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The nation in heterogeneous time

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Abstract

Following a critique of homogenous time, one that is so central to Benedict Anderson's reading of social history, the paper builds on the notion of heterogeneous time, with particular reference to governmentality, in the narrativization of the nation. The examples of B.R. Ambedkar and the fictional character of Satinath Bhaduri's *Dhorai* are then brought in to show the continuing tension between the utopian dimension of the homogeneous time of capital and the real space constituted by the heterogeneous time of governmentality and the effects produced by this tension on efforts to narrativize the nation. The paper ends with the claim that it is morally illegitimate to uphold the universalist ideals of nationalism without simultaneously demanding that the politics spawned by governmentality be recognized as an equally legitimate part of the real time-space of the modern political life of the nation.



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