capitalism was an unintended consequence of both ruling classes acting to reproduce themselves, under conditions not merely of competition between each other, often taking on a political form around the still-burning issue of "states rights." It is equally important to examine the struggles from below, in the form of proletarian struggles in the North and slave revolts in the South. Of course, the North won, but it was not so simple and a real subsumption of southern labour under capital was resisted by former planters as well as freed slaves, the unintended consequence of this struggle being the non-capitalist sharecropping that dominated southern agriculture as recently as half a century ago.

How did these multifaceted class struggles shape the DNA of American capitalist social property relations? Post draws on Comninel's postulation that the French Revolution, if it had any democratic after-effects, these effects were "anticapitalist," such as rent and price controls. On one hand, the radical southern demand of 40 acres and a mule was not implemented. On the other hand, the urban proletariat, a vital support base for the north in the Civil War, gained a new found sense of confidence. Against a backdrop of newly confident capitalist classes, they mounted direct actions to shorten the working day. Yet when the new labour movement of the north came close to allying with a multiracial "Farmer's Alliance" of tenant farmers, Jim Crow laws and disenfranchisement, lynching and the Klan were brought in by the new alliance of former rivals – merchants and planters. The defeat of this coalition and the fragmentation of popular and working classes mars the development of working class political organizations in the United States to this day.

Bannerji, Himani. 2011. *Demography and Democracy: Essays on Nationalism, Gender and Ideology*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press. ISBN 978-1-55130-389-5. Paperback: 34.95 CAD. Pages: 272.

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Himani Bannerji's latest book is as timely as it is wide-ranging, incisive and thought-provoking. Comprising seven essays written during the span of just over a decade, with a new, substantive introduction, the book sparkles with a genuine sense of freshness and vitality. *Demography and Democracy* is highly relevant to readers concerned with the ongoing impacts of neoliberal capitalism, communal violence and cultural nationalism, and contemporary struggles over democracy in India. But its scope reaches far beyond India's borders in elucidating how ethnic/religious cultural

nationalisms and patriarchy are used in the interests of imperialism around the world, and facilitate the global depredations of capitalism.

As with her other work, Bannerji builds upon Marx's material method, especially as articulated in *The German Ideology*, and its elaboration and application through institutional ethnography, a Marxist feminist method of sociological inquiry developed by Dorothy Smith – particularly on the social organization of knowledge. Additionally, this book is a significant scholarly contribution containing dialogues with, and critiques of, various intellectual turns and schools of thought. She engages with a range of scholarship, including, among others, Antonio Gramsci, Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Walter Benjamin, Raymond Williams and Bengali historians Sumit and Tanika Sarkar.

Those whose focus is not on India/South Asia should read it because of the theoretical and methodological richness of the discussions about ideology, the concepts and practices of nationalism, gender, identity, ethnicity, culture and nation. Bannerji's theoretical and critical explorations and reflections are relevant across a range of disciplines and contexts, resonating at local, national and global levels. The book pulls together her "attempts to understand the different dimensions, explanatory possibilities and political implications of Marx's method of historical materialism" (2). Her critical-theoretical choices are motivated by "the defensible view that historical and social realities of the world are neither macro-spaces of free-floating imaginaries and abstractions nor bounded within micro-formations and spaces of geographically discrete cultural identities" (7).

Bannerji unpacks and differentiates between forms of nationalism for one of the book's central projects. She views Zionism as a religious cultural nationalism which has legitimated the occupation of Palestine and compares it with attempts made by Hindu supremacists in India to engage in a political project which seeks to construct non-Hindus (Muslims) as foreign invaders, to expel them, and to legitimate pogroms against Muslims in Gujarat in 2002. For her, both Israel and India are cases of theocratic patriarchy as well as modern ethnic/demographic state projects which portray themselves as liberal democracies. She contrasts this kind of nationalism with the potential of "anti-colonial or resistance nationalism" (12) based on social equality and self-determination, although her book does not elaborate on these in any detail.

Two chapters deal explicitly with gender relations, but Bannerji attends to patriarchy and brings a feminist lens to bear throughout the book. She strongly critiques bourgeois nationalisms' inherent patriarchal outlook on socio-political questions, as well as feminisms which see women as a singular entity, as a collectivity self-enclosed and separate from their overall social existence and subjectivities. She calls for patriarchy and gender justice to be seen within the wider space of revolutionary social criticism rooted in a demand for social justice.

Bannerji also scrutinizes the Subaltern Studies Group of theorists which has emerged among some networks of historians on India and beyond. Building on Sumit

Sarkar, she is critical of an "epistemological shift which separates culture and ideology from class and social organization and yet claims to be writing history" (131). Further, she argues that Subaltern Studies scholars such as Partha Chatterjee legitimate various forms of violence against women, and that "subsum[ing] all issues of powered differences within a rhetoric of cultural nationalism, can only lead to new and internal forms of colonization" (176). She contends that the rightward swing in subaltern studies buoys supporters of an essentialist and anti-modernist national enterprise, cultural nationalism and ethnicized religio-communitarian state. She warns against fragmenting and separating culture, politics and economy, only for them to be added to each other when the need arises. She urges instead that we go past culturalist lenses, concepts, categories and meanings which obscure historical and social relations, citing the dangers of dehistoricizing history and instead relying on notions of culture, which inform and feed cultural nationalism.

Two of the book's chapters deal with Bengali poet, novelist, philosopher and playwright Rabindranath Tagore, and his visions of nationalism and decolonization. Bannerji maps the evolution of Tagore's views on decolonization, arguing that he opened up spaces in his novels, offering a "dynamic social and aesthetic pedagogy [which] marked a journey between what is and what ought to be" (219). Bannerji suggests that one can draw on Tagore's pedagogy fused with Marx's vision, analysis and politics to imagine an alternative vision of development and a new humanism.

I particularly appreciated the introduction and the final chapter entitled "The Tradition of Sociology and the Sociology of Tradition: The Terms of our Knowledge and the Knowledge Produced" – as excellent tools for teaching. In the latter, Bannerji strongly critiques the paradigm of tradition and modernity so prevalent in sociology as dehistoricized, degrounded and ideological categories which are implicated in capital, class, colonialism and imperialism. In sum, she has given us a rich book and reminds us what powerful tools historical materialism offers for analysis and action, indeed, for imagining and acting to bring about a better world. As Bannerji puts it: "[u]nravelling the constitutive entanglements of history, society, culture and politics allows us to arrive at claims about what surrounds us here and now, to some proximate truth claims about the past and the present, which is vital for any critical understanding and transformative action" (4). In sum, this book is a very welcome contribution to a sociology for changing the world.