

Report on the First Researchers' Workshop, August 1-2, 2014

Cities, Rural Migrants and the Urban Poor – Issues of Violence and Social Justice

The First Researchers' Workshop on 'Cities, Rural Migrants, and the Urban Poor – Issues of Violence and Social Justice' was held in Kolkata on August 1 and 2, 2014. It was organized by the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (MCRG). The workshop was designed to discuss long abstracts by the researchers in the project by eminent academics and activists. It was the first step in finalizing the thematic structure of the project and supplementing the proposed researches with new ideas, comments, suggestions and recommendations.

As we know, the project on 'Cities, Rural Migrants, and the Urban Poor' will be based on researches to be conducted in three big cities (Delhi, Kolkata, and Mumbai) and one small town (Siliguri) in India and will focus on a comparative approach towards the issues of city planning, migration practices, and social justice for the urban poor. Attention will be given primarily to the formation of the category of migrant worker and the various identities and locations of their existence within the city space. One study in particular will explore the patterns of migration along the flood-prone areas of Bihar. Most of the researchers are themselves based in these cities and their contributions will also reflect their own experiences of living in the city and witnessing the changing milieu of urban existence.

The participants in the workshop came from various parts of the country and outside and can be divided into two groups – researchers and discussants/commentators. The names of the researchers are: Ishita Dey, Amit Prakash, Madhuresh Kumar, and Mithilesh Kumar (Delhi); Debarati Bagchi, Iman Kumar Mitra, and Kaustubh Mani Sengupta (Kolkata); Mahuya Bandyopadhyay, Ritambhara Hebbar, Manish Kumar Jha, Pushoendra Kumar Singh, and Mouleshri Vyas (Mumbai); and Samir Kumar Das (Siliguri). The names of the discussants were: Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay, Paula Banerjee, Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Anannya Bhattacharjee, Dyutish Chakrabarty, Himadri Chatterjee, Mahalaya Chatterjee, Samir Kumar Das, Anita Patil-Deshmukh, Swati Ghosh, Mithilesh Kumar, Prabhu Mohapatra, and Soumen Nag.

The structure of the workshop was different from the one usually followed in most workshops and conferences. The abstracts were set for discussion over a number of sessions keeping in mind the thematic consistency and comparability of the research proposals. To lengthen the time of discussion and to encourage maximum intervention from the audience, every session was initiated by a presentation by the discussants. The discussion of each abstract was followed by questions and suggestions from the audience and responses from the author. To ensure the availability of all the abstracts to every member in the audience, soft copies were circulated beforehand. Hard copies of the abstracts were also made available in the beginning of the workshop.

Day 1: August 1, 2014

The workshop started with the welcome address by Paula Banerjee, President, MCRG, and Associate Professor at the department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta. She commented on the long and extensive relationship between MCRG and the Ford Foundation, the funding partner in this project. She welcomed the participants and promised to 'turn on the Bengali hospitality.' Banerjee's speech was followed by the statement of purposes by Ranabir Samaddar, the Director of MCRG. He extended his welcome to the audience and offered background information on the origins of this research project by situating it within the history and programmatic vision of MCRG. While MCRG's original focus was on forced migration, it came to challenge not only the distinction between voluntary and involuntary migration but also between different types of forced migration. Forced migration, particularly after 1990, is taking place in a mixed way given that its causes are also multiple and interspersed. Samaddar also asked the audience to think about the nature of human rights and their indivisibility while highlighting the particular context of Calcutta (and Partition). He highlighted the importance of the migrant at the heart of the city by asking: 'Where do we locate the migrant? How are we to distinguish between the citizen and the migrant?'

The inaugural session was followed by the first session of discussion of the abstracts. This session was chaired by Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty, eminent historian and member of MCRG. The abstract discussed in session was authored by Amit Prakash, Professor and Chairperson, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University. The title of his abstract was 'The Capital City: Discursive Dissonance in Law and Policy.' The discussant of his abstract was Samir Kumar Das, Professor, Department of Political Science, and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Calcutta. Prakash's abstract focused on the discursive nature of urban policies and laws and the associated truth making exercises in the context of the National Capital Region of Delhi. Prakash wanted to plot the issue of the migrants in this governmental nexus by addressing concerns over the conception of the city, the questions of poverty and livelihood and the ways in which the image of the migrant was constructed. Samir Kumar Das' initial criticism of the abstract was that the abstract's empirical base needs further development. Das organized his discussion around the three themes of the abstract. The first theme concerns Prakash's critique of urban anthropology (described as instrumentalist). The instrumentalist position takes the policy goals as granted and are framed so that question of instrumentality overshadows all other questions (including the ethical questions). Das commented that these policy goals are not framed independently of the regime of truth; they are issued from the regime of truth that already exists. Das encouraged Prakash to question how certain goals are held as politically incorrect and how some goals are always relegated to the background. The second theme addresses the framing of issues of justice. Das commended Prakash on the way in which his analysis departs from the traditional liberal conception of justice. The way battles of justice are fought is different from the way the battles are framed. Das encouraged Prakash to reflect on how power is not exercised to regulate but rather to eliminate the

migrants (a new form of untouchability – ‘the untouchables are the unseeables’). Instead of his focus on technology, Das asked Prakash to interrogate the cracks and interstices of the act of discipline. The third theme focuses on the ‘branding’ of the city. Das critiqued the homogenous disciplining mechanism that Prakash outlined by arguing that this process occurs in different micro-spaces (for example, how the maid is disciplined within the house). Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty, who chaired the session, also offered a historical critique of Prakash’s abstract asking him to consider the roles played by the earlier (economic) systems of production and distribution like the ‘bazaar.’

The feedbacks from the audience centred on few thematic revisions and conceptual reorganizations. Clarifications were asked to be made about the process of urban planning and its relation to the unique situations of urban governance in India. Also the relation between political economy and policy analysis came to be highlighted as an interesting avenue of such an analysis. It was asked what kind of urban space (both in terms of form and content) would emerge from these policy developments. In this context, the concept of property was asked to be engaged with more seriously.

The second session of the day was chaired by Prasanta Roy, Secretary, MCRG, and Professor Emeritus, Department of Sociology, Presidency University. The first abstract in this session was authored by Iman Kumar Mitra, Research Associate, MCRG, and discussed by Mahalaya Chatterjee, Associate Professor, Centre for Urban Economic Studies, University of Calcutta. Mitra’s abstract was titled ‘Urban Planning, Settlement Practices, and Issues of Justice in Contemporary Kolkata.’ It tried to foreground the question of violence on migrants in the city space not only in terms of physical encounters but also in the context of deeply rooted practices of cultural segregation and the historically evinced instances of categorial violence and displacements. The abstract proposed to explore a brief history of migration settlements in post-independence Calcutta (renamed as Kolkata at the end of the twentieth century) in the slums of the city and engage with the changing narratives of definitional politics (how the definition of the ‘migrant’ has changed over time in various governmental documents and laws) and their relation to the shifts in contemporary policies of urbanization like Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). Mahalaya Chatterjee, though appreciative of Mitra’s archival source, doubted how much information might come only from the archives, especially about the ethnic (de)composition of the migrant population. She argued that the absence of physical violence in the last few years located Kolkata in a unique position compared to the other cities like Mumbai – a point which needs further deliberation. The feedback from the audience picked up the issue of violence and asked Mitra to elaborate on that. It was also pointed out that, given the fragmented nature of the city, it was important to clarify which particular areas should come under the study. Also the pertinence of reviewing earlier studies from the 1960s and `70s was put to question as the decade of the `90s marked a visible shift in urban policies endorsed by the ideologies of neoliberal reform. But it was also mentioned that a better understanding of this shift required clarifying the differences between the earlier studies and the current ones.

The second abstract in this session was authored by Kaustubh Mani Sengupta, Transnational Research Group Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University,

and discussed by Himadri Chatterjee, Doctoral Fellow, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Sengupta's abstract was titled 'Taking Refuge in the City: Migrant Population and Urban Management in Post-Partition Calcutta.' It was about the intertwined processes of refugee rehabilitation and the development of the city. Sengupta discussed three themes in the abstract: (1) the different schemes of rehabilitation of the refugees in the post-partition years which led to categorization of them in terms of background and previous occupation; (2) the location of women in these schemes and how they took up training to find jobs to sustain their families; and (3) the changes in the city following the influx of people across the border. Himadri Chatterjee's first critique of Sengupta questioned the dynamics of arrival of the refugees to the city. He emphasized that the places that were known as 'camps' and 'colonies' needed to be described. He also asked in what sense or to what extent the colonies were parts of the city's imagined cartography. With regards to the camps, Chatterjee noted that they did not form part of the imagined cartography. His second critique was about the use of the term 'urban poor' which already existed through Joya Chatterjee's work. Chatterjee continued this discussion by focusing on the label of self-employment (as a disciplinary mechanism) and its relationship with agency and self-improvement. Chatterjee's third critique concerned the spatial analysis by stating that space came with its own metaphysics, not only its social index. Therefore, when framing the migrant question through spatial imagination, one needs to reconcile the various conflicting fragments therein. The feedbacks from the audience explored the specificity of women and their emancipation or (non-)empowerment in Sengupta's narrative. A question was also raised on the class character of the female workers and their work profiles. Once again, the watershed of the 1990s became an issue of contention: it was asked whether the popular image of a hospitable Calcutta experienced a shift during the '90s. Sengupta was also asked to look into three archival sources: (1) Calcutta Transport material (2) Durgapur recruitment material (3) Refugee hawkers' records.

The final session of the day was chaired by Pradip Kumar Bose, eminent sociologist and member, MCRG. The first abstract that was discussed in this session was authored by Mithilesh Kumar, Doctoral Fellow, University of Western Sydney. The title of his abstract was 'Logistical Labour and the Airport City' and it was discussed by Anannya Bhattacharjee, President, Garment and Allied Workers' Union. Kumar proposed in his abstract the concept of 'logistical labour' which was not only an empirical category but could also be described as a 'contemporary condition of labour.' Citing Delhi as an 'aerotropolis', Kumar planned to explore two instances of logistical labour which contributed to the (re)construction of the city and its peripheral structures of governmentality: (1) female cleaners at the Delhi Airport, recruited by labour contractors from a nearby village, and (2) a workshop at the border of Delhi and Gurgaon which specialized in manufacturing trolleys, repair lifts and ladders for several airlines. Kumar argued that the concept of logistical labour was based on the idea of a desubjectified multitude and wanted to explore its emancipatory potential. Anannya Bhattacharjee, in her discussion, argued that the analysis might be looking at the symptom rather than the cause. She commented on the need to foreground the discussion on logistics within the context of the global production network and transformation of value. She praised the author's use of the term logistics but suggested clarification on the same given its density and singular application to multiple workers (i.e. leather workers vs. port workers). Bhattacharjee suggested an analysis of

power within the rhetoric of logistics. She encouraged the writer's research on the supply chain when discussing the internationalization of migration. She concluded by urging Kumar to focus on re-subjectification of the labourers through trade union movements. The feedbacks from the audience pointed out that, compared to Kolkata, which had a history of refugee influx and migration settlement, Delhi did not seem to emerge as a 'migration city' in its own right. Here one should also be cautious about the 'euphemistic' usage of terms like 'minority identity' and 'urbanization' and try to find the historical links between them.

The last paper of the day was authored by Madhuresh Kumar, independent researcher and activist, National Alliance of People's Movements. The title of his abstract was 'Competing Dreams: Delhi and its Migrants' and it was discussed by Prabhu Mohapatra, Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Delhi. Kumar wrote about the conflicts between the dreams of projecting Delhi as a 'world class city' and its 'unwanted' residents' wish to find a 'dignified place to live.' He sought to explore the structural relationship between the master plans for a 'smart city' and the growth of unauthorized colonies and slums and showed how this relationship could become a site of class struggle in the garb of environmental and aesthetic aspirations leading to eviction and dispossession of the underprivileged. Taking a clue from Kumar, Prabhu Mohapatra stressed the important place of dignity in the discourse and the necessity of recognizing the housing movement as a site of class struggle (the struggle to separate the place of residence and the place of work). The struggle to make a house is as important as the struggle for raising wages and other campaigns regarding labour. Mohapatra also commented on the dialectic of settlement and displacement (unsettlement) – both of these processes happened at the same time and could be traced over time. The process should be studied simultaneously – one should ask how one draws the line and how the process of displacement should be tracked. Furthermore, these processes should be seen as political processes. Finally, Mohapatra discussed about the need to strengthen the discussion surrounding the 'planned slum' development in Delhi. He also encouraged Kumar to provide case studies to examine the themes of the paper. The feedbacks from the audience focused on the relationship between the formal and the informal sectors within the city. A question was raised about the peripheries of the urban conglomerates as sites of conflict: how these peripheries contributed to the discourse on urban poverty and (re)organization of space. The roles of the state in the depletion of space and the distinction between the city and periphery spaces were also discussed. In this connection, the conception of agency also came under scrutiny.

The evening ended with the reception and dinner where most of these issues and concerns slipped into the interactions among the participants.

Day 2: August 2, 2014

The first session of the second day was chaired by Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Professor, Development Studies, School of Social Sciences, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. The first abstract in this session was authored by Samir Kumar Das, Professor, Department of Political Science, and

Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Calcutta. The title of the abstract was 'A Transit Town: Siliguri in the Global Era.' It was discussed by Dyutish Chakrabarty, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, North Bengal University, and Soumen Nag, independent researcher and activist. At the focus of the abstract were the practices of migration and issues of violence and social justice in Siliguri, a medium-size town in North Bengal. Das compared the earlier trends of migration from outside the state of Bengal to join as workers in the local tea gardens with the more recent trends in connection with movements of global capital and spatial reorganization. He sought to explore Siliguri as a 'transit town' in the times of moving spaces and disintegration of traditional industries. Dyutish Chakrabarty, while discussing the paper, observed that Siliguri had always been afflicted with a spatial crisis as most of the city space was eaten up by the railways. He also drew attention to the increasing gulf between urban development and social justice. He requested the author to write more on the instances of resistance to the issues of injustice and explore how the local political groups could also mobilize and participate in these movements. Soumen Nag pointed out that Siliguri could be called a 'transit town' also with respect to the incidence of smuggling activities within and across the borders. He also insisted on a link between the recurrence of actual violence and the 'silent violence' endemic to the notions of urban development and planning. The feedback from the audience focused on the impact of globalization in the case of Siliguri – the connections between spatial movement and flexing of boundaries. It was asked whether, in a globalized age of less restrictive border laws, the act of smuggling became less pertinent as a marker of crime and violence. Since Siliguri is also a railway town, a question was asked whether the children living on the railway platforms could be studied as part of the research. Also the notion of 'invisibility' of some of the city residents in the discourse on urban planning came up as a potent field of study.

The second abstract was authored by Pushpendra Singh and Manish Jha, both Professors at the Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. It was titled 'On the Move: An Ethnographic Account of Rural Migrants' Journey from Village to City' and discussed by Mithilesh Kumar. The abstract proposed an ethnographic study of migratory journeys from the Kosi region in north-east Bihar to various cities in the country. This study, as the abstract mentioned, would challenge the existing bias for spatial fixity in migration literature and focus on mobility of the potential workforce and vulnerabilities involved in these processes. In his discussion, Mithilesh Kumar pointed out that the contradiction between the 'mobile migrant' and 'settling state' was fundamentally related to the question of social justice in the city. However, he said, it would be equally important to explore the connections between these mobile practices and various logistical considerations during the journey itself. He also spoke about the changing dynamics (especially in terms of land relations) in the rural areas because of migration and hoped that this exercise would throw some light on this dynamics as well. He requested the authors to compare the roles of the mates/contractors/agents in both the cases of rural-rural and rural-urban migrations in terms of social and economic privileges and caste/class relations. The feedback from the audience focused on many points. One question came on the participation and experiences of women and children in these journeys. It was also pointed out that these notions of mobility and journey might have metaphorical resonances in terms of

negotiations with the laboring body and subjectivity and political economic connotations in terms of security and survival.

The second session of the day was chaired by Samita Sen, Vice Chancellor, Diamond Harbour Women's University. The first abstract of this session was authored by Iman Mitra, Research and Programme Associate, MCRG. The title of his paper was 'Migrant Workers and Informality in Contemporary Kolkata' and it was discussed by Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay, Assistant Professor, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. Mitra's abstract discusses the contemporary take on the questions of labour and informality in the urban setting of Kolkata and proposes a study of two apparently informal work processes, namely, waste disposal and taxi driving, which are notable for hosting a majority of migrant workers in the city. Bandyopadhyay pointed out in his discussion that one must not lose sight of the theoretical question of abstract labour in the midst of studying the concrete work processes. He wanted the author to address the connection between a general theory of labour and urbanity and urbanization. He also suggested studying the various networks and contexts which formed the spatial grid that facilitated such work forms, especially in light of the structural relationship between the old towns and the new towns that are growing up around them. The feedback from the audience picked up the thread from where it was left. A suggestion came from the audience for comparing the land and labour markets in the city. It was also argued that the increasing importance of waste management in the city points to creation of new values and revalorization of urban properties which induce proliferation of new forms of labour including material and immaterial labours.

The second abstract in this session was authored by Debarati Bagchi, Research Assistant, MCRG (with help from Sabir Ahmed, researcher and activist). Her abstract was titled 'Women and Children Migrants: A Study of the Urban Workforce in Kolkata' and it was discussed by Paula Banerjee, Associate Professor, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta and President, Calcutta Research Group, and Swati Ghosh, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Rabindra Bharati University. Bagchi, while comparing the local and national level data on migration, proposed to study two particularly gendered work processes in contemporary Kolkata, the rag pickers and the workers in the care industry, especially the nurses. Swati Ghosh, initiating the discussion, suggested some other readings on the rag pickers most of whom live on the pavements of the city. She also asked the author to explore the notion of 'freedom' in connection with the question of social mobility which often features in the interviews and life narratives of the rag pickers. The gendered nature of the profession, Ghosh said, must also be interrogated in terms of choosing a particular profession. Paula Banerjee, in her discussion, pointed to the broad scope of the study. She drew the author's attention to works on migration and gender in other parts of the world, especially Buenos Aires and Shanghai and asked her to introduce a comparative framework in line with the migration practices in Latin America and South-East Asia. The audience feedback raised the important question of the rag pickers' location in the general discourses of labour and the environmental justice movements. Also the role of national and international laws regarding waste management and the role of the funding agencies like the World Bank came under scrutiny. The session ended with Samita Sen's observations on the two abstracts. She commented on the divisions

of labour in terms of material and immaterial labours, affective and care works, and pointed to the necessity of redefining and refiguring the notion of work itself to accommodate new forms of labour like the one under the rubric of care economy. She also mentioned that it was important to break certain myths as to the migration practices among women. Most of the female migration in India is accounted by the incidence of marriage. Sen argued that there could be another way of looking at this phenomenon, since post-marital housework could also be defined as a form of labour.

The third session of the day was chaired by Kavita N. Ramdas, Representative, Ford Foundation. The first abstract was authored by Manish K. Jha and Pushpendra Singh, both Professors at the Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Their abstract was titled 'Homeless Migrants in Mumbai: Life and Labour in Urban Space.' It proposed a study of the 'homeless' migrants in Mumbai and their daily experiences of humiliation, violence, and various other forms of vulnerability. The second abstract was authored by Simpreet Singh, activist and Doctoral Fellow, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, and it was titled 'The Emergence of the Migrant as a Problem Figure in Contemporary Mumbai: Chronicles of Violence and Issues of Justice.' It proposed to explore the moments of emergence of the migrant as a 'problem figure' in Mumbai in the background of economic transformation of the city from a manufacturing centre to a service city.

Both the abstracts were discussed by Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Professor, Development Studies, School of Social Sciences, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Banerjee-Guha's discussion of the abstract by Jha and Singh highlighted the processes of revalorization (whereby property prices escalate and the poor are pushed out), devalorization, and undervalorization that characterize the development of a space into a 'global' city. She further noted that the emergence of the entrepreneurial city had resulted in a shift from accommodation strategies towards accumulation strategies. Banerjee-Guha commented that an exploration of the theme of domination must account for gentrified spaces and surveillance laws. She urged the authors to track homelessness in cities worldwide, including in the global North, and identify the common processes at play, paying particular attention to the state's endorsement of surveillance as a mechanism to control space and the changing attitudes of the affluent and the middle class towards the homeless.

With regards to Singh's abstract, Banerjee-Guha broached three points that she found significant. The first pertained to the effects of liberal economic projects on the urbanization of a city like Mumbai. Mumbai's transformation into India's financial center accompanied, she remarked, the national agenda to create Global Financial Cities. The second point she raised relates to the composition of migrants in Mumbai (i.e. interstate, intrastate, and intradistrict migrants, which have constituted larger flows since the 1960s). Lastly, Banerjee-Guha pointed to the necessity in examining the effect of capitalist strategy and flexible production processes on migrant labor. The state's agenda to bring in migrants to beautify the city acts in contradiction to state efforts to expel the urban poor from that same beautified space. Migrants are compelled to occupy the periphery, unseen and unimposing upon the 'landscape.'

The audience feedback emphasized that there are two contradictory governmental policy moments at play in the conversation about migrant labor: massive flows of migrant labor are simultaneously being governed into and pushed out of the cities. It was observed that both papers raised the question of whether migrants are a problem in Mumbai. Yet, despite the difficulties in supplying water, energy, and low-cost housing to migrants, citizens in Mumbai want and depend upon migrant labor (domestic laborers, drivers, and other household employees). The real question that ought to be asked is whether migrants are problematic or whether their spatial location and proximity to citizens' perceived owned space is what is actually problematic. Kavita Ramdas, in her concluding remarks, observed that, with the rise of the neoliberal state as though it is the only form of state and economic organization, the connection between activism and scholarship had weakened. She congratulated MCRG for bringing activists and academics together in a research on social justice such as this.

The fourth session of the day was chaired by Paula Banerjee, Associate Professor, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta and President, Calcutta Research Group. This session too had two abstracts. The first abstract was authored by Mouleshri Vyas, Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, and the title of her abstract was 'Dangerous Labour: Age and Precarious Work Practices in Mumbai City.' The second abstract was authored by Mahuya Bandyopadhyay, Associate Professor, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, and Ritambhara Hebbar, Professor, Centre for Study of Developing Societies, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. The title of their abstract was 'Migrants, Vigilantes and Violence: The Making of New Urban Spaces in Mumbai.' Both the abstracts were discussed by Anita Patil-Deshmukh, Executive Director, Partners for Urban Knowledge, Action & Research (PUKAR).

Vyas' abstract focused on the growing social insecurity following informalization of work in the city and manifestation of a structural violence in some forms of work performed by the migrants. Her primary research would study the work experiences and everyday lives of migrant workers from the perspective of morbidity and employment of the elderly in two high-risk industries – solid waste management and security provision – in Mumbai. Bandyopadhyay and Hebbar's abstract proposed to study the lives and works of private security guards in Mumbai in order to explore the new forms of urban socialities, governmental practices of securitization and control, and the emerging forms of negotiations and fragility pertaining to security and order in the city space.

Patil-Deshmukh, in her discussion, presented the commonalities between the two abstracts. Both examined a specific type of migrant – the employee of the security sector. The growth of the security sector parallels the rise of a service-oriented city. The two abstracts also took up how the issue of informality had driven migrants to their current position of extreme marginalization, fragility, and subjection to inhuman working conditions. They are given new identities by the city dwellers that range from unwanted, unwelcome, irresponsible, and even criminal. With regard to Vyas' abstract, Patil-Deshmukh remarked that a majority of studies in elderly labor concentrated

exclusively on health or pension issues, with very few examining workforce participation. Vyas demonstrated that the precariousness of migrant labor is exacerbated in the security sector by the hazardous nature of the work. The abstract additionally discussed the reasons why the elderly take up work that, besides being dangerous, pays less than other informal sectors and offers tenuous access to social welfare programs. Patil-Deshmukh cited the common image of city cleaning employees as part of a generational pattern of employment: given the guarantees of employment and subsidized housing, many municipal employees do not wish to educate their children, who are to inherit the jobs of their parents. She encouraged the author to explore this tradition of continuing in the same sector and the cycle of poverty it engenders. Commenting on Bandyopadhyay and Hebbar's abstract, Patil-Deshmukh noted that, through their discussion of ex-servicemen from Jammu and Kashmir, they introduced the conflict that arises between differing state laws with interstate migration. The author additionally described the failures of the globalizing, increasingly neo-liberal state in protecting fundamental rights of its subjects.

During the feedback session, the audience reached the consensus that both these abstracts are crucial to question of securitization of a new world of consumerism thus far ignored. For example, new forms of security, namely the role of the 'bouncer', have been configured to address the security needs of the clubs, restaurants, and bars that are flourishing in the city-space. These differentiated forms of security have given rise to international protocols of security that engulf the security concerns of households, ports, industrial sites, etc. Questions that have now become relevant (in attempt to standardize security protocols) include: 'what weapons does one carry,' 'how does one thwart an intruder,' 'how much violence can one employ?' Bouncers prove the necessity of their job by excluding and punishing and asserting their existence. On the other hand, in the context of the factories, the job of the security guard is to isolate. Security guards, functioning in effect as gate bouncers, are perceived as separate from the factory's workforce by the other factory workers. The relationship between these two groups has proven contentious. It is difficult to unionize security workers in the same way as the other factory employees, since the former are often governed by a separate agency or employer. It is also worthwhile to examine how the act of 'othering' happening in the relationship between the security guard and the protected. It is problematic to 'other' the person who is meant to protect one and secure his/her personhood. It becomes important, therefore, to tease out the 'othering' of migrants entrusted to secure the 'self' of the citizen.

Ranabir Samaddar, the Director of MCRG, and Samir Kumar Das, Professor, Department of Political Science, and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Calcutta, participated in the concluding session of the day (and also of the workshop). They elaborated on some of the themes that recurred in most of the abstracts discussed in the workshop. Some of these themes are:

Who is a migrant? Is the definition a policy question? What is the 'agent' we are studying? Is the city a distinct spatial entity or agglomerate comprised by the migrants who constitute its labor base and diversity the demographics of its population?

Borders and boundary-making exercises that are carried out within the city. How are different spaces made, remade, and recreated into different, fluid zones within the city?

The questions of subject, subjectivity, subjectification. Subjectivity can be present without a subject. Should one desubjectify the subject in order to talk about subjectivity? Researchers are encouraged to define these phenomena – the process by which a subject becomes a ‘subject,’ and the linkages to subjugation and violence.

Where does one situate ‘migrant labor’ within a general theory of labor? Migrant labor’s composition has to be broken down in order to know the elements that go into making that abstraction. Moreover, there are different social constituencies that make up the ‘urban’ poor. Has the disaggregation of the urban poor into its different social constituencies adequately captured the differences in the urban poor experience?

The securitization of urban spaces. Researchers ought to include a study of international protocols given their discussion of phenomena in the globalizing world.

Political economy of migration and social justice. Under this project, political economy plays a crucial role in explaining certain critical connections: (1) the urban-rural connection: in what ways rural migrants are connected or not connected, or connected, yet remain unhinged, to urban spaces; (2) the connection of urban political economy with the national political economy: the binary of cities and the rural hinterland is no longer relevant; now cities have come to constitute a continuous national space with assertions of a national political economy; and (3) the urban-global connection: there are different routes that cities take towards globalization (for example, Mumbai’s insertion into the global economy is different from that of Delhi or Kolkata).

Issues of justice, claim-making, agenda setting. What is a just city? How do we conceptualize the ‘just’ city and, from there, the right to it?

The workshop ended with a vote of thanks to all the participants and organizers. As the afternoon slid into a pleasant Calcutta evening, the participants left for their homes, hopefully more enriched and excited about the coming days of involved and uncompromised research.

Annexure 1

List of the Participants

Amit Prakash (Professor, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Anannya Bhattacharjee (President, Garment and Allied Workers' Union)

Anita Patil-Deshmukh (Executive Director, Partners for Urban Knowledge, Action & Research [PUKAR])

Dyutish Chakrabarty (Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, North Bengal University)

Debarati Bagchi (Research Assistant, Calcutta Research Group)

Himadri Chatterjee (Doctoral Fellow, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Kaustubh Mani Sengupta (Transnational Research Group Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Kavita N. Ramdas (Representative, Ford Foundation)

Iman Kumar Mitra (Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group)

Ishita Dey (Doctoral Fellow, University of Delhi)

Madhuresh Kumar (Independent Researcher and Activist, National Alliance of People's Movements)

Mahalaya Chatterjee (Associate Professor, Centre for Urban Economic Studies, University of Calcutta)

Mahuya Bandyopadhyay (Associate Professor, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

Manish K. Jha (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

Mithilesh Kumar (Doctoral Fellow, University of Western Sydney)

Mouleshri Vyas (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

Paula Banerjee (Associate Professor, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta and President, Calcutta Research Group)

Prabhu Mohapatra (Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Delhi)

Pradip Kumar Bose (Eminent Sociologist and Member, Calcutta Research Group)

Prashanta Roy (Secretary, Calcutta Research Group, and Professor Emeritus, Department of Sociology, Presidency University)

Pushendra Singh (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

Ranabir Samaddar (Director, Calcutta Research Group)

Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay (Assistant Professor, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta)

Sabir Ahmed (Independent Researcher and Activist)

Samir Kumar Das (Professor, Department of Political Science, and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Calcutta)

Samita Sen (Vice Chancellor, Diamond Harbour Women's University)

Simpreet Singh (Activist and Doctoral Fellow, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

Soumen Nag (Independent Researcher and Activist)

Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty (Eminent Historian and Member, Calcutta Research Group)

Swapna Banerjee-Guha (Professor, Development Studies, School of Social Sciences, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

Swati Ghosh (Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Rabindra Bharati University)

Annexure 2

Programme Schedule

1 August 2014

Inaugural Session (3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

1. Registration
2. Welcome Address by Paula Banerjee (President, Calcutta Research Group)
3. Statement of Purposes by Ranabir Samaddar (Director, Calcutta Research Group)

Session 1 (4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

Chair: Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty (Eminent Historian and Member, Calcutta Research Group)

1. Ishita Dey (Doctoral Fellow, Department of Sociology, University of Delhi): *The Migrant in a Service Village in the City: Working Conditions and Rights*

Discussant:

- Samita Sen (Vice Chancellor, Diamond Harbour Women's University)

2. Amit Prakash (Professor, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University): *The Capital City: Discursive Dissonance in Law and Policy*

Discussant:

- Samir Kumar Das (Professor, Department of Political Science, and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Calcutta)

Tea Break (5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.)

Session 2 (5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.)

Chair: Prasanta Roy (Secretary, Calcutta Research Group, and Professor Emeritus, Department of Sociology, Presidency University)

1. Iman Kumar Mitra (Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group): *Urban Planning, Settlement Practices, and Issues of Justice in Contemporary Kolkata*

Discussant:

- Mahalaya Chatterjee (Associate Professor, Centre for Urban Economic Studies, University of Calcutta)

2. Kaustubh Mani Sengupta (Transnational Research Group Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University): *Taking Refuge in the City: Migrant Population and Urban Management in Post-Partition Calcutta*

Discussant:

- Himadri Chatterjee (Doctoral Fellow, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Session 3 (6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.)

Chair: Pradip Kumar Bose (Eminent Sociologist and Member, Calcutta Research Group)

1. Mithilesh Kumar (Doctoral Fellow, University of Western Sydney): *Logistical Labour and the Airport City*

Discussant:

- Anannya Bhattacharjee (President, Garment and Allied Workers' Union)

2. Madhuresh Kumar (Independent Researcher and Activist, National Alliance of People's Movements): *Competing Dreams: Delhi and its Migrants*

Discussant:

- Prabhu Mohapatra (Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Delhi)

Reception and Dinner (7:30 p.m. onwards)

2 August 2014

Session 1 (10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.)

Chair: Swapna Banerjee-Guha (Professor, Development Studies, School of Social Sciences, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

1. Samir Kumar Das (Professor, Department of Political Science, and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Commerce, University of Calcutta): *A Transit Town: Siliguri in the Global Era*

Discussants:

- Dyutish Chakrabarty (Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, North Bengal University)
- Soumen Nag (Independent Researcher and Activist)

2. Manish K. Jha (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai) and Pushpendra Kumar Singh (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and Development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai): *On the Move: An Ethnographic Account of Rural Migrants' Journey from Village to City*

Discussant:

- Mithilesh Kumar (Doctoral Fellow, University of Western Sydney)

Tea Break (11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

Session 2 (12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.)

Chair: Samita Sen (Vice Chancellor, Diamond Harbour Women's University)

1. Iman Kumar Mitra (Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group): *Migrant Workers and Informality in Contemporary Kolkata*

Discussants:

- Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay (Assistant Professor, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta)

2. Debarati Bagchi (Research Assistant, Calcutta Research Group): *Women and Children Migrants: A Study of the Urban Workforce in Kolkata*

Discussants:

- Paula Banerjee (Associate Professor, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta and President, Calcutta Research Group)
- Swati Ghosh (Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Rabindra Bharati University)

Lunch Break (1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.)

Session 3 (2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

Chair: Kavita N. Ramdas (Representative, Ford Foundation)

1. Manish K. Jha (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai) and Pushpendra Kumar Singh (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and Development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai): *Homeless Migrants in Mumbai: Life and Labour in Urban Space*

2. Simpreet Singh (Activist and Doctoral Fellow, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai): The Emergence of the Migrant as a Problem Figure in Contemporary Mumbai: Chronicles of Violence and Issues of Justice

Discussant:

- Swapna Banerjee-Guha (Professor, Development Studies, School of Social Sciences, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

Tea Break (3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.)

Session 4 (3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Chair: Paula Banerjee (Associate Professor, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta and President, Calcutta Research Group)

1. Mouleshri Vyas (Professor, Centre for Community Organisation and development Practice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai): *Dangerous Labour: Age and Precarious Work Practices in Mumbai City*

2. Mahuya Bandyopadhyay (Associate Professor, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai) and Ritambhara Hebbar (Professor, Centre for Study of Developing Societies, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai): *Migrants, Vigilantes and Violence: The Making of New Urban Spaces in Mumbai*

Discussant:

Anita Patil-Deshmukh (Executive Director, Partners for Urban Knowledge, Action & Research [PUKAR])

Concluding Session (4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

