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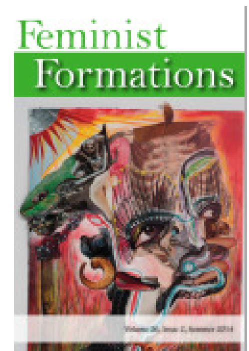

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Remembering Violence: Field Memories From Lahaul, India

Himika Bhattacharya

The article explores the relationship between memory and ethnography within the context of Lahaul, India. It weaves together different aspects of ethnographic memory by focusing on the author's field notes, journal entries, and different relationships of remembering that emerged during her fieldwork. The article emphasizes ethnographic recall of violence as at once dispersed and layered in the complex organization of caste within tribe in the region. This dispersal and layering is illustrated through an analysis of the author's own memories of fieldwork and the memory of violence shared by one of her interlocutors. In discussing these memories together, the author illustrates how a feminist counter-memory accounts for the process of remembering violence through an attention to everyday aspects of women's lives over and above the official and state memories of singular events of violence. In conclusion, the author draws on a transnational feminist framework to discuss the politics of location, and the relevance of love and friendship in fieldwork.

Keywords: caste / ethnography / loss / memory / tribe / violence

"Just Tonight"

Then laughing I teased you
And teasing said,
"I will be faithful, love, till I remember
And I will remember you, till I forget;
I vow not to forget you till you're out of sight,
But that may be tomorrow—not tonight."

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So, laughing I teased you
And you were grave.
Have I been faithful? Well, I still remember.
You must have known, even then, I won't forget.
Forgetting is not easy, and out of sight,
I think of you so poignantly tonight.

—Nalini Kanuga

I open with this poem by Nalini Kanuga because it ties together different fragments of my memories of fieldwork, and it also brings full circle my friendship with Nalini and Kavita—two women who were central to my research. In this article, I remember my fieldwork; I remember Kavita, a comrade from my initial activist work in the area and subsequently a collaborator and interlocutor in my research; I remember Nalini, a mentor and friend who lived in Manali, India, a town close to my fieldwork site, for a period of over forty years. This poem leads to new conversations about remembering and forgetting, all of which remain relevant to my (field) memories. And finally, I quote it here because this article comes together with Nalini's idea of remembering, part teasingly, part seriously, to hold together memories that are marked by friendship, love, transition, and violence. In this article, I focus specifically on memory and ethnography within a context of documenting women's life histories—including narratives of violence—in Lahaul, India. I discuss the poem "Just Tonight" to weave together aspects of ethnographic memory by focusing on my own memories, journal entries, and different relationships of remembering that emerged during my fieldwork. I emphasize here how ethnographic recall of violence and fieldwork operate at once as dispersed and layered. This dispersal and layering is illustrated through an analysis of my own memories of fieldwork and the memory of violence shared by one of my key interlocutors, Kavita, in relation to the poem. I also discuss the politics of location as salient to the construction of a feminist counter-memory that accounts for the process of remembering violence through an attention to everyday aspects of Lahuli women's lives over and above the official and state memories of singular events of violence.

My project is a culmination of several years of consistent engagement, ethnographic embeddedness, and feminist commitment to documenting women's life histories in the little-documented region of Lahaul. For two years before I began my doctoral education in the United States, I worked in the Lahaul Valley.[1] My work there began with a livelihoods project, which had a state-mandated agenda for "women's development" that was primarily focused on marketing local handicrafts and conducting livelihood surveys. It was this initial work that led me to many conversations with local women who wanted to organize around questions of violence (against women) in the valley.

I stayed on in the valley after the completion of this first project to continue working as a community organizer with local women's groups collectively called *mahila mandals*, facilitating anti-violence campaigns led by the women. These campaigns were called *kiski izzat gayi* ("whose honor is lost") and consisted of village-level meetings among the women who were organizing to address issues of violence within the Lahula community. This work included filing cases of violence that arose on a day-to-day level, strategizing for future conversations, organizing a trip with local activists to visit various women's rights organizations in other parts of India, and planning actions like valley-level meetings with the community to address issues of marriage practice, honor, and violence.[2] This was when I first met Kavita, who quickly became one of the key local organizers for the initial activism of the women's groups in the region.[3] This early work led me to graduate school in the United States. My time as a graduate student, in combination with my prior work in Lahaul as a community organizer and feminist activist, laid the foundation for my current project.

Thus, while this article is based on ethnographic interviews, field notes, and journal entries from 2005, 2006, and 2011, my relationship with both Nalini and Kavita dates back to 1999. For me, then, remembering my fieldwork is inextricably intertwined with memories of Lahaul and those years of my life in general. By this I mean that my field memories go beyond the official proposal and "research plan" with which I had returned to Lahaul; they are not entirely issue and interview focused; rather, my field memories are deeply entwined with my daily experiences and political–emotional connections with those who had an impact on my life during that time. By political–emotional connections, I mean the relationships I had with different people in and around Lahaul—people who deeply influenced my work and politics. This is one of the key reasons why Nalini and Kavita are central to this article.

Nalini and Kavita

Officially, Nalini was not a collaborator in my research; however, she remained a significant presence in my research. Because she stood in solidarity with the local activists, extended her love, her home, her political ideas, and her time to me—and to those of the Lahuli women she knew—with such abundance and joy, it is impossible for me to remember my fieldwork without remembering her. Further, her loss—Nalini passed away around four years ago—also changes how I remember my fieldwork. Kavita, on the other hand, was an official interlocutor in my research, a collaborator and participant in conventional terms, but she was not only that either. She was, and remains, a comrade, supporter, feminist community, and research collaborator for me in Lahaul. Remembering my fieldwork, then, is not only about analyzing interviews, events, and archival documents, but also involves love and political commitment to and with those who repeatedly welcomed me into their circle. To quote M. Jacqui Alexander

(2006, 275), "Love inspires remembering." So here I am, finally, remembering for love.[4] The two persons who stand out the most in this regard are Nalini and Kavita. Let me now formally introduce them.

Nalini

Nalini was a poet, artist, and educator. I met her through a common friend in her home, which she shared with two of her friends, her chosen family. The home was named "SNuG" and was located by the river in Manali.[5] We became friends almost immediately, and whenever I was not visiting Manali we stayed in touch over the telephone as often as possible. When I did go to Manali—whether to check e-mail, to attend a court case from the valley, or even to just see her—we would often talk about my work, her work, our writing, our lives, and the women who were organizing in Lahaul and Manali. Nalini belonged to a caste Hindu (*savarna*) family, and she had moved from Bombay to Manali at a time when tourism was not yet the region's main focus. She moved there to live with two of her friends as a single woman dedicated to building an alternative, unconventional family through her own life. This family consisted of the two friends with whom she lived and several others who moved in and out of their common home. In her own words, she opened her home to anyone invested in love. This meant supporting people who were breaking social norms of love, family, and sexuality—whether they arrived from Bombay or were from the Kullu or Lahaul regions. Her own caste location placed Nalini in a position of privilege, which she navigated carefully in her friendships and political work and her commitment to local issues centered on caste and gender justice in the mountains of Himachal Pradesh, thus underscoring whatever she chose to do during the years she lived in Manali. My own political understanding of the state of Himachal Pradesh and the connections between women in Lahaul and other parts of the state grew much stronger in conversation with Nalini. Over time, she became my "go-to" person for all things Lahaul and Manali. She wrote "Just Tonight" in memory of a beloved friend after her death, and I open with her part-serious voice because it signals both loss and hope. From conversations with Nalini, I knew that her love for her friend was both ridden with pain, betrayal, and loss, and yet, it was full of rapture, trust, and intimacy built over a lifetime. She hand-wrote a book of poems, which included "Just Tonight," for her friends. Her poem gently draws me into a remembrance that I have often set aside as something to which I want to return when I am done taking care of other things, such as writing my dissertation, applying for jobs, moving across cities, and various other things that constitute my life. This remembrance is connected to my fieldwork and to the narratives of violence that women in Lahaul shared with me. It always carries a sense of incompletion, loss, and recovery—like the poem. I am almost faithful to my memories and to the memories of the women with whom I worked. It is always only *almost*, for as Kamala Visweswaran (1994, 68) has said, "memory always indexes loss."

Kavita

It was during my initial work as an organizer in the valley that I first met Kavita. At that time, she was living with her husband in Manali, often coming up to Lahaul to meet her family and work in their agricultural fields during harvest season. She became increasingly interested in the activities of the women's groups, and eventually became one of the key local activists for them. She was committed to building links between the caste (and *adivasi* [tribal]) struggle in the state and the activities of the local group. Kavita is from the only *dalit* family in her village, and her life is marked by various forms of (caste) violence. In the context of Lahaul, it is important to note that the entire community falls under the state's categorization of "Scheduled Tribe" as defined by the Indian Constitution. While the usage of the term *tribe* when referring to *adivasis* (literally meaning "original dwellers") in most parts of India is a complicated and contested issue (Baviskar 2005), in this article I have opted to use both tribe and *adivasi* based on what my interlocutors opted for in interviews. Further, the Lahula community positions itself simultaneously as historically disadvantaged and marginalized via the Brahmanical structures of caste hierarchies, and yet it maintains a strict caste order internally. In various formulations of caste structures in India, both *dalits*, as mentioned earlier, and *adivasis* fall under the purview of historically disenfranchised groups. However, in Lahaul, the tribe itself is further stratified along caste lines, constructed loosely around the regulations of caste purity usually found in nontribal and mainland communities of the hills and plains in India. Thus, while Kavita is a *dalit* woman herself, her location as also an *adivasi* further complicates the dynamics of how caste violence plays out socially and politically in her life.

When I returned for my fieldwork after three years of graduate school, Kavita had moved back to the village where her parents lived. She left the home that she had shared with her husband primarily because of domestic violence–related circumstances. Upon her return, she began looking for work to support herself and her children. She worked a few odd jobs at the local school in the village. This was the period during which our relationship strengthened—both through our shared history of having worked in the women's collective earlier, and our shared goal of addressing multiple layers of violence in Lahaul. During this period, she clearly expressed her desire to talk about her experiences of violence in a formal interview. I documented her life history for my doctoral research, and our camaraderie strengthened over this period. I conducted official ethnographic interviews with Kavita. Our time together also included long, detailed discussions about our lives, current affairs, poetry, other people's lives, the local administration, the army, and numerous other topics of conversation often shared between confidantes and friends. Kavita read these poems (in translation) by Nalini, whom she knew through her activism, poetry, and conversations with me.

A theme that repeatedly emerged in conversations and interviews with Kavita was her sense of loss, especially the loss of bodily integrity within and beyond the context of her experience of sexual violence. In an interview I briefly discuss later in this article, she used the metaphor of being "trampled" in describing her experience of rape at age 16 by the village priest. In the same conversation, she talked about breaking social codes and talking about her rape publicly. Her reason for wanting to do this emerged from a desire to enable other women in the same position to speak out against violence. This was a resignification of her victim status—a move I interpret as resistance. My analysis tracks Kavita's memory beyond a singular event of violence, which allows for an understanding of her experience as part of a larger social process already in motion, a social process that is negotiated repeatedly. It is repeated as she herself turns her victim status on its head through both her daily life and her desire to speak openly about her rape. Kavita, then, by choosing to speak out, destabilizes what Sharon Marcus (1992, 389) has discussed as the rape "script." This does not necessarily achieve the physical prevention of rape on her body as Marcus has called for, but constitutes a political refusal to accept the discursive power of rape. In later interviews, Kavita also talked about her relationship with her husband. Although she loved him deeply, she eventually ran away from him to save both herself and her daughters from his violent and destructive moods. In the end, however, she decided not to tell her story openly, in light of the backlash and shame it could bring on her daughters. Kavita decided instead to wait for divine intervention in the form of Karmic justice, whereby through the logic of *karma*, the universe operates on cause and effect of actions/deeds, hence no deed goes unpunished or unrewarded.[6] Throughout her narrative, Kavita emphasized the themes of loss and resistance that for her existed simultaneously in the face of violence.

The poem "Just Tonight" stands in for loss, speaking to intimacy and trust in the event of both violence, for Kavita, and death for Nalini. These two women, who belong to different generations and radically opposed/contradictory caste and class locations, still appear together in my writing because they are connected through poetry, politics, and their disparate, yet shared sense of a future. Further, they appear on the same pages because the love, friendship, and political commitment I shared with and learned from both of them connects them through me. Finally, at a moment when Kavita was contemplating leaving her parents' home in Lahaul, but could not consider returning to her husband in Kullu, Nalini offered her home as a safe space. This is also part of what renders my memories of fieldwork inseparable from them both.

For me, Nalini and Kavita are intimately linked to each other through the experiential dimension of loss and memory. Their presence in my text is tied together through loss, which is recognized by way of their memories and mine. Nalini's poem signals loss over the death of a beloved friend, yet the tone she uses is a teasing and playful one, something reminiscent of the friendship shared

between her and her friend. Kavita, on the other hand, shared with me her sensory experience of bodily violation, in part as a type of mourning, and in part as an act of resistance for herself and other women in similar situations. The poem illustrates the impossibility of memories being definitive in these experiences of near-destruction—as in Kavita's feeling of being trampled—and feelings of loss over a death—as in Nalini's teasing tone about a friend who has since passed on. Thus, for both Kavita and Nalini, there is nothing definitive about memory. For me, this is what is underscored by "Just Tonight." The poem highlights the significance of understanding the memory of violence as processual; it forges an affective connection between the two women who become intertwined in my memory through intangible aspects of intimacy, loss, and resistance.

"Just Tonight"

I now remember these events from my field notes and interviews, never losing sight of the fact that these field memories, which have traveled with me over the last several years, are still shifting. These memories, once recorded in field notes and tapes, now also include sharing and remembering in hotel rooms, on planes, over the telephone, with friends, in multiple interviews with the women who shared their histories with me, with colleagues at conferences, and so on.

This poem leads me to discuss issues of remembrance, nonremembrance, forgetting, and not-forgetting in relation to violence and memory. In the poem, there are three instances of memory that correspond to three moments of remembrance. First, there is the memory that lasts until a moment of remembrance becomes the terminal limit of the promise of faithfulness: "I will be faithful, love, till I remember." Second, there is a memory that lasts through the duration of remembrance itself; its terminal limit is the act of forgetting: "And I will remember you, till I forget." Third, there is a memory—a not-forgetting—promised to last throughout the occasion of another's presence: "I vow not to forget you till you're out of sight." Here, in the third instance of memory, the moment of remembrance is implied; it is an initial limit that makes necessary the promise of faithfulness in the first place. In absence, there is the need for faithfulness, for throughout presence there is no forgetting. And finally, the promise of faithfulness is fulfilled through remembering despite absence: "and out of sight, I think of you so poignantly tonight."

Implicitly, the poem calls our attention to four different aspects of remembering and forgetting in the presence or absence of each other and the process of recall. Even as Nalini invoked these ideas of remembering and forgetting teasingly in the first three instances in the poem, there is a poignancy that runs throughout. She is almost serious, but really, she is not. My own memories of Nalini, Kavita, and my fieldwork also hang by this tenuous thread, as I too, out of sight, remember them poignantly in these pages. I extend her teasing tone into one that suggests both loss and incompletion in the process of recall as I draw

on the poem to discuss the following four aspects of memory. These include: *remembrance*, which I use to refer to a process of remembering that is crucial in constructing a feminist counter-memory of violence—that is, the process of Kavita's memory layered through my own remembering; *not-forgetting*, which works as an active step toward remembrance, like Kavita's decision to remember intentionally; *forgetting histories of violence*, which is part of the structural violence of the state; and *nonremembrance*, which is a complete omission—as illustrated in Kavita's case through the disavowal of the police. To begin, the act of remembering can take different forms insofar as it occurs at a moment, and lasts throughout that moment of remembrance, bound durationally. Not-forgetting, however, is nondurational; it becomes part of one's essence. Forgetting, however, has the possibility of being durational: I may have forgotten something for a length of time, but it is not necessarily forgotten forever. Nonremembrance, on the other hand is effacement: a removal from both the chronological and durational order. This nonremembrance has no terminal limit, and its implications can be significant. If there is an event to which one would like to be faithful, nonremembering can foreclose the possibility of faithfulness, especially when it takes the form of disavowal.

Remembering and forgetting in the context of violence are both durational, but nonsequential; that is, they both operate outside what Lawrence Langer (1996, 55) has called a "stream of time." However, how time factors, either linearly or nonlinearly, into acts of remembrance, nonremembrance, forgetting, and not-forgetting is also determined by who does the memory work, what it pertains to, and the processes that are at play in the overall scheme of understanding the memory of violence.

Dispersed Memory

This leads me to yet another key aspect of my argument: namely, that memories of violence—those remembered by myself and the collaborators in my research—may be durational, nonsequential, and, yet, are dispersed. The memories that the women shared with me are dispersed and remembered in pieces that are not necessarily linear. Adding yet another layer of memory, the narratives that the memories offer are also remembered by the women themselves, the state and police officials, and by me each time a little, and at times a great deal, differently. Further, there are different entry points into the conversation for each person that interrupt the direction and sense of chronological continuity. For example, this is the case in terms of my recall: some pieces of each narrative are remembered from journal entries, interviews with my collaborators, conversations with colleagues, and so on. In relation to Kavita's recall, the amount of disclosure in each instance of remembering also varied for her, depending on whether she remembered to the police, to the courts, to her family, or to me. All these memories, however, appear at once,

often as overlapping life histories narrated at different times in one document. The memories, in other words, are dispersed.

While the official memory of a violent event may tell one story, the woman who experienced the violence may remember the story differently. Because I remember both sets of memories, I invoke this idea of layering. Furthermore, a memory of violence that has literally been written over by the state, police records, or community memory can still shine through in the process of feminist ethnographic recovery, thus challenging the official memory of the "same" story. This is particularly significant because all of these memories—the stories I heard and the stories I tell—are either directly about or somehow connected to memories of violence. They are about memories of violence either in the way that the women shared them or as the police records and officials nonremembered them. Therefore, these memories are neither linear nor chronological.

Both linearity and chronology impose an artificial cohesive wholeness upon that which is durationally nonsequential and, in fact, often dispersed. Langer (1996) has discussed the difference between chronological and durational witnessing, where the former is sequential and the latter continuous. So while testimony may sound chronological, for the witness, the memory remains nontemporal, "out of time," caught between an historical narrative that imposes chronology and a witness memory "baffled by a lack of language" (55). It is important to note that none of these narratives or their memories are seamlessly tied together, precisely because they are memories of violence.

This understanding of individual narratives of violence as existing outside the "stream of time" (ibid.) is useful, as it reinforces the need to pay attention to individual narratives as equally significant to collective histories and memories of violence. This kind of violence hardly finds space in official history beyond police records, if even that; furthermore, it is discarded within a large floating space of what could be considered routine—the rape of a *dalit* tribal woman.[7] This kind of violence is often read as part of a general malaise in society, as something that is not socially memorable. It is, thus, not memorialized, not part of a collective history and remains undocumented beyond a chronological recall of police and court records.

Yet, because violence disrupts the everyday linearity of events, I argue that memories of violence that center feminist praxis must not follow—and must, in fact, reject—the artificial, seamless, chronological psychological patterns of order imposed on women by official records and literature.[8] This imposition comes from the foreclosure of the possibility of a certain type of faithfulness to one's own experience of violence. State and biomedical recordings of violence can partake in a certain type of nonremembrance of the subjective experience of violence; they can deny the visceral, embodied experiences of violence remembered by the subject. It is often the case that experiences of violence are altogether not recorded, or nonremembered, and when they are recorded, the reductive chronological and psychologizing schemes imposed on

the events of violence have no fidelity to the lived experiences of the subjects who experienced the violence.

Additionally, my ethnographic recall is also dispersed as I travel through field memories—memories that are always intertwined with my own life. What might I mean by this dispersed nature of ethnographic recollection? While ethnographic fieldwork is chronological insofar as it fits into a programmatic version of linearity, the *doing* of fieldwork is often dispersed and discontinuous. For example, most conversations I had with collaborators, even those conversations that were official interviews, did not follow a chronological structure. In other words, conversations and life stories were narrated and shared with me over a period of months, shared while we went about conducting the rest of our lives and businesses as usual. I say this to emphasize that intimate conversations about life, violence, and our histories are obviously never planned into any exact linear order of fieldwork; instead, they appeared in unexpected and dispersed ways.

My own memories of fieldwork were recorded in my journal at different points in time: some were written late at night after a full day of work; others were written while traveling from one location to another or recalled for friends and colleagues over the telephone or in person. Eventually, several memories were recounted at conferences, in hotel rooms, and during various travels miles away from the valley. All of this further complicates the texture of ethnographic memory. This fragmented process of remembering my fieldwork, then, is what I refer to as the *dispersed nature of ethnographic recall*. But why is it important to pay attention to this fragmented process?

Because memory is often seen as an individual process separate from history, understanding the fragmentation in the process of speaking memory allows us to unsettle any idea of authentic history, any idea of authentic memories of violence. In her discussion of privacy and invisibility in gay and lesbian cultures, Ann Cvetkovich (2003) discusses why and how "in the absence of institutionalized documentation or in opposition to official histories, memory becomes a valuable historical resource" (8). For her, unconventional modes of remembering "stand alongside the documents of the dominant culture in order to offer alternative modes of knowledge" (8). In this vein, I seek to draw attention to the dispersed nature of recall and the fragmented structure of memory. I do this not to construct a "true" memory, but to illustrate how notions of authentic and linear recall, which insist on a cohesive structure and occupy the space of official knowledge, do a disservice to women's memories of violence.

By privileging a memory that is officially sought, the processual account of violence is lost, continuing to center events of violence. Unless there is an attention to the processes as remembered by the women who experience violence, it becomes difficult to understand what the particular events of violence might mean, something that limits the possibilities of justice. Consider the official memory of Kavita's rape as an example of this disservice.

Kavita's father filed a police report stating that the local village priest raped her. The official record of her case included names of the victim and the accused, the date and time of the event, and some descriptions of the events leading up to the police intervention. Eventually, the official record stated that the case was resolved out of court. However, among several other things, this official record failed to mention the caste and gender nexus in which her rape was embedded; it also did not highlight that her father accepted compromise money, despite the fact that this was common knowledge both in her village and at the police station. Presumably, this was because, legally speaking, as Pratiksha Baxi (2010) has illustrated, compromise is not permitted in India for crimes like rape and murder; moreover, her father, and not Kavita herself, conducted most of the conversations with the police.

Thus, the official memory fails Kavita at multiple levels. First, it documents the events in an orderly fashion, but obfuscates the complex politics of caste, tribe, gender, and sexuality in India, something that Kavita herself highlights in her moments of recall in both her journal and in conversations with me. Furthermore, it produces the false narrative of an objective state apparatus that intervened according to the law—an apparatus willing to, and successful in, supporting the victim. This is a classic example of Pierre Bourdieu's (2004) *misrecognition* in which the violence contained in the legal and social practice of compromise is transformed into a seemingly "positive" event for the victim in question. The discursive violence of the compromise, then, gets turned on its head, becoming a moment of resolution that ostensibly helps the victim.[9] The records illustrate the state as finally "giving in" to her family's wishes to withdraw the case, but a closer look at this moment illustrates the politics of caste, tribe, and gender surrounding the compromise.[10] While it is clear that Kavita's rape was indeed an act of caste violence, but for it to fall under the legal purview of the (Prevention of) Atrocities Act of India,[11] the violence would have had to be committed by a caste Hindu who did not fit within the category of Scheduled Tribe. Because the priest also hails from a disenfranchised community (as a member of the Lahula tribe), the police claimed that it *was not and could not* be a caste atrocity. Hence, the two options offered to Kavita's family were that of either legal redress via the registration of the assault as rape alone or an out-of-court compromise. This decision to eventually compromise, while made by Kavita's own family ostensibly for "her own good," is embedded in the same logic of caste violence that routinely subjects *dalit* families to the discursive violence of caste both within the legal framework of "crime" via the misuse of legislations like the Atrocities Act and within the minutiae of everyday social life (Rao 2009). In this instance also, we see how the act is not applied and the rapist continues to serve as the village priest. What emerges here is the particularly marginalized location of *dalit* women, *within adivasi* and *dalit* communities. The legal possibilities are further complicated because of caste–tribe politics, as the impunity granted in this case is to an *adivasi*, and not to the

usual caste Hindu member of society. Thus, via this trick of settling matters "internally" within what it names the SC and ST communities of Lahaul, the state continues its complicity and active participation in perpetuating violence against *dalit* women by offering compromise in rape cases as a solution—both in this specific instance and in India in general (Kannabiran 2011).

A processual recall would have produced a different narrative, one that remained attentive and faithful to Kavita's experiences and her narrative of the rape and what happened after it, including the social implications of the compromise in further dishonoring a (*dalit*) woman. For example, in a conversation with me, Kavita remembered how her caste status was invoked by her rapist in the moments preceding and during her rape. Further, she recalled her grief and simultaneous anger at how the police approached the issue, and the injustice of the continuing presence of her rapist in the village, which finally resulted in her having to move away. All of this is entirely missed in the official record, which remained focused solely on the actual event of rape. Additionally, the fact that her father agreed to compromise—hence exposing her to a further loss of social dignity—needed to be underplayed in the official record. Nayanika Mookherjee (2006, 440) has discussed how women with few economic resources often "might only have their moral selves and honour as symbolic capital." This is further lost when material resources are accepted by victims or their families as compensation for their loss of honor through sexual violence, which doubles the public shame of rape, especially for women of marginalized communities. In this instance, Kavita's father's decision to accept the compromise added insult to injury.[12] What is further lost in the linear narrative are Kavita's own thoughts about her father's decision to accept the money for her benefit. Here, we see that the memory of violence that constitutes much more than the event itself is never really captured in the official narrative, which fails to record the multiple temporalities of recall that violence sets off. Additionally, in Kavita's case, the official linear recording eventually allowed a nonremembrance, one that created a space where her rape could later be disavowed through a series of mis-recognitions.

Arguably, one could say that the procedure of the law produces linearity; that is, the state's mandate requires it such that it can only produce a perspective that is rendered through chronology. Because such a mandate foregrounds the limit of these procedures, the bodily, sensory, and political complexities are always already lost. Furthermore, even a more sympathetic record—given that most police and juridical records are not always sympathetic to women, especially those who experience (caste) violence—when linear, will still be marked by omissions. Finally, an individual's memory can also follow a linear storytelling path. My point however, is that linear recall, which focuses on the event of violence alone, is insufficient because it is a singular approach that does not account for multiple aspects of her recall, including the ways in which bodily memory is metaphorically experienced in the moment of recall. Therefore,

effectively, an official record misses the relevance of the victim's subjectivity, which, as Veena Das (2000) has argued, over time produces self-creations by the person who experienced the violence, while remembering through the everyday.

To understand the dense realm of meaning formation in relation to violence requires delving into questions of subjectivity as constituted by caste and tribe, and by paying attention to how violence and memory co-constitute each other, without focusing on a search for facts as truth—what Michael Taussig (1991, xiii–xiv) has called the "social being of truth."[13] Instead, an attention to the processual, embodied, and fragmented process of remembering, which takes into account Kavita's subjectivity at the nexus of caste, gender, and sexuality in India, opens up the possibility of a political interpretation, one that is a departure from the official memory of the state. Following third world and women of color feminist critiques of second-wave feminists, Shailaja Paik (2009, 45) has rightly urged that there is a "need to understand the diversity of experiences of dalit castes, the specific dalit histories, culture and religion, class, personal lives and self-hood in their own contexts."

Thus, focusing on *dalit* and *adivasi* women's subjectivity needs to be connected to how it is, and can be, politicized. Several women I interviewed in Lahaul, including Kavita, wanted to discuss their experiences and include the violence in their own lives in what was to be my dissertation and eventual book, discussions excluded in prior historicizations. Still, I was and remain worried about the consequences this might have. Yasmin Saikia (2004, 279) addresses this fraught possibility of research "instigating more violence against" already marginalized women. While aware of the potential consequences of such documentation, the women seek to share their histories—sharing with the expectation that a representation of their experiences would eventually help them "overcome the silence that had been imposed upon them" (ibid.). The point I am making here is that the trajectory of how the women came to remember violence in and for this project is not merely incidental, but is the central motivation behind my research. Furthermore, in this case, the narratives of violence emerged as the women narrated several aspects of their lives and histories in interconnected ways. Thus, my emphasis on the processual aspects of memories of violence that account for women's narratives beyond the event of violence is integral to this context, and it constitutes what Kimberly Theidon (2007, 474) has called the "broader truths that women narrate." These truths must not be "reduced to the sexual harm they have experienced." My article is grounded in what Ravina Aggarwal (2000, 537) calls the "micropolitics of social struggles in everyday contexts," as I focus on women's lived experiences rooted in daily life, emphasizing the need to understand the memory of violence as always processual. My emphasis on process has at its roots an understanding of individual experiences of violence, and thus also its related suffering, as always already social. In discussing the significance of the experiential domain of suffering, Arthur Kleinman and colleagues (1996) emphasize the need to examine

violence and suffering as "beyond a single theme or uniform experience." For them, "suffering is profoundly social in the sense that it helps constitute the social world" (xix). In particular, it is these very "routine processes of ordinary oppression" that I find particularly useful because I emphasize the importance of process in understanding forms of suffering as both collective and individual. Kavita's individual experience of violence and suffering is also social if we pay attention to the ways in which her rape is normalized and routinized by the state, thus obscuring "the greatly consequential workings of 'power' in social life" (xiv), which, in this instance, are the workings of caste and gender.

Moreover, since memory is also marked by loss, an attention to the fragmented processes involved in the loss allows us to think of these otherwise seemingly individual memories as remembering differently, creating a feminist counter-memory. This is what a critical feminist ethnography of violence seeks to build. In other words, memories are often fluid and dispersed; they become part of one's subjectivity through this dynamic process of remembrance and not-forgetting. Only a processually attentive remembering that engages with the memories and silences of those who lie outside the "parameters of the dominant" (Mohanty 2003, 83) can account for a full political project. To further illustrate some of these processual aspects of remembering and forgetting, I now turn to a journal entry from my fieldwork year.

Remembering Intentionally

Over the course of my fieldwork, my journal became my sounding board for everything. In it, I processed my own feelings about what happened daily, in addition to describing details of the events and conversations that constituted my routine. Additionally, the journal kept the memories alive for me when I was writing. Returning to the United States after living a year in Lahaul and trying to get back into transcribing, translating, teaching, and other academic pursuits had me feeling lost and uncertain about what I was writing. The journal grounded me; it kept my memories fresh, even as they evolved with each round of retelling and re-remembering.

Journal entry October 2004

> Today Kavita and I talked for over three hours. I recorded the interview. We started at the Gompa (monastery) by the school and ended at the steps of the temple by where she had been raped by the priest years ago. When describing the details of her rape and the torturous walk back home, she used the words that I can best translate to "trampling" the grass as she dragged her feet. As she began speaking about it, she was crying, and I was too. For her then, and for us now. The Kavita of today who wants to reach out and save herself more than ten years back, and who now hopes to stop it from happening to others. She used the metaphor of the trampled grass and her trampled body

> as she described how part of her self was crushed that day. I thought of how I could never articulate that moment in words—the sight of the new fresh green grass that she had once trampled—the clarity and confusion of that moment muddled in my own tears during her retelling. We sat inside for a long time after, crying and shivering.
>
> She wants to talk about it to the world. She feels it could be her response to how the police forgot her case. She wants her story to stop others from experiencing her own ongoing suffering every time she remembers or is reminded of the rape. . . . I asked her if she could think about remembering publicly some more. It's a lot, telling and retelling this history . . . and the backlash that it might bring with it.
>
> We spent all day together. I returned home late and here I am now, with my words again, speaking my memories and hers. Sitting in front of the Saptapadi.[14] The constant cheesy music from the dhaba floating in; the low murmur of voices streaming in from the main road; the clanging of the hammer against the stones; the sun against my neck and back; the sudden laughter from the neighbor's house—all reassuring me of their existence. Somehow each mundane detail reminding me, as she did, that all the violence contained in that one story cannot be, must not be, forgotten.
>
> Remembering like this can be so painful. Yet worthwhile because we remembered together, those years of forgetting.

Kavita's remembering is one that actively seeks and engages a will to not-forget. In Alexander's (2006, 277) words, Kavita "intentionally" remembers as she chooses to not-forget, and fights back the nonremembrance of the state in relation to the initial police response to her rape. Remembering an experience of violence in this manner is different from looking back at violence; remembering the experience involves a recall of the perception of the violence and what surrounds it—again. In this way, remembering is embodied. The violence that Kavita has suffered bodily is recalled through multiple senses in one act of remembering. There is the violence, which is experienced and stored as a violent memory. When Kavita recalls this bodily violence, when she talks, for example, of "trampling the grass," she experiences this violence as it is remembered—not as a looking back—but she remembers the suffering as what it means today when she remembers.

Yet, another way in which remembering violence is embodied appears in the journal entry included above: the music from the dhaba, the sun against my neck and back, the clanging of the hammer. All of these descriptions lie entangled with the remarkable and mundane moments of remembering. This is yet another layer of memory: I remember Kavita remembering her experience of violence. There is something in that moment about the nature of violence and its telling that jars the usual frames of cognition because those two coexist in that one moment—the extraordinary site of remembering violence and the

mundane things that surround the violence and its recall. On the one hand, the magnitude of the violence is so far removed from the everyday, so far removed from what had occurred as I sat with Kavita and listened to her stories; and on the other, I remember it alongside this other sensory recall. There is often a methodological attempt to separate the two because they are jarring, but one must remember that both are juxtaposed and entangled; they are separate because they are different kinds: one is everyday, and one is not. Yet, it is important not to separate the moments of violence as isolated moments that either victimize or perpetrate that violence. This kind of binaristic, event-centered model of understanding violence, which relies upon a linear logic, is precisely what gets punctured when we pay attention to the process of recall.

In ethnographies of violence, it is methodologically important to note that when one remembers the violent narrative, one also remembers other things. Ethnographic recall thus entails receiving the telling of an extraordinary violence in the context of all the extraneous sensory details. As we keep journals, record on tapes, or make notes, these sensory details become part of that memory.

Remembering violence does not always have to be an act of resistance, and even when it is, there does not have to be one spectacular and celebratory moment of resistance. In her discussion of resistance, agency, and sociality, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003) says that "resistance accompanies all forms of domination . . . inheres in the very gaps, fissures, and silences of hegemonic narratives." For her, "agency is figured in the small, day-to-day practices and struggles of third world women" (38). This is precisely how an emphasis on process, on the everyday details of women's lives, contributes toward an understanding of agency and resistance that "examines power" (83). Rather than "locate resistors" (Abu-Lughod 1990, 41) and look for moments that clearly stand out as celebratory moments of resistance, Mohanty (2003), Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres (1991), and Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) emphasize the need to locate and examine women's everyday experiences within larger structures of power. They do this because domination and resistance occur at once. Kavita's recognition of the injustice of her violation and her struggle with how to speak about her rape in a way that would carry her story forward are indeed illustrative of resistance as a "diagnostic of power" (Abu-Lughod, 41). It is dispersed and expressed through processes of remembering and writing her own memory, now entangled with mine.

Further, Kavita's instance allows us to think of resisting today with the memory of the violence that was yesterday—that is, making our past and present inseparable, disrupting once again any linear order of time. In this example of Kavita's remembering, there is no room for nonremembrance. Why is this type of remembering necessary when there may often be a psychic need to forget? Part of her remembering is a will against nonremembrance; she holds on to her memory precisely because it is a political act. Thus, it becomes important to

recognize multiple and competing memories as we think of resistance as always already present. What Kavita remembers may have been remembered differently or rendered entirely absent from official recall, hence reemphasizing the political potential of her memory.

In the journal entry above, I briefly mention Kavita first wanting to tell her story openly, followed by her final decision to not do so publicly. In the moment that Kavita and I were having that conversation, she repeatedly expressed the desire to break her silence and tell her story socially in an aggressive manner, where her voice and story could reach other women of her community. For her, remembering was a way of resisting the disciplining of low-caste women through violence. In this very deliberate, self-conscious move of remembering for the purpose of resistance, Kavita turns a moment of vulnerability—and imposed victimized identity—into one of resistance. She felt the need to be actively engaged in a process of fighting the kind of powerlessness faced by her and other women in her situation. What eventually stopped her from going public, however, is the very real possibility of violent backlash. In those days, we talked a lot about what it meant for her to do this—that is, to tell her story publicly in a local/national newspaper. We considered the backlash within her community: her own family's position on this, the kinds of dangers to which it would expose her and her family and, in particular, her daughters. Further, we also talked about what her goals were and whether a newspaper article or television coverage could eventually achieve the same end. Finally, she decided against it, primarily out of concern for her daughters and what it would mean for their future. However, Kavita did decide to remember and talk about it to me.[15] While her case did not stand a chance in a court of law and was withdrawn by her father for reasons that still remain inexplicable to Kavita, she decided that retelling what happened to her during, before, and after her rape was necessary, especially since I was working on a book that documented Lahuli women's lives. Over the years and in different ways, Kavita has asked me to "tell for sure" ("*batana zaroor*") her story. She has always articulated her need to tell her story as *necessary*, such that it allows people who read it to not only know what happened with her, but also to register that violence *does* occur in Lahaul and could happen to others in the future. This, then, is her way of ensuring a counter-history, especially in response to the state's deliberate invisibilizing of women's experiences of violence in the region. Although this intentional act of remembrance may be negotiated, it nonetheless contains the possibility of feminist activism, feminist critique of caste and tribe, and actual practical changes with regard to sexual violence against *dalit* and *adivasi* women.

Kavita's will against nonremembrance is in opposition to a will to nonremembrance, which takes the form of a disavowal. This is the nonremembrance that the state and patriarchal modes of power will. Here, the violence that happens cannot be happening; the state and the patriarchy must produce lies—lies that are too often produced through violence, lies that, in fact, beget more

violence. In Kavita's own case, caste and gender politics intersect in the most classic way to once again benefit the caste and gender–privileged male priest, who is "upper" caste, but tribal—a seeming contradiction in terms of his caste identity—yet caste-privileged within this context. This is yet another example of systems that will people to not remember in ways that effectively emerge as lies. These individual lies eventually become the public memory through politicians, state officials, police records, families that have constructed narratives for future generations, and so on. If I return to my own field memories, the nonremembrance engaged by the state and its individual representatives about the rapes, murders, and everyday violation of women's bodies locally in Lahaul is a clear example of the above. For example, in Kavita's case, it is in a sense because of the state's disavowal that Kavita must not-forget. Again, this is another way in which Kavita's remembering is a remembering of resistance.

Disavowal at once affirms something and denies it. The denial of what is initially affirmed is instrumental in allowing things to function according to the status quo. Nonremembrance always serves some purpose, it keeps the structure from disintegrating. So the question then becomes: What purpose is served by the disavowal, by this nonremembrance? What structures are kept in place? Would not a remembering bring to crisis interlocking/multiple structures of culture, tradition, and state?

As discussed above, violence often produces nonremembrance. To quote Alexander (2006, 278), "a memory of violence and violation begets a will to forget." This will to forget works differently than the will to nonremembrance. First, there is the need to forget the very materiality of the violence in order to survive the embodied violence on the sex and spirit, and to forget the visceral nature of that violation on the body. This need to forget is seen in the narratives of violence enacted on the bodies of women everywhere. In other words, the duration of the remembrance of violence is often exactly that, a duration; it must have a terminal limit, and that limit is the point of forgetting. Here, once again, we see the mundane: the memories of violence must be forgotten so that there can be an everyday apart from the violence. The need to forget is so strong that we sometimes forget that we have forgotten.

A site of traumatized memory can also be a site of forgetting. Over the course of my fieldwork, and then during the transcribing, translating, and writing of my dissertation, I too often had to forget. There were journal entries that I forgot about and when writing this article, I literally excavated. Those are the entries that I had to reach back into each time I attempted to write and rewrite. This is not a looking back from the outside, but a reaching back into, into the visceral—literally the guts—into the bodily (276). For me, then, there is no writing, no representing, without re-remembering; each memory of the re-remembering of the women's stories entangled with mine; each attempt at embracing the messiness of forgetting and remembering what travels through my body, my mind, my spirit as I attempt to retell these histories is a big part of

my methodology. This is further complicated by the fact that with each different entry I bring into the conversation, my own subject position shifts.

Location and Vulnerability

These processes of remembering and not-forgetting violence often render both the ethnographer and the women sharing their histories vulnerable, even as they allow us to resist, retell, and remember. In one telephone conversation with me, Kavita said, "The reason both of us love the poem 'Just Tonight' is because both of us are very vulnerable and sincere at once to our memories and to each other." As she states so clearly, we render each other vulnerable through our relationships of faithfulness. This is deeply significant in understanding and further complicating issues of self, subjectivity, and location in critical feminist ethnographic practice.

Remembering violence can render both the ethnographer and the collaborator in the research vulnerable in the moment. Not-forgetting violence can render us vulnerable because violence is also a part of one's essence. Thus, if one approaches memories of violence with a care toward the person sharing the memory, one might argue that not-forgetting violence is yet another point where intervention is necessary. Often, as we engage in the feminist recovery of violent memories, what may get lost is that this process, while it contains the possibility of resistance and change, also renders us vulnerable. Kavita's call brought home my own anguish about avoiding an engagement with my own epistemological crisis. My story, my life, my fieldwork all remain entangled, inseparable from the experiences of the women I am in dialogue with. This once again illustrates how fieldwork for research is, in fact, a personal experience (Madison 2005).

Yet, no matter what I choose to do methodologically, one sentiment constantly underlies much of this ethnographic process: the failure of fieldwork and representation. Walking on the edge, carefully treading both my privilege and what Kavita has called my vulnerability, I now return to address the politics of location. When I revisit my journal from the initial days of my fieldwork, one sentiment that repeatedly appears is my desire to return to Lahaul as if I had never left. My anxiety is one that is intertwined with my location and my fears of returning without being able to walk back as though I had never left, and it always contains the possibility of romanticizing and diminishing my fieldwork. Despite the camaraderie and the clear articulation of trust, purpose, and solidarity between us, as I attempt to represent Kavita's life, I worry often about the complexity of my relationship with her. My nostalgia is articulated as this desire to have never left, and it is caught in my personal relationship with her and my knowledge that even when I did this fieldwork, I was always leaving my own "trail of longings, desires and unfulfilled expectations" (Behar 1996, 25). My choice in staying on in the United States after the project took

shape organically in my own doctoral thesis changes how I position myself today. These field memories lie on this unsettling border of speaking memories for love and the possible risks of representing intimate violence for academic consumption. Eventually, beyond the times we met in Lahaul and Kullu and talked on the telephone, the only place that Kavita and I appear together are in these pages. I write this article aware that it also helps my career in fulfilling career-related expectations at a US university. I am left wanting more from myself and from what I finally do represent. Here, I write through and with the hope that my own retelling and remembering of my field memories will open up more possibilities for conversations about "that vulnerability we are still barely able to speak" (ibid.). Even as I recognize the problematic role of fieldwork as method, I, like Aggarwal (2000, 537) in my own "feminist commitment to situated and accountable writing," look for a way to stay hopeful through the messiness of ethnographic representation (Martínez 2005). Several feminist scholars have emphasized the need to re-historicize third world women's experiences as central to transnational feminist interventions and, in doing so, have highlighted the importance of location in representation. For me, the process of remembering violence differently is also an intervention. This form of feminist intervention keeps coming up short; it leads me to ask where this *re-representation* leaves Kavita and me as we continue to appear together in these pages, in my memories, and in my representation of her memories.[16] On the one hand, our memories contain the possibility of a story being remembered when we appear together; on the other, we live materially and discursively worlds apart, separated by multiple borders. To clarify further, this challenge is not one that should be read as a personal desire for "borderlessness";[17] in fact, the challenge lies in walking across and among these borders, living across them in ways that allow for a feminist remembering/counter-memory. This challenge of walking across and among borders also underscores the very process of writing this article. For example, the modes in which I choose to write this article need to speak to multiple challenges of crossing these multiple borders with what Richa Nagar and Susan Geiger (2007, 3) have called "situated solidarities"—with the memories that different people shared with me in Lahaul; with my own memories of fieldwork; and, finally, with the task of contributing to an archive of feminist counter-memory transnationally.

That Kavita was and remains vulnerable in this relationship—partly because of my ethnographer privilege, partly because of the very subject at hand, and partly because of our camaraderie—has not altered her conviction in having her story documented by me, nor has it changed my certainty to place her at the center of my project. The question for me has never been whether this story should be told, but rather: How do I remember and retell this story that has emerged from the love that is my inspiration, what Gloria Anzaldúa (1999, 59) has called "soul" and what Chela Sandoval (2000, 135) described as a "hermeneutic of love."[18] For me, this hermeneutic involves engaging with

and continually evolving in terms of my research practices to work in solidarity with Kavita, other Lahauli (*dalit* and/or *adivasi*) women, and Nalini. My attempt here is not to list my privileges and identity-markers as though there is a distant landscape of structural inequalities that my research/writing can claim from the outside; rather, my attempt is to illustrate how and why Kavita and I co-inhabit this messy space of our varying structural realities, and what this means politically. To think about crossing these multiple borders politically, as several feminist ethnographers working through issues concerning self and subjectivity have argued, is not to enlist identities as discrete; rather, it is to acknowledge, recognize, understand, and work with the ways in which these stories are mediated through our own bodies, despite and in-between the structural, institutional, and sociopolitical disjunctures inherent in the practice of fieldwork (Nagar and Geiger 2007). Kavita's own memories—her memories as a caste subject having experienced violence—render her vulnerable and also as an agent of her own retelling, which for her is a clearly articulated act of solidarity toward other women in Lahaul. Through the choices she makes in her everyday life, we see an example of how her own remembering exists in opposition to public and institutional nonremembrance—a nonremembrance that, in some sense, threatens to foreclose the possibility of a type of fidelity that a subject can wish to have toward her own remembering.

What possibilities open up with this kind of remembering that simultaneously render Kavita vulnerable, yet allow her to resist? The struggle over remembering at all—how to remember, what to remember—transforms the memory of violence. The memory changes from a one-dimensional account of what happened on the day she was raped into a history of what follows in the form of her life, something that includes her own resistance of the event as situated within the larger context of caste, gender, and sexuality in India. A critical feminist counter-memory seeks this transformation; it attempts to facilitate this process of remembering violence.

In closing, I think of something that Nalini said to me. In a conversation that I had entered into my journal, something I rediscovered nearly a year after her death, she said (and I quote her translating from Hindi): "You've almost reached the shore . . . once you remember and reveal yourself, you're at the shore." I read Nalini's idea of reaching the shore as one that speaks to the process of remembering and not-forgetting in which Kavita engages. Finally, this is how I also have intentionally remembered these memories of violence and my fieldwork.

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Notes

1. The Lahaul Valley, often referred to as a "snow desert," is situated at an average height of 10,500 feet above sea level in the northern Indian Himalayan ranges, bordering Tibet on one side, Kashmir on the other, and the rest of the state of Himachal Pradesh on the third. On the two sides leading into parts of India, the valley is connected by two high passes: the Rohtang Pass, 13,051 feet above sea level, and the Baralachla Pass at 16,020 feet, rendering the area inaccessible throughout the winter months. The main driveable road connecting Lahaul to other parts of India is the Manali-Leh Highway, one of the major border roads maintained by the Indian Army. This road remains closed and unpassable for six to seven months through the year, usually between October 15 and June 15, due to heavy snowfall on both of the connecting passes. Through the winter months, those inside the valley pretty much remain locked in, unless they are willing to trek across the Rohtang into the nearest district, which is named Kullu. The government has helicopters flying in for civilian support in the event of emergencies, and there were three helipads all over the valley in the winter of 1999, and six by the winter of 2004.

2. A culmination of those initial years of work led to the start of a larger women's collective, which eventually disbanded in favor of smaller *mahila mandals*, since traveling across different parts of the valley to conduct meetings and campaigns was increasingly difficult for the larger group.

3. Kavita continues her work through an NGO, and my most recent fieldwork (in 2011) documents her current work.

4. While this article itself does not theorize love, it is indeed inspired by love. Love is the central thread, which motivates me to write about Kavita and Nalini.

5. The house that Nalini lived in was named "SNuG" by the three friends who built and lived in it for nearly forty years—Shashi, Nalini and Gautam.

6. I discuss this in greater length elsewhere, in my dissertation and in my book manuscript in progress, which is titled *"Is my honour not honour?" Women's Narratives of Marriage and Violence in Lahaul, India.*

7. In the context of the Lahula tribe (as in many others in India), caste stratifications exist *within* the tribe.

8. My emphasis is on the process of recall that entails more than a linear telling of the story, which even the individual may engage in.

9. This is a classic example of "symbolic violence" (Bourdieu 2004).

10. In conversation with the head of the only family in the village that was willing to stand by Kavita's father, this issue of compromise emerged several times. It was especially raised to justify why this one family also decided to step back from the case, as it was considered dishonorable of her father to have "benefitted financially" from his daughter's rape.

11. Article 17 of the Indian Constitution.

12. In conversations with other villagers, this issue of compromise in Kavita's case was raised, and she and her father were often ridiculed for accepting money in place of honor. I discuss this at length in my manuscript in progress *"Is my honour not honour?"*

13. For Taussig (1991), to understand the meaning of the violence, the question "Why do people do these (violent) things?" needs to emphasize that the answer is embedded in the everyday. Thus, he distinguishes between the "truth of being" and the "social being of truth" to illustrate that what is important is "not whether facts are real but what the politics of their interpretation and representation are" (xiii). According

to him, the violence itself has to be dialectically engaged. Here, I draw upon Taussig's "social being of truth" to emphasize that the memory of violence is not only about the facts of the violence as real, the motivations of the rapist in question, or the factual events of the violence.

14. Saptapadi is a mountain range visible from different parts of the Lahaul Valley.

15. As I write this article, Kavita has moved away from Lahaul and now lives in the Kullu Valley, which offers her greater anonymity.

16. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

17. Third world and women of color feminists across disciplines have cautioned against the tendency to seek borderlessness and move beyond issues of identity as though they were separate. I follow from such debates within and beyond the discipline of anthropology discussed by Lila Abu-Lughod (1990, 1991, 1993), Faye Harrison (1997) and Soyini Madison (2005, 2007), among others.

18. Virginia R. Domínguez (2000, 368) has discussed the importance of "how to incorporate and acknowledge love in one's in intellectual life," and the need to specifically do so in ethnographic writing. For me, the grounding of the project in terms of love and solidarity is clear, while I work through the "how-to" questions that she and others have raised. Chela Sandoval (2000) discusses the meaning of love as it appears in the works of third world writers who theorize social change. For them, love is "a hermeneutic, a set of practices and procedures . . . towards a differential mode of consciousness and its accompanying technologies of method and social movement" (140). In my own work, I follow from the understanding of love that guides modes and practices of community, self, and research—not only for me, but for Kavita and Nalini as well.

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