossover to their social life and the influence of modernity via the new technology could neither offset their traditional worldview nor penetrate their existing orthodox social fabric. Because of lower levels of economic development, these farmers are yet to achieve a scale of production which is economically viable as well as physically achievable. Also due to this barrier the components of human capital endowment have remained unknown to these farmers and ignorance has compounded their social cultural existence in a manner where they are yet to rise above the concept of 'cultivation only for survival and subsistence level'. What is required in this village is a concerted effort by the concerned agricultural agencies, experienced extension workers and a transparent credit system that may help the villagers to overcome the psychological barriers and motivate them to adopt these new technologies.

The needs of the Bandhbahal farmers need to be properly evaluated in the context of their traditional worldviews. Infrastructural deficiencies such as water scarcity, rainwater preservation and a wider forestation programs need to be addressed as well. Basically the farmers in these areas need to understand the nuances of this new technology and be specially taught the components of human capital endowment.

**Although the farmers have adopted these new technologies, they are also aware of the negative impacts of extensively using chemicals on their land. They are now interested in ways to maintain high productivity without harming the soil and environment. They have gathered considerable skill to chalk out their future programme and many of them show enough entrepreneurship in marketing their products and preservation of soil fertility.**

Adoption of new technology has yielded altogether a different development scenario in the village of Narendrapur. The adoption of these agricultural technologies has given birth to many tiers of perspectives in its economic, social, cultural and psychological spheres. Increased production has spurred overall economic, infrastructural development and social changes in Narendrapur. One of the visible examples of this is the pattern of conspicuous consumption in this village. Modern amenities such as television, music system, individual solar electricity, two wheelers, etc. are found in many of the farming families. It also has unleashed a kind of semi-urban culture, which co-exists with the usual rural culture of the area. The food habits, dress material, clothing and the festivals are all in accordance with the nearby urban culture of the metropolitan city of Kolkata. The traditional agricultural rituals have almost been forgotten and the individual family customs and rituals performed have a tinge of exhibitionism instead of its more traditional ritualistic forms.

Although the farmers have adopted these new technologies, they are also aware of the negative impacts of extensively using chemicals on their land. They are now interested in ways to maintain high productivity without harming the soil and environment. They have gathered considerable skill to chalk out their future programme and many of them show enough entrepreneurship in marketing their products and preservation of soil fertility. Proximity to the metropolitan city of Kolkata has influenced farmers of Narendrapur, but that alone could not have made so much socio-cultural changes unless the farmers enjoyed substantial material benefits through the adoption of green revolution packages.

### **The Finale: Balances and Imbalances**

The details of in-depth field study in both the villages of Bandhbahal and Narendrapur however, reveal some startling details that need to be assessed in proper perspective. First of all, it must

be mentioned that the parameters of new technology adoption is quite far and wide. In both spheres of application it has been seen that the parameters engulf the entire social structure of a particular region around the village. The situation in Bandhbohal, which belongs to the drought-prone district of Puruliya, has shown enough economic and social barriers leading to comprehensive cultural and psychological barriers. Here the attitude, dependency syndrome, the nuances of valence and the scale of production have all shown structural imbalances which probably is a general characteristic of a drought-prone village like Bandhbohal. Empirically speaking, the authors feel that such characteristics may occur in other drought prone areas of Puruliya district. In the same manner it has been seen that the components of human capital endowment have very little impact in such a village as Bandhbohal. The failure of this may be attributed to the farm size, lack of proper credit facility, imbalance in cost input-output ratio and absence of any kind of entrepreneurship. All of these in totality may be termed as infrastructural inadequacy and a lack of understanding of the 'felt need' of the farmers. The farmers have never been taught the utility of rainwater and ground water storage, high yielding seed quality judgment and the balanced use of chemical fertiliser as well as pesticides. On the whole, the constraints of technology adoption have nullified the desired effects of proper new technology adoption in a drought prone village like Bandhbohal. Therefore to achieve a fruitful result in this kind of environment one needs to apply a flexible attitude and certain modification that are suitable for the region and the people. We also know that sustainable development always requires a proper delivery system. The experience in Bandhbohal village clearly demonstrate this fact and it will not be an understatement if we say that the components of human capital endowment shall always remain elusive unless and until the concerned authorities adopt an attitude of flexibility, adjustment and modification to deal effectively for the eradication of adverse infrastructural inadequacies.



Farmers busy sowing the field

But this negative outcome has been somewhat compensated in the wet zone village of Narendrapur. Due to the guidance of extension workers in this area, farmers of this village have adopted new technology in its proper perspective. They have been taught to acquire a positive attitude and have also differentiated among the complexities according to their need. The limited use of power tiller and non-utilisation of tractor are positive outcomes of their differentiation. Dependency syndrome in this village is also quite remarkable. Therefore in spite of the rising cost of production, they have interchanged their traditional belief and opinion with that of the modern concept of the new technology. In the same vein they have also judged the implication of risk and change and thereby have shown a kind of indigenous managerial skill leading to a quasi-transitional mode of entrepreneurship. They have now come to understand from practical management of soil, the defaults and defects of rampant use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, the prospect of diminishing return from the soil and a cumulative effect of these factors on their ecological surrounding.

Clearly the situation in Narendrapur is a reflection of adjustment and flexibility that we

have mentioned earlier. The Narendrapur peasants have demonstratively shown this aspect and therefore have overcome the complexities and the associated psychological barriers through greater application of flexibility, adjustment and moderation. But this is a psychological barrier, which the Bandhbohal peasants are as yet unable to overcome. Herein lies the importance of adjustment, flexibility and moderation that could have effectively pulled down this barrier in village Bandhbohal. The authors feel that such traditional knowledge-bank could have been transformed into an effective human capital endowment leading to an eradication of their barriers paving a smooth way to overcome the natural obstacles of drought and water scarcity.

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# Social Movements, Democracy and Nation in the Southern Andes of Peru<sup>1</sup>

During the last decade, social movements of the southern Andes of Peru have led to several large scale social uprisings, which have challenged the configuration of the state and Peruvian society in general as formulated by the country's elite. Although most of the interpretations about these social conflicts have ignored the point of view of the subaltern actors, such actors have, in fact, developed struggles that ended up challenging the standard notion of what democracy and the nation stand for, and redefined the role of the state. Nonetheless, the counter-hegemonic potential of such social movements has been limited by the disarticulation of their confrontation with the power.



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### **Introduction: The Peruvian Southern Andes in a Historical Perspective**

The authoritarian regime of Alberto Fujimori, which ruled the country for over a decade, lasted till 2000. Since then, the country has had three civilian and democratically elected governments. All of them have continued with and, in fact, implemented the neoliberal economic model in greater depth. They have also preserved the privatisation of public utility companies, the tax exoneration for big transnational companies, and the signing of free trade agreements with the United States and other countries. All of these are legacies of the Fujimori administration. Despite of the growth of the Peruvian economy— it has had the largest growing rate in Latin America during the last years— more than a half of the population still live under conditions of poverty and around 25 per cent live in extreme poverty; public health and education are deplorable; and seventy per cent of the population survives within the informal economy without social security, medical insurance or retirement plans. Thus, while governments have implemented the best possible conditions for foreign investment, they have systematically reduced the basic rights of workers, indigenous and peasant communities, and other subaltern groups. Such groups have been resisting the progressive radicalisation of the neoliberal model, which has been accompanied by the escalation of state authoritarianism against social movements and organisations. One of the main areas from where this resistance and discontent spring has been the southern Andean region of Peru.

The Peruvian southern Andes cover five regions (Arequipa, Moquegua, Tacna, Cusco and Puno). Since the days of Spanish colonialism, a large economic and trade corridor integrated this region through means of *arrieraje* as well as connected it with western Bolivia and what is today northern Argentina and Chile. These dynamics of economic integration were accompanied by intense symbolic flows, which allowed in the region the emergence of an Andean modernisation matrix, under the form of *Inca nationalism*,<sup>2</sup> with extremely complex expressions and characteristics, and which was in opposition to the colonial West's modernisation pattern. Radical and failed political projects such as the revolution of Tupac Amaru in the eighteenth century, the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation during the nineteenth century, as well as the Marxism-influenced *Indigenism* during the twentieth century, have been expressions of this variegated Andean modernising impulse. This problematic dynamic, in conflict with the western republican project of the Creole elite— whose geographic point of reference was Lima, the capital of the country, and the Peruvian north coast— has since then conditioned the political history of the southern Peruvian Andes. This long conflict has been expressed during the Republican era, by the confrontation between the Andean region— including their economic, political and cultural elite— and the Peruvian State— overly centralised and lacking an inclusive project of nation, except in some very short periods of its history.<sup>3</sup> The forms and scenarios in which the conflict has manifested itself have, in fact, been quite diverse. In recent times, these features have been associated with active social resistance against the radicalisation of the neoliberal model implemented in Peru since the early 1990s. For some authors, these conflicts are framed by the continuation of colonial relations that still persist within the Creole republican project.<sup>4</sup>

Since the fall of the Fujimori dictatorship— which deliberately destroyed the dense network of social workers' unions, peasants and employees who were very strong in Peru in the previous decades— and the restoration of the democratic regime, several large-scale upheavals have taken place in the southern Andes. Such uprisings also led to large-scale mobilisation involving the deployment of significant economic, political and symbolic resources by the social actors who started them.

However, the southern Andes of Peru is far from being a homogeneous space. Even though the centres of power label all the regions as equally ‘conflictive’, it does also address explicit historical and cultural differences. Arequipa, for example, sheltered a wool-trade-enriched bourgeoisie since the nineteenth century. It managed to consolidate its hegemony on the basis of a very strong regional identity, more attached to the Hispanic than the Andean vein, but that remained in conflict with the Creole elite of Lima.<sup>5</sup> Cusco and Puno, on the other hand, during the same period, were the hotbeds of important indigenous uprisings that challenged oligarchies, seeking to liquidate the pre-modern regime of servitude that prevailed in Peru and that was at last abolished in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup> Finally, Tacna has been, since the Pacific War of the late nineteenth century, the epicentre of Peruvian nationalism. From being an occasional emotional outburst it went on to become a political agenda that included both regional and indigenous demands for equality. The sediments of these heterogeneous historical experiences require to be tested by comparative readings to establish, first of all, how and to what extent do these persist in the current social movements of the Peruvian southern-Andean region; and, secondly, to what extent have intense social processes such as migrations in recent years or cultural homogenisation brought about by globalisation helped the reduction or modification of such characteristics and differences.



Arequipa, June 2002. Main square of the city during the popular uprising against the privatization of the electricity companies.

Since the fall of the Fujimori dictatorship— which deliberately destroyed the dense network of social workers’ unions, peasants and employees who were very strong in Peru in the previous decades— and the restoration of the democratic regime, several large-scale upheavals have taken place in the southern Andes. Such uprisings also led to large-scale social mobilisation involving the deployment of significant economic, political and symbolic resources by the social actors who started them. The popular resistance against the privatisation of public services (Arequipa, 2002) and against the militarisation of social conflicts and the defence of human rights (Puno, 2003), or the struggle for a fairer distribution of the benefits of economic growth (Moquegua, 2008) and balanced management of natural resources, particularly water (Tacna, 2007 and Cusco, 2008)— all resulted in massive demonstrations in which a large number of actors took positions. State agents unleashed violent repression leading to tensions which destabilised the political system. Most of the readings and judgements that have been made about these events by both the media and social scientists from Lima, have developed superficial and institutional interpretations that have often overlooked, stereotyped or simply ignored the perspectives of the social actors, who deliberately or not, ended up challenging the established political and economic order. The regional academia of the Peruvian southern Andes— universities, social research institutions, individual researchers— has not yet developed and offered its own interpretation based on research that addresses the social conflicts arising in their immediate environment. This article proposes to put forward some of the subaltern perspectives of social conflicts in Peru, starting with the testimonies of the actors of the most important social movements in the last decade in the southern Andean region. They were

collected as a part of the research project entitled ‘Subaltern Memories of Social Movements in the Last Decade in the South of Peru’ supported by SEPHIS between 2009 and 2010.

Moquegua, June 2008. People blocking a road during an indefinite strike for fair distribution of mining income within their region.



### Direct Collective Action: A Struggle for Recognition

One of the main aspects common to all the cases that were included in the research project was the representation of the *conflict as a recognition request* in the actors’ discourse. For them, collective action was the last resort to make themselves visible before the state and the rest of the society, once all formal resources to process their requests had failed. In the specific cases of little or remote communities, such as Canchis in Cusco or Moquegua, interviewees frequently declared that their provinces ‘did not exist’ or ‘nobody knew where they are’ before the conflicts took place, and after the struggles they ‘have a place in the map’ and are taken into account. So, collective action— often including blocking roads, services strikes, mass mobilisations in cities and, as a consequence, confrontations with the police— is a mechanism of the subaltern actors to reinforce themselves as *subjects*; in this case in opposition to a state that, according to their own perceptions, has deliberately ignored and neglected them. Social actors not only aspire to be visible subjects, but also to be *legitimate* ones, and to be able to challenge state behaviour. The state, on the other hand, has tried to discredit the subaltern groups and refused to recognise them as a part of any negotiation saying that they are not well-informed people and are being manipulated by violent minorities. This kind of reasoning is usual in the official discourses. Therefore what is called *dialogue*— as a conflict-resolution mechanism— is understood by the elite just as a means to persuade subaltern groups using efficient communication resources. The elite do not accept that the political principles of state could be challenged or negotiated. Thus, neoliberalism has ended up attributing the monopoly of “good sense” to itself.

The intolerance derived from this attitude is evident in the evident growth of the repressive tendencies of the last civil and democratically-elected governments. Especially during Alan Garcia’s rule, several legal reforms— many of them unconstitutional— have been passed to criminalise social protests. Basic rights and freedom have been restricted and people have been exposed to excessive and inappropriate use of lethal weapons by the police and the military.<sup>7</sup> Just in the last four years, around fifty people have been killed by the state’s repressive forces during social protests. In this adverse context, where state-society relationship has been defined by arbitrariness, although under ostensibly liberal democratic forms, subaltern actors have resorted to different strategies that allow them to re-invent themselves as subjects and to produce discourses to support their struggles according to their own realities.

### The Construction of Subjects within Rural Spaces: The Indigenous-Peasant Movement

The indigenous-peasant movement of Canchis in Cusco, for example, has been opposing water privatisation, construction of a hydroelectric plant and proliferation of mining concessions in its province. Social organisations have concentrated on internal cohesion through means of the re-invention and re-appropriation of an Andean worldview, which focusses on community as a

collective subject and on the defence of community rights regarding natural resources of its environment, particularly water and land. Both of them were considered by indigenous people as basic components of their culture, their way of life and their autonomy.<sup>8</sup> Thus, nature and communal life joined in the discourse of the actors. That is why it is so important for them to reject an activity like mining which, in their opinion, contaminates their culture and life. Peasants' schools, named *hatun tinkuy*– which stands for 'great gathering' in Quechua– have been an exceptional way to construct and reproduce this discourse and to fuel collective discussions about problems and "threats" which require a common remedy. Peasants' schools also have a clear purpose of decolonisation. As an indigenous leader explains, at the schools 'we don't talk about western ideologies: Marxism, Maoism, Leninism; we talk about daily reality of the peasants.'<sup>9</sup>

As to the discursive representation of the relationship between the indigenous peasant communities and the state, it is framed in figures of 'abuse' and 'dispossession.' Projects promoted by the state such as the construction of the 'Salcca Pucara' hydroelectric plant and mining concessions, which caused peasant uprisings in October 2008 and June 2009, are considered by communities as an act of aggression; since they imply the expropriation of collective land at absurd prices.<sup>10</sup> Indigenous peasants think of the state as an agent of the great private investors; as a group of 'lobbyists' who get richer by selling off natural resources. In this sense, indigenous peasants consider themselves as 'orphans of the state.'

Additionally, indigenous peasants not only consider that the state is treating them as 'second or third class' citizens,<sup>11</sup> but also they feel deprived and exploited by transnational companies who intend to operate within their territories. Indigenous leaders of the Canchis state that communities, which are legal entities recognised by Peruvian law, made the following proposition to the company in charge of constructing the hydroelectric plant: To become partners and participate as shareholders in the project; using their farm lands, where the plant is located, as their capital. Nevertheless, the company rejected the offer and replied that if the communities wished to become partners, they should disburse financial resources to pay a part of the 360 million dollars, the total cost of the hydroelectric plant. It was obviously an impossible proposition on the part of the companies, since most peasants are extremely poor. The attitude of the capitalists has reinforced the indigenous peasant perception that the state and the companies do not consider them equals, nor take them into account in the 'development' process. To sum up, indigenous peasant subjects legitimise themselves through the affirmation of their identity and subaltern condition before a state which operates as an agent of companies and capital that constantly attack these indigenous communities.

On the other hand, one of the most frequent strategies used by popular urban movements to produce counter-hegemonic discourses has been to appeal to the middle class, in search for 'technical arguments.' In Arequipa, on June 2002, popular social organisations made an alliance with some professional associations against the privatisation of electricity companies. Additionally, they gathered a team composed of technical experts, who publicly debated privatisation with the government's technical team. The debate successfully attracted public attention and was considered a 'victory' by social movements.

### **The Construction of Subjects in the Cities: Popular Urban Movement**

Urban social movements developed into a popular uprising in Arequipa in June 2002 and successfully stopped the privatisation of the region's electric companies.<sup>12</sup> The discursive construction of subaltern subjects has had an identity-based component, referring to a non-conformist regional identity with republican values.<sup>13</sup> But it has also included other elements taken from the dynamics of urban expansion. In fact, settlers of the city outskirts were the main



protagonists in the uprising. According to the testimonies, their significant role was related to the settlers' relationship with basic public services. Although the state does provide public services like water or electricity to the new towns and neighbourhoods around the city, settlers pay for technical and economic surveys done prior to the installation of services and, above all, execute community service— collective work without payment— to physically install them. Consequently, public services were closely linked with the work of 'the people' because they 'have taken pains to make a hollow, to put a post inside and have their electricity.'<sup>14</sup> Therefore, these settlers assumed that the basic services were their property too, and they cannot just be 'sold off', and that too at ridiculous prices by the national government. According to one of the interviewed leaders, the relationship between the urban settlers and the basic public services is similar to that of the indigenous people with natural resources.

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Finally, as a part of this counter-hegemonic strategy, social organisations rejected privatisation as a matter of *national interest*. The testimonies of social actors articulated a discursive representation of transnational capital's interests as foreign and anti-popular. Electricity companies are considered as 'a part of the national *territory*.'<sup>15</sup> Thus, the sense of the 'national' is appropriated by popular and subaltern groups to turn into, according to Lloyd, nationalism against the state.<sup>16</sup> In spite of a wide heterogeneity involving settlers, teachers, workers, political parties, local authorities and students, social movements raised their demands beyond the interests of individuals or social groups. Even other neighbouring regions joined the protests. The issues succeeded in legitimising themselves beyond the particular identities and structural positions of their actors, to the extent of challenging the elites' discursive monopoly on the signification of the 'national.'



Cusco, October 2008. Protest in Canchis against the construction of a hydroelectric plant.

### Democracy, Violence and Participation from a Social Movement Perspective

'Democracy' has been one of the most questioned concepts within the contemporary social movements in the southern Andes of Peru. A *minimalist* definition of democracy that only considers its *procedural* aspects<sup>17</sup> has been generally assumed by intellectual and political elites all over the continent.<sup>18</sup> So, for subaltern actors working against the limited prescriptions of liberalism, democracy as a political regime is neither an unquestionable principle nor a concept exempt from contradictions. Despite the presence of periodic 'free elections' and the regular functioning of institutions, subaltern actors consider the present scenario of the country to be

akin to a 'dictatorship.' Particularly, they focus on official intolerance: Political and judicial persecution, which are mechanisms of getting 'nobody to think in other way than government's aim'<sup>19</sup>; and violent state repression on social protests. As one social leader stated, 'Social-political conflict has been thought to be resolved as if it were an armed conflict.'<sup>20</sup>

Cusco, October 2008. Indigenous peasants of Canchis during the uprising against the proliferation of mining concessions.



The alarming levels of violence enforced by state agents during social conflicts has been starkly registered in some cases, such as the conflict of 29 May 2003 in Puno city, where a demonstration of university students was suppressed by the army and the police using firearms, a state of siege being declared by President Alejandro Toledo.<sup>21</sup> A student was killed that day and dozens of people, including students and pedestrians, were severely injured by bullets. The events were shown on local television channels, and the shocking images later found their place in national and international press. Survivors, who later on led an important human-rights movement, claimed that this 'massacre' was an 'ambush' on democracy that the state had 'attempted' against the people. For them, state and government— both terms used as equivalent— acted 'against the people' in a 'such a cruel' way that they can not be considered as 'democratic' any more. That is why, according to these testimonies, the main demand in Puno during the mass mobilisations after the 'massacre' was President Toledo's resignation.



Puno, May 2003. Student Juan Guido Vilca, injured by the Peruvian army during social protests.

Besides intolerance and repressive violence, there is another element that subaltern actors have taken up to question the hegemonic concept of democracy: The limited popular *participation* in government decisions that affect them. Collective action, as we have already mentioned, is the last resort and comes into play only when formal mechanisms of mediation and political representation have failed. In this way, as one leader says, uprisings show an "impossibility" of the democratic system to process social demands. For example, before the social organisations of Moquegua started an indefinite strike in June 2008 to claim fair and balanced distribution of mining income within their region, they sought to give exposure to their demands through their parliamentary representatives.<sup>22</sup> Afterwards, they asked for mediation between the central government and the democratically-elected local authorities of their region. Nevertheless, these efforts did not work and the government did not pay attention to their requirements. Finally, after a long wait, social organisations started an indefinite strike, blocked

the roads that connected the south of Peru with Bolivia and Chile, and mobilised tens of thousands of people for more than a week.

A remarkable participation strategy on the government's decisions has been the organisation of *popular referendums* concerning mining activities in Tacna and other regions of southern Peru since 2007. Considering the dreadful experience of mining— large pollution and little effect on welfare and income— in many towns of the country,<sup>23</sup> popular referendums were organised in two provinces— Tarata and Candarave— and a district— Gregorio Albarracín— by civil-society organisations, particularly of the environmentalist variety. Such referendums collected people's opinion about mining activities in their towns, and results show that more than ninety per cent have left mining. People from these communities claim that the state and mining companies are '*compadres*' (a Spanish word that stands for a closer relationship than that of partnership), and have come to an agreement 'behind the back of the people.' The people and communities who were affected by mining organised the referendums so that they were taken into account by the central government. They hoped that the government would 'listen to people and not make a decision just by itself.'<sup>24</sup>

Puno, May 2003. Troops of Peruvian army shooting against students during social protests.



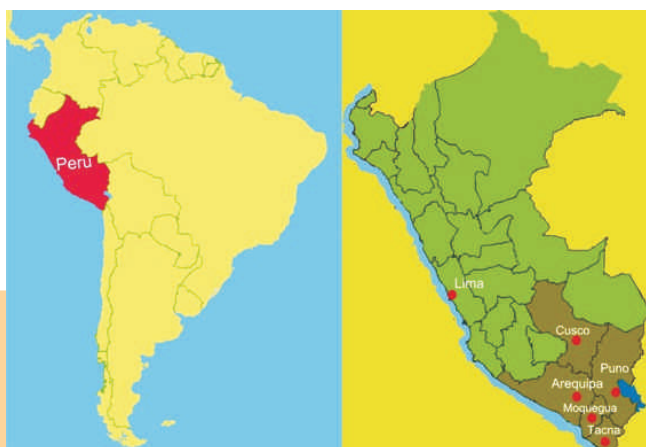
### Social movements, State and nation: Some final comments

As we have intended to expose and demonstrate in this paper, over the last decade social movements of the southern Andean region of Peru have questioned and challenged a number of core assumptions of the state as well as the vision and configuration as designed by hegemonic elites of the Peruvian society. Among the most critical points of this process, which have been mentioned in this study, are the following:

1. The relationship between the state, private investment and the society;
2. Political systems and institutional mechanisms for aggregation, representation and mediation of social interests;
3. The current model of Peruvian economic development, having *exploitation* as its predominant activity.

Nonetheless, other kinds of disputes have also taken place in contemporary social struggles, Those that are inherent to historical problems inherent in the construction of the Peruvian nation. In this sense, the appearance of the indigenous movement in recent years<sup>25</sup> has added a further element of tension in the national project by questioning capitalist modernity and nation-state rationality. Peru has, from its very origins, been a fissured nation project, with critical race, class and gender gap, among others. To be sure, beyond merely seeking some passive mechanism of inclusion, contemporary social movements in Peru are trying to *re-define*, in each confrontation against the state, the colonial structures that have been preserved for nearly two centuries of the Republic's history. Paraphrasing Lloyd, the nation has been *overflowed* by people.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the nation is capable of being re-imagined<sup>27</sup> beyond colonialist remainders and the homogenising trend of modernity. Nevertheless, particular social movements, organisations

and struggles have been isolated from each other, thus obtaining just partial and temporary concessions from the hegemonic power. This is the main difference with other processes of change like the Bolivian, where social movements have been able to articulate themselves and, indeed, force the state<sup>28</sup> to open a new period for the re-foundation of society. In Peru, meanwhile, the *people-* as a function of the subaltern actors' unity<sup>29</sup>, i.e. as a hegemonic and foundational bloc- is yet to be constituted.



The southern Andes of Peru cover five regions: Cusco, Puno, Arequipa, Moquegua and Tacna. During the last decade, social movements of this area have been protagonists of several large scale social uprisings, which have challenged the configuration of State and Peruvian society in general, as it was designed by the country's elites.

- 1 This article is based on the conclusions of a research project titled 'Subaltern Memories of the Last Decade's Social Movements in Southern Peru.' It was carried out between 2009 and 2010, by *Cátedra Libre Alberto Flores Galindo*, with a grant from the SEPHIS Programme. As a result of the research, the documentary *Nuestros pueblos han hecho historia* (Our People Have Made History) was produced, consisting of five thematic chapters and one conclusion. During the five first chapters— corresponding to the five regions in which the research took place: Tacna, Moquegua, Puno, Cusco and Arequipa— the interviewed social leaders narrate stories of their struggle and incorporate their own reflections about the events in their speech. The last chapter includes excerpts from testimonies of all the actors, composing a general reflection about the articulation and projection of their struggles within the national context, emphasising the southern Andes' reality. There are testimonies of 34 social leaders, as well as those of seven journalists who were linked to the social movements. It is available online at: <http://www.catedrafloresgalindo.blogspot.com/> accessed on 10.12.2010. I am grateful to Rogelio Scott for checking the English version of this paper.
- 2 Max Thurner, *Republicanos andinos*, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos y Centro Bartolomé de las Casas, Lima, 2006, pp. 245-270.
- 3 See for example, Sinesio López, *Ciudadanos reales e imaginarios. Concepciones, desarrollo y mapas de la ciudadanía en el Perú*, Instituto de Diálogo y Propuestas, Lima, 1997.
- 4 See for example, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos: Luchas del campesinado aymara y qhechwa 1900-1980*, Aruwiriyi – Editorial del THOA, La Paz, 2003, p. 16. For this Bolivian author, colonial domination is articulated with a semblance of modernity in what she calls *the long-lasting structures of internal colonialism*.
- 5 See Sarah Chambers, *De súbditos a ciudadanos: honor, género y política en Arequipa 1780-1854*, Red para el Desarrollo de las Ciencias Sociales en el Perú, Lima, 2003.
- 6 See José Luis Rénique, *La batalla por Puno. Conflicto agrario y nación en los Andes peruanos 1866-1995*, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, Lima, 2004, pp. 27-103.
- 7 See Wilfredo Ardito, Rocío Peñafiel and Katya Pinedo, *Serios peligros para los Derechos*

*Humanos. Los 11 decretos del gobierno de Alan García*, APRODEH, Lima, 2007. Available online: <http://www.aprodeh.org.pe/criminilizacion/documentos/crimi.pdf>, accessed on 10-11-2010.

- 8 For an important approach to the meaning and importance of “territoriality” in Latin American social movements, see Raúl Zibechi, *Autonomías y emancipaciones. América Latina en movimiento*, PDTG y UNMSM, Lima, 2007, p. 26.
- 9 “Subaltern Memories of Social Movements in the Last Decade in the Southern of Peru”, SEPHIS project on *Preserving Social Memory: History and Social Movements*, CLAFG, Universidad de San Agustín, Peru, 2009-10.
- 10 The peasants of Canchis claim that the amount they were offered for their community lands for the construction of the hydroelectric plant was of 0.80 nuevos soles– the equivalent of 0.20 euros– per square metre.
- 11 In May 2009, when the Amazonian indigenous uprising, which ended in the tragic event of Bagua with 34 people dead, including civilians and policemen, President Alan Garcia actually referred to the indigenous people on television as ‘those people are not first-class citizens.’
- 12 See Jorge Bedregal, “La gesta de Arequipa”, and José Luis Ramos, “Discursos, sujetos y democracia representativa en la gesta de Arequipa de 2002”, in Erick Tejada Sánchez (ed.), *Movimientos sociales y democracia en el Perú de hoy. Reflexiones a propósito de la gesta de Arequipa*, CES, FCHS y PDTG, Arequipa, 2009, pp. 131-146; José Luis Vargas, “¡Erupción Arequipa! Una posición desde la provincia”, *Quehacer*, 136, mayo-junio, 2002, pp. 72-77.
- 13 See Jorge Bedregal, *Iconografía y simbolismo: identidad arequipeña*, FCHS, Arequipa, 2006, pp. 121-131.
- 14 “Subaltern Memories”, SEPHIS project on *Preserving Social Memory*.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 David Lloyd, quoted in John Beverley, *Subalternidad y representación*, Iberoamericana, Madrid, 2004, p. 50.
- 17 Alberto Adrianzén, *La transición inconclusa. De la década autoritaria al nacimiento del pueblo*, Otra Mirada, Lima, 2009, p. 29.
- 18 See Carlos Franco, *Acerca del modo de pensar la democracia en América Latina*, Friederich Ebert Stiftung, Lima, 1998.
- 19 “Subaltern Memories”, SEPHIS project on *Preserving Social Memory*.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 When a state of emergency is declared, it does also imply the suspension of civil and political liberties and the internal control is handed over to the armed forces. Under the decrees passed by Alan García, it is no longer necessary for a state of emergency to be declared for the intervention of the army and the use of sophisticated weaponry to deal with internal social conflicts.
- 22 The Peruvian parliament is composed of congress members who represent, in one single chamber, all the regions of the country, in a proportional number, according to each region’s population.
- 23 See José de Echave, Raphael Hoetmer and Mario Palacios, *Minería y territorio en el Perú: conflictos, resistencias y propuestas en tiempos de globalización*, PDTG, CONACAMI y CooperAcción, Lima, 2009.
- 24 “Subaltern Memories”, SEPHIS project on *Preserving Social Memory*.
- 25 See Luis Vittor, “CONACAMI y el despertar del movimiento indígena en el Perú”, in José de Echave, Raphael Hoetmer and Mario Palacios, *ibid.*, pp. 185-217.
- 26 David Lloyd, as quoted in Beverly, *Subalternidad y representación*.

**27** Beverley, *ibid.*

**28** Pablo Stefanoni, “El nacionalismo indígena como identidad política: La emergencia del MAS-IPSP, 1995-2003”, in Bettina Levy and Natalia Gianatelli (comp.), *La política en movimiento. Identidades y experiencias de organización en América Latina*, CLACSO, Buenos Aires, 2008, p. 370.

**29** Ernesto Laclau, *La razón populista*, FCE, México, 2006, p. 97.

Picture Source: Author

# Governance in the Neoliberal Era of Globalisation

In the wake of expanding networks of global trade and liberal policies, good governance and equal opportunities were expected by common citizens aspiring for survival with dignity. Failure to link economic growth with human welfare has put a question mark on development administration. Major challenges in health, basic amenities, security measures etc. have created wide gaps between the haves and have-nots. Concern for bridging this gap should be a major challenge before civil society because human survival is inter-dependent. If two-thirds of the population of India dependent on agriculture becomes indebted and commits suicide to escape the drudgery, the world's richest countries would be affected adversely in the long run. The WTO rules in 'agriculture' for poor countries and the quality of governance that supports the cause of security of its majority countrymen cannot bridge the gap between violence and conflicts. This paper intends to highlight the subtle and invisible divides thus created.



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We shall attempt to focus on the implications of vested interests which need to be bridged at the earliest in order to build internal as well as transnational security and peace, structural adjustment programme for women, with a special focus on possible changes in agriculture, as a significant proportion of Indian women still depend primarily on agriculture for their survival.

It is commonly known that changes in agricultural growth and prices have a direct relation to poverty. It is found that there is a strong relationship between the incidence of poverty, on the one hand, and agricultural output, prices and the public distribution system (PDS), on the other.<sup>1</sup>

There is a sharp increase in poverty in the rural areas during the first 18 months of reforms period (1990-1992). According to Tendulkar and Jain (1995) People in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan experienced sharp decline in per capita total expenditure. The spurt in prices, especially in food prices, cannot be attributed solely to a downturn in agricultural production. In fact, in the last two years the increases in procurement prices have been well above the costs of production.<sup>2</sup> There has been a cutback, in the food subsidy to the consumer and in combination with rising food grain prices; this has had a direct impact on the rural sector as reflected in the increase in the incidence of poor households.

Women, it is widely acknowledged, constitute a significant section of the poor. Two-thirds of female agricultural labourers are below the poverty line according to the National Sample Survey (NSS).<sup>3</sup> Female-headed households constitute about 35 per cent of poor households. Hence, it would not be unlikely if women constitute a majority of this increased poor.

The high rate of inflation adversely affects women as they shoulder the burden of provisioning the family and as they often cut back on their own consumption to manage dwindling resources. This is especially very serious in the context of declining per capita monthly consumption of cereal.<sup>4</sup>

Evidence indicates that there has been a reduction in government outlays, in real terms, on poverty-alleviation programmes. The number of families assisted annually under Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) has declined from 3.35 million to two million between 1989 and 1994.<sup>5</sup>

**From the mid-seventies to 1992, there had been an increase in real per capita expenditure by states on social sectors. It increased on an average from Rs. 281 to Rs. 578 in the case of 17 major states. Further, there has been a reduction in the share of social sectors in total development expenditure of the states over the last three years which is likely to decline further with decreasing transfer of resources from the centre to the states.**

For the poor, daily living has been made equally hard by the reduction in social services as part of stabilisation and adjustment policies. Overall allocation in rural development and social sectors (education, health, family planning, etc.) as a proportion of central plan outlay declined from an average of 16.1 per cent between 1987-8 and 1990-1 to 15.7 per cent and 14.1 per cent respectively in the next two years.<sup>6</sup> Expenditure on rural development and medical and health services also declined in real terms. Even the increase in the allocation for social sectors in the 1994-95 budgets (10.8 and 10.2 per cent respectively over the previous year) has been eroded by inflation.

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further with decreasing transfer of resources from the centre to the states.<sup>7</sup>

The overall cut in social services severely affect the poor, who depend on such services, as it inevitably reduces not only the availability and quality of such services, but also increases their cost. Further, it will imply a greater burden on women who are responsible for provisioning the family— whether it be water or childcare or healthcare. The stabilisation and adjustment policies so far have, in effect, placed the burden of macro-economic balance more on the shoulders of women. To implement the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the government has initiated a series of policy reforms in the agriculture, industry, trade and financial sectors, to alter the basic dynamics of the domestic economy.



Death in WTO garb

### Reforms Package

In agriculture the set of reforms being envisioned are:

1. Removal of input subsidies on fertilisers, irrigation, electricity and credit over time;
2. Realigning domestic prices with international prices by removing all trade restrictions;
3. Unification of prices so that dual markets in food grains and other agricultural commodities are eliminated;
4. Removal of restrictions on production and marketing choices; and
5. Incentives for the expansion of agro-business.

The basic thrust of these measures is to push larger sections of the agrarian population into the logic of the market.

The step-up of growth in agricultural production in the eighties can be seen as a return to this fairly high and steady rate of capital formation, which sharply decelerated to 0.9 per cent annually. This was largely due to sharp reductions in capital formation on government account. Real capital formation on government account declined at 3.3 per cent in the eighties.<sup>8</sup> Public investment in infrastructure, especially irrigation, also stagnated in this decade. With more than two-thirds of agricultural production still depending on rain, it is hard to imagine how agricultural output will expand rapidly.

Despite the fact that private investment in agriculture depends critically on the supply of credit, the government has been eager to implement financial reforms as part of the overall reforms package. An integral part of financial reforms in increasing the efficiency and profitability of the banking sector is the irregularity of the commercial banking sector in rural credit. A justification for this policy change is that only a small percentage of farmers avail bank credit and that two-thirds of the credit goes to large farmers. To develop infrastructure and disseminate modern methods of production on a wider basis, what is actually needed is a greater supply of credit at subsidised interest rates.

### Input Subsidies

Apart from credit, private investment also depends critically on the supply of other inputs such as electricity and water. Overall input subsidies for electricity, water, fertilisers and credit have

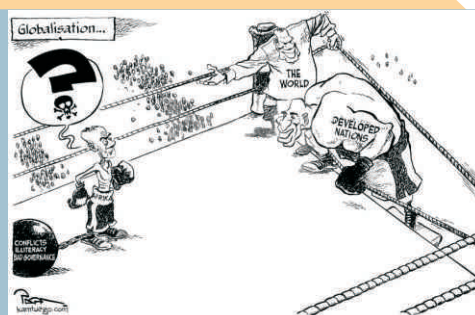
gone up between 1982-83 and 1992-93. Water and electricity accounted for roughly about sixty per cent of the subsidies in 1992-93.

It is finally the issue of fertiliser subsidy that has been the most debated one among the structural adjustments. A feature of agricultural growth in the eighties is the increasing contribution of productivity to growth of agriculture.<sup>9</sup> Input subsidies on water, electricity and fertilisers did encourage the spread of High Yield Variety (HYV) technology. Under the given circumstances the fact that the effectiveness of fertiliser use in improving yields has reached a plateau, it is argued that the removal of the fertiliser subsidy will increase the use of bio-fertilisers and biotechnology.

### Globalisation and Agriculture

Changes in trade policy are formulated to increase the export orientation of the economy. Over the past three decades, the main objectives of policies concerning agriculture were to promote food security, maintain domestic prices at levels commensurate with average income levels and impart stability to domestic prices. Today, there is a distinct shift in policies, which would open up the economy, including the agricultural sector. It is argued that if domestic prices are brought in line with international prices, the terms of trade would move in favour of agriculture and the comparative advantage of India in selected crops can boost up exports. Studies show that India has a comparative advantage in major cereals, fruits, vegetables and their processed products.<sup>10</sup>

Cartoon representation of the impact of globalisation in Africa



### Cropping Pattern

As part of the reforms to encourage agro-business, many states have begun to dismantle their land legislation. Maharashtra has exempted horticulture projects from land ceiling legislation. Madhya Pradesh is offering land on long-term leases of at least forty years to private industries. Karnataka has also proposed to reform its land legislation to exempt agro-business. In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, private corporations are allowed to acquire over 300 acres for prawn cultivation, with even government wastelands being offered to agro-business. An example of the pitfalls of transition has become evident in Andhra Pradesh. Here prawn lands, which have been leased out by small farmers are now completely useless for any other cultivation. During the last year a major disease affected prawns in the district of Nellore. Exporters who had leased this land were unable to withstand the crisis and cut their losses. This left small farmers with lands that were once green rice fields but are now gaping holes.<sup>11</sup>

### Changing of Women's Work in Agriculture

The precise impact of the ongoing changes in agriculture for the livelihood of rural women will depend on how the profiles of female agricultural work changes. Their employment opportunities are not only dependent on demand for labour consequent to cropping changes, but also dependent on the forms of labour recruitment as well as the extent of substitution between

male and female labour.

### **Women as Cultivators**

As pointed out earlier, women are primarily dependent on agriculture for sustenance. Data from the 1991 census indicates a sharp increase in the number of women reporting as cultivators. An examination of the growth of female cultivators at a district level reveals some interesting trends. The districts in the north-west of India, spreading over Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh experienced the highest growth in female cultivators in the range of 54.66 per cent to above 109.43 per cent in the decade. Even parts of Bihar and West Bengal have had a growth higher than 109 per cent. It must be remembered, however, that the very districts which have had the highest growth in the number of female cultivators, are also the same districts, with the lowest participation rates. In South India, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, where the participation rate of women is fairly high, the increase in cultivators is more moderate, primarily in the range of 27 to 54 per cent.

The relative importance of female cultivators can be discerned from an examination of their share among total cultivators. The maximum share of women cultivators in the north-west is in some of the districts like Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. The spread of the districts, with proportion of women cultivators greater than thirty per cent is mainly concentrated in the districts of the Deccan Plateau, the eastern districts of Maharashtra, a few isolated districts in Tamil Nadu and the North-East.

A majority of female workers in agriculture are agricultural labourers. There is an increasing spread of districts where the number of female agricultural labourers, in fact, outnumbers male counterparts, with non-Scheduled Caste and non-Scheduled Tribe<sup>12</sup> labourers forming up to fifty per cent of the female agricultural labourers. Poverty is seen as a push-factor as it breaks down the caste hierarchies and the traditional aversion to manual labour.

It should also be noted that a shift to prawn cultivation and fruit orchards, usually has meant less employment possibilities for women. Similarly, the conversion of paddy fields to floriculture has drastically reduced the work available for women and men as cropping intensity has declined.<sup>13</sup>

Today, however, the contract form is becoming predominant for most operations of almost all crops. In areas where this system has become prevalent, the impact has been that the eligible able-bodied women, the old and the very young are losing employment days to men, especially in the harvesting operations. In Nellore district, the shift to the contract system and the consequent loss of employment of women, leading to a decline in household income has been considered as one of the causative factors for the rapid spread of anti-arack agitation.

Increase in the commercialisation of agriculture can result in a greater pauperisation of marginal farmers. An equally possible impact will be that with increasing input cost, as subsidies are removed, the gap between output price and input price may narrow resulting in poor peasant households withdrawing from cultivation.

Commonwealth Expert Group on women and structural adjustment pointed out that women's welfare has suffered disproportionately from structural adjustment programmes given the multiplicity of women's roles and the intensification of the conflict over allocation of time. The social-support networks, including health and nutrition programmes, the public distribution system, water and sanitation services, etc., is cut back as part of the 'fiscal discipline' of adjustment. Women are therefore caught in this effect: They are forced to increase the time on income earning activity along with domestic and sustaining activities. This has resulted in increasing difficulties in the face of reduction in the availability and quality of the social support network.

### **Economic Reforms and Emerging Trends**

The role of government in India has been confined largely to investments in agricultural infrastructure including research and extension and public procurement and distribution of major cereals like wheat and rice. There is considerable scope to encourage farmers to take more initiative by involving farmers' groups and organisations, through appropriate training, in the management of irrigation systems, production and distribution of seeds and the provision of extension services.<sup>14</sup>

### **Credit and Marketing**

Improving the viability of formal credit institutions— cooperatives and commercial banks— is critical for stepping up investment in agriculture. In view of the very high interest rates prevailing in the informal credit market and the shortage of production credit, the poor farmers would benefit immensely from the timely availability of credit from the formal institutions rather than from interest subsidies or loan write-offs. It would be necessary to reduce dues by speeding up the recovery of loans and to cut down subsidies on account of low interest rates and loan write-offs. Improving land records would also be necessary to strengthen the position of the farmers in their dealings with formal credit institutions. The development of market infrastructure in the areas of the interior of these regions through public investments and public procurement of food grains can contribute to raising the incomes of these farmers significantly.

Government interventions in trade have led to some inefficiency. Wheat, rice and cotton seem to have emerged as good exportable commodities up to a point, particularly after the recent adjustment in the exchange rate and the convertibility of the rupee. But imports of edible oils, which have been heavily protected, could be increased.

In view of the uncertainties of world supplies, the country cannot run the risk of undermining its food security by running down the domestic stocks below a certain critical minimum. It must consider the incidence of droughts and the commitment of the public distribution system to meet the requirements of a large section of the population still living below the poverty line.

**The last few years have been a test for such regulations, culminating in the formal approval of cotton for commercial production in 2002. By examining the Bt cotton story in India— and particularly in the state of Karnataka, different debates are raging over the efficacy of the technology; the changing nature of agriculture; and the control of agriculture and food by multinationals; the role of the state in a federal system; the relevance of regulation in a post-reform economy. Despite the advocacy of uniformity and harmonisation in regulatory policy, it is found that there is no clear-cut one-size-fit-in-all-solution.**

The ongoing economic reforms in the country have a direct as well as indirect bearing on the prospects for agriculture. There is a need to cope with some of the adverse consequences of economic reform in the short run, such as inflation and slow growth in output and employment. Agriculture can work as the biggest safety net in the process of adjustment by softening the steep inflation as well as by raising income and employment for the vulnerable sections of the population.

Contrary to popular belief, freeing of trade by India leads to greater domestic price stability even though world prices are more volatile. Freeing of trade by India also leads to higher world price stability. Under liberalised trade, variable levies/subsidies are more effective in stabilising domestic prices compared to buffer stocks. It is, therefore, in India's interest to argue for non-zero binding on import tariffs and export subsidies at the World Trade

Organisation (WTO) negotiations.<sup>15</sup>

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### **Farmers' Suicide**

Due to failure in cotton crops and huge debt on Indian farmers there has been more than 25,000 cases of suicide.<sup>16</sup> Crop failure is due to Bt cotton, a genetically modified breed that contains a pesticide that naturally occurs in soil rather than plants.

In the last seven years, bad seeds, costly pesticides and drought have escalated indebtedness among the peasantry. There have been 4,500 suicides of farmers in Andhra Pradesh alone.<sup>17</sup> Government has taken no responsibility on this issue.

It is observed that native seeds have been displaced with new hybrid varieties, which cannot be saved and need to be purchased every year at high cost. Hybrids are also very vulnerable to pest attacks. Spending on pesticides in Warrangal has shot up by 2,000 per cent from \$ 2.5 million in the 1980s to \$ 50 million in 1997.<sup>18</sup> Now farmers are consuming the same pesticides as a way of killing themselves so that they can escape from this permanent debt trap.

The drought is not a 'natural disaster'. It is 'man-made'. It is the result of mining of scarce ground water in arid regions to grow thirsty cash crops for exports instead of water-prudent food crops for local needs.

### **Patterns of Growth and Women's Empowerment**

Migration of men over a longer duration is seen to have created socio-economic space for women in agriculture. This has been borne out by a number of studies that indicate that in the absence of men, women have started performing larger roles, even outside the space of home, thereby assuming greater autonomy in decision-making than before.<sup>19</sup> This seems to have happened in two sets of households. First, those which experienced a more dynamic growth in agriculture where women have shifted more to managerial tasks (like that in the Punjab; or in the case of dairy development in Gujarat; or in fishery sector in Kerala; or in the hilly regions of northern states). A second set of households represent women of the marginalised class where women have come out of their domestic spheres and started interacting with different categories of people within as well as outside the villages. Women in the middle strata of peasantry are likely to have experienced lesser gains in terms of an expanded socio-economic space.

### **Land Rights**

Gender gap in ownership and control over property is the single most critical contributor to the gender gap in economic well-being. The penetration of agricultural capitalism has strengthened joint families. Over time the partitioning rate of rich peasant households has been less than that of poor peasant households.

The 'technology induced' growth of agricultural production in India, has marginalised women from their traditional knowledge-based management of natural resources. It is further contended that economic globalisation subverts democracy and instead of strengthening decentralisation increases concentration.<sup>20</sup> This perspective seeks to link women's traditional

knowledge and control over natural resources with sustainable development of agriculture through a production technology based on existing eco-system rather than on the external inputs.

### Conclusion

It is now increasingly realised that the pattern of agricultural growth, based on a mechanical replication of the Green Revolution strategy is unlikely to be viable. Incremental growth in agriculture will have to shift both its regional composition i.e. from irrigated to rain-fed and dry-land regions as well as in content i.e. from input-intensive technology to knowledge and skill intensity. Through such shifts, the management of natural resources would become a priority, promoting in the process, women's access to as well as control of natural resources. Such a move would render agricultural development economically viable and environmentally sustainable, and at the same time, gender equitable. It is in this larger perspective that women's role in natural resource management and development needs to be understood.

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# Bamum-Hausa/Fulani Historical Ties in The Western Grassfields of Cameroon 1880-1920

The Hausa/Fulani who arrived in the Western Grassfields in the early twentieth century successfully established cordial ties with the Bamums. Due to such relations, coupled with the help of the German and British colonial administrators, with whom the Bamum collaborated, the Hausa/Fulani were capable of establishing permanent settlement in the Bamenda grasslands and this assured their security. Islam was introduced into the Bamum land through the influence of the Hausa/Fulani from Northern Cameroon. Thenceforth, religion became a binding force between the Bamum, Hausa and Fulani of the Western Grassfields of Cameroon.

This study sets out to examine the friendly relations that existed between the Bamums and the Hausa/Fulani of the Western Grasslands of Cameroon. It was realised that, thanks to this friendship, not only was Islam introduced into the Bamum land, but also the security of the Hausa/Fulani were assured in the Western Grassfields of Cameroon.



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### **Introduction: Geographical Location of the Western Grassfields of Cameroon**

The Western Grassfields cover what are today the North West and Western regions of Cameroon. It is carpeted for the most part by grassy highlands with peaks rising over 2000 metres. It is a fairly distinct geographical unit lying between five and seven degrees north of the Equator. It extends from Upper Cross River Basin to the middle basin of the Katsina Ala River, meandering among the range of hills running from North-West to Gayama gap. The Mbam River to the east and the Nun marshes mark it off from the Bamum area and parts of the Bamileke highlands. As a specific ecotype, the Western Grassfields are rich in natural resources and possess a healthy climate which certainly has always favoured human settlement. In the valleys, woodlands alternate with meadows, and the rainfall average is 258 centimetres a year. The average temperature is 21°C (70°F). The rainy season lasts from the end of March to early November while the dry season lasts from December to March.<sup>1</sup>

### **Historical Presentation of the Bamums and Hausa/Fulani in the Western Grassfields**

The Bamum kingdom was a major kingdom in the Western Grassfields of Cameroon. Its people originated from the Tikar country from around the Adamawa region. Due to internal squabbles, Fulbe raids, population pressure or the need for new lands, a new wave of migration from their original territory called Rifum took place. From there, they subjugated the peoples beyond the Mabe and Mui rivers which are the Fumban of today. From Rifum, they moved to Njimom. The Bamum were led out of Tikar, just ahead of the Nso, by a prince of Tikar, Nchare, who eventually became the first Fon, establishing the Bamum dynasty. Later, the dynasty moved from Njimom and finally settled at Mfom-Ben, which is Fumban today.<sup>2</sup>

The Hausas are said to be people of mixed ancestry, having descended from a union of an Arab husband and a Sudanese woman. They ruled kingdoms in between the Niger River and eastern Sudan. These kingdoms were said to be very powerful and extensive in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These kingdoms were destroyed by the Fulani who themselves established a feudal empire extending from present-day Northern Nigeria to Northern Cameroon.<sup>3</sup>

**The Hausas are wholly distinct as an ethnic group from the Fulani and have different historical and linguistic backgrounds as well as a distinct difference in physical appearance. They are a large group based in Northern Nigeria who migrated to Cameroon in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What they had in common with the Fulani was their belief in Islam. The Fulani speak a language known as *Fulfulde* while the Hausas speak *Hausa*.**

The legend concerning the origins of the Hausas claims that they came to Western Sudan from Baghdad in the Middle East. The precise date of their departure or arrival is however unknown. But it is alleged that a certain Bayajidda migrated from Baghdad to Kanem Bornu. From Kanem Bornu he crossed to the Hausa country where he was said to have killed a sacred snake which had for years deprived the people of water from a well, except on Fridays. In appreciation of this deed, Queen Daura of the first Hausa State married Bayajidda. The union gave birth to a son called Bawo. Bawo, in turn, had seven children who became the founders of the original Hausa states called *Hausa Bakwoi*.<sup>4</sup> The Hausas are mostly found today in greater numbers in Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Gabon and Cameroon.<sup>5</sup>

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nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>6</sup> What they had in common with the Fulani was their belief in Islam. The Fulani speak a language known as *Fulfulde* while the Hausas speak *Hausa*.

The Hausas are also town-dwellers who engage in trade.<sup>7</sup> The Fulani pastoralists, on their part, arrived in the Western Grassfields in the early twentieth century, more precisely in 1916. This was under the leadership of Ardo Sabga of the Gosi clan from Northern Nigeria. From there, they moved to North Cameroon. From North Cameroon, they passed through Banyo and Bamum country, before arriving in the Bamenda Grassfields where they finally settled.<sup>8</sup> The Fulani are a predominantly nomadic people who spend most of their time rearing cattle.

Our major concern in this study is to examine the historical ties between Bamum and Hausa/Fulani communities in Cameroon in general and the Western Grassfields in particular.

### Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the relationship that existed between the Bamums and the Hausa/Fulani of the Western Grassfields of Cameroon. We intend to trace the origin and evolution of the cordial intercourse between the two communities, with emphasis on the spheres within which the relations manifested. Furthermore, our focus is going to be on the observation of how these ties were strengthened and its repercussion on the Hausa/Fulani.

### Hypothesis of the Study

The study is guided by three hypothetical statements designed to handle our objectives. The hypotheses are as follows:

1. The Bamums and the Hausa/Fulani of the Western Grasslands established friendly ties during the early twentieth century.
2. German and British colonial administration facilitated peaceful co-existence between Bamums and Hausa/Fulani in the Western Grassfields.
3. The Hausa/Fulani gained a lot of security in the Bamenda Grassfields from the Germans and the British thanks to their friendship with the Bamums.



King Njoya Ibrahim of Bamun

### Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the study will contribute to the history of peopling of Cameroon in general and the Western Grassfields in particular. It will also furnish us with an in-depth knowledge of the friendship that existed between the Bamums and Hausa/Fulani communities of the Western Grassfields of Cameroon.

### Methodology

Interviews were conducted in the field with the help of a questionnaire from 2000 to 2002. Our informants furnished us with a great deal of information on the issues addressed. Information for this study was also collected from archival material. Published and unpublished works

written on related subjects on the area were also consulted. Both the thematic and chronological approach has been used in writing the article.

### Trade

One of the major factors that contributed to the migration of the Hausas from Northern Nigeria to Cameroon was trade.<sup>9</sup> The Hausas were massively involved in caravan trade over long distances in items like ivory, rubber, kolanuts and gutta-percha.<sup>10</sup> Their participation in this trade and the above commodities can be traced back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Internal trade in Cameroon is said to have been dominated by Hausa traders who set up barriers and prevented local monopolists from extending their trade to the coastal areas. Hausa long distance trade took them as far as the Bamum country where trade links were established with the indigenous population.<sup>11</sup>

These trade relationships resulted in cultural exchange, thus enabling the Hausas to benefit from the remarkable cultural advancement of the Bamums. Bamum is a chiefdom of over 600,000 inhabitants,<sup>12</sup> where many extraordinary achievements were recorded under the native king Njoya. Bronze works, wood carving and other arts and crafts were practised by the people under the warm encouragement of their sovereign, who did not want his people to forget their culture in the presence of easily-purchased, European-manufactured goods.<sup>13</sup>

One of the early trading activities which attracted the Hausas to Cameroon was the Trans-Saharan slave trade. Hausa traders bought slaves in the interior of Cameroon and sold them to waiting buyers up North and along the coast. During this period, Bamum slave dealers made slaves available to Hausa slave buyers after which the slaves were channelled to the coast and sold to European buyers.<sup>14</sup>

### Influence of Religion

Besides the influence of trade, religion also acted as a motivating factor for Hausa migration to the Western Grassfields. A good number of Hausas had been converted to Islam by the fifteenth century. The Fulani conquest of Hausa land began with Uthman Dan Fodio's first victory over the army of Yunfa, king of Gobir, at Tabkin Kwatto in 1804. The effect of this victory was tremendous. Yunfa at once, warned other Hausa kings of the growing Fulani danger as the Fulani excited by Uthman's victory were rallying under his banner in large numbers. Alarmed, the Hausa kings began to attack Fulani communities within their states. The result of this unprovoked attack was to rally the discontented Fulani throughout Hausa lands to the support of their kinsman Uthman.<sup>15</sup> Jihad thus became a racial as well as a religious war.

In 1805, leaders of Fulani communities all over the North came to Uthman. He gave flags or symbols of authority to each leader urging them to conquer unbelievers in their areas and establish true Islam. Following this, Kebbi, Zaria, Katsina, Gobir and Kano fell to the Fulani jihadis between 1805 and 1809. By the end of the latter year, the conquest of Hausa was almost complete.<sup>16</sup>

The launching of the Islamic holy wars of Uthman Dan Fodio in Adamawa by Modibo Adama and his recruitment of Hausa/Fulani volunteers marked an important turning point in the history of the coming of Islam. This resulted in the conversion of many Hausas/Fulanis to Islam, thanks to the Islamic education they received. Some of them became great clerics and Islamic scholars who further promoted the purification and spread of Islam after the jihad.<sup>17</sup>

However, it was only during the twentieth century that the Islamic religion was officially driven into the Bamum chiefdom. This was due to the initiative of the Lamido of Banyo. It happened during one of those occasions when King Njoya was preparing for a decisive battle

against Gbetkom to secure his throne. It was during the reign of Njoya that we witness the first contact with and conversion to Islam of the Bamum aristocracy. As a matter of fact, the introduction of Islam in the Bamum country was closely related to the insurrection staged by Gbetkom against the young king.

According to existing sources on Bamum history and culture, it is said that Gbetkom was the first Titamfon, who was the senior adviser of Nsangou, the fifteenth monarch of the Bamum dynasty. In this context, Gbetkom was a loyal, intelligent and faithful servant of the king. His master was greatly satisfied with the services rendered to him.<sup>18</sup>

Apart from the exemplary servant that Gbetkom proved to be, he also envied the position of the king. As such, Gbetkom engaged in a bloody conflict with the king and his life was only spared thanks to the intervention of the queen-mother. Njoya, it should be noted, was very young when his father, Nsangou died, shortly before Njoya's encounter with Gbetkom. This was during a punitive expedition against the Nso. Faced with this difficult situation and the necessity to maintain the unity of the kingdom, the queen-mother decided to assume regency while waiting for Njoya to attain the right age. It was during that moment that Gbetkom was invited to assume the role of first adviser to the king.<sup>19</sup>

Some time later, Gbetkom started expressing his ambition of taking over the throne. His intention was to forcefully seize the throne from the queen-mother, thus distancing the young Njoya from the throne. Njoya had to resist Gbetkom with all his force. This resulted in a civil war that lasted for almost two years. The civil war had serious repercussions as it divided the Bamum population as well as the Bamum capital.

Despite the deteriorating political situation, the strength of Njoya doubled, thanks to the military support he was getting from his neighbours. Gbetkom also tried to obtain some military assistance from his neighbours in the South to defeat Njoya and his armies. A few neighbouring villages who were not happy with the domination of the Bamum king gave Gbetkom some military support in the form of arms and people to fight for him.<sup>20</sup> Njoya faced with this imminent danger sent a desperate plea of help to the Fulani Muslim leader, Lamido Oumarou of Banyo, irrespective of the opposition of some close collaborators.<sup>21</sup>

The Njoya-Gbetkom war in which the Fulanis were involved lasted from 1892-1894. The Fulanis in question here were those from the kingdom of Kontcha, which was part of the Banyo Lamidat. They belonged to the Wallarbe clan. It was the father of Lamido Oumarou, Haman Gabdo who founded this southern Lamidate of the Fombina emirate. It was also Haman Gabdo who received the flag of spreading Islam through jihad from Modibo Adama in the Adamawa region.<sup>22</sup>

**Weighing his choices, and taking into consideration the political relations based on solidarity between kings or rulers, Lamido Oumarou decided to act in favour of king Njoya. The Lamido who accepted the request arrived in the Bamum country with a contingent of Fulani and Hausa warriors to help the young sultan. Having arrived, the Muslim army merged with that of Njoya and started preparing for an eventual battle. But then, before the commencement of hostilities, Oumarou ordered his troops to pause for prayer. He invited the mallams who were leading the prayers to evoke 'Allah' to help them assure victory.**

The young sultan addressed himself directly to Lamido Oumarou of Banyo, asking for help so as to put an end to the rebellion and preserve the throne. Being aware of the consequences that would be the inevitable companion of the help coming from the Lamido of Banyo, Gbetkom equally solicited the help of Lamido Oumarou of Banyo. He promised the Lamido that in the case of a victory and elimination of Njoya, they will divide the kingdom among themselves. It was alleged that the members of the royal mission sent by Njoya to the

Lamido of Banyo arrived in Banyo at almost the same time as those of the delegation sent by the rebel, Gbetkom. It is also said that Gbetkom was informed of the initiative undertaken by his rival Njoya, and that he wanted to double-cross Njoya's emissaries in Banyo.<sup>23</sup>

Divided between the necessity of rescuing a floundering king and his ambition of having half of the Bamum kingdom, Lamido Oumarou sought guidance from the sages of Emir Zubeiru of Yola. The latter responded to him as follows:

A king is a king and a subject is a subject. You ought to rescue a king and not the subject because it is God himself who has wanted that one of them (Njoya) becomes more honourable than the other (Gbetkom),<sup>24</sup>

Weighing his choices, and taking into consideration the political relations based on solidarity between kings or rulers, Lamido Oumarou decided to act in favour of King Njoya. The Lamido, who accepted the request, arrived in the Bamum country with a contingent of Fulani and Hausa warriors to help the young sultan. Having arrived, the Muslim army merged with that of Njoya and started preparing for an eventual battle. But then, before the commencement of hostilities, Oumarou ordered his troops to pause for prayer. He invited the mallams who were leading the prayers to evoke 'Allah' to help them assure victory.<sup>25</sup> Following the Islamic tradition, the Fulani and Hausa warriors evoked God. A mallam recited a verse of the Quran followed by his palms facing the sky after which the cavalry answered.<sup>26</sup>

The Bamums were very impressed with the ritual gestures of the Muslim combatants, including the lifting of their hands to the sky and bowing down altogether, while evoking God as 'Allahu Akbar' continuously. The posture and way in which the Muslim soldiers accomplished their prayers charmed the Bamums greatly.

In the course of the battle, the Muslim soldiers destabilised their adversaries and captured many of Gbetkom's rebels who tried to use the general panic to escape. In a very short period, the Muslim soldiers were able to put to an end the most destructive civil war ever experienced by the Bamums. This demonstration of force had an immense impact in the minds of the Bamums and Njoya, the young king. The Muslim cavalry inspired the Bamums to greatly fear God and admire Islam.

Njoya then asked the Lamido of Banyo what was at the origin of his success in the war. The Lamido of Banyo responded by sending him a rosary, a white gown, a turban and a trouser. Lamido Oumarou added that what gave him victory was that he is a Muslim and prayed to God (Allah).<sup>27</sup> This was how Islam made its appearance to the Bamum kingdom through its king and political leader of the kingdom. In order to consolidate and affirm the new Islamic religion of the Bamum aristocrat, Lamido Oumarou decided to leave behind some mallams to follow up and show the right way to the new Muslims. These mallams had a mission to convert the Bamum to Islam,<sup>28</sup> to teach them the prayer rituals and all the other obligations of the Muslim faith, not forgetting the importance of legislation so as to model the kingdom's administration to that of the Lamidat of Banyo. Islam was adopted by the Bamums peacefully and not violently.<sup>29</sup> Njoya solicited the services of Mallam Abou Baker together with that of a certain Njidda who had the prime task of spreading the Islamic faith in the Bamum chiefdom. He was later replaced by Mallam Moussa who came from the North.<sup>30</sup>

At the end of the war, while most of the Fulani volunteers returned to Banyo, their Hausa counterparts and a few Fulanis stayed back to settle in Fumban. They quickly established friendly ties with the Bamums. Sultan Njoya, who was happy with the victory facilitated by them, accepted the settlement of the Hausa/Fulani in his kingdom and made land available for them.<sup>31</sup>

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Hausa settlements had already emerged in the Bamenda Grassfields. This was further facilitated by the arrival of groups of Hausa from

Nigeria into the region. They migrated into the region in groups under specific leaders after passing through Takum, Ngaoundere, and Fumban while some proceeded to the Bamenda Grassfields. They first temporarily settled at Mendankwe, Nso and Wum villages in 1900 before establishing their permanent settlement at Abakwa-Old Town Bamenda in 1918.<sup>32</sup>

Prominent among Hausa group leaders who arrived at the Bamenda Grassfields were Mallam Balarebe and Mallam Baba.<sup>33</sup> The two leaders were familiar with the Bamenda Grassfields as their long-distance trading adventures had earlier taken them to the area. They had already built cordial trading relations with the indigenous population of the area in 1898.<sup>34</sup> The Hausa/Fulani who settled in Fumban established ties of friendship with the Bamum people thanks to periodic exchange of gifts between Hausa/Fulani leaders and the Bamum kingdom. There was even some intermarriage between the Hausa/Fulani and the Bamums. This was mainly facilitated by the fact that all of them were practising the same religion, Islam. Here, we can see some socio-cultural integration between the Bamums and the Hausa/Fulani of the Western Grassfields of Cameroon.

The German annexation of Cameroon in 1884 and their eventual expansion into the Bamenda Grassfields made possible the opening of their administrative station in Bali in 1889. The Bali station was transferred to Mendankwe in 1902 not far from the temporary Hausa settlements in Medankwe.<sup>35</sup> The serious resistances witnessed by the Germans in the area obliged them to establish friendly relations with the Hausas whose support they needed. This was provoked by some Hausa leaders' hold over the region. The Germans recruited the Hausas as spies, guides, porters and interpreters. Consequently, the Hausas become a force to reckon with in the Western Grassfields.<sup>36</sup>

Another important reason that facilitated the building of friendly relations between the Germans and the Hausas in the Bamenda Grassfields was the cordial ties that existed between the former and the latter in Bamum.<sup>37</sup> The Germans arrived in Bamum in 1902 and Sultan Njoya informed them of the Hausa/Fulani found in the Bamenda Grassfields. The Bamum people collaborated with the Germans through their king Sultan Njoya after Captain Ramsey arrived in Bamum and was well-received. Hausa collaboration with the Germans guaranteed their security.<sup>38</sup>

The Hausa community at their temporary settlement in Mendankwe was headed by Mallam Balarebe until the outbreak of World War I in 1914.<sup>39</sup> The eventual ousting of the Germans at the close of hostilities in 1916 in Cameroon led to the dispersal of the Hausa settlement in Mendankwe. A good number of these Hausas went to Fumban probably because of their friendship with Germans and partly because of the hospitable attitude of Sultan Njoya. Another reason was the fact that Sultan Njoya had embraced Islam.<sup>40</sup>

Sultan Njoya, in his usual manner, provided security and land to the Hausa for settlement. This resulted in a tremendous growth of the Hausa community in Bamum and further strengthened the friendly ties that already existed between the two groups.<sup>41</sup>

The defeat and ousting of the Germans in February 1916 from Cameroon led to the partition of the territory into British and French Cameroons in March of the same year. The southern part of the British sphere which was later referred to as Southern Cameroon included the Bamenda Grassfields. Following the partition of 1916, the British military officer, George Macaulay, who was assigned to administer the Bamenda Grassfields, found it difficult to gain access into the territory.

Having been used to German rule, the inhabitants of Bamenda were not in a mood to welcome the British authorities. In order to facilitate their administration of the area, the British eventually relied on the Hausas who had earlier collaborated with the Germans; especially those

who remained at Mendankwe. G.S. Podevi decided to negotiate the return of the Hausas from Fumban.<sup>42</sup>

However, George Macaulay, who now gained access to the interior, eventually requested the Hausas at Fumban to return to the Bamenda station, but Sariki Balarebe refused. Instead, the four British soldiers sent to bring the Hausas successfully convinced Balarebe's assistant, Mallam Baba, who accepted to return to their former settlement. After receiving blessings from Sultan Njoya, Mallam Baba left with an enthusiastic Hausa community and arrived at the Bamenda station via Babessi and Bamessing.<sup>43</sup> Sultan Njoya pleaded with the four British soldiers not to maltreat his guests.

Following the footsteps of the Hausas were the Fulani pastoralists who benefited from the security found in the Bamenda Grassfields and migrated there. The Fulani also passed through the Bamum land before entering the Bamenda Grassfields. Because of the fact that the Fulanis were the original followers of Islam in Fumban, Sultan Njoya did not hesitate to ask the British colonial administrators to also ensure their security in the Bamenda Grassfields. The Fulani, under the leadership of Ardo Sabga, founded their first settlement at Babanki-Tungo overlooking the Sabga plain. The security of the Fulani was even more assured by the British colonialists due to the cattle tax (Jangali) they paid to the administration. Following the footsteps of the Hausas were the Fulani pastoralists who benefited from the security found in the Bamenda Grassfields and migrated there. The Fulani also passed through the Bamum land before entering the Bamenda Grassfields. Because of the fact that the Fulanis were the original followers of Islam in Fumban, Sultan Njoya did not hesitate to ask the British colonial administrators to also ensure their security in the Bamenda Grassfields. The Fulani, under the leadership of Ardo Sabga, founded their first settlement at Babanki-Tungo overlooking the Sabga plain. The security of the Fulani was even more assured by the British colonialists due to the cattle tax (Jangali) they paid to the administration.

Prominent among the Hausas who accompanied Mallam Baba to their former settlement were Adamou, Umaru, Abdoulay and Haruna who were British Hausa soldiers trained during the war. Generally, the returning Hausa community was composed of men, women and children. Sultan Njoya despatched fourteen Fumbanese envoys to accompany Baba and his people, and offered many gifts to the departing Hausa community.<sup>44</sup>

Following the footsteps of the Hausas were the Fulani pastoralists who benefited from the security found in the Bamenda Grassfields and migrated there. The Fulani also passed through the Bamum land before entering the Bamenda Grassfields. Because of the fact that the Fulanis were the original followers of Islam in Fumban, Sultan Njoya did not hesitate to ask the British colonial administrators to also ensure their security in the Bamenda Grassfields. The Fulani, under the leadership of Ardo Sabga, founded their first settlement at Babanki-Tungo overlooking the Sabga plain. The security of the Fulani was further assured by the British colonialists due to the cattle tax (Jangali) they paid to the administration.<sup>45</sup>

When the Hausas returned from Fumban, the British resettled them at Ntamulung and Bafrend areas. As time went on, the Hausas found these new settlements non-conducive. The British Military Officer, George Macauley, shifted the settlement to *Poto Poto* area in 1916. In 1918, due to an increase in population among other reasons, the British authorities looked for a new settlement which would be larger and more conducive to habitation for the Hausa community. This was in collaboration with the village head of Mankon, Fon Angwafor II. The new settlement was named Abakpa by the new Hausa leader, Sarki Mallam Baba. The name Abakpa was later change by the Bamenda administrative authorities to Abakwa-Old Town, the reason being that they wanted people to know that the town Bamenda began in that

neighbourhood.<sup>46</sup>

Map of Africa showing Bamun kingdom



## Conclusion

The Hausas and Fulani pastoralists were able to establish permanent settlements in the Bamenda Grassfields thanks to the security they got from the German and British colonialists. This security was made possible due to the largesse and the hand of fellowship that Sultan Njoya extended to the Hausa/Fulani. This was most importantly due to the fact that the Hausa/Fulani greatly facilitated the advent of Islam in Bamum land. Sultan Njoya made use of his friendship with the German and British colonial administrators to get them to provide security to the Hausa/Fulani in the Bamenda Grassfields. The Hausa/Fulani communities that remained in Fomban also established a permanent settlement under Balarebe's leadership, thanks to the land readily made available to them by Njoya. As time went on, Balarebe named the settlement *Zango*. The Hausa/Fulani communities in Zango (Fumban) and that of the Bamenda Grassfields have maintained cordial relations and have witnessed an evolution at all levels. During important feasts such as the Feasts of Ramadan and the Feast of Ram, these two brotherly neighbouring communities exchange friendly visits. This has gone a long way to strengthen and consolidate ties of friendship between the Bamums and the Hausa/Fulani in the Western Grassfields of Cameroon.<sup>47</sup>

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- 37 Interview with Alhaji Zakari and Baba Ali, Hausa traders, Old Town Bamenda, aged 72 and 84 years respectively, 25 and 14 December 2002.
- 38 Ibid.
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43 Ibid.

44 Awasom, "Hausa and Fulani", pp. 43-45.

45 Ibid.; Pelican, "Getting along in the Grassfields", pp. 254-256.

46 Ibid., pp. 50-51.

47 Interview with Sarikin Hausawa Usmanu, Old Town, Bamenda, 68 years, on 25 December 2002.

Picture Source:

1. <http://blackethics.com/date/2010/07/> accessed on 20 December, 2010.

2. [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fb/Bamun\\_Kingdom.gif](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fb/Bamun_Kingdom.gif) accessed on 20 December, 2010.

# 'Sourcing the Story: The Archive Anew and Archives New' [Annual Conference organised by The History Association, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University]: A Report

Pratyay Nath recently submitted his M.Phil. dissertation on Mughal warfare at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His areas of interest include warfare and state-formation in medieval India. Passionate about medieval history, Pratyay runs a Medieval History Club with young sophomores and fellow researchers.

He is also the editorial assistant of *Global South*.



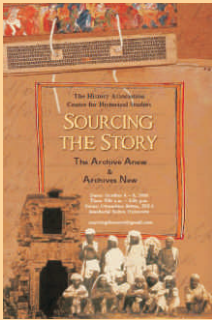
Pratyay Nath

The annual students' conference is a grand affair at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, involving large-scale involvement of post-graduate and research students of the Centre at every level. Every year, it sees participation of research scholars from different universities across the country as well as overseas. This year the theme was 'Sourcing the Story: The Archive Anew and Archives New'. In a span of three days, the organisers decided to take a look on the new sources that budding historians are using as well as the new ways in which the latter are interpreting traditional sources. The conference accommodated twenty-one papers in all, spread over nine panels, with three panels on each of the three days.

The conference showcased a whole range of research themes, exploring a diverse gamut of sources. The first session of the first day, titled 'The Official, Mined' focused on reading the official archive. It was chaired by Prathama Banerjee and Rahul Govind was the discussant. By highlighting how versions of the brutal pre-partition riot varied radically among the social groups represented by

the Hindu *bhadralok*, the Muslim citizens and the police, Sugata Nandi showed in his paper ‘Written Subject, Unwritten Subjectivities: Rethinking Official Informants of the “Great Calcutta Killing” of August 1946’ how different sources remember and explain the same event in different ways. Anandaroop Sen in his paper ‘Raiding a History: Stories from 19th Century Tippera’ brought forward different narratives that went into the making of the regional identity of colonial Tripura. Charu Singh’s paper, ‘Learning to Predict: Meteorology and Famine in Colonial India’ focused on the colonial invention of the South Asian ‘monsoon’ and its representations in the colonial discourse.

The second panel, named ‘Literary Texts and the Historical Imagination’ dealt with pre-modern texts and was chaired by Romila Thapar, while Shonaleeka Kaul was the discussant. The first paper, ‘Reading between the Lines: *Vasudevahindi*, a Non-Canonical Jain Text, (c. 600 A.D.)’ by Ashish Kumar demonstrated how relatively less used non-Sanskrit texts can alter our notions about ancient Indian society. The next paper, ‘Becoming Hindus and Muslims: The *Kavyas* of Medieval Bengal’ by Saumya Dey focused on the question of Hindu-Muslim identity as reflected in the medieval *kavya* literature of Bengal.



Conference Poster

The third panel titled ‘Spaces of Culture, Practices of History’ had M.S.S. Pandian as the chair, and Veena Naregal as the discussant. In her paper ‘Interpreting Caste and Labour in the Archive: A Study of Scavengers in South India’, Vidhya Raveendhranathan focused on the construction of the scavenging caste in the official discourse of colonial South India. Kuljeet Singh, in his paper ‘Mapping Campus Theatre Tradition: Shift from Colonial to *Desi* on the Campus of the University of Delhi’, shared the evolution of the theatrical tradition over the years in the institutions of higher education in Delhi.

The second day began with the fourth panel of the conference, named ‘The Place of Space’ with Kunal Chakrabarti as the chair and Aparna Vaidik as the discussant. With the general theme as the spatial history, Digvijay Kumar Singh spoke on the evolution of the maritime space in early medieval South India in his paper ‘Narrating the Coast: Maritime Perception of Malabar, c. 9th – 14th c. A.D.’. Kaustubh Mani Sengupta spoke about the making of the neighbourhood in the context of a colonial city in his presentation ‘Writing the *Para*: Some Notes on the Places and Spaces of Colonial Calcutta’.

The fifth panel, named ‘Not Set in Stone’, was chaired by Kesavan Veluthat, and the discussant was Vijaya Ramaswamy. In her paper ‘Ambalavasi Groups of Ancient And Medieval Keralam’ Anna Varghese spoke on the representation of certain social groups in sources of pre-colonial South India. Mamta Dwivedi’s paper ‘Exploring Numismatics as a Source: The Case of Yaudheya Copper Coins (c. 300 B.C. to A.D. 300)’ demonstrated the value of coins as sources for writing political history, especially of the ancient period. The name of the panel, as pointed out by Ramaswamy, was somewhat incomprehensible as both the papers drew on epigraphic material written on stone.

The sixth panel named ‘Memory, Orality, History’, housed three papers dealing with oral

history, mainly of the partition of India, and its sources. It was chaired by Prof. Neeladri Bhattacharya and the discussant was Dr. Nonica Datta. Pallavi Chakravarty in the paper 'Representing Partition in the East' dealt with the oral recollections of the traumatic event of Partition. Suranjana Ganguly's paper on 'Recording the Untold Stories of Post-Partition Refugee Women in Kolkata' explored the lives of women in refugee settlements of Calcutta through a series of interviews. Akanksha Kumar's presentation, 'Dalit Refugees from West Pakistan in Post Partition Delhi' talked about the lives of dalit immigrants into India in the aftermath of Partition.

The third day began with the seventh panel of the conference, titled 'Reading the Languages of Law.' It was chaired by Prof. Sunil Kumar, while Sanghamitra Mishra was the discussant. Tripti Deo explored the world of the bards of Rajasthan in her paper 'Charans of Rajasthan: Variegated Representation in the State Chronicles and Petition Records'. Ruchika Sharma, in her presentation 'Wills and Court Cases: Studying 'Domesticity' in Early Colonial Bengal' studied the private realm through the lens of legal documents.

The eighth panel, named 'Behind the Visual, Beyond the Image' concerned itself with visual sources. Dr. Kavita Singh was the chair and Sabeena Gadihoke the discussant. Shailka Mishra, in her paper 'Suratkhana at Amber-Jaipur: A Note on the Sources' spoke about the relevance of textual sources in understanding the nuances of visual ones. Sanjukta Sunderason shared with the gathering the complex scenario of art in late-colonial Bengal in her paper 'The Aesthetic Archive: Framing and De-framing Visual Arts'. Sonam Joshi talked about the arrival of the camera and photography in colonial India in her presentation 'Amateur Photographers and Commercial Studios: Debating Photographic Practices in Colonial India'.

The last panel of the conference, 'Scenes from the Past: Seeing the Unseen' was also about visual sources. Dr. G. Arunima was both the chair and the discussant for the panel. Pratyay Nath spoke on the role of military culture in the construction of Mughal miniature paintings in his paper 'War-Elephants in the Miniatures of Baburnama: Mughal Military Culture and the Constitution of a Visual Archive'. Srinayani Reddy's paper 'Imaging History: Court Paintings of Hyderabad and the Samasthanas' portrayed the construction of political authority through court paintings.

Punctuated by sumptuous lunch and chatty tea sessions, and encouraged by the generous chairs and encouraging discussants, the conference proved to be a great platform for young scholars to share their enthusiasm and work with their colleagues. The gracious hosts ensured that informal spontaneity was quick to replace any probable formality and unfamiliarity among the participants from different universities. And for students of the Centre, like the reviewer, the conference delivered the joy of home-coming.

# Remembering Anjan Ghosh

Jishnu Dasgupta teaches history at Serampore College, India. He is also a columnist and activist, an aesthete, lover of music, old things and the City of Joy. Amidst all this, he also manages to put some work in for *Global South*.



Jishnu Dasgupta

Anjan Ghosh is easy to remember. All who came in touch with him would be forever marked by that infectious smile, that perpetually restless spirit, the Lenin-like looks. But even more than that what left a lasting mark was his keen intellect and ever-present helping hand. This Fellow at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences was indeed a wealth of resources for any researcher in any field of the social sciences. With his vast reading, and the near miraculous ability to keep all the references tucked neatly into specific corners of his mind, Anjanda could critique a scholar's treatise or lead her to new sources that even an adept in the field was unaware of. And with the greatest joy he would share the contacts built over long years with anyone who needed to partake of such help, often in unfamiliar, if not inhospitable quarters a researcher is forced to visit. I, for one, owe him a debt of gratitude on all these counts.

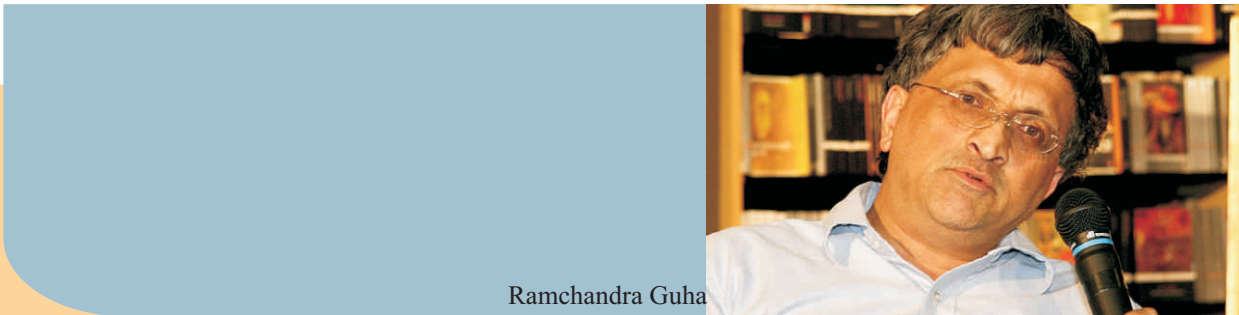


Anjan Ghosh

So, it was no surprise that Anjanda was remembered in the way he should have been— by academic lectures given by two scholars who are known to be among the most erudite at this point of time. The first, organised by the West Bengal Sociological Association, which would miss his leadership sorely, and his

alma mater, St. Xavier's College, was held on 18 December 2010. the college, where Anjanda pursued a Bachelor's degree in English, also hosted the auditorium. The memorial lecture was given by Ramachandra Guha, his student at the Indian Institute of Management decades earlier. As befitting the man who is probably India's best known public intellectual, Guha took on a sweeping subject– the plight of the Adivasis in India after independence. It was also a topic close to Anjanda's own heart, as he had himself done considerable work on the topic.

Guha identified, in as detailed a manner as is possible in a lecture, the many tragedies that the tribals/Adivasis have had to undergo in independent India. Some of the points, like their being concentrated in only a few parliamentary constituencies, rendering them unworthy of being cultivated as a votebank, were telling. Others, however, were fraught with the dangers inherent in liberal historiography, such as the 'failure' of the tribals to throw up a leader of the stature of the Dalit messiah, B.R. Ambedkar.



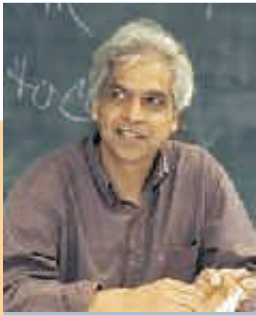
Ramchandra Guha

But even such a personality-dependant sense of history was not the chief fault of the paper. Rather, it was blindness to certain options that did not fit his own idea of right. Thus, having identified painstakingly the many perfidies of the Indian state, the miseries visited on them by the resourcefulness of the land they inhabit, craved by capitalists for timber, and even more so, the mineral riches, the many displacements they have to suffer, the violence, legal and illegal inflicted on them, and the absolute lack of democratic redress, he then proceeded to lament that the Adivasis are not seeking relief within the constitutional mechanism. The arch-liberal failed to, or refused to, see why the Maoist guerrillas find these peoples the most likely source of recruits. And, as a citizen, all he had to offer was a call to the rebels (and not the legal and extra-legal arms of the state) give up weapons. Not surprising, perhaps, in a scholar who idolises Jawaharlal Nehru, a left-liberal politician who, as India's first Prime Minister had few qualms in crushing tribal resistance in the North-Eastern parts of the country.

Surely, Anjanda would have loved the lively debate sparked by Guha's controversial defence of the state, as he thrived in the atmosphere of academic debate. A lifelong radical would have also adored the way people, including undergraduate students of the college, tore into the statist position. But I sincerely doubt if he would have found it in him to appreciate the apartheid Xavier's displayed in the sitting arrangement, sitting students and academics in different areas and on different chairs.

The second memorial lecture was hosted and organised by the Centre of Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, where Anjanda spent much of his career as a teacher. Gyanendra Pandey noted subalternist historian and a long-time collaborator of Anjanda spoke on difference as the mark of subalternity, presenting a case study of three such groups– the African-Americans, the Dalits and women. A deft weaving of the diverse material, presented in Pandey's captivating manner, material that will form part of a forthcoming memorial volume for Dr. Ghosh. He marked out how physical markers of difference have been repeatedly employed to portray the subaltern as different, and, by definition, inferior.

But this member of the audience, like many others, felt rather at a loss as to why that needed to be said. That has, after all, been known for decades now in various branches of theory that deal with subalternity. Moreover, the additive nature of the source material also raised inevitable questions of why these were the models/experiences to be chosen, and why not others. What of the differences in the markers, and not just the similarities? Or was Pandey looking for a subaltern model of solidarity, given his inaccessibility to the older model of class? More disturbingly, as Rajarshi Dasgupta (Jawaharlal Nehru University) pointed out in the ensuing discussion, all such a discourse could achieve was to give the state a very handy manual of target categories for its welfare projects by enumerating these markers of difference/subalternity and grading them, so to say. And surely, to aid in governmentality could not be the aim of Pandey's project?



Gyanendra Pandey

In the end then, Anjan Ghosh was remembered by contentious lectures on subjects that were close to his heart, by people who were close to, organised and hosted by institutions he was closely associated with. One could almost picture those sparkling eyes shining under the bald pate, relishing such a feast. For *Global South* too, his passing is an irreparable loss, for he, as a Sephis coordinator, had taken the most active interest in our affairs. Adieu, Anjanda, we would all miss you.

Picture Source:

1. [http://www.google.co.in/imgres?imgurl=http://images.businessweek.com/ss/09/04/0415\\_india\\_most\\_powerful/image/ramchandra\\_guha.jpg](http://www.google.co.in/imgres?imgurl=http://images.businessweek.com/ss/09/04/0415_india_most_powerful/image/ramchandra_guha.jpg), accessed on 10.01.2011.

2. [http://www.google.co.in/imgres?imgurl=http://college.emory.edu/home/assets/images/headshots/faculty/pandey\\_gyanendra.jpg](http://www.google.co.in/imgres?imgurl=http://college.emory.edu/home/assets/images/headshots/faculty/pandey_gyanendra.jpg), accessed on 10.01.2011.



# A Puzzle of Repression: On “Memories of the City. Signals of State Terrorism in Buenos Aires”

Memoria Abierta, *Memorias en la ciudad. Señales del terrorismo de Estado en Buenos Aires*, y Editorial Eudeba, Buenos Aires, Agosto de 2009, 270 pages.

Florencia Paula Levín holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Buenos Aires. She is currently professor at the National University of General Sarmiento, where she teaches several courses on recent history. Her research deals with history of the recent past in Argentina and she has co-edited (with Marina Franco) the book “Historia reciente. Perspectivas y desafíos para un campo en construcción” (Paidós, 2007). She is also a co-founder of the Interdisciplinary Network for the Study of Recent History ([www.riehr.com.ar](http://www.riehr.com.ar)).



Florencia Paula Levín

Memoria Abierta, *Memorias en la ciudad. Señales del terrorismo de Estado en Buenos Aires*, y Editorial Eudeba, Buenos Aires, Agosto de 2009, 270 pages. The recent history of Argentina is crossed by violence, massacres, death and disappearance of thousands of people (as well as the defeat of several projects of social change and transformation) within the framework of the activity of a state terrorism apparatus. It is a history that is associated with traumatic social processes, in the sense that such processes have threatened the very existence of social links and were experienced as moments of deep breaks and discontinuities, both from an individual and collective point of view.

Although the origins of violence have complex, deep and ancient roots, the paroxysm of its utilisation with political motivations is without doubt the start of a massive, planned and large-scale system in more than 360 clandestine detention centres scattered throughout the country, a plan initiated by the military that took power on 24 March 1976. Around 30,000 men and women passed through those centres and then appeared in the list of *desaparecidos* (disappeared), most of whom were executed after ferocious torture sessions.

The specificity of the *disappearance* crime consisted of its clandestine

character on one hand, and on the intention of erasing all proofs, including the disappearance of the victims' corpses, on the other. A complex machinery, organised and hierarchical, defined a *modus operandis* for the massacre, which included kidnapping and sending victims to their clandestine torture centres for assassination, with more or less long captivity periods in between.

More than 25 years have gone since democracy took over that ominous past of repression and extreme violence. Those 25 years have witnessed the long and arduous work of re-institutionalisation of political life in the country, a process that implied the trial of the military establishment that controlled power during the time of state terrorism. Moreover, it has been a time of intense work by the human rights groups that continued their fight against impunity and oblivion. Finally, along the way several academic groups were organised around the study and research of the recent past and its multiple and conflictive memories.<sup>1</sup>

*Memories in the City*, a work by the Memoria Abierta association<sup>2</sup>, currently receiving SEPHIS support for a project to preserve social memory, should be considered in the crossings of ethical, political, pedagogic and academic tasks and aims that emerge from the wounds left open by state terrorism. It is not easy to classify like *Memorias en la Ciudad*, that puts together and expresses a large variety of registers and reading levels constructed from an ample, systematic and extremely valuable investigation that includes the use of testimonies, photographs, physical evidence and memories.



Book Cover

### Topography of Horror, Topography of Memory: When the City Talks

*Memories in the City* constitutes a fundamental contribution to the reconstruction of what happened through the fragmentary and disperse tracks received from that ominous past. One of the main contributions of this work is the reconstruction, systematisation and organisation of a group of cues or “entrances” to habit, walk through and think about the city of Buenos Aires from its recent histories and memories. Certainly, the book proposes an alternative use of urban space that emphasises the suppressed history of every place where the military dictatorship condensed its nuclei for the dissemination of terror. The authors seek to transform each of these spaces in a bid to represent the memory of the recent past.

The book is organised by topographic criteria that allows one to visualise the city and its neighborhood. The cover includes a map of the city of Buenos Aires divided into nine sections, each of them numbered and coloured individually. The book contains 9 chapters, which correspond to these nine sections of city. Moreover, each chapter is introduced by a more detailed map of that section, the neighbourhood and an internal index that allows a specific trajectory. The arrangement of the index might be according to important places of recent history and memory or names of the victims of state terrorism (referred to individually or collectively). Most indices are presented within an expanded map that contains references as to how to get there. Everything is also represented photographically.

In addition, the book offers a detailed, valuable and meticulous reconstruction of fundamental fragments of the recent past and its protagonists.<sup>3</sup> In this way, the book

reconstructs the traces of violence scattered in buildings and public spaces of the city (streets, sidewalks, parks). Some of these places are important, like the Plaza de Mayo- epicenter of the political life of the country and site of the encounters that the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the disappeared) maintained since 1977 in their fight for truth and justice, or the building of the School of Mechanisms of the Navy (ESMA), the site of one of the main clandestine centres of detention and torture. But this work also reveals the less visible marks, of more fragile and intimate memories, that are erected from plaques, writings and other cues that often go unseen by the occasional passer-by.

As pieces of a complex puzzle, the links of this work offer a fundamental clue to the urgent and difficult reconstruction of what happened in the recent past of Argentina and of the multiple (and never enough) attempts for its remembering.

Through this complex device, then, diverse voices, registers, languages and representations are conjugated and organised into a lattice of histories- histories of the clandestine mechanism of horror, of the victims and their relatives, of public and private memories. These registers and memories signal landscapes, propose routes and also alphabetise the historic view so that the use and modes of habitation of the city do not bury the remembrance of what happened. In other words, *Memories in the City* constitute a global attempt against oblivion- not only of what happened in the past but also that of their memories and narratives.

- 1 Actually, only in the last fifteen years a specific academic field for the study of recent history and memories was constituted.
- 2 Memoria Abierta is a coordinated action of Argentinean organisations for Human Rights whose central aim is to increase the level of information and social consciousness about state terrorism, as well as enriching democratic culture. It is composed of the following bodies- Permanent Assembly for Human Rights (APDH), Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS), Foundation for Social and Historic Memory of Argentina, Mothers of Plaza de Mayo (Founding Line) and Justice and Peace Service. By means of intensive activity that includes professionals from several disciplines, Memoria Abierta develops actions related to the preservation, production and systematisation of archives that record what happened during the years of state terrorism and is also creating a Museum of Memory. Some of their specific actions include a photographic archive, an oral archive, a documentary archive and the “topography of memory” project. Each of these sections, from their own specificity, contributes to increase the cultural heritage of the Memoria Abierta.
- 3 For their work, Memoria Abierta used the results of the work carried out by relatives of disappeared people and by human rights organisations, as well as research which included a systematic search for information in newspapers, magazines, legal transcripts, interviews, photographs etc.

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