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THE CONTACT ZONES OF INTERSECTIONALITY

Inequality and feminist knowledge production on India

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Feminist scholarship on India has been grappling with the centrality of differences such as sexuality, religion, caste, and socioeconomic class in forming the identities, experiences and conditions of life for women. In this context, the concept of intersectionality has become a theoretical and methodological tool that both scholars and activists have used to engage with such inequalities. This trend has sparked a debate on whether intersectionality has become a new imposition of western feminism or whether it serves as a critical tool to foreground the epistemological and experiential frameworks of women who are marginalized by dominant models of upper caste, Hindu conceptions of womanhood and feminism. This chapter presents an overview of these debates and seeks to ask how intersectionality can travel in productive ways.

Concepts such as intersectionality travel within historically specific global circuits of power that have connected the United States and Europe with post-colonial contexts in the Global South. The debate on intersectionality in India thus speaks to broader dynamics that shape the relationship between feminism and knowledge production. In this endeavor, I draw on the concept of “contact zones” (Pratt 2003) to open up the conceptual space for a discussion of how theories can travel in ways that do not merely reproduce colonial dynamics of knowledge production. In this endeavor, the chapter seeks to shift discussions of traveling theory (Thayer 2010) from a question of whether contact should take place to one that interrogates the nature of contact between disparate and differentially located intellectual communities in nation-states that are marked by complex forms of internal stratification.

Intersectionality, “western feminism,” and knowledge production

The question of how concepts of “feminism” travel is a deep-rooted quandary that is shaped by colonialism. Such historical processes entwined “modern” conceptions of women’s rights with “modern” forms of European colonial state power (Ahmed 2021).¹ As feminists have long argued, in this context, discourses on “women” more often than not became the grounds for the production of colonial categories of knowledge, technologies of power and relations of ruling (Mani 1998). Such relationships of power have often been reworked in new ways

through new imperial formations that link the missionary impulse of saving “other” women to contemporary geopolitical imperatives of both the US nation-state and corresponding global economic and institutional orders (Abu-Lughod 2002).²

Long-standing debates on the ways in which feminist ideas travel sparked a debate in India on the intellectual, political and institutional impact of the concept of intersectionality for Indian feminism. Nivedita Menon sparked a critical discussion with a provocative essay that argued that intersectionality does not, in fact, capture the complexities of feminism and the differences within and between categories of “men” and “women” (2015). Rather, Menon posits that the influence of the concept of intersectionality is rooted in long-standing practices of transforming concepts that are derived from specific Euro-American into generalizable “universal” theories that are then applied to contexts such as India in the Global South.

Menon’s arguments bring to the fore important questions about the persistent transnational relationships of power that undergird contemporary feminist thought. One of the critical points that Menon calls attention to is the way in which contemporary feminism has been institutionalized within hierarchical global political and socioeconomic structures. Intersectionality, for instance, was formally institutionalized through the United Nations (Yuval-Davis 2006). As Menon points out, in the Indian context, this institutionalization of intersectionality has been further entrenched through non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The result has been what Menon aptly refers to as a form of “facilitated travel” (2015: 37) that is linked to donor agendas, funding arrangements and state developmental agendas. Menon thus concludes that, “the term intersectionality seeks to work not for *feminism*, but for *states and international funding agencies*” (2015: 44).

These global developmental regimes are in many ways reconfigurations of longer colonial legacies of knowledge production. In this context, the Global South has long been constructed as a testing ground for western theories.³ The result as postcolonial scholars have long argued is a temporal marking of otherness where the Global South is constructed as a space that perpetually lags behind the Euro-American world. Theories and concepts are thus, as Menon reminds us, developed in the West and then implemented in countries such as India. There is no better illustration of this than the long policy and intellectual history of work that has constructed “Third World women” as targets of global discourses on development. What is rendered invisible in the process are the genealogies of movements and knowledge production in India that have long grappled with inequalities such as caste, religion, gender and class.

While Menon raises crucial questions regarding the institutionalization and “facilitated travel” of intersectionality, her critical discussion also flattens out the historical context and intellectual complexity of activism and scholarship that are condensed into the rubric of “intersectionality.” Menon’s discussion of intersectionality, in line with mainstream global developmental agendas, associates the intellectual terrain of intersectionality with Kimberlé Crenshaw’s canonical work (1991). However, as feminist scholars of color in the United States have shown, the concept of intersectionality encompasses a rich and varied body of thought that has been produced by both activist and academic scholars (Alexander-Floyd 2012; Hancock 2016). Similarly, we can draw a distinction between intersectionality as an ideograph and intersectionality as an idea. As Alexander-Floyd (2012: 3) has argued, intersectionality operates both as an ideograph and an idea.

As an ideograph, intersectionality serves as a catch-all word that stands in for the broad body of scholarship that has sought to examine and redress the oppressive forces that have constrained the lives of black women in particular and women of color

more generally. As an idea or an analytically distinct concept, intersectionality is a moniker, identified with Crenshaw (1989), meant to describe the “intersecting” or co-determinative forces of racism, sexism, and classism in the lives of black women.

Problems with the institutionalization of intersectionality are thus not limited to global developmental organizations. For instance, similar problems characterize the institutionalization of intersectionality within the US academy and indeed within Women’s Studies academic departments.

Consider the ways in which intersectionality has been incorporated within disciplines such as Political Science and Sociology. Ange Marie Hancock has shown how the appropriation of intersectionality through a foundation of positivist epistemology “underestimates the ontological, epistemological and methodological changes required for intersectionality” (2016). As she notes, such approaches that have become mainstreamed in the Social Sciences rest on an underlying epistemological framework that implicitly presumes the “analytical severability of categories” that miscast the ontological project of intersectionality. Inequalities, in other words, are treated as if they are disparate variables in ways that eschew the focus of feminists of color on their interconnectedness.⁴ Furthermore, as Nikol Alexander-Floyd has argued, this “mainstreaming” of intersectionality has meant that “the voices, intellectual contributions, and political projects of black feminists magically disappear or are supplanted by post-black feminist readings of intersectionality” (2012: 19). Thus, there the mainstreaming of intersectionality both within the United States and through the managed travel of global institutions produces distinct but parallel and simultaneous erasures of the intellectual thought of women marked by the otherness of racial inequality and colonialism.

In this context, a simplistic dismissal of intersectionality as a “western” concept becomes enmeshed in modes of racialized knowledge production. The postcolonial feminist criticisms that Menon advances in effect reproduce these racialized practices that “disappear” the contributions of black feminist thinkers and erase historical inequalities that have marginalized communities of color in ways that do not allow such communities to stand in as figures of “western” knowledge production. Such criticisms also produce ahistorical understandings of movements and political thought in India that have long grappled with questions of inequality. For instance, India’s leading Dalit activist leader B.R. Ambedkar (and the author of India’s Constitution) briefly corresponded with W.E. Dubois as each of them grappled with questions of caste and race, respectively (Dubois 1946). Or to take a more mainstream example, Martin Luther King Jr. was engaged with Gandhian writings and tactics of non-violence. The potential for engagement between black feminists and feminists of color in the United States and feminists grappling with caste and religious inequality in India is thus rooted in long-standing historical exchanges that are not reducible to colonial relations of ruling. The potential for productive engagement thus asks us to think about how and when intersectionality can travel in ways that can unsettle colonial modes of knowledge production.⁵ Let us consider first the challenges of incorporating intersectionality within concrete methodological and conceptual analyses of inequality in India. I draw here on my own research that has sought to rethink understandings of categories such as “woman” and “working class.” At one level, the concept of intersectionality allows us to pry open such categories in ways that shed light on the complex layers and hierarchies of power that shape relationships between women or between workers. At another level, the potential of intersectionality lies in the way in which it forces a rethinking of what counts as materiality; materiality become a complicated, layered, stratified, nuanced set of intersecting structures and discourses.

Intersectionality and the case for productive travel: reflections on working-class politics in India

In this discussion of how intersectionality can productively travel, I draw on the ways in which theories of intersectionality enabled me to productively rethink the category of class. Consider the case of working-class politics and the ethnographic research that I conducted on the jute mills in India (Fernandes 1997) on working-class politics in one of the major industries in north-east India. The research that I conducted provided a story of an intricate and varied set of identities, interests and political practices that sharply departed from both the Marxist orientation of the West Bengal jute labor movement and from conventional conceptions of class inequality.

Intersectionality provided the conceptual space to think differently about the category of class. In the Indian context, conceptions of class had been shaped by Marxist approaches. Indian feminist scholarship had also long engaged in attempts to think through the relationship between Marxism and feminism (see Agarwala, Chapter 19 in this volume). However, such debates on the links between class and gender did not encompass the complex relationships of gender, religion, and caste that shape the realities of working-class politics. Meanwhile, postcolonial, subaltern reconceptualizations of class broke with Marxian approaches through a rejection of the category of class based on claims of starker culture differences; class consciousness, for instance, was replaced by religious consciousness as a primary explanation of Indian workers' identities (Guha 1983; Chakrabarty 1989). On the one hand, in the case of Marxian theoretical models, social identities were primarily treated as secondary differences and identities that were distinct from the material conditions of class inequality. On the other hand, postcolonial reconceptions rejected European conceptions of the working class and turned instead to culturally rooted conceptions of working-class identity.

In the context of such polarized debates, intersectionality provided a vital break from both conventional Marxist and postcolonial variants of post-structuralist theories. Intersectionality provided the conceptual tools for an understanding of the materiality of cultural and discursive representations of identities of gender, religion and caste in ways that broke from a unitary conception of working-class politics. This rethinking in turn provided a basis for a break from Eurocentric conceptions of class that, at the time, presumed that working-class politics conformed to western models of labor parties and labor movements. Indian labor studies had traditionally been shaped by assumptions of the exceptional nature of Indian politics. The unsuccessful search for models of working-class politics that conformed to West European politics led political scientists to assume that class as a category was not relevant because there was no national political expression of class-based movements (Rudolph and Rudolph 1987); class politics in this perspective was not central to the dynamics of contemporary India. However, such arguments stopped short of examining the ways in which class politics was shaped in distinctive ways by inequalities and identities of religion and caste in the Indian context.

In this endeavor, theories of intersectionality were central to the process of reconceptualizing "the working class." At one level, theories of intersectionality open up an analytical space for a consideration of how class is structured by gender, caste, and religion. At a second level, theories of intersectionality provide a post-positivist conception of materiality that is distinct from both post-structuralist and Marxist analyses of class inequality. From such a perspective, conceptions of class must be rethought at the discursive level as well as at the material, ontological level (conventionally described as the class structure). This approach unsettles two false binary oppositions. The first is that class is a primary form of inequality and that social identities

are (usually divisive) layers that are distinct from the structural dimension of class. Second, such an approach unsettles the exceptionalist argument that Indian politics is shaped by the politics of religion and caste rather than class politics.

Theories of intersectionality provide an approach that dismantles the presumed separation between class structure and identity without treating class as a purely discursive phenomenon. It allowed me to break away from that. For instance, my research showed that the boundaries that delineate relationships between gender, class and community were, in practice, political discursive and material boundaries that were being constructed and reproduced within sites such as a labor market, working-class families, unions and community organizations. These sites were producing the discursive boundaries of what it meant to be a “worker.” What that process of construction meant, both discursively and structurally, is that certain groups were then counted as real workers. Workers from marginalized caste and religious backgrounds were then structurally and politically subordinated *within* the category of working-class politics. Exclusionary boundary projects had material consequences for which groups of workers had access to union power and were represented in political party structures.

In other words, the exclusionary representations of class, gender and community that were produced within these sites were producing material hierarchies between workers who were from more dominant groups, on the one hand, and working-class members marked by gender, caste and class, on the other. From an intersectional perspective, this is distinct from conventional understandings of stratified capitalism that acknowledge, for instance, that labor markets are stratified by social inequalities. From an intersectional perspective, workers from dominant groups are implicated in the subordination of more marginalized groups of workers. In this context, theories of intersectionality provide invaluable conceptual tools. Such tools allow us to shift away from an understanding of capitalism as a unitary economic structure to the task of grappling with different ontologies. In the Indian context, ontologies of capitalism, caste, religion and gender were locating various groups of workers in different stratified positions that then had a differential set of material and political effects for these groups of workers. Such processes are only rendered visible by epistemological practices that break away from the dominant norms of both positivist epistemologies and Marxist conceptions of class formation. In other words, both positivist empiricism and Marxist materialist conceptions of class tend to overlook the intersectional nature of inequality. Such conceptions missed the gendered community-based production of class formation and class politics in India.⁶

Grappling with the US-centric limits of intersectionality

While theories of intersectionality can provide crucial tools for understanding inequality in India, the “application” of such theories raises cautionary considerations. Theories of intersectionality must be contextualized within autonomous intellectual histories within the Indian context and within transnational approaches to the study of inequality. Considerations of the intersections between gender, caste and religion may parallel debates on race in gender in the United States, but they have distinct genealogies from theories of intersectionality. While such theories can potentially travel in productive ways, categorical conceptions of inequality and identity do not translate across cultural and national contexts in simplistic ways. For example, a comparison between intersections of race, class and gender in the United States and class, caste and gender in India raises questions over how and whether race functions in an identical way to caste. Religion in India also operates in distinctive ways and needs a careful historical and cultural situatedness that cannot be fully captured by the concept of intersectionality.

At a deeper level, one of the main cautions in applying the concept of intersectionality rests with a need to understand the distinct intellectual genealogies that have addressed the relationship between caste and class in India. Such genealogies have developed simultaneously as the development of theories of intersectionality. Theories of intersectionality must be put into conversation with these autonomous, intellectual legacies if they are not to reproduce imperial US-centric approaches to knowledge production.

Consider Hancock's (2016) endeavor of bringing the US study of intersectionality into conversation with global perspectives. Hancock's objective of broadening our understanding of the broader intellectual fields that have contributed to understandings of intersectionality is a worthy one. In this endeavor, she produces a classification of what she defines as "intersectionality-like" approaches. There are serious problems inherent in the epistemological move of using the discursive framing "intersectionality-like" to capture a wide and complex field of scholarship, which as Hancock herself notes, predates the term "intersectionality." From an international perspective, using the term "intersectionality-like" to frame diverse local, national and global intellectual histories contains within it the serious risk of flattening out and absorbing such histories within a singular US-driven intellectual genealogy (even though it is one that challenges dominant feminist narratives within the United States). Indeed, much of the discussion in Hancock's work outlines terrain on US-based feminist theory and the analysis of global scholarship does not locate such "intersectionality-like" thinking within the intellectual genealogies, historical contexts, and local and national political and discursive debates in the places where they have emanated. The heuristic device "intersectionality-like" risks serving as a discursive disciplinary practice that flattens out the complexity of international feminist thought (that emanates from various local and national contexts) in much the same way as "intersectionality" has been flattened out by both practitioners of citational politics and superficial criticisms of the concept. The result is the production of an intellectual history of the mutual constitution of categories and the focus on marginalized groups of women as an intellectual story of theory and scholarship on the United States. This risk is intensified by the institutionalization of US-centric conceptions of transnational feminism in the US academy (Fernandes, 2013).

The terms of contact

The question at hand then is not whether theories of intersectionality can or should travel but what the terms of travel are. More specifically, how do we navigate them so that the terms of travel and terms of exchange that we set up do not reproduce colonial or neo-colonial relationships of exchange or extraction? Unlike other concepts that travel across national borders, feminist scholars of color have used intersectionality to contest dominant frames of western knowledge production from within "the West." Intersectional approaches can potentially provide the political and theoretical space for collaborative subjugated knowledges and programs of activism across national borders. Such possibilities exceed the kind of "facilitated travel" of intersectionality that Menon decries. On the contrary, these kinds of intersectional analyses have sought to foreground the practices, experiences, identities and politics that conceptions of discrete categories have rendered invisible and called attention to the material and epistemic violence that women from subordinated social groups (such as Black women in the US and Dalit and Muslim women in India) experience.

Consider, for instance, the ways in which the anti-imperial critique that Menon develops reproduces erasures of subjugated Dalit histories in India. As Meena Gopal has commented:

Menon's account suggests there is a binary opposition between caste politics and feminist politics. An instance of this presupposition is the statement: "The challenges to feminist politics from caste politics erupt also in other contexts. A revealing moment of tension was manifested at the National Conference of Autonomous Women's Groups in Kolkata (2006), between the newly politicised bar dancers of Mumbai and Dalit feminist groups."

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The binary opposition between caste and gender that is implicit in Menon's critique inadvertently captures the resistance to the very challenges that intersectional approaches pose to dominant Brahmanical versions of feminism. Menon (2015) argues that:

Generally, the term intersectionality when used in India expresses one of two familiar feminist ideas—"double and triple burdens," or that "Woman" must be complicated by caste, religion, class. When used in this sense, the term has no particular purchase, and adds nothing new to our understanding. This is because the politics of engaging with multiple identities, their contradictions and interrelations, goes back to the early 20th century and the legacy of anti-imperialist struggles in the global South.

Indeed, as Shailaja Paik (2014) has shown, there are long histories of Dalit thought that developed autonomously from Black feminist thought (Namala 2008). However, as Dia D'Costa has argued in Chapter 6 in this volume, these complex intellectual histories have generally been written out of the origin stories of Indian feminism. It is precisely the idealized inclusionary model of feminism that Menon presumes that Dalit feminists have contested; a process of contestation that parallels the ways in which Black feminist scholars have historically challenged dominant models of US feminism that have elided histories of slavery and racism (Hull Scott and Smith 1982; Collins 1990).⁷

Menon's critique of the ways in which intersectionality travels through dominant modes of facilitated travel is critical, given the historical and contemporary global circuits of power that shape the production and dissemination of knowledge about women and that privilege US academic and policy institutions. However, the conception of intersectionality as a "western" or "Euro-American" concept fails to understand that feminists of color have themselves been marginalized within "the West" and the United States. Perhaps more significantly, such post-colonial criticisms miscast and homogenize the rich and deep scholarship of intersectionality studies. This miscasting is shaped by the elision of the historical marginalization of women of color in the United States (Nakano Glenn 1992) and the structures of racialized political economy and modes of internal colonialism that have produced this marginalization. Histories of colonialism and slavery have meant that women of color in the United States and large segments of women in India and in the Global South are in fact placed in subordinated positions (structurally, politically and institutionally).

Foreclosing the productive potential of a concept such as intersectionality in turn forecloses a deeper understanding of such parallels. Let us return, for instance, to the question of how we can pry open the category of class in order to develop a richer and more expansive field of feminist political economy. In the dominant forms of institutionalized US feminism, women of color in the US, or in the Global South, serve as *de facto* embodiments of socioeconomically marginalized women in ways that foreclose such an endeavor. On the one hand, Women's Studies curricula in the United States presume that US women of color and women from the Global South are embodiments of poverty; class becomes coded by race and nation. On the

other hand, theories of intersectionality are often miscast as theories of “identity” or as a form of “identity politics.” Writing about the “institutional life of intersectionality” Jennifer Nash has noted that in the process, intersectionality “is imagined to always reference black female bodies who are figured as disciplinary figures for US women’s studies, and ... transnationalism and intersectionality are set up as necessarily mutually exclusive analytics, theories, methods, and approaches” (2015, 75). Such forms of institutionalized knowledge render invisible the reconceptualization of materiality that, as I have discussed earlier, such theories have developed. A productive approach to global relations of power, then, is not one that mistakenly dismisses intersectionality as a “Western” imposition, but one that asks, how can intersectionality travel productively?

Rethinking the contact zones of intersectionality.

I conclude this chapter by rethinking the terms of the facilitated travel of intersectionality. More specifically, how can we reshape the contact zones between the US-based context of theories of intersectionality and places such as India to which the theory has traveled? This question asks us to think more about the nature of contact rather than presuming that contact is a one-sided form of travel. As noted earlier, there have always been historical connections between civil rights activists in the US and anti-colonial thinkers and activists in India. Let us consider two productive examples of a different mode of facilitated travel.

Writing about the potential connections between African American and Dalit women, Shailaja Paik has argued for a “margin-to-margin” framework. As Paik puts it:

By a margin-to-margin framework, I mean the juxtaposition of seemingly disparate margins (for my purposes, caste and race and Dalit and African American women), in order to construct new knowledge and enable political solidarity to build conscious and sustained commitment to challenge social injustice. Moreover, I argue that centering on the particular historical experiences, specific contexts, contradictions, and connections between the marginalized “Dalit of the Dalits”—Dalit and African American women—allows for the most inclusive and productive politics, developing of new feminist frameworks, and critical decoding of systemic power structures.

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This framework of reciprocal engagement unsettles the colonial underpinnings of the facilitated travel of intersectionality through international organizations and NGOs. This engagement does not rest on a presumed homogeneity of subordinated women of color and “Third World” women. Rather it stems from a productive analysis of gendered dynamics of hierarchies of caste and race (Velaskar 2010). Similar engagements have stemmed from the ways in which both scholars and queer feminist activists in India have incorporated intersectionality in order to link questions of sexuality and critiques of heteronormativity with inequalities of caste and class (Sharma and Nath 2005; Velaskar 2010; Dave 2012; Vasudevan, 2015).

Or consider the following example outside of India, Hae Yeon Choo has described the process of translating and facilitating the travel of the work of Black feminist scholars to South Korea. As a co-translator of Patricia Hill Collins’ canonical text *Black Feminist Thought*, Hae Yeon Choo in effect facilitated the travel of Collins’ theories of interlocking systems of oppression. As she notes: “By facilitating the travel of Black Feminist Thought to South Korea, I hoped to cultivate the ability of the South Korean public to understand and respect the diverse

ways in which minority groups make their claims based on lived experience” (Choo and Park 2009: 43).

Choo argues that this facilitated travel served to open up the space for an “intersectional lens that counters the myth of ethnic and national homogeneity by showing the uneven burden migrants have carried in South Korea in the shadows of nationalist ideology via the pressure of assimilation and exclusion” (ibid.: 42). As in the Indian context, this form of facilitated travel is not reducible to the geopolitical agendas of international NGOs and institutions.

Of course, for such emerging contact zones to be productive, the routes of travel must be reciprocal, if they are not to reproduce the colonial circuits of travel from the “west” to the Global South.⁸ In other words, feminists within the United States would need to engage with the historical, cultural and political contexts of subordinated women within the Global South. Instead of focusing on the fact of contact, we should really be focusing on the processes by which contact is being made and how it is taking place. Such an endeavor would require an examination of the ways in which different intellectual communities are coming into contact with intersectionality and the ways in which US scholars working on intersectionality can learn from the complex histories and contexts that structure inequalities and shape identities in places like India. Such contact zones would not stem from predefined maps or routes of travel but would compel scholars to listen to different kinds of thinkers who are differentially located both socially and geographically. Such engagements also can set boundaries about what intersectionality can and cannot do in ways that prevent it from being turned into a totalizing concept and allow instead for the space for productive contact between different places, different contexts, in different nations.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to grapple with the possibilities, risks and ways in which we can think about using intersectionality as a framing concept and method when conducting research in India. In a world that is fundamentally interconnected by global economic, social and geopolitical relations of power, the question at hand is not whether but how knowledge formations travel across borders. If the global reach of paradigms is to become more than US national imaginations of the world, it is imperative that feminist scholars and activists locate knowledge practices within specific local, national and regional contexts. The facilitated routes of intellectual travel can then be shaped by engaged, situated exchanges between differentially located groups rather than by the power of global institutions and funding agencies. The promise of reshaping such modes of contact is an unsettling of long histories of epistemic violence that have undergirded knowledge production about women subjugated by complex formations of race, class, religion, caste, sexuality and gender.

Notes

- 1 These external processes unfolded alongside and in interaction with varied indigenous and autonomous expressions of women’s identity and forms of agency, activism and protest.
- 2 As Abu-Lughod (2002) suggests, this missionary impulse shapes modern, secular languages of women’s rights. This dynamic stems from the colonial roots of liberalism as Mehta has argued (1999).
- 3 This is the case, for example, for theories of modernization in the early decades of the post-independence period in countries like India. In fact, exchanges of knowledge were complex and multidirectional. See example of Gandhi and King below.
- 4 For an example, see McCall (2005).

- 5 My reference here is not to Indian feminism but to the ways in which feminist theories traveling from Europe or America may encode colonial forms of knowledge production about women, gender and sexuality in India.
- 6 Later scholars of Hindu nationalism would later grapple with these categories but without an engagement with the intersectional nature of inequality. See, for example (Hansen 2002; Thachil 2014).
- 7 This dismissal of the intersectional nature of caste and gender parallels both the dismissal of such intersections in Marxian conceptions of working-class politics that I have discussed and the dismissal of caste and gender by dominant conceptions of Indian nationalism.
- 8 This is also critical since the process of migration means that new forms of inequality and identity travel to Europe and the United States. Consider, for example, the ways in which caste is now a key inequality within the United States even while it has not entered the academic lexicon of diversity, equity and inclusion in US institutions. See, for example, the caste-based discrimination case filed against Cisco Systems in the California Supreme Court, <https://ambedkarinternationalcenter.org/2021/03/cisco-caste-discrimination-aic-press-release/>. I am grateful to Christian Novetzke for providing me with this material and for his comments on this draft.

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