Mujeebu Rahman Vazhakkunnan

CONSTRUCTING THE PRIMITIVE: THE CONCEPT OF "TRIBE" WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CALICUT UNIVERSITY B.A SOCIOLOGY CURRICULUM

Abstract

This article is an attempt to investigate the process of tribal identity construction through BA Sociology study materials as well as in social science literature. To be more specific it examines the dominant group's construction of Adivasi identity. If we situating the knowledge production and knowledge transmission within the learning context of undergraduate level, it can see that, the "dominant culture" has a key role in shaping sociology knowledge. Within the discourse of modernity, it is conceived of the 'modern' and its 'other' in terms of knowledge-inferior, progressive-backward, civilized-primitive, society-community, and sociology-anthropology. It is these binaries that served as the intellectual ground on which Indian sociology was developed within the larger concerns of the colonial state in India. This paper examine the representation of "Tribes" by taking B.A Sociology study materials as means to interrogate the experiences of learning sociology at the undergraduate level within a view to unveiling the nature of ideological relations that underlie knowledge production and knowledge transmission within B.A sociology syllabus of Calicut University. The examination of the construction of dominant culture made one aware of the predominant stereotyping of the tribe as 'primitive'. The article adopts the assumption that identity can be constructed and negotiated via curriculum.

Keywords: Curriculum, Dominant Culture, Ideology, Hegemony, Selective Traditions, Tribe

Introduction

This paper is about the construction of tribal identity by the dominant culture. The examination of the dominant culture made one aware of the

MUJEEBU RAHMAN VAZHAKKUNNAN, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Institute of Tribal Studies and Research, Chethalyam, University of Calicut, Kozhikode, Kerala, India

predominant stereotyping of the tribe as 'primitive'. This paper use B.A Sociology study materials as means to interrogate the experiences of learning sociology at the undergraduate level within a view to unveiling the nature of ideological relations that underlie knowledge production and knowledge transmission within B.A sociology syllabus of Calicut University. In this connection, the reading passages of **"SOC5 B.09 Social Anthropology"** study materials, which are available for students of BA Sociology under University of Calicut, were analyzed with reference to ideologies embedded in them. The present paper sought to analyze how Tribal and Adivasi identities are representing and constructing through university study materials. This paper is purely qualitative with theory-based content analysis. The paper adopts the assumption that identity can be constructed and negotiated via curriculum.

The development of sociology at the undergraduate level like other disciplines of the social sciences was carried out entirely from within the larger framework of the university and initiated during the colonial period. Just like any other branches of undergraduate level study, the sociological practice at the undergraduate level forms an integral part of the larger institutional structure of sociology that is engaged in research and teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Sociological knowledge at the undergraduate level performs the dual functions of acting, first, as a feeder for postgraduate departments, and second, a public function, wherein students can use a sociological imagination to positively engage with society in their diverse relationships within the social worlds they inhabit.

Generally, classroom viewed as a learning context for undergraduate level, which is supposed to be an autonomous space that makes possible a range of different kinds of learning interactions. The learning context through its engagements and practices can give shape to a discipline both in terms of rigor and relevance as well as creativity and criticality. However, even if a learning context represents an autonomous sphere of learning, it is important to recognize the various kinds of influences that subjects bring with them into learning contexts.

In order to meet the learning requirements of undergraduate students, University have rendered most by producing a host of "study materials" directed at helping the vast majority of students to cope with the examinations. Often written by undergraduate teachers, these "study materials" ensure that students can get through the examinations without any kind of constructive engagement with the subject. At the undergraduate level, the culture of learning is stamped by the all-encompassing presence of the "study materials" and "guide books". All courses in the undergraduate curriculum have these "study materials" and "guide books" whose main function is to offer students simple and ready to reproduce solutions to possible questions in examinations. At the undergraduate level these guides and study materials often serve as effective means of rendering irrelevant any pedagogical practice that might prove to be

demanding and challenging in the classroom. Not surprisingly then, it is possible to imagine a student of sociology achieving BA degree without him/her ever engaging with a single sociological text throughout the entire three years of this BA Programme.

Further, if we situating the knowledge production and knowledge transmission within the learning context of undergraduate level, it can see that, the "dominant culture" has a key role in shaping sociology knowledge. It would not be wrong to say that it is their own individual and collective experience that served as the basis for their understanding and representation of society. The dominant discourse within Indian sociology, as Patel (2006) observes is essentially constituted within the study of caste and Hindu society, which informs its observations of Indian society. Nineteenth century European sociology was explicitly oriented towards the study of the modern. Within this discourse of modernity, it conceived of the 'modern' and its 'other' in terms of knowledge-inferior, progressive-backward, civilized-primitive, society-community, and sociology-anthropology. It is these binaries that served as the intellectual ground on which Indian sociology was developed within the larger concerns of the colonial state in India.

Anthropological writings, popular articles, and coffee-table books on tribes reinforce certain images in which they wish to project them. These writings and pictures earnestly wish to captivate the readers' attention, thereby promoting their sale. For serving this interest, it would be better if they succeeded in capturing the "bizarreness" of tribes, showing them as head-hunters, tattooed, cannibals, practicing some strangest forms of marriage and with their family, cooking, disposing of their dead, wearing more of jewellery than clothes, and living in compact pockets, having least communication with the outside world (Srivastava 2008). These are the images in which non-tribals wish to see their tribal brethren. Therefore, notwithstanding the changes of vast scale and magnitude that the tribal society is experiencing all over the world, the irony is that the writers on the tribes (and their photographers) wish to keep them "frozen", in the representations of "oddities", as "romantically different and bewitching" as they could be. Not only that, we have also come across cases where tribal leaders and entrepreneurs try to preserve certain aspects of their traditional culture (calling them "pristine"), for it has a roaring marketable value. Cultures are showcased for the market (ibid).

Michael Apple's *Ideology and Curriculum* (Apple 2010) is a foundational text in the new sociology of education and in curriculum studies more broadly. In particular, Apple's *Ideology and Curriculum* interrogate the connections between economic and social reproduction and everyday school life and curricular knowledge. Although considering a range of oppressions, *Ideology and Curriculum* focuses largely on the reproduction of economic inequality. In this regard, Apple's book was one of the earliest and most prominent examples of neo-Marxist curriculum theory in the United State, largely setting the stage

for a generation of scholars interrogating the links between social reproduction and the curriculum (Dimitriadis 2010).

Perhaps the most lasting and enduring contribution of *Ideology and Curriculum* has to do with the interrogation of curriculum knowledge. As Apple made clear, curricular knowledge does not stand outside of existing power structures and relationships. That such knowledge typically appears neutral or disinterested only underscores its particular force and power. Drawing on the work of Antonio Gramci and Raymond Williams, Apple highlights the ways in which ideology, hegemony, and selective tradition work to produce certain forms of legitimate knowledge in school settings. By ideology, Apple refers to the ways distinct political agendas and ideas are linked together to create broader and more cohesive explanatory mechanisms. In *Ideology and Curriculum*, Apple focused on the ideological press for new forms of standardized management and control in school life. These ideological forms saturate everyday life in schools through the proliferation of legitimate forms of knowledge.

Such ideologies work to maintain what Apple (drawing on Gramsci) called hegemony. As opposed to more coercive forms of social control, hegemony works to legitimate existing forms of power through the production of commonsense. In *Ideology and Curriculum,* Apple discusses the role of the curricula in maintaining existing, hegemonic social relations. For example, he discusses the ways social conflict is elicited from existing school life in favor of more seamless narratives of social cohesion. Here, as well, a seemingly neutral scientific curriculum is favored over and above one that engages in social and economic conflicts, including those around social class. For Apple, structural economic inequality is naturalized, made to seem immutable – just the way things are. School knowledge is a key site where this common sense is produced.

School knowledge is also a product of what Apple calls (following Williams) selective traditions. That is to say, the school curriculum reflects only certain kinds of knowledge and not others. When one sees the curricula as selective, Apple demonstrates, one sees it as the product of invested actors, situated in particular social, cultural, and economic contexts. Knowledge does not simply fall from the sky. As Apple argues, when one sees the curricula as selective, one must explore the political implications of knowledge selection and transmission. In years to come, Apple would extend this focus on the so-called official curriculum to explore the range of ways in which the curricula work to benefit certain groups and interests and to marginalize others.

Ideology and Curriculum highlighted the ways school life is saturated by hegemonic forces. Although the focus was largely on the curricula, he also stressed the ways teachers, researchers, and other educative agents worked to normalize this technical approach to school life. In particular, he looked at

the proliferation of particular, remedializing categories and labels and how the field of education sorts young people by and through categories and labels such as slow learners, under-achievers, and so on. These categories and labels are deployed in the service of technical rationality – used to sort young people by so-called ability to seemingly maximize the school's resources most efficiently. As Apple argues, these categories and labels work as part of a self-perpetuating cycle, perpetrating inequality in the service of seemingly neutral, clinical, or remedialiazing ends.

With regard to education, Apple (2010: 168-170) noticed that, education reproduces the norms, values, dispositions, and knowledge of a society. Usually, these norms, values, dispositions, and knowledge will be those of dominant groups. According to him, the curriculum participates in the reproduction and at times subversion of dominant meanings and knowledge and the production of new meaning and identities. It is itself a cultural product, created out of the tensions, conflicts, and compromises over what should count as legitimate or official knowledge. In answering the question of what knowledge is of most worth, it is also must take account of the equally crucial question of whose knowledge is of most worth and of new cultural productions.

This focus on ideology, hegemony, and selective tradition would mark Apple's approach to the field of curriculum studies – one that looked to explore the connections between the organization and selection of school of knowledge and broader social structures. In many respects, Apple offered a more sociological approach to the curricula. In focusing on school knowledge as a site of hegemonic control, Apple helped set the stage for generation of critical pedagogues and also, he helped open up space for educators to contest power through rearticulating everyday school knowledge and practices.

Imagining the "Other": An Indian Debate on Sociology and Anthropology

Orientalism (1978), Edward Said's classic critique of European Imperialism, discusses the concepts of knowledge and power as they relate to the Imperial enterprise in the Orient (Said 1978). According to Said Orientalism is based on the "ontological and epistemological distinction made between the "Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident" (Said 1978:2). These distinctions are based on the politics of difference and hierarchy between the Occident and the Orient, promoting a "relationship of power and domination" which "puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand." (Said 1978:7). Thus, the idea of Western racial and cultural superiority over "oriental backwardness," promoted through Western academic, philosophical, and other cultural expressions, is seen as central to the promotion and protection of the European Imperialist ventures. Orientalism, then, is a systematic discourse, "a corporate institution for dealing with the Orient-dealing with it by making statements about it,

authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism (can be seen) as Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1978:3).

Scholars accuses this due to the Eurocentric nature of the Social Sciences which alienates "the Indian intellectuals from the mass movements" (Bhaduri 2010). For a similar reason, Guru complaints that the Social science discourse "is being closely disciplined by self-appointed juries who sit in the apex court and decide what is the correct practices according the canons" (Guru 2002). In their recent well debated book "Cracked Mirror", Gopal Guru and Sundar Sarukkai brought the attention on how Western constructs giving precedence to ideas over experience have, for long, dominated theorization in Indian social sciences (Gopal Guru and Sundar Sarukkai 2012). Since the late 1960s, anthropologists in the North have recognized that their discipline was associated with a colonial project and that the knowledge, which they created, and the discipline, which they organized and institutionalized, represented the 'othering' of the east (Patel 2011). Uberoi *et al* (2007) have done an exemplary survey on this debate as it exists within anthropology. Cohen (1997) has called this process as the 'objectivation' of knowledge, that is, the coding of the colonized country, such as India, to make it available for colonization.

Sujata Patel highlights two separate but connected dominant positions that have structured the sociological traditions in India. These are: a) colonialism and its practices and b) ideologies of nationalism and notions of nation and nationhood (Patel 2011). This political project of colonialism divided the study of two kinds of societies into two disciplines – sociology as a study of 'us', the modern western society; and anthropology as the study of the 'other', the non-modern societies. It is well-accepted truism that, according to Patel, sociological theories are enmeshed in normative projects. Sometimes these projects are explicitly stated but often implicitly argued. These normative projects are projects of power. Patel also assessed the implication of this process on the making of sociology in India. According to her, the seminal assumptions relating to colonial modernity were embodied in the discipline of anthropology, as contemporary sociology was identified in India. This episteme structured at the first level, the construction of academic knowledge regarding societies in the west as sociology and the east as anthropology and created a hierarchy between them by associating the value of modernity on sociology (the study of modern societies) and that of the non-modern East on anthropology (the study of the other). In turn anthropological knowledge divided the East in separate geo-spatial territories of political states, with each territory given an overarching value. (ibid).

The tribe was constructed primarily as "primitive" by Western culture. The ways, in which the tribes all over the world have had their histories written, however diverse and non-universal they have been, illustrate some common features. The condition of many of the indigenous people all over the world

has been described as containing the feature of the "primitive". The terms "tribe", "aborigine", "savage", and 'barbarian" have been used. The discipline of Anthropology, along with many other disciplines, was one of the sites where these articulations took shape. As Adam Kuper says: "Speculations of the primitive society took a distinctive and novel version and crystallized with Anthropology between 1860s and 1870s (Kuper 1988).

The myriad ways in which Adivasi has been seen is represented by the variety of terms available. For instance, they include terms like "savage", "primitive", "barbarian", "aborigine", "tribe", "Scheduled Tribe", "Adivasi", "indigenous people", "the fourth world", "girijan" or "vanavasi". Each term has its specific connotation and history. Tribal study in India or study relating to multi-dimension of tribes in India started during late British period, particularly after 1930s. From 1930 to 1950 British scholars only undertook such studies. Areas they studied are macro covering socio-cultural and political and economic life of tribe. Studies are intensive, formal, holistic and substantvist. From 1950 to early 1970 Indian anthropology and sociology got influenced by British. Their concept, method and approach were followed by most Indian scholars. Subsequently American anthropologists, scholars from Africa and other regions also influenced/motivated Indian scholars. However, till early 1970 Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown's method became most popular method for Indian scholars. Accordingly, G.S. Ghurye (1963), D.N. Majumdar (1937), Nirmal Kumar Bose (2007), Surajit Singha, S.C. Dube (1998), A.R. Desai (1977), B.K. Roy Burman (1994), L.P Vidyarthi (1976), Andre Beteille (1986) and other scholars' contribution are noteworthy in field of tribal study in India. Further controversy arose among scholar, reformer and administrator to describe tribe in India. Risely, Lacey, Elwin, Grigson and others describe tribe as aborigine or aboriginal. Hutton calls them primitive tribe. G.S.Ghurye describes them so-called aborigine or backward Hindu. Some scholars describe them Adivasi and scholar like S.T Das designates them 'submerged humanity' (Das 1989).

Constructing the "Primitive": The Case of Social Anthropology Study Material of Calicut University

In the seminal volume *"Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter"* (1973), Talal Asad argues that anthropology was deeply embedded in the colonial system, and that the discipline in fact helped to perpetuate power relationships, built around inequalities between the colonial regime and the indigenous population, by imagining and representing the latter as an inferior "other". This is because 'anthropology does not merely apprehend the world in which it is located, but... the world also determines how anthropology will apprehend it', and thus, he suggests, 'anthropologists before independence were "apologists for colonialism" and subtle agents of colonial supremacy' (ibid). Similar arguments about the constructed, imagined nature of Western visions of "Others" are made by Edward Said in his work *"Orientalism"* (1978), which

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concentrates on the ways in which Westerners have imagined oriental society so as to belittle it, and thus justify both colonial rule and, more recently, implicit Western hegemony.

As the social science that grew most directly out of the European encounter with the rest of the world and that claimed as its subject matter non-western, 'primitive' peoples, anthropology has often been indicted for its complicity with colonialism and neo-liberalism (Upadhya 1996). While earlier critiques of anthropology focused on its direct political utility, recent critiques have drawn attention to more subtle ways in which anthropology contributed to colonial rule, especially its role in the construction of colonial discourses. Because colonial ethnographical categories and images are still reproduced and circulated in a variety of spheres, anthropology continues to be a politically loaded body of knowledge. Anthropological knowledge has been implicated particularly in relation to ethnic, indigenous and other identity-based movements (ibid).

While the scholarship of Inden (1990), Ganguly (2005), Dirks (2001), King (1999), and Ludden (1993) amongst others, has challenged the hegemonic academic texts that shaped Western Indology, our work analyzes **"SOC5 B.09 Social Anthropology"** course materials that BA sociology students commonly use in learning introduction to anthropology (see University of Calicut 2011).

As the syllabus says, the primary objectives of the course are to familiarize with Anthropological studies in India by focusing on Tribal Communities in the country in general and in the state of Kerala in particular, along with introducing the basic concepts of Anthropology. If we look at the syllabus critically, it is possible to argue that there is a perspective of creating binary oppositions through which knowledge is organized; placing values on these oppositions; creating hierarchies between them and thereby framing knowledge in term of "I" and the "other"; posing an universality for "I" of the "dominant outsiders" and particularities for the "other" of the Tribal Communities, reconstructing culture in terms of a linear analysis. The syllabus also highlights the marriage, family, kinship, kinship usages, class and lineage totem, religion and magic of tribes as something peculiar social institutions in "Primitive Society". In the last section of the syllabus again reiterate its politics of dominance by assigning its internal assignment as a seminar presentation on tribal socio-cultural life by means of a visit to a tribal area. Here the tribal community is generally envisaged as distinct from the "normal" mainstream human society, whose socio-cultural life is related to the concepts of primitiveness, uncivilized, savage, profane, tradition, mechanical and unscientific in contrast to the mainstream, whose culture is related to concepts of being cultured, educated, civilized, modern, organic, scientific and open society. The approach only helps to polarizes tribe/culture and civilization at different ends, rather than to have any constructive view on tribes.

There are two modules devoted in **SOC5 B.09 Social Anthropology"** study material of Calicut University to discuss the subject matter of tribes; one for the general introduction on Indian Tribes, and other for the Tribes of Kerala (Pages: 76-93). Third Module also extensively deals with the definition, socio-geographic distribution and characteristics of Tribes in general and tribes in Indian context, in particular.

For defining the term 'tribe', the study material has brought the definitions offered by the scholars such as W. J. Parry, W. H. R. Rivers, T. N. Madan, D.N.Majumdar, S.C. Dube and Gillin & Gillin (Page: 77). From these definitions the study material apparently confirmed that a "tribe is nothing but a group of families which have a common ancestor and descent" (Page: 77). Astonishingly, it list out many criteria to be a Tribe, such as, tribes have blood relationship and related closely with each other; they have a feeling of unity and oneness in general; and speak a common language and due to a common cultural heritage their traditions are more or less same; they live in some geographical area in group (Page: 77). It also tells us that tribes are generally a social group in which there are many clans, nomadic bands, village or other subgroup which usually have a definite territorial area, a separate language and a distinct culture, either a common political organization or at least a feeling of common determination against outsiders. Tribes are considered as a group of people who live in a particular area, who keep a separate identity in their life pattern and culture. Generally even though expectations are there, a tribe can be mentioned as a homogeneous unit with certain common territory and common ancestor. They are isolated from the main stream and very often preliterate and backward in technology by observing social and political custom based on kinship. Even though some tribes are changed in their distinctive characteristics, some of them are still relevant (Page: 77).

After assessing various definition of tribes as aforesaid, the study material then presents some *common* characteristics, which according to it has generally reveals among tribes, as follows (Page: 78):

1. Definite Common Territory

2. Collection of Families

3. Common Name

4. Common Language

5. Common Ancestor

6. Common Religion

7. Common Culture

8. Common Political Organization

9. We feeling

10. Endogamy

11. Common Economic Organization

12. Simplicity and Self Sufficiency

By considering the economic characteristics of tribes, the study material considered the following classifications: (Page: 80)

1) Food gatherers and hunters

2) Pastorals and cattle feeders

3) Shifting cultivators

4) Settled agriculturalists

5) Labuorers and workers

For the study material, following cultural characteristics help to divide tribes into three groups: (Page: 80)

1) Those who live in the post primitive stage

2) Those who load a community life and share a common culture

3) Those who are isolated from main stream communities.

Following the definitional and characterization task of tribes in such a repulsive way, it affirmed without doubt that, generally tribals live away from "civilized life" (Page: 81). According to it, usually they are residing in remote areas such as, forests, mountains, dense valleys and so on. (Page: 81). It acknowledges that, these tribal groups are still in primitive stage and often referred to as primitives, advasis, aborigines, or girijans and so on (Page: 76). Above all, study material upholds the Indian mainstream's political view of that the term 'tribes' in the Indian context today are referred as 'Scheduled Tribes'.

The fourth module of the syllabus describes the socio-cultural and physical features of various tribal communities of Kerala. It gives a quick look on various tribal communities of Kerala, such as Paniyar/Paniya (Page: 89-90), Adiya/Adiyan (Page: 90), Cholanaikan (Page: 90), Kattunaika (Page: 90-91), Kurumar (Page: 91), Kurichiar (Page: 91), and Koragar (91-92).

The most common stereotype of the discussion on aforementioned tribal communities is that of the barbarian – being removed in every way from civilization. In most of the representations of the barbaric primitive, s/he always possesses outer markers, like looks, clothing, societal organisation, customs etc. The outer markers did not just mean superficial difference. They were used as indicators that led to other more important inner difference with the "progress" groups. The first and most important marker is of course race. The looks of the aboriginal evoked so much curiosity (and perhaps disgust as well)

among the society. The Anthropological discussions in the text of study material try to mask this disgust in the endless objectifications around the size of the nose, the eye colour, texture of hair and other physical features of the aborigine. This should be read in comparison with the lack of any physical descriptions as far as "higher civilizations" are concerned. These lengthy descriptions of the primitive distance the viewer/speaker from the gazed object. The gazed other becomes the race and nothing but the race. Any specimen is fine. They are nothing but the body.

Description of clothing is one major way in which "culture" is signified. Lack of specific forms of dressing, especially if the dressing can be seen as scanty by Mainstreams' standards might be one way of naming the group as barbaric. In a similar way, ornaments, or lack of them, will be read as barbaric according to circumstances. Even in the contemporary time the easiest way to signify a person belonging to a tribal group seems to be the lack of conventional clothing.

Yet another way to primitivize is to point out to the societal organization of these communities that will be read as "simple" in contrast to the State based power systems of "modern" cultures. The barbaric primitive is understood to be organizing her/his society based on instinctual relationships of blood and not on social contracts. This kin-based bonding, though existing and very often idealized in the mainstream societies, is not given ideological legitimacy except with the immediate family. Almost all the ancient societies were of particular interest to the legal historians of the nineteenth century because the societies were seen to exist m a condition beyond State power.

The other point, which is seen to mark the barbaric primitive from the civilized, is her/his religion. Primitive religions are seen to be based on superstition and fear, rather than on a universal spiritual understanding, which is seen to be the organizing principle of the "higher races". The ritual based religions are seen to worship nature directly and not symbolically, like other religions. It is not an attempt to lead people towards a higher humanity, which is the prerogative only of the more developed religions.

From the above discussions, it might be clear that the primitive conceived as barbaric is the "other" of the mainstream dominant society in every way. Such contrast which marks the dominant society as positive and the other as negative clearly betrays the fear of the other. In building the primitive as barbarian, what the dominant culture is doing is to build itself as "civilized".

Conclusion

Following Apple (2010), this paper seeing the curriculum of the university as ideology through cultural studies perspectives, which is embedded the identity production and reproduction through hegemonic discourse. This

paper confirmed that the concept of "tribe" as a construction of *selective tradition* of dominant culture, which made one look to the "civilized" to see what their dominant stereotype about the primitive was.

As the first part of this paper reviewed, since the late 1960s, anthropologists in the North have recognized that their discipline was associated with a colonial project and that the knowledge, which they created, and the discipline, which they organized and institutionalized, represented the 'othering' of the east. Though all these scholars talking on the "othering' of East by West, this 'othering' also be applied to the Dominant Culture of the same society as they make "othering" on Tribal Communities. The disciplines of sociology and anthropology are distinguished by the kinds of societies they study. Anthropologists have carried out work on mostly non-industrialized and "primitive" societies, while sociologists have focused on social patterns and processes within the industrialized "First World." Anthropology also possesses a distinctive methodology: fieldwork. Nonetheless, the disciplines are linked by a common concern with societal and cultural processes, and it is appropriate to consider them together. This study observed that, sociology's normative origins were at birth, not only associated with the nation-state, but also with an affirmation of an ideal and vision of modernity – a universal project of progress and reason.

As we observe in the debate on Indian sociology and anthropology, the discourse of colonial modernity incorporated a set of axioms to frame knowledge of society. These axioms at an epistemic level were comprised of binaries that classified modern knowledge system in terms of oppositions, such as nature and culture, subject and object, masculine and feminine, material and spiritual within the rubric of the master binary of the West and East. This master binary liked the division and subsequent hierarchization of groups within geo-spatial territories in terms of a theory of temporal linearity: the West was modern because it has reason; the East was traditional because it was religious and spiritual.

It can be argued that university curriculum still in the hangover of this colonial modernity. The monographs at the time of the post colonial period were written keeping in mind the emergence of the nation-states. This changing political context is reflected in the discussion of tribes as the 'tribes-in-transition'. The process generated academic debates along binary frame; 'tradition versus modernity', 'old to new', 'colonies versus nations' and 'tribe to nation'.

It can be assessed the implication of this process on the making of sociology in university curricula. The seminal assumptions relating to colonial modernity were embodied in the discipline of anthropology, as contemporary sociology was identified in India. This episteme structured at the first level, the construction of academic knowledge regarding societies in the "mainstream"

as sociology and the "tribes" as anthropology and created a hierarchy between them by associating the value of modernity on sociology (the study of modern societies) and that of the "non-modern tribes" on anthropology (the study of the other).

The syllabus of the university still re-affirms its standpoint that – intentionally or unintentionally – the Imperial culture was considered superior to that of indigenous cultures especially in Asia and Africa. The colonizers were of the strong belief that they knew others and they defined who the others were. This assumption led them to colonize countries and annex them as their own. This 'knowing' of others cemented the Imperial dominance and it became the mode by which 'colonized' increasingly persuaded to know themselves as they were subordinate to Europe. But post-colonial reading refers to a period from the very beginning of colonialism. It is a re-reading and oppositional reading that is reading differently what has been written. So, this study insists that, one should understand it as a continuing process of deconstruction and reconstruction. It is a radical rethinking and reformulation of forms of knowledge and social identities authored and authorized by colonialism and western domination. This can historically analyze the historical events and its interpretations using the methodology of either oppositional reading or re-reading whichever is applicable in a particular text or situation.

As we discussed in the case of outer markers, such as looks, clothing, societal organisation, customs etc., the most common stereotype of the discussion on aforementioned tribal communities is that of the barbarian – being removed in every way from civilization. From the discussions, it might be clear that the primitive conceived as barbaric is the "other" of the mainstream dominant society in every way. Such contrast which marks the dominant society as positive and the other as negative clearly betrays the fear of the other. In building the primitive as barbarian, what the dominant culture is doing is to build itself as "civilized".

It makes one to think the definition given by the study material of social anthropology which is a typical case of fiction-creation by the dominant culture. And, therefore, in Indian system being a tribe means a person remaining outside of state and civilization than attaining a definite stage and co-exists with the state and civilization. In this juncture literature produced on them by the outsiders like Anthropologists, historians and writers using the existing exhaustive reviews, definitions and terms may not be acceptable to the native people. This calls for an urgent rewriting and detribalizing the history of so called tribals in India as well as in Kerala from native perspective and ultimately ends with deconstructing tribe/tribal in India. And this is definitely a post-colonial/oppositional reading of the master narratives through the lens of cultural studies.

The contribution of this methodology is the restoration of the subject,

status of the people who were either silenced or taken away for granted by elitist discourses. In such a kind of research what happens is deconstruction of colonial historiography and reconstruction of newer history that is peoples' history. The imbalance is set right by counter-balancing history through re reading and re-writing history while considering the nature, role and function of the people. It is also to be noted that by its very virtue rereading of history is liberative. And its objective is to bring to the fore a perspective that has been missing. This is not to dominate others rather to impart their qualities to others. This struggle will bring real freedom to the people and it will open a new front in their struggle for freedom. This will repeal and rebuild the past for present sustenance which sometimes to reject and disown all master narratives.

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