

# Structure, Innovation and Adaptation

*Concepts and Empirical Puzzles  
in a Post Modern Milieu*



*Editor*  
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## **Spaces of Culture and Agents of Identity Construction: A Study of the *Banjara* Community of Rajasthan**

*Urmi Bhattacharyya*

*Never was the word 'community' used more indiscriminately and emptily than in the decades when communities in the sociological sense became hard to find in real life (Hobsbawm, 1994: 428).*

### **Introduction**

With escalating industrialization and the far-reaching effects of globalization, the incidence of mobility, of individuals, groups, communities, and commodities, have witnessed significant increase. Going beyond the confines of the socially marked boundaries, or the territories and borders of modern nation-state, this aspect of increased mobility has brought to light the need to emphasize on and reconsider, the idea of social identity.

Situated in Rajasthan, the Banjara, historically identified as nomads, have been intrinsically associated with the process of migration, playing a significant role in facilitating the transportation of goods and the exchange of communication between different regions across India, till the growth of the British rule. Being hereditarily nomadic in nature, generations from this community were incessant migrants, travelling continuously for centuries throughout different parts of the country in their caravans. However, despite their wandering tendencies, they managed to retain the distinct traditional patterns and practices reminiscent of their past, as displayed by their choice of employment, their