Mapping Fragments, Day 2

A broadcast by Surfatial, the collective of Satya Gummuluri, Malavika Rajnarayan and me, 9 May 2016. Watch on YouTube

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I made this transcript by machine from the recording and corrected it against the recording's description and my own records. I have not checked the words by ear. I checked a sample of the speaker names by ear, and corrected those I heard differently. [?] marks a word still in doubt and [unclear] a passage that could not be made out. A speaker is named only where the broadcast's screen or the recording's own words say who is speaking. Fillers such as "uh" and "um" are left out. Times are from the start of the recording.

A name followed by (?) was read from the screen at a moment when it changed from one speaker to the next, so the turn may belong partly or wholly to the speaker before or after.

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00:02 MALAVIKA Hello?

00:09 Hi, welcome to the second day of Mapping Fragments.

00:16 ADITYA Hello.

00:17 MALAVIKA Hi, yeah, hi.

00:19 ADITYA Hi, can you

00:20 MALAVIKA The second day of the discussions. I have just posted a couple of questions that Saurab Dubeh [?] sent as he will not be able to join us for the discussion in the chat window. So there are two questions and we'll come to these in the course of discussion. Okay. apart from that, we'll also talk about the current questions. So maybe I should recap what we discussed yesterday a little bit. Sounds good. Because we spoke of how we perceive fragmentation and what its relationship to a larger unit was. and it seemed like we all arrived at the sense that the wholeness we referred to was transitory.

01:16 SATYA Right.

01:17 MALAVIKA And in some way related to the event of mapping. And what we were mapping and leaving out was also related to it in a kind of simultaneous way.

01:30 ADITYA Okay.

01:31 MALAVIKA Other than that we also spoke of the idea of projection and how anticipation of hope and desire feeds the projection.

01:42 SATYA Right.

01:42 MALAVIKA And how it acts as a driving force for the event of mapping. And how mapping both forms the fragments as well as well as unites them or brings them together from different perspectives. So these were a couple of things that we spoke about yesterday. The question for today, the first question for today is: how does fragmentation get manifested? And I would like to

02:18 Oh. I was wondering if fragmentation gets manifested through identities or whether we could even look at physicalities of fragmentations in terms of how we carry scars or personas or masks, you know, can that also be a kind of fragmentation?

02:42 ADITYA Mm. But the interesting part about that is that especially the question of identity and man and fragmentation. identity so fragmentation th and the process of the identity it's like an image in of certain kind. So identity is an image. It's an image that is of course utilized to be able to segregate citizens and population. And also in the political context to be able to produce certain form of essentialization among different social groups. So an in way in a way fragmen-

tation in the context of identity is a fragmentation that is produced which similarly we discussed yesterday, but this is a pro it's a production of an image that thereby translates itself as identity.

03:41 MALAVIKA Right.

03:42 ADITYA And the second question of whether fragmentation gets manifested through something.

03:51 MALAVIKA So physicality is whatever is funny [?].

03:54 ADITYA Physicality that I'm not very sure of.

03:57 MALAVIKA In terms of one's own and because there I'm trying to relate it to our question of how we are talking of fragmentation in the context of the self. And although identity does play a role, what about identity in terms of if you look at the fragmented self, what happens to personas that we may assume?

04:22 ADITYA Yeah.

04:22 SATYA Personas sound like they are fragments in a way. They are like cross sections. Because personas are constructed either consciously or unconsciously in response maybe to something else. But if while wearing a persona, you are only being part of yourself in a way. So that way it's a fragment. So it's not the entirety of what you even think you are, even though you may not know exactly who you are entirely, but y it's a section of you. So that's maybe that's one form of manifestation as a fractional self.

05:07 And the other thing about manifestation is it fragmentation can also manifest in how the self is relating to the event.

05:21 So it's not only that the Self is fragmented, but the Self's relationship to the event could be fragmented.

05:28 ADITYA Huh. Certainly. That's the that's the I think that's where she sh is absolutely right that the self 's relationship to the event is fragmented because even though the it is perceived like that is like the identities maybe relationship with the social like mobile [?] it is it is a fragmented part of conversation that you would like to have. And it's also more of thinking about oneself as a fragment to contribute in a larger conversation that is the event.

06:08 SATYA Perception of what the whole is could be fragmented

06:15 ADITYA Huh.

06:16 MALAVIKA Yeah.

06:16 SATYA In the sense like obviously nobody's going to have the entire information. Like when we talk about geopolitics, for example, I mean there are certain projections given by certain people who have certain levels of power and who have agendas or whatever it is. So by definition the perception of geopolitical events or whatever to me at least seems very fragmentary.

06:44 MALAVIKA Right. we had an interesting response from Natasha Narayan who was part of the conversation yesterday but sent us a response later and she I think brings up this idea of geopolitics because she talks about diaspora and she said fragmentation to me is a breakdown with some level of violence of power and displacement involved. And fragmentation can also be in diasporic identities.

07:16 SATYA Yeah. Yeah. This is a very specific manifestation certainly. Yeah. And it's and it's very all pervading. Like because diasporas are not necessarily somebody leaving a country going somewhere else. It could just be one stepping out of one's own home. That's you're already a diaspora in a way.

07:36 MALAVIKA But also this idea of home is n not very clear. It's not very

07:44 SATYA Yeah.

07:44 MALAVIKA It's not something that concrete.

07:47 SATYA No, it doesn't. Yeah, that's right.

07:48 MALAVIKA And I think that is where what we were talking of yesterday, the maps come into play as to what you're grouping into that identity or

08:00 SATYA Yeah.

08:00 MALAVIKA Aware of that fragment, how each fragment is in some way self aware to see what its role in the map is maybe.

08:12 SATYA Yeah.

08:16 ADITYA But there's also something that Prayas ended at a very interesting note yet yesterday about this patterns, fragments is patterns.

08:24 MALAVIKA Yeah.

08:24 ADITYA And which is something to lead on to b to from that, because it's also about fragments as patterns because places somewhere like produce an identity f for themselves only in the process of this fragmentation, no? Where

08:44 MALAVIKA Right.

08:44 ADITYA Where the whole called the world or a country or a state is basically fragmented into manageable s fragments.

08:54 SATYA Mm.

08:55 MALAVIKA Yeah.

08:55 ADITYA So that a particular in institu particular ru like infrastructure is instituted to be able to rule them or control them or run them.

09:05 MALAVIKA Yeah.

09:06 ADITYA So that way the pattern of fragmentation of course is different but it was quite something interesting to think about the idea of the patterns and how patterns and places are so related and how fragmentation process becomes the channel through which this patterns in some way basically places become patterns of some kind.

09:32 SATYA Right. It's like you're placing a grid, you're placing a s like a filter on top of a given data set. And you're looking at that data set through that filter. So that's creating a certain type of pattern. So if you're placing like a filter of language, for example, and you're only taking that as the language map, that's one way of grouping people or it could be skin colour, it could be whatever. So and there's various ways of

10:02 MALAVIKA Does that mean that the see, in this case the purpose of fragmenting or grouping is functional?

10:10 SATYA It could be functional, yes.

10:14 MALAVIKA Yeah, exactly. For the ease of administration and prominence [?].

10:17 SATYA Yeah.

10:17 MALAVIKA Does it work in a similar way when we look at it in terms of one's own self identity?

10:25 SATYA I think so. I mean I think like the idea of compartmentalization, right? Like where we decide very specifically I like which is equivalent to the idea of a persona, where I'm going to only focus on these aspects of myself as is in a strategic way. That it in a way self management is born through that. Like in a way that's governance of the self. Where I'm only going to I'm going to keep away my destructive tendencies at bay for some reason. And I'm only going to have my constructive aspects activated in a particular situation. I can make an ac active decision to do that. If I manage to understand myself well enough, where do I function and how do I function? And I only ac activate certain things of my like if I go and have to give a speech you know, like there's only some parts of me that I activate. So that way it's like a placing a filter on myself.

11:25 ADITYA Yeah. It's also just to lead on to that, it's also a form of like in politics there is this whole process of essentializing. Where different things come together. You know, for example

in cas in a mobilization that is basing on the idea of the caste. So suddenly the input caste factor [?] of your identity comes to the fore to perform a certain kind of political function.

11:49 SATYA Right.

11:49 ADITYA So in a way similarly in the lecture context that you were just saying, because the essentialization of what is the form of address or what is the form of function form and function that I'm undertaking necessarily realigns the ways in which fragments speak to each other or adjust with each other.

12:13 MALAVIKA Regarding the patterns in fact now I think I'm bringing in Saurab's question where he says we always have patterns in our mind. Everybody has different patterns of thought or arriving at the solution. So what is important the solution or the pattern through which we arrive at the solution? If yes, how is one more justifiable than the other?

12:39 ADITYA So patterns and solutions is what he's trying to arrive at.

12:44 MALAVIKA Yeah, he's trying to draw some sort of connection between how we think in and I think this is like what you were saying, Satya, how we sort our ideas and thoughts out in when we are supposed to act in a certain circumstance or a particular event.

13:06 SATYA And the question he's asking is, what is more important? The way we s do that sorting or is it the so is the end justified or the means justified?

13:17 MALAVIKA Yes. I think that's his question.

13:19 ADITYA And especially in the context of the end, I don't know whether to think about something as a solution has a very instrumental value and I would say scientific value into it, where there is an equation that you have to solve and that becomes the solution through which it is addressed. I'm not very sure whether

13:40 PRAYAS Yesterday we were talking about how maps are never complete.

13:46 ADITYA Yeah, exactly.

13:47 PRAYAS In that sense if the pattern is never complete and if there is never any solution to begin with

13:55 ADITYA Absolutely. So that's where I'm coming, whether it is the idea of the solution that is productive to think about, or it's the idea of consensus to think about that there is a particular historical point where there is a consensus of how yes, this is how we would like to fragment ourselves as an identity. how fragment ourselves as a place. And we there is a consensus on this is how we would like to exist, therefore we move ahead. Which lives in the perpetual idea of that there is a change that's going to happen in the future.

14:31 SATYA Right. Or an or a good place is going to be reached in the future so

14:35 ADITYA Absolutely. Exactly.

14:37 MALAVIKA Yeah I

14:38 SATYA Yeah

14:39 MALAVIKA You [?] also say something similar, he says algorithms follow a similar design, making sense of the noise as it were. So in a sense, mapping could be viewed as fragmentation, which is chopping data sets into chewable bits. Yet at the same time it is also a process of integration, piecing together bits to create an intelligible model of maps which is larger than the mere sum of its parts.

15:04 PRAYAS But how is it possible if fragments

15:11 Are never going to be organized in a pattern that's going to be complete. And how is it possible to look towards the future with any sense of hope?

15:22 SATYA I think that hope is an ideal.

15:25 PRAYAS Or

15:26 SATYA Hope is to hope is for stability. Hope is for a creation of metastable states which take us towards the next thing, the next thing, the next thing. I mean it's hope is for survival really. It's for coherence.

15:41 MALAVIKA Hope is there could also be an organizational hope. Exactly. Like for administration, you just are trying to figure out the most efficient way of getting something done at that point of time.

15:55 PRAYAS This whole tangent of administration that's come up a couple of times today, but I'm I don't understand it fully. So administration is from whose for whom? Like for whom is the system being an administered? The because the system definitely doesn't want to administer itself because to le to be left to itself it would be just existing any system would leave it reach its optimal level of chaos.

16:29 MALAVIKA Think I don't agree there because I think we are talking of a certain human realm. Okay. So we already know if we talk of the self there are certain inherent patterns of behaviour that we are we gravitate towards and if we're talking of social communities and administering so the same thing will apply I feel to i in a more collective social context.

17:04 SATYA So I don't think

17:07 MALAVIKA This is stressful [?].

17:11 Thank you.

17:16 ADITYA Hello?

17:17 PRAYAS Hello.

17:19 ADITYA So there was some disturbance in the

17:22 PRAYAS Yeah.

17:22 MALAVIKA I think we'll sort of think [?].

17:25 PRAYAS No, you're there.

17:27 MALAVIKA No, I'm there.

17:30 SATYA Actually I think the when we talk about administration, like if we if we narrow the question down and be very crass about it in the sense admin we talked about nation states some time ago, so yeah. Maybe at some point it might be worth going into a discussion in a very concrete direction. We are talking about nation states.

17:50 ADITYA Yeah.

17:51 SATYA Yeah.

17:51 PRAYAS Nation states when we talk about administration are we talking about nation states

17:57 SATYA I'm just suggesting that maybe if it is of interest we can consider going into something very specific like that.

18:04 ADITYA So if you think of the state as a entity, for example even the formation of the nation state and try to understand administration from that premise, then the then the administration becomes the structural element through which the nation state exercises its power.

18:23 SATYA Right.

18:24 ADITYA Right?

18:25 SATYA Yeah.

18:25 ADITYA Which is completely different, for example, if you're talking about a person who is trying to organize or like basically adhere to a certain kind of activities that is making him a particular profession or like etcetera. So the if the my only point is whether administration is the way to think about

18:56 Yes, it is certainly the way to think about how nation states exercise power.

19:00 SATYA Yeah.

19:01 ADITYA But what is the structure, whether we are in a we're in a moment where the administration as we understand in the formation of the nation state is the same or there is a different logic of administering things that persists.

19:18 SATYA So the way I'm seeing it is at a fundamental level there is a need for administration, even whether it be this you know, management. So that it whether it be the self or some other sort of organization a nation state. So the I feel like when we talk about exercising power ideally that's not what a nation the administration of a natal nation state should ideally not be doing that. I mean, they are there for management and governance. It's not necessarily for exercising power and control over a population.

19:51 PRAYAS But for ma management and governance you require power.

19:55 SATYA Yes, I agree, but there is this thing of power corrupting, that sort of thing. So I'm when I think about exercising power I'm thinking of it in a negative way. But as you said, it's not necessarily negative. You do need to use power in controlling or to manage sections.

20:14 PRAYAS Power is just maybe the order of priority that an entity acquires in a system.

20:22 SATYA Mm hierarchies of some sort.

20:25 PRAYAS But yeah, but in that sense I'm not entirely sure if the evolution of hierarchies is a synthetic process that happens in a system. It might actually be a very natural occurrence.

20:38 SATYA Inherent.

20:39 ADITYA Yeah.

20:40 PRAYAS Mm.

20:40 SATYA No, but what I am saying is that in an ideal case with humans, the idea ideally as it has been preached for example by saints or whatever is not about control or hatred or that's not the idea fundamentally but the way that has become exercised or manifested in reality is the opposite of that.

21:06 So

21:06 MALAVIKA I think there are some things about this we can carry into the second question for today, which is how do you develop distance in self perception? Because if you're thinking of whether a system can in some ways monitor itself.

21:26 SATYA Yeah, pretty [?].

21:27 ADITYA Whether the system can you repeat it, sorry?

21:30 MALAVIKA Monitor itself.

21:31 ADITYA Okay.

21:33 SATYA The question was how can we

21:35 PRAYAS Not as well [?].

21:36 MALAVIKA Self management. The question is how do you develop distance in self perception?

21:45 ADITYA Okay.

21:48 PRAYAS Do we have any examples of self management?

21:52 SATYA I mean if you look at discipline for example, if you have a routine. I get up in the morning, I do yoga, I do I drink grass juice or something, you know, that's sort of a structure, for example. That's sort of a self management, you know.

22:08 That's it.

22:09 PRAYAS But self management is helping you. How is it helping the system?

22:15 SATYA It is also helping in the sense of order. For example, if I'm in a nineteen eighty four kind of system, my job is to turn on the monitor volume up at some point in my tiny cubicle. So if I've been mandated certain rules by the system and I'm following those rules, then I am feeding into this I'm helping the system.

22:41 MALAVIKA But h why is the system being seen as outside of the self? What can't the self also be seen as the system?

22:52 SATYA As part of the system or as a system itself.

22:55 MALAVIKA Of discipline because then y you are working you are the system that you are working with.

23:01 SATYA Correct. Which is what we were talking about which is the response to what is self management.

23:07 ADITYA But I think more than self management, the question is actually the system itself, because we were just discussing about administration. Whereas administration has this authorial exercising of power when it actually in its structure. System has a very like a lucid infrastructural tone to it that speaks about how basically things work. Right? Which is not which is not necessarily a pr a priori understanding that system is what exercises power as opposed to administration where there is a big boss who's sitting on the top who's trying to administer things so that everything is fine. Whereas system which is also relevant for something in like the working in digital and the in the present system is where how things are channelized, how things communicate with each other and how s things are compartmentalized into different sequences or different structures, etcetera.

24:12 MALAVIKA Nice.

24:13 ADITYA Sist system that way is more interesting and it's and it's when then you and you come to the question of self from that system, it's it is about up to you how do you like to position yourself within the possibilities that the system offers to you.

24:31 MALAVIKA Right, so this is where the perception of the system is also important as much as perception of the self is. So how you perceive because when you're talking of this the issue of power, then you're clearly the power comes from a skewed sense of perception.

24:51 ADITYA Yes.

24:53 MALAVIKA O or the imposing of power comes from a very skewed sense of perception of either the system or the self.

25:00 SATYA Or it could be a very deliberate projection of something.

25:05 PRAYAS Be or it could be necessary. it could it could be a see w one do what do systems want to do. Systems want to preserve their state.

25:17 SATYA Hence.

25:18 PRAYAS Right. And to in order to for self preservation they might find it necessary to do something and that might be seen as an application of power. But essentially what is do what any system will do at any given point is preserve itself.

25:36 SATYA Yeah.

25:38 ADITYA Do you think it's preserve itself or do you think it's updating itself? Because preserving sustaining sustainability and preserv

25:45 SATYA No, actually it's both. Because if you preserve yourself, you are in a stable state which then takes you to the next better state. So in a way l as you said, it's updating. So if the goal is to update, you have to have a stable place for which to update from. Yeah.

26:00 ADITYA You will have to have a fundamental structure with on which the update actually happens, no?

26:05 SATYA Right. That's what I would say, yeah.

26:07 ADITYA What?

26:09 MALAVIKA But the questi coming to the question, how does one develop distance in self perception? Because and I think

26:20 ADITYA Well we have to qualify the distance. What is the distance? Whether it's the distance from the self or whether it's the distance from the positioning of one's own self that it decides within us within a particular structure.

26:37 MALAVIKA What if we take distance as a sense of objectivity?

26:42 ADITYA That is certainly the case because the idea of distance is fundamentally i in the way we interact with the system. Okay? So you distance yourself from A B C D things because you would like to engage only with the other many other things. Few other things, not many other.

27:03 PRAYAS Isn't distance just a suppression?

27:08 ADITYA No, maybe it's a conversation to think it is a point to think well what conversation No what conversation is it's a it's a choice of what conversation for you is relevant at a particular given time as opposed to suppressing that and moving on to something else, I think.

27:29 PRAYAS But do we get to choose? you are saying that we get to choose what we find relevant, but then do we get to choose as such?

27:39 ADITYA That's a trick question.

27:41 SATYA That's it's a degrees, right? Like a there are degrees of how much you get to choose. Like it depends on degrees of self awareness. If you are really able to control that process of distancing, it is possible to do it. The process of compartmentalization in the mind, for example, like you're going through trauma but you have to do this other thing. You can to a certain extent find a way to s not suppress but step away from the trauma but do something else.

28:08 ADITYA It's a it's a possi it's a possibility of distraction in a way, no. Like it's not literally the same distraction, but to be able to think that okay this is this is the stage but this is a conversation that I have to have. So I would like to produce a temporary move away from it and try to achieve or try to articulate what I would like to say or what I would like to do.

28:32 SATYA Yeah.

28:34 MALAVIKA But do you think
28:38 That by creating that distance.

28:42 SATYA Mm.

28:43 MALAVIKA How firstly, how do you distance yourself from the self? You know, how do you develop that distance?

28:50 SATYA Yeah I

28:51 MALAVIKA If we think of you know, if you are thinking of it in the context of these fragments, you're already you acknowledge that there are these many fragments. So I can you completely distance yourself from the collection of fragments? Is there an

29:11 PRAYAS But isn't this

29:13 MALAVIKA Keeping it [?].

29:15 PRAYAS Isn't distancing a distancing a kind of
29:21 Isn't it in the mind of the subject? So in the sense that isn't it fiction? Because

29:27 SATYA It could be.

29:28 ADITYA It couldn't be [?].

29:29 SATYA It could also be very physical.

29:31 PRAYAS It's true.

29:34 ADITYA It's also the idea, for example, the idea that the produced there is there could be even if we go back to the question of the place in the self, that there is a certain kind of a selfness that the self has that the particular self establishes to a particular place, whatever place that is. Okay? Where the where the somewhere the idea of the self at least lives in the fiction of a completeness.

30:01 MALAVIKA Yeah, this is

30:02 ADITYA The place in the world that is where I am complete in all my capacities. Okay, whether it's physical, mental, all the all the possible capacities. So the idea of producing any distance from this position of self within a place where supposedly the fiction of the completeness is produced is interesting, then the friction is so much about whether the self is complete or not, just because this distance is produced.

30:36 MALAVIKA So are you saying that by altering the pattern you can achieve distance?

30:43 ADITYA I'm not I'm saying I'm trying to make sense of the distance itself.

30:48 MALAVIKA Because see I am looking at it like this, that we let's say e even if we take a physical location, we are situated in a s certain city and we've gotten used to the patterns of that city and how we move around and but if we want to view that city from a different perspective, we would have to move out of it.

31:15 ADITYA Absolutely.

31:17 MALAVIKA So we would have to move out of it to experience another pattern in order to see how this pattern compares. So in that sense I'm thinking of, you know, altering the pattern of the fragments we that are, you know, actually making us understand the world.

31:39 ADITYA Certainly the comparison, yes, but I also think that it's also the position of whether you would like to have relocation of your fragments into a new idea of place because you of various it's it is the distancing from the actual place that you think that is belongs to you. And suddenly you would like to have this relocation of your functioning into a new place just for the sake of thinking that you would like to think of both place and yourself as new. You know, that also is a very

32:17 MALAVIKA Yes. Yes.

32:18 ADITYA Possibility.

32:19 SATYA If you see through the eyes of someone else, you don't have to move out of a place. If you are in a place long enough, it's you can still have a distance from it.

32:29 ADITYA True. That is also true. It's also yeah, it's also about the which perspective are we posing? What wha what we choose to look at like for example in a city, what is it you would like to choose to look at the city, whether it's the morning sun or the evening sun or the moon?

32:45 MALAVIKA Yeah.

32:45 ADITYA So it's a it's a whole bunch of all these things.

32:49 SATYA Yeah, and it's like which circles are you moving in? For right now if you're in college you're saying certain things, but tomorrow something else, yeah.

32:56 MALAVIKA Yeah. So the that again comes in a certain examination of that pattern that is already existing and say, Okay, this is this is what is going on here and I c I could change, I could remove a few components and maybe add something else to see what kind of a pattern it forms.

33:22 ADITYA But I think we can also talk about s distancing within the s itself.

33:28 SATYA Yeah.

33:28 MALAVIKA Right. Right.

33:30 ADITYA No.

33:32 PRAYAS That going to happen without any differentiation that fragments the self into the self and the other? I mean in the sense how can you distance yourself from yourself without fragmenting and differentiating?

33:49 ADITYA No, fragmenting is definitely the process. I don't think fragmenting is excluded from it. But what I'm saying is there is only a p at a particular moment that the fragment of the self is chosen to be considered. Whereas always you're actually in the perpetual thing of trying to find a wholeness, a fictional whole for what you are.

34:09 SATYA Right. Like I was talk yeah. Like I was talking about seeing yourself through the eyes of another, for example. So you are wearing a persona and in that sense you are fragmenting yourself and you're looking at yourself through a s a new way of looking at your yourself. That's a distance.

34:29 PRAYAS Yeah.

34:33 So considering

34:38 What are the be I mean, I'm just saying what are the benefits of fragmentation as opposed to

34:49 Really being able to deal with all the contradictory

34:57 You know urges within one's own integrated self.

35:03 ADITYA It's to basically do damage control.

35:09 To be able to basically to be able to negotiate to be able to not literally I'm I was not like being just provocative to not to be actually to the moment of collapse of any kind, whether it's an intellectual collapse or whatever collapse where you're basically not able to read the context that is in front of you within any of the faculty, whether it's the physical faculty or the intellectual faculty or both simultaneously.

35:33 PRAYAS So fragmenting is never a positive thing.

35:37 ADITYA No fragmenting. No, it is, it is, it is. Fragmenting is the process through which you can actually try to find ways of engaging with yourself. Because you can't deal with the intensity that the whole like basically burdens you with.

35:53 MALAVIKA I also think that if you look at fragmenting of the self as like you mentioned a little while earlier, Prayas, of the differentiation between the fragments of yourself and the other. I think I wouldn't necessarily look at it as the other, where the moment you are fragmenting yourself, there are many selves and it depends on which lot of selves you're actually with. so I don't know, the question of the other is in some ways too much of a polemic.

36:33 ADITYA Yeah.

36:33 MALAVIKA And in that sense I think the advantages of fragmentation is to also reduce the distance from, you know such the creation of extreme opposites where you somewhere understand that you're only a part of many.

36:51 ADITYA It blurs the relationship between the inside and the outside that used to used to you know, exist within.

36:59 MALAVIKA Yeah.

37:00 ADITYA Makes that it makes that way more complicated and interesting. because then you're not necessarily trying to deal with in this as like by yourself, but actually in the in the presence of others that you either fictional or real. That's a different conversation.

37:21 But the pr but the idea of a presence of some kind. It can be a presence of a place also.

37:28 MALAVIKA The presence of a place

37:33 You're talking of the fragments, the idea of fragments related to the idea of a presence or

37:40 ADITYA No, I'm talking about the fragments as an as producing the idea.

37:47 MALAVIKA Okay. Okay.

37:48 ADITYA Presence of others, not necessarily the self.

37:51 MALAVIKA So when you talk of this idea of oppressors [?], that means you are again m moving towards some sort of a mapping of those fragments.

38:07 ADITYA Perhaps. Yes.

38:10 MALAVIKA So the third question we have for today is what does a map do?

38:17 ADITYA What does a map do?

38:19 MALAVIKA What does a map do and how does it do what it does?

38:27 SATYA What does what does a map do and

38:30 MALAVIKA How does it do what it does? And how? How does it do it?

38:35 SATYA What does a matter [?]?

38:36 MALAVIKA Yeah, what does a map do? And we spoke about this a little bit yesterday in terms of a map being taking the place of an event.

38:49 SATYA Yeah.

38:53 MALAVIKA But how does it do it?

39:00 SATYA So map can a map create distance?

39:04 ADITYA I think the map is all about measuring distance.

39:08 MALAVIKA Measuring distance.

39:11 ADITYA Your or seg [?] are basically one is to segregate geographies and of course which is the literal thing and also is also measuring distance between these so called identified geographies.

39:25 SATYA Is it measuring or is it creating distance?

39:28 ADITYA Creating, yes. Simul maybe both simultaneous, creating and measuring simultaneously.

39:33 SATYA Right. because yes, I can see how it is measuring in the sense for me creating distance is like if I draw a map, I'm dividing up spaces and I'm saying this place is this far away from this mu this other space.

39:45 ADITYA Yeah. But the measure is also the process, as you said.

39:48 SATYA Yes, exactly, the measurement. But at the same time by drawing the boundaries of the map I'm saying if this place is falling within the boundary of this other space, therefore these two are closer to each other.

40:01 ADITYA Yeah.

40:01 MALAVIKA Nu just made a comment saying map is to identify topography, physical and mental.

40:15 SATYA Map is to identify topography. Yeah, I mean at a very generic level, yeah, that's what maps do. We sort of try to talk about the contours of or of a space.

40:29 PRAYAS They do maps identify or do they represent what is identified?

40:35 SATYA Is repr is it isn't identification a part of representation? Like you have to sort of work on identifying first

40:43 ADITYA Yeah. And so that it becomes a object of or name. It becomes a place. So basically in barren land is being into m is made into a place with a name only through the process of A identification and then bec it becoming to so you s are identified as this, therefore from tomorrow you will be representing this.

41:05 SATYA Yeah.

41:07 MALAVIKA So is that identification in relation to its character or in relation to where it is in terms of because what I'm thinking of is if you're looking at mapping barren lands all over the world then you will get a very different map. And if you're looking at a barren land in say a specific region

41:34 ADITYA Mm.

41:35 MALAVIKA You're going to find a different kind so and if you apply the same to say communities or people you're gonna get different kinds of maps when you are looking at say you know m mapping children of a certain kind or mapping

42:03 ADITYA I think it's a good thing [?].

42:04 MALAVIKA Yes.

42:05 ADITYA It depends upon the for example in a c in the context of a place, of course there is always a you know, possibility of mapping in imaginary, you know, people try to speculate this thing that, you know, particular era try to imagine about the past and the present in certain way, etc. etc. But in the context of place, I think it's the identification also is an analysis that tries to basically explorate what is the what is the possibility that the place is offering. What

are the I'm not saying in terms of resources, but what is it what is the potential of the space. So the potential of the space becomes the fundamental question within which the identification process is internally hierarchized in a way, no?

42:55 SATYA Yeah, actually when we talk about topography, that's more reasonable because we are not imposing anything. They are just doing a survey of the place. We're just like saying this is how it is.

43:07 ADITYA Yeah.

43:08 MALAVIKA Maps are distancing agencies. They are in some ways surveys. They're not so much

43:15 SATYA They can be. Yeah, they can be. Because there's two types of maps now. One is where you're trying to represent to the best of your own ability what you are sensing. And there is the other type of mapping where you are applying some lenses which come from some other place of maybe an agenda or maybe a place of power or whatever. And you're trying to impose that.

43:37 ADITYA And

43:40 Just to just to think about maps in the present, because we are also talking about maps, then when the mapping process has begun. But map in the present is also so much to do with the movement of what is the a big question of mapping for the for the sake of extra mobility in an extra extremely accelerated way than before. Of course, at some point maps were made to understand how do we navigate from here to there. But now the equation is so complicated maps basically track the movement of your bodies, no? True everywhere [?].

44:23 SATYA It is still if it is just a tracking, it is still similar. It's still a survey of how you're moving.

44:30 ADITYA Absolutely.

44:34 But what it does to the tracking is a different conversation.

44:37 SATYA Yeah, exactly. That's the other place of where what is the agenda of the movement and why are these migrations happening, etcetera.

44:43 ADITYA Absolutely, yeah, that's true.

44:45 MALAVIKA So yesterday we spoke of how mapping is in some ways the event and the event itself is transitory and which means if the mapping is also in some ways related to time and movement.

45:00 SATYA Yeah.

45:01 MALAVIKA How does a moving thing map other moving things?

45:08 SATYA And I think in that there is the device of metastability in the sense of having a snapshot which we hold on to for a little while until it changes so much that there is a need to redraw it.

45:23 So we have a device of holding on to something. The s because we need stability.

45:29 PRAYAS So it's like a photograph. It's like a photograph of a dynamic system.

45:35 SATYA Yeah, a snapshot, a cross section.

45:41 MALAVIKA So a question that just occurred to me is how do we map something like conflict?

45:52 Because we're talking of fragments, we're talking of

45:56 The different selves they were talking of you know parts and things trying to come together or not coming together and the f the times of friction when that all this causes

46:15 How can we relate it to mapping conflicts?

46:18 SATYA And so then we can I'm thinking how to map conflict could be looking for certain indicators for certain temperature points. Certain so for example the casualties. If I'm map making a map of casualties that can indicate to me something else. If I am mapping migration, that is indicating to me so I guess from a very practical point of view we take temperature at different points and we set you know have sensors of different sorts at different points in a soup, and then it tells you, it gives you a shape of that soup. And if what does it mean to map a conflict? Like what are you what are we trying to look at?

47:09 PRAYAS We're trying to make sense of the conflict, right? So

47:13 MALAVIKA That's me [?].

47:14 ADITYA But what is the question through which sorry, you go ahead. I interrupted you.

47:18 PRAYAS No, I was just reiterating the point that we are essentially trying to make

47:24 SATYA Sensor [?].

47:25 PRAYAS Yeah, sense of con of the conflict.

47:28 ADITYA No, if you are s asking about making sense of the conflict, it's also about w where does one stand in the conflict. That's the most important question. And whether you are trying to have a bird eye view of the conflict or whether you are talking about as the person who's standing inside the conflict and speaking, or you are the one who's looking back at the conflict that has already happened to be able to produce some kind of a hypothesis of how can you map it? Because mapping is a process which presumes that there is an aerial view that's possible.

48:03 SATYA Yeah.

48:04 ADITYA And in the context of the conflict it's very difficult whether that aerial view is possible or not. Whether we have the luxury of that aerial view.

48:11 SATYA Yeah, and if somebody But is aerial view a luxury? Yes, it can be. Because you're not in it. I y if you're n if you're on the ground and you're the one being shot at, then you don't have necessarily the luxury of AI [?].

48:25 ADITYA And that's the distance, but then we are going back to the question of the distance of whether it's a

48:29 MALAVIKA Missing out something by not being in the conflict. Do you may not know the

48:37 SATYA Yep.

48:39 MALAVIKA Yeah.

48:40 SATYA Absolutely, which is why we talk about journalistic privilege and we talk about like you know, c colonialist interpretations of what's going on the ground. Like you're speaking from an ivory tower.

48:51 ADITYA Exactly.

48:52 MALAVIKA Yeah, but

48:53 ADITYA Image [?]

48:54 SATYA And that's the important

48:55 MALAVIKA Of personal histories.

49:00 What about the role of personal histories, the one who is has been through the conflict?

49:06 SATYA Right, and that's another map. That's so i guess time also provides a distance. So there's one way of

49:11 PRAYAS So this must this must mean that we for some reason we prioritize the representation of the pattern over the experience of the pattern.

49:24 SATYA We prioritise no, that's the only thing we can do. See in the moment

49:29 PRAYAS Because from the ivory tower what you can what you can have is a sense of perspective. You can maybe observe the entire pattern.

49:39 ADITYA You have the distance basically to be able to

49:41 SATYA And you have the experience.

49:43 PRAYAS Even so.

49:44 SATYA Maybe not, but you have the capacity to do it because you are using a different part of your brain when you're sitting in the ivory tower and I don't mean to be condescending or whatever, but you know, if you look at it very objectively, you're at a distance where you're use

you're not in the moment and you're not in a fight or flight mode. So you can actually sort of represent it. And even when you're inside the conflict, it doesn't mean that you don't have your faculties all there. I mean even while you're in there you have a very different perspective of that locality where you are and how things are happening over there. And as Malavika you said, yeah, something is lost. If you're not in it then you're not seeing that. The personal histories you don't have access to that. So maybe everyone has their own cross section of it.

50:31 MALAVIKA Yeah, so as I'm thinking of m mapping being a kind of objective process. But can the mapping, the process of mapping include these multiple perspectives, which means then the mapping itself also has fragments.

50:49 SATYA (?) Definitely. Yeah, and you know funny thing is sometimes when you distance away the because of time from a from an event, there is a better perspective of an understanding of why something happened. Why did that conflict happen or at that moment why did that person take that decision?

51:06 ADITYA Absolutely.

51:08 PRAYAS What?

51:08 ADITYA That doesn't matter.

51:10 PRAYAS The distance perspective is in some ways more progressive.

51:17 SATYA Not necessarily. It's just a different I'm not s I'm not giving priority to anything. Like I don't believe that. I think it's just that the information that's available to make a pattern.

51:30 PRAYAS Is number [?].

51:31 SATYA Is i it i the distance gives a component which adds to the information. Whereas while you're in the situation, while you're experiencing it, that information is lost when you have distanced yourself.

51:45 ADITYA But it's also maybe the question of being in the conflict, which is very interesting for me, to think about whether it is the it is the point where your preconceived pattern is challenged, as opposed to you being in the ivory tower and watching the

51:59 MALAVIKA Right.

52:01 ADITYA You know? So the idea of being in this I'm not saying valorizing any of those, but I'm trying to say that the very dynamic of you being within a conflict as a participant and be extremely spontaneous to everything that is happening. Not necessarily always like a state exercising power onto you, but the very moment then tries to re make you force you to go out of the pattern of your imagination and then try to do something else and then the pattern of what you think you are actually either failed or reinvented in the process.

52:37 SATYA Yeah and

52:38 MALAVIKA So starting [?] a moment of things happening every and changing as you live in that place as opposed to something that becomes reportage.

52:52 ADITYA Yeah.

52:55 So, I think that's a good idea [?].

52:57 MALAVIKA There is a certain privilege there also.

52:59 SATYA Which is what I was saying, that there is a definitely a privilege.

53:06 ADITYA It's also it's also the question of you know, simple question of the spectator and the participant, no?

53:11 SATYA Yeah.

53:12 ADITYA It's the role you would like to choose, whether you want to be the spectator of and perceive it as a spectacle because for many people it's not a spectacle, it's something that they have to participate to be able to claim what they have for them, no?

53:26 SATYA Yeah, and there's some there sometimes there is no choice. Sometimes there is no choice. Yeah.

53:30 ADITYA Yeah. Yeah. And sometimes there are moments where these things blur because the spectator might not have that luxury, actually has to become a participant by the virtue of the dynamic of how the scene unfolds.

53:41 SATYA Exactly.

53:42 ADITYA So it's very murky.

53:44 SATYA Yeah.

53:45 ADITYA But what

53:46 PRAYAS What to do with privilege if it exists by default?

53:50 SATYA There you go.

53:50 PRAYAS Not to be accepted.

53:52 SATYA See, how my painting has to be [?]

53:55 MALAVIKA Yeah.

53:56 SATYA Sorry, anything it's better to it is better to accept that something exists. You know, it does exist. And it's better to admit it and to acknowledge it. It is important to do that.

54:11 MALAVIKA I think it's also important to look at privilege in terms of how the different privileges can be accommodated.

54:20 That

54:21 SATYA Or whether they should be accommodated. Yeah.

54:26 ADITYA No, the important question is about maybe it's not the question of the privilege, but even if you go back to the question of objectivity and the translation of what you see, which is what basically we are discussing about, as opposed to the question of not being able to participate in the conflict but at the same time speak about it, which are which are two different things because you're not participating in it because A you don't relate to it and also you choose to be the spectator of it. And not really

54:58 Hello?

54:59 MALAVIKA Yes, we can hear you.

55:01 ADITYA So that's the question because then I don't know whether it's the question of the privilege or whether it's the question of h that's how that's how the structure allows it to happen.

55:18 MALAVIKA Yeah, so I'm trying to envision a kind of structure that can that has the option of looking at the m multi layered map. I mean, you know, in i to take an example of just normal Google Maps and how it functions. What if you when you looked at it from a certain perspective you saw a certain map and when you zoomed in you saw a very different map. And that and it's not that one is untrue and the other is true, but they're both true in their own perspectives and in their own sense.

56:02 And whether these multi levels or these layers can coexist is something that I'm thinking of in terms of the process of mapping.

56:15 ADITYA But it's important to think about if you were to think about mapping as a conceptual practice.

56:20 MALAVIKA Yes.

56:21 ADITYA As opposed to mapping as the as the geological practice. it i the important thing is about how do you then you understand the process of mapping that is not simulating the geographies.

56:35 PRAYAS Right.

56:37 ADITYA So if we were to think about mapping as a process that is not simulating the geographies, which is what its conventional process has been, then we are actually entering a new field of thinking about what are the possibilities that mapping and vis-à-vis its perception of the world, not necessarily as a geography.

56:56 MALAVIKA Yes, exactly.

56:57 ADITYA Does. So that is the and the mapping fragments in that way comes together there because then you're not just talking about mapping as an instrumental structure that is has a codified way of approaching a geography, but as something way more diverse and tangential than just like a as a mere process of like segregating territories.

57:22 SATYA And we talked about applying lenses and filters on a very same data set, which geographically that data set has a certain import, but if you applied a conceptual map, a conceptual filter, you're getting a different map.

57:39 A filter. You know, if you're y so you're looking at the same thing from various perspectives. So one is a very physical survey.

57:46 PRAYAS But I would like to question the fact that is it at all possible to look at a map and outside of its geospatial kind of

57:57 SATYA Yes you can. That's what I'm trying to say. I mean if you have a map of India and for example, and you're taking the citi names of cities which are all laid out on it, you can absolutely apply a another m map which says which all cities have the vo letter X in it.

58:13 PRAYAS No, but that's basically, you know, maybe you're doing information design or something, but I'm saying that

58:21 SATYA It's just a trivial example. I don't want to

58:25 PRAYAS Isn't the word map and how we associate with the word presupposes a particular kind of history of the word and its application before?

58:36 SATYA No, not necessarily. You can get new information, right? Like you're looking at stuff and you're seeing a new pattern. Why is it doesn't okay, now that looking at the new pattern would be presupposed because of a history in the past, a way of thinking.

58:51 MALAVIKA I'm also looking at the map within its I mean if you take the geographical map and looking at it with the geography and beyond. So you at one level are looking at the geographical map and then at another level you're looking at where the jo geographical map blurs and it flows into other things that may not necessarily stick to its geographical boundaries.

59:16 SATYA Exactly, like if you take language, for example, like you're taking dialects. So could be anything like skin colour I said earlier. You're specifically looking for one shade which is a distribution across the whole entire journal [?], then that's a completely another map.

59:34 MALAVIKA Should be a

59:35 ADITYA Procedures of mapping in terms of thinking about what are the different procedures through which mapping as such can be thought about and whether that is the p opportunity to diversify the conversation about map as such and the multiple things it offers to think about the present.

59:55 MALAVIKA Right. I'm afraid we're gonna we're gonna have to stop for today because we've it's already been an hour. But thank you everybody and we hope to see you all tomorrow. We'll post the link for the hangout and we'll send it to whoever's participating. So thanks once again.

01:00:17 SATYA Nice.