REFUGEE WATCH

A South Asian Journal on Forced Migration

**Refugees, Migrants, Violence and
The Transformation of Cities**

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Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group

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CONTENTS

Borders of Labour and Refugee Economies

By

Ranabir Samaddar [*]

Refugee Economy as a Site of Several Interfaces

Most writings on refugee economy or the immigrant economy refer to changes in the immigrant labour absorption policies of the Western governments. In these writings, for instance of Stephen Castles, the refugee economy or the immigrant economy never features directly. Castles refers to changes in the immigrant labour absorption policies of the West European governments, reviews the economic activities of the refugees and other victims of forced migration in several countries.[1]

These writings reflect on the economic activities of the refugees and other victims of forced migration. Refugees are seen as economic actors in the market. But we do not get a full picture of why capitalism in late twentieth or early twenty first century needs these refugee or immigrant labour as economic actors. The idea we get is that refugees and other victims of forced migration want to be economically viable, relevant to host economies; they are economically relevant, but unfortunately discriminated against. These writings showcase refugees' attempts to survive meaningfully in camps, cities, and other settlements, in ethnically homogenous or mixed settings, and the ways they prove useful to market, big business, and organised trade. Several studies along this line tell us of the success stories of migrants' economic activities. The message is: the refugee or the migrant as an economic actor has arrived, do not neglect the refugee, do not dismiss the refugee as an economic actor. Yet the organic link between the immigrant as an economic actor and the global capitalist economy seems to escape the analysis in these writings.

However, to be fair to Castles, the immigrant or the victim of forced migration as labour is present, though not centrally, in his discussions. There are of course other studies taking a somewhat different line. In these studies the refugee is seen as an economic actor, an informal trader, an entrepreneur, but not as labour, so much so that Alex Betts' and his colleagues' recently co-

[*]Distinguished Chair in Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata. He can reached at ranabir@mcrg.ac.in

published book *Refugee Economies* does not have the word labour at all, at least not in a significant way.[2] Betts and his colleagues' work showcases refugees' attempts to survive meaningfully in camps, cities, and other settlements, in ethnically homogenous or mixed settings, and the ways they prove useful to market, big business, and organised trade. Several studies along this line tell us of the success stories of migrants' economic activities. In these studies, the refugee is an economically viable actor in the market, s/he can be an entrepreneur, and an understanding of the market dynamics and its appropriate modulation can be of immense help to the refugee. While these writings recognise that most refugees and illegal immigrants are denizens of informal economies, the guiding thread once more is that these economies and their actors can be of relevance to market if our analysis and appropriate policy response based on such analysis are correct. In such line of thinking again, the refugee or the illegal immigrant as the labouring subject is absent.

Yet as Michel Agier in his detailed study (*Managing the Undesirables: Refugee camps and Humanitarian Government*, 2011)[3] of several camps shows, on the ground however, the structure of care and protection put in place ensures that this remains a situation of permanent catastrophe and endless emergency, where undesirables are kept apart and out of sight, while the care dispensed is designed to control, filter, and confine. How can we explain this duality of care and control coupled with exclusion? Camps are transforming, likewise immigrant settlements are changing. Camps are like holding territories of mobile labour, since they hold at one place an enormous quantity of reserve labour. Camps are becoming towns, and other types of big, quasi-informal quasi-formal settlements. Without a study of the immigrant as the labouring subject it will be difficult to make sense of such transformation.

Even on occasions where the refugees or immigrants are considered as labouring subjects it is a matter of labour market segmentation and differentiation. For instance, Stephen Castles and Mark Miller's *The Age of Migration* has an entire chapter on migrants in the labour force.[4] They take note of the dominant presence of the migrants in the informal economy, "growing fragmentation of immigrant employment and the range and significance of immigrant labour market diversity",[5] and labour market segmentation leading to long term marginalisation of certain immigrant groups and immigrant women workers, and global cities and ethnic entrepreneurs.[6] Castles and Miller are of course able to ask some significant questions, such as: impact of economic restructuring on migrant workers, patterns of labour market segmentation by ethnic origin and gender, scope of underground economy, strategies by migrants such as self-employment, small business, mutual aid, ethnic niches, etc., to deal with labour market disadvantages.[7] However, in all these, market is the conceptual anchor, be it labour market or trade, or marketing of skills.

As a consequence, the question frequently asked is about the impact of refugees on the host economy, and not, about why economies cannot do without the so-called refugee economies that supply informal labour for the host economy. The further result is that the economic interface of refugees and economies are little understood - also because sufficient data is not

available and the question of refugee impacts does not lend itself to conventional impact evaluation methods. Some suggest comparison of impacts of cash versus in-kind refugee aid. But there is nothing special in this. Studies of poverty alleviation programmes in developing countries show specific relevance of both strategies – depending on specific time, locality, and situation. Most studies do suggest however that despite undergoing forced migration and often living in destitute conditions, refugees have productive capacities and assets, and they actively interact with host-country economies. Some evidence suggests that a large influx of immigrants increases unemployment among the less-skilled workforce and also decreases wages among certain populations. But again that is the general way in which an economy expands. The impact of economic expansion has been always differential. One study found that whereas increased demand may increase prices if supply does not respond, increased demand due to an additional refugee influx exerts limited upward pressure on prices around the camps where cash has been extended to camp inmates. Economic spill over may also result as refugee households and businesses inside the camps purchase goods and services from host-country businesses outside the camps, because the agricultural, livestock, other production activities, and all retail businesses outside the camps are mostly owned by host-country households. One survey found that while refugee households accounted for 5.5% of total income within a 10-km radius of the three camps, 17.3% of surveyed businesses outside the camps reported that their main customers were refugees from the camps. The increase in refugee demand raises host-country incomes and spending which, in turn, generates additional rounds of spending impacts in the local economy. This is of course a familiar story where total expenditures, including savings, equalling total income for all households and activities, ensure that changes in expenditures match changes in incomes for all agents in the local economy. But the snag in the story is that the local poor households may also receive such assistance – cash or in kind or business advance – and thus the problematic is generalised, and does not remain migrant or refugee-centric. Simulations are therefore not always useful tools to understand how impacts unfold in complex systems. Also, the economic impacts of refugees depend on the rules governing interactions between refugees and the host country, the structure of host economies, and the characteristics of refugees.[8]

 As we know, with growing population movements from the postcolonial countries to Europe and the United States, and with growing realisation that the idea of a classic refugee defined in the UNHCR statute in the context of cold war is inadequate now,[9] the concept of forced migration has been accepted as more holistic than the concept of refugee.[10] Not that the notion of refugee was found incorrect, but with "massive and mixed population flows"[11] from the South to the North, more importantly within the South, refugee determination as the main mode of protection of the victims of forced migration was found inadequate. The present European migration crisis demonstrates this beyond doubt.[12] Seen in this light, the studies mentioned here along with several others studies deal with what can be called

the internalities of the migrant or refugee economy (thus their ethnic composition, hierarchies, location, survival techniques, etc.), and leave out the externalities, by which I mean the broader forces and dynamics that influence such internal configuration and shape labour markets.

A consideration of the externalities will suggest four interactive relations impacting on refugee economies.

(a) The deeply close relation between refugees, other victims of forced migration, and the illegal immigrants; likewise the interface of classic refugees and the environmental migrants as the constituting elements of an informal labour market;

(b) The similarly close relation between refugees, illegal immigrants, and the internally displaced as labouring subjects;

(c) The connection between the refugee economy and the informal economy as a whole;

(d) And finally, the incredibly dense network between formal and informal economies, shaping certain types of economic activities as in care and entertainment industry, which features the refugee and the immigrant as the labouring subject, and which borders on both formal and informal economies.

In this paperthe author shall repeatedly bring to fore these interconnections in order to suggest why we should be cautious in basing our analysis on a market centric approach, and what may be a more fruitful way to analyse the dynamics of the refugee and the immigrant emerging as the labouring subject.

The Paradoxes of Labour Market Integration

Governments have realized that labour market integration calls for investment and viewing the arrival of refugees and other forced migrants as opportunities, triggering further growth. Labour market integration helps fiscal sustainability for the host country, given the specific skill base of the migrants say from Syria. Companies therefore call for more efficient refugee policy, so that admitting refugees and other forced migrants becomes a matter of both short-term and long-term investment rather than sunk cost.

Migrant economies pose the issue of labour market integration. Refugees and other immigrant labour market actors, such as climate migrants, illegal immigrants, economic migrants, etc., carry the signatures of footloose labour, and the refugee economies are in turn subsumed in the dynamics of informal economy. The dynamics of informal economy relating to types of economic activities (for instance in care and entertainment industry in countries of Europe) subsumes all distinctions between refugees and other victims of forced migration, illegal immigrants, environmental migrants, the internally displaced, the trafficked labour, and so on. While talking of labour market segmentation we have to keep in mind the countervailing reality of the utmost flexibility of capitalism to create informal arrangements in production and circulation everywhere. Michael J. Piore's classic study, *Birds of Passage* argued that the conventional push and pull theory is simply wrong, and

industrial development in one place always creates informal, low paid economy, and calls for the import of informal, low wage labour for jobs that otherwise would not be performed.[13] Indeed, informality and segmentation go hand in hand; between stereotyped and regularised skills and jobs, there is a range of work arrangements creating transitory forms of labour, which navigate several institutional spaces of the market. As said, the refugee economy is a footloose economy, whose relevance to global capitalism today lies in the salience of the informal mode of production and circulation. The global now houses the informal within the formal.

Thus a formal sportswear brand company in its production complex may engage informal makers of shoes, soccer balls, cricket bats, caps, etc., who are located across vast distances, or a fashion company may contract tanneries in distant countries of the South for polished leather goods including leather bags. This is possible because standards are global, and the refugee economy in order to survive has to follow the global standards and protocols. The refugee or the immigrant economy in this way becomes a part of the global supply chain of a commodity. Classic is the case of carpet making by Tibetan refugees in Nepal or Syrian refugees making leather and other garment products in Turkey or Bangladeshi immigrants in India engaged in garment making as in Kidderpore in Kolkata. Opportunities and constraints thus have a pattern.

Syrian refugees present an insightful corpus of experiences of how and when refugees become labouring subjects. All these of course link the management of informal economies on a global scale with the dynamics of global governance. Alexander Betts and his colleagues are only partly right when they say of their work, "The theoretical purpose of these three institutions of refugeehood (urban, protected camp, and emergency camp) is to highlight the ways in which refugees' different institutional contexts shape their economic opportunity structures. Rather than being inherently different from 'citizens' or 'migrants' what makes them distinct is a set of institutional features that shape their economic lives and interaction with markets."[14] On the contrary, one may argue that global experiences of refugee and migrant economies suggest a broad uniformity of pattern in the formation of the labouring subjects from refugee and immigrant populations, namely that they form a huge dispersed population of footloose labour whose products are linked to global market chains. These population groups must be made to work as per the requirements of the global supply chains of commodities and labour; on the other hand they must remain invisible from the public eye.

Borrowing from Saskia Sassen we may call this "expulsion"- exactly the dialectical opposite of the inclusion of the immigrant population in the global cities.[15] Sassen shows, soaring income inequality and unemployment, expanding populations of the displaced and imprisoned, accelerating destruction of land and water bodies can be understood in their complexity only as a type of expulsion from professional livelihood, living space, and the biosphere that makes life possible. From finance to mining, complex types of knowledge and technology are being deployed in ways that produce brutalities and result in predatory formations. Today's financial instruments are backed

by engineering expertise that enables exploitation of the environment, trading in futures, also by the legal expertise that allows the world's rich countries to acquire vast stretches of territory from the poorer ones. And the brutal fact is that the sheer complexity of the global economy makes it hard to trace lines of responsibility for the displacements, evictions, and eradications it produces.

The market opportunities Betts and others speak of have to be seen in this context. In the context of their research on refugees in Uganda Betts and his colleagues admit of "refugee economic activities being embedded in much wider Ugandan network and economies outside the settlements".[16] But this means not only network of opportunities, but also of linkages of compulsions and burdens. The earlier vocabulary of "refugee burden" and the currently replacement vocabulary of "refugee asset" both hide the salient laws of the functioning of informal economy. The replacement of one phrase with another only suggests the increasing awareness of the social scientists and policy makers of the way neoliberal global economy makes everyone a market enabled actor, though unequally.[17]

Thus, while more than thirty five years ago ICARA 1 (International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, 1981) and ICARA 2 (1984) highlighted the "burden" that refugees placed on their hosts, such as additional costs on already hard-pressed public and social welfare budgets, arresting economic growth, distorting markets, causing environmental degradation and putting political strains on already fragile and conflict-affected countries, today several reports speak of refugees bringing in economic benefits and social capital, such as, new skills and expanding market of food and building materials stimulating growth of the host economy, with the host community also benefiting from assistance programmes such as infrastructure and welfare services provided by agencies responding to refugees' needs.[18]

It is now being argued that to resolve the enigma of "refugee economy", analysts will have to ensure that, wherever possible, all relevant stakeholder groups, four in particular – refugees, host population and country, area and country of origin, and providers of assistance (which will include presumably business houses providing marketing opportunities and capital advance to the displaced) – have to be incorporated into the analysis. Then quantitative parameters will have to be evolved to measure impacts (for example, income, assets, employment and access to natural resources), together with mediating factors such as age, gender and length of exile; also qualitative factors such as perceptions of security and protection will have to be identified. With these two methods, the goal has to be to construct an overall socio-economic profile and analyse how the profile is affected for each of the stakeholders by forced displacement. The host country's public sector fiscal costs and impacts in providing social and welfare assistance for refugees have to be measured, such as, increased medical and education provision, increased demand for utilities such as water, and longer term capital costs and impacts such as infrastructure investment. And finally, while the methodology's focus will be on livelihoods and micro-economic impacts and

costs, assessing the impacts at the macro-economic level will remain an equally important dimension of the analysis.

All these at the end of the day are labour market analyses. They do not throw much light on the larger forces that lead to absorption or otherwise of refugee and immigrant labour in global economy.

Autonomy of Migration and Limits to such Autonomy

The salience of Syrian and Iraqi refugees and asylum seekers in Europe is that they come from countries occupying the grey zone between the North and the South. With over 80 per cent literacy, wide skill base for entrepreneurship, high rate of women's participation in non-family forms of labour, these countries have produced refugees who have deployed knowledge in not only reaching countries where they seek asylum, they also learn quickly new skills, adapt themselves relatively quickly – in a year or two – to new requirements of language, labour protocols, self-run business rules, and learn to straddle the two different but interacting worlds of formal economy and the informal economy. The eventual absorption of current immigrant flows of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled labour in labour markets of Europe and countries of other regions (Brazil, South Africa, Hongkong, the Gulf countries, etc.), albeit in differential manner, will not be much different from what had happened in Europe, United States, Canada, and Australia in the pre-Second World War years. In this dense labour market scenario pleas for labour market equality receive consideration from well-meaning economists and refugee studies specialists, but formal (political, legal) equality makes sense only if they are relevant for entry in labour markets. Otherwise as labouring subject, the migrant's lack of political equality is the other side of her economic ability to enter the labour market.

Yet strangely, the absorption of the refugees and the migrants in the informal labour market and informal mode of production also produces the labouring subject's autonomy. The chronicle of Syrian and Iraqi refugees reinforces the argument of autonomy of migration in a way that is somewhat distinct from the original proposition of the thesis of autonomy of migration. The original thesis of autonomy of migration also spoke of footloose labour, borders that created greater knowledge of how to escape controls and new techniques of circumventing borders, and illegalities provoked by legalities and tighter control mechanisms. One study in particular spoke of "border as method", which meant borders as signifiers of multiplication of labour.[19] We shall now move on to that discussion on migrants as the plural labouring subjects.

It is strange that migration analysts rarely consider the two aspects together, namely, lack of entry in the formal political arena accompanied by entry in the informal and sometimes formal labour market. Immigrant labour's autonomy, more known as "autonomy of migration" allows the migrant to cope with this dichotomous world. For long, it was a case of political opportunity, but economic closure; now it is the case of economic opening (entry in the informal labour market), but political closure; yet the

migrant as the footloose labouring subject copes with this upside down world of politics/economics with his/her autonomy to move. In a way this return of economy to the centre stage of discussions on refugees and migrants is strange, but perhaps should not be so, if we recall that at the heart of the "durable solutions" debate in refugee studies circles, the issue of economic rehabilitation was always paramount. The formation of the UNHCR itself nudged by the UN Economic and Social Council was an effort towards finding out a durable solution to refugee crisis. Economy buttressed by demography has been always the other scene of refugee and migration management in the modern capitalist age.

Policy responses concerning labour market form the other side of what has been called the autonomy of migration – a term that means among others the willingness and the capability of the migrants to move on from one condition to another, one job to another, one economic situation to another, and one economy to another. Autonomy of migration means thus heterogeneity of labour forms. This is again brought out by empirical studies, like the one conducted by Betts and his colleagues. That more than two-thirds of refugees are in protracted displacement, at times in camps and without the right to work or move freely, does not mean that they stay put in one place. As Betts and his colleagues in their research on African refugees demonstrated, despite the constraints placed on them, vibrant economic systems often thrive below the radar, whether in the formal or informal economy. Refugees are not economically isolated; they are part of complex systems that go beyond their communities and the boundaries of particular settlements. Their report tells us of maize grown in settlements then exported across borders to neighbouring countries, and Congolese jewellery and textiles imported from as far as India and China. Somali shops import tuna from Thailand, via the Middle East and Kenya. Thus mostly they are not burden on host states. Migrant labour is relevant to global supply chains of commodities, it is the global nature of the supply chains that produces footloose informal labour and ensures that various categories of the displaced finally add up to the reserve army of labour to be deployed where and when necessary to the extent that big refugee camps look like townships with specific economies linked to various commodity chains. And it is this condition that accounts for the relative autonomy of migration. Therein is the significance of migrant labour, whose marks are irregularity, informality, subjection to unequal labour regimes, degradation of work, footloose nature, subjection to violence, and the fundamental relevance to the logistical aspect of neoliberal capitalism, such as construction labour, work in supply chains, waste processing including e-waste recycling, and last but not least in care and entertainment industry.

The last area of work mentioned above is important for our discussion here, not least because in discussions on migrant economy sex work is almost absent. Yet it is in discussions on sex work and trafficking that we find all the paradoxes of the labour market reality. In fact the trafficking framework is inadequate for the purpose of analysing the experiences of sex work and exploitation in the field of commercial sex. The problems migrants encounter in this field are more often related to the institutional structures of

immigration and the implementation of prostitution policies that restrict and prevent possibilities of migration. Sex work is a migrant-dominated field throughout the world. A recent study shows that half of the sex workers in Europe are migrants, and in West Europe the percentage is much higher – nearly 60 to 75 per cent.[20]We rarely analyse the situation from the migrant's point of view because of the dominance of the discourse of trafficking, which means that migrant sex work has been seen always in the context of sex trafficking, known today as modern slavery. We rarely take into account the struggles and negotiations on restrictions of movements and against constraints in the labour market. The trafficking discourse also takes our focus away from labour market analysis, analysis of the associated institutional and structural framework, such as border and immigration controls, visa requirements, and a discriminatory labour protection framework that can be extremely racist. These controls modulate access, in this case of the sex workers, to labour markets. The situation produces circular migrants, who would not have the protection of welfare benefits, but on the other hand face continuous deportation threats and possibilities.

In short, immigration policies produce precarious labour. What is important to note in this context, and this has general significance for the task of theorising the migrant as living labour, is that, migrants in the informal labour market are not always particularly dependent on specific employers. Often their fate depends on immigration policies. They reproduce the overall uncertain conditions of the life of labour under capitalism. This calls for a rigorous analysis of the link between the refugee like condition and capitalism, and helps to understand thereby the reasons as to why refugees and migrants working for low wages are essential for capitalism.

Conclusion

The question of the production of living labour is important because it puts in a critical perspective the necessity of the states and the international regime of protection to synchronise the economic and the political strategies of protection. The refugees and the migrants to be treated as labour must become de jure subjects, citizens or almost citizens with proper registration, defined entitlements and rights, at times with rights claiming voices, and right kinds of attributes and skills. Only then, they can be helped to become market enabled actors. Yet the disjuncture between the two strategies of protection is not only typical of the postcolonial parts of the globe, the disjuncture is evident in the developed countries also – in Europe and the United States.[21] The search for "economically viable" migrant labour continues both in Europe and the United States; and nearly every time the rulers in these lands deploy the languages of economic interdependence, they quickly recoil back to the assertion that they must also fight the external agents of violence, tighten the borders, and remain vigilant. Such a paradox calls for a policy of permanent flexibility, so that the different temporalities of migration can be made to suit the economic interests of the dominant classes/states. Thus in Europe (for instance, the recent German determination) Afghanistan is now a

"safe" and "stable" regime, while Syria is a "crisis", which means that in practice "crisis" in Syria allows a government to selectively accept an influx of variably skilled labor (say, Turkish or Syrian refugees) while shutting the door on unskilled migrants from slower, steadier streams (i.e. Afghans).

In this way capital sets in motion movements of labour within a specific field of force that dictates how and why migrant labour is to be harnessed, disciplined, and governed (for instance the dominant presence of immigrant labour in logistics, health care, agriculture, etc.), and that shapes the links between "strategies" (that control migrants once they are in motion) and the mechanisms that set these movements in motion. We have to thus think of the question of "autonomy of migration" within this "field of force". We shall then realise that there is no escape from the dialectic between autonomy of migration and the policies to govern migration. Fostering mobile footloose labour is functional more than ever to capital's reproduction – and this "flexibility" is the dialectical other to migrants' autonomy. The resilient migrant labour is therefore an adaptive agent, and indeed, neoliberal capitalism in order to continue has to keep on fostering these adaptive subjects.[22]

Notes

[1]See Stephen Castles, "Migration" in *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies* edited by David Theo Goldberg and John Solomos. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002, (pp. 561-579), pp. 570-572; also Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World ,*Hampshire, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003.

[2]Alex Betts, Louise Bloom, Josiah Kaplan, and Naohiko Omata, *Refugee Economies: Forced Displacement and Development,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

[3]Michel Agier,*Managing the Undesirables: Refugee camps and Humanitarian Government*, London: Polity Press, 2011.

[4]Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, chapter 8, "Migrants and Minorities in the Labour Force", pp. 178-197

[5]Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p. 183

[6] Alex Betts and his colleagues also take note of this factor of global cities in the three fold institutional context of refugee economies – urban, protected camp, and emergency camp - Alex Betts, Louise Bloom, Josiah Kaplan, and Naohiko Omata, *Refugee Economies*, p. 202

[7]Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p. 179; the issue of strategies by migrant such as self-employment, small business, mutual aid, ethnic niches, etc., to deal with labour market disadvantages has been dealt at length by Betts and his co-authors..

[8]. Many of the observations including cited figures here are based on J. Edward Taylor, Mateusz J. Filipski, Mohamed Alloush, Anubhab Gupta, Ruben Irvin Rojas Valdes, and Ernesto Gonzalez-Estrada, "Economic Impact of Refugees", *PNAS (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America),* 113 no. 27, July 2016, pp. 7449-7453

[9] Margaret E. McGuiness discusses the 1951 Convention's "limited nature of the definition of a refugee" in Margaret E. McGuiness, "Legal and Normative Dimensions of the Manipulation of Refugees" in *Refugee Manipulation: War, Politics, and*

the Abuse of Human Suffering edited by Stephen John Stedman and Fred Tanner. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003, Chapter 5, pp. 135-166.

[10] B.S. Chimni, "The Birth of a 'Discipline' - From Refugee to Forced Migration Studies", *Journal of Refugee Studies,*Volume 22, no. 1, 2009, pp. 11-29.

[11] The concept of "mixed and massive flows" is indirectly admitted by the UNHCR; see the UNHCR document, """Mixed Migration: A 10 Point Plan of Action" – http://www.unhcr.org/mixed-migration.html (accessed on 19 Januray 2017); "'Refugees' and 'Migrants' – Frequently Asked questions", question 8-9 http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/3/56e95c676/refugees-migrants-frequently-asked-questions-faqs.html (accessed on 14 January 2017); see also Christophe Tometten, "Judicial Response to Mixed and Massive Population Flows", Refugee Watch, 39 & 40, June and December 2012, pp. 125-140 – http://www.mcrg.ac.in/rw%20files/RW39_40/11.pdf (accessed on 1 December 2017); "The Issue: The Growing Salience of Mixed Migration", and "Mixed Migration: Policy Challenges", The Migration Observatory, 24 March 2011 - http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/primers/mixed-migration-policy-challenges/ (accessed on 15 January 2017); and Report of the UN Secretary General, "In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements and Refugees and Migrants", 9 May 2016 - http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/21-Apr_Refugees-and-Migrants-21-April-2016.pdf (accessed on 29 January 2017)

[12] UK is a case in point. "In the early 2000s, in response to a rise in asylum applications, it constructed a network of detention centres, ostensibly to process applications more quickly, and made the system tougher. Asylum seekers are banned from working and must live on £36.95 a week, one of the lowest rates in Western Europe. Detainees can be locked up for unlimited periods while allegations of verbal abuse and mistreatment have been widely reported. The institutional violence of this system is hidden…" - Daniel Trilling, "What to do with the People who do make it across?" *London Review of Books*, 37 no. 19, pp. 9-12, 2015, p. 12 – http://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n19/daniel-trilling/what-to-do-with-the-people-whodo-make-it-across (accessed on 3 January 2016)

[13]Michael J. Piore, *Birds of Passage*, Cambridge: Cambridge Books, 1979.

[14]Alex Betts, Louise Bloom, Josiah Kaplan, and Naohiko Omata, *Refugee Economies*, 2014, p. 54

[15]Saskia Sassen, *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy,* Harvard: Belknap Press, 2014.

[16]Alex Betts, Louise Bloom, Josiah Kaplan, and Naohiko Omata, *Refugee Economies*, p. 123; Where Betts and his colleagues admit of constraints, it is "constraints arising from refugee-hood"(p. 138). They do not speak of the general linkages and constraints of the informal economy, for which refugees and migrants with their particular de-institutionalised lives and regulations become the most appropriate subjects.

[17]Not unexpectedly the UNHCR commissioned a study in 2011 for innovation that laid emphasis on the organisation's private sector engagements.The UNHCR's Innovation Unit of the UNHCR evolved in this way to become a platform for collaboration between the UNHCR Divisions, refugees, academia, and the private sector (such as Vodafone, IKEA Foundation, Microsoft, etc.) to address complex refugee challenges. See for instance - http://innovation.unhcr.org/about-us/ (accessed on 4 January 2017). Betts also mentions the collaboration between a Silicon Valley company like Samasource and the international NGO Care International for

Somali refugees following Samasource's work in the Dadaab camp focusing on crowdsourcing. (Refugee Economies, pp. 196-197)

[18]For instance, a report on Dadaab refugee camp speaks of positive impact –"In Search of Protection and Livelihoods: Socio-economic and Environmental Impacts of Dadaab Refugee Camps on Host Communities", Joint Report by Government of Denmark, Government of Kenya, and Government of Norway,Reliefweb,September 2010   -http://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/search-protection-and-livelihoods-socio-economic-and-environmental-impacts-dadaab (accessed on 1 January 2017); the report claimed the positive economic impact of the camps for the host community was USD 14 million – about 25% of the per capita income of the province. Income benefits to the host community from the sale of livestock and milk alone were USD3 million, while over 1,200 local people benefited from refugee camp-related employment or trade-related work. Roger Zetter referred to the Report while discussing the issue- Roger Zetter, "Are Refugees an Economic Burden or Benefit?",*Forced Migration Review*, 41, December 2012, pp. 50-52 –
http://www.fmreview.org/preventing/zetter.html (accessed on 19 January 2017)

[19]Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, or the Multiplication of Labour*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

[20]Report by TAMPEP – European Network for HIV/STI Prevention and Health Promotion among Migrant Sex Workers – "Sex Work in Europe: A mapping of the Prostitution Scene in 25 European Countries", Amsterdam, 2009.

[21] One instance is the Sudanese refugee rehabilitation in the United States; Jennifer Lynn Erickson in her research thesis, "Citizenship, Refugees, and the State: Bosnians, Southern Sudanese, and Social Service Organisations in Fargo, North Dakota", PhD. diss., Department of Anthropology, Graduate School of the University of Oregon, September 2010, wrote, "… economic self-sufficiency was a measure of successful refugee resettlement and social citizenship in the U.S. Regardless of prior experience or formal education the newly arrived refugees were mandated to find waged labour as soon as possible. For most refugees in Fargo, including Sudanese, this meant working in factories, hotels, retail, and other entry level jobs. In addition to decades of war-related trauma and forced migration, lack of experience in waged labor markets resulted in barriers to Sudanese integration. As a caseworker in Sioux Falls (2001-02) with dozens of Sudanese clients, I was surprised by the variety of experiences among Sudanese when it came to resettlement, and more specifically by the vast differences in levels of formal education and experience with waged labor. There were men (and some women) who had a college education abroad (in India, Cuba, Egypt, and Kenya) and who spoke fluent English. Others had worked for large, well-paying international organizations. There were many women, and some men, who had almost no formal education and little experience in waged labor. There were men and women who suffered from psychosocial trauma and there were men of all ages who had fought in the war" (pp. 251-252). "In a conversation with Santino, a man in his twenties, about the challenges facing young Sudanese men in the U.S., he said, 'There is a lot of suicide going on. Some people, they feel their life's not okay.' He recounted several cases of suicide and then added that for some Sudanese, alcohol and drugs became solutions." (p. 273); Classic is the case of tens of thousands of immigrants reportedly detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) who are forced to work for $1 day, or for nothing at all, which is a violation of federal anti-slavery laws, as a lawsuit claims. The lawsuit, now having class-action status filed in 2014 against one of the largest private prison companies in the country, implies that the case can involve as many as 60,000 detained immigrants. According to the same report, under

ICE's voluntary work programme, detainees sign up to work and are paid $1 a day. The nationwide program according to the , ICE says, provides detainees opportunities to work and earn money while confined, subject to the number of work opportunities available and within the constraints of the safety, security and good order of the facility." - Kristine Phillips, "Thousands of ICE Detainees Claim They were Forced into Labor, a Violation of Anti-slavery Laws", *Washington Post*, 6 march 2017 - https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2017/03/05/thousands-of-ice-detainees-claim-they-were-forced-into-labor-a-violation-of-anti-slavery-laws/?utm_term=.5c796b97f65a (accessed on 8 March 2017)

[22]On the theme of resilient subject of neoliberal capitalism, Brad Evans and Julian Reid, *Resilient Life: The Art of Living Dangerously*, London: Polity Press, 2014.

Freedom under Control: Jurisdiction, Human Rights, and "Freedom of the Sea"

By

Tommaso Manfredini [*]

On May 9, 2009, the Italian Coast Guard and Revenue Police intercepted two hundred individuals aboard three ships, thirty-five nautical miles south of Lampedusa. The intercepted individuals were transferred to military vessels and brought to Tripoli, Libya. On the basis of this interception and expulsion, twenty-four of these individuals later brought a case against Italy to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

In the case of *Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy*, adjudicated in 2012, different interpretations of the age-old legal principle of 'freedom of the seas' are central to establishing Italy's violation of the European Declaration of Human Rights and its Protocols.[1]If today, the phrase 'freedom of the sea' has no clear resonance, in the 17th and 19th centuries it held significant power, both legally and in popular imaginaries. Legal forms such as the ones that will be studied in this paper are never new, but their interpretations can be powerful. Formerly modern theorizations of a free maritime space for the flourishing of trade and the prosperity of maritime powers, to Britain's claims of jurisdiction over the high seas for the ostensible purpose of policing the abolition of the slave trade in the mid-19th century, the author will consider how the principle of 'freedom of the sea' has interacted with claims of 'freedom of movement' and how it has been mobilized in practices of border control. Recently, 'freedom of movement' has been brought to the fore by contemporary maritime migration worldwide, from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean and Andaman Seas. In light of this history, an analysis of *Hirsi Jamaa v. Italy* will help us shed light on what it means to be free at sea, whether and when such freedom exists, and how this freedom has been enforced or curtailed by legal decisions.

The author's own approach to the principle of "freedom of the seas" is anchored in the discipline of literature. As such, he is interested in how this

[*] PhD candidate in the Department of French and the Institute for Comparative Literature, Columbia University. He can be reached at tm2538@columbia.edu

phrase responds to its environment, how it accumulates meanings that are sometimes disparate, and how it accomplishes ideological tasks that are contradictory. As Robert Cover wrote, "no set of legal institutions or prescriptions exists apart from the narratives that locate it and give it meaning."[2]The phrase "freedom of the sea" follows the birth of Western European free-market capitalism, its meteoric rise through slavery and other sins of "primitive accumulation", and its need for state regulation. It carries the traces of successive economic systems, and their many victims."Space – we are reminded – is constituted through legal language, and then serves as the seemingly natural 'ground' for that language."[3] The constitution of the high seas as a discernible, codifiable unit of maritime space, particularly as one primarily defined by 'freedom' and the total or partial absence of state sovereignty, seems to fit this description. In this space, meanings and their interpretations are shared and agreed upon by all actors. Running counter to this logic of semantic 'peace', the aim of this paper is to de-naturalize 'freedom' at sea by retracing, on the one hand, the various economic and political purposes that have contributed to the construction of a free space in the high seas and, on the other, the conflicting and historically unstable practices of "freedom" on the part of individuals as well as states. In the case of migrants and state power, the "natural", blank and smooth ground on which they meet is, in fact, the rugged surface of a battle ground for a thoroughly asymmetrical exercise of rights and duties.

This essay touches on key moments in the conceptualization and implementation of rights and restrictions relating to freedom at sea from the 17th century to *Hirsi Jamaa*. The author begins by contextualizing the emergence of a "free sea" in the work of 17[th]century Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius. He moves on to discuss how 'freedom of the seas' is reinterpreted by Britain in its effort to end the Atlantic slave trade. I then return to *Hirsi Jamaa*to study its use of the principle. Finally, he ends by discussing what meaning we impart to 'freedoms of the seas in the 21st century, focusing on migration. Freedom of the seas developed through a juridical notion: jurisdiction. In the parts that follow, the coterminous evolution of these two concepts will become apparent. The author will begin, however, with a working definition and framing of jurisdiction at sea.

Jurisdiction at Sea

Jurisdiction is generally defined as "the power of a court to hear and decide a case or make a certain order", and "the territorial scope of the legislative competence of Parliament."[4] The first part of the definition refers to 'adjudicative jurisdiction'—the competence of a court to judge a particular matter—while the latter refers to 'prescriptive jurisdiction'—the capacity for a legislative body to enact laws for a particular territory. Complementing these dimensions, 'enforcement jurisdiction' is the power to "compel compliance with rules, including through the recourse to punitive and coercive measures."[5]Beyond these standard definitions, an important difference has to be made between "lawful" jurisdiction, exercised under existing laws, and

jurisdiction as articulated in human rights instruments, which is something akin to a "right to act" over the individual person.[6]This amounts to a distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* jurisdiction, the former concerning "the power attributed by a rule in international law to a State to act in a specific situation", the latter referring instead to "the actual exercise of power by the agents of a State over a person."[7]

What about jurisdiction at sea? The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Montego Bay, 1982), which entered into force in 1994, is the most recent comprehensive codification of maritime law. Drawing from earlier attempts at codifying a common international law of the sea,[8] it defines four different maritime jurisdictions, dividing the sea into four major areas, each with attendant norms: the territorial sea,[9] Contiguous[10] and Exclusive Economic Zones,[11] and beyond these, the high seas. The 1982 Convention came to (re)define the legal regime of the high seas as "reserved for peaceful purposes", in the sense that "no State may validly purport to subject any part of the high seas to its sovereignty"; they are "open to all States, whether coastal or land-locked."[12] The Montego Bay Convention, like all international law instruments, "are designed [by and] for States, not for individuals."[13] The Convention also codifies the flag-state principle, whereby a boat navigating the high seas is not subject to any other jurisdiction but that of its flag – except when otherwise stipulated in international agreements.[14]

Determining jurisdiction at sea "is an exercise in combining the space and the object, the medium with the area."[15]Although based conceptually on territory on land, the various ways in which jurisdiction can be exercised or claimed make it less commensurate with the physical ground it covers than with the reach of the law from which it stems. For Peter Szigeti, "most jurisdictional conflicts are better described as conflicts between communities and their legal orders, without a territorial connection."[16]The sea—the space where the border betrays its contingency, not to say fictionality—exemplifies what Szigeti has called the "illusion of territorial jurisdiction", an idea of jurisdiction as infallibly tied to place. We see this well in the Montego Bay Convention's codification of the flag-state principle, by which ships in the high seas are made to resemble pieces of territorial land floating on a deep blue jurisdictional vacuum.

Hugo Grotius, the Freedom of the Seas, and Mercantile Imperialism

The idea of the "freedom of the seas" was developed in the Western legal and philosophical tradition around the 16th century, particularly in the works of Francisco de Vitoria. It foreshadows in certain respects the tenets of liberal ideas of individual freedom.[17] According to Locke, humans are naturally in "a *State of perfect Freedom* to order their Actions…as they think fit…without asking leave, or depending on the Will of any other Man." This principle was reinforced by Mill who viewed freedom as a predetermined state that needs not be justified: "the burden of proof is supposed to be with those who are against liberty; who contend for any restriction or prohibition … The *a priori*

assumption is in favor of freedom." Early-modern and modern liberal theories of freedom agreed that restrictions on freedom, whether by the state or fellow man, must be justified. This principle is extended to the domain of state sovereignty when the international legal system is crafted. States are legal subjects of international law, just like individuals are legal subjects of national law. Like the liberal subject, who is free to bargain and contract, states are autonomous and free to bind themselves under international law instruments such as bilateral treaties and multilateral conventions. The "freedom of the sea" is the freedom for (often state-sponsored) merchants to contract, and the freedom of the states to exploit the sea.

In the first half of the 17th century, an important debate set the ground for our contemporary legal imagination of maritime space. It revolved around the legitimacy of claims of *dominium* (ownership) and *imperium* (control) over the sea or parts of it. In a time of growing commercial and military rivalry between the United Provinces forming the Dutch Republic and England, Hugo Grotius (1583 - 1645) and John Selden (1584 - 1654) catalyzed in their respective works two opposing views of maritime space, its ownership, and its uses. On the one hand, Grotius' *Mare liberum*(1609)[18] defended, in the name of natural as well as Greek and Roman laws, the absolute freedom of passage and navigation over the seas. Based on customary law and *iusgentium*,[19]Selden's *Mare clausum*(1635), an immediate and direct response to Grotius' formulations, argued that the sea can be appropriated, controlled, and considered exclusive property. This original controversy eventually played out in favor of Grotius' ideas of the sea as a free space, in great part because its pragmatic liberalism won the day against Selden's "bizarre principles"[20] of possessing the high seas.

Grotius' theorizations on the freedom of the seas are less grounded on high philosophical debates as they are in a worldly dispute over prizes and booty. In 1603, as a jurist of the Dutch Republic, Grotius was called upon by the Dutch East India Companyin the case concerning the seizure of the *Santa Catarina*. The ship, a fully loaded, 1500-ton Portuguese vessel, was seizedoff the coast of Singapore by captain van Heemskerck of the Dutch East India Company. As historical records show*,* captain van Heemskerck's prize was a rich one: "When the carrack and its cargo were auctioned in Amsterdam in the autumn of 1604, the gross proceeds amounted to more than three million Dutch guilders—approximately three hundred thousand pounds sterling",[21] making it one of the highest-valued seizures ever recorded.

As Heemskerck's position in international law was quite weak — he had no official privateering endorsement, and his mission was to be peaceful and solely concerned with trade — the Dutch East India Company directors instructed Grotius to write "a short, inflammatory pamphlet detailing the iniquity of the Portuguese in the East Indies, who deserved condign punishment for the ceaseless harassment and intimidation to which they had subjected Dutch merchants"("Introduction", *De jure praedae*, xv).Instead, not only did Grotius posit the innocence of van Heemskerck's actions, he also argued that "a trading company might legitimately engage in a private war against other merchants, *or even against the agents of a sovereign state*, in order to

enforce the natural law, which mandated freedom of trade and navigation" ("Introduction", xviii). Grotius linked natural law and jurisdiction in an unprecedented way, allowing states to take jurisdiction over matters regarding natural law.[22]This idea will become central to subsequent interpretations of the relationship between jurisdiction and natural law, including the 19th century debates over the abolition of the slave trade and contemporary issues of migration control at sea.

Grotius posited the sea as *res communis* ['that which is shared by all'] as opposed to *res nullius* ['that which has not been claimed']. *Res communis* implies the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the "common" good in question. *Res nullius* defines instead an entity or object that does not belong to anyone *yet* but can, legally, become someone's property. The wild animal becoming the possession and property of the hunter is the most common example. Grotius was deliberately envisioning a juridical status for the sea based on an innovative "right of shared prosperity"[23] rather than shared property. As he wrote in one of the main theses of Chapter XII of the *De jure praedae*, later published anonymously as *Mare liberum*(1609)*,* "neither the sea itself nor the right of navigation thereon can become the exclusive possession of a particular party, whether through seizure, through a papal grant, or through prescription (that is to say, custom)."[24]

Since its conception and early implementation, the 'freedom of the seas' has been championed by liberal as well as capitalistic and imperialistic orientations. Grotius's formula, though it avoided assigning to the high seas the status of property, stands as the basis for the mercantile expansion of embryonic colonial powers. His principle of "freedom of the seas" has informed all subsequent attempts at framing an international set of principles governing the sea, such as the Montego Bay Convention.

In the next section, we will see how the evolution of trade patterns, movements of capital and labor, and moral arguments against slavery changed the conception and use of jurisdiction over the high seas. We will also analyze how the progressive implementation of international courts and high-sea patrols tied the imperialistic undertones of the British notion of total or "universal" jurisdiction to emerging arguments of human rights, particularly in the semantic remapping of the notion of *hostishumani generis*. Freedom of the sea, which once served as the background for the slave trade, was made emancipatory by British legal imperialism.

The British Empire, Universal Jurisdiction and the Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade

The status of the slave in European empires was grounded in Roman law. Slaves were considered objects rather than subjects of rights.[25]Slaves were, however, often presumed to have a right to life and in certain cases could purchase their freedom. Freedom could also be granted or "imposed" by the master or the censor through the act of *manumissio*, which could take place in several ways.[26]

Modern slavery and its trade across the Atlantic were built on the philosophical premises of Roman ideas of slavery and ownership of human life. They combined the definition of slavery in the *iusgentium*,[27] the commercial principles of a 'free sea', and the political transformation of *iusgentium* into law of nations, and eventually, into modern international law to regulate the interactions between trading nations and their navies. As Jenny Martinez argues, in the 17th and early 18th century slavery was sometimes justified by reference to ancient doctrines of the 'just war' as a branch of *iusgentium*, while later, in the context of the antislavery campaign, international law was invoked as a right of just intervention against pirates and subsequently slave traders.[28]"The crime of piracy … is an offence against the universal law of society; a pirate being … *hostishumani generis* [enemy of humankind or "the human race"]. As therefore he has renounced all the benefits of society and government, and has reduced himself afresh to the savage state of nature, by declaring war against all mankind, all mankind must declare war against him."[29]Efforts to declare the slave trade to be piracy under the law of nations – and therefore to make it a crime punishable anywhere by anyone – were initiated, albeit unsuccessfully, by England at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818.

Contrary to the slave trade, slavery remained somehow protected from the status of *hostishumani generis* through a jurisdictional notion known as "beyond the line", that is, beyond the line of the Metropole. This notion allowed for the institution of rules, norms, and legal principles in the newly discovered colonies that would have not applied within the national boundaries of English and French imperial powers.[30] It rationalized and systematized difference. It was on this basis that, in 1772, lawyer Francis Hargrave argued, on behalf of black servant Somerset in what became a landmark case *en route* to abolition, that "if the right of slavery was recognized in England, slavery with its horrid train of evils would invade the island, not only from our colonies … but from every part of the world, where it still continues to torment and dishonor the human species".[31]The use of differential legal regimes in the colonies allowed imperial Metropoles to reap, for centuries, the fruit of commerce, the immorality of which they had long recognized. England's extension of its jurisdiction to the Atlantic world in the fight against the slave trade could only happen after the immorality of the trade had been legally recognized at home, effectively breaching the borders of the differential legal structure of imperialism.

Once the slave trade was abolished by Britain alone in 1807, Britainwas determined to make other slave trading nations comply with its own act of abolition. Incidentally, this also suited its aims of extending its control over the seas. To do so, Britain embraced international law and instruments such as the right of "search and visitation" to seize and emancipate cargo. A number of states, such as the United States, refused these measures on the basis of the Grotian concept of "freedom of the seas". Most Atlantic nations, in the end, relinquished the right of search of their ships often in the framework of bilateral agreements, a legal tool that Britain had begun to exploit heavily in its effort to end the trade. By exercising its

freedom of contract, Britain took control over the high seas by entering into bilateral agreements that gave it the right of "search of visitation" in the enforcement of ban on the slave trade. As noted by Seymour Drescher, *"Pax Britannica* intervened in the relationship between slavery and the development of international law in a far more significant way. In dealing with British pressure, weaker states were often tempted to sign treaties and then to evade enforcement, sometimes for decades. The British were then equally tempted to escalate diplomacy to virtual declarations of war, naval blockades and even bombardments to ensure compliance with their demands to end the slave trade, as in Portugal in 1842, in Brazil in 1850, and in various parts of West Africa."[32]

Pax Britannica, British hegemony over sea, semantically upended "freedom of the seas". Under British control, freedom of the seas became equated with freedom from slavery at sea. By 1859, when the last ship illegally smuggling Africans into the United States for the purpose of selling them as slaves was intercepted, Britain had created an effective juridical network of mixed courts scattered on the Eastern and Western shores of the Atlantic through which more than "80,000 men, women, and children were legally granted their freedom […] in some 600 cases."[33]

We can see how the revolution sparked by Grotius' theories on the freedom of commerce, adapted to the discovery of new capital (the New World), and the need for free labor to transform it (African slaves) had started give shape to the different regimes regulating freedom of movement for labor, capital, and goods respectively. Particularly in the last years of the slave trade, the "free seas" came to signify a space that needed to be rid of – freed from – piracy and slavery. This freedom – in its opposition to slavery – came, however, at the expense of a complete freedom of navigation, movement and commerce, as that once theorized by Grotius. Freedom was freedom under British control. British efforts to control the high seas in order to enforce the natural freedom of all human beings put an end to their absolute liberty as a space.

From Universal Jurisdiction to Global Migration

It was for the purposes of breaking Portuguese trade monopolies in South East Asia that a free maritime space was first theorized in the early 17th century. Nowadays, "Freedom of the seas" continues to permit global maritime commerce and mobility of capital and goods, yet it has been restricted in cases where this interest conflicts with powerful states' will to control or limit movement of people.

Systematically since the end of the slave trade, bilateral agreements have been used by states to extend their jurisdiction to irregularize and criminalize certain types of movement and activity over the high seas. Although migration through the high seas cannot be in principle prohibited because there is no national prescriptive jurisdiction on the high seas, the freedom of states to enter into contract with one another has effectively enabled the treatment of high-seas migration as a matter of domestic

legislation, where irregular migration is often criminalized. The *Hirsi Jamaa* boat was intercepted under the 2007-2009 bilateral agreements between Italy and Libya which, among other objectives, were aimed at strengthening "Search and Rescue operations" as part of a concerted effort to effectively curb the number of crossings from Libyan ports.

These bilateral agreements extend states' rights, but they also have profound effects on migrants' status at law. For example, the US jurisprudence according to which a state should have the right to intercept vessels in high seas "seemingly intending" to enter territorial waters for the purpose of unloading migrants, in fact endangers the person traveling on the boat, reducing the multiple possibilities of their status -- and the multiplicity of their trajectories -- to just one: *illegal alien.* When reduced to such a right-less legal category, an individual can by no means be considered free, even if she is journeying through free space. In 1981, when Haitians were fleeing *en masse* the violence of the Duvalier regime, the US required "the boarding by US authorities of private Haitian flag vessels [when] such authorities have reason to believe that the vessel may be involved in the irregular carriage of passengers outbound from Haiti."[34] Shortly after, President Reagan issued Executive Order 12324 and the 'Presidential Proclamation 4865 on High Seas Interdiction of Illegal Aliens', which allowed the US to intercept Haitian vessels on the high sea. This created a precedent, which has since been exploited in the Mediterranean, both by national patrols and by EU-led SARs missions.[35]The doctrine that supports this principle takes direct aim at the high seas as a space of free movement and – by focusing on smuggling – treats migration like a criminal enterprise: "if a ship is unequivocally directed towards the coast of a foreign state in order to unload illegal migrants, the coastal state is entitled to take steps to prevent illegal activity from taking place on its shore, [as well as] to take measures in the high seas to prevent the violation of its laws if the ship is heading towards the coast."[36]

The strategies employed by receiving states to extend their "fight against illegal immigration" involve bilateral agreements that create new statuses for seafaring migrants: such as Afghans and Rohingyas trying to reach Australia, Malaysia, or Thailand, or anyone crossing into Europe from Libya or Turkey. Under these agreements, states refuse to ascertain the status of the person or vessel intercepted, instead treating the vessel under the terms of bilateral agreements often allowing (as in, for instance, the Libya-Italy 2007-2009 agreement) interception and return *from the high seas.* These practices have been found to contravene the principle of *non-refoulement*, a pillar of international human rights as well as refugee law.

Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy, 2012

In the "encounter"[37] at sea between the individual seafarer and the State, several conflicting legal regimes exist and overlap. First, domestic law, both administrative and criminal, under which states exercise the right to patrol their borders and under which they sometimes claim jurisdiction over the high seas for the purpose of combating "illegal" immigration. Second, the

international law of the sea, which affirms freedom of movement in the high seas but also the binding duty to rescue a vessel in distress, as well as bilateral agreements signed by the relevant states. Third, international human rights and international refugee law, which state the right to seek asylum and the duty of *non-refoulement,* that is, for asylum seekers not to be returned to or disembarked in an unsafe place.

As migration scholar Itamar Mann has recently written, "the European Court of Human Rights […] has in its jurisprudence on unauthorized migration developed some of its most fundamental tenets of human rights law. In celebrated decisions it has meted out judgements recognizing the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment, the right to asylum, the prohibition of collective expulsion, and the right to effective remedy. In the context of maritime migration in particular, it expounded its doctrine of extraterritorial personal jurisdiction. The latter is central to contemporary understandings of human rights law."[38]The most recent to-date in this string of important human rights judgements, *Hirsi Jamaa v. Italy* represents in many ways a landmark case on matters regarding the interception, handling and eventual return of migrants outside of a state's territorial waters. By finding Italy guilty of violating the European Convention of Human Rights by "forcibly returning" a group of asylum seekers to Libya by sea, the ECtHR delivered a judgement likely to influence future national and Community (EU) policies on push-backs, *refoulement* and return of undocumented sea crossers.[39]

In 2009, migrants aboard a ship in the Search and Rescue zone assigned to the Maltese Coast Guard were intercepted by an Italian military vessel and returned to Libya, even though the interception happened roughly 35 miles south of the island of Lampedusa. The applicants, eleven Somalis and thirteen Eritreans, were part of a group of two hundred individuals who left Libya aboard three vessels with the aim of reaching the Italian coast. They were then transferred onto Italian military ships and returned to Tripoli, allegedly within the renewed bilateral agreements entered into force in February 2009, where they were detained, some for several months. In reviewing the case, the Court found Italy in violation of Article 3 (Prohibition of Torture) and 13 (Right to an effective remedy) of the European Convention of Human Rights, and article 4 of Protocol 4 (Collective expulsion of aliens).[40] The Court found that in returning the applicants to Libya, Italy was exposing them to ill-treatment as well as deportation to their own country, where they would face a serious risk of harm and persecution. Italy's argument for returning the applicants to Libya was that the interception was the result of the rescue operation of civilians in distress, during which Italy never had direct jurisdiction on the vessels it intercepted and their occupants. Italy argued, in particular, "that the obligation to save human lives on the high seas, as required under the Montego Bay Convention, did not itself create a link between the State and the persons concerned with establishing the State's jurisdiction."[41]

Italy's argument was dismissed by the Court on the grounds that the applicants, even though they had never reached Italian soil, had been

transferred to Italian military ships and had thus to be considered "under the continuous and exclusive *de facto* and *de jure* control of the Italian authorities" (*Hirsi v. Italy*, para 81).[42] We should note Italy's invocation of its "lack of sovereignty" when it comes to ascertaining the status of the person on board, when, at the same time, the very interception of the vessel affirmed Italian sovereignty over the space occupied by the migrant vessel. On the one hand, the claim to absence of jurisdiction points to the shiftiness and malleability of the very notion of jurisdiction when its exercise entails granting basic human rights, such as the right to seek asylum or the right to *non-refoulement*. But in a perhaps more dangerous way, such a position implies divorcing maritime Search and Rescue operations from the responsibilities of jurisdiction. In a legal opinion on the case, Jacques Barrot, then-Vice President of the European Commission, wrote that "the activities of the Italian border guards correspond to the notion of 'border surveillance' as set forth in Article 12 of the Schengen Border Code, because they prevented the unauthorized crossing of an external sea border by the persons concerned and resulted in them being returned to the third country of departure." He added, however, that "[…] the case-law of the ECHR provides that acts carried out on the high seas by a State vessel constitute case of extraterritorial jurisdiction and may engage the responsibility of the state concerned."[43] What, initially, seems to uphold Italy's right to police the high seas is, in fact, a reminder of the obligations of jurisdiction, however and wherever it is exercised. Furthermore, circumscribing the duties of Search and Rescue operations to the mere action of saving from drowning disturbingly recalls a particular strand of humanitarian practice which envisions humanitarian help as a series of supposedly punctual and neutral interventions, thus effectively acquitting the rescuer from any larger legal responsibility. In a way, the defense argument encapsulates most of what is wrong with interceptions, returns and, more largely, the differential legal regimes distinguishing not only between migrants and refugees, but also between police and humanitarian operation. There cannot be an extension of jurisdiction over individuals at sea – such as those intercepted aboard the migrant vessels in *Hirsi* – without the responsibilities brought by that extension of jurisdiction to which the state is bound under international law. In the case of migrants, this obligation amounts to protect their specific as well as basic human rights.

The *Hirsi* judgment was ground-breaking because it pierced the protective veil of bilateral agreements of patrolling and policing. It determined that illegal *refoulement* had occurred and ordered reparations to the returned migrants. However, it is in the concurring opinion of Judge Pinto de Albuquerque that a new push towards the extension of *non-refoulement* to all migrants at sea, irrespective of their status, seems to crystalize. Quoting from the dissenting opinion of Judge Blackmun in the infamous U.S Supreme Court case *Sale v. Haiti Centers Council, Inc.* (1993), which upheld Reagan's Executive Order 12324 on the "repatriation of all aliens on the high seas", Judge Pinto de Albuquerque attempts to solidify the principle of *non-refoulement* not only in human rights but also in customary law: "the prohibition of *refoulement* is a principle of customary international law, binding on all

States, even those not parties to the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or any other treaty for the protection of refugees. In addition, it is a rule of *jus cogens*, on account of the fact that no derogation is permitted and of its peremptory nature, since no reservations to it are admitted."[44] He also added that "the prohibition of *refoulement* is not limited to the territory of a State, but also applies to extraterritorial State action, including action occurring on the high seas." (Concurring Opinion, 66)Effectively, Pinto de Albuquerque's opinion rejects the Reagan-era justification of boarding at sea by insisting on *non-refoulement* as internationally binding principle.

Conclusion

Who is free – and what is freedom – at sea? Early histories seem to suggest that only individuals under the purview of the state could claim some exercise of freedom, whether it be freedom of action, passage, trade, or movement in general. In the brief written by Grotius for the Dutch East India company, one of the main issues was the fact that captain van Heemskerck's actions were not protected by a privateering endorsement or *lettre de marque*. He was acting as a private citizen, an agent of a company. As such, the aim of Grotius's legal defense was, among others, to claim state protection for the captain and, simultaneously, to grant any representative or subject of the Dutch Republic – anyone – to freely sail the seas. The entitlement to enjoy the free seas was thus to be protected by one's own condition of citizen subject to the laws of the Dutch Republic, and by extension of the same principle, of any state. The "freedom of the seas" started off as a doctrine whose extent was protected by state sovereignty.

When, on the other hand, flagless boats boarded by undocumentable individuals cross the high seas, they do not fall under the principle that guarantees the freedom of that space or their freedom within it. That is, they are not entitled to the protection of their own state and, although this does not make their presence on the high seas unlawful *per se*, it is overwhelmingly interpreted as such. As a result, only a small number of rights – human rights at sea – stand in the way of the definitive erosion of the principle of freedom of movement in the high seas. To migrants, the right to move freely and effectively does not apply: states attack and curtail the principle of freedom of navigation by way of "temporary jurisdiction", granted by another state, to perform police and control operations that formally erase the high seas as a space of lawful presence. Yet at the same time, states who are bound by international law to respond to distress calls in their assigned zone of search-and-rescue resort to the argument of "lack of jurisdiction" over migrants vessels, suggesting that rescue does not engage jurisdiction when having to assess claims to international protection. Historically, both these stances took form within the frame of bilateral agreements aimed at erasing a certain legal space – the high seas – and the duties and rights it entails. This juridical and logistical project of control of the sea has shifted its focus from the enforcement of individual rights to movement and trade and even to personal

liberty, as in the case of slavery, to the erasure - the effective drowning - of the high seas as a space of rights for migrants.

Notes

[1] European Court of Human Rights.*Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy*. Application Number 27765/09, 23 February 2012.
[2] Robert M. Cover, "The Supreme Court, 1982 Term -- Foreword: Nomos and Narrative" (1983). Faculty Scholarship Series. Paper 2705.
http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/fss_papers/2705
[3] Leti Volpp, "Imaginings of Space in Immigration Law", *Law, Culture, and the Humanities* 9, 3 (2012), 456.
[4] "Jurisdiction", *Oxford Dictionary of Law* (7th Edition), Edited by Jonathan Law and Elizabeth Martin. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014.
[5] Anne Gallagher, *The International Law of Migrant Smuggling*, New York: Cambridge UP, 2014, 408.
[6] Irini Papanicolopulu, "Human Rights and the Law of the Sea", in *The IMLI Manual on International Maritime Law*, edited by Attard *et al*, 2014, 510.
[7] Irini Papanicolopulu, "Human Rights"*,* 512.
[8] Hague Codification Conference, 1930; First UNCLOS, Geneva, 1958; Second UNCLOS, Geneva, 1960.
[9] In order to define the territorial sea, an area of full sovereignty of a "limit not exceeding twelve-nautical miles" (Section 1, Art. 3) is established from a fictitious baseline aiming at smoothing coastal cuts and indentures, usually calculated from the low-tide mark.
[10] A Contiguous Zone is also outlined, over which the coastal state can extend its jurisdiction to "prevent or punish infringement" of the "customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws within its territory or territorial sea". The Contiguous Zone doubles in breadth the Territorial Zone, practically extending State jurisdiction to a 24-nautical-mile limit from its coast, but only for operations of policing, surveillance, and border control.
[11] Beyond the Territorial and Contiguous Zones, a coastal state has the right to extend its Exclusive Economic Zone, or EEZ, up to a 200-nautical mile limit from the coast. This further subdivision was included in the convention after a strong push by 'developing countries', particularly Kenya and Tanzania. Frank Njenga, the Kenyan representative at the 1982 negotiations had in fact put forth the proposal for an EEZ at various preparatory stages during the previous 10 years. The proposal for an EEZ could be considered something of a "consensual decolonization" of resources, particularly fishing and mineral extraction at a moment when, for instance, 'developed countries' with less than one-third of the world population managed to seize and keep 60% of the world's fishing catch. All other countries, whether developing, non-developing, or underdeveloped, were left with the remaining 40%. Juridically, EEZs constitute a hybrid, or *sui generis* space that is neither completely under the full jurisdiction of one state — as opposed, for instance, to Territorial Seas — nor fully subject to the norms regulating the high seas, where sovereignty (and its rights) are not associated with space but only with the ship and its flag. The superficial waters remain "international". O.P. Sharma, *The International Law of the Sea: India and the UN Convention of 1982,* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009.131.
[12] United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982. 50-56. Accessed 2 July 2017 at
http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf

Hereafter the full text of relevant articles: *Article 86, Application of the provisions of this Part:* "The provisions of this Part apply to all parts of the sea that are not included in the exclusive economic zone, in the territorial sea or in the internal waters of a State, or in the archipelagic waters of an archipelagic State. This article does not entail any abridgement of the freedoms enjoyed by all States in the exclusive economic zone in accordance with article 58." *Article 87, Freedom of the high seas:* 1. "The high seas are open to all States, whether coastal or land-locked. Freedom of the high seas is exercised under the conditions laid down by this Convention and by other rules of international law. It comprises, *inter alia*, both for coastal and land-locked States: (a) freedom of navigation; (b) freedom of over flight; (c) freedom to lay submarine cables and pipelines, subject to Part VI; (d) freedom to construct artificial islands and other installations permitted under international law, subject to Part VI; (e) freedom of fishing, subject to the conditions laid down in section 2; (f) freedom of scientific research, subject to Parts VI and XIII. 2. These freedoms shall be exercised by all States with due regard for the interests of other States in their exercise of the freedom of the high seas, and also with due regard for the rights under this Convention with respect to activities in the Area." *Article 88, Reservation of the high seas for peaceful purposes:* "The high seas shall be reserved for peaceful purposes." *Article 89, Invalidity of claims of sovereignty over the high seas:* "No State may validly purport to subject any part of the high seas to its sovereignty." *Article 90, Right of navigation:* "Every State, whether coastal or land-locked, has the right to sail ships flying its flag on the high seas." *Article 99, Prohibition of the transport of slaves*: "Every State shall take effective measures to prevent and punish the transport of slaves in ships authorized to fly its flag and to prevent the unlawful use of its flag for that purpose. Any slave taking refuge on board any ship, whatever its flag, shall *ipso facto* be free."

[13] "The law of the sea is a State-centered regime, in which it is States that have the rights (and obligations) while people may at most be considered as the beneficiaries". Irini Papanicolopulu, "Human Rights and the Law of the Sea", in *The IMLI Manual on International Maritime* Law, edited by Attard *et al*, 2014, 510. Similar critiques have been moved to the principal instrument of refugee law, the 1951 Geneva Convention, since its inception. Notable jurist Hersch Lauterpacht, writing as early as 1949, identified the original flaw of the system being put in place in the fact that asylum was intended a condition one is free to seek, not a guaranteed right and even less a duty or obligation on the part of sovereign states. He powerfully wrote: "The Committee (drafting the Geneva Convention) rejected the proposal that there shall be a right to be granted asylum. According to the article as adopted there is a right "to seek" asylum, without any assurance that the seeking will be successful. It is perhaps a matter for regret that in a Declaration purporting to be an instrument of moral authority an ambiguous play of words, in a matter of this description, should have been attempted. Clearly, no declaration would be necessary to give an individual the right to seek asylum without an assurance of receiving it. The right 'to enjoy asylum' was interpreted by the British delegation, which introduced the amendment containing these words, 'as the right of every state to offer refuge and to resist all demands for extradition." But this, with regard to political offences and persecution generally, is the right which every state indisputably possesses under international law" by virtue of its sovereignty. Hersch Lauterpacht, "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights", British Yearbook of International Law, 1: 1, 1949, 373.

[14] *Article 91, Nationality of ships,* 1. Every State shall fix the conditions for the grant of its nationality to ships, for the registration of ships in its territory, and for the right to fly its flag. Ships have the nationality of the State whose flag they are entitled to fly.

There must exist a genuine link between the State and the ship. 2. Every State shall issue to ships to which it has granted the right to fly its flag documents to that effect. *Article 92, Status of ships,* 1. Ships shall sail under the flag of one State only and, save in exceptional cases expressly provided for in international treaties or in this Convention, shall be subject to its exclusive jurisdiction on the high seas. A ship may not change its flag during a voyage or while in a port of call, save in the case of a real transfer of ownership or change of registry. 2. A ship which sails under the flags of two or more States, using them according to convenience, may not claim any of the nationalities in question with respect to any other State, and may be assimilated to a ship without nationality." United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982. 50-56. Accessed 2 July 2017 at

http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf

[15] Anne Gallagher, *The International Law of Migrant Smuggling*, New York: Cambridge UP, 2014.

[16] Peter Szigeti, "The Illusion of Territorial Jurisdiction", *Texas International Law Journal* 52, no.3 (2017): 369-399.

[17] Despite attempts to distinguish the two, "liberty" and "freedom" have generally been used interchangeably in the history of philosophy and its commentary. For this, and following references to the major theories of freedom, see "Liberalism", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* Accessed 12 October 2017 at

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberalism/#DebAboLib

[18] Published as an anonymous pamphlet, *De mare Libero* is, in fact, Chapter XII of Grotius' monumental legal brief, *De jure praedaecommentarius,* completed in 1606.

[19] "Iusgentium est, quo gentes humaneutuntur, quod a naturalirecedere facile intellegerelicet, quiaillud omnibus animal bus, hoc solishominibus inter se commune sit." ("The Law of peoples is that which is used specifically by humans, and it differs from natural law, as it is easy to see, in that the latter is common to all animated species, while the former is proper to humans only.") Ulpian, *Digest* 1,1, 6.

[20] The Sardinianjurist Domenico Alberto Azuni (1749 – 1827), speaking of Selden, in Guillaume Calafat, *Une mer jalousée : Juridictions maritimes, ports francs et régulation du commerce en Méditerranée (1590 – 1740).* Thèse en doctorat d'histoire, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2013, 10.

[21] Martine Julia van Ittersum, "Introduction" in*Commentary on the Law of Prize and Booty,* (*De jure praedaecommentarius*[1606]),by Hugo Grotius. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2006, pp. xiii-xxii.

[22]Natural law, as conceived by Ulpian, is shared by all living creatures:"Iusnaturaleest, quod naturaomniaanimaliadocuit: namiusistudnon humani generis proprium, sed omnium animalium, quae in terra, quae in marinascuntur, aviumquoquecommune est."("Natural law is that which nature taught all animals. Indeed, this is not solely the law of humankind, but it is common to all animals that are born on earth, sea and even the birds.")Ulpian, *Digest* 1,1,3.

[23] Hugo Grotius, *De mare libero.* This is founded and predicated on the notion that "navigation is free to all persons by Law of Nations (*iuregentium*)", 8. For a concise overview of the genealogical line connecting *iusgentium*(and *iusnaturale*)*,* law of nations, and international law, see Jenny Martinez, *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law,*Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012, 134-138.

[24] Hugo Grotius, *Commentary on the Law of Prize and Booty,* p. 300

[25]*"Persona,* or *caput,* originally meant *the Juristic Role of a Being of Will.* Hence all human beings were classified from the legal point of view as falling under the law of persons even when, as in the case of the slave, the individual was considered more as a thing,

an object of rights rather than a subject thereof […]. Later *persona* and also *caput* differentiated in meaning into: (1) 'a human being' (2) '*full* legal capacity.' Thus we find Ulpian using the former in his dictum: *'Servile caput nullumiushabet'*; and Paul, the latter in his dictum: *'Servusnullum caput habet.'* […] In the fully developed Roman Law two elements were held to be necessary for full legal personality. They were (1) freedom from slavery (*libertas*), (2) citizenship (*civitas*). The loss of either those elements involved loss of status." From Edgar Shumway, "Freedom and Slavery in Roman Law", *The American Law Register (1898-1907)* 49, no.11 (1901): pp. 636-653 (636-37).

[26] Among the most frequent ways by which a slave could be granted freedom was *manumissiovindicta*, where the slave's head was touched by a 'freedom rod' (*vindicta*) twice, once by the master, and once by a third party. A magistrate had to be present to validate enfranchising. Also common was *manumissio in testamento*, whereby a master could free a slave by writing the act in his will. Chronologically, they both preceded *manumissiocensu*, whereby a slave's name was entered in the censor's list (*census*) as a citizen, and the slave was freed. Other forms of emancipation included the *manumissio per epistulam*, done by the master through a statement in a letter, and *manumissio per mensam,* where the slave was freed by being allowed to sit at the master's table. For a contemporary, in-depth discussion of the legal fiction of *manumissio,* particularly *vindicta*and *censu,* see Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death,* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1982, pp. 222-229.

[27]The idea that slavery is inconsistent with *iusnaturale* but recognized by the law of nations (*iusgentium*) is present in Justinian's *Codex*, the definitive collection of Roman norms.

[28] Jenny S. Martinez, *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012, 16.

[29] William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Law of England*, quoted in Martinez, *The Slave Trade*, 119.

[30] Seymour Drescher, "From Consensus to Consensus: Slavery in International Law", in *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary*, Edited by Jean Allain.Oxford UP, 2012, 89-90.

[31]*Somerset v. Steward* (1772)was adjudicated in Lord Mansfield's court*,* like another landmark case for slavery and property, that of the ship *Zong*. Hargrave's words arequoted in Seymour Drescher, "From Consensus to Consensus: Slavery in International Law", *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary*, Edited by Jean Allain. Oxford UP, 2012, 91.

[32] Seymour Drescher, "From Consensus to Consensus", 94.

[33] Jenny Martinez, *The Slave Trade*, 99.

[34] François Saluden, "Le statut du migrant clandestin en haute mer", in *Réfugiés, immigration clandestine et centres de rétention des immigrés clandestins en droits international*, edited by Daniel Dormoy, Habib Slim.Paris: Broché, 2008, 23.

[35]Search and Rescue missions such as the controversial *OperazioneMare Nostrum*, carried on by Italy for roughly a year (October 2013- October 2014), during which more than 150.000 people intercepted and/or rescued at sea were disembarked in Italian ports. It was abandoned for political reasons and rising costs, for which Italy was complaining to be the sole bearer, and replaced by more surveillance and police-oriented *OperationTriton*, under the control of EU's border agency Frontex.

[36]Ronzitti in Saluden, "Le statut du migrant clandestin", 4.

[37]Itamar Mann, *Humanity at Sea:Maritime Migration and the Foundations of International Law*, Cambridge UP, 2017.

[38]Itamar Mann, *Humanity at Sea,* 4.

[39]*Ratio* for this judgement can be found in another case brought before the ECtHR, *Soering v the United* Kingdom, ECtHR, Application Number14038/88, 07 July 1989.

[40] Article 3 of the ECtHR states that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (Rome, 4 November 1950).

[41]*HirsiJamaa v. Italy,* para 65.

[42]As the Court wrote, "the decisive testin establishing the responsibility of a State was not whether the person being returned was on the territory of a State but whether that person fell under the effective control and authority of that State." (para 65).

[43]*Hirsi Jamaa v. Italy,* para 34.

[44]*Hirsi Jamaa v. Italy,* p. 65(Concurring opinion of Judge Pinto de Albuquerque).

Remaking Caste and Work:
Calcutta Municipal Methars and
Their Strikes in 1928 [*]

By

Tanika Sarkar [†]

I

The paper dwells on the caste-class ramifications of being Methars in colonial Calcutta: workers who cleaned private and public privies, streets and underground drains. It concludes with two strikes by Methars and sweepers in 1928: when they came of age as political agents.

Methar are shit removers, belonging to the larger category of municipal scavengers. Censuses relegate them to Dom and *Hadi* castes: lowest of the low, even among untouchables. Contemporary Bengali records, on the other hand, call them Dhangars. [1] The term, according to several 19th and early 20th century sources, was originally applied to Kol Adivasis from the Chhotanagpur region. An 1824 painting of Calcutta scavengers by Coles worthy Grant shows them in attire that was typically worn by Kols. Early 19th century missionaries travelled with Calcutta scavengers to their Chhotanagpur villages to set up missions. [2]

The three villages which constituted early Calcutta would employ local Dom and Hadi Methars. As the city grew with a building spree in the 18th century, the demand for night's oil removal also grew. Labourers from Chhotanagpur Adivasis then joined the work, sometime in the early 19th century. Censuses, as well as contemporary Bengali dictionaries, call Methars forest dwelling "jungle", " ashabhya" and "Anarya" people: uncivilized, beyond and below the Hindu caste order. [3]

Most probably, Adivasis were first imported to clear forests and drain marshes – they were widely renowned for such skills - that abounded in early Calcutta. Once tree felling and marsh draining slackened, they would turn to other urban occupations. North Indian migrant labourers poured into Calcutta from the late 19th century, and many joined the ranks of Dhangars/ Doms/ Methars, as they turned to manual scavenging. But till at least the 1860s, tribals predominated "…Dhangars and other hill tribes who do such important though dirty work in the drainage of Calcutta..." [4]

Some scavengers were a few notches above them. One Bala Chamar tried to block the strike of 1928.[5] Chamars, an untouchable tanner caste, were ritually somewhat superior to Doms or Hadis. Risley, in 1891, also described Methars as "a sub caste of Hadis who remove nightsoil "as well as as" a section of Maghaya Kumhars…of the Dharkar subcaste of Doms..." The latter were untouchable potters who were ranked above nightsoil cleaners. A very small segment was Muslim. The 1911 Census also shows the sudden appearance of sixteen Christian scavengers. [6] In the 1911 Census, women Methranis numbered 1,889 as against 7,210 men.[7]

Clearly, they came from multiple sources, drawn from a bottom pool of destitute outcaste, tribal and non Hindu labour. Once slotted within the occupation, they became a distinct untouchable caste on their own, lower than any of its original components.

The very sight of them was profoundly repugnant to upper caste Corporation ratepayers. Bishnunath Motilal, a Bengali gentleman, wrote to municipal authorities in great horror in 1837, that nowadays Methars can even be seen on the roads "at all times of the day". The sight, he complained, turns the stomach of well born Bengalis, especially after they had enjoyed a good meal.[8] A short story by Rabindranath Tagore, written in 1928, sometime during the strikes, is a tale about an elderly Methar and his small grandson who are returning from work, freshly bathed and cleanly dressed. As they pass a crowd of temple goers and inadvertently brush against them, their telltale broom and pail give away their caste and pious pilgrims pounce on them to lynch. The husband of an ardent Gandhian activist wants to rescue them but she is adamant: "Even if they were Hadis or Doms, we could have done it. But they are Methars"[9].

The city badly wanted to excise them from its sight. But, it also needed them, equally badly, to tackle their intimate daily needs: shit and waste production. In 1864, the rapidly growing colonial capital was producing 200 tons of night soil every day and the volume grew relentlessly with urban expansion. [10]

In 1928, however, the urban public saw them primarily as a labour force and caste was not invoked in public discourse: except indirectly, since no other caste would do their work. Communists did not mention it at all, except once. On 4 March, 1928, on the first day of their first strike, Muzaffar Ahmad addressed them in a public speech as "Dear Mehtar, Dom and Dhangar brothers".[11]

II

Older Calcutta residential buildings usually had a winding iron staircase that connected with the outermost room – the latrine - on every floor from outside. This ensured that their cleaners would not enter other rooms. Homes without this useful appurtenance did allow Mothers inside, but only after ensuring that nobody came within touching distance. Amiya Samanta, now a retired Bengali police official, recalls how he was severely chastised by family and neighbours because he had handed over the Methar's salary to him instead of throwing down the cash on the ground to be picked up. Even if their hands did not actually touch, he was contaminated by the horizontal spatial connection.

The Corporation pulled them into the municipal workforce from the 1870s, though they continued to clean private latrines. Nandini Gooptu, discussing untouchable municipal labourers in UP towns, thinks that being government employees, however meanly paid, did bring them a measure of self esteem. [12] We have seen how persistently their pollution stigma chased Methars. Nonetheless, a corporate identity as urban workforce, did gradually introduce a sense of collective strength, even before unions appeared. Strikes, significantly, began only after they became Corporation employees. As domestic servants, caste was their manifest identity. Now a class identity began to form. Strikes added a third dimension: it made them union men and women.

While factory workers affected only their immediate employers when they struck work, Methars alone brought the entire city to a complete standstill when they went on strike. Their degraded caste then gave them invaluable bargaining power. Theirs was work that announced itself as such only when it ceased.

III

From 1703, Methars were first employed to clean European quarters and streets in the White Town and, from 1760; they were supervised by the Director of Conservancy. Methars took out garbage from homes to load into municipal boats at Night soil Ghat near the Old Mint at night. Boats dumped the lot into the Hooghly River. But most waste was simply abandoned into the nearest ditch, pond, or gutter: notwithstanding the cholera epidemic of 1770, when more than 70,000 Calcutta residents died and piles of human and animal carcasses rotted on the roads. [13]

Before John Straw's theory of waterborne cholera gained ground from the 1850s, [14] sanitary measures were negligible - as, indeed, they were in British towns and cities of those times. James Chevers, a renowned European doctor in Calcutta, described, in visceral detail, the filth and the stench in the overcrowded native quarters which made Calcutta "nasty and pestilential "Contemporary Bengalis confirmed the horrors. A biography of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar described the open ditches that lined city streets when he first came to Calcutta. They overflowed with faeces and garbage,

rotting and stinking: producing quite spectacular stomach ailments for Vidyasar and his brothers which, too, are described in graphic detail.[15]

Once epidemics were medically connected with waterborne infections, city fathers had to act. Many ponds were filled up and roadside open drains were paved over. In the 1870s, thirty eight miles of brick sewers and three miles of pipe sewers were soon laid down, and massive funds raised to provide piped supply of clean water. Garbage was now taken out, through municipal depots, pumping stations and waste treatment centres, to the Salt Lakes, about three miles away from the city, and connected by Bidyadhari river to the Sunder bans.[16] This was a time when, under a new electoral system, Indian corporators joined the ranks of civic authorities.. [17]

Predictably running from south to north – first serving European residents and then moving to the Indian quarters – a network of pipes covered the city by the 1890s. The Jorasanko residence of the Tagore family, for instance, had access to piped water by the 1870s. [18] From the early 20th century, middle class homes were connected with drains through the new flushing system, though manual night soil collection was legally abolished only in the 1980s.[19] The class divide definitely became far more critical than the much discussed racial one.

By the 1920s, improved sanitation and water supply reached most well off residents, Indian and European. The 1935 Calcutta Municipal Gazette carried pages of illustrated ads of new sanitary gadgets: covered pans, pull flush commodes, motorised municipal refuse disposal Lorries. There were pictures, too, of "revolutionary" drainage and sewer building material. [20]

Municipal conservancy, then, provided a field for Indian private capital investment and profits, a local labour market, minor capital goods production, as well as a new civic and patriotic pride : for this went along with an expansion in municipal franchise and the capture of the Corporation by the electoral wing of Congress nationalists : the Swarajists. A Bengal Iron Company ad proudly proclaimed that it used "Indian material, Indian labour".[21] Nationalist Corporation authorities were careful to invite tenders from patriotic Indian businessmen who liberally added to their vote bank and coffers. In 1924, Subhas Chandra Bose, Chief Executive Officer under Mayor C.R.Das, accepted a tender from a firm of Bengali contractors and builders for the hugely lucrative Palta Water Works Extension Scheme. The firm, in return, deposited a hefty donation into Swarajist election funds. Indian godown owners gratefully funded the Bengal Congress in exchange for favours by the Swarajist dominated Corporation.[22]

Elected Indian representatives to the Corporation came from the most privileged upper caste urban gentry ranks in the late 19th century, even though a few low caste Suvarnavaniks also found their way into it, on account of their great wealth. In the 1920s, somewhat less exalted professional middle class men – even a few women - joined their ranks. But the caste profile remained unchanged.[23] The gulf between Corporation employers and Methars, therefore, could not have been greater.

At the same time, since their rivals were Europeans, Indian nationalists were, perhaps, just a bit more accountable to Indian labour. This

created a peculiar tension between their two identities: as upper caste, properied public employers who were remarkably insensitive to low caste, working class needs; and as leaders of a mass movement who proclaimed themselves the real guardians of Indian people.

IV

In the age of urban improvement, nothing changed for those who loaded buckets of filth with their hands and carried night soil on their heads to municipal dumps. When Corporation trucks carried garbage to the Dhapa Square mile landfill in eastern Calcutta, foetid waste," sickly smelling", was spread out every day with bare hands to raise the ground level. [24] Huts of the urban poor were set right on damp earth without any elevation at all. Walls were wet mud and roofs were thin piles of straw. Damp dripped from the very pores of houses, entirely unventilated, lying next to what the Fever Hospital Committee described as "pits of stagnant water often made close to the doors ". Municipal garbage carts found slum lanes too narrow to enter, and scavengers could not afford to pay night soil and garbage cleaners.[25] Public latrines were very few. Human waste, consequently, festered on their doorstep.[26]

Slums had a three tiered structure. Landowners rented out land to house owners who built huts and rented them out to poor tenants. Landowners, being men of substance, had much clout in Corporation politics, and they disobeyed sanitary regulations with impunity. If, goaded by epidemics, the Corporation stepped up pressure; they simply demolished the huts and rented out or sold the vacated land to rich residential housing developers, public institutions or commercial establishments. Europeans and Indians alike preferred slum clearance as the "cheapest option" for urban health and beautification. [27]

A vicious circle formed: bustee demolitions were undertaken in the name of the filthy habits of the poor which put the entire city at risk. The displaced were then forced into even more congested and insanitary surroundings – for which, again, they were blamed.

In 1878, Calcutta had a total of 39, 756 listed houses. Only 5400 were connected with sewers and 11, 496 houses made private arrangements to remove their waste. The Corporation employed 1100 scavengers to clean the rest and they also cleaned underground drains and the sixty eight public toilets in the city. Methars also removed the vast deposits of animal excreta from streets, most transport being animal driven till well into the 20th century.[28]

The monthly pay of scavengers in the 1870s varied between 8 annas for cleaning houses that paid an annual Corporation rate of Rs. 50/ : and Rs 8/ for those who cleaned houses paying Rs. 5000/ a year. [29] In 1928, communists prepared a monthly budget for the average Corporation scavenger: their pay was between Rs. 10 and 14/. Those who worked a double shift had higher wages. In these fifty years, wages had, indeed, gone up but prices of essential goods went up far more. Their monthly expenditure came to more than Rs 12/ and this covered a basic diet of grains and vegetables, –

rarely meat or fish - drinks and soap – the last two essential items, given the nature of their work - fuel, rent and interest on loans, and bribes to sardars or middlemen who recruited them and decided on leave and re employment. No surplus was left for medicine or education for children or for old age and accidents: for none of which their employers made any provisions. They lived in slums without electricity, ventilation or water supply: paid exorbitantly high rents; had neither leave entitlement nor death benefit for the family even when death occurred through Corporation negligence. They cleaned undergound drains, clogged with noxious fumes, and many drowned and died of suffocation as they worked without protective gear, gloves or masks. [30] Interestingly, neither communists nor anyone else observed the precise nature of their work.

About 2000 Methars lived in Corporation barracks while the vast majority rented a single unventilated 25 square feet hovel per person which barely had room for a string cot. Sometimes they were as small as 13 square feet where a whole family, lived and cooked. An enquiry committee of 1933 recommended aprons for Methars, maternity leave for Methrani women, a winter blanket for outdoor scavengers and a raincoat for gully pit "boys" who cleaned drains, cheap stores with provision for credit. They found it "deplorable" that rooms adjoined Corporation bullock stables that water supply was extremely meagre, and one latrine did for sixty people. [31] In 1946, K.P. Chattoapdhyay, Corporation Education Officer, suggested in despair that Christian missionaries should be invited to teach their children as no one else would. The Corporation did not maintain service records and treated them as casual, daily wage workers. [32]

In 1907, a Methar drowned while cleaning a manhole, and Nafar Kundu, a middle class youth, died as he tried to save him. Satyandra Nath Datta, an eminent poet, dedicated a poem to Kundu and the Bengal Lt Governor had a memorial built for him.[33] No one mentioned the Methar, who had died, nor was a count maintained for such deaths, nor safety devices provided.

All this bears an interesting parallel with British sanitary developments in the mid 19th century. Edwin Chadwick's celebrated Report on sanitation in Britain had attributed diseases and epidemics to the way in which the urban poor "chose" to foul their surroundings. A slew of underground drains – universally seen as *the* panacea to urban disease - were immediately organized. Scholars have pointed out that both diagnosis and prescribed cure short circuited a medical alternative that had focussed, instead, on structural problems in the living and working conditions of the urban poor.[34] Colonial Calcutta, likewise, ignored the working and living conditions of city cleaners.

<center>**V**</center>

Relations between scavengers and nationalists had long been strained. In October, 1907, at the height of the Swadeshi movement, large numbers of " Methars, dhangars , sweepers, etc " set upon nationalists at Beadon Square,

beat them up and robbed them as they preached the Swadeshi message.[35]   In April, 1928, during the Howrah scavengers' strike, a Swarajist Municipal Councillor was "set upon and assaulted" by workers.[36]

In 1928, however, Subhas Chandra Bose mobilized urban workers to protest the Simon Commission. Four thousand scavengers joined the demonstrations in January, even though their union did not support Congress nationalism. [37] This shows their autonomy in political decision making. It also briefly knitted them into the city public: an unusual and heady experience for them.

Communist Party cadres and its mass fronts – Workers' and Peasants' Parties - tried to unionise scavengers from 1927. Founded in 1925, the miniscule Party did become something of a spectre that haunted the Empire. It faced five conspiracy cases in the first decade of its life. Directed by the Communist International, it was, then, about to distance itself from Congress nationalism and pursue a different kind of anti imperialism, founded on working class activism led by the vanguard Party. It intended to lead an all India general strike as prelude to revolution. Strikes were, therefore, its overriding concern.

A very tiny group of very young men, communists were certainly exceptional labour organizers. But they were not the first to mobilize scavengers. There were independent labour leaders, too: some of them women, both Hindu and Muslim, from privileged backgrounds. In the 1910s, Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hussein encouraged young women from upper class Muslim families to visit slums. Santoshkumari Gupta worked among jute labourers in the early 1920s. In the thirties, Begum Sakina, a remarkable woman of aristocratic Iranian descent, and Maitreyi Bose, a doctor, would form non communist scavenger unions.[38]

Prabhabati Dasgupta was born into a rich nationalist business family. As a young PhD scholar, then freshly returned from the US, she had met M.N. Roy at Berlin who encouraged her to work in the labour belt. She visited scavengers in their slums over a long time, after their working hours, drinking tea and snacking at their small shops and exchanged rough badinage with the men: seriously violating gender and class taboos as well, about respectable feminine conduct. Though scavengers were at first suspicious, they eventually began to call her their mother: *dhangar* ma. [39] This was a common cultural code for coming close to a young woman without the pitfall of possible sexual overtones complicating the closeness. This route to cultivating personal closeness with social Others opened up an alternative kind of labour activism which communists, in contrast, undertook with a more straitlaced economist mobilisation. Communists, at that time, had no women activists at all, and women's organizations rarely reached beyond middle class associational politics, except as philanthropic gestures. Their extraordinary travel across social spaces can be partly linked to an interwar phase in middle class gender history in Calcutta when a youthful avant garde experimented with daring lifestyle changes.

Arya Samaj ascetics like Swami Kumaranand and Vishwanand also worked for the union. In February 1928, Kumarananda told sweepers and

Methars that Russian workers had dethroned the Czar and now ruled the country themselves.[40]

Methars, however, had even earlier contacts with upper caste middle classes. Vaisnav proselytisers had worked at anti alcoholism in Dom-Hadi slums from the time of the Calcutta plague epidemic of 1893. Prabhu Jagatbandhu and Atulchandra Champati "converted a few" Doms and Hadis in 1910s and allowed them to join the processions and Hari Sabhas as singers. Vaisnav musical processions frequently disrupted mosques with their loud music and this was a source of major communal tension in the twenties.

Muslim community leaders worked among North Indian labourers and tried to address their grievances. Tablighis, on the other hand, spread news of anti cow slaughter riots from UP and Bihar to raise Muslim political temper.[41] In the 1926 riots, they armed Corporation Jamadars – labour contractors - into militant bands.

Unions, in very sharp contrast, were multi community. They were able to develop a different route to mass militancy, remarkably soon after the devastating riots where scavengers played a considerable role. [42]

The All Bengal Scavengers' Union was formed in 1927. Prabhabati was its President, and Dharani Kanta Goswami from WPP, its Secretary. Organizers came mostly from the WPP.

VI

But Methars had not waited for middle class leaders to set out on their path of militant protests. Earlier, privately hired mehtars collected waste from individual homes which allowed them some bargaining power. But an Act of 1863 centralised cleaning operations under Corporation tolla Methars. It fixed wages and put scavengers under sirdars licensed by the municipality. With a rapid municipalisation of night soil services in the 1870s, they lost their earlier leeway, and, in 1877, they struck work in protest. They spread rumours among municipal sweepers who turned up for work that they would be eventually packed off to the West Indies by Corporation authorities as indentured coolies. They also sent off emissaries to district municipalities to spread the strike. This was their first public appearance in the history of Calcutta.[43]

There was a brief second strike in May 1924, again before the emergence of unions. Mayor C.R. Das, towering Bengal Congress leader, met them and offered a lot of facilities along with a wage rise. All were empty promises but the nationalist press made much of Das' magnanimity in meeting Methars.

The strikes of 1928, constituted the critical moment in Methar class consciousness as 1928 was followed by a steady spate of strikes for the rest of the colonial period, despite frequent defeats : in 1933, 1935, 1940 (two successive ones in March and August) , 1943, and 1945. [44] We may say that 1928 initiated a parallel life for Methars: one that was the other of their degraded, forgotten, everyday existence.

As the 1928 strikes entered the second phase, clearly demonstrating their staying power, *The Statesman* made a perceptive observation. In 1924,

when scavengers had spontaneously downed tools without a union, they presented "grievances". In 1928, they made "demands" instead.[45] The earlier strike had shown desperate militancy. In 1928, the union brought them self confidence. It provided legal counselling, raised regular subscriptions – one day's salary per month - and solicited funds from the Bengal and the All India Trade Union Federations. Scavengers expressed solidarity with the ongoing Lillooah Railway workshop strikes. Acting as an umbrella that unified multiple unions, the WPP also organized solidarity messages from very diverse unions for them. [46]

The Union also introduced scavengers to news of global strikes and to foreign communists like Philip Spratt who worked in their slums. [47] Their speeches and pamphlets brought in news of scavengers' strikes in other places in Bengal and India, of other strikes in the country, of strikes all over the world, and, finally, of the Soviet Union which was described as a Workers' Raj. All were interconnected in a series of concentric rings, the Soviet Union forming the overarching outer one. The rings were strategically crafted: as if all strikes were happening simultaneously in the present and all were on a winning streak. The British General Strike of 1926, which had actually been defeated already, was included among them and the defeat went unmentioned. The news had a pedagogic function. They gave workers instant and short lessons in world History and Geography, both founded on strikes. The pedagogy, however, was simple, and the Marxist dialectic about class and class struggle or about capitalist production methods and relations were absent from it.

Union leaders, however, struggled against tremendous odds to keep the union running. A lot of decisions were taken by workers themselves. When the first strikes broke out, the leadership was caught unawares as they were busy with a massive strike in another district among railway workshop labourers: scavengers just came and informed them that they had declared a strike. [48] On 1 July, Prabhabati informed the press that Gowkhana Methars had declared strike "absolutely without our knowledge". [49] In both cases, the union enters the strike scene post facto and manages the consequences of the initial action.

No communist leader ever described his momentous first encounter with scavengers: or the texture of working class lives that opened up before them. Workers are curiously faceless figures in Muzaffar Ahmad's autobiography, for instance. [50] Strikes not only framed communist contact with workers, they were its sole content.

How did scavengers experience the strikes? They left no records. But we can know what they heard from the union leaflets – like the *Tariq Ki Talab* circulating from February, and another red leaflet signed by Dharani Goswami in June [51] and from the speeches of union leaders at public meetings. These were mainly produced by middle class leaders but their popularity makes them something like a consensual discourse, producing a shared imaginary: something like the "controlling narrative" that Patrick Joyce had in mind.[52]

VII

There were two strikes: one between 4 and 9 March, involving 9-10,000 scavengers: another, between 25 June and 5 July, involving 3000. The first strike happened when the Corporation was under swarajist rule and J.N. Sengupta was Mayor. But subterranean rivalries between him and Subhas Bose made Bose's *Forward* comment rather gleefully on the many failures on the part of the authorities. [53]

The middle classes soon realized that though scavengers had reported their obvious difficulties to the Corporation, the latter had ignored them altogether. Strike reportage, therefore, was fairly sympathetic to workers and highly critical of the Corporation. Workers got their views across with ease. The union held its meeting in the most public of spots – the Maidan, abutting on the Sahib Para, but also an area crossed by office workers returning home after work from the Dalhousie Sqaure. Their speeches left no one in any doubt about scavenger miseries and the rightness of their demands.

The urban public became increasingly irate and nervous as garbage piled up dangerously and stench became unbearable with the onset of hot weather in March and of monsoon rains in June - July. Epidemics were predicted. Eventually, J. N. Sengupta was forced to negotiate with workers' representatives and the delegation included a few Hindu and Muslim workers. They agreed on a Re 1/ monthly wage increase, release of all arrested workers and restoration of pay for the strike period. The agreement remained entirely on paper till workers went on another round of strike in June. [54]

Congress-Swarajists were at a loss about how to deal with the strikes. Their own labour perspective as administrators was elitist and disciplinarian. On the other hand, the success of their rival WPP in an important mass constituency called for some damage control exercises.

They cracked down very hard on strikers. Hundreds of workers were beaten up mercilessly. Blacklegs were promised the skies and scavengers were excluded from local cheap price shops and credit, and, worse of all, water supply and public latrines were closed to men and women on strike. But strikes were highly resolute. Even better off scavengers, who cleaned homes of Europeans, ignored blandishments of preferred treatment and joined the pickets. When sirdars or jobbers were approached to provide an alternative labour supply, they confessed that they just could find the men. [55]

VIII

As garbage choked the city, the entire urban public appealed to the Corporation to negotiate with them. Union meetings, moreover, occupied prominent public spaces: Deshbandhu Park, the largest public space in North Calcutta and the Maidan - the largest, most beautiful and well kept green in the entire city, a pleasure ground of the rich and the Sahib.

The spatial strategy was significant as it ensured that Methars had a multi class audience as various categories of employees returned from work when their meetings began in late afternoon. The sanitary crisis had affected

the entire public who would, therefore, eagerly listen to the union version. For the first time, too, scavengers, especially Methars – kept at a shuddering distance – actually addressed them from the podium.[56]

Scavengers bargained for a bit of wage increase – Re1/ per month - and non victimisation. Public memory proved remarkably short and the city was happy to forget them as soon as things returned to normal. They failed in 1928 and they failed in later years too. If their untouchable work gave them strength to hold out for some time, it also ensured that Methars would not find alternative sources of employment because of their caste stigma.

Yet, strikes were also a moment out of time: creating a "new normal", for a few days. An Intelligence Bureau report on a meeting observed that a "stout methrani" sat next to the main speaker and it was because of her vigorous interventions from the podium that workers finally decided to continue the strike. Ram Nagina, a very vocal worker, advised scavengers to use violence without hesitation if they were attacked.[57]

There was an old tradition behind Methranis' protest. An early 20th century song by a Methrani of the Calcutta Corporation reveals their sense of professional and collective strength, their absolute irreverence towards their masters, and their audacious mockery of a world which denigrates them. It is a song where the world is turned upside down.

"My name is Hari Methrani
I am the grandma of the municipality
If anyone accuses us of being abusive
We quit work in unison
Our caste is well bonded….
But the Babus are different
They shamelessly lick the half eaten plates of Sahibs
.. And then they retort "Don't' touch us, methrani[58]

During the Howrah scavengers' strike in April 1928, they drove away Anglo Indian sergeants by upending pots of excreta upon their heads, thus turning their signs of degraded caste and work into a weapon of offence. Sergeants fled, tearing off their uniforms and vowing never to return. The example inspired a middle class activist, Sachinadan Chatterjee, who advised them to drench the police in night soil when they came to arrest them.[59] Methars blocked traffic by heaping filthy refuse on streets and tramlines, helped, by "street urchins" or homeless children. It was difficult to remove the blockages as few would touch the rubbish.[60]

Strikes were an affirmation of their working class identity, now stransfigured as a source of strength. They were also a brief but real transcendence of that identity. They became a part of a different world order: of a whole world on strike. And strikes that were surely going to change the real world: as the utopic mythology of the Soviet Union promised them.

Notes

[1] Haricharan Bandyopadhyay, ed, *Bangiya Shabdakosh*, Vol 1, Ist ed. 1933-34, Calcutta; Delhi: Sahitya Akademi reprint, 1966, p 1115.

[2] P. J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India 1740-1828*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. The author is grateful to Dr. Sangeeta Dasgupta for bringing the painting to my notice and pointing out the topknot and the belt which she identified as Kol dressing: and to Dr. Uday Chandra for the information about missionaries.

[3] Subol Chandra Mitra, ed. *Saral Bangla Abhidhan*, Calcutta: New Bengal Press, 1909, p. 1280; Haricharan Bandyopadhyay, (Ed) *Bangiya Shabdakosh*, Vol 1, 1st ed. 1933-34, Delhi: Sahitya Akademi reprint, 1966, p 1155.

[4] Anon, *Five Hundred Questions On the Condition of the Natives of India: A Paper Read Before the Royal Asiatic Society, London, June 19, 1865*, London:Truber and Co, 1865 , p 1.

[5] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 27 June, 1928.

[6] H.F.J.T Maguire, *Report on the Census of Calcutta*, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1891, pp. 198-99 ; L.S.S. O'Malley, *Report on the Census of India*, Vol VI, Parts 1 and 2, Bengal Secretariat Press, 1913, p112.

[7] Census of India, 1911, Vol. 6, Part 1, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1912, pp. 15-72.

[8] S. W. Goode, *Municipal Calcutta: Its Institutions in Their Origins and Growth*, Edinburgh: Calcutta Corporation Publications, 1916, p. 168.

[9] " Samskar", May 1928, *Galpaguchha*, Calcutta:Visvabharati Publications, 1401, pp. 646-649.

[10] P. Thankappan Nair, 'Civic and Public Services in Old Calcutta' in Sukanta Chaudhuri ed, *Calcutta: The Living City,* Volume 1, Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1990, p 228.

[11] Report of his speech in Meerut Conspiracy Case Proceedings (MCCP) , P 193-40(T), National Archives of India.

[12] Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth Century India*, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

[13] James Ranald Martin, *Notes on the Medical Topography of Calcutta*, Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1837, p. 9.

[14] Mark Harrison, *Public Health in British India: Anglo Indian Preventive Medicine*, *1859-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p 3.

[15] Subol Chandra Mitra, *Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar: A Story of His Life and Work,* Calcutta, 1902, pp. 55.

[16] On the history of the river, which gradually died of siltage in the early 20th century, see Haraprasad Chattopadhya, *From Marsh to Township East of Calcutta: A Tale of Salt Water Lakes and Salt Lake Township*, Calcutta: K.P. Bagchi, 1990 ; Christine Furedy, " From Waste Land to Waste Not Land : The Role of the Salt Lakes, East, in Waste Treatment and Recycling" in Pradip Sinha, ed, *The Urban Experience* :Essays in Honour of Nisith R, Calcu Ray, Calcutta: Ridhi-India, 1987p. 147.

[17] For an excellent history of the fate of the elective system, see Rajat Kanta Ray, *Urban Roots of Indian Nationalism : Pressure Groups and Conflicts of Interests in Calcutta City Politics*, Calcutta:Vikas Publishing House, Delhi, 1979.

[18] Rabindranath describes the pleasures of bathing under a shower in a second floor bathroom in his childhood – around the early 1870s. *Jibansmriti, Rabindra Rachanabali,* Vol 10, Centenary Edition, Calcutta: Visvabharati Publication, 1961, p 12.

[19] Thankappan Nair, 'Civic and Public Services in Old Calcutta', p.228.

[20] *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, Silver Jubilee number, Calcutta, 1935, p 98.

[21] *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, Silver Jubilee number.

[22] Rajat Ray, *Urban Roots*, p. 166.

[23] Rajat Ray, *Urban Roots*.

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[25] Baron Dowlean, 'Calcutta in 1860', reproduced in N. Bose (ed.), *Calcutta: People and Empire*, Calcutta: India Book Exchange, 1975, pp 10-11.

[26] James Ranald Martin, p 21.

[27] For living arrangements of the urban poor, see the excellent account of Maitryei Bardhan Roy, *Calcutta Slums: Public Policy in Perspective*, Calcutta: Minerva Press, 1994, pp. 12 -13.

[28] Memorandum of the Army Sanitary Commission, 1878, in *Parliamentary Papers, East India, 1878-9,* India Office, British Library, pp. 176-80.

[29] Memorandum of the Army Sanitary Commission, 1878, in *Parliamentary Papers.*

[30] Meerut Conspiracy Case Proceedings, Prosecution Exhibits, p.545-48, (10).

[31] K.P. Chattopadhyay and Gautamshankar Ray, eds, *Municipal Labour in Calcutta*, Calcutta, 1947.

[32] K.P. Chattopadhyay and Gautamshankar Ray, eds, *Municipal Labour in Calcutta.*

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[34] Edwin Chadwick, *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain…*, London:W. Clowes and Sons, 1843 : Christopher Hamlin, *Public Health and Social Justice in the Age of Chadwick : Britain, 1800-1854*, Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1998.

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[36] IB, Report on the Political Situation and Labour Unrest for Seven Days Ending 18 April, 1928.

[37] Tanika Sarkar, *Bengal, 1928-1834: The Politics of Protest*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, chapter 1.

[38] Manju Chattopadhyay has pioneered research on such figures. See her *The Trail Blazing Women Trade Unionists of India*, All India Trade Union Congress, Delhi, 1995.

[39] See Tanika Sarkar,*Bengal,1928-1934, The Politics of Protest,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987: also Manju Chattopadhyay, "Kolkatai Dhangar Dharmaghat Ebong Prabhabati Dasgupta O Sakina Begum" in Gautam Chattopadhyay, ed, *Itihas Anusandhan*, Vol 2, Calcutta:K.P. Bagchi Co, 1982 : transcript of interview with Prabhabati, Oral History Section, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, 24 April, 1968, New Delhi.

[40] Intelligence Branch, Weekly Reports on the Political Situation in Bengal, week ending 22 February, 1928. Kumaranda's speech at Calcutta Maidan.

[41] Kenneth McPherson, *The Muslim Microcosm: Calcutta, 1918 to 1935*, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1974, p. 72.

[42] Parimalbandhu Das, *Prabhu Jagatbandhu*, Sri Jagatbandhu Harililamela Karyalay, Calcutta, 1913. (The author is grateful to Santanu Dey for this). Also Kenneth McPherson, *The Muslim Microcosm: Calcutta, 1918-1935*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Wisbaden, 1974, pp 82-97.

[43] Goode, *Municipal Calcutta*, pp. 162-7.

[44] K. P Chattopadhyay and Gautamshankar Ray, ed. *Municipal Labour*, pp 8-9.

[45] *The Satesman*, Calcutta, 26 June, 1928.

[46] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 3 July, 1928.

[47] Meerut Conspiracy Case Proceedings, Correspondence Related to Scavengers.

[48] Sarkar, *Bengal, 1928-1934*, chapter 1.

[49] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 26 June, 1928.

[50] *Myself And the Communist Party of India*, *1920-1929*, Vol 2, Calcutta: National Book Agency, 1970.

[51] IB, Weekly Report on Political Situation…week ending 29 February and w-e 23 May, 1928.

[52] Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1840-1914*, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp 329-335.

[53] The author has culled strike details from the *Forward*, *Ananda Bazar Patrika* and IB files for March to July, 1928.

[54] See especially *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, March to July, 1928.

[55] IB, Weekly Reports.. March to July, 1928.

[56] Ibid, W-e 1 February, 1928.

[57] Meerut Conspiracy Case Proceedings, Bengal and Bihar Speeches, P 1926(T).

[58] Collected by Tinkari Sur, in his *Teensho Bochhorer Kolkata :* cited in Anindita Ghosh, *Claiming the City : Protest, Crime and Scandals in Colonial Calcutta*, Delhi: Oxford, 2016, p 94.

[59] IB, Weekly Report, w-e 18 April, 1928.

[60] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 9 March, 1928.

Criminalizing the Migrant: Street Carriers and the Colonial State in 19th-20th Century Calcutta and Bengal

By

Somdatta Chakraborty [*]

This article concerns itself with decoding the dialectical relation that the colonial state and the street-carriers shared and lived out in the highways, lanes and by-lanes of 19th-20th century Calcutta, with a specific aim of understanding the 'culture of transgression'[1] that the government practiced on such marginal people as also to 'feel' the fences that the carriage men put up in defense and retaliation. 'Transgression' conceptually inheres within itself a notion of violence or force and in various subtle and non-descript ways, it remains the underlying tenor of this article.

Here the *city* does not feature merely as a backdrop to the ongoing conflict and altercations between the fringe people and the government. The organicity of contemporary Calcutta becomes palpable in the way the colonial government and the migrant populace sought to include the metropolis in their respective discourses in order to justify their individual rationales. Thus while the British government improvised ingenious "legal" modes to circumscribe the non-settled people within Calcutta; the latter perceived the city as a symbol of refuge and freedom. It was on the pretext of maintaining law and order within this city area, that the colonial state infringed the occupational boundaries of the hackney carriage drivers and palanquin bearers. Such actions reveal an imperialistic bias as the colonizers firmly believed that mobility breeds criminal predilections in people and thus almost all periaptetic communities were perceived as a threat to stability or 'normalcy'.[2]

The state consequently insisted on chastising such 'wandering' occupational communities and their usual practice was to criminalize their 'non-settled/mobile' identities and existence. It is believed that in such endeavors at controlling the fringes, the colonial government counted upon

[*] Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group. She can be reached at somdatta@mcrg.ac.in

the support of the indigenous educated classes and landed elites. Such apparent reliance on the propertied class was dictated principally by the logic of capital as socio-economic markers situated an upper or middle class citizen and a transport worker in very different vantage points vis-à-vis each other and the state. Whether the former did collaborate with the state or not is a matter of further research and reflection but it is noteworthy that as a potential threat to the socio-legal structure, the colonial records do not mention any native elite in the same list as the carrier people. Probably the settled character of the former reinforced the binaries drawn in colonial minds that associated precarity and lawlessness with non-settledness or mobility. Here it would be pertinent to note that back in their own country too, the British harboured similar apprehensions bordering on to stereotype creations about peddlers and people in itinerant occupations thus often rounding them off on random criminal charges.

The apprehensions seem mutual as the indigenous people too did not take to the state in a homogenous manner. In fact, the trajectories of interaction of the upper echelons of the indigenous society and the colonial state or the philosophies that informed such exchanges from the perspective of the former, were qualitatively very different from the way a transport labourer of Calcutta related to the state. While the upper classes gradually evolved a formal way of petitioning and protestation against the colonial government that eventually took the shape of the national struggle, the principal actors of this paper did not resort to any direct method of confrontation probably because they realized that they needed the formal state structure to operate and survive. Such awareness however seldom translated into full conformity as archival records document multiple instances of evasion and arbitrary behavior of the transport populace as they dealt with the state.

It might be argued that state control permeated through the occupational spaces of such workmen through regular license drives, frequent surveys of men and their carriages, collection of ethnographic data and formulation of comprehensive census lists. Each of these marked a conscious effort by the colonial administrators to analyze and thus essentialize Indian nature and institutions within non-flexible, rigid categories. Preeti Nijhar in her work discusses such acts of control, labeling and subjugation arguing that British India was not unique in this regard as the poor and working class people suffered similar fate in all the colonies of England and even in the home country. Comparing and contrasting the 'criminal' classes of Victorian London and the 'criminal' castes and tribes of imperial India[3], Nijhar argues how their peripheral standing made them devise indigenous ways of survival.[4] This paper has used Nijhar's methodological lense as it provides insight into the experiences of both the state and the working populace of erstwhile Bengal and tries to substantiate the argument of colonial cultural transgression by consulting Home Files, Intelligence Report, government gazettes, census and press clips. Since archival records of British India were seldom catalogued or interpreted from a neutral raison d'être, this paper thereby tries to stand outside the textual 'truth' as captured in the documents and compare that with

representations in private memoirs and historical literature. Near absence of first-person narratives however considerably obfuscates the processes for reconfiguring this particular slice of subaltern history.

This paper demonstrates how the experiences of negotiating with the colonial web of surveillance and discrimination, was much more immediate and rigorous for the land carriage people of contemporary Bengal as compared to that of the boatmen or fishermen of the same spatial and temporal frame. Functioning within the municipal grid of the colonial government, the horse carriage drivers or palanquin bearers were easily accessible by the state machinery and thus susceptible to their rights being violated on the pretext of maintaining the legal fulcrum. In contrast, the boatmen plying on the waterways were often less affected as the fluidity of their existence made it difficult for the government to exercise its legal and extra-legal prongs and circumscribe them. Why did the state go out of its way to dissect the people it governed? What was the foundation of the colonial zeal to map and limit the movements of the land carriage people? What made the state believe that it could actually coerce its way through the defenses put up by the carriage pullers? A discursive understanding involves an effort to 'know' the power that discriminated and transgressed as also the 'victims' of such actions.

Socially and culturally, the transport workers of nineteenth-twentieth century Bengal were predominantly migrants in the city of Calcutta who through frequent cycles of immigration introduced certain distinct elements in the morphology of the city. Historically, migrants have always played a significant part in Calcutta's civic life—a fact that is well documented in colonial census surveys.[5] The 1901 *Census of India* noted that if people of Calcutta and her suburbs were grouped as 'born in Calcutta' and 'born outside Calcutta' respectively, "then those born in Calcutta (302,906) will be found to form only 31.9% of the total, while 68.1% or more than two-thirds are born outside of Calcutta and may be termed the immigrant population of the city…"[6] A large section of these migrants took to driving hackney carriages [7]and carrying palanquins. Also, in the 'occupation' category, 'Transport and Storage' was found to employ the second highest number of people in the city area in 1901.[8]

What made these people migrate out of their native places? As the colonial land revenue settlements introduced far-reaching changes in the indigenous agrarian economy, the communities hitherto dependent on it experienced irrevocable reversals in their traditional way of life. Historians differ over whether colonial land policies permitted traditional rural structure to continue[9] or introduced irreversible changes in the relationship between the cultivators and the landed elite[10]. Notwithstanding their contradictory points of departure, both the schools acknowledge the longue durée effects of such economic policies on rural life in general. Dissociation of the new class of land magnates who obtained rights through bidding, from the land or its people, fractured the patron-client relation thus pushing the cultivator/artisan out of his traditional occupation and land base. Frequent natural calamities also acted as veritable push factors, like the great famine of Orissa of 1866. It

ravaged districts of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri and created a sizeable migrant populace for Bengal, a large number of which took to earn their living as palanquin bearers in this city. Given that occupation based census was not officially recorded before 1876, it might seem difficult to identify the exact proportion of 'seasonal' and 'permanent' immigrants to Calcutta before that year. Historians like Sumanta Banerjee have based his conclusions on colonial occupational statistics. Banerjee tried to surmise about the state and character of the indigenous population of Calcutta from the kinds of houses they lived in, which were either *pucca*(houses built with brick and cement) or *kutcha* (built with mud and thatches or tiles). The occupation statistics of the period also demonstrate a clear demarcation in the accommodation patterns as almost without any exception the 'lower orders' of Calcutta lived in huts and people from better social stations lived in 'pacca' houses. By Beverley's estimates[11], over half of Calcutta's population was living in *kutcha* houses in the nineteenth century[12] and quoting this census, Banerjee argues that it was actually the service people or people comprising the 'lower orders' that constituted the bulk of the city's population as the trend among people from the suburbs and beyond to settle down permanently in Calcutta was evident even as early as 1876.[13]

Of all the transport workers inhabiting old Calcutta, the palanquin bearers seemed to come mainly from Orissa, Bihar and United Provinces (modern day Uttar Pradesh). The immigration of the Oriyas into Bengal proper dates back to the nineteenth century, if not to an earlier period; the migrants being employed mostly as cooks, domestic servants, palanquin-bearers, ordinary labourers etc. The 1891 Occupation Table returns show that out of a total population of 100,000, there were around 47,346 palki owners and bearers[14] in the Bengal Presidency Division as a whole. The 1921 census of Calcutta and her suburbs in Howrah and the 25-Parganas made the following observations:

> The province of Bihar and Orissa supplies nearly one in five of the Calcutta population, a greater number than what comes from the rest of Bengal outside the city and the two adjoining districts. Nearly half come from S. Bihar, from the four districts Gaya, Shahabad, Patna and Monghyr, a quarter from Orissa and most of the remaining quarter from N. Bihar…[15]

For most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, majority of such migrants continued to be 'seasonal' or people who flocked into the city from neighbouring Orissa at the end of each harvest season and earned their living as palanquin bearers, punkha-pullers and coolies. They worked till the arrival of the next harvest season when it was again time for them to attend to cultivation back home.[16] This influx from Orissa was noticeable even in mid-eighteenth century Bengal.[17] Radharaman Mitra in his extensive work on old Calcutta notes that the earliest palanquin bearers were Bengalis who over time came to be substituted by Oriya and Hindusthani[18] migrants. Given that a Bengali carrier enjoyed natural cultural advantage than his Oriya counterpart, such an Oriya dominance of the occupation comes as a surprise. A growing

aversion to physical labour among the Bengali speaking people has often been held as the main factor. In contrast the *Kāhar*s or the traditional Palki bearing caste from Orissa were well-known for their zeal for hard work as they continued in their forefathers' profession even in their city of migration.[19] From a socio-cultural perspective, such occupational choice appears to stem out of the *kāhar* community's familiarity with this particular occupation and also its urgency to find work in a new city.[20] In later years when migrants from United Provinces (modern day Uttar Pradesh) joined the workforce,[21] the regional character of the palanquin bearers experienced further changes. A section of migrants from Bihar, especially the weavers or *tantis* from Monghyr district, also frequently opted for carrying palanquins in Bengal and in Calcutta.[22]

In colonial Calcutta, hackney carriage driving was yet another popular choice with such displaced people. Usually they filled in the void in the city's workforce in times of natural disasters when it was common for the existing carrier men to leave Calcutta[23] in large numbers out of fear or apprehension or even die. This was witnessed once between 1867 and 1874 when the Fever epidemic had affected Bengal and yet again around 1898 during the Plague in Calcutta and Backarganj, East Bengal. While rampage of malarial fever claimed many lives thus leading to a dearth of labour from the adjacent districts of Bengal; the scare of plague forced much of the resident working populace to migrate out. These corroborate the 1901 census statistics where one finds no less than 12,142 'carriage drivers, stable-boys and coachmen' in Calcutta who in all probability came from the Northern provinces and featured prominently in the logistics of the city.

The paper argues that it was the migrant past of the transport workers that made them 'soft targets'. Being 'outsiders', they also usually did not receive support from the 'middle class' socio-cultural milieu of Bengal. Despite remaining relevant to urban Calcutta even in the early twentieth century [24](as evident through the steady demand for hackney carriages), those transport men continued to share a contentious equation with the colonial government. Thus it was regular for the police and owners of many hackney carriages to draw brazen generalizations about the 'fraudulent' nature and 'criminal' predilections of such carrier people. Against this backdrop, correspondences around reports of purported 'deviant' behavior of the carriage drivers or palanquin bearers emerge as rich multilayered texts for unpacking the underlying dynamics of power and resistance. From a broader perspective, these records serve a dual purpose. On one hand, they interrogate the fears and complexes, entrenched deep in the colonial psyche that made the British state discriminate against an immigrant or a person from the periphery, be that in India or in her other colonies[25]. On the other hand, these also throw valuable light on the templates of resistances put up by the migrant workers against acts of colonial transgression.

'Crime', 'Transgressions' and Resistance

Acts of fraudulence and evasion by such carrier populace of nineteenth-twentieth century Bengal often came to be classified as 'crime'. In this context, one might refer to a particular municipal record from 1919. It was a kind of handbook the hackney carriage drivers and bearer population of the city were expected to follow and non-adherence to same were to be punished through punitive measures like imposition of fines, suspension of their driving licenses and even inflicting imprisonment.

The following actions or gestures were identified as veritable 'offences' or instances of non-conformance to the legal prescriptions:

> (a) drunk during employment, (b) using insulting, abusive language/gesture, (c) stand elsewhere than at approved stand or loiter in public street for being hired, (d) suffer his carriage to stand for hire across any street or alongside of any other carriage, (e) refuse to give way(when he reasonably and conveniently may do so) to any other carriage(f) willfully obstruct or hinder the driver of any other carriage in taking up or setting down any person into or from such other carriages, (g) wrongfully prevent/endeavour to prevent the driver of any other carriage from being hired, (h) demand or take more than the proper fare to which he is legally entitled, (i) refuse to admit and carry in his carriage the number of persons/marked on the registered plate affixed to such carriages or specified in the register.[26]

Turning the gaze back on the colonials make these rules of conduct appear as props of intrusion and imperialistic governance. Taking cue from this historical document, this paper points out how through such outlandish codification, the state was merely trying to tighten its legal and administrative noose around a free-willed carriage driver of contemporary Calcutta. It might be argued that arrest of the carriage drivers for these 'offenses' on the basis of public complaints could have justified the implementation of the manual. However the glaring absence of records representing the common city-dwellers' grievances against the carriage people only strengthen apprehensions of an imperialistic motive behind such codification.

Efforts at such classification were often based on and in turn gave birth to random stereotyping. Here we might refer to a particular correspondence from 1919 between Babu Pasupati Basu, the Munsif of Pabna in erstwhile East Bengal, the Secretary of the Presidency and the Commissioner of Police of Bengal. In this particular correspondence the Munsif makes decisive remarks on the nature and habits of carriage men.

> …hackney carriage drivers are mostly wicked people and that they overcharge and extort as a rule…[27]

It is interesting how the Munsif essentializes a carriage man as an untrustworthy and 'wicked' individual through use of terms and phrases like 'mostly' and 'as a rule' which are value-loaded and partisan. Here it might be argued that he was perhaps not singular in his perception as native

government functionaries of the times often reiterated the official line of thought. Such acts of libel appropriated the identities of the transport workers only to be shaped into pre-ordained moulds of deviance and criminality. Here Radhika Singha's insight is illuminating.[28] Singha discusses how the colonial state peddled stereotypes about the criminal predilections of the peripatetic and informal labour populace of Bengal, as it set out to overhaul the indigenous legal structure and traditions and replace it with its own legal superstructure. In a bid to legitimize new socio-legal languages and categories, the British government identified 'crime' as a collective or communal activity and issued acts to that effect.[29]Such radical reconfiguration of classificatory categories directly impacted the administration of justice especially criminal jurisprudence. Singha points out that the new legal enactments shifted the stigma of offence from an individual offender to the community or tribe with which his affiliations lay thus in a way legitimizing an anthropomorphic mapping of a criminal. Preeti Nijhar in her work dwells at length on the nature and effects of such social-constructionism or acts of labelling that informed almost every aspect of governance in colonial India. Thus both Singha and Nijhar argue how it was standard procedure for the colonial police or other law enforcement officials to 'solve' a crime and book a criminal even before the evidences were properly furnished, if the accused happened to be from the margins of the indigenous society. While affiliation to a 'criminal' tribe or community made them more vulnerable to such charges of crime, people from the sidewalks of life or in itinerant occupations also ran the risk of being absorbed into similar webs of crime and criminality.

One might juxtapose contemporary municipal records against such scholarship in a bid to analyze the efforts of the colonials to portray all trivial resistances of the carriage people as serious offences. To elaborate, the paper refers to a particular municipal record from the years 1875-76[30]. It documents how Stuart Hogg, the-then Police Commissioner of Calcutta observed that in recent years a far lesser number of people desired to own hackney carriages than was expected and he blamed the hackney carriage drivers for the dwindling state of the otherwise lucrative trade. Hogg perceived it as a failure of the legal apparatus to save the profession from the increasing clout of the hackney carriage drivers that deterred prospective owners. The owner class could seldom earn as much as the drivers as the latter managed to put aside most of the day's earnings for themselves, thus depriving the owners of their legitimate profit. As the police commissioner went on to interpret instances of pilferage by the driver community as 'habitual' or due to a trait ingrained in them, he lent official support to the multiple binary categories with deep socio-economic overtones. What spurred Mr. Hogg to arrive at such unilateral conclusions? One wonders whether he based his perception on a meticulous survey of the state of the hackney carriage trade or merely relied upon disjointed complaints lodged by a few hackney carriage owners. Analysis reveals sufficient chinks in his argument. To begin with, his conclusions do not seem economically tenable. The paper argues that had the pilferage been serious and substantial, a greater number of hackney carriage drivers would have managed to buy carriages of their own and graduated into owners, which

was not the reality. It thus remains inexplicable why the drivers, despite making 'huge profits', continued to stagnate in their subordinate social stations. While there must have been instances when some hackney carriage drivers *did* dupe the owners, this cannot be read as a general pattern. Mr. Hogg's conclusions loose further credibility as instances where hackney carriage owners have lodged formal complaints against their drivers, are few and far between. Read against the grain, the archival sources account for a different reality that questions tales of animosity within the hackney carriage community. Thus it is not common to come across petitions filed by owners of hackney carriages of Calcutta asking for a revision of certain clauses of the Calcutta Hackney Carriage Acton the pretext that those harmed their professional as a whole, affecting both the driver and owner classes financially. Juxtaposing such records with Stuart Hogg's observation, this paper argues for a need to revisit the documents and look beyond the generalized assumptions. For instance, it is easy to conclude that the carriage owners would not have been sensitive to the plight of the drivers had they been habitually defrauded by the latter. The petition also in many ways, challenges the class binary legitimized in the contemporary colonial discourses as the hackney carriage owners and the driver community are portrayed as occupying two contradictory positions in the society, their portrayal delineated principally in terms of ownership of economic resources. Reinterpretation of the records also creates a need to review the ideological positioning of the colonial state vis-à-vis all itinerant communities.

While the state went on justifying its existence in the land by inventing and reinventing different modes of governance, the transport populace seldom accepted their ubiquitous presence without offering resistance or their own understandings of the modalities. The carriage people occupying the other end of the relational spectrum often had ingenious ways of defying such tools of control and surveillance. The hackney carriage drivers of city Calcutta especially those who drove office *jauns* were frequently fined and accused of impersonating and they were booked for furnishing false names and fictitious addresses. Thus the state often failed to track the roots of the absconding carriage men since they often misled the census officials by furnishing incorrect biographical details. The carriage drivers also took to fleeing to avoid court summons[31] and legal actions when there were impending disputes over identity. Another usual complaint against this section of transport workers was that they disrupted law and order by not driving as per rules and many colonial legal officers strongly felt the need to rein in the office-*jaun* drivers lest they create havoc on the city streets.[32] It was however not possible for the authorities to take immediate legal action. There being no such provisions for registering private carriages like office-*jaun* which were mostly owned by private individuals, the colonial government found it extremely difficult to discipline the drivers.

State regulations binding on the public hackney carriages applied equally to the bearer class of contemporary Calcutta. Records demonstrate that a palanquin bearer's points of friction with the state were apparently far less pronounced compared to the hackney carriage men and the reasons were

largely socio-economic. Their abject poverty made them flinch from any direct confrontation with the government though that seldom translated into silent submission to the system as their interaction with the state remained interspersed with moments of resistance and dragging the feet that took shape through occasional impersonation, breaking the street code of conduct and manipulation of the fare. While these might well be seen as 'criminal' acts, this paper suggests that these characterize a pattern of everyday resistance which perhaps accorded the bearers singular opportunities to individuate outside the colonial meaning structure.[33] In the absence of memoirs from such largely illiterate sections of the working men or even oral responses of any sort, it is these instances and sites of protests that emerge as veritable mines of testimonies, underlining their constant struggle against the infringing culture of transgression.

Newspaper entries from 19th century Calcutta document a rare instance when these bearers had protested én masse against a unilateral government decision to fix the palanquin fare to one rupee for one *kos* or mile. Apart from paying the bearer, that fare was also supposed to include the expenses incurred on the *maslachi* or the man accompanying the bearers with a torch lamp and the torch oil.[34] This measure affected the bearer community adversely as they argued how fixing of rents on hourly basis meant huge monetary losses for them. Some of them pointed out that they wished to be paid as per the distance they *actually* covered as often journeys of one mile turned out to be so tiring that it consumed half of their day's energy and the new fare arrangement added to their angst as they would then receive only one *anna* per head for such back-breaking labour. The same report noted how there was a considerable slump in the number of palanquin bearers in Calcutta in the years after the new fare rule was implemented. Certain newspapers interpreted such disappearance as deliberate and defiant. The middle class either linked the crisis to the innate rebellious nature of the bearers or believed that they were simply misguided by different interest groups.[35] The same newspaper report however incorporated multiple voices and standpoints as it shed light on the grievances of the bearer community and discussed its apparent fear of facing monetary loss once the fares became standardized.

At one point, the colonial government also fixed the fare as per clock time. Such standardization of the palanquin fare as per Western time seemed to go against the community's interests and some newspapers interpreted this new legal enactment as a symbolic oppression of the marginalized.[36] It was argued that the bearers did not possess watch and not being conversant with clock time, were almost singularly dependent on the passengers' assessment of time. It was common practice for a native aristocrat of colonial Calcutta to be carried in a palanquin for more than an hour and pay for a lesser duration of time and from that perspective, the new fair rule was nothing but a virtual tool of hegemonic domination. Possessing a watch, the passengers rarely took note of the demands of legitimate fare by the bearers and paid them as per their own calculations which were rarely impartial. In none of such instances, the bearer class could substantiate its claims of just payment as unlike the upper class passengers, their assessment of time was integrally related to their innate

sense of time which was very different from colonial, official time. Their voice lost further credibility as none of them had a watch to crosscheck the passengers' judgment of time and fare. When they tried to protest and lodge complaints with the government against erring passengers, their efforts were generally unsuccessful as those could not be ratified with evidential proof. To make matters worse, in certain extreme instances, the bearer community even ended up being penalized by the state for voicing their angst.

Such regulations and concurrent enactments unravel a direct attempt by the colonial government to subdue the bearer community and make them submit to its grid of governance. It might be argued that by fixing the palanquin fare through such parameters, the state wished to drive home the superiority of clock time as clock traditionally is believed to represent the Western notion of progress. Palanquin bearers being largely rural migrants were familiar with non-linear, cyclical time and the paper argues how such fixing of fares by clock thus homogenizing time per se, was an indirect de-legitimization of all these 'other' parallel time worlds. Fares in Bengal had traditionally been determined both by distance and by time, and the bearers generally preferred the former. They perceived the watch as a tool of deception and intrusion overriding their personal conceptions of time. As they refused to put up with such forceful submission to the Western system through the imperial metaphor of clock, they deserted the city in large numbers. When the crisis deepened and civic life faced the brunt, some suggested that the state should provide a watch to each of the bearers, so that they could see the time at the onset of the journey and check it again on reaching their destination. This apparently innocuous suggestion was radical in its implications. It implied absorption of the marginalized bearers into the same time frame as the colonial masters, thus in a certain way lessening the distance between the two. Moreover, a bearer adept in checking time with the help of a watch would potentially be in a position to crosscheck the claims of the passengers. However such suggestions to potentially empower the bearers were perhaps dovetailed with a subtle effort to symbolically privilege clock time or the western form of progress over all indigenous cycles of time. Therefore a bearer, who would consult a watch for carrying palanquins, would gradually but inevitably loose contact with his 'native' time or the traditional worlds of time that were outside the domain of a single homogenizing clock entity. The paper argues that had this particular measure been implemented, it would have meant a direct infringement of the bearer's self and identity amounting to an appropriation of their separate mental and physical worlds into the linear western framework of progress.

Dialogue between the carrier and the bearer community and the government touched new impasse during periods of license registration. As the government deployed multiple state machineries to set up a license raj for the carriage men and their vehicles, it faced resistances at multiple scales as the itinerant people even took to absconding én mass in order to avoid accepting the colonial hegemony. This perhaps explains why a far lesser number of palanquins and hackney carriages were registered for the year 1875-76 as compared to the earlier years.[37]

In retrospect it might be concluded that dynamics between the state and the carriage communities of contemporary Calcutta was as rich and varied as an octave, strains of which often touched a crescendo that found expression in violence and disruption. The British officials and the carriage men often resorted to violence as each wanted their own unique tunes, own meaning structures and their particular versions of justice to prevail. Being the déjure and defácto authority, the government used the language and modality of law to bend the peripheral populace into submission. Whether it truly succeeded or not can form the subject matter of a different study, but it is undeniable that through the processes of labeling and resistance, the colonial state and the carriage men played out their conflictual relation several times thus making and unmaking their individual identities. The city of Calcutta in turn remained witness to a more profound interplay of freedom and unfreedom that remained veiled in discourses of rights and power.

Notes

[1] The author specifically uses this concept to explain the 'culture' or set of practiced values and beliefs that the colonial state apparently endorsed and exercised which with regard to the indigenous populace was one of transgression. The argument put forth in the paper is that the practices of transgression or violation of the boundaries of indigenous life, habits, customs and codes by the state had become so frequent and incessant that they had become ritualized and gradually evolved into a culture of transgression.

[2] Nitin Sinha, "Mobility, Control and Criminality in early colonial India, 1760s to 1850s", *IESHR* 45, No.1 (2008).

[3] "The British appear in the nineteenth century to have felt most comfortable surveying India from above and at a distance—from a horse, an elephant, a boat, a carriage, or a train. They were uncomfortable in the narrow confines of a city street, a bazaar, a mela—anywhere they were surrounded by their Indian subjects… There were however groups and categories of people whose practices threatened the prescribed sociological order. These were people who appeared by their nature to wander beyond the boundaries of settled civil society: sannyasis, sadhus, fakirs, dacoits, goondas, thugs, pastoralists, herders, and entertainers. The British constructed special instrumentalities to control those defined as beyond civil bounds, and carried out special investigations to provide the criteria by which whole groups would be stigmatized as criminal…."(Bernard S.Cohen: *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press,1996,p.15). Also see Radhika Singha, *A Despotism of Law: Crime and Justice in colonial India,* New Delhi: O.U.P, 2000.

[4] "While there are clear differences between the two situations, there are similarities of image, of space, of social status and of social structure….Each collectivity lay at the base of its respective social pyramid. Indeed, each could be said to be marginal to the larger stratification system—a kind of underclass. During a period of rapid social and economic change, whatever their past practices, the groups labelled as 'dangerous', were forced to adopt new survival techniques."(Preeti Nijhar, *Law and Imperialism: Criminality and Constitution in Colonial India and Victorian England,* London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009,p. 6)

[5] The statistical realities upheld by colonial Census surveys are seldom fullproof, as the numbers are unreliable and do not throw much light on the identity and field of operation of such sections of people. Considering that one does not know "what the

census makes visible and what it erases" (Neeladri Bhattacharya, "Labouring Histories: Agrarian Labour and Colonialism"*, NLI Research Studies Series* 49(2003), V.V.Giri National Labour Institute, p.20) one is needed to read beyond the figures. Colonial statistical reality is perhaps relevant only as approximations of reality and as a link to the past that cannot otherwise be approached and understood.

[6] *Census of India 1901*, Vol. VII-*Calcutta Town and Suburbs*

[7] Here 'hackney carriage drivers' essentially imply men driving public horse carriages, not employed by private families or individuals.

[8] *Census of India 1901*, Vol. VII-*Calcutta Town and Suburbs.*

[9] Rajat Kanta Ray and Ratnalekha Ray, "The Dynamics of Continuity in Rural Bengal under the British Imperium: A study of quasi-stable equilibrium in underdeveloped societies in a changing world", *IESHR* x.1 (March 1973).

[10] Binoy Bhushan Chaudhuri, "The Process of Depeasantization in Bengal and Bihar, 1885-1947", *Indian Historical Review* II. No.1 (July 1975).

[11] A planned comprehensive census of Bengal was taken in 1876 under the auspices of Henry Beverley, the Inspector General of Registration in Bengal.

[12] 'The number of huts fell from 53,289 in 1821 to 50,871 in 1837. In that year the erection of huts with thatched roofs was prohibited because of fire hazards. Thatch was replaced by the more expensive tiles. The number of huts fell further to 22,860 in 1876, the year of the census. During the same period, i.e. from 1821-1876, the number of houses had increased from 14,230 to 16, 896.'(Sumanta Banerjee, *The Parlour and the Streets: Elite and Popular Culture in Nineteenth Century Calcutta*, , Calcutta: Seagull books, 1998, p.59-60)Noting that the falling off was 'entirely restricted to native huts', Mr H. Beverley…admitted that 'huts have largely made way for the erection of tanks and new roads…'(Census of 1876,as quoted in Banerjee,1998:60)

[13] Banerjee cites that while in 1821, around 100,000 persons visited Calcutta on a regular basis for work and then returned back home; in 1876, only about 10,000 persons frequented the city daily. Banerjee thus tries to argue that by 1876 a greater proportion of the populace from the suburbs had settled down in Calcutta and therefore lesser people were commuting.

[14] Census of India, 1891.

[15] Census of India, 1921, Vol. VI: City of Calcutta, by W.H.Thompson, Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1923.

[16] "The favourite employment of the Oriyas in Calcutta was that as palanquin or palki bearers who commanded a strength of 11,000 odd, as in 1839, as evident from the *Samachar Darpan* of 15ᵗʰ June of the year. The same source then mentions….that the Oriya Palki-bearers used to come back to their home-province from Calcutta with a saving to the tune of three-lakhs rupees each year on an average." Census of India, 1921, Vol. VI: City of Calcutta, by W.H.Thompson, Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1923.

[17] Hence it was possible for a colonial official, T.Motte to spot no less than 7000 Oriya palanquin bearers at work in Bengal, in the course of his journey to the Diamond Mines at Sambalpur, Orissa. He had undertaken this official trip under the aegis of Lord Clive in the year 1766.

[17] Motte's account hints at strong Oriya presence in this particular occupation as they were found to form a body or 'common-wealth' headed by a president whose instructions were expected to be binding on these bearers during their years of operation in Bengal. Problems of this Oriya palanquin community was also supposed to be discussed and decided through regular 'council' meetings.

[18] People from northern India, especially United provinces were known such because they conversed in Hindusthani language, which was a variant of Hindi.

[19] "…The reason is that as casual labourers they are eminently hard-working and they take up work which is generally too strenuous for the Bengali" (Census of India, 1921, Vol. V: Bengal by W.H.Thompson).

[20] A permanent discourse was woven by the colonial state regarding the characteristic traits of the Indians. Ethnographic surveys and anthropometric studies informed their endeavor in this sphere through which the rulers came to form stereotypes regarding the 'nature' of each and every caste. Thus in their discourses, Bengalees were 'weak and frail' and averse to physical labour while people from Punjab were 'martial'. For incisive discussion, refer to Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the late nineteenth century*, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995.

[21] Mitra argues that the Oriya and Hindusthani bearers virtually monopolized the task of carrying palanquins in Calcutta, thus pushing the Bengalis out off the orbit.(Radharaman Mitra, *Kolikata Darpan: Pratham Parbo*,3rd Edition, Calcutta, 1988)

[22] Radharaman Mitra, *Kolikata Darpan: Pratham Parbo*, p.281.

[23] 'In the province of Bihar, the bulk of the migrants was supplied by the districts of Gaya, Patna, Sahabad, Saran, Muzzafarpur, Monghyr and Darbhanga...'(Radharaman Mitra, *Kolikata Darpan: Pratham Parbo*,p. 422)

[24] Till 1911 palanquin bearers retained their relevance in the transport work sector-- Census of India 1911, Vol. 6-Calcutta , L.S.S.O' Malley.

[25] Nijhar's caveat is enlightening here. In her work she discusses how the process of governing and labeling the subject people was never a one-way activity as such an exercise always took the form of a dialogical relationship in course of which identities of both the rulers and the subject people were made and unmade. (Nijhar 2009)

[26] Home/Municipal/ 1919- *The Calcutta Hackney Carriage Act 1891(Bengal Act II of 1891)*.

[27] Correspondence exchanged between Babu Pasupati Basu, Munsif of Pabna to the Secretary of Bengal through the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, 17th September,1919; as quoted in Home/L.S.G/Municipal, December 1921.

[28] Radhika Singha, A *Despotism of Law: Crime and Justice in Early Colonial India* New Delhi: O.U.P, 2000.

[29] 'The reforms of 1772 included one significant foray into substantive law, in the form of Article 35, for punishing dacoits. This article laid down that every dacoit on conviction shall be carried to the village to which he belongs; and be there executed, as a terror and example to others; and…the village of which he is an inhabitant, shall be fined….and …the family of the criminal shall become the slaves of the state; and be disposed of, for the general benefit and convenience of the people, according to the discretion of the Government.'(Singha, A *Despotism of Law:* pp. 27-28)

[30] Home/Judicial/ 1876.

[31] '…In many cases where the correct names and addresses are given and summons duly served, the accused is absent on the date of the hearing of the case and a warrant is issued. The complainant in the case on going to the same address where the summon was served, is informed by the owner of the office-jaun that the driver has since been discharged or gone to his native country on leave, and consequently the warrants are returned with the remark "No trace" and the case filed or struck off….' Home/Political/Police/1921,- *Proposed Amendment of the Calcutta Hackney Carriage Act so as to license office jauns.*

[32] "...the traffic in the streets mentioned is abnormal and unless some check is put on the drivers of this class of vehicle, it will be impossible to regulate the traffic efficiently." Home/Political/Police/1921,- *Proposed Amendment of the Calcutta Hackney Carriage Act so as to license office jauns.*

[33] '…it seemed far more important to understand what we might call *everyday* forms of peasant resistance—the prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labour, food, taxes and interest from them. Most of the forms this struggle takes stop well short of collective outright defiance. Here I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth. These Brechtian forms of class struggle have certain features in common. They require little or no coordination or planning; they often represent a form of individual self-help; and they typically avoid any direct symbolic confrontation with authority or with elite norms…'(James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985,p.29-30). This theory through directly relevant to the peasants, is pertinent for the transport workers of British India too as all such people shared a certain 'kinship' in terms of how they were perceived and treated by the colonial state.

[34] Reported from 30th October, 1819 under the heading '*dakbehara',* in Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, *Sangbadpatre shekaler katha*, vol.1, 1818-1830, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Mandir, Kolkata, 1937, p.343.

[35] "…*Kintu ekhon kolikatae ek beharar o mukh dekha jaye na. Ihate anuman hoye je, ihar madhye kichhu dushtota thakibek kimba keho tahardigo ke kumantrana diya thakibek…* ."Translation- Now face of not a single *behara* or bearer can be seen in Calcutta. This makes us believe that there must be some mischief involved in this or someone might have given them ill advice." Excerpt under the subheading *Thika Behara* or contract bearer. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, *Sangbadpatre shekaler katha*, vol.1, 1818-1830, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Mandir, Kolkata, 1937,pp. 344-345.

[36] "….*kolikata r ek shamachar patre beharader pakhhapati hoiya keho likhiyachhen je shamay anushare beton nirupaner natun aiin hoyate beharader pran loiya tantani hoiyachhe.* Translation- In one of the newspapers of Calcutta, somebody has become the spokesperson of the bearers and written that with the coming of the act that determines their fare as per time, the lives of the bearers have become endangered. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, *Sangbadpatre shekaler katha*, Vol.1, 1818-1830, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Mandir, Kolkata, 1937.

[37] "…at the end of that period it was found that the registration fell short in the following proportions, compared with those of the corresponding period of the previous year, namely 1301 third class carriages; 438 drivers; 109 palankeens; bearers 657; making a total deficiency of 1334".Home/Judicial/1876-*Report on the working of Hackney Carriage Act in Calcutta and its suburbs; and in Howrah, during the year 1875-76.*

The Small Town in India:
'Subaltern Urbanisation' and Beyond

By

Ritam Sengupta [*]

Introduction

Even as official and corporate urban development in India and the global south seeks to invest in newer paradigms like 'smart cities', the 'small town' continues to persist as well as reinvent itself as the ordinary yet essential intermediary in the urbanisation process. In recent times, newer ways of gleaning and reading data has led up to suggestions that the 'small town' might in fact not be simply an intermediary, but rather an essential element in/of India's emerging urbanities. While this proposed significance emphasises the 'small town' as a new object of knowledge, the task this paper sets itself is also to qualify a distinctive mode of enquiry with respect to questions of the urban and urbanisation as might be founded on this (relatively) recent epistemic interest, especially in the case of India.[1]

   This paper could be prefaced by specifying that the otherwise commonplace descriptor - 'small town', will in this paper refer (negatively) to all areas as made out to be 'urban' or 'town' (the criteria for this is discussed in a subsequent section) by the Census of India that do not cross the population level of a million, beyond which urban areas in India become the 'metros' or metropolitan urban areas. In thus overlapping the question of the 'small town' with the entire gamut of non-metropolitan urbanisation, there could being certain ways a simplification of a range of scalar questions as to what could be classified 'medium' or 'large' towns within the entire range of urban settlements with a population under a million[2]. This 'simplification' is however firstly to serve a heuristic purpose of isolating an area of enquiry that is the question of urbanization beyond metro-cities that has till now surfaced only sparingly within existing urban studies in India and beyond. This absence of

[*] Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group. He can be reached at ritam@mcrg.ac.in

research and thinking about towns and urban areas outside metros is the subject of the next section of this paper.

The wide casting of the 'small town' as encompassing all non-metropolitan phenomena is however also to serve a second and more key objective. This, as will be elaborated gradually, pertains to the understanding - within policy but also to an extent within critical discourse - of urbanisation as following *as such* from metropolitan processes, developments and 'spillovers'. Here metropolitan centres could mean the 'global cities' of the north and as a corrective of this west-centred conception of global control, the 'mega cities' of the south could make an appearance as drivers of national growth and urbanisation. Combined with the actual absence of research on smaller-scale urban areas, this conceptualisation of urbanisation as driven entirely (essentially?) by metropolitan inducements is the primary object of interrogation in this paper. And this interrogation can for now be enabled by the posing of 'small town' as the umbrella category to group all non-metropolitan forms of urban development. The disassembling of this category to locate the diversity in non-metropolitan urbanities is of course what could follow this conceptual interrogation. But that is a task beyond the mandate that this paper sets for itself.

The Discursive Illegibility of the 'Small Town'

In many ways the 'small town' has more often than not been the discursive casualty of the epic, modern division of imagination between the urban and the rural, the metropolis and the countryside. As the classic thinker of urbanity Henri Lefebvre had posed it, urban life-forms had something of a world-defining mandate. The 'rural' itself was part of this definition-making as the coming of urbanity historically reconstructed peasant life and "villages thus become ruralised by losing their peasant specificity".[3] But other thinkers like Raymond Williams had also pointed out that the stereotypical divisions between the town and the country has roots in antiquity and their persistence into the present often elides a variety of more mixed or transitional 'ways of life' like that of the suburban, dorm towns, shanty towns, etc.[4] And yet even as the general logic of urbanisation making a new world after its own is treated as something of a truism, the unfolding of this logic outside the familiar and grand industrial premises of metropolises onto other kinds of settlements has over time attracted relatively minimal reflection. The modern metropolis, especially the European kind, continued to attract analyses of the fragmentary experiences and the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation specific to urban life as in the writings of Georg Simmel and Walter Benjamin.[5] Such analyses while illuminating in their novel presentation of modernity's foundational relationship with urbanity, nonetheless secured a norm of being urban that centred on the big metropolis with its industrial constitution and newer regimes of wonders and attractions.

In the specific case of India, the urban question remained somewhat suspended in the nationalistic and Gandhian understanding of the emotional salience of the rural to the question of Indian-ness even as the technocratic

Nehruvian planning regime sought to cast the urban as the historicist destination of the nation.[6]The official significance accorded to the urban remained predominantly bound to the extant industrial or trade centres or extended at most to newly planned towns which were modelled to create ideal living conditions around the newly sanctioned industries of the nation. There was arguably very little governmental concern about the more immanent tendencies of urbanisation springing from the capitalist process which might have drawn attention to other more intermediate urban settlements or agglomerations.[7] The official anxiety was rather 'conservatively' submitted to meticulously plan the newer (and older) towns in ways in which the norms of communal ('rural) living could be met.[8]

When it has received a certain amount of attention (though sparingly), in Indian historiography, the 'small town' has been seen to be a significant site often of pre-colonial origins, for studying key processes of economic transformation in early modern and colonial India. Thus in both Bayly's and Haynes' work on northern and western India respectively, smaller urban centres outside Presidency towns come across as a space of sustenance and multiplication of commercial production and capital that was driven differentially through both global as well as inter-local trade and migration linkages.[9] There has also been more recent interest in the character of the administrative, district towns of colonial India as 'intermediate' forms of urbanity neither delimited to defined belts around the big provincial city nor characterised by a simple extension of rural communal life.[10]

Over time, most of what has evolved as critical urban studies and history in India has however continued to cast the urban question as a corollary of metropolitan developments, even as the notion of the urban came to be appreciated as less a historicist destination and more of a specific culmination of historical, contingent trajectories.[11]While the most critical amongst such studies have espoused the urban as a specific product of colonial history mingling with 20th century currents of popular politics, nationalist planning and technocratic imaginaries as well as movements of people, goods and sensibilities 'from below', the implications of this understanding at the level of non-metropolitan settlements have been minimal.[12]The English-language critical understanding of urbanity in India has thus hardly been extended beyond the expanding folds of big metropolitan centres. The 'small town' till recently thus has had its bare discursive presence perhaps as the literary 'Malgudi' of R.K. Narayan's fiction or as a slightly more sophisticated stand-in for the rural simplicity as in the imagistic ledgers of Hindi cinema.

Over the 1970s and 1980s, a somewhat differently qualified social-scientific approach to thinking of the 'small town' as a diffuser of sorts – both economic as well as socio-cultural - of the over-saturation of existing metropolitan centres, especially in the global south, came into being.[13] This was practically also the moment when social science started taking seriously the city in developing nations with the landmark event of the setting up of the World Bank's Urban Division in 1972. Propositions were made around this time regarding the 'urban bias' in development agendas that led to the

advocacy of the decentralisation of policy interests and investment away to smaller urban centres.[14]

However tied as it was to the imperatives of policy prescriptions, such social scientific attention devoted to 'small towns' began to fade as assessments implicating such policy measures as 'failure' returned international social-scientific focus onto the metropolis as a new engine of growth.[15]It is not incidental perhaps that such change of focus was coincidental with the newer waves of liberalisation post the 1980s.Crucial here was also the significance since the early 1990s of the (eventually) Nobel-prize winning economist Paul Krugman's ideas of 'New Economic Geography' that implicitly posited the inevitability of larger cities as motors of economic development.[16] The critical academic attention followed suit as the new problematisation of the urban refreshed the obsession with big cities through the problematisation of the 'global cities'/'world cities' as command centres of an expanding global economy in a new neo-liberal order.[17]

The Recent Resurfacing of the 'Small Town'

Breaking the discursive impasse concerning the 'small town' has been a protracted process. Part of this can be attributed to the plain empirical reality that "by 2000, just over half of the world's urban population and a quarter of its total population lived in urban centres of less than half a million inhabitants".[18]The more recent attention extended to smaller towns has been generatedin particular by a degree of disaffection with analyses of the post-industrial 'global city' that while focusing upon the spatialities of the new urban character of capitalist accumulation, has nonetheless been argued to retain a 'metrocentricity'.[19] This disaffection has also been articulated with respect to the recasting of the urban question as centred around 'world cities'/'global cities' as centres of creative enterprise and their consolidation both as sites of high-value production in entertainment, informational and knowledge-based capitalism as well as in the form of 'command centres' controlling a supra-national network of urban existence. Another significant point of contention has been the inevitable hierarchy that frames the propositions concerning post-industrial 'global cities', a hierarchy within which a spatial division is temporalized to implicitly maintain a developmentalist paradigm within which cities of the global south find themselves lagging on a historicist path to 'catching up' with their western counterparts.[20]

In distinction from the 'global city' approaches to studying the newer forms of urbanisation, urban organisation of capital and social experience since the advent of the latest phase of globalisation, a range of interventions since the early 2000s have attempted to delineate a different path of urban analysis. The primary objective of such interventions is to return the academic gaze to a sense of a more 'ordinary city', a more category-less 'cosmopolitan' understanding of contemporary urbanity that looks at the 'multiplex' and 'variegated' distribution of the urban along the circuits of capital beyond its metropolitan concentrations.[21] The emphasis in such interventions has been

to supplement the analytic of the global with views of both intra-regional/urban linkages as well as the evolving place-based politics of democratic citizenship. This is also a call for re-energising enquiries about specificity and the 'interstitial' character of urban connections while tracking the international generality of contemporary capitalism marked by neoliberal expediency, post-Fordist production processes and financial and informational capital.[22] Small towns often distinguished by demographic characteristics have thus been proposed, quite suitably, to be the ideal nodes of studying contemporary urbanisation to understand the intermediate character of capitalist processes.

What is significant to such recent interventions is to not only pose the 'small town' as a recent find tucked away erstwhile as a silent presence in the spatio-temporal flows and fixes of capital. The 'small town' is rather both a new object of enquiry as well as a epistemic critique of the positioning of large urban formations and the singular experiences they harbour as 'synecdochal' subsumptions of the entirety of urban experiences around the world or even on national scales.[23] The key question for such recent interventions then can be reiterated as follows: what happens when the necessities of global, national and regional capital move parallel to metropolitan circuits to find different axes and nodalities of operation and accumulation and what are the political and social implications of such multifarious travels of capital? What goes on in and around the relatively smaller-scale channels and concentrations of wealth, mobility and labour, how are they governed and how are they inhabited? What are thus the dialectics of alienation and reconciliation that make such places 'urban' and how can the contemporary urban be reconceptualised through such limits(?) of its proliferation?

Beyond the 'Global'/'Mega' City in India

In the case of India, one of the courses charted in framing the critique of the 'global city' paradigm has been via a problematisation of the peripheries of the large metropolitan centres. In their understanding of Indian 'mega city' formations, certain influential urban theorists have characterised the forms of life and labour on such peripheries variously as forms of 'subaltern urbanism', 'need economy'/ 'non-corporate' capitaland/or 'political society'.[24] The primary claim in such modes of understanding the urban has been to critique the west-centred paradigm of transition to the brutal and sanitised megapolis cleared of all traces of industrial labour processes and other kinds of working populations. The claim in such studies has instead been to understand the survival of non white-collar working classes within the peripheries of Indian megacities through creative endeavours of 'informal', subsistence-based, economic activities that while excluded from the regime of capital, return to the space of the urban through the processes of democratic politics, moral registers and lower-end service economies.

However the creation and maintenance of such peripheries of large metropolitan centres have also been shown in other studies to be constituted by illegalities that directly tie up agents of accumulation with the state and the

ruling party through novel permutations of neo-liberal govern mentality.[25] These forms of accumulation-based rule on the peripheries of large metropolitan centres seem to be based on rendering the 'informal' also as immensely precarious by laying claims again and again to displaced and migrant populations' inhabitations and means of livelihood as and when the order of the urban has to be expanded. Thus subjected to a 'recycling of the urban', the continuous intertwining of the limits of the bigger cities with processes of capital do not very easily admit of any logico-political exteriority (as for instance signified by the term 'non-capital').[26]This observation however can also be complicated by emergent findings that a considerable measure of the economic dynamism along peripheries of big cities need not always be drawing dependence from these city-economies.[27] To consider in tandem these multiple economic possibilities in describing the 'outgrowths' of the big metro cities, a viable inference could perhaps be drawn that livelihoods at these 'peripheries' might be constituted through both linkages with as well as de-linking from their metropolitan centres and yet very much implicated in varying logics of capital, accumulation and social reproduction of power. This would then perhaps be a salutary lesson for the contemporary, as a set of very recent developments make it imperative for the study of the urban to push further and further beyond the limits of large metropolitan centres.

Urban by Data

Key amongst such developments is the result of the 2011 Census of India and calculations specific to the national economy around this period. According to this last decadal Census, the number of settlement units marked as urban has increased by over 2700 in the period between 2001 and 2011.[28] This is an extremely sharp rise, given the previous 2541 settlements being classified as urban over more than a hundred years since 1901.[29] It is also remarkable considering India's urbanization rate had actually declined in the two decades since 1981.[30]Further, of the 2774 newly classified urban settlements, 2532 have been placed within the category of 'Census Towns' (CT), a development described as 'sudden' and 'phenomenal' by some and gradual by others considering almost 70% of this 'rise' was already showing up on the previous 2001 Census.[31]

CTs mark more of a conceptual threshold of understanding the 'urban' within the governmental imagination in India. The statistical criteria to designate CTs first came into being with the 1961 Census and order the CT status to be extended to places/settlements with a minimum population of 5000, distributed according to density of at least 400 per square kilometre and with 75 per cent of the male working force engaged in non-farm activities.[32]*Census Towns* are of course distinguishable from *Statutory Towns* (STs) meaning all settlements which have been mandated by state government legislation to be governed by an Urban Local Body (ULB); and *Outgrowths* (OGs) that are understood to be a 'viable unit' physically contiguous with an existing ST and possessing 'urban features' in terms of infrastructure and amenities like pucca roads, electricity, drainage, educational institutions, post

offices medical facilities, banks, etc.[33] Since it is eventually up to particular state governments to *administer* areas as urban according to criteria that differs from the statistical labels denoted by the central government's census authorities, CTs mostly do not transition to urban governance in terms of changing tax rates, provisioning infrastructural endowments and instituting ULBs and remain ruled by village panchayats.[34]

Of late, a slightly different form of urban classification using a single, universal morphological criterion is beginning to be used by social-scientists. This is that of the Geopolis initiative whose Indian wing is referred to as the Indiapolis project. By way of satellite images, this project marks out physical agglomerates with a contiguity of built-up areas with a maximum of 200 meters separating constructions, calling these settlements agglomerations. These agglomerations are then geospatially matched with Census figures to obtain their population. A minimum of 10000 for each settlement agglomeration is used as the threshold of urbanisation.[35] Indiapolis thus does away with the Census' occupational criteria (that is also uncommon internationally). This is on count of an alternative epistemology of the urban whereby farm work is not necessarily considered an attribute of rural livelihood alone just as multi-spatial and multi-sectoral livelihood practices are deemed to be the reality of contemporary migratory labour.[36] On count of such methodological differences, the project proposes a 37.5% urbanisation rate for India already in 2001 as different from the 31.16% figure available from the Census, 2011. Methods proposed in studies by the World Bank also use certain other kinds of satellite imagery driven criteria that estimate the distance of populations from bigger cities as a measure of urbanization and present even higher rates of urbanisation to the tune of 40%.[37]

'Subaltern Urbanisation'

Spurred on by the Census 2011 findings and the related statistical exercises and arguments coming from other modes of measuring urban area and population in India, there has been a range of studies over the last few years that have been grouped under the broad rubric of 'Subaltern Urbanisation'. The explanatory power achieved by this phrase merits a discussion to understand exactly what could be involved when one ventures to conceptualise the urbanisation processes derived from demographic growth in non-metro urban areas.

The 'Subaltern Urbanisation' moniker is primarily adopted by a group of researchers of Indian urbanization at the Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH) at Pondicherry. Other researchers at the World Bank and at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR) in New Delhi, those working on a long term project initiated by Barbara Harriss-White on the Tamil town of Arni as well as scholars working independently of such research clusters have also used the term frequently.[38] There is broad amount of convergence around how this phrase is used – as primarily a descriptor or urban happenings outside and in spite of the policy preference accorded to larger cities in India over quite some time now. In this, it is both a critique of such policy as well as an

attempt to reconceptualise urbanization from a non-metro perspective. The phrase borrows as a 'literary' device, the 'subaltern' term from the critical historiographical tradition in South Asia known as Subaltern Studies referencing Ranajit Guha's (one of the founders of the Subaltern Studies project) intention to study "the contribution made by people *on their own* that is *independently of the elite*".[39] More substantially, the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' approach takes off after the indications of demographic surge in populations of non-metro urban areas and specifically the CTs, derived from databases of the Census as well as those of projects like that of India polis. One key element of this approach has thus been to read Census data 'against the grain'. There has thus been a comparatively widespread understanding amongst the proponents of the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' approach that at its current suggested rates of urbanisation, the Census might be underestimating India's urban population to a significant degree, primarily as a result of an underestimation of the contribution of non-metro/non-statutory settlements. Such claim-making has been developed in frequent conversation with the India polis database to locate a large part of urban demographic growth in non-metro and/or non-classified areas that perhaps potentially fall through the sieve of governmental classification and by implication, the territorial scope of planned urbanisation. This follows from the application of nationally uneven classification and administration of urban areas and internationally uncommon discretionary criterion of the non-farm employability of male inhabitants.

Even without the extending the 'urban' category to areas that do not satisfy CT criteria, critical studies of Census reclassification read 'against the grain' to assert the declining growth rate of the largest Indian cities especially when compared to the contribution of smaller towns and especially CTs to the urbanization numbers (now 14.5% of the urban population in total).[40] There is also a second supplementary observation that there is considerable demographic accretion happening *around* large cities with growth rates higher than those *inside* designated boundaries of such cities. Thirdly, newer large cities, that are smaller than metros have had dispersed and relatively newer growth trajectories not necessarily connected to those of large metros. And a fourth claim made is that only about a third of the urban population growth through CTs has been within the radial scope of the larger cities (Class I towns with population 100,000 and above) and only 13% of CT population growth has happened around cities with population of 1 million and above.[41] There have of course been some amount of healthy scepticism around how much of this population growth actually points to a development of urban character(is tics) or whether this is simply an 'urbanisation without industrialization' following from distressed forced migration to towns driven by rapidly deteriorating agrarian conditions.[42] The proponents of the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' thesis have however disagreed in ways to such claims by pointing out that recent demographic waves of urbanisation in India when decomposed into its component parts show that most of the urban population growth has either been natural or by way of reclassification of extant rural areas as urban (mostly CTs). The extent of migration causing this

demographic change is estimated here to be between 22.2% and 25.7% that is thought to be comparable to intercensal estimates of migration since 1971.[43] This estimate, it is argued, shows that much of the urban growth in India over the two decades or so has been 'in-situ' resembling the Chinese case since the 1980s, of small and medium towns developing themselves as viable economic inhabitations on their own without contributing demographic migrations to larger cities.[44]

To also qualify how this 'in-situ' urbanisation signifying a relative dispersal of urban population growth might also be matched by an underlying 'broadening' of the economic base, studies of small towns and their relatively 'autonomous' growth have started pointing out to the likelihood that a significant part of India's GDP growth can be attributed to towns with population between 100,000 to a million and even below that and to the 60-68% of India's 'town people' who live in non-metros.[45] Terming this non-metro population 'Middle India,' it has also been pointed out how 40% of the demand for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) is located in these non-metros according to 2011 figures.[46] It is also predicted that about two thirds of India's $84bn online shopping industry is soon going to be accounted for by production as well as consumption practices of small town India.[47]

Further, arguments about 'subaltern' or 'in-situ' urbanisation are also qualified by the fact that though there seemed to have been an employment shift towards metro cities during the period 1993-2010, "metros still account for less than half, and often less than a third of urban employment".[48] Conversely the share of non-metros in urban employment figures is understood to be considerable and actually increasing in sectors like construction and 'traditional services' pointing to be an economic vitality of 'small towns' that is often buried in the 'pessimism' about India's 'jobless growth'.[49]Combined with such registered accounts of employment in India are also suggestions that there is a large 'informal' economy driven from the vicissitudes of small town India that is responsible for forms of home-based or otherwise unregistered employment.[50]

The Critical Purchase of the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' Thesis

The 'Subaltern Urbanisation' thesis thus bases itself on a set of demographic and economic observations to make the proposition that there are important processes and forces of transformation, particularly in the realm of urbanisation, that are to be found in the "agency" of actors located in these (small town) settlements, which goes beyond their role as a transmission mechanism for 'trickle down' growth (as might be emanating from large metropolitan towns and settlements.[51] Alongside this, it emphasises a view of small towns as urban centres per se and not simply as intermediaries in rural-urban linkages. In developing this emphasis it also asks how small town urbanisation might differ from processes seen in metropolises - primarily in terms of the urban agglomeration driven economies as posited by theories of New Economic Geography (NEG).

The NEG model concludes that the growth dynamics of non-metros are definitely affected by their closeness to and dependence on a metropolis and are in fact augured by 'spillover' effects of metropolitan development.[52] This is in effect enabled by spatial agglomerations assumed to have minimal costs of connectivity, business-friendly governance and adequate provision of public goods - agglomerations within which the mobility of labour, capital and goods occur uninhibitedly and with little cost even as firms of diverse orientations populate and find scope to innovate in the region to compete in circumstances where no producer has total control over prices.[53]These firms henceforth are supposed to concentrate around metropolitan spatial axes while also having access to markets not immediately proximate to or around these axes.

The proponents of 'Subaltern Urbanisation' take issue with NEG theories by pointing out that following policy applications of NEG in the Indian case (also following from World Bank prescriptions), agglomeration around metropolitan regions of the country has not necessarily proceeded uniformly. There has instead been the development of (sub-) clusters around for instance, port city-areas where Foreign Direct Investments have concentrated. This is said to follow from the historical proximity developed by such areas with international markets.[54] Metro-cities too have also not necessarily grown very fast as a consequence of NEG-driven policies.[55]Moreover issues are raised appropriately about assumptions in NEG theory about the smooth consolidation of transportation facilities to the point of costless ness, uninhibited labour migration opportunities and patterns and the development of capital chiefly around metropolitan spatial agglomerates as assumed in the NEG theories.

In describing the uneven dispersion of industry/services as well as international trade along or around clusters/agglomerations separate from metropolitan areas, the advocates of the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' approach emphasise instead on the empirical specificities of 'endogenous' factors like cheaper wages, entrepreneurial and labouring cultures arising from caste and other forms of social organisation and the possibility of the transformation of land as an input required in production and urbanisation.[56]They also thus criticise the assumption of centre-periphery models of progression within NEG theories. It is argued instead that existing historical composition of particular regions contribute often in both negative and positive ways to the dispersion of spatial agglomerates through forging of both inter-regional and global linkages in the face of more contemporary and changing economic conditions – linkages which are found to exist in many non-metropolitan urban areas that have their own 'local competences'.[57]Through developing such critique of the NEG, 'Subaltern Urbanisation' urges policy makers to distribute infrastructure-building over areas outside the immediate ambit of large cities in India. This it claims, adds fillip to existing spatial clusters that harbour localised forms of economic and social capital that could potentially be transformed into economic forms capable of sustaining lives and livelihoods as much as metro-cities.

The criticism of NEG as developed in the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' thesis could also perhaps enable a slightly different sort of focus to develop in the study of Indian urbanisation. A sole focus on metro-cities in India, it can be claimed, has also till date limited the understanding of capitalist accumulation in the country. While it is noted that capitalism proceeds in historically distinctive ways in this region, the study of economic phenomena different from large-scale accumulation resulting from mining, energy or industrial expansion has increasingly been relegated to the sphere of 'non-capital' or 'non-corporate' capital by studies of 'postcolonial capitalism'.[58] The economic and by turn social implications of this 'sphere' have time and again been rendered separable from the capitalist process to argue that postcolonial capitalism works to exclude a substantial portion of the region's labouring classes who essentially turn to become subjects of a subsistence-based 'need economy'. This need economy is further claimed to be sustained by the state through its welfarism as it is also driven not so much by imperatives of surplus extraction but rather by the moral structure of communal living.[59] As mentioned before in this paper, this 'sphere' has also, more often than not, been discovered at the peripheries of big metropolitan centres or within them at times and is said to be in a para-sit(e)ic relationship of non-inclusion with the economies of such centres.[60]

In pointing out the economic vitality of 'small towns' in India, the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' approach actually demonstrates a range of sites and scales at a considerable distance from major manufacturing and trading centres, over which the prototype of non-corporate/non capital/'need economy' remains untested. Conversely, studies of urbanisation in such sites and over such scales would also serve to problematise the dispersed character of capitalist processes in India. But to perhaps recast the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' thesis in order to appreciate this dispersion, it is essential to subject this thesis to a particular set of variances that it's overarching rhetorical slants might at times be glossing over.

A Reappraisal: Incorporating Power/Politics

The first point to note in this regard is the regional variability of the emergence of non-metropolitan urban existence depending upon the peculiarity of the historical trajectory of particular regions/states. Thus states with a history of the ryotwari system have seen a more distributed pattern of urbanisation whereas those with the legacy of the zamindari system (that concentrated land ownership in a few hands) of the British Raj like West Bengal have developed a top heavy urban structure.[61] The 2011 Census revealed that the urban population in West Bengal grew majorly through 526 'new' CTs most of which have appeared at quite a bit of distance from Kolkata, the metropolitan urban centre, thus reversing in some ways the top-heavy urbanisation pattern. And yet it is also necessary to account for the fact that a good part of these new CTs have also grown in close proximity to older towns like Burdwan that perhaps have had their own historical primacy fed by both princely regimes as well as on account of being administrative centres of

the Raj's revenue apparatus.[62] Thus the centre-periphery patterns could actually have a dispersed reproducibility of their own depending on regional locations. To continue emphasising this regional variability, Kerala also becomes a case in consideration. As has been shown by many studies, the development of plantation economy in Kerala already favoured a dispersed growth of settlements. This dispersed growth then has a historical provenance much prior to more recent shifts through transformation in trajectories of capital of manufacturing sites and employment opportunities as might be occasioned by the liberalising economy.[63]

A second point of reappraisal might be posed in relation to the question of migration and migrants.In aligning with a reading of the growth of India small towns as 'in-situ' urbanisation (as pointed out before), the proponents of 'Subaltern Urbanisation' have at times understood this growth to be (relatively) irrespective of migratory tendencies since migration has been shown to account for not more than a fourth of the growth in urban population in recent times. This, first of all can be argued to be not a very insignificant fraction when considering the demography of emerging towns and non-metropolitan urban areas. The understanding of 'in-situ' urbanisation can also be queried in terms of its estimation of migration that is a fraught issue in India. As pointed out by demographers, the Indian Census which records migrants as those whose place of last residence is different from their place of birth does not account for those (return migrants) who return to their place of birth after a stint of work perhaps in a different place. The National Sample Survey on the other hand attempts to consider as migrants those who have stayed for a period of six months or longer in a place other than the place of birth; and yet being a sample survey it cannot serve as a viable alternative to the Census, especially as the latter is the only source of information on 'internal' migration at the district level.[64]

These are factors particularly significant for estimating how much non-metropolitan urbanisation is related to migration especially when considering the likelihood of emerging towns and urban areas drawing seasonal migrants or intra-district migrants as construction (major source of employment in these areas) labour. Moreover migration and its control through separation and/or occupational mobility have been considered in many ways to be the essence of urbanisation in the modern history of town-formation with the migrant identity surviving through inter-generational transitions.[65] Thus in both older as well as emerging towns, migrants could be key to an analysis of occupational and economic processes, even more so when moving further away from metropolitan centres where they could potentially avail of cheaper forms of inhabitation. This could also be revealing of the 'local' politics of identity that frame the claim and the constitution of urban land relations in terms of an insider-outsider dynamic.[66]

A third point of reappraisal concerns the acceptance by the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' thesis of the criterion of continuous, built-up area with a suitable density of population as a threshold of urbanisation. While this index of spatial demographic density could be taken as a symptom or a basic standardized point of departure for pursuing the study of settlements as

urban, it is also important to note that this urbanity could be at most an issue for probing rather than a critical presupposition. Here it would be salutary to remember that the beginnings of social-scientific urban studies as exemplified in the work of the Chicago school was based upon the similar Durkheimian pronunciation of 'material and moral density' as a criteria of urbanisation to work out a normative argument considering what kind of occupations, residential arrangements and population distribution would be ideal for a city.[67] The opposition to this approach emerging through Marxist circles since the 1960s was articulated precisely against its ahistorical presupposition of spatial and demographic density as a baseline of urbanisation.[68] This opposition eventually evolved into Harvey's now canonical argument about the 'switching' of capitalist surplus that goes into the making of 'urban' areas following periods of over-accumulation, creating spatial 'fixes', themselves reversible through dispossession and redevelopment according to the further needs of accumulation.[69] In considering non-metropolitan urban growth it might not be entirely out of place to reconsider this Harvey-ian argument in combination with located histories of migratory demographic accretion, especially in understanding how settlements acquire a particular spatio-demographic density.

This would give us an idea of what kinds of transformation in terms of erstwhile land and property-related capital might be happening as settlements become towns through incorporating non-farm forms of economic activities as well as infrastructural linkages. This analytic has been useful in considering transforming economies of small towns as they move between agrarian production to manufacturing and eventually to service-related economies trough allied processes of changing land markets and relations.[70] This analytic also overlaps with the understanding of how the expansion of urban territorialities via centrally ordained infrastructural projects like JNNURM have been taken over and served to reconsolidate socially preordained and powerful caste-based collectivities, thus opening up also the question of small town socialities for study (Andhra Pradesh: Visakhapatnam; Maharashtra: Akola).[71] To understand spatial and demographic agglomeration as a graduated and contingent process also carves up other avenues of enquiry, for instance into the politics of classification that have emerged in relation to such towns. Studies have thus emerged to analyse the calculated reticence of local elites to classify a settlement as urban as against centralized demands of classification (West Bengal: Singur, Garbeta).[72] Other studies have shown how town elites otherwise attempt to coalesce surrounding villages into their town areas by tapping into the 'regularising state' in order to maintain a certain degree of economic enterprise (Maharashtra, Akola, Kolhapur).[73]

These three points of reappraisal in relation to the 'Subaltern Urbanisation' thesis perhaps expose the overarching slants of this approach to a range of *political* contingencies that have to be considered as against the simple assertion of the demographic and economic vitality of small towns, as we proceed to understand non-metropolitan urban growth as a dispersion also of capitalist processes in the Indian scenario.[74]In fact individual studies of

small towns further point to other manifestations of social, political and economic power often articulated through caste-consolidation led accumulative tendencies as manifest in small town economies of semi-industrial production, as argued in a long-term study of the Tamil town of Arni.[75] This study provides a distinctive perspective of how 'social structures' of accumulation processes develop to be driven by networks of caste that regularise a kind of passive violence working through processes apparently of 'informal' character while all the way, competing for global capitalist circuits.[76] This study is in fact also quiet unique in its long term focus on Arni and the understanding of the changing habits of consumption of the town's populace over time.[77]

In coming to terms with the intersection of economic vitality with apprehensions of the reproduction of social power, we perhaps can also begin to take into consideration how the suggested relative economic vitality of small towns could run in parallel with the phenomenon of 'exclusionary urbanisation' whereby the poor are pushed to the peripheries of urban existence with poverty increasing with distance from large cities.[78] The evidence of this poverty also belies any easy resort to anthropology of a 'need economy' or subsistence-based production. We perhaps then have to come to terms with small town economies as enabled both by surplus production and accumulation as well as by expropriation and dispossession. Neither can we assume a straightforward reproduction of communal forms of life and livelihood where surplus extraction takes a back seat. To study the small towns as a site of the existence of non-metropolitan forms of capitalism, we thus need to attune ourselves to the implementation of labour and logistics within such towns that should be understood as active processes of rendering certain livelihoods and desires (as opposed to needs) possible while rendering certain others impossible, as opposed to certain presuppositions of 'in-situ' urbanisation.

Towards a Research Problem

In view of the preceding discussion, it is possible (as also urgent) to devise a research problem that scales the question of 'small towns' in India beyond the concerns of macro-classification and 'urbanisation growth-rate approaches'. Key to such a problem would be attention paid to living realities in such towns as perhaps adequately elaborated by cited works that attempt to connect a range of questions concerning classificatory politics, social dominance and political-economy. The 'small town' would thus emerge as an evolving entanglement of all such facets, once the indicators provided in terms of larger historical changes are pursued over more 'field'-level approaches via ethnography and other kinds of studies of more local policies and practices.

Yet the problem of the 'small town' in India also requires a calibration of the synchronicity of the 'field' in terms of movements that overlap with but also arrive at/move beyond the limited character of the 'local'. In other words, even as the 'small town' problem of urban studies can

be conceived as a socio-economic reality of somewhat 'autonomous' character in agreement with theses like that of 'subaltern urbanisation', it is nonetheless imperative to keep on interrogating this autonomy rather than presupposing it. The 'small town' then is to be recast as a locus of *immanent* transformation as opposed to all appearances of *organic* development. To do so, four directions of research are being proposed:

- **Migration:** In developing upon the essentially mobile character of the labour force, employed in service industries, infrastructure and building construction work as well as in metropolitan development, one problem will be to understand urban populations even in smaller urban settlements as constituted by compulsions, desires and political economies that stretch beyond the realm of the 'local' site of the city. In this delocalised form, mobility becomes a norm that then makes for a 'city in transit'. It also reveals how social identities like caste and tribe are modulated as part of or as response to labour migration. Most importantly, it makes for a conception of the urban (of whatever scale) as essentially premised on the possibility and the probability of migration

- **Logistics:** The focus on logistical developments that attempt to span the scope of the national as well as global economy can reveal yet another paradigm along which the sedentariness of the urban and its locatedness is carved up and distributed internally as well as across regions. The 'logistical city' is then the line of entry as well as the line of flight for the flow of capital and labour leading up to varying effects of displacement. Such lines could either run parallel to but also perhaps in isomorphic overlap at times and places with the chain of 'global'/'mega'-cities – and yet their spatial effects are distributed along channels not immediately identifiable with chains of globality, neither working in absolute isolation from them.

- **Accumulation:** At the intersection of migratory labour and logistical dispersion/integration lies the acute work of capital accumulation that is relentless. In no ways are political-economic events and processes, even apparently excluded from its ambit and logic, working in separation from the work of accumulation. This could take violent forms of displacement as smaller cities barge into their non-urban neighbourhoods. This could however also work through the cunning of social authority by powerful caste groups manipulating legal and formal processes in their stealth of rent, surplus and/or land.

- **Politics/Populism:** How are small town inhabitants, as they live at the intersection of compulsion and agency, relating and negotiating the many binds of potentially migratory lives, the effects of social and economic accumulation and the relative availability or unavailability of infrastructural endowments? One word which can perhaps denote the modes in which these relations/negotiations are collectively activated could be politics. But to be specific, in the context of the Indian democracy this politics perhaps finds or seeks forms of patronage that translate 'needs' into various forms of contingently articulated desires – the translations sometimes being conservative and at other times perhaps emancipatory or at some other times just about gradual. This translation could be referred to as the substance of various populisms and the Indian 'small town' could perhaps be the best approximation of this kind of politics.

Taken together, these four epistemic axes of understanding the advent and functioning of smaller towns and urban settlements present the problematic of such towns as less a question of independent driver of India's economic growth and more a question of grasping the distributed presence of the work of capital, dispossession, social consolidation and aspirations to citizenship. Each of these pointers in fact are to be seen as operating through a dialectic of territorialisation and deterritorialisation as they come to constitute, permeate and inhabit the 'small town'.

Notes

[1] This paper was initially developed as a proposal for a research project on small town India. It continues to limit itself to this scope. The author has benefited from the suggestions of Prof. Ranabir Samaddar, Distinguished Chair, MCRG.

[2] There is a distinct practice in Indian systems of urban classification via class rank distribution that take the settlements designated as urban in the Census and describe them as Class I – with population 100,000 and more, Class II – 50,000-100,000, Class III – 20000-50000, Class IV – 20,000-50,000, Class IV – 10000-20000, Class V – 5000-10000 and Class VI – less than 5000. Apart from these methods of class rank distinctions, there are also social-scientific propositions that look to label non-metropolitan towns as 'small' or 'medium' or 'large' depending on size of population. See in this regard, S.S. Dhaliwal, *Urban Infrastructure Development in Small and Medium Towns,* New Delhi: Deep & Deep co., 2004 and A. Kundu, "A Strategy Paper on Migration and Urbanisation in the Context of Development Dynamics, Governmental Programmes and Evolving Institutional Structure in India." A Paper commissioned by United Nations Population Fund(UNFPA), 2007.

[3] Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, p. 119.

[4] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, New York: Oxford, 1975.

[5] Georg Simmel, *On Culture: Selected Writings*, Sage: London, 1997 and Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century", in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, New York: Schoeken Books, 1986: 146-62.

[6] Gyan Prakash, "The Urban Turn", in *Sarai Reader 02: The Cities of Everyday Life*, edited by Sarai Editorial Collective, New Delhi, 2002: 2-7.

[7] SrilataSircar, "'Census Towns' in India and what it means to be 'urban': Competing epistemologies and potential new approaches", *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 38, no. 2 (2017): 229-244.

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[9] C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, townsmen and bazaars: North Indian society in the age of British expansion, 1770-1870*, Cambridge: No. 28. CUP Archive, 1988 and D.E. Haynes, *Small Town Capitalism in Western India: Artisans, Merchants and the Making of the Informal Economy, 1870-1960*. Cambridge: Vol. 20. Cambridge University Press, 2012.

[10] T. Sengupta, "Between country and city: fluid spaces of provincial administrative towns in nineteenth-century Bengal", *Urban History* 39, no. 1 (2012): 56-82.

[11] See in this regard, P. Chatterjee, "Are Indian cities becoming bourgeois at last?" in *body. city: siting contemporary culture in India,* edited by Indira Chandrasekhar and Peter C. Seel, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2003: 170-85, J. Nair, *The promise of the metropolis: Bangalore's twentieth century*, *New Delhi:* OUP, 2005, T.B. Hansen, *Wages of violence: naming*

and identity in postcolonial Bombay, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001 and J. Heitzman, *The City in South Asia,* New York: Routledge, 2008.

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[13] R. Fox, *From Zamindar to Ballot Box. Community Change in a North Indian Market Town,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969; L.A. Corwin, "The Rural Town: Minimal Urban Center." *Urban Anthropology* 6, no. 1 (1977): 23-43; O.P. Mathur, "The Problem of Regional Disparities: An Analysis of Indian Policies and Programmes", Paper presented at the Seminar on Industrialization Strategies and the Growth Pole Approach to Regional Planning and Development: The Asian Experience, Nagoya, Japan, 1975; D.A. Rondinelli, "Towns and Small Cities in Developing Countries." *Geographical Review* 73, no. 4 (1983): 379-95.

[14] M. Lipton, *Why Poor People Stay Poor: A. Study of Urban Bias in World Development.* London: Temple, 1976.

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[16] P. Krugman, "What's new about the new economic geography?" *Oxford review of economic policy* 14, no. 2 (1998): 7-17. See also, E.L. Glaeser, *Agglomeration Economics.* National Bureau of Economic Research Conference Report. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010.

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[19] T. Bunnell, and A. Maringanti, A., "Practising urban and regional research beyond metrocentricity", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 34, no. 2: 415-420.

[20] J. Robinson, "Global and world cities: a view from off the map." *International journal of urban and regional research,* 26, no 3 (2002): 531-554. See also H. Leitner, Helga, and E. Sheppard, "Provincializing critical urban theory: Extending the ecosystem of possibilities." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, no. 1 (2016): 228-235.

[21] A. Amin and S. Graham, "The ordinary city." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 22, no 4 (1997): 411-429; J. Robinson, *Ordinary cities: between modernity and development,* London: Vol. 4. Psychology Press, 2005. See also, S. Sinha, "Separation, Mobility and the Ordinary City", Paper presented at the 6th Critical Studies Conference – 'Refugees, Migrants, Violence and the Transformation of Cities', Kolkata, 23-25 Aug 2017.

[22] D. Bell and M. Jayne, "Small cities? Towards a research agenda." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33, no 3 (2009): 683-699.

[23] A. Amin and S. Graham, "The ordinary city." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 22, no 4 (1997): 411-429. See also, M. Jayne, "Ordinary urbanism—neither trap nor tableaux: a response to Richard G Smith." *Environment and Planning A*45, no. 10 (2013): 2305-2313 and A. Maringanti, "Ordinary entanglements in the world city." *Environment and Planning A*45, no. 10 (2013): 2314-2317.

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[25] I. Dey, R. Samaddar and S.K. Sen, *Beyond Kolkata: Rajarhat and the Dystopia of Urban Imagination*, New Delhi: Routledge, New Delhi, 2013.

[26] I Mitra, "Recycling the Urban", *Economic and Political Weekly*, LI, no 26 (2016): 55-62.

[27] V. Dupont, "Conflicting Stakes and Governance in the Peripheries of Large Indian Metropolises – An Introduction." *Cities*, 24, no 2 (2007): 89-94.

[28] Much of the statistical information and results discussed in this and the next section is based on comparisons between the 2011 and the 2001 census. For the 2011 Census, refer primarily to: Census of India 2011, "Census of India 2011: Provisional Population Totals, Urban Agglomerations and Cities". Available from: http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/paper2/data_files/India2/1.%20Data%20Highlight.pdf. For the 2001 Census, refer primarily to: Census of India 2001, "Census India: Issue Number 1: 2001". Available from: http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Newsletters/Newsletter_Links/News_Issue_no_1.htm

[29] S. Sircar, "'Census Towns' in India and what it means to be 'urban': Competing epistemologies and potential new approaches", *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 38, no. 2 (2017), p. 1.

[30] J. Nijman, "India's Urban Challenge", *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 53, no 1 (2012), p. 10.

[31] For the view that this 'rise' is sudden see A. Kundu" Method in madness: urban data from 2011 census." *Economic and Political Weekly*. XLVI, no 40 (2011): 13–16. For the view that this 'rise' has been gradual see K.C. Pradhan, "Unacknowledged urbanization: New Census Towns of India." *Economic and Political Weekly,* XLVII, no 36 (2013): 43-51.

[32] These criteria were newly revived though not entirely applied in the 2001 Census and forms the basis of marking CTs in the 2011 Census.

[33] Census of India 2011, "Census of India 2011: Provisional Population Totals, Urban Agglomerations and Cities". Available from: http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/paper2/data_files/India2/1.%20Data%20Highlight.pdf

[34] West Bengal for instance has the official requirement of allotting the statutory status and consequently an ULB to settlements with populations of 30000 and above distributed according to a density of 750 per square km and minimum 50 per cent adult population employed in non-agricultural work. Thus while the Census 2011 released the finding of 526 new CTs in the state, most of these continue to be ruled by rural panchayat forms. See S. Sircar, "'Census Towns' in India and what it means to be 'urban': Competing epistemologies and potential new approaches", *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 38, no. 2 (2017), pp. 5-6.

[35] K. Marius-Gnanou and F. Moriconi-Ebrard "Urbanization in India: From Megacities to Urban Villages". Indian French Institute in Pondicherry. 2008. Available at:

http://www.ifpindia.org/ecrire/upload/press_ifp_website/indiapolis_articlerelu.pdf. See also, E. Denis and K. Marius-Gnanou, "Toward a better appraisal of urbanisation in India." *Cybergeo: European Journal of Geography,* Document 569,2011. Available at: http://cybergeo.revues.org/24798.

[36] E. Denis, P. Mukhopadhyay and M. Zerah, "Subaltern urbanization in India." *Economic and Political Weekly*, XLVII, no 30 (2012): 52–62. See also, P. Schaeffer P, M. Kahsai and R. Jackson, "Beyond the rural urban dichotomy: essay in honour of Professor A.M. Isserman." *International Regional Science Review*, 36, no I(2013): pp.81–96.

[37] H. Uchida and A. Nelson, "Agglomeration index: Towards a new measure of urban concentration." Working Paper No. 29, World Institute for Development Economics Research, 2010. For yet another satellite imagery methodology of understanding the urban in India via an estimate of night-time illumination via electric lights see: J. Gibson, G. Datta, R. Murgai, M. Ravallion, "For India's Rural Poor Growing Towns Matter More Than Growing Cities", Policy Research Working Paper 7994, World Bank Group, Poverty and Equity Global Practice Group, March 2017; and World Bank, "Leveraging Urbanization in South Asia: Managing Spatial Transformation for Prosperity and Liveability." Conference edition. South Asia Development Matters, Washington, DC: World Bank, 2015.

[38] Major studies by these researchers are as follows: For the CSH group there is a web outlet sharing the products of research: http://suburbin.hypotheses.org/. Aside from this, there has been a major review of literature released by the group: B. Raman, M. Prasad-Aleyamma, R.De Bercegol, E. Denis, M.Hélène Zerah, "Selected Readings on Small Town Dynamics in India", Working Papers series no. 7; SUBURBIN Working papers series no. 2, 2015; as well as a new volume: E. Denis and M. Zérah, eds. *Subaltern Urbanisation in India: An introduction to the dynamics of ordinary towns.* New Delhi, Springer, 2017. The term 'Subaltern Urbanisation' has also appeared in the title of a much-cited EPW article: E. Denis, P. Mukhopadhyay and M. Zerah, "Subaltern urbanisation in India." *Economic and Political Weekly*, XLVII, no 30 (2012): 52–62. A particular issue of the EPW's Review of Urban Affairs (2014) grouped together a number of studies in relation to this conceptualisation. See the introduction to this issue: P. Mukhopadhyay and A. Mariganti, "Articulating Growth in the Urban Spectrum", *Economic and Political Weekly,* XLIX, no 22(2014): 44-45. A World Bank study while not referring explicitly to this term has nonetheless referenced its conceptual purchase: P. Mukhopadhyay, M. Zerah, G. Samanta and A. Maria, "Understanding India's Urban Frontier: What is Behind the Emergence of Census Towns in India?"Policy Research Working Paper. Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice Group, World Bank, Dec 2016. The long-term study of Arni is published now: B. Harriss-White ed. *Middle-India and Urban-Rural Development: Four Decades of Change*, New Delhi: Springer, 2016. Lastly, the term has been at the centre of

considerations in the PhD thesis of Researcher Srilata Sircar: S. Sircar, "Between the Highway and the Red Dirt Track: Subaltern Urbanization and Census Towns in India", Ph.D. diss., Faculty of Social Sciences, Lund University, 2016.

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40 R.J. Van Dujine, "What is India's Urbanisation Riddle?" *Economic and Political Weekly,* LII, no 28 (2017): 76-77.

41 These claims are taken from Partha Mukhapadhyay, "Subaltern Urbanization in India? Movement of People Transformation of Place", Presentation made at the India China Institute, The New School University Sept 12, 2012, pp. 17-23 and pp. 26-31. Available from https://indiachinainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/ICI-presentation-Partha-Mukhopadhyay-Sep-12-2012.pdf

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A Colonial, Modern and Urban Interface: Jaffa and the Politics of Exclusion

By

Priya Singh [*]

> To summarize the city as it has been in part for some time, and is increasingly becoming entirely: it appears chaotic and is fragmented, but underneath the chaos there are orders; the fragmentation is not random. It is divided, but not dual, or limitlessly plural. Quartered, or five-parted, better captures reality. Its quarters are both walled in and walled out, but walls do not play equal roles for all quarters. Each quarter is thus separated from all others, but each is nevertheless intimately related to all others; they are mutually dependent. While the quarters are hierarchical in the power and wealth of their residents, all are dependent on forces beyond their separate control.[1]

Contemporary urban expanses are, by characterization, diverse socio-spatial formations. Their exceptional success and vigor lie in the abundance of their ethnic texture and continuing exchange of "economic goods, cultural practices, political ideas, and social movements". Diversity, conversely, seldom spells harmony, and urban fusion has often triggered passionate encounters over territory and identity. As urban theorists unfailingly emphasize, urbanization intrinsically comprises the "differential creation of marginalized groups, cultural alterities, class subordination, and racial segregation". The modern city as we know it is also an agonistic, dynamic combination of convergence, multiplicity and conflict. In contrast to its rather homogenous European variant, Palestine was home to two contending national projects, an indigenous Palestinian Arab project and a colonizing Jewish-Zionist one. Both projects were armed with articulate narratives of history and of claims: the Palestinians emphasized upon native indigenous entitlements while the Zionists underlined primeval biblical promise and redemption from a hazardous diaspora in Europe. It is not unexpected that this quickly had the two projects embroiled in a conflict that protagonists on

[*] Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group. She can be reached at priya@mcrg.ac.in

both sides still view as a zero-sum game for sovereignty and basic existence. The manner in which the contending narratives played out on the urban expanse is worth an analysis.[2]

Since its creation in 1909, Tel-Aviv has had an awkward and uncertain connection with Jaffa-its mother city turned foe. Like many instances of parent-offspring rivalry, this relationship concentrated on the intricacies of exclusion and individuation. Tel-Aviv, which began with Ahuzat Bait as Jaffa's "Jewish garden suburb," was suddenly consuming Jaffa, commercially and demographically, as early as the 1930s.

> The city of Tel Aviv began with the founding of the neighborhood of Ahuzat Bayit in 1909 on the sand dunes just northeast of Jaffa…Jews from European countries established Ahuzat Bayit to escape from the conditions of high density and low sanitation found in the oriental town of Jaffa. Their objective was the creation of a Garden City suburb, a concept then popular in Europe and the United States as a response to the polluted, dirty and noisy cities of the industrial revolution. The idea entailed the construction of quiet residential areas on the outskirts of the cities where urban dwellers could reside surrounded by well-tended vegetation. It was on this model that Ahuzat Bayit appears to have been created. It was built according to a grid system of parallel streets, forming rectangular land parcels on which small, generally single-storey houses were constructed".[3]

The power equation upturned in 1948, when Jaffa was conquered by Israeli forces and emptied of most of its Palestinian inhabitants. In the 1950s Jaffa was officially merged with the municipal jurisdiction of Tel-Aviv, a move that reduced it to the persistently derelict south side of the "White City", increasing an economic and political reliance on Tel-Aviv and a radical cultural dissimilarity from it. The century-long relationship between Jaffa and Tel-Aviv thus echoes a tension between integration and otherness, and cultural assimilation and spatial segregation-a dialectical conflict that forms Jaffa's identity till present times. It consolidates social contiguity and detachment, political inclusion and exclusion, and ethnic mingling and seclusion. The case of Jaffa and Tel-Aviv is symbolic of a broader, macro nationwide structure. Prior to 1948, both Jaffa and Tel-Aviv were perceived as the metropolitan personifications of their separate "national-though not religious or spiritual-geists". Tel-Aviv was mythicized in Zionist imagination as "the city that begat a state". Jaffa, christened in the Palestinian narrative as "the bride of Palestine", developed in Palestinian national imagination as the nation's pluralistic, modern, and secular settlement. The hostility between the two towns thus became an existential battle between two national projects. The figurative, conversational, and later physical suppression of the Palestinian center became a prerequisite for the exemplary and quantifiable advent of Jewish-Israeli Tel Aviv. [4]

The essay offers to interpret the discourse of segregated urbanism with its corollaries in the context of the city of Jaffa which is perceived as a replica of Palestinian history at large post 1948.

Mixed Cities in Israel

Since the last two decades, there has been considerable emphasis on the study of "mixed cities" in Israel. Mixed cities in the Israeli context refer to the urban space which is inhabited by both Jews and Arabs. In other words in the Israeli manner of speaking, mixed cities are those which have significant resident Palestinian populations; they are usually recognized as comprising three different categories. The first category consists of Palestinian cities that existed before the creation of the state of Israel, but which received a population of Jewish settlers as part of the Judaizing project of the Israeli government post 1948. Cities such as Acco, Ramle and Jaffa fall under this category. The second category of mixed city is those that existed pre-1948 as mixed Palestinian- Jewish cities (for instance, Haifa and Jerusalem). The third category includes cities formed after 1948 as Israeli-Jewish cities but which have since seen an inflow of Palestinians (for instance, Upper Nazareth and Beer-Sheba).[5]According to Rabinowitz and Monterescu, "mixed towns in Palestine/Israel are best characterized as emergent constellations, that is to say, historically specific superposition's of earlier urban forms. Rather than treating them as essentialized primordial entities, we see them, following Nezar al-Sayyad, as unfolding manifestations of "hybrid urbanism -an idiom resonating with imageries of mimicry, unconscious infatuation, and tense cross-references between colonizer and colonized, as developed within postcolonial theory"[6]Two causal factors can be attributed to the growing importance of this field. One is the increasing cognizance of the fact that cities constitute the focal point for national socio-political relations. Thus mixed cities mirror interfaces between Jews and Arabs on a nationwide scale, at the same time concurrently engendering distinct indigenous discourses that contest national perspectives. The other stimulus for academic attentiveness is the upsurge in politically incited episodes of violence in Israel between the Jews and Arabs since the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000. Mixed cities as a geographical phenomenon is not exclusive to Israel nor confined to acutely divided societies. They are ubiquitous and their origins can be traced to the social and political thought of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a time when large European and American cities were inhabited by immigrants largely due to the industrial revolution and evolving nationalism. The academic argument was that social plurality along with swift changes in the bigger cities absolved the individual from group associations culminating in spatial exclusion and a surge in cultural multiplicity.[7] Louis Wirth, an eminent urban sociologist of the early twentieth century observed "The bonds of kinship, of neighborliness, and the sentiments arising out of living together for generations under a common folk tradition are likely to be absent or, at best, relatively weak in an aggregate the members of which have such diverse origins and backgrounds".[8]In case of the Zionist immigration to Palestine, right from the initial stages, the Jews had no desire to adapt and integrate into the Palestinian community, while the Palestinians evaded Jewish- Arab integration. LeBor's account of the refusal of Jaffa's European Jewish immigrants' to study Arabic along with their egotistical behaviour

towards Sephardi Jews who had lived in Jaffa for years, exemplifies this argument. LeBor thus contends: "Many European Jews regarded the Sephardim with scorn, as old-fashioned, conservative and oriental ... like the Arabs".[9]Remarkably, this evasion of adjustment and integration was not confined to Jaffa's urban population. As Monterescu and Rabinowitz observe, "the same urban space was perceived by both national projects as empty and available".[10] Thus the perception was that urbanism in pre-1948 Palestine was sketched by the national ambitions of both Jews and Arabs.

Post 1948, the ecological model seemed to have had lost its relevance as far as mixed cities in Israel was concerned. According to Rabinowitz "almost every town currently within Israel which prior to 1948 had a Palestinian population, became spatially, socially and temporally truncated".[11]Accordingly the four mixed towns, Tiberias, Safad, West Jerusalem, and Haifa lost the bulk of their Palestinian population while other Palestinian cities such as Lod, Ramleh, Acre, and Jaffa became mixed cities as a consequence of the enactment of the Judaization policy that consisted of settling Jewish immigrants into vacant and newly erected houses. Haim Yacobi termed the enduring Israeli strategy of forcibly settling Jewish immigrants, predominantly Mizrahi (Jews from the Middle East and Central Asia) and Russian Jews in the city ("re-territorialization") and constricting the Arab space ("de- territorialization); to put it in a different way, a "colonial toolbox" of spatial control.[12] In fact after 1948, the mixed cities in Israel could no longer be viewed as multicultural cities. Despite the fact that urban localities were divided between the culturally distinct Jews and Arabs, these cities did not seem to have adopted a multi-cultural approach as the Arab community was deprived of the right to preserve its singular and collective way of life and to participate in the decision making process. As such a local narrative distinct from the national did not emerge in the case of the mixed cities of Israel post 1948.

Jaffa, a mixed city, has been designated by Levine[13]as an adjuvant of Tel Aviv, where according to Monterescu and Rabinowitz "resides the mass of service workers…who are largely excluded from the wealth and power they generate".[14]Efforts at urban renaissance, restoration and development in Jaffa in actuality did not qualitatively enhance the standard of living of the poor, on the contrary, it compelled them to move out from the city, especially from the localities that offered vantage views of the city and the sea. Urban planning was therefore founded on power relations.The marginalization of the Palestinian/Arab community was manifest in the everyday assertion of urban space. Thus Yacobi contends that the word "mixed" is confusing in the Israeli context as it connotes a pluralistic outlook that is not appropriate for cities in which the prevailing national majority (Jews) controls the native minority (Palestinians).[15]Along with spatial displacement as a result of the policy of Judaization are the accompanying cultural practices of displacement such as the politics of naming of streets and locales after Zionist leaders regardless of the protests and demands of the Arabs to name them after their prominent personalities as well as the attempt to expunge the Palestinian past with the inculcation of the hybrid language, Arabebrew to denote the supremacy of

Hebrew over Arabic. In the words of Daniel Monterescu, "The relative scarcity of Arab names is a constant source of alienation and tension, part of a struggle around the national and cultural character of municipal spaces in mixed cities. Street naming is a political act of marking territory that often ends in a fierce dispute. Street names define "spatial texts" that sear events and historic figures into the local collective memory".[16]Consequently according to Shammas the young Palestinian in a mixed city is "confused ... his/ her memory has been taken away . . . S/he lives in a city whose whole existence has been altered in 1948, whose streets have been renamed, whose internal geography has been redrawn and, above all, whose original Arab inhabitants, except a small minority, have been forced out of its space, torn away from their lives" [17]

Jaffa: Mixed and Deprived

> Now I walk in their path / looking down / past the lost village / leaving behind a dusty past / of a ghost town / city of ruins / full of bleeding stones / grieving stones / marking the memory / of Jaffa's native residents.
>
> Samah Shakra,"Sfat Yafo" (Jaffa's Language)[18]

For Adam LeBor, "the relationship between Jaffa and Tel Aviv is a metaphor for that between Palestine and Israel".[19]In the aftermath of the 1948 war as Jaffa finally capitulated most of its Arab population was displaced, a process akin to "the experience of exile and dispossession" that is at the core of Palestinian history. LeBor goes on to narrate the story of the creation of Tel Aviv as a suburb of Jaffa, a century ago, conversely the latter is now a suburb of the former. The two neighbouring cities do not possess formal boundaries with Jaffa now becoming an extension of Tel Aviv. In the words of Arnon Golan, "These two cities that were separated by a colonial regime, were reunited due to the outcome of a rapid political, economic and demographic transformation, occurring in a post-colonial situation. The colonial Arab city was incorporated into the Jewish settler city, becoming an impoverished urban suburb of the newly formed post-colonial Israeli metropolis".[20]Jaffa has enacted a crucial role in the history of Palestine. While Jerusalem was regarded as the spiritual/religious capital of Palestine, Jaffa was referred to as the "Bride of Palestine" prior to 1948. It was the nation's cultural, commercial and literary hub accounting for countless newspapers and publishing houses in addition to sporting and cultural clubs. Tel Aviv personifying the modern Hebrew city originated as a suburb of Jaffa in the early twentieth century. The early Zionist settlers regarded Jaffa as a crumbling and grimy structure. The answer according to them lay in constructing new European-style settlements on its periphery to accommodate Jewish immigrants arriving from Russia and eastern Europe. Progressively Tel Aviv evolved into a familial competitor of Jaffa from being an offspring. "'The 'White City' soon relished in the biggest cluster of Bauhaus buildings in the world. Their sparkling, ascetic appearance and unrestricted design were a reaction, even a defiance of the "Oriental muddle of Old Jaffa"−a proclamation that in the center of the Levant it was

conceivable to live a "modern European lifestyle". Jaffa too was once a modern city. The Irgun's (a Zionist paramilitary organization that operated in Mandate Palestine between 1931 and 1948. It was an offshoot of the older and larger Jewish paramilitary organization Haganah) shelling of Jaffa in April 1948 and its capitulation in May 1948 brought a fundamental change as only a few thousand of its original population of about a hundred thousand remained as almost the entire city fled to the West Bank and Jordan by land and to Lebanon and Gaza by boat. Only a handful returned. But those who did continue to debate over whether the city was needlessly deserted. The beautiful Ottoman villas of the Ajami and Jebaliyyeh quarters crumbled and countless homes were destroyed and the ruins lay derelict on the beach. As Tel Aviv began to flourish, Jaffa waned. She now became home to chic art galleries and smart jewelry shops. The refurbished city assumed the character of an artificial construct with its flawless, glistening alleys yet deprived of its soul, its original inhabitants. The efforts at reconstructing the Old City of Jaffa and giving it a glossy makeover had little significance for its inhabitants. The story of Jaffa became the story of Palestine post 1948.[21] In the words of a Jewish-Israeli artist and photographer, "My husband and I moved here [to Jaffa] in the seventies because it was cheap to live here. We thought it would become a small, nice city, but they built these extravagant palaces on small pieces of land and the prices went up. .. . We've never had good schools in Jaffa. Those who can afford it still send their kids to school in Tel Aviv. I did too, but we could afford it. We were privileged".[22] Along with the colonial and post-colonial means of social domination newer processes such as the construction of gated communities, urban renewal and tourism have introduced novel methods of domination in the existing Israeli mixed cities particularly in the context of Jaffa due to its significance as a historic port city as well as due to its contiguity to the commercial hub, Tel Aviv. While Jaffa has become central to the Israeli narrative of a distinctive heritage yet the indigenous presence in the city is further displaced by these grand commercial projects aimed at promoting urban renewal and tourism. While such projects could definitely bring economic benefits to the Arab/Palestinian population, their position in social and political terms continue to be problematic as they become an intrinsic part of the historical narrative but are denied any substantive role in present times. [23]

Jaffa became a mixed city. Its remaining Arab population assumed a mixed identity. And its traditions became mixed while the traditions of pre-Nakba Palestine endure in the West Bank and in Ramallah, in the homes of many of the old Jaffa families who now reside there. Two members of the same Arab family that continues to live in Jaffa have different stories to tell of their city. Robyn Andraus considers the separation has little to do between Jews and Arabs but more to do with being rich or poor. She observes "There are mixed kindergartens, mixed schools, and cultural events. The separation is more to do with money. Rich Arabs and rich Jews go to the same places, and the poorer ones don't. We grew up learning Arabic, Hebrew, and English. We had a good education, and a much better chance in life. The kids down the road go to Arab schools where the way they teach Hebrew is atrocious and

Arabic even worse. They are expected to cope with two languages and cannot read either. They don't have a chance." [24] On the other hand, her brother Amin Andraus, a lawyer by profession is more guarded in his articulation of the state of affairs in post 1948 Israel. Amin contends, "I am not nationalistic by nature, neither for the Arab side nor the Jewish one. I am more humanistic ally inclined than political. I don't see myself as closer to a certain person because he belongs to one of those groups. But while my mother is Jewish, she married a Palestinian and I grew up as a Palestinian. But I live in Israel and I have Israeli citizenship. It is complicated because Israel by definition is a Jewish state, and that excludes me. It is not a state of all its citizens, as some would like". [25] The statement underlines the essential contradiction within the Israeli nation that defines itself as a Jewish state or homeland for all Jews spread across the globe yet within its geographical confines are groups of non-Jews, sections that resist the prevailing narrative of a Jewish state. In addition the borders of state of Israel are disputed and there are differing connotations of citizenship for its Palestinian and Jewish citizens. [26]

Jaffa like any other Israeli mixed city symbolizes mixed purely in a demographic sense and not in the realm of a meaningful cohabitation or interface between the Palestinian and Jewish communities. In the words of Peter Marcuse the situation was indicative of postmodern ghettoization, "…. what is happening today maybe considered the attempt to impose chaos on order, an attempt to cover with a cloak of visible (and visual) anarchy an increasingly pervasive and obtrusive order - to be more specific, to cover an increasingly pervasive pattern of hierarchical relationships among people and orderings of city space reflecting and reinforcing that hierarchical pattern with a cloak of calculated randomness".[27]

A Colonial, Modern and Urban Interface

> The central social fact of colonial planning was segregation, principally, though not only on racial lines. The segregated city not only resulted from but in many cases created the segregated society.[28]

Levine contends that at its most elementary level, globalization can be described as a deliberate and conscious growing density of economic and cultural interface between and in principle, assimilation of distinctive societies around the world through increasing linkages and movements of "commodities, money, cultural symbols, and people."He outlined five epochs of globalization, from the integration of the Americas into prevailing Euro-African-Asian trade networks after 1492 through present times. Among them, the periods of high imperialism (approximately 1870 through World War I) and post-Cold War globalization have perceived the most robust intensity of movements and linkage formation, if not always integration, on an international scale. These developments played out in significant ways in the geographical region of Jaffa-Tel Aviv, a singularly influential locale for the unfolding of modernity and through it, globalization in Palestine. To be precise, the Jaffa-Tel Aviv region was a principal initiator for the other parts

of the country of the boundaries created by a commonly constitutive fourfold milieu of discourses comprising "modernity, colonialism, capitalism, and nationalism', and the many binaries they construct and endure. Together they created an enormously powerful force that, when used by the leaders of Tel Aviv and the broader Zionist movement, made probable the "overthrowing" of the prevailing geography of the region in favor of one that reinforced the national and economic objectives of the Zionist movement. Such a toppling of the prevailing "spatial, economic, and cultural geographies" is a characteristic of globalization during the "long century" that was initiated in the late nineteenth century and endures through present times.[29]

The notion that the Ottoman Empire and Palestine, in particular was a stagnant and regressive geographic space waiting to be introduced to modernity by the Europeans and the Zionist settlers is no longer an accepted version of the history of the region. The more acceptable version is one that contends that prior to the establishment of Tel Aviv there was a period of institutionalized economic centralization and modernization that was carried out by the Ottoman state that had a deep impact on the development of Palestine and provided for the stimulant that facilitated both Jaffa's growing affluence and the progression of Tel Aviv and the Zionist movement in the same space. At this juncture modernity was not accompanied by violence. It constituted what could be termed as "cosmopolitan Levantine modernity" a space wherein subcultures were accommodated. Jaffa at that point in time exemplified a peculiar blend of noncolonial modernity wherein hybridity was nourished and it was devoid of the malicious consequences of colonialism, nationalism and capitalism. Jaffa was then the "mother of strangers" an inclusive city, an emblem of Palestine's modern urban landscape. However, this inclusive, free flowing brand of hybrid identity could not weather the aggressive European colonial, nationalist and modernist identities that were arriving at its port on a daily basis in swelling numbers. They laid the basis for the successful initiation and execution of the Zionist discourse of exclusion and the renewed conflict for land, though at this point for economic and not political reasons. [30]

As mentioned above the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Jaffa and its vicinity were engaged in their own interface with modernity for almost a century by the time Tel Aviv was created in 1909. In the folklore of Zionist Tel Aviv, the city factually emerged out of the sands, and therefore out of the "over throw" of the prevailing geography of the region. In other words, there was a clear yearning to circumvent the construction of a mere Jewish neighborhood of Jaffa. Thus the objective of Tel Aviv's founders was to "establish a Hebrew urban center in a healthy environment, planned according to the rules of aesthetics and modern hygiene in the place of the unsanitary housing conditions in Jaffa".[31] Theodore Herzl explained in the following words what was imperative to construct a Jewish State, "If I wish to substitute a new building for an old one, I must demolish before I construct".[32] Several decades later, the French architect and city planner Le Corbusier a number of whose students become prominent Zionist planners and architects cited a well-known Turkish proverb to characterize the

modernist ethos: "Where one builds one plants trees. We root them up".[33]From a comparable but more critical viewpoint, Henri Lefebvre has elucidated how "the 'plan' does not remain innocently on paper. On the ground, the bulldozer realizes 'plans'".[34] In terms of urban planning Jaffa can be interpreted as a space of denial and empathy for Tel Aviv. The incongruity towards Jaffa echoes the broader equation of the Israeli state with its Arab/Palestinian populations at the same time they also reflect upon the trends of present day globalized urbanism. In other words, Levine contends that postmodern architectural understanding of Jaffa's Arab legacy has continued to be constricted and economic in nature. For instance, the recognition of Tel Aviv as a world heritage site by UNESCO in acknowledgement of its Bauhas style buildings but the complete disregard of Jaffa's architectural legacy is a case in point. The positioning of Jaffa for Orientalist contemplation and at the same time constructing it along the lines of a varying market economy symbolizes both the economization and depoliticization of the Palestinian community and it has a profound semblance with the consequences of globalization on other peripheral native communities in the Global South, especially with reference to the spread of global tourism. While the confluence and interface of colonialism, nationalism and modernism in the Jaffa-Tel Aviv belt may be distinctive, it does compel one to consider that irrespective of their setting, all modern cities are fundamentally colonial in character. [35]

Notes

[1] Peter Marcuse, "Not Chaos But Walls: Postmodernism and the Partitioned City", in S.Watson and K.Gibson, eds., *Postmodern Cities and Spaces,* Cambridge MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1995, p.243. Cited in Mrinalini Rajgopalan,"Dismembered Geographies: The Politics of Segregation in Three Mixed Cities in Israel", *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, 13, no. 2 (Spring 2002):35-48.

[2]Dan Rabinowitz and Daniel Monterescu,"Reconfiguring the "Mixed Town": Urban Transformations of Ethnonational Relations in Palestine and Israel", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 40, no. 2 (May, 2008):196

[3]E. Efrat, *Urbanization in Israel*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984, p.57.

[4]Rabinowitz and Monterescu, "Reconfiguring the "Mixed Town", p.206

[5] Mrinalini Rajgopalan,"Dismembered Geographies", p.36.

[6]Rabinowitz and Monterescu, "Reconfiguring the "Mixed Town", p.196. See Nezar AlSayyad, ed., *Hybrid Urbanism*Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2001.

[7] Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention", Review Essay in *Israel Studies Review* 26, Issue1, (summer 2011):153-165.

[8] Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life", *American Journal of Sociology*, 44,no.1 (1938): 11. Cited in Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention", p.155.

[9] Adam LeBor, *City of Oranges: An intimate History of Arabs and Jews in Jaffa*, New York: WW.Norton, 2006, p.27.Cited in Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention", p.155.

[10] Daniel Monterescu and Dan Rabinowitz, eds., *Mixed Towns, Trapped Communities: Historical Narratives, Spatial Dynamics, Gender Relations and Cultural Encounters in*

Palestinian-Israeli Towns, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, p.2.Cited in Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention, p. 156.

[11] Monterescu and Rabinowitz, eds., *Mixed Towns, Trapped Communities*, p.53. Cited in Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention", p.156.

[12] Haim Yacobi, *The Jewish-Arab City: Spatio-Politics in a Mixed Community*, London: Routledge, 2009. Cited in Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention", p.157.

[13] Mark Levine, "Globalization, Architecture, and Town Planning in a Colonial City: The Case of Jaffa and Tel Aviv", *Journal of World History,* 18, no.2 (January 2007):171-198.

[14] Monterescu and Rabinowitz, eds., *Mixed Towns, Trapped Communities,*p.2.Cited in Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention, p. 161.

[15] Yacobi, *The Jewish-Arab City: Spatio-Politics in a Mixed Community.* For greater details on the aspect of segregation and displacement as a result of urban planning, refer tothe works of Oren Yiftachel and Ian Lustick.

[16]See : https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.798731 (Accessed on September 30, 2017)

[17] Monterescu and Rabinowitz, eds., *Mixed Towns, Trapped Communities,*p. 308. Cited in Erez Tzfadia, "Mixed Cities in Israel: Localities of Contention, p. 163.

[18] Cited in Barbara E. Mann, "An Apartment to Remember: Palestinian Memory in the Israeli Landscape,"*History and Memory*, 27, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2015):83.

[19] LeBor, "Jaffa as a Metaphor," *World Policy Journal*, 24, no.4 (Winter 2007/2008):61.

[20]A. Golan, "The Demarcation of Tel Aviv Jaffa's Municipal Boundaries Following the 1948 War: Political Conflicts and Spatial Outcome," *Planning Perspectives*, 10 no.4 (October 1995).Cited in Rajgopalan, "Dismembered Geographies", p.40.

[21] LeBor, *City of Oranges: An intimate History of Arabs and Jews in Jaffa*, New York: WW.Norton, 2006, Introduction.

[22] Cited in Rajgopalan,"Dismembered Geographies", p.40.

[23] Rajgopalan,"Dismembered Geographies", pp.44-45.

[24] LeBor, "Jaffa as a Metaphor", pp.73-74.

[25] LeBor, "Jaffa as a Metaphor", p. 74.

[26] Nadim Rouhana, *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State: Identities in Conflict*, New Haven CN: Yale University Press, 1997.

[27] Marcuse, "Not Chaos But Walls", p.243. Cited in Rajgopalan,"Dismembered Geographies", p.46.

[28] A.D. King, *Urbanism, Colonialism and the World Economy: Cultural and Spatial Foundation of the World Urban System* London: Routledge, 1990, p.57. Cited in Rajgopalan,"Dismembered Geographies, p.38.

[29]Mark Levine, Globalization, Architecture and Town Planning in a Colonial City: The Case of Jaffa and Tel Aviv", *Journal of World History*, 18, no.2 (2007):171-198. See Mark Levine, *Overthrowing Geography: Jaffa, Tel Aviv and the Struggle for Palestine*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, chapter 3.

[30] . Levine, "Globalization, Architecture and Town Planning in a Colonial City", See Levine, *Overthrowing Geography,* chapter 2.

[31] Levine, "Globalization, Architecture and Town Planning in a Colonial City",p.177

[32] Theodor Herzl, *Old-New Land*, trans. Lotta Levensohn, New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1943, p.84. Cited in Levine, "Globalization, Architecture and Town Planning in a Colonial City", pp.196-197.

[33] Le Corbusier, *City of Tomorrowand Its Planning,* trans. F. EtchellsLondon: Architectural Press, 1947, p.82.. Cited in Levine, "Globalization, Architecture and Town Planning in a Colonial City, p.197.

[34] Henri Lefebvre, *Production of Space,*trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991 p.191. Cited in Levine, "Globalization, Architecture and Town Planning in a Colonial City, p.197.

[35] Levine, "Globalization, Architecture and Town Planning in a Colonial City", pp.197-198.

Commentary

Need of a Gender Centric
Approach under Resettlement Policy

By

Gargi Sengupta [*]

The policy of resettlement is considered as one of the welfare policies adopted by the Government for giving tenancy security and other basic facilities to the informal residents of a megacity. Any megacity cannot avoid the presence of migrant population both in formal and informal sectors. These migrants primarily come to a city in search of those economic and livelihood opportunities which are either absent or scarce in their place of origin. Economic dissatisfaction and non-availability of employment opportunities act as a push-pull reason behind rural migration to the city, without consideration of the consequences. Primarily these people are involved in the informal sector where employment is largely temporary and ad-hoc in nature. Therefore, squatter settlements in a city are a readily available destination-cum-option for the migrants residing in the migrated city. Generally city lands belong to the Government therefore according to its requirements the Government displaces squatters by following the policy of relocation and resettlement. Though in principle the relocation and resettlement policy affects the entire family collectively, yet it has a gender dimension inherent to it. The policy of resettlement adversely affects women more than men. Under the policy of relocation and resettlement women face dual discrimination, firstly as resident of the resettlement colony and secondly, gender-based discrimination. Against this background, this paper is interested to look into the concerns of relocated and resettled women, especially those who belong to the informal sector.

  Rajjo Devi, Lakshmi, and Sunita, are all residents of Savda Ghevra, a resettlement colony of Delhi formed in 2010. All of them came to Delhi after

[*] Assistant Professor, Ramanujan College, University of Delhi. She can be reached at gargi.sengupta14@gmail.com

their marriage around twenty years back; since then they all are undergoing the trauma of migration and adverse effects of urbanisation. Rajjo Devi and Lakshmi were residents of Yamuna Pusta slum and Sunita was a resident of Karkardooma. After living as squatter settlers but with regular livelihood opportunities for a period of more than twenty years, they were relocated to Savda Ghevra, which is situated near Tikri Border, bordering Haryana, almost 35 km far from their previous place of residence. The gender identity became their immediate problem which resulted in a loss of jobs for them as well as for their daughters.

Resettlement and relocation of squatter settlers have become a regular phenomenon in any megacity. Resettlement policy which is often showcased as Government's welfare policy is associated with the concept of providing tenancy security along with the idea of better infrastructural facilities like concrete road, planned layout, availability of potable water, electricity etc. Despite the presence of these facilities, the journey from squatter settlement to resettlement colony is a non-voluntary movement for the squatter settlers and thus creates multiple problems.[1] Though in theory under the resettlement policy, squatter settlers or slum dwellers become 'eligible' to get some kind of housing from the state yet in practice the story is different. Against this background, this article attempts to analyse and discuss the Government's urban housing scheme of relocation and resettlement.

Apparently it seems that resettlement as a policy affects each slum family collectively yet the fact remains that there is a gender dimension to it. It has been observed that there is a differential impact of the same policy on men and women.

The Rationale behind Relocation and Resettlement of Slum Dwellers within the Same City

The process of gradual transformation of a small town into a megacity is known as urbanisation.[2] Urbanisation is a continuous process which requires huge resources for its progression from one stage to another in terms of money, material and man-power. Through state intervention and support, the process of urbanisation is able to get money and material; however this is not the case with respect to man-power especially in the informal sector,[3] which requires construction labour and other man-power related support for different unskilled, low skilled and semi-skilled work. A city by itself is neither capable of providing such man-power from its existing population nor is ready to get involved in such unattractive and non-remunerative jobs, which are most essential for city growth. It is in this context that migration plays an important role.

The rural economy is shrinking because of low agricultural production, lack of varied and multiple employment opportunities etc. This has led to increased rural unemployment and under employment, and work becomes a vital cause behind rural migration to megacities which offers various employment opportunities for these low skilled or no skilled groups.

In this context, the role of the migrant population (employees in the informal sector) becomes most important.

Rural to urban migration is not merely a physical-geographical journey from rural to urban area (Table:1a). Rather it is a process of gradual transformation, filled with psychological stress and adjustment to a new unknown place. Rural to urban migration works as a double-edged sword because it affects both the people of rural areas as well as urban areas. Though the rural people get better livelihood opportunities within the city, yet migration related physical and mental displacement affect the life of the migrants over a long period of time. On the other hand, through the urban lens we get a different view. Though these migrants are working in the informal sector and servicing the city, yet the city feels the burden of rising population and increased pressure on various civic facilities. In fact, the city which is active in offering employment opportunities by way of increasing demand of low skilled works etc., during the process of its infrastructural developments is very passive and somewhat careless about the physical settlement of this migratory group. As a result the migratory work force starts to settle down in any odd/vacant space or in any part of the city to merely lead an existence. These people not only occupy the lands but also use various city resources and facilities (like electricity, water, cable connections etc. which are primarily used illegally) for their survival within the city life.

Reason behind Migration in a Megacity (Delhi)

REASONS BEHIND MIGRATION	IN LAST 10 YEARS (% OUT OF 100)
IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT	59.5%
BETTER SALARY AND WAGES	27.8%
FOR PURSUING EDUCATIONS	3.9%
TRAINING PURPOSE	6.2%
OTHER (POVERTY, ABUSE, DISCRIMINATION, NATURAL DISASTER)	2.6%

Source: Table: 1a, *Delhi Human Development Report, 2013*

The pattern of rural-urban migration has different categories:-
a) **Seasonal Migration:-** where the migrants follow ato-and-fro pattern of movement between their native and migrant places (these people go back to their village during a particular season and get back to their original occupation that is agricultural activities).[4]
b) **Chain Migration:-** under this type of migration people come to the city, then go back to their previous place and discuss their economic prosperity. This pulls their relatives and neighbours to the migrant city.[5]

c) **Step Migration: -** under this type of migration the migrants first go to nearby towns and cities and finally to a mega city.[6]

Migrants primarily come to a megacity to develop their livelihood opportunities. As the megacity provides these livelihood opportunities for the economically poor people primarily in the informal and unorganised sector (which are casual in nature and characterized by absence of job security). These unskilled work forces (migratory people) do all the ancillary activities of city life. But this is just one side of the story where the migrants come to the city on their own. There are numerous cases where the city offers various employment opportunities to attract the migratory population for purposes related to infrastructural developments such as construction (like the Asian Games of 1982). Therefore migrants either come voluntarily or are brought by different market forces to meet the requirement of the city. In both cases it is primarily the economic factor which is playing the dominant role behind migration. When these people come to the city for any work then they have to settle down there because it is practically impossible for them to journey to-and-from their workplaces and homes on the same day. They have to come back to their work continuously, so staying in the city becomes a dire necessity and thus use of the city's existing resources is the direct outcome of such migration. In fact this staying back in the city is the starting point for a host of chain reactions towards urbanisation and its management (which generate new demands and issues within the urban city which also has its own internal demands).

Growth of slums and slum dwellers divides the urban city into two different sets of citizens.[7] One group consists of those people who are all within the planning process of the city, state or the Government because they all have housing within the legal and municipal frame work. The second group by design and default exists outside the formal housing scheme of the city planners, thus they encroach upon open land and build up habitation for themselves. While doing so they do not feel concerned about obtaining the permission of the state or Government authorities.[8] However it is important to mention that many-a-times, they are not aware of the technical paper work required for permission. Thus growth of new slums and expansion of existing slums into bigger ones are a continuous consequence of the urbanisation process. This leads to two different types of problems and issues. First, the spaces which these groups occupy are either public spaces or the land belonging to the Government. Therefore, even if slum dwellers are owners of their houses (jhuggis etc.), they are not the owner of the land where their houses (jhuggis) have come up. If they so wish, the Government or the authority to whom the land actually belongs, can demand it back anytime. As a result, the chances of eviction of slum dwellers from their places of squatting always remain, making their situation highly precarious. The important issue at hand then is that slum people lack the right of ownership. They are always considered and identified as an unauthorized and illegal group (as legally they never take the permission of the concerned authority). Second, it is equally an important concern of the state and the Government to look into the needs and demands of these people who have come to the city

and work for the city. Generally, slums are treated as potential sources of risk of various kinds because of its sub standard housing, degraded environmental and sanitary conditions, over population, etc.[9] Nonetheless, they are equally necessary for the city because of its dependency upon this group of unskilled workers who populate the slums. In fact, it would be a worthwhile risk if the Government could build in a process and a mechanism to ensure that the city's extension grows as a matter of organic growth and not as an appendix, as is the case now, where the slum is mostly treated as an appendix and unwanted growth waiting to be removed at any point of time.

As the central part of an urban city is overly populated with all primary activities taking place there, the slums are relocated and resettled at the city's corner or at the outskirt, which means a removal or disconnection from the prime urban city for the relocated and resettled people.[10]Thus despite relocation and resettlement being a policy of legal tenancy, yet a sense of dissatisfaction is associated with it. For the slum dwellers, resettlement is a two way policy: on one side, it secures their shelter, but on the other side, the same policy is affecting negatively their ready jobs because of long distance travel and expensive transportation. In fact, this policy is critically affecting the women more in comparison to men.

Gender Dimension within Relocation and Resettlement Policy

Since the beginning of the feminist discourse, it has been discussed repeatedly that the society practices differential treatment towards men and women. The society is gendered such that women are positioned, recognised, and identified as the second sex and thus often discriminated by their male counterparts and by the larger society. Patriarchal society has created a complex confusion between the two categories of biological sex differences and social gender differences. The consequence of this creation is that men get identified as the first gender (superior, strong, independent) and women are identified as second gender (inferior, weak, dependent).[11] In fact these differential behavioral attributes, traits and norms for men and women is constructed by the society. These differences divided the human life between the private and the public life, according to which the public life belongs to men and the private life is for women. Thus men are held responsible for earning of livelihood in the public sphere and women, for household activities. However, in the contemporary era, though the public-private dichotomy continues to operate, a significant change is visible within rural and urban women, so far as their involvement in public life is concerned.

Presently along with men, large numbers of women have also become the participants in the urbanisation and migration processes, especially under the category of rural-urban migration where the entire family is migrating to the city (though the common practice is that the man of the household migrates first, and on securing a job and a place to stay, relocates the rest of the family). In contemporary times, the numerical involvement of migratory women in informal and unorganised sectors is almost at par with their male counterparts. Either these women are involved in construction work hand-in-

hand with their husbands and families, or they are working as housemaids in urban households and as casual support staff in shops and such establishments. Quantitatively, the number of women engaged in urban household activities is higher than in other activities.

Urbanisation not only means large infrastructural developments but also enlarges the employment opportunities for both men and women (for both urban and rural areas). Since urban women are also participants in public life (working and earning), therefore they require someone to look after the household; here, the women of the informal sector play an important role, as they take up jobs in urban homes. Consequently it can be said that urbanisation driven migration has broadened the scope of employment for both rural and urban women. Hence this process is gender inclusive; however, the same process divides the rural and urban women as slum dwellers and non-slum dwellers so far as the relocation and resettlement policy is concerned.

With the passage of time the nature of relocation and resettlement policy has changed from core to core displacement to core to peripheral displacement (to an unknown distant place). Therefore relocation and resettlement results in economic cost in general and economic and social costs in particular to women.[12] Relocation policy not only affects housing but simultaneously affects the employment of the slum dwellers. These people are primarily engaged in daily wage jobs therefore because of relocation; initially they had to leave their jobs because peripheral relocation is associated with long distance. Prior to relocation, usually slums were located near the place of work, thus no transportation cost was involved. On the other hand after peripheral relocation the travelling time extended, as a result of which they are forced to spend a significant amount of their earnings on transportation. Distance not only increases the burden of transportation costs but it also results in many other problems. For example, because of huge distance the relocated people waste a good amount of time in travelling, as a result of which their working time gets reduced and reduction of working time leads to reduction of earning (the nature of informal jobs is such that higher the number of hoursthe worker puts in, the better he gets paid). This indicates that this type of relocation reduces their monthly income and increases their cost of transportation.

Peripheral relocation not only increases transportation time and expenditure (Table: 1b and 1c), it also has a direct negative impact on women's employment. Before relocation, both men and women were employed; as the distance increases, women lose their jobs. Firstly, it is difficult to travel such long distances and secondly, it is associated with expensive transportation. Thus it is difficult for the slum dwellers to afford the transportation costs of two people. Consequntly, relocated women are dissatisfied with this type of relocation. It forces the women to get dependent upon their male partner for their economic needs. This type of dependency on men makes their position more vulnerable and marginalised. Thus from the second gender perspective, resettlement is not merely a process of displacement or relocation (as in the case of men). In fact, it is displacing the

women again from the public domain which in turn leads to women disempowerment. The situation is worse if a woman is the head of the house (in the absence of the man) as there is no one apart from her to shoulder the needs of her family.

Table: 1b, System of Transportation

REASON BEHIND TRANSPORTATION	PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE
WORK	93%
DAILY/DOMESTIC NEEDS	1.5%
OTHER PURPOSES	5.5%

Table: 1c, Money Involved in Transportation Purpose

TRANSPORTATION RELATED EXPENDITURE	PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE
LESS THAN Rs 100	15%
BETWEEN Rs 100 to Rs 300	30%
BETWEEN Rs 500 to Rs 1200	50%
ABOVE Rs 1200	5%

Peripheral relocation is also associated with fewer job opportunities. Non-existence of urban settlements in nearby surroundings results into highly decreased job opportunities especially for women who all were working as housemaids in the pre-relocation stage (Table 1d).

Case: - *loss of job was/is primarily faced by the relocated women. As Poonam, Rani et.al (residents of Savda Ghevra resettled Colony) told me, they used to work as a domestic help or maid in areas close to their respective previous slums. As Savda Ghevra is surrounded by villages and undeveloped areas, the residents of nearby areas can neither afford a domestic servant, nor do they require domestic help; thus no job opportunities in the form of domestic service are available for women.*

Table: 1d, Percentage of Male/Female Employment Engagement

EMPLOYMENT ENGAGEMENT IN PRE AND POST RELOCATION AND RESETTLEMENT		
GENDER	PRE RELOCATION	POST RELOCATION
MALE	60%	90%
FEMALE	40%	10%
TOTAL	100	100

Another myth of resettlement policy is that it ensures tenancy security yet what the resettlement provides is only the space or land on which suitable shelters have to be built by the slum dwellers on their own, which is a costly affair. Further, the land parcel which is given under resettlement programme is an open piece of land, thus it worsens the condition of the women because of lack of privacy and security. Absence of proper electricity in the relocated site at the time of resettlement results in discomfort and also increases the chance of female centric violence.

Absence of proper sanitation system and toilets in the house is also a serious problem for the resettled women. In the resettlement sites, mostly mobile toilets are being provided by the Government for the people but these are functional only during the day time. Therefore at night, the women are forced to go to nearby deserted places, which is quite difficult for them in addition to threatening their safety. It has been seen that in general, the ownership of the plot/house rests with the head of the family, which in practice is usually a male member. Thus denial of ownership right affects the women headed households miserably (most of the time only the male members are invited for discussing land related issues).

To conclude, it can be said that Government needs to understand that the policy of resettlement is not a simple process of just the shifting of shelter; instead resettlement should be treated as a long drawn affair over a period of time in a planned manner as relocation affects the displaced, relocated and resettled people greatly and leads to a host of other issues and concerns that need attention. In reality, it is a difficult task to rebuild the life of relocated people as any new settlement requires time and resources (both of which are ignored largely during the course of relocation). Here, it is necessary to mention that conventionally resettlement theory and practice are concerned with the need of relocation and the logistics involved in such relocation. As a result, the authorities do not get concerned about the people who are being relocated and resettled. Consequently, the Government often fails to recognise the gender centric dimension involved in relocation. An ideal situation would be to involve women in the decision making process and its

implementation. But it is observed that no such mechanism is followed. The resettlement policy as of now remains an in-house matter of the Government without much involvement of the people for whom the relocation has been undertaken. The Government therefore should make itself responsible so as to check the ground realities before effecting relocation. As has been illustrated in the earlier part of this article, one of the consequences of application or implementation of existing relocation policy also results in disempowering women more as a group in relation to men folk. This goes directly against the spirit of relocation policy which is otherwise treated as a welfare measure of the Government towards the slum dwellers. No welfare measure should result in a group's (here women) further disempowerment and marginalisation. Therefore, this article ends by suggesting that there is a need for having a few well thought out gender centric approaches under resettlement policy. Otherwise, the resettlement policy would contribute towardsfurther widening the gap between the Government and people and also between the two distinct socially constructed genders.

Notes

[1] City growth and expansion directly results in the increase of number of slums and their demands. To meet such set of demands and also to provide a legal habitation the resettlement policy is practiced by the Government and city planners from time to time. For more details Veronique Dupont, "Slum Demolitions in Delhi Since the 1990s: An Appraisal", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.43 No.28, (July 2008):79-87, Ashok K Dutt, Charles B Monroe and Ramesh Vakamudi, 'Rural-Urban Correlates for Indian Urbanisation', *Geographical Review*, Vo. 76, No.2, Thematic Issue: Asian Urbanisation, (April 1986):173-183, Swati Dutta, "Change in Efficiency Level in Achieving Human Development: Inter-Temporal Comparison of Indian States", *Indian Journal of Human Development*, Vol.7, No.1, (2013):61-67.

[2] This transformation takes place by observing the following process that is from a small town to a bigger size town then into a city and finally from a city to a megacity.

[3] In the rural areas job opportunity is limited to agriculture. But the tilt towards agricultural activities is reducing day by day therefore very speedily the rural economy is shrinking and people are moving out form these rural areas to urban areas. Primarily urban city or mega city offers two broad categories of job opportunities, one in the formal sector and second is in the informal sector. The requirement of formal sector is based on specific qualifications and skills therefore it includes Government jobs and few private sector jobs which are qualification based, skill based and also require money investment. Unlike the formal sector, in the informal sector the situation is absolutely different because it is not based on any specific skill and educational qualification, thus this act as easy and ready option for the rural people, without knowing its nature of flexibility and insecurity associated with it. For more details Amitabh Kundu, and N. Sarangi, 'Migration, Employment Status and Poverty: An Analysis across Urban Centers', *Economic and Political Weekly*, (January 2007):33-37, Nels Anderson, 'Urbanism and Urbanisation', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 65, No.1, (July 1994):8-73, Amitabh Kundu, "Theories of City Size Distribution and Indian Urban Structure – A Reappraisal", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.18,No. 3 (1983):111-112. Amitabh Kundu, 'Making Indian Cities Slum Free: Vision and

Operationalisation', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 17 (April 2013):89-90.

[4]Seasonal Migration: this type of migration is mainly practiced by the peasants, who are engaged in agricultural activities but equally ready to do other informal jobs during the off season. Under this type of migration the entire dependency is on the agricultural as well as seasonal cycle. Berkley. Davis, K. The urbanisation of the human population, *Scientific American*, 213(3), (1965):41-53.

[5] Chain Migration: this type of migration is completely depends upon social network and process because people who earlier migrate motivate the other people to migrate to the city. Ayona Dutta, *The Illegal City: Space, Law and Gender in a Delhi Squatter Settlements*, New Delhi: Ashgate Publications, 2012

[6]Step Migration: usually the rural migrants first explore job opportunities in nearby town, in order to reduce their cost of transportation as well as they want to go back to their home. Therefore from rural to town to city is the journey which the migrants prefer to follow. Anne Rademacher, "When is Housing an Environmental Problem? Reforming Informality in Kathmandu" *Current Anthropology*, Vol.50, No.4, (August 2009):513-533

[7]Urban cities and its population are internally divided into rich and poor, formal and informal, organised and unorganised and most importantly city dwellers (non-slum dwellers) and slum dwellers.

[8]Since lands under various authorities in Delhi, therefore it is necessary to take permission from the concerned authority, for using the land to built house (jhuggis) on it. This entire process of permission includes huge paper work and technicalities. All this things are important to function under legal process.

[9] Slums are defined as space of risk because presence of it might lead to numerous problems which not only destroy the aesthetic culture of the city but spread out pollution in a huge scale the consequence of which is health as well as environmental risk. Moreover many illegal activities are also present within the slum, which is again act as a source of risk for the city dwellers.

[10]Urbanisation process results into both expansion of city and inclusion of migrant population as slum dwellers. The city planners many a times are unable to meet the demands of this new entrant within the city life. Primarily because shortage of enough space in the city core forced the slum dwellers in the city corners under Governments relocation policy. Partha Chatterjee, *Politics of Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*, New York: Columbia, 2004, p.100.

[11]Gender is a socially constructed phenomenon for making a distinction between men and women. This distinction is present in all spheres of life from household activities to community, state or public agencies. Gender is constructed in such a way that society assigns different roles, responsibilities and rights to men and women. For more details Helena Catt, *Democracy in Practice*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999, pp.25-28, David Held, *Political Theory Today*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, pp.54-56.

[12] Amartya Sen and Sudhir Anand, "Gender Inequality in Human Development: Theories and Measurement," *Background Paper for the Human Development Report 1995*. New York: Human Development Report, 1995.

Book Review

By

Samata Biswas [*]

The Adivasi Will Not Dance: Stories
Author: Hansda Souvendra Shekhar. New Delhi: Speaking Tiger Books, 2015, Pages: 189, Price: 275/-

Hansda Souvendra Shekhar's second book, a collection of short stories, *The Adivasi Will Not Dance* (published in 2015) was shortlisted for the Hindu prize in 2016. Shekhar is also a winner of the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Purashkar in 2014. Neither of which shot the book to its current fame, which is an untended result of the Jharkhand government's ban on the book (for sale within the state) and his subsequent suspension from service as a government medical doctor. The charge against the book was that it portrayed adivasi women in a 'derogatory and objectifying manner'. Hansda Souvendra Shekar's suspension continues till the time of writing this review.

The role of censorship in the current political clime, both in India and elsewhere, is fairly self explanatory, and will not be remarked upon here. The aim of this review, however, is to look into the portrayal of (forced) migration, so central to the life worlds the book's characters inhabit. Set in the Santhal Parganas, the characters range from Panmuni-jhi who moves to the vegetarian city of Vadodara with her husband and therefore starts to eat regularly at restaurants, to the destitute Baso-jhi, who finds a temporary home at Sarjomdih, from newly married and pregnant Gita who travels to the next district everyday for the teacher training course, to Sona, the most coveted sex worker in Lakkhipur, brought there from Bengal or Bihar or Nepal or Bangladesh, to Mangal Murmu's son in law, in jail because he had been protesting their imminent removal from their land, due to a proposed power plant.

The collection has ten short stories, the longest "They Eat Meat!" being twenty seven pages, while the shortest, "November is the Month of Migrations" is only four pages long. Most of the stories are peopled by

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[*] Assistant Professor, Department of English, Bethune College & Member, Calcutta Research Group. She can be reached at bsamata@gmail.com

destitute, underprivileged, hard working Santhali women, described in a third person narrative voice. Only four stories, "Sons", "Getting Even", "The Adivasi Will Not Dance" and "Eating with the Enemy" have a first person narrator, and interestingly, in all except "The Adivasi…", that narrator has a persona much like the author's own—that of a middle class Santhali person, educated or well in his way to being so—in fact in "Getting Even" he is a medical doctor at a government hospital. The narrator in each of these three instances, is however, no less sympathetic and keen an observer of lives less fortunate, and an unobtrusive commentator on how development, extraction and apathy have been changing Santhal lives beyond recognition.

The first and the longest story in the collection "The Eat Meat!", is much more than its expressive title, while enquiring into the politics of eating meat it also raises questions of identity, the distrust of 'tribals' and outsiders, but sadly, is the only story in the collection with a happy ending, of collective action in the face of intolerance. The rest are representations of the violence of the everyday—through complex webs of extortion, changing geographies, altered relationships, extraction of natural resources and the removal of tribal people from their homes, to be then employed at mines and other labour intensive jobs as menial workers: the world of *The Adivasi Will Not Dance* is filled with men labouring for 'hours at a stretch within the belly of the earth. Shirtless, sweaty, black with coal-dust, and with only their headlights to guide them in the dark abysses, they dig and explore' (144). These men and women inhabit spaces like Sarjomdih, 'which bore the repercussions of development, the nationalisation of the mine and the factory, the opening up of two more quarries, and the confiscation of villagers' properties…' (115).

Sona, of "Merely a Whore" has the new economy of Santhal Parganas being played out on her body; from the coal mine owner who give Sona as a gift to the DSP for turning a blind eye to their raucous celebrations, to the young and rapidly-becoming-rich, transporter, Nirmal, who she falls in love with; to her other VIP clients, Sona's body is also a metaphor for the changes besieging Lakkhipur, where 'Mud houses fell, concrete ones mushroomed,. Roads, police outposts, a railway station, a bus depot, shops, market, slum and the busiest red light area in the whole of the mining zone' (147). Shekar's narratives do not hold back on the violence. From the way young Talamai Kisku tries to earn some money and some food on her way to Bardhaman to work as a seasonal labourer, to the structural violence that enables governments to displace people and then make them celebrate their displacement, to the deep-seated superstitions that make people who benefited from Baso-jhi's unending hard work turn on her: the narratives are stark in their exploration of everyday violences, graphic at times, in their depiction and bold in locating them on the human body.

The narratives also point at the centrality of displacement in these lives, when villages get sucked under development projects, flooded by newly constructed dams, cultivable lands buried under mines—established modes of livelihood are no longer available, and people of all classes and genders have

to move from one place to another to eke out livings. Shekhar's characters, by and large, migrate in order to eke out a living, and unless already middle class and educated, have to settle for a fare worse than what they had had before. Although not a conventional happy ending, the final story in the collection, from which the book gets it title, is also about an act of resistance—that of Mangal Murmu, who can no longer farm, because most of the farmland in their area has been acquired by a mining company or by the stone merchants, despite steep resistance from them. The roads to the quarries cannot be walked upon by the Santhals, the very same ones who used to live here earlier, and they are reduced to stealing coal with their nails, teeth and utensils, to fight for the elusive fruits of promised development. Murmu is asked to dance with his troop at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the thermal power plant that was going to be built upon the land of eleven villages. Instead, with the president of India in attendance, Murmu holds the mike, and announces 'Unless we are given back our homes and land, we will not sing and dance' (187). What happens to him afterwards, the reader is already appraised of at the beginning of the story, but the story and the book, end with this note of defiance.

A quick note on the prose: Shekhar's writing is crisp, unsentimental. But the crucial postcolonial gesture, now increasingly familiar in Indian English writing (for want of a better name), that Shekhar makes, is his refusal to gloss or even to italicise words and modes of address in the vernacular, making his English distinctly unique, local, and rooted in the world that he seeks to portray. In short, this is a book that needed to be written, and must be read.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles submitted for consideration of publication in REFUGEE WATCH should be around 5000 words. Book reviews can be around 1000 words and review articles can be around 2000 words. Articles will have endnotes and not footnotes. Endnotes should be restricted to the minimum. Please refer to www.mcrg.ac.in for a details style sheet. Round-tables can also be proposed for publication. Enquiries about possible submissions are welcome.

For submission of articles and all other matters, correspondence should be addressed to the Editor, Refugee Watch, Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, GC-45, First Floor, Sector-III, Salt Lake, Kolkata – 700 106 or paula@mcrg.ac.in. For book review and review-articles correspondence to be addressed to Anita Sengupta, Review Editor, Refugee Watch, at the same address or at anitasengupta@hotmail.com.

Authors will have to submit articles both hard and soft copies (in MS Word). All articles are peer reviewed and it may take 3 to 4 months before a decision is reached on the proposed publication. Contributors will get 2 copies of the journal.

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