

# **The Orientalism of Mapping Bodies and Borders: Postcolonial (In) Security and Feminist Contentions on the India-Pakistan Border**

Meghana V. Nayak<sup>1</sup>  
PhD Candidate  
Political Science Department  
MacArthur Scholar  
University of Minnesota

## ***Introduction***

In various speeches about the Partition, Jawaharlal Nehru remarked: “what was broken up which was of the highest importance was something very vital and that was the body of India” (Nehru 1950, 247 quoted in Krishna 1996, 195). Five decades later, novelist Shauna Singh Baldwin joined a few others attempting to portray the emblematic struggles of “Midnight’s Children”<sup>2</sup> in her eloquent novel, *What the Body Remembers*. In the account of the breaking of two Sikh women’s spirits and families, the author makes visible the way displacement, abduction, rapes, and murders systematically marked women’s bodies to signify community, nation, and state. Both Singh Baldwin and Nehru haunt their audiences with memories of the Partition violence, but what is the connection between the mapping of borders and the mapping of bodies?

How do we conjoin, in other words, postcolonial (in)security studies of South Asia with feminist interrogations of women as terrain for competing discourses about nation and state? I propose that the logic of Orientalism sustains the postcolonial cartographic anxiety in South Asia as well as the discursive production of women’s

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<sup>1</sup> Please do not cite without permission at [meghananayak@hotmail.com](mailto:meghananayak@hotmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Salman Rushdie’s novel *Midnight’s Children* beautifully narrates the stories of children born at the stroke of midnight, August 15, 1947. . . these children have come to symbolize the attempts of different peoples to come to terms with the Partition. As Rushdie’s narrator Saleem Sinai informs us: “I mean quite simply that I have begun to crack all over like an old jug--that my poor body, singular, unlovely, buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drainage below, mutilated by doors, brained by spittoons, has started coming apart at the seams. In short, I am literally disintegrating, slowly for the moment, although there are signs of an acceleration.”

bodies. Such a theoretical examination will also shed light on recent post-September 11<sup>th</sup> Indo-Pakistani politics of mapping borders and bodies. Finally, I discuss possible ways to "de-Orientalize" these politics.

### ***Mapping Borders***

In his critical study of India's border politics, Sankaran Krishna argues that cartography comprises:

representational practices that in various ways have attempted to inscribe something called 'India' and endow that entity with a content, a history, a meaning, and a trajectory. Under such a definition, cartography becomes nothing less than the social and political production of nationality itself. (Krishna 1996, 1994)

India's fixation with "inscribing" this entity makes sense given the overwhelming scholarly and policy commitment to territoriality within the world's state system. Ruggie argues that the "central attribute of modernity in international politics has been a peculiar and unique configuration of territorial space.....territorially disjoint, mutually exclusive, functionally similar sovereign states" (Ruggie 1993, 144). Postcolonial countries accordingly inscribe the already given territory with a "national political authority [that would] exercise sovereignty within the territory" (Prakash 1999, 221). However, despite accepting territory as given, natural, and already there, it must be constantly guarded, remade, and secured. The mainstream political science discipline takes for granted that the territory is ontologically prior to the state, rather than being an *effect* of state (or empire)<sup>3</sup> practices. As Campbell points out, "the drive to fix the state's identity and contain challenges to the state's representation cannot finally or absolutely succeed"

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<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, Edney 1997 for a critical examination of the intersection of British imperialism and mapmaking of India, and accordingly the politics of cartography.

(1992: 11). The production of an external threat, of dangerous margins, of the Other, is precisely what maintains boundaries and thus constitutes the state's existence.

The geographical boundaries of India, the condition of its possibility, are determined by the boundaries of India's postcolonial security imaginary. The imaginary is a social signification that makes possible, real, and meaningful certain social identities and practices, and is reproduced by the continued performance of these identities and acts (Muppidi 1999, 123-131). Further, the boundaries of the imaginary "are reached when particular representations of the world seem 'unintelligible,' 'irrational,' 'meaningless,' or 'ungraspable' in and through the symbolic resources offered by the security imaginary" (ibid, 125). The establishment of a sovereign, autonomous territorial state as against the colonizer first legitimated such an imaginary. Indian political actors have since understood the "[p]hysical preservation of the borders [to be] metonymous with the state of the union" (Krishna 1996, 200). The Indian state's persistence in producing external threats and dangerous Others not only stems from the drive to secure its existence but also from a need to deal with its emergence by virtue of violent carving up of boundaries. Accordingly, the prevailing fear that India is "less than" features consistently in government discourse. Witness, for example, the strict control the Indian government maintains over mapmaking, particularly regarding the boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian website on Jammu and Kashmir also expresses a deep regret over the border problems in this region, denying any role whatsoever by the Indian government in the political volatility yet placing the integrity of India in the future of Jammu and Kashmir's borders.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Available at <http://jammukashmir.nic.in>

India's "cartographic anxiety [has been] inscribed into its very genetic code" (Krishna 1996, 196), enacted in the 1962 border conflict with China, the creation of Bangladesh from East Pakistan in 1971, involvement in Sri Lanka's civil war and consequential secessionist movement in Tamilnadu, various separatist movements in the Punjab, Assam, Sikkim, and other regions, the recent creation of new Indian states, and the ongoing battle with Pakistan for Kashmir. The Subaltern Studies collective explicitly interrogates, in fact, India's history in terms of a lack:

It is the study of this *historic failure of the nation to come to its own*, a failure due to the inadequacy of the bourgeoisie as well as of the working class to lead it into a decisive victory over colonialism and a bourgeois-democratic revolution of the classic nineteenth-century type...or [of the] 'new democracy' [type]-*it is the study of this failure which constitutes the central problematic of the historiography of colonial India.* (Guha and Spivak 1988)

Despite the attempts to examine India's cartographic anxiety, the crucial role of mapping bodies has been left out of most security studies work on India and the Indo-Pakistan border.

### ***Mapping Bodies***

Baldwin's account of Sikh women's struggles during Partition effectively reveals the social practices aimed at controlling and containing women's bodies. The rape and abduction of 70,000 to 100,000 women on both sides of the Indo-Pakistan border, the public humiliation of women by parading them naked, cutting off their breasts, or tattooing their bodies with nationalist slogans were all violent reminders that women's bodies are contested sites for fixing competing discourses. Feminist scholars argue that women's bodies are mapped, or defined with a particular embodiment of unproblematic identity, due to their culturally reinforced materiality and their institutionally sanctified

appearances (Bordo 1993). Masculinist anxiety about the body politic (in a state or community) being dismembered finds its expression in the violation of women's bodies, such as systematic rape campaigns, sex trafficking and abduction, and the murder of women who have "dishonored" the community. At the same time, women are fleshy signifier of morals and values, "holding up half the sky," and securing the sanctity, spread, and survival of a community with the purity of their bodies.

An interrogation of the Partition shows the mutually constitutive acts of mapping borders and bodies. After the Partition, the passage of the Inter-Dominion Treaty of December 6, 1947, the Central Recovery Operation, and the Abducted Persons Recovery and Restoration Ordinance Act No. LXV of 1949 set off a massive "rescue, recovery, and rehabilitation" Indo-Pakistan campaign that was enacted in often violent ways. The recovery operation lasted until 1956, with 22,000 Muslims women recovered from India and 8,000 Hindu and Sikh women recovered from Pakistan (Butalia 1999, 123). The lives of women who were homeless or rejected have not been included in these estimates. Nor do these numbers tell the stories such as police participation with abductors to prevent the recovery of women (ibid, 110).

Integral to understanding the mapping of bodies is the hypermasculinization of men who participate in this violence against "other" women, and the emasculation of men of "other" communities (Basu 2001). For example, enforced soldiering has claimed the lives of many men in Siachen Glacier, the one part of the Indo-Pakistan border left unmapped by British cartographers due to the incredibly treacherous terrain. In the recent few decades alone, half of soldiers posted to this contentious border have died (Krishna 1996, 200), with the other half barely surviving in inhumane conditions. At this border,

and others, codes of masculinity govern the “micropolitics of everyday life” (ibid). In the mundane practices of daily life, the operative discourse is one in which

‘the mucky, humbling limitations of the flesh’ become the province of the female; on the other side stands ‘an innocent and dignified ‘he’...to represent the part of the person that wants to stand clear of the flesh , to maintain perspective on it: ‘I’ness wholly free of the chaotic, carnal atmosphere of infancy, uncontaminated humanness, is reserved for man. (Dinnerstein 1976, 133 quoted in Bordo 1993, 5)

This discourse is a system of signification that produces *both* women’s and men’s bodies.<sup>5</sup> Whether it is massive displacement, abduction, or rape, or battles that never reach the headlines, India and Pakistan participate in the gendered mapping of men’s and women’s bodies as dispensable yet symbolic of countries’ and communities’ body politic. I do, however, focus more on *women’s* bodies because of the disproportionate way in which they are targeted.

What happens when the body is mapped? Elaine Scarry notes in *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* how the reality of the physical pain of violating people “seems to confer its quality of ‘incontestable reality’ on that power that has brought it into being. It is, of course, precisely because the reality of that power is so highly contestable, the regime so unstable, that torture is being used” (1985, 27). For the person in pain, there is not reality besides pain; if it hurts, it must be real, making the pain useful politically. The body is accordingly an appropriate political metaphor “enabling discourses of discipline and containment” (Campbell 1992, 79).

The body, then, is necessary to “map” in order to discipline the inhabitants of the territory that is simultaneously being mapped. The link between deciding what happens

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<sup>5</sup> See for example Brian Keith Axel’s examination of Sikh male amritdharis as iconic of Sikh homeland (2001). Explain!

to bodies and borders becomes even clearer in Judith Butler's argument that the body's boundary, as well as the border between internal and external, is maintained by turning elements that were part of identity into a "defiling otherness" (Butler 1990, 133) No longer fluid and fragmented and multiply located, the body, sex, and gender become determined, naturalized, and unquestioned. But Butler argues that the body is performative, such that gender is "an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts....[achieved] not [through] a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition" (ibid, 140-141, 145). Like the practice of fixing territoriality, the marking of bodies is important to stabilize and immobilize identities that are hailed as "national" identities...identities vital to the existence of the state and the justification of its activities.

India, for example, used the issue of recovery of women to express the dishonor of the less civil, nonsecular, intolerant Pakistan—a constant reminder of betrayal, of the cutting up the body of India (Butalia 1999, 134). However, Indian officials could not explain why they could not recover as many women from Pakistan as Pakistan did from India. In response to the anxiety India experienced about having the proper inhabitants within the proper space of India's territory, India emphatically placed an emphasis on religion defining home--Hindus and Sikhs were to live in India. As Butalia documents in her narrative study of women during Partition, "...women living with men of the other religion had to be brought back, if necessary by force, to their 'own' homes-in other words, the place of their religion" (Butalia 1999, 105). Embodying women with religion was a particularly peculiar move for India which was claiming its status as a new *secular* sovereign state. Yet, Indian officials and nationalists circulated literature pronouncing the

honor of returned women by referring to the Hindu religious text *Ramayana*, in which the Lord Rama's wife, Sita remained pure despite her abduction by the demon Ravana. Sita later proved her purity by surviving *agni-pariksha*, trial of walking through fire, putting the burden of proving purity on the returned woman. Hindu nationalists also encouraged war against Pakistan, citing the moment when Hindus went to war to defend Sita's honor. "Secular" and Hindu nationalists alike argued that "[t]he very formation of the nation of Pakistan out of the territory of Bharat (or, the body of Bharatmata) became a metaphor for the violation of the body of the pure Hindu woman" (Butalia 1999: 139). However, these nationalists failed to mention that the denial of freedom to women who resisted return to "proper" homes [India for Hindu and Sikh women, Pakistan for Muslim women] was vital to fixing India's postcolonial state identity as modern, secular, and rational.

The violence of the Partition is so crucial in itself and in the similar violence that has been rehearsed since then because it very clearly linked the appropriation of territory as nation and the appropriation of the body of the women as territory. What is remarkable is that the nationalist project of disciplining sexuality is a connection with rather than rupture from the colonial project of disciplining sexuality. McClintock, for example, argues that European men marked the boundaries of the "discovered" worlds by "ritualistically feminiz[ing] borders and boundaries [with] female statues, wooden female figures on ships, mermaid imagery on maps, and tropes of invading "virgin" territory (McClintock 1995, 24). I want to suggest that postcolonial states are producing gendered politics of cartography because they face the same "crisis of origin" as did the colonial powers; something becomes "real" and thus "born" only after it is named and made visible through maps, texts, and discipline of women's bodies (ibid, 28-30).

The politics of mapping borders and bodies, then, are evidently connected in the way that the representational practices work, but what is it that sustains and secures these politics in the specific case of India and Pakistan? I claim that the answer is the logic of Orientalism. I make the move to explore this logic out of the concern of stretching the metaphor of mapping too thin. The project of exploring the mapping of bodies and borders does not end, in other words, with the elaboration of discursive production and the fixing of inside and outside. In fact, this theme is one that has been emerging in critical feminist work for several years. I want to explicitly acknowledge that there is not some phenomenon “out there” such as patriarchy that performs the act of mapping. Rather, the mapping is embedded within a deeper logic-Orientalism--with concrete practices.

### ***Orientalism and The Hindu Right: Restoring Masculinity and Disciplining Bodies***

Mapping borders and bodies depends on the mystery, eroticism, darkness, defilement, and danger of the Other-- the “deep and recurring image of the Other”--which is central to the logic of Orientalism. Edward Said’s oft-cited exposition of Orientalism is too complex and nuanced to critically examine at length here, but I will briefly summarize in order to set up this section. Said argues that Orientalism is a “Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (1979, 3) based on an ontological and epistemological distinction between the “Orient” and the “Occident” (2). The internal consistency of the Orientalist discourse, despite any lack of correspondence with a “real” Orient and its establishment of the Westerner’s positional superiority, is key to conferring an objective and innocent status to it (5-7). Therefore, Said presses readers to examine the political production of knowledge as well as the consequences for

post/colonial, imperialist, and hegemonic power relationships between the “Orient” and the “Occident.” I want to focus on two particular elements that are key to practicing the logic of Orientalism, and accordingly the mapping of borders and bodies: Orientalist practice *within* the Orient, and Orientalism’s intersections with feminism, particularly in addressing violence against women.

A key point to Said’s argument is that Orientalism has much less to do with the “Orient” and much more to do with the making of “our” world (1979, 12), and indeed the representational practices of knowing the Orient are for the European. However, Said argues to not privilege the “insider” perspective over an “outsider” one, as the influence of Orientalism has a hold within the Orient (ibid: 322). Oriental consent, specifically, upholds the Orientalist system, as intellectual success is measured by managing such a system (ibid, 324).

Indian critical scholars, such as the Subaltern Studies collective, have interrogated the “seductive degradation of knowledge” (Said 1979, 328), or Foucault’s contention that “all knowledge rests upon injustice . . .and...the instinct for knowledge is malicious” (Rabinow 1984, 95) in the writing of India’s history. Professional Indian historiography, for example, is ostensibly a corrective to Orientalism yet relies upon Orientalist practices of mapping and fixing territoriality. Gyan Prakash notes that nationalist historians, such as J. Nehru and H.C. Raychaudhuri, “broke the exclusivity of Indology as a European discipline” (Prakash 2000, 169). But rather than being the “inert object” of Orientalist discourses, it was now an active, *sovereign and unitary* nation-in-the-making (ibid: 170). Orientalism within the “Orient” is actually useful, then, in securing certain acts and practices important to security imaginaries. India’s difference, and its place in Orientalist

scholarship, explains its heightened cartographic anxiety about its border with Pakistan, an anxiety that surpasses the anxiety “Occidental” countries face in securing their boundaries and in producing danger. As noted earlier, India faces a fear of being less in the world system because of its contentious borders.

However, since Hindu nationalists have recently gained political footholds in national and state governments and gained several parties as allies, many scholars have pointed out the increasing collusion of Orientalism and Hindu nationalism in the construction of a “tolerant Hindu” universalism that transcends other religious ideologies (Breckenridge and Van der Veer 1993, Van der Veer 1994). This complicity takes place in the overt articulation of a right-wing stance about Indian politics, culture, and history based on the propagation of essential qualities of gender, race, sexuality, and caste as well as the naturalization of difference. An explicit “reverse Orientalism” found in the Hindu-Brahmanical<sup>6</sup> view of Indian cultural nationalism suspends India in the ex-colony, not quite nation-state status—which perpetuates the need for the Hindu right to police the state’s activities and to achieve superpower status.<sup>7</sup> Specifically, the Hindu nationalists specify the state as a *Hindu* state, in which all citizens, regardless of cultural and religious politics, are Hindus systematically differentiated from the Occidental Other. Hindu nationalists also collapse the distinction between nation and state, resolving difference within India that has historically challenged state authority and boundaries of nationalism.

Key to India’s attempts to build a national security state is the primacy of Orientalist representations of Muslims, the quintessential, contemptible, categorically

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<sup>6</sup> Brahmanic denotes upper caste, typically male intellectuals who represented themselves as intermediaries between mortals and God.

threatening traitor to the predestined completion of a bounded Hindu state. In the contemporary Indian electoral scene, voter banks are no longer beefed up by accommodating minorities but by promises to teach Pakistan tough lessons and to insist on the political construction of religious minorities as Hindu citizens. India's security imaginary is under constant threat by scheming, lurking Muslims who emerged during Partition. The politics of mapping the Indo-Pakistan border, then, participates in and draws upon Orientalist logic. I would go so far as to say that the mapping of the border *would not be possible* without Orientalism.

Feminist critics have outlined the second important key to the logic of Orientalism, complicating Said's presentation of Orientalism as a male style of thought that represented the East with the essentialized characteristics of Woman: irrational, licentious, and exotic. These feminists argue that the unified Orientalist discourse Said presents is actually much more open to fissure, with the East being used to further Western feminist projects, particularly to secure the Other. Further, nonwestern women's acceptance of Orientalism obscures their attempts to effectively strategize against oppression (Mellman 1992, Zonana 1993, Lewis 1996, Yegenoglu 1998). Susan Akram argues that Western feminist and human rights discourse about women's oppression in the nonwestern world (for example, the marking of their bodies in communal conflicts) inherently awakens Orientalist discourse, because representations of violence against nonwestern women relies upon an inherently persecutory and monolithically oppressive "Oriental psyche" (2000).<sup>8</sup> Further, an implicit normative injunction within discourses about violence against nonwestern women is an appeal to become more liberal, secular,

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Hindu nationalist rhetoric on possessing nuclear weapons.

and Western in order to more effectively resist violence. Thus, women's bodies continue to be the terrain for shifting discourses about the "Third World Woman" and Western women's agency. Hegemonic Western feminist discourse fails to critically examine state and community mapping of "their" women's bodies, as it actually legitimates reducing women to their bodies. Narayan argues that attempts to avoid gender essentialism in feminist theorizing actually generates cultural essentialism, as "attempts to avoid the Scylla of 'Sameness' often result in moves that leave one foundering on the Charybdis of 'Difference'" (2000, 83).

I claim that the Orientalism is key to mapping bodies because gender oppression collides with the colonial encounter's insistence on difference...a difference that is maintained by Indian state discourses and reproduced by both Western and nonwestern feminist attempts to resist mapping. How is it, we can ask, that Indian feminist discourse often hinges upon rather contests Brahmanical texts, 19<sup>th</sup> century Orientalism, and neo-Orientalist human rights discourse? (Bacchetta 2002). Why is it that Hindu women, despite their protests about representations of Indian culture as persecutory and violent in the Western gaze, undermine their efforts by participating in the portrayal of Muslim women as victims of their religion? This is not to say that Western and Indian feminists are lax in making these critical interventions. However, I believe that the explicitly unmasking of the logic of Orientalism must occur, before strategy-making regarding the violent mapping of women's bodies can proceed.

The connecting thread in the Orientalism of mapping borders and bodies is the unspeakable violence. Feminists attempting to document women's experiences during

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<sup>8</sup> Some fascinating discussions about Western feminist Orientalism are taking place in the critique of

Partition have repeatedly encountered a “code of silence,” and, as Said notes, Orientalism is predicated on the Orient being unable to speak and represent itself (1979, 21). But, as this section poses in its examination of the Hindu right wing, how can the agency of speaking and of claiming power as against Orientalist discourses avoid violence? Is agency predicated upon internal Orientalism? As Said notes, participating in producing the Orient as “an unconditional ontological category [does] injustice to the potential of reality for change” (Said 1979: 240). I would also add that to conceive agency in rationalist terms, as a power one holds and enacts when engaging in power over another discourse, stunts the possibility of change. The problematic agency involved in remapping and reworking bodies and borders is discussed in the next section, which explores the cartographic anxiety since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

### *Cartographic Anxiety Post-September 11<sup>th</sup>*

Now, more than ever, the politics of fixing meanings, the cartographic struggles to engage representational practices to inscribe “India” and “Pakistan,” are dangerously contentious. It is India, the world’s largest democracy, versus Pakistan, the military dictatorship with suspect relationships with the Taliban (and other unsavory characters!). Indian officials participate in this inscription of the two countries, mimicking post-September 11<sup>th</sup> discourse that reduces politics to a fight between the civilized world and the “evildoers.”

During a recent seminar on globalization, India’s Finance Minister Yaswanth Sinha emphasized India’s desire to overcome its anxiety of not-yet-nation-state status and to be on the “right” (I insert the quotes tongue-in-cheek) side of politics. Sinha lamented

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gender-based asylum.

the inequality developing countries face: “We have been subjected to such terrorism for a long time. But we were not allowed to take such actions. Their (US) bombers can bomb before a guilt was established but we could not hit terrorist camps (across the border),” (“India flays US double standards on terrorism” 2002).

The December 13, 2001 attack on India’s Parliament took on an especially charged symbolism, smacking of war-mongering and nationalist chauvinism, and explicitly invoking George W. Bush’s claim that any country (namely Pakistan) that harbors or supports terrorist will be considered a hostile regime. India expressed fear of the “Talibanization” of Pakistan and Kashmir, to invoke the same dangers as those producing U.S. foreign policy and to accordingly justify any military border intervention. Pakistan, in turn, quickly attempted to keep up with India’s cartographic practices. When India blamed two Pakistan-based groups, Lashkar-e-Tayiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, for invading its territory and attacking the Parliament, Pakistan's military spokesman alleged that Indian intelligence agencies engineered the attack to justify an attack on Pakistan’s territory. By late December, both countries had mobilized massive troop movements to the border. As the countries shut down interstate train travel, mournful relatives on both sides of the contentious border recalled the pain of the Partition.

The blame game continued when Pakistani officials implicated Indian dignitaries in the recent attack on a Christian church in the capital Islamabad. This came on the tail of India’s accusation that Pakistani terrorists helped orchestrate the February 2002 attack on an Indian train carrying some members of a right wing Hindu nationalist organization. This soon followed with both countries massively deploying forces to the border. In attempts to resist Orientalist representations of two irresponsible nuclear powers at the

brink of war, of two insecure countries that could never complete their statehoods after colonialism, India and Pakistan have accepted and legitimized such discourses. Some postcolonial scholars argue this was an explicit gesture to mock the West and its tunnel-visioned hypocrisy in other countries' expressions of sovereignty. But why does this mocking necessarily occur in the very gestures the West makes?

More importantly, how can one intervene in such gestures that authorize Orientalist mapping of borders and bodies, that are ironically in the guise of having some agency in the international hierarchy? Krishna argues:

We are back in the realm of the ironic: the definitive marker of the postcolonial society is that of one trapped in time, post-colony but pre-nation. And yet, the way to modern nationhood can only be through the complete colonization of the self. Thus, to decolonize the self may mean denationalizing the narratives that embody space and time. (Krishna 1996, 209)

Partha Chatterjee's (1986) treatment of nationalism as a "problem in the history of political ideas," contrasts nationalism's appeal in approaching liberty and progress with its practices of chauvinism, xenophobia, and organized violence. The ideology of nationalism faces this contradiction because of its acceptance of East-West division. Thus, I would also pose Krishna's call as one to de-Orientalize the self. De-Orientalizing the self, like decolonizing the self, is to explicitly recognize that attempts to belong and to own political discourses are so very tempting but also counterproductive. Participation by Others to frantically hold on to their identities (and the boundaries of such identities) will not eradicate such logic but may recreate the very frameworks and modalities that created conditions of oppression. What kind of response *should* there be?

First, critical scholars and activists must actively confront and destabilize the four dogmas of Orientalism.

...one is the absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior. Another dogma is that abstractions about the Orient, particularly those based on texts representing a “classical” Oriental civilization, are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from modern Oriental realities. A third dogma is that the Orient is eternal, uniform, and incapable of defining itself; therefore it is assumed that a highly generalized and systematic vocabulary for describing the Orient from a Western standpoint is inevitable and even scientifically “objective.” A fourth dogma is that the Orient is at the bottom something either to be feared (the Yellow Peril, the Mongol hordes, the brown dominions) or to be controlled (by pacification, research and development, outright occupation whenever possible). (Said 1979, 300-301).

But they must confront Orientalism without being obsessed with Orientalism as the point of departure for resistance. Colonialism did not “remould[sic] ... indigenous structures, making them dependent or derivative” (Sarkar 2000: 242). The attempt to “fix” India occurred long before the colonialist enterprise. In fact, the consent and participation of Orientals in Orientalism occurred because Orientalism was feeding on existing Brahmanical discourses. The Brahman elites acted as intellectual intermediaries who created internal consistency about a [gendered] static, timeless, spaceless, advanced Sanskrit civilization that would provide the basis for Indian unity (Breckenridge and van der Veer 1993). In effect, I am calling for a deconstruction of authoritative Brahmanical discourses and codes. Such a move is much more painful than attacking Orientalism but it is a necessary recognition of what constitutes Indian actors.

Similarly, Sumit Sarkar warns against the assumption that colonial gender idioms are the sole *source* and cause of postcolonial Indian patriarchy (2000, 249). Resistance to

the discourses of borders and surveillance, Chicana activists have long argued<sup>9</sup>, often reinforces the power of borders to govern bodies. Therefore, in underscoring the Orientalism of mapping bodies and borders, I do not want to claim that the possibility of resistance and critiques lies *only* within this logic.

In addition, there might be ways to rethink and remake cartographic struggles that can destabilize the dichotomy between India and Pakistan. Aijaz Ahmad notes that simultaneous military takeover of Pakistan and the announcement of election results in India in fall 1999 cemented the oppositional struggles between the two postcolonial countries. However, his comprehensive book *Lineages of the Present* exposes both India's right wing activities, and Pakistan's democratic activities. He also reveals the implausibility but potential effects of India making a claim to have an important place in the "Islamic World" (Ahmad 2000, 319). While this would confront the deeply rooted imagining of India as a Hindu country with an "appeased" Muslim minority, even naming this possibility could shake the discursive fixity of India's security imaginary.

In effect, while examining the logic behind cartographic struggles, we can not construct a universal status for imperialism, Orientalism, or patriarchy for the basis of theory and action. Rather, we need to point to the contradictions in totalizing discourses such as Orientalism *and* nationalist counter-Orientalism. What does this do on the ground in South Asia? For example, a grassroots women workers organization in Maharashtra, India, questions why India supports the U.S. claim of "liberating" Afghani women from the clutches of the burkha while criticizing the U.S.'s practices in globalization (Sarvate

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<sup>9</sup> I'm thinking about activists who draw upon Aida Hurtado, Gloria Anzuldúa, Maxine Baca Zinn, and Alma Garcia.

2002). These women note that U.S. hegemonic practices sustain certain representations of Afghani women and by extension “Islam” *as well as* the movement of global capital. India’s ambiguous relationship with the U.S., as well as with nonwestern countries, pivot on the attempt to hold together a security imaginary that accommodates both Orientalism and anti-imperialism. It is my contention that mapping the structures of oppression, as I have attempted to do in this paper, rather than bodies and borders, is the political project that will most effectively dissolve cartographic anxieties.

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