

The Nation-State as Guardian of Difference and Globalisation as the end of Difference?:

A Postcolonial Dissent

Sanjay Seth

Globalisation, nowadays widely regarded as one of the defining features of our age, is commonly seen to be a phenomenon or process that is characterized by two new and distinctive features. First, it effects a leveling out of heterogeneity or difference; everyone, everywhere, is increasingly subject to the same social ‘logics’. Second, and following from the first, this results in a diminishing capacity of the nation-state to perform its role of representing the cultural particularity or difference that renders a people distinct from others.

In this essay I dispute both these propositions. In the first part I contest the proposition that the nation-state has a diminishing capacity to represent cultural particularity by suggesting that this was never its function- on the contrary, the universalization of the nation-state form was itself the consequence of an earlier globalization of modern European epistemological and political categories. In the subsequent parts I engage arguments that insist that only the unfolding logic of the global modern provides the conditions for challenging it, because that logic has effaced all difference and thus all other possible grounds from which any critique could issue. The globalization of capitalist modernity means, according to such arguments, that there is no longer any vantage point ‘outside’ the logic(s) of capital, and thus that the only possibility of critique is an immanent one. I suggest instead that we need to be able to think of difference as that which is neither outside of capitalist modernity, nor subordinated to its logic.

What is at issue in this essay, then, is how we conceive of difference, and how we seek to remain attentive to it even in the era of the global modern; and whether globalized modernity is so totalizing that the only forces capable of challenging it are those produced by its own logic,

Postcolonial Theory and the Critique of the Nation-State

It is often thought that an acknowledgement and recognition of difference is in fact one of the central and organising principles of the world order, in the form of the nation-state;

and those who oppose the homogenizing effects of globalization therefore often do so in the name of the nation-state, seen as representing cultural particularity. Now, at one level it is all too apparent that the nation-state is a historically specific polity, and that its generalization represents the universalization of a political culture which is, in its origins, Western. How, then, could the generalization of the nation-state possibly be seen as something that codes and preserves difference? Because a distinction is usually made between the genealogy of the international system and its subsequent trajectory. Hedley Bull and Adam Watson write:

“The present international political structure of the world- founded upon the division of the earth into separate states, their acceptance of one another’s sovereignty, of principles of law regulating their coexistence and co-operation...is, at least in its most basic features, the legacy of Europe’s now vanished ascendancy.”¹

What was once parochially European has now become global - and thus for Bull and Watson, to treat the nation-state and the international system founded upon it as the norm is not to be guilty of Eurocentrism. Bull and Watson write, “it is not our perspective but the historical record itself that can be called Eurocentric”.²

What I draw attention to here is a widely used intellectual ‘move’- Bull and Watson only make explicit what for many others remains implicit- which allows one to argue that, in becoming global, what was once the European-modern ceased being specifically (and thus parochially) European. And what makes this stance plausible is the history of anti-colonial struggles, where nationalism appeared as the riposte of the oppressed, the manner by which they sought to seize control of their destiny and fought for their place under the sun, as well as the form (nationhood) which their liberation ultimately took. Bull and Watson write, “The most striking feature of the global international society of today...is the extent to which the states of Asia and Africa have embraced such basic elements of European international society as the sovereign state, the rules of international law, the procedures and conventions of diplomacy and international relations”.³ And why did the non-West desire to adopt a political institution not produced out of their own traditions and ways? Because- this is the most common answer- while

the nation-state may be a European form in its origin, as form it can be filled with any content, and is thus capable of being used to code and express and embody the specificity, that is, the cultural and other particularities, of non-Western countries. The struggles of oppressed peoples against colonial domination was, in the form of nationalism, a struggle conducted in the name of their difference; and the success of these struggles, culminating in the overthrow of colonialism and the establishment of independent and sovereign nation-states, meant that non-European peoples could claim their place in the world without losing or surrendering that which made them different and underwrote their desire for political independence in the first place. In this account, the winning of independent statehood by the colonised functioned to admit the once-excluded to the international system, whilst allowing them to participate in it as peoples possessed of their own unique particularities, expressed and embodied in their nationhood.

This presumption rests upon a distinction between form and content, and universal and particular, that is itself a characteristically modern one. According to this, the modern world is characterised by an increasing rationalization that separates form from content. As David Kolb explains it (in the course of explicating Weber), “What is distinctive about the modern situation is that the universal rules have become quite formal and do not specify any content to the particular case...[moreover] the separation of universal and particular has become institutionalised.”⁴ We see this logic at work in discussions within liberal theory about the equality and rights of individuals. We are all individuals, and the universality of this becomes the basis for regarding persons as equally worthy of respect, of rights and so on; but we are also all individuals, and now the accent on ‘individual’ provides the basis for valuing autonomy and for the expressivist notion that each person must cultivate his/her unique personality, in order to most fully and genuinely ‘become’ himself/herself. Similarly, because the nation form is universal and not the prerogative of any one peoples, all nations are equally entitled to respect, and to formally equal status in global forums. But at the same time each nation also represents and embodies the unique features of its peoples. And thus, notwithstanding that the nation-state first emerges in Europe, it is not a European particular merely masquerading as a universal, because this

form is an empty one, into which any content can be poured; it functions precisely as an empty container which can be filled with different sorts of content.

But this is the nub. The form/content distinction conceals more than it reveals. The nation-state is not an empty container into which anything can be poured; it already has a content. The nation-state presupposes (and thus helps to create) certain relations between authority and the people, between custom and law, knowledge and practice; it presupposes certain forms of selfhood and community. This means that the nation-state cannot serve as the vehicle for expressing those aspirations which do not already accord with or ‘fit’ the frame of nation, state and modernity; and indeed may ill serve as the vehicle for recovering and expressing what is autochthonous, rather than Western and derivative, about a political community and culture. From this perspective the fact that the colonized and marginalized sought to assert themselves through nationhood represents not an escape but rather a continuation, even an intensification, of a moral-epistemological and political subordination to the West. That we could ever suppose otherwise is a testimony to the extraordinary narrowing of horizons which has been one of the consequences of modernity; that we can imagine no form of selfhood other than the individual, no form of autonomy other than independence, no form of community other than the state. From this perspective the universalization of the nation-state was one of the most decisive- and perhaps most catastrophic- forms by which Europe became, to borrow Daniel Defert’s felicitous phrase, “a planetary process...rather than a region of the world.”⁵

Nor is this narrowing of possibilities consequent on the globalization of the nation-state a benign matter, a mere shrinking of options. The privileging of nation and state normalizes and authorizes certain expressions of particularity, and pathologizes others. Forms of self and community that cannot be so coded- which exceed or are otherwise not homologous with the state- must be remade so that they can be so coded. Modernization and nation-building, those vast and often violent projects of modernity of which the state has been both a means and an end, in fact involve a high degree of social engineering, the coercive component of which increases proportionately to the difficulty of fitting and forcing the particularity concerned into the mould of nationhood and statehood. Peasants have to be

taught/forced to become Indian or Chinese; kinship, or caste, or the numerous other solidarities and forms of social organization to be found in the world have to give way to (or be subsumed by) citizenship; old public arenas must give way to new ones, and old rituals and practices of identity to the rituals of citizenship and statehood. We have been witnessing precisely this for some time now, in the bloody and unlamented century just passed, and this is why, when confronted by the demands to champion either globalization or state sovereignty, one should declare a plague on both houses.

Farewell to Difference?

The importance of the nation-state, conceived as a way of coding and representing other cultures and forms of life, has been perhaps the most common way in which (some) moderns have sought to give life to difference. But if, as I argue above, it is a fragile or even self-contradictory basis upon which to conceive or seek to defend difference, are there any others? There is an argument, emanating from the Left, which concludes that the logic of capitalist modernity is itself the only source for its supersession. The argument here is that that which preceded modernity or was once outside it was so oppressive and devoid of emancipatory possibilities that compared to it, capitalist modernity is to be preferred and should be welcomed; in any case, nothing has escaped the logic of capitalist modernity, and there is thus no vantage point (no ‘outside’) from which one could conceive of opposition and resistance; and finally, and relatedly, that the potentials unleashed by this modernity are the only source and hope for transcending it.

In short, difference is beside the point, or rapidly becoming so: transcending or surpassing the oppressive logic of capitalist modernity can only be achieved immanently.

I will take as my two examples of this argument two highly influential texts (published some twenty years apart), Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* and Marshall Berman’s *All that is Solid Melts into Air*. Both issue from and identify with the Left, and both invoke the spirit, and sometimes the letter, of Marx. Hardt and Negri cite Marx’s writings for the *New York Daily Tribune* on India in 1853, where Marx, while denouncing the hypocrisy and greed of the British in India, also declares that in destroying earlier forms of social organization and life such as the village community, British colonialism was proving “the

unconscious tool of history” by “laying the material foundations of Western society in Asia,”⁶ and was to be welcomed for that reason. Approvingly referring to Marx’s unsentimental willingness to see the progressive and utopian possibilities of the globalization of his day, they declare that a similar recognition “is what prevents us from simply falling back into particularism and isolationism...pushing us instead to forge a project of counterglobalization.”⁷ Similarly, Berman powerfully recapitulates Marx and Engels paean of praise to capitalism and bourgeois society in the *Communist Manifesto*, not only or even principally for its tremendous technological achievements, but also because it has (in Berman’s words) “liberate[d] the human capacity for drive and development: for permanent change, for perpetual upheaval and renewal in every mode of personal and social life.”⁸ Instead of “constructing idealized fantasies of life in tradition-bound small towns”, we should remember, as Marx and Goethe did, “the cruelty and brutality of so many of the forms of life modernization has wiped out”, and thereby render ourselves “immune to nostalgic yearnings for the world we have lost.”⁹

In short, the ‘world we have lost’ is not worth mourning. Capitalist modernity, for all its destructiveness, has by contrast opened up unparalleled possibilities, and critics of this modernity need to embrace it and its possibilities: “the fullest and deepest critique of modernity may come from those who most ardently embrace its adventure and romance.”¹⁰ Hardt and Negri reach the same conclusion. For all its violence and inequities, the “new global form of sovereignty...we call Empire”¹¹ is to be welcomed, just as Marx welcomed capitalism as a historically progressive development: “We claim that Empire is better in the same way that Marx insists that capitalism is better than the forms of society and modes of production that came before it. Marx’s view is grounded in a healthy and lucid disgust for the parochial and petty hierarchies that preceded capitalist society as well as on a recognition that the potential for liberation is increased in the new situation.”¹²

Both texts position those who disagree as being guilty of ‘nostalgia’ or ‘fantasies’ (Berman), or of ‘particularism’, ‘parochialism’ and ‘isolationism’ (Hardt and Negri). Not only is the past is not worth returning too; there is in any case no possibility of returning to it, for it is well and truly gone. Marx shared the view that the past was not worth

returning to, but he did not think it was well and truly gone, and indeed in a letter to Engels even worried that it might suffocate the future:

“The specific task of bourgeois society is the establishment of a world market...this seems to have been completed by the colonization of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan. The difficult question for us is this: on the Continent the revolution is imminent and will immediately assume a socialist character. Is it not bound to be crushed in this little corner, considering that in far greater territory the movement of bourgeois society is still in the ascendant?”¹³

Writing more than a hundred years later, Berman is not plagued by doubts of this kind, for he adjudges that the all-encompassing nature of modernity has done its work so thoroughly that there is no longer any ‘outside’ left. Indeed the notion of an outside, put forward by narodniks of all varieties, by some Third world elites, and by 60s and 70s radicals who saw the ‘wretched of the earth’ as a revolutionary vanguard because they were uncorrupted by modernity, is either an act of bad faith or ruinously mistaken.¹⁴ Hardt and Negri make a similar judgement- there is no Third World, no ‘non-West’, for these are themselves the effect of the global machine, and thus offer no license for an ethical or political project which might counterpose them to the universal and the global: “It is false...to claim that we can re-establish local identities that are in some sense *outside* and protected against the global flows of capital and Empire.”¹⁵ Indeed, Hardt and Negri go further- theories which have emphasized the binary nature of modern and colonial thought and sought to deconstruct it are fighting a disappearing target: “the postmodernist and postcolonial theorists who advocate a politics of difference...have been outflanked by the [new, global] strategies of power. Power has evacuated the bastion they are attacking and has circled around to the rear to join them in the assault in the name of difference.”¹⁶

Is the choice, then, between either accepting the inexorability and desirability of the global modern, in order that we may harness and deflect its logic to emancipatory ends; or else seeking an ‘outside’, that which has been untouched by capitalist modern, and which may, therefore, constitute a form and basis of resistance to it? As in the first part

of the essay, I will reject the options we are offered by challenging the terms in which such choices and debates are set up. Below I argue that the undeniable ubiquity of the global modern does not mean that the world has been subordinated to a single logic; but also that the differences that continue to mark the modern are not, and should not be conceived as, pre-capitalist and pre-modern ‘survivals’.

Global Capitalist Modernity and the Question of Difference

The Marxist tradition has sometimes made an important distinction between ‘real’ and ‘formal’ subsumption, in order to distinguish processes and life-forms that have become subordinated to the logic of capital, but had not been completely re-ordered and remade according to that logic. In *Provincializing Europe* Dipesh Chakrabarty, reading Marx somewhat against the grain, suggests that for Marx, once capital has fully developed, there are certain historical transformations (eg., the separation of labour from the land) which appear, retrospectively, as the logical presuppositions of capital. That is, once one has grasped the structure of capital (which can only be done retrospectively, when capital is triumphant and its structure clear), one can see that certain historical events and processes are a necessary part of its emergence, are posited by capital as the conditions for its own emergence (that is, one can see that the *logically* necessary conditions for the emergence of capitalism also *historically* occurred). But there are other elements of the past, which capitalism also encounters as antecedents to it, but- Chakrabarty quotes Marx- “not as antecedents established by itself, not as forms of its own life-process.”¹⁷ These are pasts that are not ‘outside’ capital, but nor are they the logical preconditions of it, *necessary* elements in the history of capital. In other words, Marx accepts, according to Chakrabarty, “that the total universe of pasts that capital encounters are is larger than the sum of those in which are worked out the logical presuppositions of capital.”¹⁸ These other pasts may be part of the ‘premodern’ past of a society, but they also may not, consisting (for example) of comportments, bodily rhythms, and structures of affect which coexist with capitalist global modernity, but are not part of the world that it posits. That is, multiple ways of being human- which are not part of the logical structures and historical processes of globalizing capitalism, and the global modernity that it helps to

produce- continue to inhere, even where global modernity has done its work most thoroughly. Modern life may be shaped and animated by the logic of capitalist modernity, but it is not a coherent or singular whole, for that logic has not reshaped and remade everything. Difference- that which is not subsumed by this logic- continues to exist, though “difference, in this account, is not something external to capital. Nor is it something subsumed into capital. It lives in intimate and plural relations to capital, ranging from opposition to neutrality.”¹⁹

Addressing a very different question- that of the increasing absurdity of treating countries such as (say) India, China and Brazil as not-yet-fully-modern, as being somehow in ‘transition’- Charles Taylor also argues that modernity, whilst possessed of a logic which transforms and reshapes, is not singular. Asking why we assume it to be so- why we privilege the European historical experience, treating it as that which all societies must undergo if they are to be classed as modern- he argues that this understanding of modernity arises out of a conception of modernity in which “modernity is conceived as a set of transformations which any and every culture can go through...Modernity in this kind of theory is understood as issuing from a rational or social operation which is culture-neutral...a general operation that can take any specific culture as its input.”²⁰ In fact, however, modernity is not just a set of economic and institutional arrangements, but also the practices, beliefs and background assumptions that enable these economic and institutional arrangements to function. Why then does this account assume that the background assumptions and practices of the modern will not even be inflected in any major way by the traditions they encounter? Because what is implicit and often explicit in this account is the view that what Taylor calls the ‘culture of modernity’ is not on a par with other cultures. It is not simply one more way of construing and constructing human identity and its place in the world: “At the heart of this explanation is the view that modernity involves our ‘coming to see’ certain kernel truths about the human condition”²¹, such as instrumental rationality, and the assumption that the individual is somehow more basic and more real than any collective. Taylor rightly rejects this account of modernity, and the accompanying narrative that tells us that the culture of modernity is the privileged bearer of certain universal and trans-historical truths. He offers instead a way of conceiving modernity in which the cultures of regions that become modern leave

a lasting imprint on that modernity: "If the transition to modernity is like the rise of a new culture...[then] the starting point will leave its impress on the end product ...transitions to what we might recognize as modernity, taking place in different civilizations, will produce different results that reflect their divergent starting points...new differences will emerge from the old. Thus, instead of speaking of modernity in the singular, we should better speak of 'alternative modernities'."²² In this account of modernity, the 'difference' between, say, India, China and Brazil and the countries of the West is not the space of a time lag, where the former are bedevilled by 'survivals' of the past that are destined for (eventual) extinction, but rather of different starting points which lead to different outcomes, so that modernity is seen to exist, but to exist in the plural rather than the singular.

Above I have offered two ways of conceiving of 'difference' such that it appears neither as a relic of precapitalism which, being out of harmony with the logic of capitalist modernity, will eventually succumb to that logic, nor as that which is itself produced by capitalist modernity and is therefore not difference at all. 'Religion' is an obvious example of this. The secular modern state treats the religion of its subjects as a private matter partly because the state (and social science) regards religion as matter of 'belief', and ritual and religious observance as the outward manifestations of these internal beliefs. But the view that religion is principally a matter of belief, and that religions vary according to what is believed, is a product of a very specific, European and Christian history. This is one in which deism and the 'discovery' of 'natural religion' play a large part, for it was the presumption that there was a natural religion underpinning all religions that gave rise to the view that religions were systems of belief. Peter Harrison argues that in England in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries "'religion' was constructed along essentially rationalist lines, for it was created in the image of the prevailing rationalist methods of investigation...inquiry into the religion of a people became a matter of asking what was believed..."²³ If religion was conceived as a matter concerning belief, it is this, conversely, which made it possible to invent the category 'religion', as the species of which different religious beliefs are the genus; it is in the course of the history of Christianity and debates around it in Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment Europe that 'religion' and 'belief' emerge as mutually constitutive

categories. Thus the very notion of 'religion' is itself "a Christian theological category"²⁴, "a modern invention which the West, during the last two hundred years or so, has exported to the rest of the world."²⁵

In many parts of the world, however, what is designated by the term 'religion' is not in fact a matter of 'beliefs', located in something called 'the mind'. For the vast majority of Hindus, for instance, their religious practice is not an expression of their religious beliefs-as Max Muller, the 'founding father' of comparative religious studies, discovered when he quizzed Indians who had arrived in Oxford about their religion, only to discover that "they hardly understood what we mean by religion. Religion, as a mere belief, apart from ceremonies and customs, is to them but one, and by no means the most important, concern of life, and they often wonder why we should take so deep an interest in mere dogma, or as they express it, make such a fuss about religion."²⁶ For many Hindus their religious practice is not constituted through the beliefs they hold, just as they do not 'believe' that their numerous gods exist, but rather know them to coexist with humans. Whatever the validity may be of seeing these gods as (in Durkheims's words) "exist[ing] only because they are represented as such in minds"²⁷ such interpretations are far removed from the Hindu understanding, in which gods and humans coexist as persons.²⁸

As long as such ways of being religious- that is, 'religion' as an array of practices and a way of being in the world amidst the gods, rather than a set of propositions one subscribes to- do not come into conflict with the boundaries created and policed by the state, it does not matter that the modern state's understanding of religion is at odds with the self-understandings of many of its people. The modern understanding of 'religion as belief' is (often, though not always) sufficient for the state's purposes of separating out a private sphere of religion where people may believe whatever they wish, and a public sphere where they are citizens subject to law. In cases such as these, we could say (borrowing from Marx and Chakrabarty) that a formal subsumption, rather than a real subsumption, has taken place; certain forms of being human have found a niche in the interstices of capital and the modern state, without being subordinated to their logic. Or, borrowing from Taylor, we could say that modernity has affected great transformations,

but in each case these ‘reflect their divergent starting points’, such that ‘new differences...emerge from the old’.

If this is true, then the view that globalized capitalist modernity has effaced difference, or is the process of doing so, such that there simply is no viable ground from which to view and resist modernity, is mistaken. There continue to be features of life (forms of affect, modes of being a self, ways of being-in-the-world) and institutions and practices that are not subordinated to a singular logic of capitalist modernity. This is especially so in the non-Western world, where the rush to statehood in the era of decolonization did not entirely efface other forms of organizing community and political life; where the citizen has not become the only form the self can take, nor the state the only form a common life can assume. But it is also so in the very heartlands of modernity, where for many people the natural world is not disenchanted and devoid of meaning and purpose, god(s) are not dead, ‘superstitions’ thrive, and practices of self-making are not always exercises in autonomy. Of course, to argue for the importance of attending to difference is not to argue that all differences are attractive, or oppositional, for the differences in question, in Chakrabarty’s words quoted earlier, “live in intimate and plural relations to capital, ranging from opposition to neutrality.” Whether they are grounds upon which opposition to global modernity can be based, or should be based, will be a matter for political and ethical judgement. But this will not be a judgement based upon notions of ‘survival’ and ‘transition’. That “‘rationalization’ has begotten an efflorescence of witchcraft and magic” in late twentieth century Africa²⁹, for instance, may be something we approve or disapprove of; but we cannot disapprove of it and consign it to the dustbin of history on the grounds that it is a survival of the past that has lingered on too long.

For these reasons, I dissent from arguments that conclude that the time when it was ethically and politically important to attend to difference have passed. But I do so without contesting the fact that the global modern is real, and without seeking to track down ‘survivals’ of a pre-modern past; and also without regarding the nation-state and its sovereignty as the representative of this past and this difference. I argue, rather, that the world has not been subordinated to a single logic, that difference has not been surpassed, and thus that we still need to attend and to work our way ‘through’ difference.

Postcolonial theory is a useful tool in that enterprise- not as a form of nostalgia for a vanishing world, nor as the voice of the premodern subaltern, but rather as that which keeps us sensitive to what is ‘in’ but not ‘of’ capital and the global modern.

¹ Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, “Conclusion”, in Bull and Watson (eds), *The Expansion of International Society*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984, 2.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, 433.

⁴ David Kolb, *The Critique of Pure Modernity: Hegel, Heidegger, and After*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, 15.

⁵ Quoted in Mary L. Pratt, “Scratches on the Face of the Country: or, What Mr Barrow saw in the Land of the Bushmen”, *Critical Inquiry*, 12:1 (Autumn 1985), 125.

⁶ Quoted in Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Harvard University Press 2000, 119.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁸ Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, New York: Simon and Schuster 1982, 94.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹¹ A form of sovereignty “composed of a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule” - Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, xii.

¹² *Ibid.*, 43.

¹³ Letter to Engels, d. 8 October 1858, in Shlomo Avineri (ed), *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization*, New York: Doubleday 1968, 439.

¹⁴ Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, 29.

¹⁵ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 45.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 138.

¹⁷ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, 63.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 64

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 66.

²⁰ Taylor, “Two Theories of Modernity”, *Public Culture*, 11:1, 1999, 154.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 170.

²² *Ibid.*, 161-62.

²³ Peter Harrison, '*Religion' and the Religions in the English Enlightenment*', Cambridge University Press 1990, 2. See also Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993; Peter Byrne, *Natural Religion and the Nature of Religion: The Legacy of Deism*, London and NY: Routledge, 1989; Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Faith and Belief*, Princeton University Press, 1979; David A. Pailin, *Attitudes to Other Religions: Comparative religion in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Britain*, Manchester University Press, 1984; Rodney Needham, *Belief, Language and Experience*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972; Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*, University of Chicago Press 2005; and Jean Puillon, "Remarks on the Verb 'To Believe'" (trans. John Leavitt) in Michael Izard and P. Smith (Eds), *Between Belief and Transgression*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

²⁴ Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mystic East'*, London: Routledge, 1999, 40.

²⁵ John Hick, "Foreward" to Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991, vii.

²⁶ Max Muller, *Anthropological Religion*, London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1892, 155. Ethnologists in contemporary times continue to make the same discovery. For instance, Lawrence Babb, conducting an ethnology of popular Hinduism in Central India, finds "There is practically nothing to be gained in questioning Chattisgarhi informants about what they believe, for this is simply not the primary context in which religious matters are understood"- *The Divine Hierarchy: Popular Hinduism in Central India*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1975, 31.

²⁷ Quoted in Sue Stedman Jones, "The Concept of Belief in *The Elementary Forms*", in N.J. Allen, W.S.F. Pickering and W. Watts Miller (eds), *On Durkheim's Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, London: Routledge, 1998, 55.

²⁸ Ashis Nandy writes, "Deities in everyday Hinduism...are not entities outside everyday life, nor do they preside over life from outside; they constitute a significant part of it...Gods are above and beyond humans but they are, paradoxically, not outside the human fraternity"- Ashis Nandy, "A report on the present state of health of the gods and goddesses in South Asia", *Postcolonial Studies*, 4:2 (July 2001), 126. There is no sharp separation between a sacred realm inhabited by gods and a mundane one of men; as C.J. Fuller observes, popular Hinduism is "premised on the lack of any absolute divide between them....human beings can be divine forms under many and various conditions, and the claim to divinity is unsensational, even banal, in a way that it could never be in a monotheistic religion lacking 330 million deities."- C.J. Fuller, *The Camphor Flame: Popular Hinduism and Society in India*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, 31

²⁹ Jean and John Comaroff, "Introduction", in Jean and John Comaroff (eds), *Modernity and its Malcontents*, University of Chicago Press 1993, xiv.