

UNPACKING MARGINALITIES

Conference Proceedings 2024





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Nawaz Khan and IIHS Design Team

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Unpacking Marginalities

The eighth edition of Urban ARC, IIHS' Annual Research Conference, was conducted between 11-13 January 2024, virtually and in person, at the IIHS Bengaluru City Campus. The theme for this edition is '*Unpacking Marginalities*'.

An intricate landscape of urban space houses the complex and multifaceted phenomenon of marginalities—an experience that affects the lives of people who reside in diverse forms of margins, and the experiences of multiple marginalities within urban spaces, in both, the Global South, where rapid urbanisation and informality are pervasive, and the Global North, where social polarisation and spatial fragmentation are burgeoning. The current context of climate change, pandemic, conflicts, migration, demographic shifts, financial meltdowns, and technological developments, poses novel and unprecedented challenges as well as opportunities for people living in urban margins and raises ever-evolving questions for different systems that aim to address them.

Looking at Marginalities and Agencies

Rapid urbanisation and its many discontents have rarely been linear or uniform in their trajectories. Further, the experiences of marginalisation have elicited disparate responses. Moving beyond the canonical core-periphery frameworks, new knowledge has emphasised the need for grounded and contextual understandings. The Urban holds marginalities as experiences and defined spatialities, isolating or segregating people based on factors such as caste, class, religion, ethnicity, race, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. The experiences of marginality are multi-faceted. Being unable to find housing in the city; having restricted access to health and educational opportunities due to one's social or religious identity; not receiving basic living amenities (water, sanitation, electricity) due to area of habitation or migrant status; being denied access to technological innovations (digital devices, internet services, or online platforms) due to lack of education and affordability; lack of access to natural resources or increased exposure to environmental risks due to degradation of natural ecosystems by powerful private or state interest groups are lived experiences in the urban margins. These marginalities manifest themselves along the lines of livelihoods, education, and health among others.

While urban marginality involves multiple dimensions of disadvantage and exclusion, such as social, spatial, structural, environmental/ecological, economic, technological, political, cultural, and historical (Bradatan & Craiutu, 2012), it also involves diverse forms of agency and expression, such as resistance, mobilisation, citizenship, and culture. It is not only a product of the urban core's power and norms but also a challenge and a contribution to urban studies and knowledge production. While historical marginal positions affect present or future situations, marginalities are also a product of the government's response to a crisis (Coffey et al., 2020), necessitating the need to recognise and appreciate new forms of agency (Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018; Brosig, 2021). Marginalised groups have cultures, identities, networks, and strategies to

navigate and challenge their marginalisation. They also have their own ambitions, claims, and movements to assert their rights and preserve their dignity. The use of facilities like public spaces, art, culture, language, and social media, by marginalised groups, often speaks to specific forms of presence and visibility in the city. Art and culture can be used as forms of resistance against marginalisation and oppression of certain groups by others (Falkovsky, 2021) while certain literary works can also challenge and transform epistemic injustice and other forms of marginalisation (Mihai, 2018). Cities thus become spaces that not only create those marginalities but also spaces that offer them different avenues of expression.

The Global South is home to most of the world's urban population and is witnessing rapid and dynamic urbanisation (Lawhon et al., 2020). Mainstream urban studies have often disregarded or dismissed Southern research, which explores the urban realities and theories of the Global South, deeming it irrelevant or exceptional (Robinson, 2002; Roy, 2009). By promoting innovative and participatory research methods to engage with urban marginalities and resistances such as action research, ethnography, storytelling, mapping, and visual approaches, (Banks et al., 2019; Mirafteb & Kudva, 2015) Southern research emphasises the epistemic rights and contributions of Southern scholars and practitioners (Sheppard et al., 2013; McFarlane & Robinson, 2012). Academic conversations around marginalities need to acknowledge this epistemic history and the complexity of experiences and recognise that they are not mutually exclusive and often overlap or intersect with each other in complex ways. Thus, it becomes important to recognise and engage with the diversity and richness of marginalities in theory and practice.

A Call to Explore and Reflect

While a lot has been identified to constitute marginality, it remains an elusive concept. (Cullen & Pretes, 2019) Emphasising the need to understand marginalities and their various manifestations, Urban ARC 2024 presented an opportunity for an exchange of knowledge, considering the need for interdisciplinarity, locally recognised and globally relevant knowledge(s), innovative methods and methods grounded in the principles of epistemic justice. The call emphasised the broad spectrum of this complex urban condition of advantages and disadvantages, experienced by individuals and communities, seeking submissions that explore descriptive and analytical approaches to the concept.

Building on IHS' goal of recognising and understanding the ever-changing nature of cities, Urban ARC 2024 aimed to explore the concept and practice of urban marginality from various perspectives, methodologies, and disciplines and created a space for dialogue and exchange of knowledge on urban issues, fostering collaboration, discussion and exchange among researchers and practitioners working on this urban issue. The conference invited researchers and practitioners to a space that allowed for reflection on their practice(s), against the background of economic, environmental, socio-cultural, technological, political and historical marginalities, using diverse modes of engagement, in ideation, methodology, history, investigation and implementation.

To understand the dynamism of marginalities that urban spaces have grown to house, the conference encouraged bringing together an assortment of methods, questions asked,

geographies covered, disciplines explored, and outcomes reached. It welcomed panel as well as paper submissions covering several sectors (e.g. environment and sustainability, planning and policy, among others), disciplines (e.g. social sciences, climate sciences, humanities, economics, architecture, planning) and methods (quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods), using the lens of research, academia, policy and practice. It invited work that looks at both contemporary and historical ways of studying the urban.

The conference was held from 11 to 13 January 2024 at the IIHS, Bengaluru City Campus and online on Zoom. The conference presented an opportunity for researchers and practitioners to investigate the idea of the 'flux' in cities across themes such as planning, housing, identity, ecology, and governance, among others. Out of the 230 paper submissions received, 60 papers were selected for the conference. Eighty-nine presenters joined in person at the IIHS Bengaluru City Campus and online. These presenters spanned across 11 geographies that included Bangladesh, Ethiopia, France, India, Singapore, Italy and United Kingdom. Over 1,000 attendees tuned in to the conference online and in person over the three days.

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Schedule

DAY 1 11 JANUARY 2024	
9:30 am – 10:00 am	Opening remarks by Aromar Revi, Director, IIHS
10:00 am – 11:15 am	PANEL 1 Navigating Urban Margins: Right(s) to the City
	The Broken Edges: Politics of Imagination, Expansion, Marginalities and The Right To Ernakulam City <i>Jose Deepak T T, Indian School of Public Policy</i>
	Tourism, Touristification, Gentrification and Marginalisation: Case Study of Fontainhas, Goa <i>Shashwat Vikram Singh, BITS Pilani KK Birla Goa Campus</i>
	Power Spatiality: Discourse on Public Spaces of Kashmir <i>Samreen Junaid Wani and Owais Asif Khan, Islamic University of Science and Technology</i>
	Liquid Margins: Understanding The Shifting Nature of Marginal Geographies Through The Buckingham Canal in Chennai <i>Nandan Sankriti Kaushik, Independent</i>
11:15 am – 11:30 am	Break
11:30 am – 1:15 pm	PANEL 2 Climate, Ecology, and Resilience in Urban Environments
	How Inadequate Urban Land Regulation Instruments Exacerbate Climate Injustice <i>Divyanshi Sharda, O. P. Jindal Global University</i>
	Co-producing Resilience: Lessons From Bottom-up Practices in Informal Settlements <i>Rashee Mehra and Sukrit Nagpal, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Bengaluru</i>
	Extensions in Disaster Induced Resettlement Sites: A Tool For Placemaking in The Urban Peripheries <i>Suchismita Goswami, University of Copenhagen</i>
	Gram-Bangla: Exploring Indigenous Communities and Marginalities in The Sundarbans <i>Ishita Agrawal, Prachi Rawat and Constance Adeline, Politecnico di Milano</i>

	<p>Pigs in Informalised and Invisibilised Caste Ecologies in Delhi <i>Sneha Gutgutia, National Institute of Advanced Studies</i></p> <p>Navigating The Urban Stray Dogs' Conundrum Lying Beyond The Margins of Planning and Governance. <i>Mallika Sarabhai, Indian Institute for Human Settlements and Chaitanya Lodha, Independent</i></p>
1:15 pm – 2:30 pm	Lunch
2:30 pm – 4:15 pm	<p>PANEL 3 Making The City: State, Space, and Marginalities</p> <p>Urbanisms and Its imaginaries: Exploring The Rise/Emergence of an Educational City in Sonipat <i>Shehana Sajad, Jawaharlal Nehru University</i></p> <p>Exploring Urban Marginalities: A Comprehensive Analysis of Social Inequities in Cities <i>Rupali Shrivastava, Independent</i></p> <p>Smart City Built From Scratch as Democratic City? The Case of The Lanseria Smart City <i>Federica Duca, Public Affairs Research Institute</i></p> <p>Planning with/in Exception: Urban Governance and Marginality in Kolar Gold Fields <i>Ranjani Srinivasan, Columbia University</i></p> <p>In The Shadows of City-Making: Exploring the Articulation of Spatial Segregation in The City of Ahmedabad <i>Aditi Pradhan, Jawaharlal Nehru University</i></p> <p>Capitalist State and Space: Affirmative, Reactionary and Dialectical <i>Shilpa Krishnan, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati</i></p>
4:15 pm – 4:30 pm	Break
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	<p>PANEL 4 Thinking Aesthetics, Law and Informality in The Ordering of The Urban Margins</p> <p><i>Jyoti Dalal, Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi</i> <i>Ruchira Das, Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi</i> <i>Chetan Anand, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai</i></p>
5:30 pm – 5:45 pm	Break
5:45 pm - 7:30 pm	<p>Panel 5 Thinking Through Marginalities</p>

	<p><i>Aromar Revi, Director, IIHS</i> <i>Gautam Bhan, Associate Dean, IIHS School of Human Development</i> <i>Sudeshna Mitra, Associate Dean, IIHS Academics</i> <i>Shriya Anand, Associate Dean, IIHS School of Economic Development</i></p>
DAY 2 12 JANUARY 2024	
9:30 am – 11:15 am	<p>PANEL 6 Urban Housing Dynamics: Inequities and Social Realities</p>
	<p>Producing Marginalities in The Rental Spaces of Peri-Urban Hyderabad City <i>Minu Anna Philipose, University of Hyderabad</i></p>
	<p>Social Housing and Social Mobility of The Urban Poor Transgender People: Positive Deviants from Resettlement Sites of Chennai <i>Sunitha Don Bosco, Velayutham C, Rekha P and Induja S, Anna University</i></p>
	<p>Understanding Bangalore’s Urban Growth Pattern Through The Lens of Gentrification: A Spatio-Temporal Analysis <i>Sagar Sinha, Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee</i></p>
	<p>Between Surviving and Thriving: The Marginality of The Urban Homeless <i>Sneha Maria Varghese, London School of Economics and Political Sciences</i></p>
	<p>A Portolan of Marginalities: A Case Study of Homeless in Rome <i>Paolo Do, Letteria Fassari, and Gioia Pompili, La Sapienza University of Rome</i></p>
	<p>The Ghetto as ‘Make-Believe Space’: On State Discourses and Contestations of Urban Marginality in Denmark’s Social Housing Areas <i>Sigrid Corry, London School of Economics and Political Sciences</i></p>
11:15 am – 11:30 am	Break
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<p>PANEL 7 Roundtable: Remaking Indian Cities Through Peripheral Resettlement</p>
	<p>Tracking Marginal Lives as a Prehistory To Platforms: GPS Meters in Autorickshaws, Working Class Lives in Delhi <i>Anurag Mazumdar, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</i></p>

	<p>Shifts in Work Relations: A study on How Gig Economy is Shaping Work Relations of Domestic Workers in Pune <i>Shubhanshi Dimri and Pranjali Sharma, Savitribai Phule Pune University</i></p>
	<p>Contours of Marginalities and Informal Sector Innovation: Comparative Case Study of Three Indian Informal Vehicles a.k.a Jugaad Vehicles <i>Shekhar Jain, Jawaharlal Nehru University</i></p>
	<p>Navigating Margins: Religious, gendered, and Class-Based Resistance Strategies Among Muslim Women in the Informal Labor Markets <i>Priyanjali Mitra, University of Chicago</i></p>
	<p>Financial Literacy and Marginalised Women's Engagement With Formal Financial Institutions: The Case of Women Domestic Workers of Delhi NCR <i>Nidhi Vahi, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi</i></p>
	<p>Unstable and Uncertain: Informal Settlements and The Politics of Policy Categories in Guwahati City <i>Brishti Banerjee, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay</i></p>
1:15 pm – 2:30 pm	Lunch
	<p>PANEL 8 Urban Marginalities: Methods, Design, and Social Change</p>
	<p>Unmapping Kolkata: Urban History at the Margins <i>Sujaan Mukherjee, The Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata</i></p>
	<p>New Social Mix in Nantou Ancient Town in Shenzhen <i>Daria Lisaia, Vanke Urban Research</i></p>
	<p>Mapping as a Tool For Social Change: Exploring Urban Marginalities of Female Street Vendors in Raghbir Nagar Through a Collaborative Method <i>Tanya Rana and Saleha Sapra, City Sabha</i></p>
	<p>Space, Territory, Time: A Mapping Method to Capture The Complexities and Negotiations of Everyday Urban Life <i>Bhavya Trivedi, CEPT University</i></p>
	<p>The Spatial Type of Servant Quarters: Understanding Their Design and Manifestation in Apartment-Type Housing <i>Ujjwala Krishna, ATREE</i></p>
	<p>Marginalisation As an Act of Design <i>Priyanka Salunkhe, Indian Institute for Human Settlements and Naomi Mehta, Harvard University</i></p>
2:30 pm – 4:15 pm	

4:15 pm – 4:30 pm	Break
4:30 pm – 6:30 pm	<p>Panel 9 Activating The Public Role of Universities: Engaging With Marginality</p> <p><i>Chair: Barbara Lipietz, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit</i> <i>Azadeh Mashayekhi, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit</i> <i>Zarina Patel, University of Cape Town</i> <i>Joiselen Cazanave-Macias, Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría</i> <i>Gautam Bhan, Indian Institute for Human Settlements</i> <i>Francisco Comaru, Federal University of ABC</i> <i>Hector Becerril, Concejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT)</i> <i>Julia Wesely, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences</i></p>
DAY 3 13 JANUARY 2024	
9:30 am – 11:15 am	<p>PANEL 10 Gender in The City: Labour, Aspirations, and Marginalities</p>
	<p>Researching the Marginalities: Exploring Bazaar as a Site of Pollution, Respectability, and Marginality of Women Workers <i>Sandhya Gawali, Jawaharlal Nehru University</i></p>
	<p>Gender Norms and Bargaining Over Childcare in Urban Areas: Case Studies of Working Class Women in The National Capital Region <i>Shraddha Jain, Centre for Development Studies</i></p>
	<p>Women At Work: Viewing The City of Ahmedabad From The Perspective of Women Labourers <i>Jemini Sara Nainan, Mudra Institute of Communications</i></p>
	<p>Drivers of Masculinity: Marginality, Manhood, and Mobilities <i>Sneha Annavarapu, National University of Singapore</i></p>
	<p>Failing The Working Mothers: Are Women Paying The Price of Motherhood in Their Commutes? <i>Sila Mishra, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur</i></p>
	<p>Negotiating Marginalities: Possibilities and Aspirations on The Site of Higher Education in Contemporary India <i>Sayali Shankar and Sinu Sugathan, Savitribai Phule Pune University</i></p>
11:15 am – 11:30 am	Break
11:30 am - 1 pm	<p>PANEL 11 Urban Services and Systems: Marginalities in the Global South</p>

	Sanitation Work and The Politics of Waste in Colonial Bombay <i>Meera Panicker, Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence</i>
	Marginality, Water and Blood: Water Infrastructure in Kusumpur Pahari and Women's Menstrual Practices in Everyday Life <i>Prerna Singh, University of Edinburgh</i>
	Dystopia in Healthy Urbanisation Permanent Temporaries: Pathologies of Illegalities <i>Maryam Riasat, National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS), Pakistan</i>
	Unfolding Adolescent Responsiveness of Urban Primary Health Centres: A case study from Surat, India <i>Anuj Ghanekar, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, Mohit Sood and Khushbu Chauhan, Urban Health and Climate Resilience Centre of Excellence, Surat</i>
	Planning for Urban Infrastructure of Care in Vulnerable Neighbourhoods of the Global South <i>Arunima Saha, World Resources Institute, India</i>
1 pm – 2 pm	Lunch
	PANEL 12 Representing marginalities: Images and imaginations
	Understanding Marginality and City-Making Through Images and Aesthetic Governmentality: Childhood Unfolding in The Urban Margins of Delhi <i>Priyanka Mittal, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)</i>
	Learning From Action-Research in Museum Spaces <i>Clara Cirdan, London School of Economics and Political Science</i>
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	How Short-Form Content App Transformed the Shape of Mumbai's Marine Drive <i>Apoorv Shandilya, Manipal University</i>
	Visibilising Marginalised Lives in Delhi and Mumbai Through Literary Nonfiction: The Case of Aman Sethi and Sonia Faleiro <i>Marianne Hillion, University of Strasbourg</i>
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Break
	PANEL 13 Living Off-Grid Food & Infrastructure Collaboration (LOGIC): (Re)Thinking the Off Grid City <i>Sudeshna Mitra, Indian Institute for Human Settlements</i>
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm	

	<p><i>Vrashali Khandelwal, Indian Institute for Human Settlements</i> <i>Iromi Perera, Colombo Urban Lab</i> <i>Herry Gulabani, Indian Institute for Human Settlements</i> <i>Nicholas Nisbett, Research Fellow, IDS Sussex</i> <i>Hayley MacGregor, Research Fellow, IDS Sussex</i> <i>Jodie Thorpe, Research Fellow, IDS Sussex</i> <i>Dolf te Lintelo, Research Fellow, IDS Sussex</i> <i>Gareth Haysom, Senior Researcher, African Centre for Cities</i> <i>Issahaka Fuseini, Researcher, University of Ghana</i></p>
5:00 pm – 5:15 pm	Break
5:15 pm – 7:00 pm	<p>PANEL 14 Social Marginalities: Identities and Negotiated Spaces</p>
	<p>Muslim in Indian cities: Landscapes of Belongingness <i>E P Sarfras, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar</i></p>
	<p>Sexuality at The Margins: Understanding Space, Self and Agency of Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh <i>Shailja Tandon, Krea University</i></p>
	<p>Marginal Religious Spaces and Dissonant Heritage: Negotiating Adaptive Agencies at Mausoleums and Dargahs in Dhaka and Delhi <i>Imamur Hossain A and R Madhuri Agarwal, Sonargaon University</i></p>
	<p>Discriminatory Developments: Unveiling Marginalisation in Revitalised Public Spaces in Dhaka City <i>Kanak Kanti Saha, Arpan Shil and Anamika Das Champa, Leading University</i></p>
	<p>Unpacking Marginalities: Manipur in The Context of Rest of India <i>Iman Bhattacharyya, Sattva Media and Consulting Pvt. Ltd</i></p>

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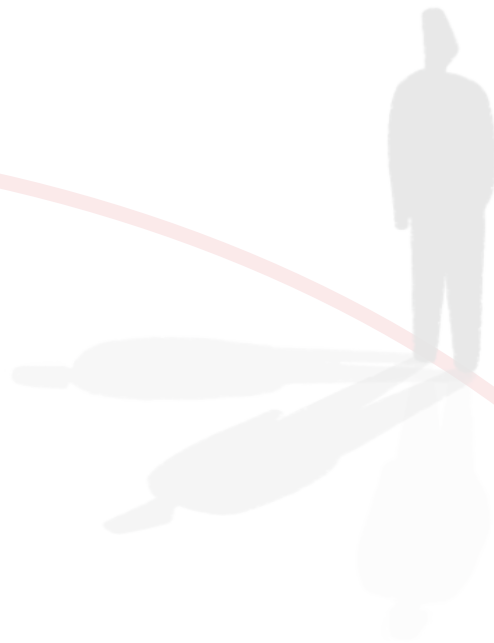
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PANEL 1

Navigating Urban Margins: Right(s) to the City



The Broken Edges—Politics of Imagination, Expansion, Marginalities, and the Right to Ernakulam City

Jose Deepak T T, Indian School of Public Policy

Keywords: Marginalities, Right to City, Accumulation by disposition, Social Contract, Vikasanam (expansion), Discourse, Counter-revolution.

This paper focuses on the aspirations of the people of Vypin and Moolampilly (both are in the Ernakulam district of Kerala), who contribute to the growth of the city of Kochi for the greater good. However, the political discourse of Vikasanam (expansion) prevented the people of these geographies and those who lived there from being part of the greater good. In the light of Vypin and Moolampilly events, the paper explores the politics of imagination, which defines explicitly who gets what, of expansion or the discourse of Vikasanam (often termed development in Malayalam, Kerala), which is an outcome of particular imaginations. On the one hand, Vypin faces geographical marginality and Moolampilly, on the other hand, is marginalised by the so-called dream of greater good and development.

In this study, the city is seen as a space where wealth coexists with marginality. The city is an outcome of the process of globalisation led by the expansion of global capital. Therefore, this specific work is not just about examining the local but an attempt to understand how the global shapes the local. One of the crucial thinkers who stressed this is David Harvey. Harvey underlines the notion of city-making and general patterns to subordinate the regime of rights to the idea of development (Harvey, 2010). Here, the evaluation of a government is based on how much visible infrastructure was built during their period and how much GDP they produced, which is indeed essential for society. At the same time, when this discourse gets established, it also makes the rights of those who are affected by developmental activities or those who are excluded in the way of development subordinate to the process of development (Sassen, 2000). Justice or equity gets subordinated to growth (in many ways if not all). This was prevalent after the Washington Consensus of 1989 which paved the way for spreading developmental activities of a particular kind, as a way forward for all nations. The universal homogenisation of the concept of development has created problems without understanding the socio-political and cultural cleavages of a particular space or society and this is being exposed in the work of James Ferguson (Ferguson, 1991). One of the important things that Ferguson mentions is the discourse, which equates politics as development and exclusions as a 'natural' part of the process. Since what is claimed to be natural wins people's hearts, inequality and exclusion also does the same. This similar pattern is followed in the Moolampilly and Vypin events. It is at this juncture that Lefebvre gets involved; he is an image who argues to ask for the right to the city (Lefebvre, 1987). The act of remembering that rights are earned through struggles is a political motto that a society needs to cherish in order to make a just order of living. This is the fundamental value a society must hold in order to preserve what is called justice and to keep the edges (geographies and people who are vulnerable) safe from breaking down further into pieces. At the core of this effort lies the belief that society should be politically aware and active in their everyday and

everydayness for the better today and tomorrow. This is what lacks in the accumulation and expansion process of Kochi City and this is an element worth striving for as well.

The Edges of Ernakulam City: Vypin and the Demand for Equitable Access to the City

For the past 15 years, residents of Vypin have been urging authorities to allow buses from their area to enter Ernakulam city, challenging the outdated 1970 route nationalisation policy favouring the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC). Vypin, a significant contributor to the city's daily workforce, faces discrimination as its residents lack direct public transportation access to the city. The few existing bus services from Vypin are insufficient for its 2.2 lakh residents. The demand for bus entry is fueled by two key issues: significant time wastage waiting for connecting buses, and the financial burden on residents, who collectively spend a substantial amount on additional travel costs which will now be cumulatively more than hundreds of crores. Despite the potential for economic savings, the state government continues to focus on nationalising more routes, perpetuating the injustice faced by Vypin residents. The claim that allowing Vypin buses into the city would create chaos is debunked by the fact that there has been a reduction in the overall number of buses post-COVID-19, and Vypin buses could serve as substitutes. The denial of city permits to Vypin buses contributes to an increase in private vehicles, exacerbating traffic congestion, fuel consumption, and environmental issues (Godwin, 2023).

Apart from this the establishment of the Kochi metro, a significant infrastructure development, underscores the importance of Vypin's population density in surpassing the threshold for metro qualification. However, Vypin residents themselves are denied metro access due to vested interests. This denial highlights a broader pattern of the government protecting individual interests over the rights of many. Recent struggles against the discrimination faced by Vypin buses have witnessed reduced street-level participation, with digital activism becoming more prominent. This shift is in line with Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of manipulated seriality, where control over the working class is exerted through fragmented resistance (Sartre, 1938). Despite ongoing struggles, government responses have been ineffective, mirroring past instances such as the Vallarpadam container terminal, Moolampilly displacement, and the Puthuvyp LNG terminal. The political dynamics involve the Gramscian notion of passive revolution, where the elected authority's actions are portrayed as reasonable for the greater good (Gramsci, 1991). This narrative masks the reality of Vypin's unmet needs, echoing the unfulfilled promises of projects like the Dubai Port World construction in Vallarpadam. Despite Vypin's substantial contributions to Kochi's growth, the residents continue to be deprived of their rightful access and benefits.

Accumulation by Disposition: The Case of Moolampilly

The Moolampilly case is a harrowing tale of injustice that unfolded over the course of 15 years, leaving hundreds of families devastated. In 2008, 316 families across seven villages faced eviction due to land acquisition for the International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT) project in Kerala, India (*Moolampilly Rehabilitation: 11 Years on, An Unending Tale of Apathy for 326 Families*, 2019). In the aftermath of the eviction, the government assured the affected families of a rehabilitation package known as the Moolampilly package. One key promise was providing jobs based on educational qualifications to one member of each family in the ICTT project. However, this promise remained unfulfilled, compounding the sense of betrayal and injustice among the displaced families. The impact of the eviction was not merely financial; it took a heavy emotional toll on the affected families (Praveen, 2023). Many individuals succumbed to the emotional turmoil brought on by losing their homes. A total of 33 people have died since the eviction without receiving proper rehabilitation, while others became bedridden and emotionally traumatized during their prolonged battle for justice. The financial burden of rebuilding their lives from scratch also affected the education of the youth. Some had to compromise on their career aspirations due to the financial strain on their families. This setback in education further exacerbated the challenges faced by the displaced families. The government initially provided rehabilitation plots, but only 52 out of 316 families have moved into these plots. Issues with the suitability of the land for house construction, landfilling problems, and limited access to loans further hindered the rehabilitation process. The bureaucratic hurdles and lack of follow-up meetings exacerbated the situation. The government claimed to have fulfilled its commitments under the rehabilitation package, blaming the affected families for not utilising the land promptly. The authorities also cited the nature of the ICTT project as a reason for not fulfilling their promise of jobs (L D, 2022). Despite the challenges and dwindling intensity of the Moolampilly movement, the affected families continue their struggle. Their fight has become symbolic for others facing displacement due to development projects, highlighting the government's tendency to disregard assurances and orders when it comes to the welfare of its citizens. The Moolampilly case is a stark reminder of the long-lasting impact of injustices committed by authorities in the name of development. The affected families' resilience and determination to seek justice underscore the need for greater accountability and compassion in such cases (Praveen, 2023). One of the most fundamental ironies is that even after evicting the people from their homes and building railway paths, no goods carriers travelled through that rail line. One can identify from these examples that those who ought to provide rights have been standing with those who have might or power.

The social contract of giving away some of our privileges for greater rights and protection tend to backfire and find itself dead during these events. Lockean tradition of constitutional democratic rights and the burden of the state to give and protect the rights of the citizens are making citizens dependent on the state to gain their rights. This would also happen in a social contract that Rousseau suggested, where popular sovereignty rules on behalf of the people (Bertram, 2010). This is actually a dangerous discourse since, on the one hand, it tries to justify its actions for the greater benefit of people and on the other hand, this logic will always be used even in support of atrocities. Therefore, there is a dire need to be politically organised, as Marx and Engles argued and in the context of a city and development that is unjust for the residents

(Harvey, 2010). Foucauldian method of discourse analysis can be used to unearth the misunderstanding and expansionist construct that struggles or protests are bad (Foucault, 1994). The idea of disciplinary gaze can be tackled with the help of counter-hegemonic knowledge in which the better life of people in those cities which is collectively owned by its residents after championing the slogan of the 'right to the city'.

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Tourism, Touristification, Gentrification and Marginalisation: Case Study of Fontainhas, Goa

Shashwat Vikram Singh, BITS Pilani KK Birla Goa Campus

Keywords: Gentrification, Touristification, Tourism Studies, Displacement, Goa

This paper critically examines the multifaceted impact of tourism, the phenomenon of touristification and gentrification, in Fontainhas, a neighbourhood in Panjim, Goa. Diverging from conventional marginalisation narratives from the global South typically dominated by state-led initiatives, Fontainhas presents a distinctive scenario where market forces assume a primary role, instigating the displacement and marginalisation of its residents. This study attempts to document the various challenges faced by residents of Fontainhas as tourism emerges as the predominant economic force, shedding light on their coping mechanisms and resistance.

British sociologist Ruth Glass theorises that gentrification transforms neighbourhoods as affluent individuals displace existing residents, notably affecting working-class areas. In North America and Western Europe, gentrification often involves racial dynamics, impacting minority communities (Johnson-Schlee, 2019). The influx of affluent residents raises living costs, leading to the displacement of long-term inhabitants. Distinguishing gentrification from touristification, the former involves affluent long-term residents, while the latter features short-term visitors with different impacts on displacement, property ownership, and property use (Sequera & Nofre, 2018). Gentrification and touristification exhibit a symbiotic relationship, particularly in the global North, where they coexist or collaborate. However, in the global South, touristification often supersedes gentrification due to lower native purchasing power (Cocola-Gant, 2018). The interplay between economic factors, consumption patterns, and cultural dynamics shapes the complex landscape of neighbourhood transformations globally.

Touristification and its resulting gentrification marginalises existing residents as neighbourhoods undergo rapid transformation. The influx of wealthier newcomers and rising property values displace long-standing, often low-income communities, leading to heightened social and economic disparities. This displacement disrupts the social fabric and limits existing residents' economic opportunities as local businesses catering to the original community struggle or are replaced (Lees, 2008; Smith, 1996). The changing neighbourhood dynamics also push marginalised groups to the urban peripheries, exacerbating their social marginalisation (Bridge, 2004). The consequences of gentrification extend beyond economic displacement. Social cohesion deteriorates as traditional networks break down due to forced relocations, eroding the sense of place and belonging that once defined these communities (Ley, 2003). Gentrification perpetuates a cycle of marginalisation, disproportionately affecting those least equipped to navigate the challenges brought about by urban transformations.

Inherent in its nature as a displacement process, gentrification assumes diverse forms globally. While economic factors predominantly drive displacement in the global North, state intervention actively shapes these changes in the global South (Doshi, 2015). Despite these regional

distinctions, gentrification shares core components, including capital-led architectural restructuring, the influx of affluent residents, displacement of original inhabitants, and alterations to the urban landscape (Sequera & Nofre, 2018). Fontainhas, experiencing a surge in touristification, bears witness to a parallel narrative as tourist infrastructure, exemplified by hotels and cafes, proliferates. The ensuing influx of short-term affluent residents and escalating property prices mirror the classic gentrification trajectory, ultimately reshaping the neighbourhood's landscape. Increasing infrastructure that caters to tourism and the influx of tourists has marginalised the neighbourhood's residents in two ways:

- 1) The economic marginalisation of the residents
- 2) The socio-cultural marginalisation of the residents

The Economic Marginalisation of the Residents

The early perspectives on gentrification, rooted in cultural and economic analyses, lay the foundation for understanding the broader context. The cultural viewpoint suggests that the urban allure, particularly for young, middle-class individuals, catalyses gentrification by driving migration to vibrant city centres (Smith, 1979). Simultaneously, rising building and transportation costs in expanding cities, as posited by the economic perspective, prompt purchasing and renovating properties, further contributing to gentrification (Smith, 1979). However, Neil Smith's (1979) critical intervention challenges these perspectives, accentuating the pivotal role of the rent gap—the disparity between real rent, potential rent, and the investment required. This redefinition portrays gentrification as a process contingent on the intricate interplay of these factors, dispelling the notion of a straightforward binary between cultural and economic forces.

The state's role becomes a mediator or initiator of touristification in the case of Fontainhas. Designated as a Heritage City under the JNNURM urban renewal scheme and marked as a conservation zone in the 2011 development plan, Panjim faces restrictions on new construction (Ahmed & Shankar, 2012). While ostensibly aimed at preserving the area's historical charm, this conservation effort inadvertently accelerates the conversion of residential units into commercial establishments. The resulting surge in maintenance costs for traditional houses forces residential property rents higher, marking a pivotal moment in Fontainhas' evolution. Slowly, the community witnesses the encroachment of commercialisation, impacting the fabric of daily life. As the state takes a back seat in Fontainhas' transformation, market-driven forces contribute to the displacement of original inhabitants and reshape the neighbourhood's socio-economic landscape. In this dynamic interplay between tourism, state initiatives, and market forces, Fontainhas stands as a poignant case study, offering insights into the intricate challenges faced by communities grappling with the impacts of touristification. In Smith's terms, the neighbourhood's designation as a heritage area increased the gap between the potential and real rent. These dwellings built in old Goan style fetched meagre real rent since the upkeep of the houses was high. The roof shingles were expensive and gave out quickly, and the walls crumbled every monsoon. Earlier, the neighbourhood underwent change where the old buildings were replaced with new ones until the restrictions were implemented. The real rent of these dilapidated buildings from long-term residential renters was lower than those who hoped to open cafes, restaurants and short-term rentals. Slowly, owners unable to maintain the upkeep of these houses according to the new norms gave their dwellings to the market.

The Socio-Cultural Marginalisation of the Residents

The concept of the "Tourist Gaze," developed by John Urry (1990), further enriches our understanding of tourism's sociological dimensions. Urry posits that tourism is inherently visual, satisfying a conditioned gaze shaped by various actors such as poets, writers, historians, photographers, bloggers, and guides. This gaze is not raw but mediated by multiple mediums, influencing what tourists consider extraordinary. Urry emphasises the globalisation of the gaze since the 1990s, attributing it to cheaper travel and the widespread use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) (Urry, 1990). The corporal nature of the gaze, involving embodied and multimodal performances, establishes a relationship between those who look and those who are looked at, with tourists exerting power over natives by objectifying space and people.

Building on this, Guy Debord's exploration of the society of spectacles complements Urry's perspective, highlighting the reduction of human relations to relations between commodities. In the mass media age, images replace human ties with spectacle capitalists employ to maximise profit (Trier, 2007). Sandeep Bhattacharya's concept of consumerist images, where images are used to consume commodities, is particularly relevant in the context of tourism (Bhattacharya, 2020). Bhattacharya (2020) illustrates this through the example of Ladakh, where mass media, such as movies, is used to consume a place even before a tourist sets foot in the destination. This consumption continues long after the visit through social media platforms like Instagram. Thus, tourism is not complete merely by physically experiencing a place; it extends to capturing and sharing images on social media platforms. Every place, however, has a carrying capacity, and once saturation is reached, expansion is necessary to incorporate new regions into the tourism fold.

In the specific context of Fontainhas, a phenomenon akin to over-tourism emerges, significantly propelled by social media. Once quaint with few tourists, the neighbourhood underwent a transformative shift after the first lockdown. Initially, a few vloggers and social media influencers recorded user-generated content for unexplored parts of Goa, including the Latin quarters and Fontainhas. Subsequently, influenced by this content, a wave of tourists sought to create their own digital content, producing Instagram reels and taking photos in the neighbourhood. The influx of social media content creators and photographers, particularly those engaged in pre-wedding shoots, gradually diminished the commons for Fontainhas' residents. Once venues for quiet evenings and friendly chats, the neighbourhood's streets became stages for constant camera presence. The discomfort experienced by residents prompted many to lock themselves indoors, transforming their once-lively neighborhood into a living museum devoid of the vibrant community life that once defined it.

In response to this invasion, residents began feeling alienated from their neighbourhood. Some chose to sell or rent their houses and leave, while others resisted. Residents erected signage imploring visitors not to photograph their homes and strategically placed flower pots to obscure the view of cameras. This clash between the digital and physical realms of tourism adds a layer to Fontainhas' struggle against the encroachment of touristification. The intricate relationship between tourism and Fontainhas' identity becomes apparent when considering the region's

unique history. As a neighbourhood in a lusophonic colony with a substantial Catholic majority until recently, Fontainhas embodies a complex tapestry of cultural influences. However, the dominance of tourism introduces a double-edged sword, where the neighbourhood's Catholic identity is both exoticised and subjected to nationalistic assertions by the predominantly Hindu domestic tourist influx. This tension adds layers to the challenges Fontainhas' residents face as they grapple with the shifting dynamics driven by tourism.

In conclusion, Fontainhas emerges as a poignant case study, encapsulating the intricate dynamics of touristification, the challenges posed by the tourist gaze, and the impact of social media on the tourism experience. The interplay between tourism, state initiatives, and market forces shapes the destiny of this neighbourhood, offering valuable insights for scholars, policymakers, and communities worldwide. As tourism continues to evolve as a global phenomenon, understanding its nuances and the implications for local communities is imperative for sustainable and equitable development. The case of Fontainhas serves as a compelling lens through which to explore these complexities, paving the way for further theorisation and research.

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Power Spatiality: Discourse on Public Spaces of Kashmir

Samreen Junaid Wani, Islamic University of Science and Technology

Owais Asif Khan, Independent

Keywords: Power, Marginalities, Urban, Space, Public, Production

All social phenomena are, to some degree, the work of collective will, and collective will implies choice between different possible options. The realm of the social is the realm of modality (Mauss, 1929, p. 470).

Space and power are two intertwined concepts that have a complex impact on each other. Power, as a force not only influences and affects, but also produces and changes spatial forms. Power manifests in diverse forms, encompassing authority, individual prowess, societal structures, or even indiscernible forces. This research aims to analyse the impact of urban marginalities, recognising space as a societal construct shaped by the exertion of power. Through this lens, redefining power in the context of spatial practices serves as a fundamental introduction to the discourse on power dynamics in the public realm.

To explore this phenomenon historically, this study derives its inferences from a case review of the Old City of Srinagar. Operating under the premise that power embodies an ongoing structural process characterised by competition and positioning among three primary social entities—authority, market, and people—this research asserts that these entities engage in a perpetual struggle for equilibrium within the societal framework. The study contends that public spaces can be moulded, reshaped, or defined based on the outcomes of these power Competitions.

The essence of public spaces is inevitably linked to the quality of urban areas. With the evolution of city fabrics, the character of public spaces has also evolved. Historically, the towns based on the agrarian models, were relatively close-knit with homogenous populations, and as such the public spaces served as central hubs accommodating trade, political discourse, cultural activities, and social interactions.

Public spaces that are well-planned and well-managed can help people who are left out of society to feel more connected. These spaces are important for meeting the daily needs of families, making friends, talking to others, and feeling a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and the city. For many people who are socially excluded, having places to go outside their homes is very important for living normally. In neighborhoods where people are very poor and vulnerable, public spaces might sometimes become places of chaos. But, strangely, these problems and the special needs of the people can also bring them together, making them closer to each other and more part of society. However, the number and size of public spaces have increased in today's sprawling cities with diverse populations spanning vast areas. The transition from an integrative community to the anonymity and alienation of large

modern urban societies has been a key concern in the development of sociology (Engels, 1993; Tönnies, 1957; Simmel, 1950).

Yet, they have also lost much of their intimate significance, becoming more generic and detached. As urban centres have expanded, public spaces have proliferated, yet they've also relinquished much of their depth and individuality. In the city of strangers, the meaning of public space becomes less personal, more transient, and at best merely functional or symbolic (Madanipour, 2010).

Space is political, as Henri Lefebvre describes the spatialities of power and space in his book: *The Production of Space*. This holds meaning in contemporary times, especially in the cities that are operated on power dynamics. In Kashmir, the public spaces have been spaces of resistance, where the urban is a result of manifestation of power. Kashmir, being a developing city—inflicted upon by conflict, lacks the preservation of its identity. Due to this, space as such has become imperceptible throughout the urban fabric of the city.

This paper draws inferences from two sociologists, Georg Simmel, and Henri Lefebvre, who had different but related views on how space and power interact. Georg Simmel thought that space was not just something physical, but something that people created and gave meaning to through their interactions. He focused on how social relationships and interactions were affected by the spaces they took place in. He also looked at how the physical layout of space affected power structures and social order. He believed that the way space was organised influenced the kinds of social interactions that could happen, and how power was distributed and expressed in society.

Henri Lefebvre had a more complex view of space, and he called it the “production of space.” He said that space was not fixed, but constantly changing because of social, economic, and political factors. He divided space into three types: spatial practice, representations of space, and representational spaces. These types showed the different aspects of space, such as how people use it, how they imagine it, and how they give it meaning. Lefebvre said that power relations were deeply involved in the production of space, and that power affected how people acted, thought, and felt about space. He also examined how power was shown in the way space was arranged and used, and how that affected social relationships and individual experiences.

In the context of Kashmir, the interpretation of public spaces as a “panoptic” concept portrays a transition from initiating social interaction to a tendency of avoidance. This shift reflects the overwhelming nature of social encounters amidst the socio-political tensions. Consequently, public spaces in Kashmir have transformed into areas characterised by avoidance rather than places of communal engagement.

Tracing urban marginalities in Kashmir unveils a multifaceted and intricate process that necessitates comprehensive responses. Among the various strategies to address these complexities, the creation and upkeep of public spaces emerge as a pivotal aspect. Kashmir, renowned for its rich cultural, social, and traditional heritage, is an amalgamation of diverse

cultural expressions. Within this context, public spaces stand as crucial architectural and urban components, showcasing the essence and identity of the region.

To understand the significance and nature of these spaces, considering their inherent genesis as spatial entities and their contribution to shaping the morphological character of the city, an analysis of three distinct case examples has been undertaken across different hierarchical and typological settings. Each case presents a unique perspective on the role and impact of public spaces in Kashmir's urban fabric.

A. The first case delves into public spaces at an intimate scale, where these areas serve as integral elements of daily rituals, inducing a sense of domesticity and intimacy among residents. These spaces become places of everyday activities, facilitating social interactions and familial bonds within close-knit communities. The old city of Srinagar is a place of social and cultural exchange. In these regions, courtyards can be interpreted as modest public spaces, catering to a housing cluster.

Courtyards are more organically yet intrinsically formed in the morphology of the urban fabric. A cluster of three to four houses interact in such a way that a courtyard is formed at the centre. These open spaces are more extroverted in nature, where they become a central atrium for a cluster of houses, enabling more interaction—acting as a communal place for the cluster. This cluster gets repeated, and the hierarchy of these open spaces gets repeated. These open spaces act as interaction zones for the neighbouring houses, promoting the cultural and social aspects of the old city. They are serving as points of interest for women, therefore acting as domesticated spaces.

B. Moving to a moderately larger scale, the second case analyses the Maharaj Gunj Complex. Here, public spaces transcend their intimate settings, acting as gathering spots that bring together a more substantial area of the populace. These spaces serve as junctions where diverse groups converge, and initiate dialogue, commerce, and cultural exchanges, thereby contributing significantly to the social and economic vitality of the region.

The market complex of Maharaj Gunj, Srinagar serves as a place of interaction for the public. It can be differentiated from the previous case, as this complex surround both residential and public places. Maharaj Gunj was one of the most important business districts of Srinagar. It housed numerous shops and centres, which were accessed by the water transport – from the river Jhelum.

C. Expanding further to a much larger scale, the third case study focuses on Jamia Masjid, a site of collective socio-political interest. This grand public space not only serves as a religious centre but also embodies the convergence of socio-political discourse, reflecting the collective aspirations, identities, and struggles of the community. It becomes a focal point for community gatherings, discussions, and expressions of cultural and political significance, shaping the collective consciousness of the region.

Jamia Masjid is one of the most important mosques present in old city of Srinagar. More than serving as a place of worship, it acts as a place of social exchange. It has been one of the most central public spaces which is accessed by all groups of society, thus catering to a wider population. Jamia Masjid is constructed around four courtyards—housing a fountain at the centre. Here the courtyards are more inward looking, connecting the four blocks with each other. These open spaces, paradoxically, induce a sense of tranquillity in the surrounding spaces of power. These diverse case studies offer insights into the multifaceted roles of public spaces across different scales within Kashmir's urban landscape. They illustrate how these spaces, from intimate to extensive settings, not only facilitate daily life but also contribute significantly to the social, cultural, and political dynamics of the region, weaving a tapestry of diverse identities and expressions within the urban fabric of Kashmir.

Therefore, this paper presents an exploration of the intricacies revolving around the public spaces within Kashmir, delving into the ways in which power manifests and influences the physical structure and layout of its urban landscape. Central to this research is the incorporation of Henri Lefebvre's theoretical framework concerning power dynamics intertwined with spatial constructs. Lefebvre's concept suggests a significant shift from merely producing tangible objects within physical space to actively shaping and constructing the very spaces in which these objects exist.

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Liquid Margins: Understanding the Shifting Nature of Marginal Geographies Through the Buckingham Canal in Chennai

Nandan S. Kaushik, Independent

Framework

How does one define marginality in the city? Can marginalisation be processual, and reversible? I intend to explore the marginalisation of a geographical space, the Buckingham Canal in Madras (later Chennai) using these questions. By positing the creation, development and eventual decline of the canal as separate processes, I intend to understand a geographical marginalisation of the canal space. As a bounded region with a two-century long history, a segment of the canal runs through the city of Chennai today. When this is visualised as an inner margin, the canal in itself becomes a marginal space (as opposed to the 'central') in the city. In this capacity, I argue that marginal geography welcomes the marginal from society. If and when this marginalisation is reversed, while the processes that unfold upon it are permanent, the effects that unfold attempt to extricate those marginalised from society, and now associated with it, away. This paper uses material written for a thesis as its basis. This thesis was written in the 4th year (Ashoka Scholar's Program) at Ashoka University (History Department) on the history of the Buckingham Canal in Madras (later Chennai) city.

Structure

The paper examines three key themes that define each period of the canal's life and builds an argument, these acting as the overarching structure for that segment. The first theme is colonialism, at the time of the canal's construction. Here the canal is centralised as an infrastructure project. The second theme is that of transport. This delineates the canal's usage, as it is marginalised and replaced by the railways, and finally housing—informal housing specifically—that benefits from the canal's marginalisation. However, this informal housing is displaced when the canal, the subject of restoration efforts, is centralised again.

Method

The canal is a largely unexplored academic subject. The original thesis (and thereby the paper) depends to a large extent on primary sources. These include archival work, archival books and articles, newspaper reports, maps, scientific papers, and select interviews. A few secondary academic sources were consulted as well. The archives used were the Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai, and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML) archives, New Delhi. The NMML provided a few important secondary sources as well as important primary sources. Newspaper collections were accessed through university subscription. Accessing articles from the Times of India collection helped bring in a more local understanding of the canal and understand changes on a month-to-month level.

Secondary sources complemented and contextualised information regarding the Buckingham Canal with larger discussions. This included material, for instance, on the Madras Famine of 1876 – 1878 (e.g. Sami, 2011; Dyson, 1991); urban planning (Lanchester, 1916); on slums

(Venkatachalam, 1998); and on more global ideas of urban environmental restoration (Turan, 2018).

Of interviews conducted, two residents of the erstwhile Thanithorai market provided lived experience that addressed macro-level details of life around the canal. Suneetha D. Kacker, an urban planner who had been part of an initial private attempt to restore the canal provided a planner's idea of the canal's later life (Kacker, 2023). A conversation with Bhavani Raman proved immensely helpful to understand the canal's functioning from an academic point of view (Raman, 2023).

Historiography

This paper, following the earlier research, is a relatively fresh foray into the canal. Therefore, historiography is limited. To quote Karen Coelho, "The already sparse social science literature on urban waterways remains preoccupied with rivers and lakes; canals barely feature in these writings and when they do they are ...grandiose projects of modern engineering" (Coelho, 2022). Russell's (1897) account of the Buckingham Canal, the first detailed account, was published a year after the canal's completion. However, it focused on technical aspects, and less at an understanding of the canal's social space, rather at its construction. The late D. Hemachandra Rao was a researcher of the geography of the canal. However, his focus was on the space of the canal, understanding its path and its various milestone markers (D'Souza, 2022). Karen Coelho's papers deal with urban environmental history. Her work on the Buckingham Canal incorporates it into larger frameworks of urban systems. She has provided extremely important interventions such as bringing forward the term 'water's edge urbanisms' that I use here as well (Coelho, 2022).

Bhavani Raman has studied the canal in its modern era. However, her work deals with the canal as a part of the city of Madras in the colonial and post-colonial period, and not as a site in itself (Raman, 2021).

Theoretical Concepts

Certain key theoretical concepts are employed in order to give the argument presented a larger background. Colonial theories of transport canals: Certain colonial modes of thinking rated control of transport as an important form of control. Canals as a cheap source of transport would allow for greater level of control while the irrigation function of these same canals would provide monetary compensation (North British Review, 1859; Guldi, 2012).

Famine Relief Policies: Famine Relief policies were contested. Where initially the Madras government depended on direct provision of food and money, the Viceroy and his Council believed in food-for-work schemes. In this way, only the sick and infirm were given money payments. Those considered fit and able were made to travel far in search of employment during the Madras famine (1876–78). (Digby, 1878) Canal vs. railway debate: The canal vs. railway debate was typified in the Cambridge Economic History of India (2005). Here, the focus on famine relief from the 1890s onward in British India was a debate between irrigation canals or improved railway networks in order to provide grain. On the other hand, David Ludden (2005)

took this debate back to the mid-19th century. Both irrigation projects and the railways vied with each other for government funding from the time of their inception, for economic benefits.

Water's Edge Urbanisms: Karen Coelho (2022) identified areas around waterbodies as 'sites of urban place-making – and of contestation'. While there is a relationship to the water, it was a site for subaltern urbanism. The nature of these settlements as being along a waterbody ties it into questions of ecology. Urban informality: For Ananya Roy, a city's slums are in a state of urban informality. Urban informality exists in conflation with the state, which neither has a comprehensive policy on such sites nor does it allow them to exist permanently. In fact, she argues that informality is a part of the state itself (Roy, 2009).

Paper Summary

The paper's focus lies on three key themes present in the history of the Buckingham Canal. These themes provide the most illustrative glimpse of the canal and define a large part of its history. These are: colonialism in its construction; transport during its period of use; and housing in the period following its functional collapse. Where initially the canal was a colonial project, its later life saw its steady marginalisation against the railways. With a stoppage of its transport function, it served as a space for the accommodation of informal housing.

The Buckingham Canal was built as a private transport canal by 1806 (Russell, 1898). Between 1876 and 1879 it experienced expansion as a famine relief project (Nightingale, 1879). It reached its final length in 1897. In this phase, the canal was a centralised project, with public attention given to it at home (Times of India, 1879) and abroad (Florence Nightingale, 1879). It served a colonial ambition in its construction, both as private tolled waterway and later as a famine relief project.

With competition from the railways, the canal began to lose its central position. The Railways were championed as better transport mechanisms by the 1880s (Kumar et al., 2005), and the East Coast Railway was completed in 1890 (Times of India, 1890). Its speed and efficiency caused the Buckingham Canal to lose its favoured status. The Canal, though cheaper, was slower and more cumbersome (Coelho, 2022). Additionally, its requirement of expenditure for desilting and repair works through the early 20th century exceeded its revenue earnings from transport (Molony, 1916). By the 1960s, the Buckingham Canal had been marginalised—official financing of the canal had stopped, and its usage declined. By the late 1980s, a local railway line was being built within it, in the city (Coelho, 2022).

Meanwhile, the Canal had opened up as a space for urban informality (following Ananya Roy (2009)). The scale of immigration to the city increased in the early 20th century. Housing was established near areas of work wherever land was found. This included the banks of the Buckingham Canal where 10 per cent of the city's slums lay (Coelho, 2022). From 1961 onward, slum improvement became a state project (Nambiar & Suleiman, 1971). However, the Buckingham Canal returned to a central position in the city, with conversations of state-sanctioned restoration emerging from a concern for its position as urban nature and a

waterbody (Lopez & Lakshmi, 2023). This effected a change in policy on housing around it— displacement of its slums was officially sanctioned (Imranullah, 2022; The Indian Express, 2022).

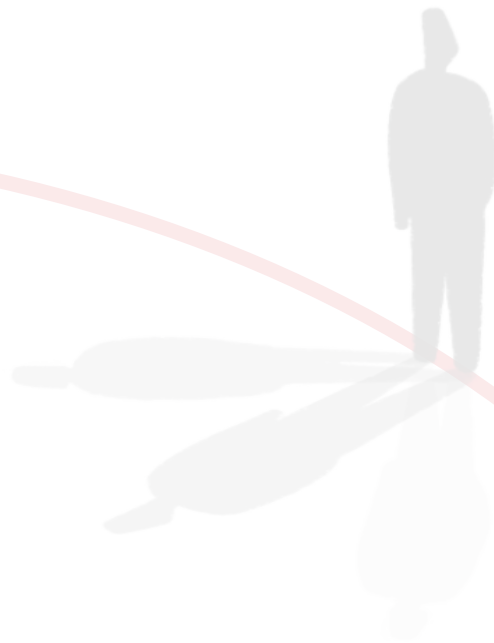
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PANEL 2

Climate, Ecology, and Resilience in Urban Environments



How Inadequate Urban Land Regulation Instruments Exacerbate Climate Injustice

Divyanshi Sharda, O. P. Jindal Global University

Introduction

Land is one resource that operates as a factor which holds the potency to configure the process of urbanisation. Despite early modernist epistemologies of the 19th Century conceptualising the 'city' as a dimension segregated from the flows of nature, urban spaces have in fact developed by centralising the continuity of interlinkages between themselves and natural entities such as land (Kaika, 2004). Functionality of land thus deems it a primordial matrix that facilitates concentrated urbanisation for a metropolis, as well as extended urbanisation for fixed capital-based infrastructure, which shoulders the creation of cities (Brenner & Katsikis, 2014; cited in Arboleda, 2016). The demand for fixed-capital infrastructure on parcels of land is a necessitated by-product and incentive for increasing demographic density in cities (Smith, 2008 [1984]; cited in Arboleda, 2016), thereby effectuating ecological and social implications from the depletion, degradation, and unequal distribution of climate risks produced by the agglomeration trajectory on different social groups. Hence, in such a context, urban land regulation policies assert themselves as significant institutional instruments for engaging with the comprehensive capacity of the city to not only recover from climate risks that neoclassical expansionism poses, but also minimise the extent and intensity of the same on marginalised communities, who are significantly more vulnerable to the same (Ostle et al., 2009; cited in Kumar and Geneletti, 2015).

The incremental predicament of ecological injustice therefore exhorts investigation into the issue of land appropriation, and whether the legal frameworks and institutions administering this are in fact cognizant of the equitable climate-sensitive policies. This research question would be answered through the subsequent section's findings and discussions, substantiating how the present legal and institutional arrangements abound in acute inadequacies and therefore lack the prescience to mitigate and alleviate skewedly distributed climate change risks. Finally, the last section will conclude with certain evidence-backed policy recommendations for addressing this issue.

Methods

This research utilises a secondary, qualitative methodology to understand how neoliberal land-use policies exacerbate climate risks on marginalised communities by utilising different case studies—from Sweden, India, and South America—and analysing them through the framework of complex systems thinking.

Results and Discussion

The analysis reveals that land-use instruments in urban spaces are indeed insufficient for addressing concerns of socially sustainable development and equitable climate-risk mitigation. The following two subsections establish these findings through a convergence of urbanisation theories, empirical research outcomes from secondary sources, and a systems-thinking framework in the latter part.

Understanding Institutional Frameworks for Land-Use Regulation

Institutional structures regulating land-use exist in variegated forms, often in hierarchical levels (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2005). Urban land-use planning is mostly undertaken by the local government authorities such as the municipality, whereas in the Indian context, this function is executed by the centrally appointed, bureaucratic development authorities (Kumar & Geneletti, 2015). The conceptual framing of the instruments employed by such state authorities for allocating land for defined, specific purposes cannot be delimited only to the spatial policies that manifest in tangible outputs like the masterplan and the city development plan (ibid), but must also widen its ambit to incorporate national and regional land regulation laws such as The Land Acquisition Act, 1894, and West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 (Sangameswaran, 2018), along with Court rulings (case law).

Another broad component of institutional instruments for urban land-use regulation is the strategic decisions undertaken by elected representatives and bureaucrats in the form of action plans, rules, notifications, circulars, and guidelines issued by government departments as official policy framed by the State's executive wing, accompanied by day-to-day measures implemented by the aforementioned state actors, the latter which may not necessarily be preceded by textual declaration. Hence, land-use regulation instruments exist in largely three forms: first, as legally ratified masterplans; second, as land and property-related statutes and case laws; and third, as government-led executive policy decisions (author's own observations). A good example of the last classification would be the West Bengal government's order crystallising the optionality of obtaining clearance from the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Authority (EKWMA) for any sale or transfer of land lying in the protected wetland regions (Department of Environment, 2012; referred in Sangameswaran, 2018).

In addition to the aforementioned archetypes of land regulation instruments, 'multilevel governance' or policy dynamics have agency to shape not only national or regional, but also local land-use structures (Rosenau, 1997; cited in Bulkeley and Betsill, 2005). The disinvestment of the district energy producing company by the Stockholm municipality to the private company (Stockholm Energi) now having 50 per cent shareholding was not an isolated occurrence, but in fact reflected a shift in the urban political economy that was largely driven by the overall European trend of liberalisation, and thus brought the energy infrastructure and supply services under the ambit of the Nordic Energy Exchange (Rutherford, 2008). The international, or 'extra-local,' pattern of disinvestment and energy regulations, that influenced this economic shift in Stockholm city, had considerable implications for land-use changes; resulting in unnecessarily larger tracts of land now appropriated by the Municipality for construction of private energy

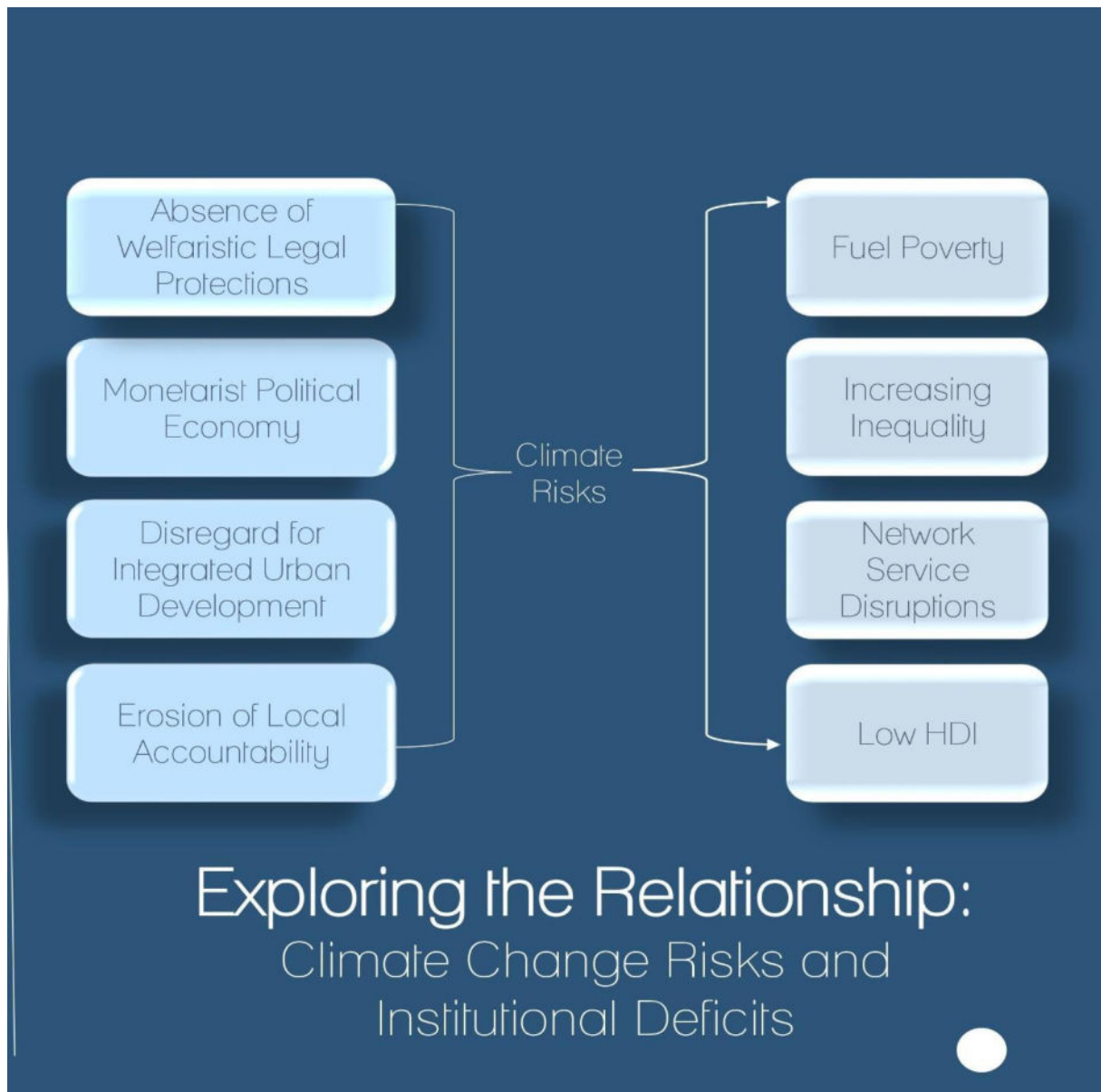
infrastructure; leaving lesser land available for more accessible, affordable public utility provision (ibid); which would have otherwise been advantageous for low-income groups in the city.

Scanning for Weak Signals: Land Regulation Institutions Inadequate for Mitigating a Skewed Social Distribution of Climate Risks?

The combined employment of two land-use regulation instruments—city plans and local executive policy decisions—to liberalise network service provision, debilitated the erstwhile socialist arrangement of institutions in Stockholm city, and in no way confined itself to the generation of negative ecological externalities related to the energy sector alone (Graham & Marvin, 2001; cited in Rutherford, 2008). Private land appropriation for the city's "urban regeneration project" of Hammarby Sjöstad resulted in the delimitation of sustainable natural resource consumption and waste management practices to bourgeois settlements of the city (Jones, 1997; cited in Rutherford, 2008) rendering the larger, low-income groups devoid of ecologically-sensitive urban development outcomes and vulnerable to increased climate risks manifesting in potential potable water shortage, quality deterioration, and disruptions in heating, electricity network service supply in concurrence with already-observable fuel poverty (Defra, 2004; cited in Rutherford, 2008). Ecological risks are exacerbated in cases of private land ownership, since resources now serve the purpose of profit generation and are thus utilised in larger quantities (ECLAC, 2012a). Such land-use changes are often accompanied by resource commodification as private property equips holders with increased vantage to not only extract more resources, but also make them excludable through pricing—which is evident in the aforementioned case from Stockholm, wherein high housing prices rendered accommodation resources exclusive for high-income groups of the city. This deteriorates not only ecological but also social sustainability, especially when both are mutually inclusive. The earlier stated negative ecological externalities are met with improved mitigation strategies that are practiced mostly in public land management systems; which are generally more climate-sensitive (Graham and Marvin, 2001; cited in Rutherford, 2008).

Such a context compels us to investigate the structural causes effectuating ecologically insensitive land appropriation. Adverse environmental impacts stem from wide deficits in institutional and legal land regulation frameworks, which do not simply act as escape clauses abetting non-compliance, but also debilitate other institutional provisions having positive implications for ecological conservation. Such deficits exist in multiple forms; first, as lack of socialist mandates; second, as absent institutional accountability measures for potential violation of existing socialist provisions; third, in the form of flawed, weak institutional policy provisions; and fourth, as exclusion of participatory decision-making strategies. In the aforementioned case of Hammarby Sjöstad, the masterplan did initially envision socially equitable objectives in the form of rental living accommodation for disadvantaged groups. However, this component was eventually discounted from the policy, engendered by the shift in political power from the socialists to conservatives in the city's municipality (Vestbro, 2005; cited in Rutherford, 2008).

Figure 1: The Relationship between weaknesses in land-use institutions such as local government policies and climate risks, and the social inequity produced by them.



Source: Author

The convenient exclusion of socially sustainable provisions signifies the immunity of local government bodies to legal mandates of welfarist policymaking allowing the incumbent neoliberal representatives to institute elitist configurations into city development plans. As observable, this particular instance of local-level executive policies facilitating unsustainable private land appropriation was rendered possible due to the prevalence of three out of the aforementioned four institutional deficits. Although the Swedish constitution talks about the welfare of the people as the prime objective of state-led public operations (Instrument of Government, 1974). The Swedish Land Code does not extend any restrictions on private proprietorship of real estate barring the transaction of agricultural land even in case of regional or urban developmental projects such as the one mentioned above (Land Code, 1970). There are no legal protections enacted to maintain the public management of land despite the fact that

they could have functioned as safeguards exerting institutional pressure on local government bodies such as Stockholm municipality to not engage in disinvestment of land to private entities beyond a certain limit, especially in the case of urban development projects. This renders the concerns of disadvantaged groups devoid of strong protections against being excluded from urban policymaking.

Hence, the public welfare legal mandates are non-existent in the case of local government policymaking; a situation which gets exacerbated by the fact that urban local specificities are discounted in city-level policies when local government institutions are rendered bereft of legislative powers- that happens to be the case of Stockholm city. Secondly, the Stockholm municipality or the national laws on land, do not, at any point, envision a regulatory agency to hold accountable and subject local government actors to penal repercussions for transgressing aforementioned legal mandates- simply because such mandates have not experienced any fruition in the first place. Furthermore, there are no local institutional policies or national legal provisions on ensuring direct democratic participation of citizens, especially low-income marginalised citizen communities, into the process of land-use decision-making; despite these very communities being the most adversely impacted by any such drastic socioeconomic policy. The agency of citizens as the determinants of urban development trajectories can be emphasised through direct voting for that particular land-use agenda, whilst engaging particularly with civil society organisations harbouring intellectual resources that are active proponents of sustainable land-use policy measures.

The theoretical frameworks which can help us understand such complexities are that of urban political ecology. The former illuminates the political economy underpinning urban land-use decisions taken by local executives, and how these facilitate the domestication or “taming” of nature to reproduce urban spaces (Swyngedouw & Heynen, 2003; cited in Sangameswaran, 2018; Kaika, 2004).

With the conservatives coming to power in the Stockholm city council in 1998, land divestiture to private entities was increased to 70 per cent from 50 per cent for Hammarby Sjöstad, facilitating unabated private land appropriation for profiteering motives, resulting in the aforementioned deletion of the housing assistance programmes and abatement of potential climate risks for low-income communities. Observable in this case is the potent force wielded by the processes of political economy in Stockholm’ city council. Management of natural resources such as land was subjected to neoliberal rationales patronised by incumbent political representatives, resulting in a new, exclusivist template of urban growth that was accompanied by adverse socio-ecological ramifications. Such a policy differed starkly from the socialist ideologies of public land resource ownership espoused by erstwhile local government actors. The latter would be characterised by a relatively moderate artificialised urban transformation of nature stemming primarily from its non-commodification and consumer reimbursement in the event of excessive profits, limit on resource quantity extraction, compact, integrated multi-resource extension of water and electricity through the same parcel of land (Rutherford, 2008), and cross-subsidisation of profitable and loss-making public units using the Swedish *bolag* system. These public welfare policy instruments mitigated the negative socio-ecological externalities emerging from natural

resource management which were significantly eroded due to the neoliberal shifts in local political economy instituting disjointed and inequitable urban growth.

To put into perspective how such neoliberal political economy shifts relate to institutional and legal land regulation deficits, let us consider a reinforcing feedback loop. Ascension of local political parties catering to free-market interests invests in them the institutional agency to morph existing executive local-level urban policy—in the form of masterplans, orders, or taxation rules—to facilitate private land resource proprietorship (Hammarby Sjöstad) or augment land usufruct rights of private entities (Stockholm Energi) and minimise state regulatory presence by debilitating institutional safeguards against extractive resource utilisation. This move grants private entities the power to “greenwash” sustainable land-usage (Rutherford, 2008) by claiming to adhere to equitable, moderated employment of natural resources whilst effectuating diametrically opposite production decisions. Such greenwashing exacerbates climate risks, in the form of fuel poverty and resource shortage, that eventually widens socioeconomic inequality between different income quartiles. This facilitates resource concentration in the hands of the minority elite, which uses it as social capital to exercise firm control on local government bodies to continue creating bigger spaces for institutional deficits with regards to urban land-use regulation. Hence, bourgeois private entities as well as their elected neoliberal collaborators have a symbiotic relationship with debilitated institutional and legal land regulation deficits; both aggravate each other.

Figure 2: A systems-thinking feedback loop displaying how neoliberalisation of urban land-use institutions exacerbates climate injustice



Source: Author

Insights from the Developing World: Bridging Theory and Real-Time Facts

Urban political ecology insights hold true not only in the extensively discussed case of Stockholm city, but also with respect to the urban spaces of the developing world such as India and Latin American countries. Protection of precious natural ecosystems such as the East Kolkata Wetlands from urban land-use change through construction activities is substantially hindered by an unscrupulous capitalist axis of local, state-level politicians, members of the wetlands protection authority (EKWMA) and real-estate developers (Sangameswaran, 2018).

Such manifestations of a monetarist political economy are too considerable to look past when they are accompanied by progressively weakening institutional land regulation provisions for protected natural sites such as East Kolkata Wetlands. Bourgeois institutional collaborators, akin to Stockholm's case, have amplified wetland conservation policy deficits by not only refraining from expelling illegal constructions around protected wetlands, but also by actively perpetrating such ecologically destructive activities by amending the state-level wetland protection law to award themselves greater agency for converting parts of the wetland into infrastructural development sites (Basu, 2017; referred in Sangameswaran, 2018). Even in this case, the legal provisions restricting land conversion are acutely fragile as they abound in ambiguity, the latter now operating as escape clauses. Important to note, is that despite the wetlands being publicly owned for the most part, natural resource exploitation and unsustainable land-use practices are still abundantly observed. Hence, socialist mandates for natural resource management will ultimately ring hollow unless they centralise participatory policymaking with marginalised local communities which in the case of East Kolkata Wetlands are the peri-urban fishermen, cultivators, and several other informal sector professionals who stand generally invisibilised (Dembowski, 2001; cited in Sangameswaran, 2018).

The constant encroachment of urbanisation processes into the peri-urban region of wetlands is symptomatic of a globally encompassing ideology, which seeks to define urban development through the processes of continued capital accumulation, creation of privately-owned industrial landscapes, and an outward expansion of urban spaces; known, in other words, as "urban sprawl." Foregrounding the planning tenets of the New Economic Geography (Wilson, 2011; cited in Arboleda, 2016), such an extractive, resource-intensive form of urbanisation utilises land—existing both in the margins of cities as urban frontiers and as primeval forested regions—as the primary natural resource to be artificialised through built environment, thereby triggering urban expansion which caters majorly to profit-centric market interests of international trade (Zibechi, 2006; Smith, 2008[1984]; cited in Arboleda, 2016). This neoliberal ideology also has political economy implications, which is evident from the restructuring of national mining codes in multiple Latin American countries by their respective national governments to grant private entities landholding rights and concessions for mining activities, even in biodiverse natural zones (Fuentes, 2012; Toro, 2012; Pardo, 2013; cited in Arboleda, 2016); thereby gravely endangering endemic natural ecosystems and exacerbating climate risks.

This particular case in Latin America not only signifies political economy variations at a domestic level, but in fact brings to light the international forces shaping such variations. Adherents of neoclassical urban growth frameworks, international financial institutions such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank exerted considerable pressure on domestic institutions to dilute safeguards on non-renewable natural resource and land management to facilitate capitalist sprawling of urban spaces (Bebbington et al., 2008b; cited in Arboleda, 2016). Bulkeley and Betsill's (2005) theorisation on multilevel governance experiences materialisation in the aforementioned case; where a witting or unwitting cooperation between national state actors and international non-state actors effectuated the curtailment of regions of rich biodiversity in Latin America whilst accelerating the climate crisis through deforestation, loss of indigenous land, forced displacement of communities (Indian Law Resource Centre, 2023),

greenhouse gas emissions, multitudinal forms of pollution, and natural resource depletion across the Amazon rainforest.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A participatory approach of peri-urban natural resource management could be inferred from the project undertaken in the Hubli-Dharwad region of Karnataka, India, where collective, marginalised-community centric decision-making was undertaken according agency to Dalits, Adivasis, women and landless communities (Halkatti et al., 2003). Rapid land-use change for urban residential purposes was accounted for, that had significant implications for natural resource management particularly for landless, Dalit and Adivasi communities which required access to forested land for their livelihoods. Organisation of marginalised communities into *Sanghas* improved their negotiating power, ability to assert their concerns, and yielded specialised policy planning insights such as creation of forest committees to govern peri-urban forest land. Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) are important techniques of community-centric policymaking, that contributed to contextually relevant project recommendations designed to suit the needs of the marginalised, through consistent community engagement and bridging information asymmetry. This project brings to light how urban frontier land-use could possibly be directed towards rural and peri-urban livelihoods through ownership, usage rights accorded to marginalised communities and by keeping these land parcels contained within the rural or peri-urban space, instead of being captured by urban sprawl through real-estate constructions. An example of this was dedicating peri-urban non-forest land to agro-forestry for sustainable livelihood of disadvantaged groups instead of advocating for its commercialised land-use change into urban built environment and private property, as part of the Hubli-Dharwad project (Halkatti et al., 2003).

The case studies discussed above in-depth hold a mirror to the innumerable institutional deficiencies in land-use governance. Theoretical frameworks such as urban political ecology help us uncover the vast complexities of such inadequate land regulation instruments which expedite ecological degradation and social inequity culminating in grave climate risks. Certain best practices of land regulation policy could be implemented through consolidating various levels of community-engagement, and cooperation between local, regional and national institutions (Allen, 2003). Efficient utilisation of existing public land through adoption of “green and gray” infrastructure may integrate sustainable resource consumption into urban settings relatively more effectively (Wachsmuth and Angelo, 2018) with green infrastructure ensuring creation of vegetation-rich open spaces and reducing carbon emissions, and the gray kind infusing physical architecture with energy efficiency. The aforementioned techniques may only yield constructive sustainable impact and mitigate climate risks equitably if urban land regulation instruments are holistic, participatory, and social welfare oriented.

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Co-producing Resilience: Lessons from Bottom-Up Practices in Informal Settlements

Nidhi Sohane, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Sukrit Nagpal, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Rashee Mehra, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Vineetha Nalla, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

This paper/abstract is at the intersection of two themes—primarily climate change, risk and resilience, and social and economic inclusion, urban poverty, and slums.

Informal settlements in cities of the global South hold some of the most significant but overlooked climate-related challenges. These marginalised settlements typically operate outside the purview of the formal apparatus and witness fragmented, incremental, and informal development processes. They are consequently embedded in accumulated risks arising from material (built form), infrastructural (basic services), and legal (tenure) inadequacies, along with economic (informal work), spatial (tenability) and social precarity (violence and health). These everyday risks are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change induced extreme weather events rendering residents of these settlements into deeper vulnerability and making them more susceptible to poverty traps.

There is a need to analyse and explore practices that are sustainable and scalable, and mainstream resilience to risks—both everyday risks and those that are climate change related. We hypothesise that co-production and capacitation are critical means of building agency and resilience of vulnerable communities. This paper uses two case studies—the *Main Bhi Dilli* Campaign (MBD) www.mainbhidilli.com and SEWA Bharat's *Zamini Adikar Abhiyaan* (ZAA)—to analyse and deconstruct modes of building resilience to risks in marginal settlements marked by social, physical, and economic vulnerabilities. Both case studies incorporate forms of co-production to build resilience of communities toward current and future risks but were implemented at different scales employing different modus operandi.

Main Bhi Dilli is a people's campaign born out of a vision to make planning in Delhi inclusive, representative, and participatory through engagements with residents from Delhi's informal settlements and informal livelihoods. A key part of the campaign was to demystify the upcoming Delhi Master Plan 2041 and create opportunities for residents to engage with and influence it through capacitation and mobilisation. One of the hallmarks of the campaign was its ability to bring together over 40 organisations from worker unions to housing rights CBOs, to local and international NGOs as well as research institutes and architecture and design firms, to understand the implications of the master plan on the city of Delhi. The organisations also worked on diverse urban agendas such as sanitation and waste, gender, housing, street vendors, domestic workers, construction workers, etc., and were thus able to co-produce intersectional research to add, challenge and reframe how the masterplan views informality and marginality in urban spaces.

Together The Main Bhi Dilli Campaign has created a repository of publicly held participatory research on master planning in Delhi through factsheets, technical reports and the suggestions and objections that the campaign members submitted to the Delhi Development Authority in 2021 during its public consultation process. The campaign's modes of operating give us valuable insights on the ability of marginalised populations to assert and participate in formal planning processes which have historically excluded them.

The SEWA case study draws from the authors' implementation and evaluation of a three-year pilot project undertaken by the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA Bharat) focused on women's empowerment. The project worked closely with informal workers in settlements across Delhi and Patna on a spectrum of informal land tenure status, for example in Delhi the SEWA team worked on building knowledge of various government departments that govern access to services such as water, electricity, community toilets, sanitation, etc. In Patna the team assisted the women residents to seek relief from annual flooding of their communities by engaging with the elected officials of urban local bodies. Through similar modes viz. demystification of knowledge, capacitation and mobilisation of women, the project built awareness and access to basic infrastructure services and tenure security for women in these settlements, in the process building the capacity of marginalised communities to seek out services and infrastructure that can build resilience in these communities.

The paper draws from the authors' participation in both these cases. The paper employs a mixed-methods approach by relying on the authors' insights from evaluation and implementation, activism, and secondary literature. Through this it will first conceptualise these forms of co-production as a method to negotiate and upgrade adequate infrastructure in vulnerable settlements. In doing so, it raises the developmental baseline, reduces everyday risks and in turns builds the capacity of residents to withstand future risks including those related to climate change. Thus, we investigate how incorporating *co-production and capacitation* can reduce everyday risks in these settlements and in turn raise capacity/resilience to climate change related risks.

BIO OF SPEAKERS

Rashee Mehra

Rashee Mehra is a Consultant in Academics & Research at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS). Her research focuses on issues of activism, urban planning, and social protection. At IIHS she works on creating research on social movements to support the work of activists and practitioners who engage with marginalized urban geographies. She is one of the coordinators of the Main Bhi Dilli Campaign.

Sukrit Nagpal

Sukrit Nagpal is a Senior Associate at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS). He is a researcher and practitioner with a focus on issues of urban housing, sanitation, and informal work. Prior to joining IIHS, Sukrit led the land rights vertical at SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association).

Gram-Bangla: Peri-Urban Communities and Marginality in The Sundarbans

Ishita Agrawal, Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Constance Adeline, Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Prachi Rawat, Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Unlocking the Layers of Urban Marginality in the Sundarbans: A Multidisciplinary Exploration

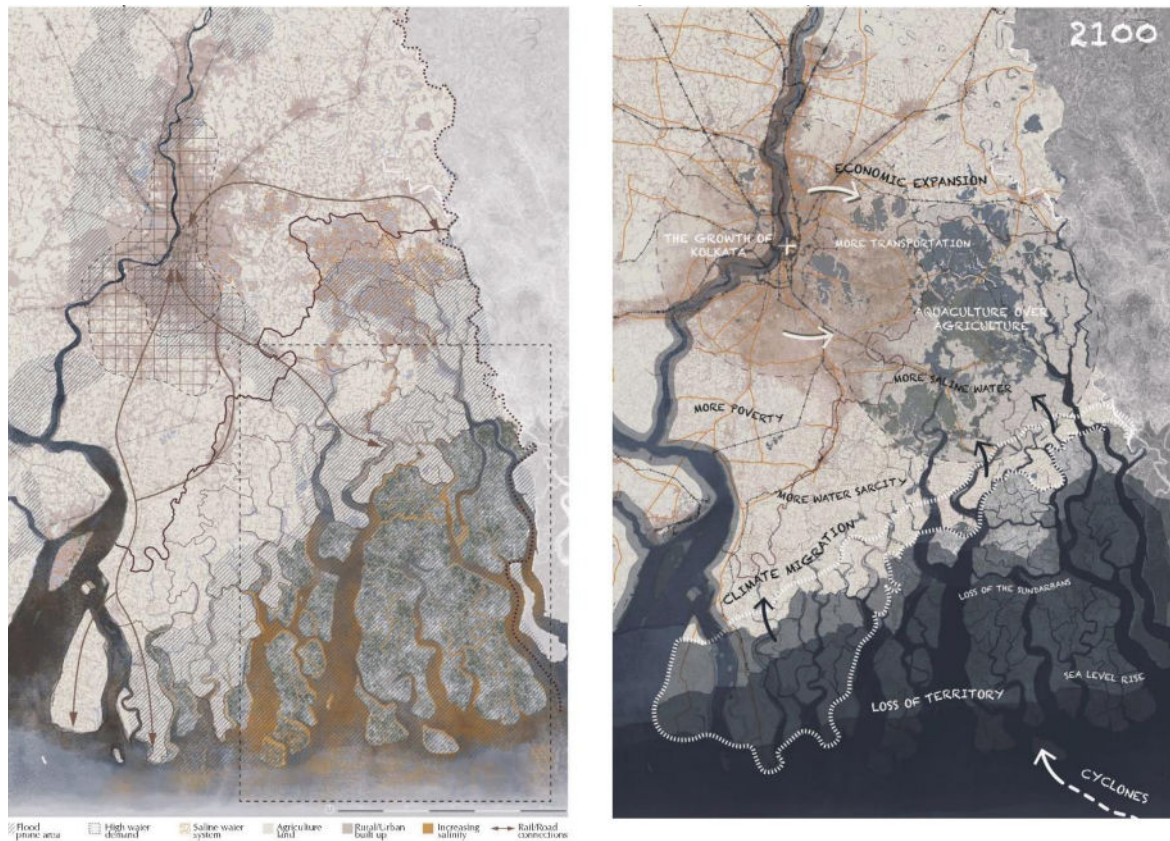
Nestled within the delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers, the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, stands as a testament to the intricate interplay of nature and human existence. It is a distinctive region at the nexus of environmental vulnerability and urban development. This unique region is home to approximately four million people and is considered one of the most fragile ecosystems globally. However, the Sundarbans faces severe climate-related challenges, amplifying vulnerabilities and giving rise to marginalities. Before delving into the nuanced concept of marginality in this context, it is essential to understand the complexities of the Sundarbans.

The Sundarbans: A Microcosm of Fragility and Resilience

The Sundarbans, with its constantly evolving landscape shaped by the deltaic confluence of mighty rivers, bears witness to perpetual transformation. This region, comprising dense mangrove forests and a mosaic of waterways, is home to a delicate ecosystem and a human population deeply entwined with its natural rhythm. Amidst this complexity, the Sundarbans faces an existential threat—climate change. As climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities, the Sundarbans experience a myriad of challenges, from intensifying cyclones to rising sea levels. The resultant urban marginality is marked by issues such as low resource management, mass migration, and compromised community livelihoods. With approximately 4.5 million people living in the Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve, it highlights the importance of balancing economic development with environmental protection in West Bengal.

The conclusion map below encapsulates several significant challenges confronting the region, mainly Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve and its relation to the city of Kolkata. These challenges include floods triggered by cyclones and rising sea levels, the densely woven urban landscape of Kolkata imposing heightened demands on resources, particularly water, the escalating salinity levels in water and soil, the depletion of mangroves, and the expanding scope of aquaculture activities. Additionally, a weak transportation network connecting the urban expanse of Kolkata to the Sundarbans is highlighted. The projected devastation map shows that by the year 2100, the impacts of climate change is likely to exacerbate existing challenges, such as poverty and lack of access to basic services. Urgent action is needed to address these challenges and build resilience in the region for the future. Marginalised communities are the ones that are facing higher vulnerabilities, making them more susceptible to the negative impacts of various challenges faced by the region.

Figure 3: Synthesis map depicting the challenges in the region between Kolkata and Sundarbans biosphere reserve (left); Projected devastation map, 2100 (right)



(Source: Author)

Defining Urban Marginality in the Sundarbans

Urban marginality in the Sundarbans manifests because of the confluence of climate change-induced challenges and socio-economic vulnerabilities. As human activities contribute to the rise in greenhouse gas concentrations globally, the Sundarbans, with its fragile ecosystem, bears the brunt. The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has surged by 47 per cent since pre-industrial times (NASA, 2022) leading to sea level rise, extreme weather events, and a cascade of consequences. In this context, urban marginality refers to the systemic exclusion and vulnerability experienced by communities residing in the Sundarbans, accentuated by poverty, limited access to basic services (health, education, etc), and the intricate socio-economic fabric of the region.

The Sundarbans in Numbers: Urbanisation, Vulnerability, and Resource Management

The state of West Bengal, home to the Sundarbans Forest and the city of Kolkata, serves as the backdrop for the unfolding drama of urban marginality. With a population of around 103 million and a population growth rate of approximately 9.13 per cent between 2011 and 2021, West Bengal grapples with the paradox of progress and vulnerability (UNDP, 2020). Urbanisation, representing around 36.4 per cent of the total population, is fuelled by a diverse industrial base, including jute, tea, textiles, chemicals, and engineering. However, approximately 19.98 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, and around 15 million people are vulnerable to cyclones, sea level rise, salinity intrusion, and flooding (UNDP, 2020). This confluence of numbers

sets the stage for an exploration of urban marginality rooted in the Sundarbans' socio-economic fabric.

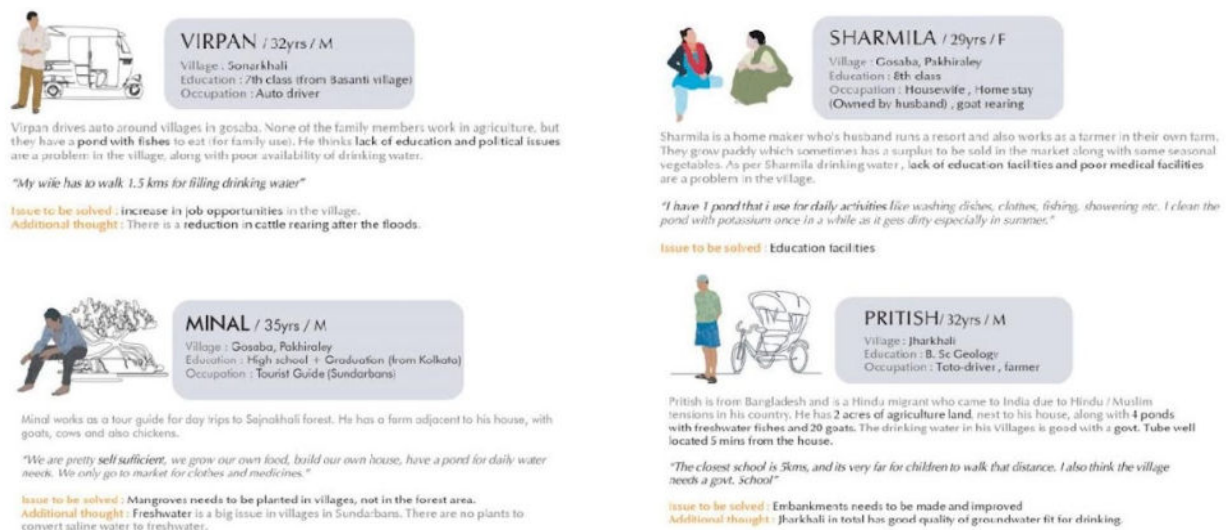
Climate Change Impacts and the Cumulative Challenges of Urban Marginality

With escalating climate change, the Sundarbans, renowned for its abundant biodiversity and reliance on fishing and agriculture, confronts a risky future, suggesting that the region may witness a staggering 96 per cent reduction in forest cover by 2100, displacing over 6 million inhabitants (Dasgupta et al., 2015). The rise in sea levels, contributing to heightened salinity in freshwater sources, adds another intricate layer of challenge to the livelihoods of local communities.

The consequences of climate change has culminated in a formidable convergence of poverty, resource scarcity, and vulnerability. As villages are compelled to migrate from low-lying areas to elevated terrain, inevitable conflicts over resources ensue, amplifying the strain on land and water resources (Rakshit et al., 2020). This intricate interplay further convolutes the narrative of urban marginality in the region.

The subsequent local narratives provide specific cases from Sundarbans villagers, aspires to offer a more nuanced and context-specific understanding of the challenges faced by the marginalised groups. These cases serve as poignant illustrations of the intricate web of issues stemming from climate change and its cascading impact on the socio-economic fabric of the Sundarbans.

Figure 4: Interviews of locals from the villages in Sundarbans



(Source: Author)

Nature-Based Solutions, Humanitarian Landscapes, and Indigenous Wisdom

Efforts are being made to build resilience in marginalised communities in the Sundarbans region. The focus is on enhancing their capacity to withstand, adapt to, and recover from the challenges they face. This can involve initiatives to improve access to resources, education, healthcare, and sustainable livelihoods. By addressing the underlying factors that contribute to

marginalisation, resilience-building efforts aim to empower communities to navigate and overcome adversities, ultimately reducing the impact of marginalities.

In the context of the Sundarbans, building resilience involves implementing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), promoting sustainable resource management, enhancing community preparedness for climate-related events, and addressing socio-economic disparities. These efforts contribute not only to the resilience of the communities but also to the reduction of urban marginality in the region. Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) have emerged as a promising approach to mitigating the impacts of climate change. These solutions stand out as a potential avenues for mitigating urban marginality in this ecologically sensitive region. These practices leverage natural systems to address environmental, social, and economic challenges in the Sundarbans. These solutions, rooted in indigenous knowledge and sustainable practices, can address the unique challenges posed by climate change and urbanisation. The innovative landscape measures not only mitigate the impacts of climate change but also promote better resource management in the rural context. Simultaneously, the concept of humanitarian landscapes dynamic and responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities, gains prominence, ensuring resilience even in the aftermath of disasters. Moreover, the Sundarbans holds within its folds indigenous methods of resource management, providing valuable insights into sustainable land-use practices that have sustained communities for generations. For instance, the aquaculture practices can be converted to AMA, associating aquaculture with forestry by means of a greenbelt of mangrove along shorelines. This helps in mangrove restoration, while the community can benefit from the provisioning services of mangroves, improved water quality for the shrimps etc. Restoring the coasts using sustainable dams, network of permeable structures which trap the mud sediments for mangroves to recover and restore. This system unlike dams and dykes works with the forces of nature instead of fighting against it. Shifting to salt tolerant agriculture in the areas more prone to saltwater intrusion, during cyclones.

Figure 5: Plan of a 2 km village radius showing the use of nature-based solutions to address the challenges

Figure 6: Nature based solutions.



(Source: Author)

Fostering Dialogue, Collaboration, and Knowledge Exchange: In concluding this exploration, the urgent need for adaptive and resilient design principles resonates. However, the complexity of the Sundarbans demands a collaborative and multidisciplinary approach. The nature-based approach project seeks to create a space for dialogue, collaboration, and the exchange of knowledge among researchers and practitioners invested in understanding and addressing urban marginality in the Sundarbans. By bringing together an assortment of methods, questions, and perspectives in relation with architecture, urban and landscape solutions, we aim to unravel the intricacies of urban marginality, fostering a comprehensive understanding that transcends disciplinary boundaries. In addition, a critical aspect that deserves attention is the inclusion of local voices and community engagement. Integrating local perspectives is crucial for understanding the lived experiences of urban marginality and ensuring that any proposed solutions align with the needs and aspirations of the people directly affected. Moreover, by engaging with local communities, the project not only facilitates the exchange of knowledge but also promotes a sense of ownership and agency among the residents. This participatory model acknowledges that solutions must be co-created with the people of the Sundarbans, rather than imposed upon them. In doing so, the project aims to cultivate a collaborative ethos that transcends not only disciplinary boundaries but also bridges the gap between researchers, practitioners, and the communities directly impacted.

Only by embracing a community-centric perspective within the framework of dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange, can we hope to build resilience, promote sustainable development, and navigate the complex urban challenges faced by the Sundarbans in the era of climate change.

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Pigs in Informalised and Invisibilised Caste Ecologies in Delhi

Sneha Gutgutia, National Institute of Advanced Studies

Delhi has been studied, written about, and rewritten a thousand times. The subject has always been people, places, and events. Memories related to the city as well as its present has been a thoroughly anthropocentric account of incidents, practices and stories. But that does not paint a complete picture or even a correct one. Not just Delhi, but any landscape for that matter, is impossible to imagine without its nonhuman inhabitants. A large population of nonhuman animals, especially livestock, reside in Indian cities (Smil, 2011 as cited in Barua, 2016). Livestock keeping is in fact indispensable for the physical, cultural, social, and economic wellbeing of the poor in developing economies as (Randolph et al., 2007) it improves health by acting as sources of food, provides additional income ensuring financial security, proves to be an important asset that can be easily sold for money in times of distress, and are elemental for recreation and fulfilment of socio-cultural values (Hovorka, 2008). However, this is a highly anthropocentric understanding of urban lives of animals. The truth is that, in the urban, the lives of nonhuman animals is inextricably interwoven with the everyday lives of people (Hovorka, 2008; Randolph et al., 2007) which is beyond an understanding of animals as simply utilitarian. And so much so that it wouldn't be wrong to say that the urban is thoroughly a nonhuman affair.

Animals that are witnessed every day in this city—pigs around the *nalas* (drains), cows at road junctions and garbage dumps, dogs territorialising the streets, goats and chicken tied to *jhopris* (huts), and kites circling over municipal waste dumps—are only some examples of the myriad ways in which nonhuman animals exert their presence in the city. The above examples show that the urban offers these animals various settings to thrive and animals perform important ecological functions, for example, management of solid waste. In a way, nonhuman animals have carved a niche for themselves in the urban. Urban form, planning and design affect animal lives as animals navigate through the city in search for places to forage and live; in turn shaping urban dynamics, processes and ecologies (Hovorka, 2008).

This paper is about one such animal found in the urban, the pig, that is being reared, slaughtered or sacrificed, sold as pork and offered to the Gods or eaten at feasts in informal settlements across Delhi. The lives of these urban pigs, that enable people to lead fulfilling lives—socially, culturally and economically—were found to be enmeshed in slum economies and ecologies. A highly fragmented Indian social structure based on caste where Dalit¹ communities, such as, the Valmiki or Balmiki, who rear these pigs, the Khatiks and Sonkars who butcher pigs and sale pork, and pigs themselves are discriminated against, based on lingering notions of purity, and relegated to urban margins, enables porcine ecologies and pork economies that provide for and replicate life in the city of Delhi (Gutgutia, 2020). These human-pig relations,

¹ Dalit is a caste group in India and now legally classified as one of the scheduled castes. The Dalit communities, of which there are many, were historically characterised as untouchables under the Hindu *varna* or caste system (not a legal categorisation) and considered untouchables. Though the practice of untouchability has been declared illegal, *savarna* (those within the Varna system such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras) Hindus still carry notions of pollution and purity and, therefore, the Dalit communities continue to be one of the most ostracized communities in India even today.

embedded in socio-economic and cultural processes of a hierarchical society, will be explained in great ethnographic detail in the first section of the paper.

There has also been extensive 'ordering' (Field, 2015) of animal lives in the city by controlling their numbers in public spaces and 'bordering' (Field, 2015) of the practices of the poor with animals by delimiting them to ghettos. In fact, the discourses around pigs, pork, and management of ritualistic or economic practices involving pigs in the city run deep into a colonial past when these were actively converted to policies, acts, and other legislations based on colonial notions of sanitation, violence towards animals, and hygienic meat to regulate them (Sharan, 2014). Contemporary laws and policies are either a continuation of the colonial ones or a derivative of them. Such practices of the state that aim to actively regulate the practices of communities involving pigs and the lives of pigs themselves in the city thereby eliminating them from the urban public sphere, both in the present and historically, not only results in marginalising them but also invisibilising them politically and physically.

Moreover, in India's crowded metropolises, discourses on urban environmentalism, everyday contestation for space, and an ever-increasing demand for real estate further marginalises the presence of animals and the practices of people who closely interact with animals—such as rearing, slaughtering and selling meat. It is well documented that such environmental politics and the pursuit of clean and green living spaces within the city threaten the survival of the working class by excluding their basic concerns for food, shelter, water and sanitation leading to what has been aptly termed 'bourgeoisie environmentalism' (Baviskar, 2002). Furthermore, animals that are valued as pets become a nuisance to public health and safety if found straying or being domesticated as sources of food, income, and other utilitarian purposes in the fabric of the urban social life and must be ousted from the city (Philo, 1995). Nonetheless, despite such discriminatory practices, animal life continues to flourish in the city, by occupying marginal spaces and on waste, and people continue to use them as strategies to deal with urban precarity (Gutgutia, 2020). These aspects have been explained, in great ethnographical and empirical details in the paper.

The data used for writing this paper has come from an ethnographic study conducted for a period of 11 months conducted between April 2019 to March 2020 in Delhi and is a more-than-human ethnography of everyday life and precarity in informal settlements in Delhi. This ethnographic endeavour tries to bridge the gaps in urban political ecologies, by locating the animal in informal settlements and waste relations, and animal geographies, by locating the role of caste and social relations in enabling more-than-human entanglements. By doing so, the study becomes a part of the newer sub-discipline, more-than-human geography. The main participants of the study were pig rearers and pigs, that were being reared by members belonging to the Balmiki community in primarily two informal settlements. Apart from that, pig butchers and pork sellers, the Khatiks and Sonkars, were also a part of the research study. Participant observation, in-depth interviews, and fieldnotes were the major methods used for research with people. For the inclusion of nonhuman animal participants, a mix of fieldnotes, photography, and videography were used to foreground animal activities and capture their subjectivities, agencies and lived realities. Interviews were also conducted with other people

residing in these informal settlements, namely, meat shop owners and the neighbours of the rearers; visits were also made to authorised and unauthorised, formal and informal slaughterhouses and meat shops across the city. A round of interviews was also conducted with various government officials from veterinary departments in the municipalities of Delhi as well as members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working on issues of animal welfare. Archival and empirical research helped bind the issues from the past and the present with narratives encountered in the field to make a coherent story. These aspects of the research will also be briefly introduced in the paper.

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Navigating The Urban Stray Dogs' Conundrum Lying Beyond the Margins of Planning and Governance

Mallika Sarabhai, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Chaitanya Lodha, Independent

Urban areas in India are often challenged by conundrums that are critical and tricky to address. These situations question the pragmatic role of different entities in a hierarchical power play. It begs to critically examine the role and influence of the hierarchical power of public institutions and people's agency through sticky situations that are products of apathy, lack of imagination, capacity issues, fear, deficit of funds, or imbalanced opportunities to avail right to live. In India, urban areas are commonly associated with the built environment and lifestyles centred around the politics and ecology of infrastructure provisioning. However, minimal attention has been given to comprehending the biopolitics of animals inhabiting these spaces. This has been exasperated by the rapid urbanisation that has led to evolution of unique challenges being posed in planning and governance in urban areas, issues like the management of stray and abandoned animals that traverse the city streets (Barua & Sinha, 2023).

Historically, colonialism and in-formality have co-produced a "state of exception" rooted in the socio-political construction of the human/animal binary. In this framework, both the animality of humans and the personhood of animals are negated, resulting in the exclusion of animal rights from the sphere of formal urban governance (Narayanan, 2017). Presently, urban planning in India lacks formal protocols and frameworks that recognise cities as biodiverse spaces or acknowledge the rights of various species to habitats that have undergone urbanisation. The human/animal binary obscures the understanding that 'human,' 'animal,' and indeed, 'dog' are not only natural realities but also social constructs (Narayanan, 2017). Planning practices scribed on Indian cities, though, have tried to undo oppression imposed by colonialism but are still embodied by colonial structures. (Porter, 2006) However, due to their invisibilities, animals are constantly oppressed, and their recognition has evaporated from cities, which is why it becomes essential to abandon anthropocentrism from city planning nomenclature. Anthropocentrism has branched out viciously in cases of dealing with animals, with multiple countries initially mass culling dogs since their (in)visibility was evidenced.

Urban ecology of animals stems from three modes, i.e., ecologies that are cultivated, feral, and wild (Barua & Sinha, 2023). These ecologies include rearing cattle or the presence of stray animals like cattle, dogs, and cats scavenging streets and garbage-laden areas alongside macaque monkeys, leopards, and langurs seeking food resources, contributing to asymmetrical relationships. In these scenarios, people exercise power over creating conditioned environments, compelling these ecologies to adapt and take specific dispositions and forms. Cultivated ecology also contribute to different forms of economy, such as cattle rearing, which often provides for an informal milk supply and the leather and meat industry. The contribution towards employment opportunities by feral and wild ecologies is limited. Which stems from animal rescue organisations that employ people to provide welfare and healthcare services.

The feral and wild ecologies however have had increasing frictional interaction with humans. Failure to address these issues has led to severe outcomes, which harm both the humans and the animals. Children, adolescents, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities may suffer from animal bites or, in some cases, lose their lives. Conversely, animals may be subjected to physical and sexual abuse, acid attacks, or even harm involving burning with firecrackers, either attached to their bodies or introduced into their food.

The surge in bite incidents can be attributed to these retaliatory crimes and acts of cruelty against dogs, their caregivers, and feeders, leading to conflicts among urban residents. Interestingly, crimes against animals or dogs are not reported and, if reported, are not taken seriously. Simultaneously, no records exist by the National Crimes Records Bureau about crimes against stray animals, especially dogs (Apoorva, 2023). The lack of records documenting animal abuse crimes makes it challenging to comprehend the consequences endured by the victims. It also complicates understanding the potential development of aggressive tendencies as a defence mechanism against humans. This situation could potentially result in incidents like animal bites or the endangerment of vulnerable individuals such as children, the elderly, and those with disabilities (Apoorva, 2023).

These incidents can be viewed through health statistics. India currently accounts for 36 per cent of the global deaths due to rabies as per WHO estimates. In comparison, it contributes to 65 per cent of deaths due to rabies in Southeast Asia Regions (Goel et al., 2023). Rabies, one of the oldest known zoonotic infections, is still neglected and endemic in India, which is primarily dog mediated. Between 2019 and 2022, about 1.6 crore cases of stray dog bites were recorded, while as per the State of Pet Homelessness Index, there are about 6.2 crore street dogs in India (Sachdeva, 2023).

This is as a result of the growing population of stray dogs whose struggle to find food fuels their aggressive nature leading to severe repercussions if the dogs are left unneutered. Their instinct to reproduce can initiate dog fights or conflicts with humans, and that might to revenge crime against them. Often, with stray dogs trying to assert some claim within the city boundaries, individuals or organisations come to their relief by providing care through food provision or medical interventions. The adverse living conditions of city street life can subject stray dogs to skin infections. When people lacking proper knowledge encounter dogs in distressed conditions, they may attempt to shoo them away. This can lead to the displacement of these dogs into new territories, exposing them to additional risks, including potential attacks by other dogs. While animal rescue organisations try their best to look after stray dogs, they also face financial challenges.

The rise in the population of dogs and dog bites can be attributed to the inability to sterilise and vaccinate them successfully. In India, the neutering of dogs has been a significant challenge for various reasons. Animal welfare organisations try to bridge the gap by actively neutering and vaccinating stray dogs. However, these organisations often fall short in funds and space to shelter stray dogs. Currently, most animal welfare organisations in different cities in India function on donations to provide welfare services to stray animals. However, with growing

crimes against stray animals, specifically dogs, they tend to acquire debts, which later hampers animal welfare service provisioning.

Interestingly, the stray dog population in urban areas is not always attributed to natural reproduction but to the abandonment of pet and breeder dogs. In India, one needs to be a licensed breeder to breed dogs. However, many times, people buying pedigree dogs must be made aware of the requirement. This has pushed towards puppy mill industries where dogs are bred repeatedly in ill-spaced cages, providing them with little to no care and later abandoning the breeder dogs on the streets when they are no longer able to service the purpose of breeding. The issue of abandoned pet dogs saw a massive rise during and after COVID-19 because owners often underestimate the care and finance it takes to look after pet dogs. Simultaneously, dog ownership is very classist, with one noticing elite society members owning pedigree dogs and neglecting the inclusion of native breeds. Further, the most common Indian breed, Indian Pariah, derives its name from the caste Periyar, which the Britishers coined. Many communities actively adopted different native Indian breeds before colonisation. In Tamil Nadu, it is common to ask about a dog's caste (interchangeable with jathi) when asking about the breed (Baskaran, 2017).

The responsibility for animal welfare within the urban realm is placed on the urban local bodies by the 74th Amendment Act. However, the inherent limitations of the act, particularly its inability to generate funds, relegate animal welfare to the background. Consequently, it must be prominently featured among the urban issues that local authorities are grappling with. This is further exacerbated by local authorities' poor infrastructural services of soil waste management. Since a significant portion of municipal solid waste (MSW) is organic, it becomes a food source for stray dogs. Often, dump sites are either near informal housing settlements or eateries. This leads to more dogs around garbage sites, fostering competition among them, contributing to aggressive behaviour, and putting human lives at significant risk. For instance, in 2019, Chandigarh generated about 470 tonnes of MSW and dumped more than 74 per cent on the dumping ground of the waste processing plant in Dadumajra. The city has seen a rapid increase in dog bites from 6900 to 10,000 between 2012–2018, with the population growing from 17,912 to 23,000. However, data on rabies cases in Chandigarh is not publicly available (Wright et al., 2021).

In India, the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules of 2001 departed from the colonial policy of euthanising street dogs. In 2023, the regulations were updated to the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules 2023 to manage the street dog population. These rules include provisions for establishing a uniform mechanism to address human-canine conflicts. They also outline essential care measures, such as providing food, water, and vaccinations to reduce the risk of zoonoses. The rules advocate for community involvement to contribute to the welfare of stray dogs, transforming the narrative from perceiving them as strays to recognising them as a shared responsibility within the community, hence referred to as community dogs.

However, there has been growing tension between the state, the judiciary system, and the animal welfare communities regarding these. High court orders of Punjab and Haryana asking

for the removal of stray dogs in housing societies of judicial officers exploit the loophole of the ABC policy of 2003, which prevents the relocation of only neutered dogs as interpreted by the court (Sharma, 2023). On the other hand, the Bombay High Court delivered judgments in favour of the rights of dog feeders. It provided a more inclusive interpretation of the rights of all living creatures (Alvares, 2023). Furthermore, there has been a call for finding an enduring solution for managing the stray dog population in urban areas with mass culling of them in Kerala (Sebastian, 2023). However, in recent times, judgment by high court orders of Punjab and Haryana over provisioning of the monetary benefits for being victims of dog bites might fuel animal abuse against dogs, which might further increase dog bites and ultimately lead to a mass culling of them (India, 2023). Even when urban local bodies try neutering programmes, there exists a capacity issue to run programmes. For instance, only two veterinary doctors were hired by urban local body in Chandigarh to look after the operation procedural details, which led to them being involved in dealing with nine or more operations daily. This might cause exhaustion and taxation where they, under constant stress, might get involved in malpractice and cause grave injuries and pain to stray dogs. BBMP is facing a similar situation in acquiring land where the stray dog population is highest to neuter and shelter stray dogs while they recover from their operation (Bureau, 2023).

The management of stray/community dogs still calls for more robust and humane intervention if one wants to curb zoonoses and cases of crime against dogs. Studies have shown linkages between animal abuse and child abuse, that 88 per cent of households that recorded child abuse also were involved in animal abuse (Apoorva, 2023). Consequently, there is a need to bring animal rescue organisations into conversation on managing the stray dog population in urban areas humanely without causing harm or injustice to them as they are by planning and governance norms deemed as informal due to their lack of assertion towards land ownership.

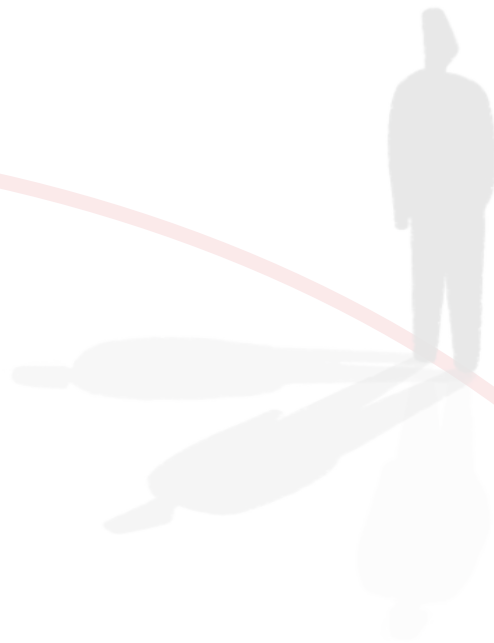
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PANEL 3

**Making the City:
State, Space, and Marginalities**



Urbanisms and its Imaginaries: Exploring the Rise/Emergence of an Educational City in Sonipat

Shehana Sajad, Jawaharlal Nehru University

In the short span of 10 years, the urban peripheries in the National Capital Region (NCR) of India have undergone tremendous regional changes with large-scale policy-driven projects that include increasing built forms, real estate, industrial constructions, educational cities/hubs, infrastructure projects, gated residential complexes, communities, and neighbourhoods. However, to what extent the inhabitants in those places are coping/adapting/acting to the new changes is relatively under-explored in the context of globalising places in South Asia. In the South Asian context, the state governments are promoting global educational cities not only to boost the local economy but also to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and to compete in the larger transnational politics and economy of the higher education sector. Lipman notes that for over 30 years of city development in the world, the governments always have 'privileged specific geography scales' and spatial restructuring of the city based on the neoliberal market principles and division of labour. Educational institutions have always been instrumental in the growth of regional development. The literature suggests that the relationship between educational institutions and cities is not confined to economic development, but also wide community networks and social relationships in the specific region (Lipman, 2011; Goddard & Vallance, 2013). As Jean-Paul notes, 'This is a crucial juncture to rethink the urban-spatial function of universities and elevate conversations regarding the problematic potential of (critical) urban knowledge to catalyse emancipatory social change'. Further, the cities have to be understood through major processes such as accumulation, stratification, societal diversification, and capitalism in the contemporary context (Savage, 2020).

Large-scale investment led educational projects and private institutions in the peripheries of NCR cater to major spatial restructuring by bringing new dwellings and infrastructure that offer new sociological and economic imaginaries. For instance, Sonipat and its surrounding districts in Haryana are one such agrarian region which is undergoing rapid changes and expeditious urban development (See Figure 7). This should also be seen in the background of larger discourses on global cities (Sassen, 1991) and the neo-liberal markers of development (smart cities, techno-parks, urban transformations, etc.) and international policies (UN, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development, etc.). However, the growth of 'educational cities' in different parts of the world both in terms of their nomenclature and their specific landscape suggests a point of departure from the earlier scholarship on education, urban and city. The earlier dominant traditions of literature focused on the knowledge-based development of university campuses, however, in the present context it requires the city itself as the major focus of research (Goddard & Wallance, 2013). These transformations also deeply imply the neo-liberal economy and political processes rather than being a locus of knowledge production. The educational cities/hubs and production of place in urban peripheries of South Asia highlight the transnational flows of capital, rural-agrarian transformations, elite desires at the cost of dispossession, urban displacements and increasing inequality, formation of social and cultural

identities, which, however, is not much discussed in the context of urban and education (Harvey, 2003; Mitra, 2015). There is also a new aspirational class that is emerging who are also benefitting from such development taking place in the city in a productive way. One such example could be as Nithin Batla (2022) notes that although there are uncertainties and marginalities in the context of regional transitions, this is also in a way, altering the lifeworld of urban habitats/lifeworld, which should not be overlooked.

Figure 7: Picture captured during fieldwork in the Rajiv Gandhi educational city, Sonipat, June 21st 2022.



Source: Author

This paper will discuss mushrooming so-called private educational cities and urbanisms in the peripheries of the NCR in the South Asian context. While the state and planners have their own agenda for place-making, it is crucial to understand how the people's perception of place and materialities and their mental life can offer insights into the future and dynamics of the urbanisation process in the peripheries. A place can invariably take non-linear directions such as a sense of place in the peripheries can also denote messiness, precarity, violence, contestations, formation of new social and cultural identities, lifelessness and apathy, and hopelessness which are all central to the idea of thinking with the place. While thinking about the production of place and its emerging materialities, sociologically, it is important to think about the 'beginnings' of such which helps to understand a 'future-oriented character of human action' agencies and subjectivities in a non-linear temporal manner (da Silva & Vieira, 2020, p.968). Clearly, dwelling and built environment are concrete social structures that can produce, reproduce and transform social relations and identities of a particular place, and thus, imaginations about a particular place and its materialities by the social actors have immense influence on the future of a city (Gieryn, 2000). Against this context how do we understand the role of 'educational city' in the production of place and space in rural-agrarian landscapes? What are the larger political economies of the state and higher education policies in fostering such regional transitions? How do the state and state institutions facilitate the growth of education capital? What policies drive the emergence and growth of educational capital and subsequent production of educational city and urban educational infrastructure?

As Kleibert et al. (2021) note, the political economy of educational cities as transnational urban actors is largely under-theorised and researched. These landscape changes in the globalising context have also found ways to the colonial reproduction of social structure and relations (Pati, 2022). Upadhyay (2021) notes that it is important to be critical of the extensive use of the neoliberal framework since it has also overlooked the ground reality, such as the transformation of agrarian land into urban forms of property. She notes that association and financialisation of lands are not much understood in this urban transformation of agrarian land (lands allocated for SEZs have already witnessed displacements of inhabitants and various communities and protests by the farmers due to its arbitrary and forced dispossession). Therefore, it is essential to understand that the current forms and patterns of urban life should not be confined to the neoliberal policies but also to the local and the regional forces and entanglements. According to Upadhyay (2021), the use of land, its meanings, and transactions as such have not received much attention in urban sociology.

Looking at the case of Kota city in Rajasthan, Rao (2017) observes that studies on 'educational hubs' are a relatively new focus of attention to the sociologists, geographers, and urbanists. Lipman contextualising urban schools in the cities has stated how the forces of globalisation and privatisation have contested and influenced educational policies, leading to geographies of exclusion and furthering the inequalities based on region and class (Lipman, 2011;2013). She argues that 'education nor urban scholars have much explored the new political economy of urban education and its relationship to the economic, political, and spatial changes that have redefined cities and their contestation' (2011, p.3). The term 'Urbanisms' carries significant theoretical insights to capture the imaginaries and urban transitions of the Global South (Robinson & Roy, 2016). Thus, it will be interesting to see different perspectives and structures of thinking of place and place-making by various stakeholders in the transitioning urban peripheries of NCR. Against this backdrop, this paper as part of ongoing doctoral research, shall focus on the production of space, place, and emerging urbanisms in the urban peripheries of National Capital Region such as Sonipat in Haryana. The purpose is to engage with urbanism not as an achieved end but rather as a process entangled with socio-historical and political realities. This process allows us to engage not only with urbanism in terms of its physical appearance and structures but with what often lies beneath the scope of observed and appearance. These developments could be engaged through the understanding of how people come to acquire and inhabit through the lens of a sociological approach. Some of these discussions have their origins as part of urban sociology at Chicago school. Graham and Marwin's (2002) work on *Splintering urbanism* is an important urban framework that is important alike for sociologists, geographers, and urban researchers.

Finally, the study's emphasis on infrastructure provides a lens to see the urban exclusions and inclusions with more nuance. It offers an impetus to understand urban society's materiality and social-cultural milieu. This paper shall focus on in-depth qualitative interviews, sociological theories and secondary sources of literature to capture the emergence, transitions, and urban lifeworlds of an educational city.

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Exploring Urban Marginalities: A Comprehensive Analysis of Social Inequities in Cities

Rupali Shrivastava, Independent

Keywords: urban marginalities, social inequities, socio-economic disparities, spatial segregation, exclusionary practices, marginalised communities

The present research paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of urban marginalities, focusing on the social inequities that exist within cities. By examining various dimensions of urban marginalities, including socio-economic disparities, spatial segregation, and exclusionary practices, this study seeks to shed light on the multifaceted nature of urban marginalities and their impacts on marginalised communities. The research utilises a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews, quantitative data analysis, and extensive literature review to provide a holistic understanding of the topic. The findings underscore the urgent need for policy interventions and social initiatives to address urban marginalities and create more inclusive and equitable cities.

Introduction

In recent years, urbanisation has led to the emergence of complex social dynamics within cities, resulting in the creation of marginalised communities and urban marginalities. This research paper aims to explore the multifaceted aspects of urban marginalities, including socio-economic disparities, spatial segregation, and exclusionary practices. By understanding the causes and consequences of these marginalities, policymakers and urban planners can implement effective strategies to address the social inequities prevalent in cities. In an era marked by unprecedented urbanisation and climate change, understanding the concept of "urban marginalities" is paramount. This research addresses the urgent need to comprehensively examine the vulnerabilities of coastal cities, shedding light on the intricate interplay between urban development and environmental challenges. By doing so, it contributes to a broader discourse on sustainable urban planning and resilience, making it of significant interest to scholars, policymakers, and practitioners grappling with the complexities of contemporary urban environments.

Problem

This work seeks to tackle the pressing issue of inadequate preparedness for urban areas facing marginalities—defined as the complex convergence of rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and coastal hazards. The project's scope extends beyond mere identification of vulnerabilities; it involves a holistic analysis of adaptive strategies, community perceptions, and socio-economic dimensions influencing resilience. The main argument contends that a nuanced understanding of marginalities is crucial for formulating effective and equitable urban development strategies in the face of intensifying climate-related challenges. The project focuses on unravelling the complex web of social inequities that characterize urban life. From unequal access to resources and services to discriminatory spatial practices, this research examines the multifaceted problems faced by marginalized communities within cities. The scope encompasses diverse

urban contexts, seeking to identify commonalities and unique challenges that contribute to the persistence of social inequities. The main argument is rooted in the necessity of addressing these issues for the overall well-being of urban societies.

Literature Review

The literature review section provides an overview of existing research on urban marginalities. It examines the historical context of urban marginalities, the various factors contributing to their formation, and the impacts they have on marginalised communities. Key theories and frameworks related to urban marginalities, such as the social production of space and the concept of the right to the city are also discussed in this section.

Diego's (2011) Uganda, employing the pooled GLS method, highlights the dynamics of risk and uncertainties in understanding poverty. The results indicate a reduction in poverty but an increase in vulnerability, particularly in socially excluded and marginalised groups.

Lefebvre's (1968) concept of the "right to the city" is a cornerstone in understanding the relationship between urban space and social justice. Lefebvre argues that urban space is a social product and should be a collective space where citizens have the right to participate in the production of their urban environment. The "right to the city" emphasises the importance of inclusive urban development, challenging the exclusionary practices that often lead to the marginalisation of certain communities. In the context of this research, Lefebvre's concept serves as a lens through which to analyse how the denial or limited access to the "right to the city" contributes to urban marginalities.

Massey's concept of "spatial justice" extends the discourse beyond individual rights to the broader societal implications of spatial inequalities. Massey argues that spatial configurations are intertwined with social relations and power structures. "Spatial justice" thus addresses the uneven distribution of resources, opportunities, and services across different urban spaces. In the context of urban marginalities, Massey's framework is instrumental in dissecting how spatial inequalities manifest and perpetuate social exclusion. It prompts an exploration of how certain areas become marginalised due to deliberate policy decisions, discriminatory practices, or economic forces.

Wilson provides a comprehensive examination of the enduring presence of poverty in urban areas and the intricate social dynamics that play a pivotal role in marginalising specific groups within these environments. Wilson's analysis delves into the structural changes within the economy, particularly the impact of deindustrialisation and the decline of manufacturing jobs, which disproportionately affect urban populations. Central to his exploration is the concept of "spatial mismatch," elucidating the stark disconnection between available job opportunities and the residential locales of impoverished individuals, thus amplifying unemployment rates and constraining economic mobility.

Poverty is viewed not only as material deprivation but as a result of interconnected factors such as physical weakness, socio-economic isolation, vulnerability, and powerlessness. (Philip, 2008)

Marginality is posited as a crucial element contributing to poverty, with its impact on living standards, particularly through insecurity and powerlessness regarding future shortfalls.

Conceptual Framework

This research adopts a multidimensional conceptual framework to analyse urban marginalities. Drawing on the works of theorists such as Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, and Saskia Sassen, the study considers the spatial, economic, and social dimensions of marginalisation. The spatial dimension involves the unequal distribution of resources and amenities within the urban landscape, leading to the creation of spatially segregated enclaves. The economic dimension encompasses disparities in income, employment, and access to economic opportunities. The social dimension examines the ways in which social identities intersect with urban structures, influencing experiences of marginalisation.

Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of urban marginalities. Qualitative interviews with individuals living in marginalised communities provide insights into their lived experiences and the challenges they face. Quantitative data analysis, including census data and survey results, offers a statistical understanding of socio-economic disparities and spatial segregation. The study also includes an extensive review of relevant literature to complement the primary research. Our study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining ethnographic fieldwork, surveys, and data analysis to capture the nuances of urban marginalities. Through in-depth interviews and community mapping, we gather qualitative insights, while quantitative data aids in identifying patterns and trends. This interdisciplinary methodology ensures a holistic examination of the subject matter.

Findings

The findings of the research reveal a complex web of interconnected factors contributing to urban marginalities. Spatial analysis exposes the existence of distinct zones characterised by differential access to resources. Economic disparities are evident, with marginalised communities facing challenges in securing stable employment and accessing financial resources. Socially, the intersectionality of identities becomes apparent, as certain groups experience heightened forms of marginalisation based on race, gender, and other social markers.

Results and Analysis

The results and analysis section presents the findings derived from the qualitative interviews, quantitative data analysis, and literature review. It highlights the socio-economic disparities prevalent in marginalised communities, the spatial segregation patterns within cities, and the exclusionary practices that perpetuate urban marginalities. The section also discusses the impacts of urban marginalities on the well-being and opportunities available to marginalised communities. The results section unveils detailed data on vulnerability indices across a spectrum of selected coastal cities, providing a granular understanding of their susceptibility to marginalities. Statistical analyses reveal correlations between socio-economic factors and vulnerability, emphasising the need for targeted interventions that consider disparities. Qualitative insights showcase community-driven adaptation strategies, emphasising the critical

role of local knowledge. This nuanced presentation of findings enriches our understanding of the complex dynamics at play in urban marginalities. The findings reveal a stark portrayal of social inequities ingrained in urban life. Specific data points highlight disparities in access to quality education, healthcare services, employment opportunities, and public amenities. Qualitative insights enrich the statistical evidence by providing a contextual understanding of the systemic barriers and discrimination faced by marginalised populations. The results collectively underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions, policy reforms, and community-driven initiatives to rectify these inequities and promote a more equitable urban landscape.

Implications

This research significantly augments the body of knowledge on urban marginalities by offering practical and theoretical insights. The identification of vulnerable hotspots informs policymakers and urban planners about priority areas for intervention. The study's theoretical contributions extend to refining existing frameworks in climate change adaptation and urban studies. Moreover, the emphasis on community-driven resilience has practical implications for fostering inclusive and sustainable urban development. As a foundation for future research, this work lays the groundwork for interdisciplinary approaches to address the evolving challenges posed by urban marginalities in an ever-changing world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research paper provides a comprehensive analysis of urban marginalities, highlighting the social inequities prevalent within cities. By examining socio-economic disparities, spatial segregation, and exclusionary practices, the study reveals the complex nature of urban marginalities and their impacts on marginalised communities. The findings underscore the urgent need for proactive measures to address these marginalities and create more inclusive and equitable urban spaces. Urban marginalities are complex and multifaceted issues that require comprehensive and integrated solutions. By understanding the interconnected nature of social, economic, and spatial factors, policymakers, urban planners, and communities can work collaboratively to create more inclusive and equitable urban environments. This extended abstract provides a glimpse into the rich tapestry of research on urban marginalities, emphasising the need for continued exploration and action to address these challenges.

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Planning with/in Exception: Urban Governance and Marginality in Kolar Gold Fields

Ranjani Srinivasan, Columbia University

Democratic decentralisation in India refers to the implementation of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts which mandated the devolution of power from national and state governments to local bodies alongside greater direct citizen participation in rural and urban governance. Using the Socioeconomic High-resolution Rural-Urban Geographic Platform for India (SHRUG), I consider how local labour unions, political affiliates, village heads, and municipal officials navigate the social, economic, and political pressures from constituents desperate for local industry, alongside rapid changes on the ground to the nature of the constituency itself—brought about by continuous redistricting. By ‘development,’ I refer to the shift in regional development policy in the 1990s from state-led industrialisation through the Five-Year Plans to market-led incentives and provisioning. In terms of urban planning, this has meant leveraging fixed assets, namely land in peri-urban areas to develop new urban hubs through public-private partnerships.

Introduction

Although policymakers are increasingly focused on managing India’s urban transition to ensure sustainable growth and inclusion, including growing urban scholarship on development and land acquisition outcomes, there is still much to be interrogated about the unintended consequences of planning interventions and their effects on marginalisation. My project seeks to fill this gap. This paper asks: how might a study of regions transitioning from one form of urban governance to another transform our understanding of ‘marginality’ as produced by contemporary planning interventions?

To answer this question, I look at industrial towns currently transitioning from the previous postcolonial Fordist regime of centralised governance to the contemporary model of small ‘d’ development (Hart, 2001), accompanied by greater democratic decentralisation, financialisation of land and restructuring of the industrial sector. Municipalities hosting Central Public Sector Enterprises provide an interesting site for study as they remain a critical component of Indian development policy despite decades of critique and neglect. In terms of public land holdings, urban infrastructure, and capital, public enterprises continue to wield considerable influence over the local political economy. Scholars such as Chatterjee (2017) have demonstrated that currently most robust State-owned Enterprises (SOEs) have been retrofitted as ‘state-market hybrids’ to fit within the contemporary paradigms of neoliberal economic policy. But in other cases, the push for disinvestment and lack of serious interest from private investors has led to loss-making SOEs being rendered defunct. Such industrial closure has had far-reaching consequences for residents in districts, *especially* in monocultural regional economies. Moreover, industrial belts in India often overlap with reserved constituencies due to the extensive reterritorialization of caste that occurred in the nineteenth century. The industrial decline of these regions has meant that Dalit populations are left in limbo having to choose between political representation or economic subsistence. Given the continuities between colonial and

the later nationalised Central Public Sector Enterprises, specifically in the mining sector, an urban transition that seeks to reckon with the fallout of decline often exacerbates these existing socio-spatial fault lines.

Research Methods

This paper is an outcome of my ongoing dissertation which relies on extended case-study research combining both ethnographic methods as well as geospatial analysis, drawing from Burawoy's (1998) prolonged analysis of the Zambian copper belt, focusing on understanding Kolar Gold fields within the broader processes of state restructuring and political decentralisation that characterise the decades after 1991. This bounds the site of study while allowing for a 'connect from the micro to macro' and allows for a 'reflexive model of science... [] ...that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge'. Yet, although the study mainly centres around Kolar Gold Fields, where the spatial unit of analysis remains the district or *taluka*, the project also gestures towards the region being, but one site embedded in a larger province that functions as a labour reservoir to Bangalore City and is deeply influenced by the metropolis.

Data Collection

This paper draws from data gathered for my dissertation. The paper examines industrial reports of both CPSEs and later municipal documents to study the shifts in planning and governance that have occurred alongside industrial restructuring. Further, the study will use semi-structured interviews with municipal officials and real estate brokers; policy experts and civil society organisations; key individuals in political parties and labour unions; and farmer unions and village leaders to understand and operationalise marginality. Lastly, the study will use the Socioeconomic High-resolution Rural-Urban Geographic Platform for India (*SHRUG*) provided by the Development Data Lab to trace redistricting efforts.

Case Study

I pursue this project by investigating Kolar Gold Fields, a district that has undergone major shifts over the last several decades. A Dalit-majority hinterland to Bangalore now to be intersected by the Chennai-Bengaluru Expressway and Economic Corridor, Kolar Gold Fields has been a site of intense political stasis, as planners, trade unions, party leaders, and residents advance competing and complementary visions of the district's future. Hosting two central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) whose workers have previously been key players in both local and national struggles for labour rights, the region presently speaks to the complexities of unionisation efforts in the face of resource decline and state rescaling. Further, the evolving political boundaries of the district brought 186 villages under its jurisdictional oversight in 2008. This allows for the paper to grapple with the question of marginality across the urban-rural interface and understand how the changing demographics within Kolar Gold Fields bring with it different challenges on how claims around development are articulated, contested, and realised. While Kolar Gold Fields' complex economic profile might make the specifics of its ongoing transformation unique, its diverse profile also allows for a multi-dimensional understanding of how changes to urban governance interact with existing socio-spatial structures.

Findings

Examining Kolar Gold Fields contributes several findings to the understanding and reproduction of marginality. First, the study observes that the closure of BGML immediately brought into focus the historic inequities in property ownership between the mining and non-mining residents in the region. The resource belt demonstrates complex layers of sovereignty instituted initially by colonial mining companies and later national and state governments that leverage bureaucratic ambiguity—especially regarding land tenure—to its maximum advantage. Mining communities have historically had common tenure rights with their settlements located within the boundaries of BGML's revenue land. Currently, ex-miners own their houses but not their land. With the closure of BGML, the boundaries of the Robertsonpet municipality in 2001 were to be expanded to encompass these settlements, but the transition remains incomplete. Legal challenges to the closure continue to plague BGML. Meanwhile, although wards have been formed and councillors have been elected, the tenure rights within BGML have starved them of revenue and made governance impossible. This has meant that local officials have been forced to adopt informal methods of budgeting and provisioning to meet the needs of their constituents.

Second, although the city municipality was reconstituted in 2001, the routing of the Chennai-Bengaluru Expressway and Economic Corridor seems to have jolted urban processes that had otherwise remained dormant. Kolar Gold Fields, as well as the surrounding regions of Bangarapet, Kolar, and Malur has been a reserved constituency since 1951. In 2008, the Delimitation Commission redrew the assembly constituency boundaries, thereby splitting the existing constituency (majority Tamil and urbanised wage labour) into two halves: the mining area (encompassing the worker lines and the larger mining region) and the non-mining area (the main town and commercial centre), where each half was combined with adjacent neighbouring reserved constituencies (which are majority Kannadiga and rural). This meant that each part of the historic whole that was KGF, was now politically enjoined to another region, that was demographically similar to a Dalit-majority but different in terms of the history of urbanisation, industrialisation, and labour. Meanwhile, the uneven effects of this transition have exacerbated existing inequities between the local mining community who have found their numerical dominance as a voting-bloc diluted.

Contribution

This paper attempts to complicate the understanding of neoliberal urban policy and state-society relations especially its effects on marginal communities. Although markets and planning institutions are mobilised as tools of coordination and discipline in regional development, they are never realised on a *tabula rasa*. Hence, industrial decline, regional planning, and connected political processes of governance and delimitation cannot be seen as merely a top-down process. Instead, they should be examined as processes that set in motion unpredictable encounters and contestations, shedding light on what Vanessa Watson terms 'the nature of the 'interface' between two important imperatives: that of survival and that of governing' (Watson, 2009)—thereby expanding possible approaches to planning.

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In The Shadows of City-Making: Exploring the Articulation of Spatial Segregation in The City of Ahmedabad

Aditi Pradhan, Jawaharlal Nehru University

That the future will be more urbanised than the present is an undeniable fact. With the ever-expanding urbanisation in the country, cities have become contested territories with complexities. A city's distinctive character comes from the city-making processes that shape its physical and social landscapes and the interfaces between them. These processes are not only controlled and/or influenced by the governing regimes, but are also challenged and negotiated by the inhabiting population according to their respective capacities and social positionalities. Therefore, city-making is a much more nuanced phenomenon than it is envisaged to be under the predominant idea, which flies around wearing the neoliberal cape professing to replicate the template of a 'modern city', usually inspired by the West. Numerous studies over the last three decades have discussed the multifaceted marginalities concomitant to the rapid urbanisation the country underwent post 1991 (Bhagat, 2011; Roy, 2011; Kundu, 2014; Jahan, 2016; Acharya et al, 2017; D'Souza, 2017; Aishwarya, 2021).

One such city is Ahmedabad in the state of Gujarat, which took a giant leap towards modernity and urban transformation to situate itself on the global map as a 'Global city'¹. It is one of the oldest thriving cities in India and has had a stark fragmented urban mosaic. The city has had a fairly welcoming stance towards private capital and entrepreneurship and city revamping processes. In 1997, the pioneer redevelopment process in a city, the Sabarmati Riverfront Development project got started. It aimed to rejuvenate the local urban economy and to attract global capital. The project included reviving the river Sabarmati, which was previously a seasonal river, across an 11 kilometre stretch in the city of Ahmedabad, by using water from the river Narmada. Two glaringly obvious observations one can make after going around in the city are—the river Sabarmati dividing the city into two parts, the Old City on the eastern side and the new city on the western side; and the conspicuous communal segregation in the city. The reigns of rulers belonging to different religions and the peopling of the city during those reigns have made the city's composition quite variegated, both on caste and communal lines. Segregation based on caste and religion has been a persisting characteristic of Ahmedabad. In contemporary times, the processes of city-making interacting with the social realities of the urban spaces have impacted the allocation and reallocation of people in the city.

The river Sabarmati not only serves as a geographical divide between the city but also a symbolic divide between 'us' and 'them'. A glimpse of the Old City showcases historical monuments standing at various distances, a mix of more or less shabby old housing structures along with retrofitted housing structures. Ellis Bridge constructed over the river Sabarmati has an arc-like structure. The new city is properly visible only when one climbs the slope of the bridge. The first clear sight after climbing the slope of the bridge shows a twin-tower like structure accompanied

¹ Saskia Sassen, a prominent sociologist and urban theorist, introduced the concept of the 'Global City' which talks about the evolving nature of urban centres in a globalised world, examining their economic, social and spatial dynamics within the context of global interconnectedness and power structures.

by many other high rises towards its left and right. '*Nadi ke iss paar*' (this side of the river) and '*Nadi ke uss paar*' (that side of the river) are the colloquial phrases used to refer to the new city and the Old City respectively. When asked to a group of middle-aged men leisurely walking on the Riverfront on the western bank, their response was "*Old city! Udhar kaun jata hai!*" (Old city! who goes there!). The city recognised at the global level for its heritage often gets described using negative adjectives by its own people. When asked, why they don't visit the Old City, the response was "*Udhar humare jaise log nahin rehte, dusre log rehte hai, daadi wale*" (People like us don't live there, other people live there, who have beards).

On the layer of a socially fragmented urban fabric, over a period of time, another layer of divide based on the perceptions regarding how urban spaces should look and feel, has germinated. A group of young men and women sitting outside a café in the new city were asked if they visit the Old City, and one of the men responded "Not if it's really essential to go there. It's shabby, shady, congested, unclean too. Our bikes get stuck in the streets." Many other respondents across different sexes and age groups had a very similar opinion. To most of the interviewed people inhabiting the western part of the same city, the eastern part is the 'shabby and shady' part of the city which they look down upon and where people from 'decent' homes shouldn't visit.

The neighbourhoods in the Old City are known as Pols, which were established primarily as a mechanism for ensuring the safety and security of the people of the same community from various types of uncertainties and dangers. It is a socially identifiable unit of a homogenous group of inhabitants, homogeneity usually based on the profession practised. Hence, every Pol has distinct names which reflect the resident community. Upon enquiry, it was gathered that post the 2002 communal riots, many households formerly living in Pols have shifted to newer parts of the city in the high rise gated complexes. Further enquiries revealed that these households mostly belong to the upper castes. An apparent reason for this shift, especially after the 2002 communal riots was the rising communal polarisation. Living in the vicinity of Muslims felt detestable.

However, this shifting to the new city has been more or less restricted to the upper caste Hindu households. The lower caste households which are colloquially known as '*Waghri*' still live in their old residential structures or have renovated them as per their financial abilities. Since the new city offered residences at prices unaffordable to them, they didn't really have the choice of moving. The economic filter embedded in the very structural conception of residential structures in the new city posed as a hindrance to them being eligible to find a decent place to stay in the new city. Along with financial constraints, the social stigma attached to these lower castes makes them unacceptable and undesirable in the new city which is occupied mostly by upper caste households.

Similar is the case for Muslims. Over time, the Old City has started being perceived as a Muslim dominated area. In the Muslim localities, which are called '*Mohallas*' the traditional house structures are very few compared to the Pols. There are newly built houses, renovated houses and even multi-storeyed buildings. Due to increase family size over time, and unlike upper caste Hindus younger generations are not moving to the new city, renovation or vertical expansion

was required to fit the growing population. It won't be wrong to say that the Muslims are mostly clustered in the Old City. When they are asked the question about why they didn't move to the new city, the standard reply was '*Idhar apne log zyada rehte hai, uss taraf bohot kam hai*' (Here, our people are more, but very less that side). If one delves into the history, Muslims being merchants and traders have also been financially stable, if not well. They might have the means to shift to a better residence at a better place in the new city, but living amongst their own people is far more important to them. While talking to the brokers, many of them reported that, non-vegetarians and Muslims are often not sold a flat or given an apartment on rent again because of the stigma attached to their identities. It is generally a rule of the gated societies. This poses the question, do Muslims really have the choice of shifting to the new city?

This paper aims to explore the questions of access to the new city, the underlying processes behind the question of 'who lives where' in the city. It also explores how urban spaces are built or rebuilt in ways that these spaces themselves act as a 'distinctive anchor of social discredit'. It tries to look at the symbolic dimension of urban processes and explores the possibility of looking at urban exclusion and marginality through 'symbolic defamation' of certain urban spaces. Interestingly enough, the intersection of ostracisation of particular communities residing there for ages and the disdain towards the presentation of those urban spaces intensifies the process of 'othering' and creates a strong sense of stigma. This stigma is often used to 'discredit differentness'. This paper tries to explore how such stigma is 'socially, politically and symbolically' produced. Marginalities tend to accumulate in isolated territories increasingly perceived by the outsiders as 'social purgatories and leprous Badlands'.

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Capitalist State and Space: Affirmative, Reactionary and Dialectical

Shilpa Krishnan, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati

Keywords: Space, Affirmative, Reactionary and Dialectical

Development projects orchestrated by the State have become an integral part of mainstream modernity. Modernity today resonates with capital-intensive development that aims towards creating new job opportunities, economic growth, and flourished trade. This development trajectory has rather shifted its focus from the rights-based growth, and applies very little emphasis on traditional livelihoods, land rights and ownership to commons. It also questions the efficiency of public participation which is a mandate in development projects. This study attempts to trace the transformation of “space” into an economic one only, as it appears to have created a change in the representation, association and access of the same space by the people dependent on it. Kerala has a long and rich history of negotiation for modernity in the form of “claim making” among the marginalised communities and labour rights. This includes access to “public sphere” for all and the efforts to sustain the access to these spaces.

This “progressive and secular” struggle for rights-based development transitioned into a capitalist form of economic development trajectory. The purpose is to traverse through the nature of “social” space as resource, product of economic activities, and changing social relations within and across geographical boundaries. This would give us an explanation of how stakeholders perceive development and in particular the Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited. Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited (VISL), located in the Trivandrum district of Kerala, India, has been the centre of several debates and discourses on development for some time now. This resulted from the multiple narratives surrounding the project’s feasibility and impact on the ecology and the livelihoods of the stakeholders.

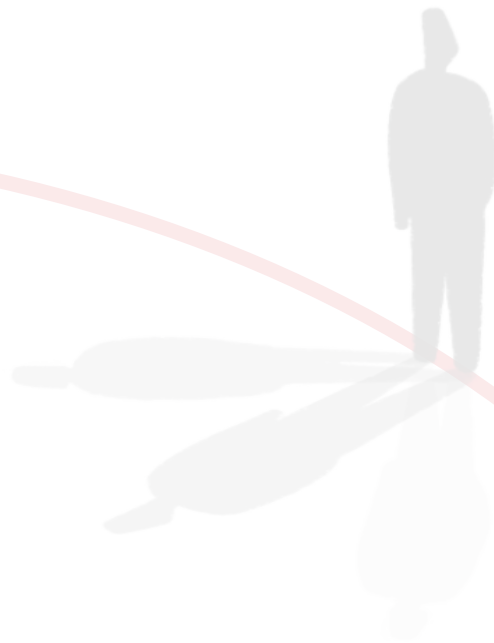
The study includes intensive data collection in the form of one-on-one personal interviews with the stakeholders (traditional higher income, middle income and lower income fish workers, state representatives, policy makers, activists, researchers, and clergy) of the Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited, India. The main source of data includes coastal community members. Around 80 per cent of the respondents are from the fisher folk community. These respondents were interviewed at their homes and place of work. The coastal communities in Vizhinjam include traditional fish workers, auto drivers, street vendors, hotel owners, real estate agents, and clergymen of the church. The Vizhinjam Port is located in Mulloor, and this region is mostly associated with agriculture, mussel collection and shore seine fishing. The south of Vizhinjam comprises predominantly of Latin Catholic Christians who are mostly engaged in traditional fishing. The Trivandrum Latin Catholic Diocese plays a significant role in the fisher folk community. Policy makers and State representatives are also important sources of data, as it is essential to understand their views on development and developmental initiatives. It is also necessary to understand how the State integrates traditional livelihood-based communities in the decision-making process.

Secondary data comprises government reports, public hearing documents and newspaper reports regarding the port. This seaport is asserted and promoted through the fervour of national pride and economic development. This is India's largest and the only multipurpose transshipment port. The port is being constructed at the southernmost part of Kerala, a state in India. The port's location is based on its access to transnational trade route lines and the geopolitical narratives surrounding it. It is also one of the deepest regions in the southern coast and has no rocky seabed making the construction of port easier. Moreover, the need for employment opportunities and "development" paved way for this port. Through this paper we also try to understand why capital intensive "development" holds a special place for both the State and the stakeholders. The data collection was carried out along the southwest coast of Kerala with special reference to the spatial and temporal aspects of the development project.

The fisher folk communities of the Southern coast in Kerala, are highly heterogeneous in nature which contributed significantly to the variegated narratives that arises in response to the development project. There appears to have emerged multiple narratives about the construction of this port characterised by the influence of the capitalist state on the space and labour dynamics. This study basically unravels how these different narratives are formed. we also try to understand how various non-human and human interactions have facilitated for the change in position over the course of time. Each respondent or stakeholder of VISL hold their own unique value for the coastal resources which is formed through the social experience obtained from the environment they live and work in. This environment is governed and manipulated by other forces resulting in changing narratives.

PANEL 4

**Thinking Aesthetics, Law and
Informality in the Ordering of the
Urban Margins**



Thinking Aesthetics, Law, and Informality in the Ordering of the Urban Margins

Jyoti Dalal, University of Delhi

Ruchira Das, University of Delhi

Chetan Anand, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Through the ethnographic study of urban margins, this panel explores the questions of statecraft that involves evoking law and aesthetic governmentality to ascribe illegalities on to the informalities of the margins. The present literature in urban studies has already established the vacuousness of the debate between the legal and illegal, and how these binaries are activated to only suit the ordering and governing of the population. The margins become the site where this tension becomes visible, as the seemingly formal, legal world of the city, by activating the statecraft, ascribes illegality to the informal lives that are lived by the marginal population.

In our work with urban margins, we have seen how city manages to invisibilise the margins and how the statecraft through documentation, educational practices and aesthetic governmentality is put to action in maintaining the order making function of the state. Located in the anthropology of margins, the present work demonstrates margins to be the site that make state functioning visible, and not its failure and how the state, that is an incomplete project, is trying to attain its completion through ordering the sites that appear chaotic and messy. By drawing from Agamben (2008), in the context of law, this means margins to be those sites of exception, where law is activated. The informal world of the margins become illegal as it comes in contact with law, whose pretence is maintained by the formal spaces of the city. Law has acquired a force today of turning the informal into illegal, as has been demonstrated by the significant works of Bhan (2016), Ghertner (2015), Routary (2022), Srivastava (2014), and Baviskar (2020).

Informality and its role in shaping our cities has long been recognised as a form of state of exception that far from creating any neat separation between formal and the informal rather produces different kinds of informalities, where some are attributed with legalities while others are banished in the zone of illegal realm. This fuzziness, anchored on the complex of law and aesthetic governmentality becomes a means of serving the ends of governmentality and the order-making function of the state. Literature has for long connected this to law's relationship to exception. Law has been theorised and is also seen to function through its constitutive exception which has brought to the centre zones where legal and illegal form a continuum. These zones of exception are made visible either in spatial aspects like informal housing, marginality etc. or in the practices of the state like decrees issued by bureaucratic machinery, which are not simply the objects that state want under its control but rather are produced by the state itself as part of its order-making function. This governance through exception is not just happening through the techno-rational apparatus but also through codes of appearance that Asher Ghertner (2015) in his seminal work has called aesthetic governmentality.

The question of law is intimately tied up with the modern state, which since the 16th century became the new political form of power, as Foucault would put it. Emerging from sovereign state and its monarchical, repressive power that unhesitatingly killed its subjects, modern state marked the shift to the power that had an interest and investment in the life of the subjects. Foucault (1990) in *History of Sexuality* notes this shift from 'to let live/to kill' to 'to foster life/to let die'—a power that was interested in administering the life and making it productive. The governmentality so emerged created constitutive links between consent and coercion and created ordering mechanisms whose strategic outcomes never became completely visible through its tactical negotiations; it is this form of power that Foucault called biopolitical. To activate this power, modern states need a recourse to laws, which weaves rights-based apparatus with the ordering function of the state. These two aspects of the law on one level are antagonistic to each other and thus create many contradictions in the functioning the legal executive complex, and yet the state's ability to keep together these seemingly contradictory forces gives statecraft its current form.

In the case of urban margins, it is this complex and contradictory relationship of law with biopolitics that becomes visible. The inherent limitation within rights become visible, as rights can mask the effects of power (Foucault, 1979; 1982), and instead of posing a counter-conduct (Golder, 2015) to the biopolitical state, they serve instrumental ends for the excesses of the state power. The political philosopher Agamben (2008) notes how in contemporary times, this balance between rights and the ordering mechanisms is becoming increasingly difficult. State, by using laws, is demonstrating a movement towards controlling the populations and is short-circuiting the rights that are the other side of it. Law is being deployed today to ensure control and regulation and not to question the biopolitical side of the state. This can be seen in the case of evictions (as is shown by Gautam Bhan), or the 'bourgeoisie environmentalism' (Baviskar, 2020) where progressive measures of laws are used to ensure the ordering of the society. The rational arguments woven around ambiguous categories of order, beauty, and hygiene have taken a force that finds continuities and establish fresh linkages with the traditional social exclusionary measures of caste, class, and religion. These earlier categories of exclusion are repacked fresh by deploying sensibilities which do not have any locus standi, legally and constitutionally, yet are able to exert strong normalising force. The aporia that so emerges is where force of law not only works independently of the content of law but can even be in opposition to it. Law and rights instead of being emancipatory and speaking for the cause of the marginalised become the platform that ensures the ordering of urban margins by providing a solid footing to sensibilities which are otherwise slippery. These are some subtle shifts within the spectrum of exclusion that further add to the difficulty in grasping the social markers of divisibility. For this reason, studying margins goes beyond a linear story of exclusion, and has to consider the troubling relationship between rights and biopolitics that bring into effect the matrix of inclusion and membership. This may run along the earlier fault lines of ascriptive identities, or may produce new categories of people that are included in the political community but are denied membership in it (Das & Poole, 2004) opening the contradictions in the liberal idea of citizenship at the margins.

The following three papers in this panel unpack these complexities that lie at the root of urban ordering. Under the present state, aesthetic governmentality is activated by transcending law through its deployment and not by dismissal, thus opening up the contours of informalities that further obfuscate the categories of legal and illegal. How are rights deployed to mask the power of the state instead of posing a counter conduct and a challenge to the excesses of the state power? What is the relationship of this rational machinery of the state with the aesthetic governmentality that blurs the margins, making them exist on the threshold of being visible and invisible? Being denied the visibility that comes with claims on citizenship, urban margins do not even enjoy the possibility of being forgotten—a phenomenon unknown to the modern statecraft. Existing as non-visible, this becomes a population that stands abandoned while simultaneously being accessible and available for any useful work of the state machinery. This panel will explore this nature of exception where the blurred boundaries of legal and illegal become visible. How this adds to the arbitrariness of state power, intensifying its control in the zones of margins are some of the questions that this panel seeks to unravel.

Thinking Exception in Aesthetic Governmentality: An Ethnographic Exploration of a Basti Located in South Delhi

Jyoti Dalal, University of Delhi

This paper draws from our ethnographic engagements with a *Jhuggi-Jhopri* cluster located in Southern part of Delhi. By drawing data from documentation and educational practices as they unfold in the everyday life of the margins, this paper is demonstrative of how aesthetic governmentality comes to the fore, and the relationship that it draws with law that obfuscates not just the categories of legal and illegal, but also of formal and informal, opening up divergent informalities where arbitrarily the categories of legal and illegal emerge.

The educational discourse is a potential site to capture the rationalities and the practices through which the margins that are rife with illegalities and informalities are disciplined and ordered in the ways of the urban. The paper demonstrates how lives of people and children living in the informal settlements take the shape of illegality for the formal world of teachers and the bureaucracy that runs the education institutions while parents and the children find school as a point that legitimises their right to the city. Education is at the fulcrum on which the disciplinary and biopolitical characteristics of the state meet; an urban order emerges that is built through the categories of beauty, hygiene, efficiency, discipline, and class assessments. In this urban order, the informal lives of margins get translated into illegal lives, and in this transition, the bourgeois gaze of the city capitalises on the aesthetics that is sustained as an empty signifier. Thus, the technical rationality is sustained by 'how things appear', and the aesthetics that governs the rationality becomes foundational through which schools discipline its children, and orders the larger population.

The nature of this aesthetic governmentality will be explored in this paper and its intimate relation with law and the rational machinery of the statecraft. Aesthetic governmentality is able to short-circuit the law, only by being backed it. This contradictory relationship of law being absent/present, or being present through its absence, unravels the zone of exception that helps in examining the nature of state. The paper will further explore the life at margins as a zone of exception by examining the emergence of petty sovereigns that demonstrate the intensified role of executives that surpasses the other arms of the state. What does it mean for margins to have a blurred existence, and how that is essential for urban ordering as imagined by State will be one of the questions that this paper will be anchored on by drawing data from educational practices specifically?

'Aestheticized' City Life and the Tribal Margins in a Metropolis: Negotiating the Inclusion-Exclusion Axis

Ruchira Das, University of Delhi

The paper is situated in the context of neo-liberal urbanism driven by a vision that centres on the idea of an aestheticized city life rooted in world class sensibilities, a conception that emerges from the idea of a world class city grounded in what Asher Ghertner (2015) calls, 'aesthetic governmentality'. This imagined landscape organises the city into markers of development. City aesthetics is shaped by code of appearance and desirability that banishes or invisibilises the 'ugly', 'polluting' spaces—the margins of the city—that are meant to blemish the 'visualised' landscape.

Amita Baviskar (2004) argues that the bourgeois gaze recognises the margins as disfiguring the landscape creating a paradigm of the encroacher. Therefore, the aim of aesthetic ordering is tidying up and beautifying the city by delegitimising the 'encroachers' and their claims to space and belongingness within the city or right to the city. Hence, it is significant to understand and deliberate how the city is governed in ways that easily legitimise such binaries, creating diverse forms of exclusion and operationalising techniques of disposability making those at the peripheries of the city illegible that as per bourgeois sensibilities and are meant to create obstruction in the imagination of the world class dream and hence to be abandoned. However, what is fascinating in this discourse of world classness anchored in the aesthetic mode of governance is that world-class aesthetics inspire among its potential subjects a will to participate in its discourse and to make the visual criteria their own as pointed by Ghertner. This is manifested through a shared imagination which Jacques Ranciere (2004) calls distribution of the sensible between the ones who are governed and the ones who govern. Those at the margins are therefore drawn towards this state injected vision and they see them as their own and appropriate the same ways to govern themselves. Hence what is interesting is to examine how this virtual imagination of the state becomes the 'real' collective imagination of the margins.

However, for the margins this imagination is not a mark of their resignation, but an effort made to be recognised as legitimate subjects of the world class project. The premise of this imagination is a false certainty and yet they are lured by imagination as it helps them negotiate and cope with feelings of unbelongingness, marginality and viciousness of the city.

In the context of the above framework, the paper aims to understand experiences of inclusion exclusion of the tribal margins from the lens of aesthetics. How are aesthetics emerging as a terrain for politics of the margins today over which the tribal migrants of Kolkata are trying to claim their belongingness to the city? The idea is to explore the city's relationship with the Santal migrants who have been permanent residents of Kolkata for more than four decades and yet are positioned at the fringes/peripheries of the city in socially and spatially segregated ghettos/enclaves/colonies.

These ghettos are responses to the brutality and the exclusionary mechanisms of the city. Aesthetic normativity emerges from such spaces of exception which are camp like structures where according to Giorgio Agamben (2003) law is suspended. In fact, law is enforced through its suspension—force of law. The ghetto being a disposable space becomes a zone of unruliness, and un-governmentality where margins are kept away from the realm of law and politics. Hence these informal spaces within the city become illegal and illegible in the world class imagination. It is not that the margins are incapable, but that they are not considered desirable of inclusion in the world class vision.

Capturing the lived experiences in the everydayness of their life in the city, the paper thus attempts to explore how the aesthetic mode of governmentality affects/influences the lived realities of the Santal migrants as this urban fantasy of world classness dominates the structuring and transformation of the city.

Thinking Aesthetic Governmentality Through Image-Symbolic Opposition: Exploring Children's Voices from the Margins of Delhi

Chetan Anand, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Veena Das points out that the relationship between urban processes and the city is volatile and this volatility has a decisive effect on how the urban poor situate themselves as political actors. Asher Ghertner has shown that the politics of the urban poor has an aesthetic dimension that structures the desire to participate in a future and a city which is exclusionary to the same people desiring this future. A world-class city as theorised by Ghertner is a diffused signifier and a utopian project which is oriented towards a closed and fixed future.

Through an ethnographic exploration of children's lives this, paper aims to examine how images of the city and the formal world at large operate at the margins and also the nature of discourse and language that these images give birth to will be analysed. Using Lacan's exploration of imaginary, symbolic and the real, it will be argued that images like that of 'world-class city' depend on an imaginary identification aka ideal ego which does not correspond to any symbolic identification aka ego ideal. Lacan has argued this to be psychotic structure where the subject is trapped in the world of ego such that the symbolic dimension becomes foreclosed. In this work I am not using psychosis as a diagnostic category but rather as a structure through which a certain part of our own world can open up for us and be understood. Language typically in this context is devoid of its ability to make things concrete and starts to function only when it is interpreted literally. For instance, children's reference to new India or Delhi becoming like a 'foreign' country (Paris, Singapore etc.) isn't a metaphorical use of language rather a literal reality that they are internalising not just from social media and TV but also through various programmes and functions in their school. It is this literal dimension of linguistic operations that is devoid of any metaphors and nuance that is implied in the conceptual category of diffused signifiers. By Ghertner that this work wishes to take forward through Lacanian writings on psychosis. Lacan has argued that it is this nature of language that gives rise to hallucinations in the subject in psychoanalysis.

Children's worlds are filled with an imagination of the city through their milieu that is typically hallucinatory in nature, where a future that has no real significance and relationship with their lives becomes more real for them than their own immediate interests. The aesthetic turn that marks governmentality is also visible in the investment of children in social media, especially in YouTube and Instagram. Many young children are consuming and even making content for these platforms. Content made and consumed typically either relate to videogames or to certain expressions of aggression like use of toy guns and mimicking of gang violence. This aggressive dimension of the aesthetic sensibility needs to be examined. Movies such as 'Pushpa' which are extremely popular amongst young children exemplify this aggression. It will also explore the relationship of children with education that is moving from its earlier technical-rational form into

certain aesthetic dimensions. 'Happiness curriculum' will be explored as an example of this movement.

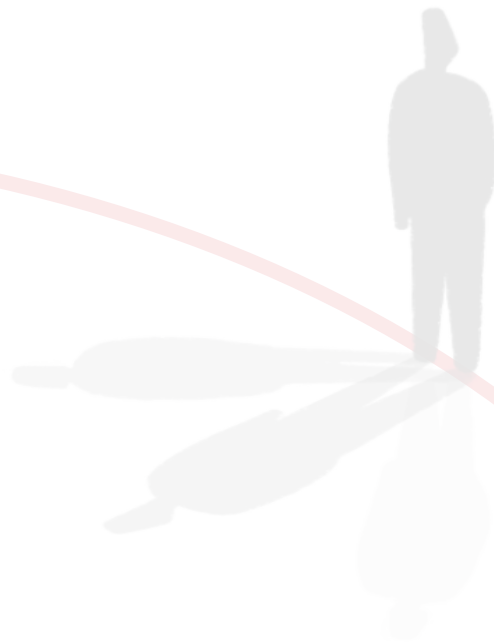
This paper will explore the linkages between in what ways aesthetics intersect with the political such that the nature of power/knowledge that is shaping the lives of children also represent the nature of power that is part of the order-making function of the state. The face of the state and its images that come in contact with the children will be explored through schooling and shadow education primarily although even policing and its effects also emerge in our interactions. The lives of children living in the informal settlements take the shape of illegality for the teachers and the bureaucracy that runs the educational institutions. The parents and the children find school as a point that legitimises their right to the city. While constitutional liberal forms of citizenship are one among many different claims that the poor make on the state, the nature of education is such that it gets entangled in managing the exclusionary pressures shaping the city. As education rests on the axis through which children's lives are shaped vis-a-vis the city, the aesthetic-political complex that is so formed is only revealed on this axis. This paper will argue that an order is built through the categories of beauty, hygiene, efficiency, discipline, and marks, with education being at the fulcrum in which the disciplinary and biopolitical characteristics of the state meet the lives of the children.

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PANEL 5

Thinking Through Marginalities



Thinking Through Marginalities

Speakers:

Aromar Revi, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Gautam Bhan, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

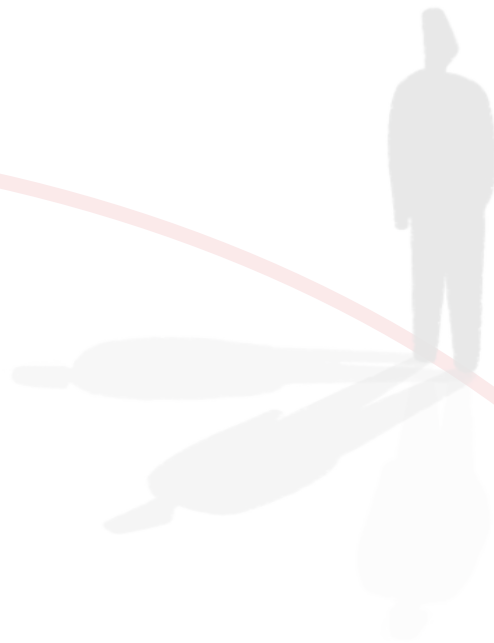
Sudeshna Mitra, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Shriya Anand, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Description: Research, teaching, and practice at the IIHS has engaged with the question of urban marginalities in multiple ways across themes, sites and methods over the last decade. This panel brings together some of our key approaches to thinking through these questions and opens up a discussion for ways to deepen, broaden and reimagine what and who constitutes marginalities, and where.

PANEL 6

Urban Housing Dynamics: Inequities and Social Realities



Producing Marginalities in the Rental Spaces of Peri-Urban Hyderabad City

Minu Anna Philipose, University of Hyderabad

As Hyderabad city has seen a rapid urban growth in the last few decades at the macro-level, it has also simultaneously weaved in elements of informality in its micro-levels to produce and sustain the demands of the urban process in the city. This urban process is sustained, in part, through a thriving rental market that has managed to keep up with the growth of the city. While the value of property in the Hyderabad Growth Corridor continues to remain unaffordable for even some of the middle-class sections of the population, a section of service providers resides and works in these properties as 'watchmen'. Only their residential quarters are formally constructed as a part of these buildings, while the informal nature of their labour is deliberately rooted in hidden and often-invisibilised gendered family labour. Using primary data collected through observation and interviews in the field, this paper explores the role of these 'watchmen' in producing rental spaces in the apartment complexes of the 'peri-urban' Growth Corridor, asserting their own 'right to the city' (Harvey, 2003) space, both as workers and residents, from their marginal positions as informal, domestic service providers.

Hyderabad city, particularly its Western fringes, developed the fastest in the last three decades, especially after the release of the Andhra Pradesh Vision 2020 document by the Chief Minister of the erstwhile United Andhra Pradesh in 1999 and the commencement of the Cyberabad Project. Since then, many Special Economic Zones were formed following contentious land auctions, and last year, the state even lifted some of the environmental regulations on development activities in ecologically vulnerable areas (repeal of GO 111). In recent years, this area became designated as the Hyderabad Growth Corridor, under a special branch of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA). These parts encompass some of the most expensive real estate properties in the city, specifically because of their proximity to the Financial District and the IT corridor of the city. In the recent years, this area witnessed an explosion of development of many luxury apartment projects or gated communities in accordance with these rising demands.

The speculative nature of real estate in these areas attract many people, even in the professional classes, to start building residential spaces, purely for the purpose of renting out, and this trend has only skyrocketed with the reopening of offices and schools after the pandemic. This is notably different from the fringes of other cities like Delhi where strong affiliations to the erstwhile landlord classes and castes remain till date (Pati, 2022). An abundance of the rental market today lies outside the gated communities, in the modified and added floors of individual houses and residential apartment complexes which offer a lot of similar amenities as their luxury counterparts. These apartment complexes are not part of larger real estate companies with multiple projects across different locations in (and even outside) a city; they are mostly developed by individuals who possessed or bought land parcels and constructed buildings in the same for the sole purpose of selling or renting them out. They do not showcase their projects in Property Shows such as those conducted by CREDAI or the Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India, with glossy brochures and attractive buy-in offers available

before the end of construction. They work by incorporating certain aspects of informality, and in my observation, one such aspect is the presence of a permanent 'watchman' living within the premises of the building.

Most of these residential complexes have a parking garage on the ground floor, attached to which is a one room living quarters usually kept for the caretaker/watchman/maintenance person for the entire complex. While the watchman's role is generally only assigned to the man of the family, his entire family lives in the residential unit with him and aid him in taking care of his responsibilities. The 'watchman' usually comes to live in these quarters with their full nuclear or even extended families, and the other family members take care of the rest of the chores in the complex including, and not restricted to, cleaning the common areas, collecting garbage, and fixing minor electrical and plumbing issues. The women, additionally, provide services to select families in the same apartment complex or even nearby apartments, who engage them for cooking and cleaning and other household chores inside their individual apartments. This family labour is, in a lot of cases, not restricted to the adults alone as even the children of the family of various ages, particularly young girls, also start contributing to the labour at an early age. In these apartments, the labour of these individuals and the many responsibilities of taking care of the apartment complex are denoted simply by the term, 'watchman', even though they are the caretakers, the janitorial and maintenance staff, or even a 'superintendent' as they are referred to in western contexts.

The respondents I spoke to, who were exclusively tenants who resided in these complexes, told me that the family of their watchman came from rural parts of Andhra Pradesh, except for the ones who did not know this information, and two of them even remarked that their watchman families also brought extended relatives or people from their same native village back to the neighbourhood that they lived and worked in here, to be engaged as watchman families in other apartment complexes in the same area (Pers. comm. in interviews dated August 1-4, 2023).

The caretakers and their families, along with the living spaces constructed for them in the residential complexes of the city are a particular feature found outside the gated communities. In a gated community, such informal arrangements are replaced by the appearance of formality, where uniformed guards at the entrance provide security, while the janitorial and maintenance works are performed by people specifically employed for the same. The domestic help in individual apartments is provided by a different group of people who work in different apartments during the day according to the schedules that are agreed upon between them and their employers. These workers are apart from the skilled and semi-skilled workers employed for the provision of other amenities like the garden, swimming pools, gyms and other activities. These workers, except for the domestic help, are overseen by the Welfare Associations in the apartments, or by the construction companies themselves, depending on who collects and utilises the maintenance fees from the residents in a block.

Property owners who rent out their apartments in these gated communities do not have a live-in caretaker like the residential complexes outside, but they are also able to become 'absentee landlords' here, as the needs of the residents are still met by this army of service providers

employed by the apartment complexes. Unlike the residential complexes where the owners have a say over the rules and regulations which are to be followed by the tenants, a lot of which are enforced by the watchman, the property owners in the gated communities have to adhere to the rules and regulations laid down by the larger apartment RWA or 'society' of residents. The appearance of formality in these many instances is not by accident, as the target population of these gated communities desire/pay for the idea of a 'modern, safe living space' where they do not need to see or co-exist with the families of a lower working class.

For the owners of the residential apartment complexes that house the watchman families, they can leave the family to take care of the building and its tenants entirely, whether or not they live in the same building. They simply have to provide a small living space with minimal wages to sustain the family. The owners of residential complexes in the city can leave the watchmen to deal with the issues and conflicts that arise in the rental spaces, at a small price. This is particularly prevalent in the residential complexes where the owner might own multiple buildings, or they simply do not live in the same building or city. Therefore, it is not a stretch to conclude that such watchman families are an essential component of these residential spaces, forming a valuable link in the creation of a rental space.

For the watchman families, these job opportunities in the city are better than those that are available to them in their rural, native places. With the rising rents and general lack of public transportation in the newer parts of the city, these often-cramped living spaces are the only way in which a family of domestic labourers can survive and work in these areas. They also dream that their children would get access to better schools here. As mentioned earlier, many of them also bring their relatives and friends from their native villages here, helping them recreate their networks of support within the context of the city. Additionally, by taking up jobs for the adjacent apartment blocks and families, the watchman families are able to augment their income. These watchman families, therefore, navigate their 'right to the city' in their own different ways.

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Social Housing and Social Mobility of the Urban Poor Transgender People: Positive Deviants from Resettlement Sites of Chennai

Sunitha Don Bosco, Anna University

Velayutham C, Anna University

Rekha P, Anna University

Induja S, Anna University

Keywords: Marginalisation, gender minority, housing, transgender, resettlement, urban poor, social mobility, positive deviants

The transgender (TG) community is one of the most marginalised social groups in the country. Transgender and gender-diverse people have been facing discrimination for centuries in India, due to their non-conformity to the pre-existent gender norms in society. Historically subjected to structural violence, the TG community continues to face widespread stigma and discrimination at the hands of their own families, society, and even the State (Joseph & Thomas, 2014). In recent years, India has made significant strides towards recognising and upholding the rights of transgender people. In 2014, the Supreme Court, the apex legal body in India in a landmark judgment declared transgender people as a third gender, thus ending the legal discrimination and enabling them access to civic rights.

However, transgender people continue to face unique obstacles that exacerbate their vulnerability, including socio-economic challenges and limited access to safe and affordable housing. The right to housing or shelter is one of the basic rights that has been denied for so long to transgender people. Many state governments in India have initiated social housing schemes for transgender people. In Tamil Nadu, the extension of social housing to transgender people was initiated in the year 2015, recognising the housing needs for the community. The Tamil Nadu government through the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (then known as Slum Clearance Board) allotted 260 tenements to transgender people. The situation took a contrasting turn when examining the transgender population in resettlement sites. Social housing emerges as a pivotal factor, providing transgenders with not only a sense of safety but also instilling hope and facilitating socio-economic mobility. Demonstrating notable socio-economic advancement, they have cultivated entrepreneurial skills, secured employment, and obtained various government identity cards.

Through this study, we document the story of the progress of transgender people under the positive deviance framework who had a definite positive impact through social housing schemes. Furthermore, this study examines the complex relationship between housing challenges and the safety and security of transgender individuals. By analysing the experiences of urban poor transgender individuals, we explore the physical, psychological, and emotional dimensions of safety and security in relation to housing. Through an intersectional lens, this study investigates how the interplay between these identities impacted the housing challenges

faced by transgender people, including discrimination, limited access to safe housing options, inadequate social support, and economic marginalisation. The research delves into issues such as violence, harassment, inadequate privacy, and the psychological toll of living in an environment that does not affirm their identities. By employing the diffusion of innovation theory, we analysed how access to stable and suitable housing can act as a catalyst to achieving social mobility.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and surveys to collect in-depth narratives and comprehensive data from urban poor transgender people in resettlement sites of Chennai. The findings were analysed using thematic analysis and statistical techniques, providing a nuanced understanding of the housing challenges faced by this marginalised population and their implications for safety, security, and social mobility.

This study carries significant implications for policymakers, social welfare organisations, and urban planners. By uncovering the complex dynamics surrounding housing challenges for urban poor transgender individuals, this research study contributes to the development of targeted interventions, policies, and support systems that address the intersecting needs of this population. Ultimately, this research aims to promote social justice and inclusivity by fostering safe, secure, and empowering housing environments for transgender individuals, facilitating their social mobility and overall well-being.

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Understanding Bangalore's Urban Growth Pattern Through the Lens of Gentrification: A Spatio-Temporal Analysis

Sagar Sinha, Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee

Arindam Biswas, Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee

Introduction

Urbanisation, marking the global shift towards urban living, profoundly intertwines with the complex phenomenon of gentrification. As cities swell with population influx, urban spaces undergo a metamorphosis, altering landscapes and communities. Gentrification, a facet of urban evolution, epitomises this transformation. It represents the influx of affluent residents into lower-income neighbourhoods, driving up property values and reshaping local landscapes (Atkinson, 2012; Freeman, 2012; Lees et al., 2008). The rapid urbanisation fuelling this process amplifies the dynamics of gentrification, as cities expand, seeking space and amenities for their growing populace. However, the consequences are two-fold: while urbanisation stimulates economic growth and development (Florida, 2012; Barton, 2016), it often catalyses displacement and marginalisation of long-established communities (Kennedy & Leonard, 2001; Atkinson, 2000; Lees et al., 2008). Thus, understanding the nexus between urbanisation and gentrification is crucial. It unveils the intricate interplay between urbanisation forces and gentrification dynamics, prompting a re-evaluation of urban planning strategies to foster inclusive, sustainable cities that mitigate the adverse impacts of gentrification on marginalised populations amidst urban growth.

The effects of globalisation and neoliberal urbanism have significantly influenced the gentrification process of cities like Bangalore, reshaping its social and economic landscape (Chattopadhyay, 2017). As a tech hub and a focal point for outsourcing, Bangalore has experienced rapid urban development driven by globalisation. Tech parks, multinational companies, and a surge knowledge-based IT industry have transformed the landscape (Hariharan & Biswas, 2019) drawing in a diverse workforce and driving up demand for upscale real estate. Neoliberal urban policies have further fuelled this shift, favouring private investments and high-end developments while neglecting the needs of lower-income communities (López-Morales, 2015; Doshi, 2015). The emphasis on creating infrastructure and amenities catering to the affluent population often overlooks the basic necessities and affordable housing required by marginalised groups (Kidokoro et al., 2023). This wave of urban renewal and commercialisation in several neighbourhoods has led to rising property values and the displacement of long-standing residents. Traditional areas witness a metamorphosis with the arrival of upscale housing complexes, luxury malls, and exclusive commercial spaces, reshaping the social fabric and character of these regions (Lees et al., 2008; Das, 2020). This intricate interplay of economic forces and urban policies presents an additional facet of gentrification in Bangalore. It illustrates the complexities of urban development in an emerging global city where the aspirations of different socio-economic groups collide.

Research Objective

This research embarks on a comprehensive exploration to achieve two pivotal objectives interlinking urbanisation and gentrification. Firstly, it aims to discern and elucidate alterations in landscape patterns attributed to urban growth and establish their correlation with the process of gentrification by spatial analysis techniques. Secondly, the study strives to assess the alignment between urban growth patterns and the phenomenon of gentrification by closely examining the dynamics of housing prices and the verification of development patterns in neighbourhoods via ground truthing. By delving into these aspects, the study unravels the intricate connections between urban growth and progression of gentrification in Bangalore. This assessment also serves as a critical measure to comprehend how shifts in property values coincide with the evolution of gentrification over time.

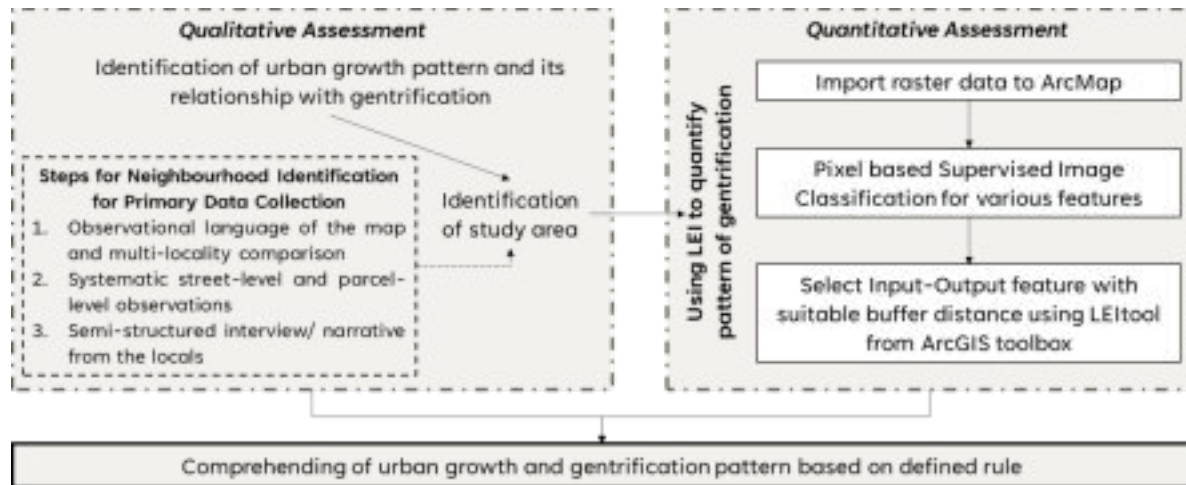
Methodology

This study aims to unravel the tangled relationship between urban growth pattern and gentrification in Bangalore by delving into the spatiotemporal dynamics of landscape transformation and housing price fluctuations. A mixed-method approach integrating both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods is used to comprehensively dissect these nuanced dynamics of gentrification in the study area (Loukaitou-Sideris et al., 2019). The qualitative assessment involves a multifaceted approach.

Firstly, it incorporates observational language of the map and multilocality comparison. The systematic street-level and parcel-level observation helped in a comprehensive examination of the physical transformation within the selected neighbourhoods. The semi-structured interviews with locals were conducted, providing invaluable insights on the physical transformation of urban landscape and the evolving nature of gentrification, shedding light on its complexities (Finio, 2021).

On the quantitative front, a systematic sequence is adopted. Initial steps involve importing raster data of various time frames into ArcMap, followed by a pixel-based supervised image classification of each raster dataset to categorises urban features such as built, unbuilt, vegetation, and water bodies. Furthermore, the Landscape Expansion Index tool is employed to quantify and classify urban growth pattern (Liu, et al., 2014; Bharadwaj et al., 2022). Combining and synthesising data from observational studies, interviews, and quantitative assessments allows for a comprehensive understanding of the gentrification patterns entrenched within the classified urban growth patterns (Figure 8). Furthermore, a detailed analysis of change in housing price, enables a nuanced comprehension of how the gentrification phenomenon evolves in connection with the urban growth pattern, offering profound insights into the complex dynamics shaping Bangalore's urban fabric (Guerrieri et al., 2013).

Figure 8: Identified methodology for spatio-temporal assessment to comprehend urban growth and pattern of gentrification.



(Source: Author)

Landscape Expansion Index (LEI)

The Landscape Expansion Index (LEI) serves as a crucial method for evaluating and understanding the urban growth patterns. Traditionally, it is instrumental in discerning the expansion trajectory within urban areas (Liu et al., 2010). This index operates through a patch-based analysis method, classifying the buffer regions encircling newly emerged urban patches, offering insights into the spatial characteristics of urban expansion. Its significance lies in its ability to delineate three distinctive growth patterns prevalent within urban landscapes, i.e., outlying, edge-expansion or infill growth patterns (Liu et al., 2010) (Figure 9).

It presents a comprehensive understanding of urban development processes, capturing not just the expansion but also the spatial characteristics of growth particularly in the context of urban transformation, such as gentrification (O'Sullivan, 2002). Gentrification, a complex process involving socio-economic changes and urban restructuring, can be uncovered by examining micro-scale spatial patterns of urban growth over specific periods. By dissecting these micro-scale spatial patterns, LEI provides valuable insights into the evolution and dynamics of gentrification. The correlation between urban growth pattern and change in housing prices serves as a robust indicator of gentrification processes unfolding within the urban area (Finio, 2021; Wilhelmsson et al., 2022). Thus, when these spatial changes are juxtaposed with housing price dynamics, it provides a more holistic understanding of the complex nuances of gentrification.

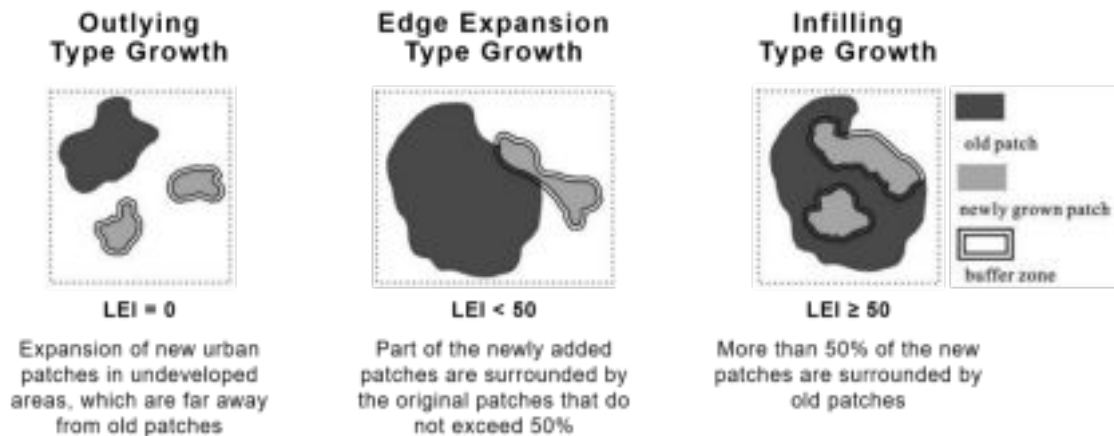
The selection of a buffer distance is a critical component within the LEI (Liu et al., 2010). This buffer distance is chosen meticulously to facilitate a clear interpretation of infill development and edge-expansion within the urban landscape. The choice of buffer distance is guided by key considerations such as spatial resolution of remotely sensed data or geographic features dividing urban neighbourhoods, such as road widths (Liu et al., 2010; Jiao et al., 2015). However, challenges persist in accurately identifying the buffer area, leading to potential overestimation or underestimation of urban growth patterns (Jiao, et al., 2018; Tian, et al., 2022). Consequently, the research underscores that the buffer distance should ideally align with the spatial resolution of

the data utilised. This alignment minimises the risk of overestimation or underestimation in the assessment of urban growth and gentrification dynamics. The statistical equation for calculation of LEI is:

$$LEI = 100 \times A_0/A_0 + A_v$$

where, A_0 is the area of the intersection between the buffer zone and the occupied category and A_v is the area of the intersection between the buffer and the vacant category.

Figure 9: Types of Urban Growth Pattern that can be identified from LEI based on define rule



(Source: Liu et al., 2010)

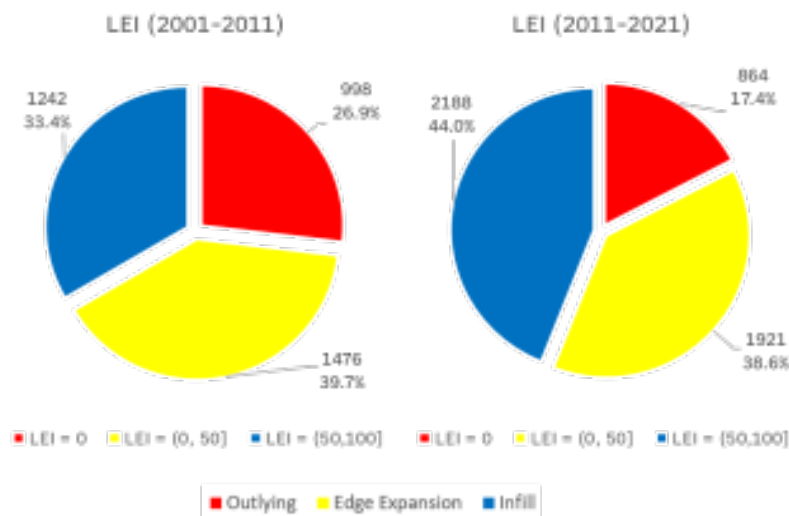
Findings

The study focuses on five distinct areas within Bangalore, each representing a unique urbanisation and socio-economic transformations, spotlighting the phenomenon of gentrification. Peenya Industrial Area, renowned as one of Asia's largest industrial hubs, Electronic City and Whitefield, major technological and knowledge-based industry centres. Attibele, a new emerging town in the South of Bangalore Urban District and Dodda Banaswadi, characterised by its multifaceted ethnicity, bustling commercial establishments, and upscale residential areas, serves as another key study area. To study the change in urban growth pattern, remotely sensed data was carefully collected for each decade since 2001 with the aid of USGS Earth Explorer¹². This dataset enables a comprehensive examination of spatio-temporal change of growth patterns, facilitating a thorough analysis of the city's evolution and the manifestation of gentrification.

¹ United States Geological Survey (USGS) developed the EarthExplorer user interface, which allows users to search and download from the inventory of remote sensing data.

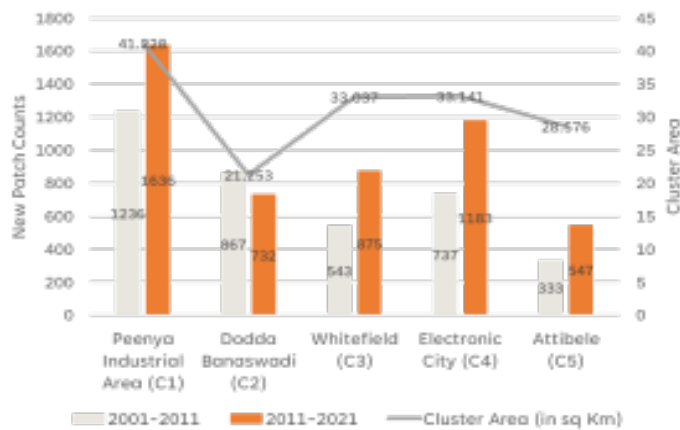
² Remote sensing data used for 2001 and 2011 is Landsat 5 (Data Resolution: 30 m), for 2021 is Landsat 8 (Data Resolution: 30 m).

Figure 10: Comparison of temporal findings form LEI for the period 2001-2011 and 2011-2021.



(Source: Author)

Figure 11: Comparing New Patch Count for the period 2001-2011 and 2011-2021



(Source: Author)

Shifting our focus to the study's results, several notable trends have come to light. In the initial period spanning from 2001 to 2011, the analysis vividly portrays edge expansion as the predominant growth pattern across the selected neighbourhoods. This marked prevalence suggests a notable outward trajectory in urban development during this phase, marking a period of substantial spatial expansion. However, the subsequent decade, from 2011 to 2021, a compelling shift surfaces in subsequent years, revealing a noteworthy transformation in Bangalore's urban fabric. Infill development emerges prominently, signalling a shift towards more concentrated and densified urban growth (Figure 12). Moreover, meticulous data scrutiny highlights a substantial surge in the emergence of new urban patches across the studied localities. This surge denotes an evolving and dynamic urban fabric, characterised by the emergence of distinct urban enclaves (Figure 12). These findings underscore the intricate and multifaceted nature of gentrification dynamics, intricately interwoven with the evolving urban growth pattern.

Figure 12: Comparing of various type of urban growth pattern in the study area for the period 2001-2011 and 2011- 2021



(Source: Author)

The analysis of housing prices in the study areas unveils that all the study areas are undergoing a steady increase in housing prices, reflecting the broader trends of rising property values in Bangalore. However, certain neighbourhoods exhibit a more pronounced surge, notably Whitefield, Peenya Industrial Area, and Dodda Banaswadi. This steep rise can be attributed to enhanced infrastructure and closer proximity to prominent workplaces, manifesting as an increased demand for residential spaces within these vicinities. Furthermore, the findings reveal that even emerging areas like Attibele are experiencing a similar influence on housing prices. This phenomenon can be attributed to the expanding industrial development in the region and the growing demand for housing. As industries and businesses continue to establish a presence in these areas, there is a resultant surge in demand for residential properties, driving housing prices upwards (Figure 12).

Discussion and Conclusion

The city's developmental trajectories not only exhibit consistency but also reflect adaptability to evolving demands and opportunities. This adaptability plays a pivotal role in sculpting the city's urban fabric and influencing the nuanced dynamics of gentrification. Dodda Banaswadi experiences a surge in infill development, catering to a wealthier population seeking proximity to the Central Business District (CBD). Peenya Industrial Area drives residential developments with significant infill growth, transforming low density residences into denser housing complexes, showcasing the interplay between economic activity and urban growth. Both areas highlight the phenomenon of new-build gentrification.

Meanwhile, Whitefield and Electronic City transitioned from rural regions to hubs of IT business parks, evolving from greenfield expansion to infill development, hosting a blend of low-rise residences from earlier times and high-density complexes from later development phases, exemplifying the phenomena of peripheral gentrification and retail gentrification in respective neighbourhoods. Lastly, Attibele, an emerging town situated in the southern periphery, fuelled by industrial prospects, attracting migration and urban expansion. Attibele, an emerging town in southern periphery, is witnessing rapid urban expansion driven by industrial prospects, attracting a wave of migration. This transformation represents the phenomenon of rural gentrification, signifying the evolving socio-economic landscape within the city.

In conclusion, the diverse neighbourhoods of Bangalore depict the intricate dynamics between urban development and gentrification, illustrating the nuanced interplay between economic, social, and spatial changes within the city. The gentrification trends, from new-build gentrification to retail gentrification, highlight the impacts of urban growth. The evolving landscape of Bangalore propelled by economic prospects and social transitions, emphasises the need for holistic urban planning strategies that balance growth while preserving the social fabric of diverse communities.

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Between Surviving and Thriving: The Marginality of the Urban Homeless

Sneha Maria Varghese, London School of Economics and Political Sciences

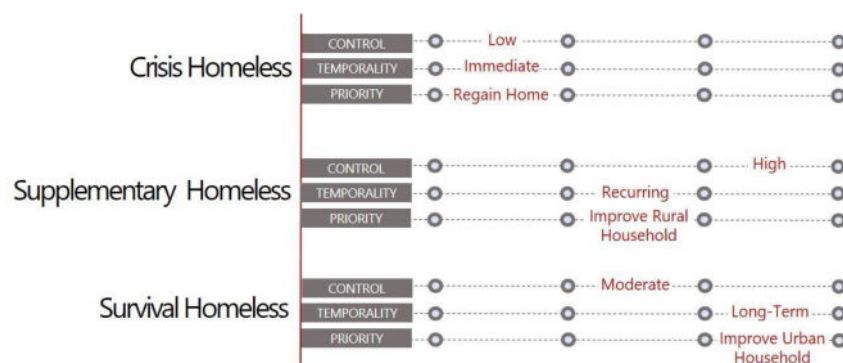
The urban homeless are a simultaneously hypervisibilised and invisibilised marginal population of the city (Bhan, 2009, p.139). The news articles that are published every winter, the enumerations that are carried out periodically, and the many shelter programmes that have been announced by local and national governments, indicates that they are well acknowledged subjects of urban policymaking and discourse. And yet, there is a pattern of aestheticisation to this enhanced visibility (Roy, 2004, p. 289-310). The complexities and subjectivities of their lived experiences are subsumed in favour of self-reinforcing tropes. They are represented either as deviants who need to be contained, victims who need to be pitied, or heroes who need to be admired. The problem with this misrecognition is that it monopolises space away from their 'hopes and doubts, limitations and aspirations, beliefs and confusion', and undermines their position as 'sources of knowledge that need to be consulted on what they think and want' (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. viii). As stated in the call for papers for this conference (IIHS, 2023), 'marginalized groups have their own ambitions, claims, and strategies', and the objective of this research will be to bring to attention the agency of the urban homeless that they exercise even within their acute states of deprivation. Analysing the life accounts of eight persons occupying varying conditions of housing inadequacy in and around Majestic Railway Station in Bangalore, this research will uncover the habitational, livelihood, and social strategies employed by them and also draw attention to the diversity displayed among these strategies. By doing so it aims to identify what actually matters to the urban homeless, what their existing strategies have been able to achieve, and what lessons they impart on the lived experience of urban marginality.

In a survey of urban homelessness commissioned by the Planning Commission, Mander et al. (2009, p.4) commented that 'it is remarkable how so little is known about the lived experience of homelessness—how they bath, eat, sleep, work, survive, cope, plan and organize their lives.' The handful of studies that do undertake grounded explorations of the lives of the urban homeless (Dupont, 2000; Parulkar, 2017; Padgett & Priyam, 2017; Rajani & Goswami, 2010) show that they negotiate their urban existence as 'sophisticated economists' (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. ix). They enact multi-pronged strategies based on subjective valuations of acceptable costs and potential benefits. For example, Dupont's (2000) study of the houseless population in Old Delhi shows that homelessness forms part of an economic strategy oriented towards maximizing savings and remittances for the families in their native place. Pavement-dwelling, especially in central locations of the city, allows them to cut down on housing expenses and puts them in proximity to economic opportunities. These strategies of the urban homeless are informed not only by economic rationale but also by socially constructed meanings, goals, beliefs, and attitudes. For example, Parulkar's (2017) study of six homeless men in Yamuna Pushta, Delhi, shows how notions of morality and dignity influence job choices, how notions of mutual support and loyalty influence the formation of friendships, and how decision-making is informed by a strong present-time orientation. Similarly, Padgett and Priyam's (2017) study of pavement dwellers in

Delhi shows how self-sufficiency is a day-to-day norm and how short-term transactional relationships were preferred over long-term commitments.

Existing literature reiterates that both choice and constraint shape the strategies of the urban homeless and there exists agency even in the most extreme forms of destitution (Parulkar, 2017, p.12-13; Dupont, 2000, p.118). It also points out that seemingly identical structural factors such as poverty, migration, abuse etc. can have very different implications on individuals' lives depending on their subjective perceptions, priorities, and abilities (Parulkar, 2017). Taking into consideration these two aspects, Speak (2004) developed a typology of homelessness to account for how varied perceptions of choice and opportunity shape varied strategies among the urban homeless. She distinguished between, supplementary, survival, and crisis homelessness. Supplementary homeless view their condition as a temporary choice and maintain strong connections with rural livelihoods. They attribute less importance to housing conditions in the city and are more concerned with proximity to worksites. Survival homeless have been homeless for longer periods of time and have little possibility of returning to rural livelihoods. They display more acceptance to the homeless condition and invest more towards building economic and social capital in the city. Crisis homeless are those rendered homeless due to some sort of crisis such as eviction, disaster, or family breakdown. They perceive very little choice or opportunity with regards to their condition and tend to rely on individualised strategies and anonymity.

Figure 13: Speak's (2004) Typology of Homelessness



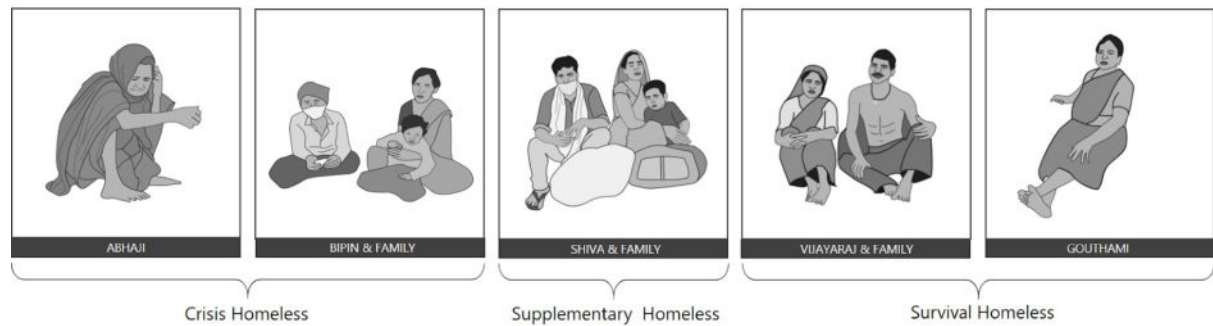
(Source: Author)

Reading from this body of literature, there emerges a need for a qualified appraisal of the strategies of the urban homeless to identify two aspects: the desirable motivations that inform them and the capacities that they evidence. This qualified appraisal is especially needed given the diversity contingent within urban homelessness—individuals occupying seemingly identical housing deprivation might be on very different socio-economic trajectories and thus their priorities will also vary. It also important to read these desirable motivations in relation with the capacities and abilities of the urban homeless. It will well established that the poor themselves are experts on their lives and there is a strong correlation between upward mobility and initiative of the urban poor themselves (Narayan et al., 2009). Studying their strategies can provide valuable insights on what actually makes a difference, what the homeless have been able to achieve and in which areas they need a push (Solomon, 2003, p. 202). Therefore, the major questions that this research sets out to answer are:

1. What are the strategies employed by the urban homeless in their habitational, livelihood, familial, and social realms?
2. What do these strategies reveal regarding the desirable motivations and the capacities of the urban homeless?

The research was conducted in collaboration with India Community Development Service Society, an NGO that runs shelter homes for the homeless in Bangalore, between September 2020 to April 2021. 8 key participants were identified from in and around Majestic Railway Station. Semi-structured interviews were the main data source for the research and each interview lasted between 30–60 minutes. Most of the interviews were conducted by the author with the support of a translator in Kannada, while a few interviews were conducted by the author herself in Hindi. Participants were informed about the objectives of the research and their informed consent was obtained before recording conversations. Names of the participants have been changed and identifiable details have been concealed to preserve anonymity.

Figure 14: Typologies of homeless encountered among research participants



(Source: Author)

In line with Speak (2004)'s typology of homelessness, the 8 participants encountered in this study had quite different perceptions about their experience of homelessness. However, the considerable alignments in their accounts evidenced that along with group specificity, there was a paradoxical commonality to their experience of homelessness. The crisis homeless saw their present habitational condition as a result of multiple misfortunes that made it a necessity. Caught between perceptions of who they were, are, and want to be, their strategies were distinctly marked by contradictory stances. They adopted a threshold-based approach to decision-making which allowed them to plan for day-to-day survival while remaining cautious to unpredictable shifts. The supplementary homeless, although encountered in the same habitational condition as the crisis homeless, saw their homelessness as an active choice. It was part of their pattern of circular migration from rural habitats. There was a clear directionality to their strategies with arrangements, relations and decisions that enabled the flow and accumulation of socio-economic capital in the rural being prioritised. The survival homeless, saw their urban habitation as a shared response to a shared crisis with their rural community generationally accumulating in the urban. Over the years they had accrued tenuous spatial claims, access to basic services, favourable social relations, and economic networks, and currently, maintaining this generationally acquired optimality emerged as the priority in their urban strategies. Across all these narratives, what emerged apparent was the denial of

substantive citizenship to the urban homeless—be it in accounts about being ‘marked dead’ when they didn’t vote, or in accounts about being denied identification documents, or in accounts about relying on rural habitats for availing basic entitlements. Further, across all the narratives, the search for favourable locales with ‘many comings and goings’ that could simultaneously disperse economic and social benefits and shield socio-spatial transgressions, was deemed as more important than the search for a house.

In conclusion, closely aligning with the theme of this year’s Urban ARC Conference, this research shows how urban marginality can be a site of not only deprivation but also of creative resistance (Hooks, 1990). Through a grounded exploration of the strategies of the urban homeless, it shows how marginal populations of the global city are neither victims nor heroes, but ordinary in the complexity, multiplicity, and flexibility of their identities.

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A Portolan of Marginalities. A Case Study of Homeless in Rome

Paolo Do, La Sapienza University of Rome

Letteria Fassari, La Sapienza University of Rome

Gioia Pompili, La Sapienza University of Rome

This paper seeks to enhance our understanding of the concepts of margin and marginality within the urban context from a sociological perspective. It investigates the margins of our societies, the social production of these margins, and it presents the protagonists inhabiting these spaces.

To address these issues, this research paper presents the findings of an empirical case study which involves homeless people residing in an emergency shelter placed in Rome (Italy), and which provide a prismatic conceptualisation of Europe beyond a Eurocentric perspective within the constitution of an emergent and heterogeneous territorialities along the Mediterranean (Chakrabarty, 2000; Hall, 1996). Marginal people are active and propulsive drivers of reframing the division between North and South inside the urban space: this case study enabled an epistemological reassessment of the traditional dichotomy Global South/Global North. The case study of Rome illustrates an urban space that complicate the linear division of this opposition, which has been eroded describing a new horizon where hierarchies are displaced taking new forms. Although Italy is still regarded as a prosperous nation and representative of the West/Global North, in the last period a process of impoverishment has significantly altered the country's social structure. A recent investigation by Feansta (Feansta, 2022) estimates about 700,000 homeless people in the European Union with an increase of 70 per cent in the last ten years. The picture is not much different in Italy where the number of homeless people is increasing significantly. In 2021, according to ISTAT, there were 96,167 homeless people in Italy. Of these, over 22,000 (23 per cent) were in Rome, the city with the highest number of them. These numbers are expected to increase as a result of migration waves of the COVID-19 pandemic and of low wages thus reconfiguring the conditions of social exclusion and changing the way of living and organising the public urban space (Guidicini & Pieretti 2004). These events have transformed the city into a jagged space characterised by a tangle of areas, zones of migration, a multiplication of internal borders, frontiers, and informal districts of interaction, where South and North constantly overlap, struggle and coexist. We are facing an original displacement of the classical dependency between South and North, an articulation of forces and contradictions, asymmetries and differential positions in the geographies of labour exploitation, access to welfare and citizenship (Bernardi & Do, 2018).

We have examined the experiences of homeless persons living in the streets, ranging from brief to long-term situations. Our study focuses on homeless practices, including the urban routes they follow to sleep, work, and receive care and assistance. Additionally, we explore their relationship with time and the affective sphere that encompasses their feelings.

Quantifying homelessness is particularly difficult. Statistics on homelessness provide different figures based on various definitions of homelessness and very different survey methods. The methodological problems of counting have their origin in the characteristics of the phenomenon

of homelessness: people who are often constantly moving from one place to another, from one status to another, people who often hide from the observer attempting to detect their presence.

This study was conducted using various techniques: focus group, mapping, and over twenty face-to-face interviews using open-ended questions. Initially, we queried the research field with regards to where homeless people live, how they utilise these spaces, and why they use them. Additionally, we investigated the types of public space that emerges from these practices. The interviews were conducted with a flexible outline instead of a standardised set of questions that centred around the correlation between homelessness and urban space; their daily lives; and their use of urban public space. This semi-structured conversation pattern facilitated us to individualise each meeting by adapting discussions and questions accordingly.

This paper reconsiders the social figure of homeless people, too often seen as a subject constantly represented and defined by the gaze of the other; they are a subject on which to intervene, but never a subject that acts independently. Homeless is a social figure often excluded without visibility or voice (Hirschman, 1970). The homeless people are often considered, even in academic literature, as passive, inactive subjects of inclusive policies and services (Cabini 2004; Barnao 2004) despite their number reaching dramatic levels in large cities (Chamie 2017; Giardiello, 2016). His/her point of view is rarely taken into account (Hooks, 1989).

Academic literature (Aru & Puttilli, 2014) suggests that 'homeless' refers to a fundamental lack of material possessions, specifically the absence of a domestic space, rather than simply the absence of a physical dwelling. Homeless people share one common aspect: they do not have a private space to manage independently, i.e. a refuge where they can rest, protect themselves, take care of their belongings, relationships, bodies, and wellbeing. If this is indeed true, however, our study presents an entirely different picture of this figure from the margins. According to our research approach, the homeless possess the ability to act, possess agency, and have knowledge that puts them beyond an established symbolic order of subordination (Mitchell, 1995). Our sociological analysis aims to "put the margins at the centre" focusing on the experiences of homeless people and their unique perspectives, experiential knowledge, and aesthetic and affective understanding of various aspects of urban public spaces.

If accurate, our research portrays those marginalised as holders of unique knowledge with a distinct perception of space, time, and urban relationships. Fostering a decolonial form of knowledge production, we consider homeless not passive subjects: they refuse a certain type of clothing, or certain foods, certain hygienic conditions, demonstrating a fair degree of autonomy in the management of their condition even though they are people whom the street has humiliated, or who are unable to provide for themselves. People manifest a clear refusal to certain conditions of assistance (Do & Fassari, 2023). They make choices, dosing their psychophysical energies and choosing not to self-degenerate their already precarious individuality in depersonalised services, too rigidly organised, where they suffer invasive social control. At the same time, through their actions, they actively transform and alter the public space (Lefebvre, 1991), affecting both themselves and their surroundings (Bonadonna, 2005; De Certeau, 1990).

Homelessness entails that people are social actors who actively participate in the production or transformation of urban spaces. Therefore, homeless individuals are not 'incompetent' and are, in fact, quite resourceful in their struggle for survival (Barnao, 2004; Meert, 2006). (Often, they must rely heavily on their ingenuity, having to think more deeply and spend more time devising ways to survive. Homeless persons are frequently alone and must navigate dangerous situations without a safe place to go. They also cannot take for granted the things which many people with homes do). Despite these challenges, they possess a deep understanding of the urban areas in which they reside.

An evocative image to shape unusual figurations of what "margins" stands for is the portolan chart. First made in the 13th Century in Italy, they are navigational maps based on compass directions and estimated distances observed, to see what it is constituted, what it includes or excludes, what space is created and what borders insist upon it (Polezzi, 2013). This paper aims to suggest a sort of *portolan chart of the marginality* that can draw a map able to engage with this fluid, unstable category characterised by a transitory and relational character (Tsing, 1994). Suggesting the centrality of the body, perceiving its biological and social rhythms, and exploring the interaction between time and the emotional realm of social actors, this research discusses the value of margins as a space—or perhaps more of a rhythm (Lefebvre, 2004) of exclusion, where the value of margins appears as a rhythm between proximity and distance, a 'space of crossing'.

Insights into the relationship between homelessness and urban spatiality in Rome show margin emerging as a paradoxical space, akin to a two-faced Janus. It places social actors both within and outside the system, on the boundary—or perhaps on the frontier describing a process of inclusion through exclusion. So, the concept of margin and its various forms of marginality do not solely indicate exclusion or lack of inclusion, but rather express the tension between the two poles of inside and outside (Lautier, 2006).

Homelessness is presented in processual terms rather than as a "status" that designates a fixed and unchanging condition of exclusion. This experience cannot be reduced to a binary logic of inclusion or exclusion since it is dynamic, multifaceted and constantly evolving (Bergamaschi, 1999). Our research indicates that homelessness is no longer confined to traditionally marginalised social groups. Nowadays, in the jagged space of Rome, even those who were previously integrated into the economic and social systems and had achieved a state of equilibrium in terms of work and social inclusion are at risk of becoming homeless (Sassen, 2014). At the same time, there is no single profile of homelessness since the individuals experiencing this condition are diverse, making it impossible to approach it homogeneously.

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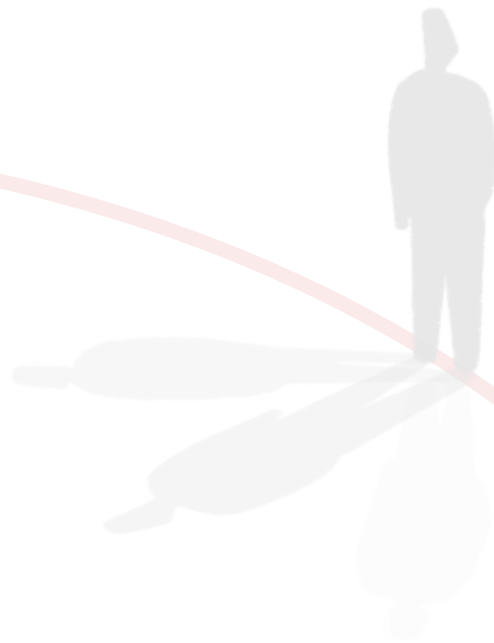
The Ghetto as 'Make-Believe Space': On State Discourses and Contestations of Urban Marginality in Denmark's Social Housing Areas

Sigrid Corry, London School of Economics and Political Science

In 2018, the Danish Government passed a legislative package which classified social housing estates deemed 'deprived' residential areas across Denmark as 'ghettos,' determined by the percentage of residents with 'non-western' backgrounds. Exceptional laws now restructure these areas, with demolitions and evictions taking place, alongside intensified security and welfare restrictions. The stated government aim is to have "No more parallel societies in Denmark by 2030". This paper explores the production of urban marginality through a politics of space, race, and legal exceptionality in these Danish social housing areas. It draws on ethnographic fieldwork conducted with residents, local representatives, and organising meetings held by activist groups resisting the plans in two of Copenhagen's most contested housing areas *Mjølnerparken* and *Tingbjerg*. With a view from the Danish ghettoised communities, it asks what can be revealed about state sanctioned processes of racialised dispossession, its contestations and claims to identity and belonging. It argues that the 'ghetto' was not a given category but instantiated as what Yael Navaro (2012) terms a 'make-believe space'—an imaginative construction, discursively assembled to be physically dismantled.

PANEL 7

**(In)formalities:
Lived Economics in the Margins**



Tracking Marginal Lives as a Precursor to Platforms: GPS Meters in Autorickshaws, Working Class Lives in Delhi

Anurag Mazumdar, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

In May 2018, Uber launched Movement—its proprietary, anonymised platform to capture, interpret, represent, and understand traffic data and urban mobility patterns—in Delhi and offered to share insights on daily traffic patterns with the state transport department (BW Online, 2018). This initiative, it was understood, would provide government departments, urban think tanks and planning professionals better access to hitherto unavailable data, which could improve urban and transport planning. Industry experts, urban planners and the state and federal government largely welcomed this initiative as a novel idea that complemented Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Indian government’s thrust on building 100 smart cities by 2020. The urban development minister present at the Delhi launch of the platform suggested that Uber Movement’s data would benefit the “9 Integrated Command and Control Centres launched so far, in various Smart Cities, (that) are state-of-the-art facilities that relay real time datasets on a range of urban indicators, including transport and traffic systems.”

By launching Movement and sharing its data with the Delhi government, Uber appeared to have expanded its role from a transportation platform to a data-driven urban planning platform, prompting, if not catalysing, the datafication of Indian roads. This is part of an emergent political economic regime, driven by the logic of perpetual accumulation and circulation, in which data acts not only as a resource, but also a source of value creation that sparks constant monetisation by other vested organisations (Sadowski, 2019). The anointment of data as capital has transformed many sectors of the economy by providing subsidised services and tapping into data markets, part of what could be called platform capitalism (Srnicek, 2016). Uber’s Movement tool was hailed as a novel initiative in that regard, one that generates new power relations and politics at various scales. I take a different position in this paper and suggest that the datafication of Indian roads is an ongoing process since the 1990s, and Movement’s tools are only the recent iteration of controlling and governing mobilities of machines and populations through the data-driven management of India’s roads. To put it differently, the gradual incursion of a host of private platforms into the governance of India’s roads, and consequently the wider urban society, did not happen suddenly but was precipitated by a series of related although distinct incidents that deserve scrutiny and analysis.

I suggest that since the 1990s, Delhi has produced a techno-social regime that enrolls different groups of mobile bodies into digital technologies to not only purportedly solve mobility issues—such as traffic, congestion, and accidents—but to produce political outcomes concerning wider marginalities. In this paper, I scrutinise one such site by tracing the trajectory of installing global positioning system (GPS) devices/GPS meters in autorickshaws or three-wheeled scooter rickshaws (TSRs) in Delhi. I provide a brief history of the GPS meter project starting from 2004 to 2019, and then analyse the ways in which the project was mobilised to achieve broader politico-economic objectives that predate digital technologies. I base my account primarily on publicly available copies of Public Interest Litigations (PILs) on the Delhi GPS meter issue and on the

media coverage of GPS meters from 2004 to 2019 in two widely circulated English-language newspapers published from Delhi—*Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*. It should be noted that by and large, this project was an institutional “failure” because even as late as 2019, most autorickshaws did not install GPS-enabled meters, and transport authorities failed to connect the data generated from the GPS meters to the central control room of the Delhi Integrated Multi modal Transit System (DIMTS). However, despite the apparent failure of this project in fulfilling its stated objectives, I argue that it is crucial to unpack the apparent “failure” of datafication. What were the motivations that prompted datafication from above and below in the case of GPS meters? How may we account for refusals, (non)enumerations and negations of autorickshaw drivers and other transport workers in framing urban marginality? How does tensions over datafication and marginality connect to the platform economy where the lines between autonomous and coerced datafication have been blurred? The case of Delhi’s GPS meters suggest that even as the immediate technical goals of the project were never realised, it gradually normalised a socio-spatial order in which migrant, working-class populations of Delhi were marginalised and vilified. This process was institutionalised through a series of court decisions that served to strengthen a range of digital enclosures that constrained recalcitrant and dangerous bodies but also made them available for unfree, dependent, and disposable labour. To be sure, I am not arguing that location-aware technologies were incidental to the project—location coordinates and the logics behind its deployment are crucial aspects of this change. However, the marginalisation of working-class populations in Delhi, in alignment with broader economic objectives of the urban elite, were not generated by the ‘successful’ coverage or deployment of digital technologies.

The paper is structured as follows. Following this introduction, in the next section, I briefly recount a history of locative media and location-aware technologies and their effects on (re)constituting urban space and politics. In the next section, I provide a short historical account of the GPS meter project as it unfolded from 2004 to 2019. In the next section, I analyse the ways in which, despite its apparent failures, the GPS meter project and its supporting discourse produce far-reaching socio-spatial outcomes for Delhi’s urban space. In the final section, I conclude by collating my arguments.

Installing GPS meter in autorickshaws

In 2004, the idea of installing GPS devices in buses and autorickshaws was first conceived by the Transport Department of Delhi. At that time, the Delhi state government was looking to improve the transport system of the city-state considering the impending Commonwealth Games of 2010—a showpiece games for an aspiring “world-class” city— that the city was hosting.

After the GPS meter project languished in bureaucratic files for years, it received a fillip in 2011 when the Supreme Court of India instructed Delhi’s Transport Department to work on a streamlined autorickshaw policy. This policy, prompted by concerns of women’s safety, efficiency, and transport modernisation, propelled the installation of a GPS-enabled meter on the autorickshaw and urged autorickshaw drivers to change from a single owner structure from the three owner-operator structure.

Ongoing conversations on unsafe streets and (rapacious) transport workers were caught in polarised arguments following the gangrape and murder of 23-year-old paramedical student Jyoti Singh Pandey in December 2012 (often known as the landmark Nirbhaya case). In the days that followed, mass protests mostly led by young students broke out, leading to far-reaching changes in legislation on women's issues. This also catalysed the discourse on women's safety, already a topic of intense discussion in Delhi, provoking large sections of Delhi's citizens to demand tracking devices and constant monitoring of Delhi's public transport services.

These demands, while legitimate and serious, prompted little action on the ground. By 2013, the project of installing GPS meters in old autorickshaws had stalled and there was no enforcement on drivers supposedly "tampering" with GPS devices (Banerjee, 2013a). Although the Delhi state government and the federal government promised quick reforms including safer public transport—collectively known as the Nirbhaya reforms—only 21 per cent of the 103,990 autorickshaws had installed GPS meters, leading to a lot of default and show cause notices. Moreover, the Delhi government had not yet set up the system through which the backend of the GPS system, managed by DIMTS, could be shared with the Delhi Police (Banerjee, 2013b).

In 2019, little had changed. Only about 31 per cent of Delhi's 100,000-odd autorickshaws had GPS devices and most of them were reported to be non-functional (Roy, 2019). The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)-led state government in Delhi were considering waiving the vehicle fitness test charges (INR 600 ~ \$8) and the annual charges for GPS meter tracking (INR 1200 ~ \$16). It was widely understood as a move prompted by the impending elections in Delhi—autorickshaws were a prime voter bloc for the AAP—but this policy alone was unlikely to encourage autorickshaw drivers to install GPS meters (Roy 2019).

Installing 'Marginality' via Datafication

At a cursory level, the deployment of location-aware technologies, that is, the GPS meters in Delhi seems to be an instance of a megacity of the Global South following in the footsteps of a global, largely Western-centric, pattern of transforming the coordinates of location, through valorisation and commodification, into programmable data. Typically, large-scale datafication projects that engage in the generation, extraction, and analysis of location-aware data serve higher corporate valuations of platform companies, and the cartographic abstraction and technical expertise generated through technical devices (for instance, GPS meters) engenders a newer, more entrenched, form of surveillance. These concerns may not be completely off the mark, as the stated objective of the installation of GPS meter is "to monitor the movement of auto rickshaws and taxis for the purpose of overall security and safety of the commuters particularly of ladies, children and the aged and...tracing and apprehending of persons who may be in conflict with the law" (Delhi High Court, W.P.(C) Nos.2878,3519,3590&6547/2011: 9). What remains unexplained is the state's enthusiasm and endorsement of this project in the face of failure. Close to a decade after the initial proposal and rollout of GPS devices in autorickshaws, only 31 per cent of Delhi's autorickshaws had GPS devices as of mid-2019, and most of them were found to be non-functional (Mathur, 2013; Roy, 2019). On top of that, the project to share and monitor the location data with the central control room of the DIMTS and the Delhi Police seems to have been a non-starter.

I argue that our understanding of the relentless pursuit to install GPS meters in Delhi's autorickshaws should be embedded in a longer history of the social and economic marginalisation of the working class. The precise calculative imaginaries of location awareness technologies are not marginal to this project, but the tracking of individuals does not seem to be its prime objective. Instead, it creates the conditions that subjects the working-class to a systematic, perhaps less-invasive, sorting and codification, and spawns a technocratic policy regime. Unlike Western cities, location-aware technologies may not have over-coded the spaces and practices of everyday life yet, but the experience of the GPS meters suggest that the gradual evolution of older digital-urban configurations have furtively set the terms for the inherent scalable digital sociability of present-day platform capitalism.

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Shifts in Work Relations: A Study on How Gig Economy is Shaping Work Relations of Domestic Workers in Pune

Shubhanshi Dimri, Savitribai Phule Pune University

Pranjali Sharma, Savitribai Phule Pune University

Keywords: Transformation in Work Relations, Domestic Work, COVID-19, Gig Economy, Uberisation, Semi-Capitalistic Work, Pune, Distinct Nature of Domestic Work, Bargaining Powers, Unionisation

This paper attempts to examine the structural changes in the work relations of Domestic Workers and employers after the emergence of the gig economy in India with the aim of studying how work relations of women domestic workers get affected with the influence of the gig economy which disrupts the idea of long-term work relations and provides short term gig work. Along with this, we also direct towards how the gig work affects the bargaining power of domestic workers due to the emergence of the gig economy in Pune, where historically the process of unionisation has attained success in securing their rights.

The paper will focus on the domestic workers in Pune and how Pune as a place forms the everyday material struggles of the domestic workers along with the historical unionisation of domestic workers in Pune leading to a certain change in the data. The data and insights cited in this paper stems from our extensive engagement with domestic workers across Pune for an action research project undertaken by the Department of Women and Gender Studies at Savitribai Phule Pune University in collaboration with *Pune Zilla Gharkamgar Sanghata* titled, "Understanding the Changing Dynamics of Paid Domestic Services During The COVID-19 Pandemic in The Pune Metropolitan Region". Pune as a space has had the history of unionisation of domestic workers which has led to the attainment of rights of Domestic Workers (Moghe, 2013). We will endeavour to map the changes in the bargaining power of domestic workers, with the entry of gig work in the sphere of unionised domestic work.

Studies around the gig economy have coined the term 'Uber-isation' of the economy to explain the gig economy. The gig economy alludes to a labour market portrayed by short-term and flexible jobs, frequently intervened by computerised stages that interface labourers with undertakings or tasks. Regarding the pandemic, the gig economy has both confronted difficulties and experienced shifts in demand and supply. As per the NITI Ayog, the quickly thriving gig workforce is introducing another monetary upheaval all around the world. India—with its segment profit of a portion of a billion workforce and the world's youngest populace, fast urbanisation, inescapable reception of cell phones, and related innovation—is the new wilderness of this upheaval. Notwithstanding, it remains unclear how platform workers could be brought under the domain of formal regulation given their vague employment status as self-employed entities or 'accomplices' (Medappa et. al. 2020). Therefore, the entry of the gig economy into domestic work which can be termed as "Uberisation of Domestic Work" changes the understanding of Domestic Work and the work relation between workers and employers

(now clients), further understood through digitisation of certain services on platforms that consider themselves as 'incubators of entrepreneurialism' (Vallas & Schor, 2020, p. 277).

The economic transformation through which work in several sectors is becoming temporary, and patchworked, the gig-economy uses the digital labour platforms to involve workers with little possibility of career advancements. In this paper, we will endeavour to map the shifts in long-term work relationships. It can be interesting to explore whether there have been any changes in the working relationship between a domestic worker and an employer in the context of the gig economy where organisations hire independent workers for a short-term commitment. The nature of domestic work often involves close personal contact making it susceptible to disruptions during health crises like COVID-19. As a result, many domestic workers faced heightened vulnerability to infection with limited access to protective measures (WIEGO, 2023).

Studies around paid domestic work have been done but the works are more importantly less focused on everyday aspects of it. The reasons behind this may have been mainly related to the nature of work and the more complex structure of it. The studies around domestic work have been conducted mainly in the metropolitan cities of India after or during the pandemic. Nature and the distinctness of domestic work which is shaped by societies governed by patriarchal and capitalist frameworks, and their intricacies make it difficult for the economic market and Indian households to recognise the effort, labour, and work that goes into domestic work. The pandemic-induced economic emergency affecting India's largest informally employed female workforce reflects the plight of millions of female domestic workers living across cities of India (Deepanshu et.al, 2021). Domestic work is in the shadows of unpaid work of the wives/women in the families compelling the market framework to not recognise its value. The precarious nature of domestic work manifests it as a lowly profession and relegates workers to the margins.

This paper thus tends to examine the shortfall of both public and state regulation for women domestic workers (WDWs) and their rejection from labour codes which implies that private homes are yet barred from the meaning of a "working environment" and the idea of domestic work stays problematic—with the jobs of WDWs totally reliant upon the negotiation capacities of individual workers with their potential employers (Jushya et al.). There is no general meaning of the word related to security and well-being for domestic workers, even though they carry the weight of the gig economy, which means that the expected effect of the nature of domestic work on their health is also disregarded.

In this paper we will attempt to understand shifts in semi-capitalistic work relations due to Uberisation and the COVID pandemic and if the work relation transformation substitutes the stigma attached to the bodies of domestic workers. The coronavirus pandemic more stringently affected long-term work relationships, strict lockdowns, and risk of life which affected the work prospects, especially of women domestic workers. Lockdowns, social removal measures, and monetary vulnerabilities prompted a decrease in traditional domestic work opportunities for some time. The gig economy, portrayed by the present moment, adaptable positions frequently worked with advanced stages, arose as an option for those looking for business. Platforms use these resources to streamline activities, boost the worth they remove from workers, and

improve their 'valuations' among financial backers, whose cash powers their start-up ventures. As well as working with esteem extraction, computerised administration procedures likewise empower a fixing of stages' command over their workers. To be sure, algorithmic administration produces types of control seldom found in face-to-face management. While the 'problematic' stage talk keeps up with that accomplices hold command over when and the amount they work, it is presently deep-rooted that algorithmic work assignments vigorously confine workers' command over their own responsibilities and working times (Rosenblat & Stark, 2016).

Women who lost customary domestic work went to gig stages for opportunities in areas such as delivery of home-cooked food for the households they worked at, and freelancing in formats like selling things via digital platforms that were comparatively available to them, for instance, WhatsApp or others. The historical arrangement of domestic work relations gets disrupted by marketplace and on-demand platforms because they break down into short, professionalised tasks (Tandon & Rathi, 2022, pp. 9). Marketplace and on-demand platforms offer popular domestic services like cleaning, cooking, and care such as that by Urban Company and several others. The on-demand companies are more in trend as compared to the marketplace and digital placement agencies because they mainly offer short-term cleaning 'gigs', which counts as one of the most essential forms of domestic work (Tandon & Rathi, 2021, pp. 14-18). Further, to understand the shift in work relations, the paper will identify the clients and the workers through unstructured interviews. The interviews will be held with the domestic workers and clients who engage with platforms and websites to interact with each other.

With no job security, financial safety net, or access to social security, the domestic workers have been left in a vulnerable position. The lack of formal employment contracts and benefits compounded their difficulties. Moreover, most domestic workers in India are migrants from rural areas, often living in cramped and unhygienic conditions. They faced a twofold crisis as they not only lost their jobs but also struggled to access healthcare and necessities during lockdowns. The lack of unionisation and collective bargaining power made it difficult for them to demand fair treatment or protection from employers (Verbruggen, 2020). The pandemic has illuminated a workforce's vulnerabilities that play an indispensable role in our daily lives. For this project, we mapped the socio-economical and material conditions of domestic workers in connection with changes taking place in the paid domestic work sector in the context of the post-pandemic realities and the entry of gig work. The paper will try to conclude while answering the question of how the work relation transformation changes our understanding of Domestic Work.

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Contours of Marginalities and Informal Sector Innovation: Comparative Case Study of Three Indian Informal Vehicles a.k.a Jugaad Vehicles

Shekhar Jain, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Introduction

This paper brings together the theme of marginality and informal sector innovation using the case of Indian informal vehicles also known as *jugaad*. These vehicles are often developed and operated informally in marginalised settings, ubiquitous across the world, more prominently in the global south. They go by many names such as Motorela in Philippines, Remork in Cambodia (Phun & Yai, 2016), Qingqi in Pakistan, Tuk-Tuk in Gaza, Salonis in Ivory Coast (Doherty & Kassi-Djodjo, 2021). In India such vehicles are commonly known as *jugaad* while many other names are popular too like Phat-Phatia in Delhi, Chakkda in Gujarat, Peter Rehra, Garukkha, Maruta, in Punjab/Haryana, Vano in Bengal, '*Jugaad-Thela*' in Jharkhand/Bihar etc. There may be several other variants present and known differently as for instance Prof Anil Gupta says, "*there are thousands of them. Gujarat alone has about 30,000 varieties of vehicles, which are low-cost, innovative and with wide applications*" (Kurup, 2009).

However, despite such ubiquity, not much is known about these vehicles from the innovation perspective. Though we find a bit about their operational aspect in the informal transportation literature without much deliberation on the manufacturing and innovation aspect of the vehicles. This literature doesn't distinguish between formally and informally manufactured vehicles which adds to the concern. This paper attempts to address this gap. In this paper we enquire the aspects which fuel the innovation, growth, and sustenance of informally manufactured vehicles in India placing them within the marginality discourse. Largely, we try to understand how the different kinds of 'margin' push for the creative endeavours which enhance the quality of life of the people. We make policy recommendations too to addresses the marginality concerns which motivate such innovations and to mainstream the people dependent upon these vehicles. We use three different cases of jugaad vehicles found in and around Delhi/NCR region to address our research agenda.

Marginality and Informal Sector Innovation

Marginality draws its meaning from multiple concerns. Historically the idea of marginality emerged as a notion of subjugation and stigmatisation, which is slowly becoming a function of inequality within the objective social conditions with hierarchy and barriers (Varghese & Kumar, 2022). The marginality can emerge due to spatial, infrastructural, socio-economic, legal, and regulatory reasons (Doherty & Kassi-Djodjo, 2021) which is often manifested in the form of disadvantage and exclusion (Bradatan & Craiutu, 2012; Varghese & Kumar, 2022). In spite of these the sites of marginalities, they are often considered important sites of creativity and production (Doherty & Kassi-Djodjo, 2021), though earlier innovation discourse ignored these aspects. At present, the creative endeavour of people at margins is often discussed under the recently emerging umbrella theme of informal sector innovation which share space with many

related themes such as frugal innovation, grassroot innovation, and jugaad innovation (Kumar & Bhaduri, 2014; Sharma & Lindholm, 2023)

Informal sector innovation is deeply intertwined with the marginalities. This theme of innovation research goes beyond mainstream Schumpeterian framework of innovation research wherein organisational routines are central to innovation processes and firms are treated as the basic unit of innovation (OECD, 2005). The informal sector innovation is overwhelmingly considered to be carried out by the people or individuals at the margin without being influenced much by any organisational routine and structure (Kumar & Bhaduri, 2014). This in turn brings the knowledge and innovativeness of the people at the margin within the fold of innovation scholarship, when they are often stigmatised and considered 'marginal minds' and their potential to generate knowledge is underestimated (Rivera-Huerta & López-Lira, 2021).

Characteristically, it is seen that these innovations are incremental, and even the labour(s) participate in the innovation processes (Harriss-White, 2014). In addition, one of the major divergence points between formal economy innovation and informal economy innovation is that for informal economy innovation, the non-economic values are also considered important, in addition to the plain and simple economic or 'exchange value' (Chen & Chen, 2020; Sheikh, 2019; Sheikh & Bhaduri, 2020). However new evidence emerging from Chinese Shenzhen mobile cluster shows that informal sector innovation may also emerge due to economics motives, though, the social values, norms and serving the people who are unserved remain paramount in their innovation process (Chen & Chen, 2020)

Interestingly, the theme of informal vehicles is not new to the marginality discourse. Doherty and Kassi-Djodjo (2021) discusses the emergence of 'Salonis'—a mode of informal transportation that emerged in Abidjan a city in Ivory Coast. They see the rise of these vehicles in the intersection of multiple overlapping marginalities. They further elaborate margins as *"social conditions of exclusion from the normative institutions of society combined with violent inclusion in its carceral apparatus, a condition spatially manifest in institutions like the prison and the banlieue. More broadly, social and political marginalization is an effect of inequalities at multiple scales and should be understood as a mode of unequal incorporation into, rather than separation from, society"*. However, Doherty and Kassi-Djodjo (2021) only consider the operational aspect of these vehicles without addressing how the emergence, design and innovation of these vehicles is also a function of marginalities which we identify in our research.

Jugaad

Jugaad, originated from Punjabi term 'jugat' meaning yukti, is quintessentially an Indian term. Scholars have addressed *jugaad* as small, on-the-ground, quick-fix demonstrations of native ingenuity, just-in-time solutions to a problem at hand, invention done out of necessity or resource scarcity (Ananthram & Chan, 2019; Das, 2005; Gupta, 2008; Radjou et al., 2012; Talukdar, 2004). *Jugaad* is not limited to innovation; it is also seen as an essential tool to deal with Indian bureaucracy. It doesn't primarily relate to qualitative matrices such as good-bad, righteousness-unrighteousness, *jugaad* essentially is an approach of doing things and relates to *"alertness of mind, knowledge about existing possibilities available in the immediate environment, and*

a dedication to solve every problem one confronts in his business/surroundings."(Kumar & Bhaduri, 2014) In a very simplistic sense, it can be related to the ability to devise impromptu solutions when the protocolised methods fail to deliver or are inaccessible for the immediate needs. These *jugaad* innovations also "close the "design-reality gaps' ' or one can say they grow in the gaps which are left out by the protocolised solutions. This way, speaking in context of marginalities, *jugaad* essentially addresses the marginalities emerging as a consequence of the over-protocolisation. Perhaps, it is not exaggeration to argue that *jugaad* flourishes in marginalities and the core aspects of *jugaad* make them consequential to marginalities emerging from these settings.

Characteristics of Informal Vehicles

Even though informal vehicles are nearly absent from innovation literature, informal transportation literature (Cervero & Golub, 2007; Mateo-Babiano, 2015) state that these locally adapted and modified vehicles emerge as a response to local needs, conditions (Kumar et al., 2016; Phun & Yai, 2016), and local cultures (Mateo-Babiano, 2015), and are manufactured informally or in small firms based on the indigenous, local technology and resources by small firms (Sperling et al., 2005). These vehicles carry a distinct advantage of being low cost, user friendly, customisable, and having simple technology which makes it easier to maintain and operate without much technical skill (Sperling et al., 2005). Success of such vehicles depends upon their context-sensitivity, meeting vital mobility needs or demand responsiveness, and socio-culturally appropriateness (Mateo-Babiano, 2015), along with the presence of infrastructure facilities like the availability of spare parts, their retailers, and skilled mechanics (Doherty & Kassi-Djodjo, 2021). The socio-economic implications like employment generation, cheaper transportation for the poor, and potential to meet the unfulfilled transportation requirements often make them favourite of people at the margins (Phun & Yai, 2016).

Indian Informal Vehicles a.k.a *Jugaad* Vehicles

In this context the Indian informal vehicles, more fondly known as *jugaad*, are unconventional, and don't follow established regulations or standards in the strictest sense. These vehicles are designed as per local needs by local mechanics using the available resources. One can broadly categorise these vehicles into three types: 1) Vehicles made using old two wheelers or motorbikes: The oldest of these vehicles is the Phat-Phatias or 'put-puttas' which were repurposed Harley Davidson bikes (Jodha, 2003). Phat-Phatias, and Chakkdas were initially made out of two-wheeler engines, similar vehicles are referred to as motor tricycles in informal transportation literature (Doherty & Kassi-Djodjo, 2021); 2) vehicles made using engines meant for water pumps, generators (e.g. Maruta, Peter Rehra, Garukka etc (Lindsey, 2002)), and 3) locally made electric vehicles (Harding, 2014).

These vehicles are not always appreciated and to some they appear 'jury-rigged' (Birtchnell, 2011) in comparison to company-manufactured formal vehicles. This caricature of *jugaad* certainly doesn't surprise much as marginality often brings along demonisation and stigmatisation, which in fact is one of the causes of exclusion (Ning, 2012; Wallace, 2012).

For us this caricature of *jugaad* vehicles only further marginalised the people who are dependent upon them, and it also leads to the ignorance of their underlying innovativeness and ingenuity of the people who innovate them.

Case Detail under Consideration

In this paper we reflect on the three different cases of *jugaad* vehicles emerged/operating in the Delhi NCR region respectively shown from left to right in the picture below.

Figure 15: Three cases of Jugaad vehicles under consideration



(Source(L-R): Author, Internet, Author)

The first of these vehicles is the scooter engine based *jugaad* vehicles which often are manufactured by the local mechanics using old scooter parts. This rickshaw has already been declared illegal by the Indian Supreme Court. Yet their numbers haven't gone down. In fact, in 2022 there was a public outcry when the Punjab police came out with an administrative order to ban these vehicles in accordance with the court order. The outcry grew so much that Punjab government was forced to withdraw the administrative order. This indicates that these vehicles are much more than makeshift arrangements, and irrespective of their 'non-standard' and 'non-protocolised' appearance they have deep relevance within the local context. The research attempts to answer some of the questions on their relevance.

The second vehicle we discuss is the battery driven rickshaw or e-Rickshaw. This rickshaw is now formalised within the motor vehicle act. Some of the studies do embark on some of the aspects of this rickshaw. However, none has studied these rickshaws from the innovation perspective. Also, despite the regulation, the e-Rickshaws are manufactured and operated informally across the country. This paper attempts to reflect on the same issue from a marginality perspective. The case of e-Rickshaw help us on the aspects of regularisation challenges faced by the jugaad vehicles.

The third case we discuss is an emerging informal vehicle which has emerged within the jurisdiction of Old Delhi and is now diffusing to other areas. These are upgraded cycle rickshaws with batteries/motors. These were first spotted in 2014, and we have been following their evolution since 2016. These rickshaws are not yet discussed anywhere but this paper uses this rickshaw to address the question of what motivates the emergence of such informal vehicles. In addition, this case helps us make deeper reflections on the innovation aspects of these vehicles.

Some Preliminary Results

In our research we have found that the *jugaad* vehicles are often the result of different marginalities including spatial, infrastructural, socio-economic, legal, and regulatory. One major aspect of the emergence of this vehicle is the geography of the area they are operating in and existing services available to the people. However, many people also adopt these vehicles to avoid legalities of the formal vehicles or to avoid repercussions if they break traffic rules. The rickshaw is a lifeline in many places as it brings down the cost of ferrying goods/people in the absence of the alternatives. The drivers adopt these vehicles as it is the healthier option than to pull a cycle rickshaw and cost effective too. Further, the *jugaad* vehicles are endogenous innovations wherein the innovation appears to be upgrading the technology for the cycle rickshaw puller rather than introducing the technology to a completely new set of people. This way this technology is not in direct competition with the existing technology. Further, the formalisation of e-Rickshaws highlights the policy aspect needed for such innovations. The complete and partial failure of e-Rickshaw regulations emphasises that the local actors must be considered during the making of the policy. Otherwise the policy fails to bring the order it intends to. In fact, it only marginalises the grassroot actors further which only increases the informality.

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Navigating Margins: Religious, Gendered, and Class-based Resistance Strategies Among Muslim Women in the Informal Labour Markets

Priyanjali Mitra, University of Chicago

Informal work has been theorised across a wide spectrum in the social sciences—from the Marxist conceptions of the ‘reserve army of labour’ and ‘relative surplus labour’ on the one hand, to anthropological framings considering it the fount of innovation with underutilised productive potential for economies on the other (Hart, 1973). While the precise definitions are everchanging, the objective of this paper is to explore the potential for resistance from the subjective positions of workers themselves. Much of the informal work around the world is undertaken by women (ILO, 2018). The effects of working in the informal economy may manifest themselves both in how women are treated by others, and in their own perceptions about their identities. Women are relegated to the informal sector owing to the structural barriers faced in accessing paid work, the responsibility of unpaid domestic work and patriarchal notions of division of labour in the household. Low wages and no worker’s rights, safety, or security are often the consequences. State support for these women is rare, if not non-existent.

Women in paid domestic work and the construction sector demonstrate different ways of resisting the spousal dynamic in the household, employers, landlords, and different arms of the state (Neetha, 2008; 2013). They frame their struggles through the ‘outsider’ lens referring to their migrant status in the city and the pejorative connotations attached with it. It is this status that shapes the form and content of resistance in the workplace, often manifesting differently in the two kinds of work examined here. I pose the following questions through this paper—Examined from below, what does resistance mean for women in informal work? How do the layered economic and social (particularly religious) marginalities manifest in their everyday lives?

Drawing from Katz’s (2004) conceptualisation of resistance as an expression of agency, I examine a range of actions following in the vein of Bayat’s conceptions of ‘quiet resistance’ (Bayat, 2000). Katz (2004) categorises the strategies people use in order to negotiate with and reformulate the conditions and possibilities of their everyday lives as resilience, reworking and resistance. The paper frames the individuals, their meaning making of resistance and what it means to do so amidst constraints in the city. The Bourdieusian ‘field’, defined as a terrain of struggle in which agents strategise to preserve or improve their positions inspires the relational position of the worker in this paper, situated in a terrain of several other actors. This perspectival approach can be theoretically and analytically fruitful to study resistance. Although there are objective features of the ‘field’ and the dimensions of struggle, the sense making is in fact an ongoing negotiation. I am more concerned with how the workers come to make meaning and articulate the ideas of resistance, how they persist and less with what the structures actually are.

The findings in the paper are drawn from an ongoing ethnographic data collection including in-depth interviews and participant observation, conducted in Gurugram (Haryana) among

different groups of informal workers in two urban villages. I consider the multiple possibilities of resistance through the meaning making processes of workers themselves. Through different cases, I contend that the notion of resistance itself is socially constructed. This is particularly true of Muslim workers in the informal sector who as per the last PLFS (2019) have the lowest labour force participation among all religious and social categories. Muslim women workers were the most affected by the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020, forced evictions in the aftermath of the government-imposed lockdowns, communal riots in the city in September 2023, and routine everyday police violence. Most of the scholarship in this regard is focused on the educational, social backwardness of Muslim women (Kazi, 1999; Saaed, 2005). There is limited empirical evidence examining the working lives in the informal labour markets. Hence the attempt here is to explore the conditions of marginality in informal work as well as a grounded understanding of resistance.

This paper draws from a sample consisting entirely of Muslim migrant workers bringing to the fore layered marginalities. On the one hand is the economic precarity, but also housing insecurity and perpetual threat of eviction in the urban village. A gendered understanding of resistance in this context necessitates considering the dynamics of social reproduction within the household as well as the public realm. My interlocutors routinely articulate a combination of acts and strategies—both intentional and unintentional that build resilience, rework their relations with employers and often actively resist actions taken by Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) or landlords. The messy entanglements of religion, gender and class reveal the complexity of navigating everyday life in the informal sector.

Without romanticising notions of resistance among this group of workers, I seek to reveal precisely these entanglements of religion and gender in the labour narratives. There is no one way of resisting the employer or the state in the case of informal workers – with workers often preferring to engage in everyday forms of incremental acts rather than large scale radical acts of resistance. To understand resistance, I argue, it is also crucial to go beyond the workplace, to the neighbourhood and the community. It is crucial to extend our examination to the homes (or *badis in Bengali*) of workers but also what happens between the employer's house and their own homes where they continue labouring. Who are the key actors they are negotiating with in the everyday and what does that mean for possibilities and constraints of resistance?

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Financial Literacy and Marginalised Women's Engagement with Formal Financial Institutions: The Case of Women Domestic Workers of Delhi NCR.

Nidhi Vahi, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi

Archana Kumar, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi

Keywords: Financial Literacy, Financial Inclusion, Marginalised women, Women Empowerment

Financial inclusion for women is not only a matter of economic empowerment but also a transformative force in the lives of poor women, providing them with the tools and opportunities they need to foster social and economic well-being, contributing to poverty alleviation and a means of advancing gender equality in the society. Many benefits associated with gender-inclusive financial systems can be realised by ensuring women's access to financial services and opportunities. However, being financially included is not enough; individuals must know how to use financial services optimally. Combining financial inclusion with financial literacy programmes can lead to improved financial well-being and greater financial empowerment especially for women and other marginalised communities. Financial literacy equips women with the knowledge and skills to manage their finances effectively. The skill enables them to make informed decisions about their money, investments, and savings, ultimately leading to greater financial independence and their empowerment.

Various definitions of financial literacy emphasise it to be an application of a combination of knowledge, skill, attitude, and behaviour applied to real-life situations for making sound financial decisions and achieving individual financial well-being. In other words, financial literacy is not just about understanding financial concepts but also about being able to use that understanding to make informed and wise financial decisions that lead to personal financial well-being. Especially for marginalised women, financial literacy can help them build emergency funds, manage debt, reducing the risk of falling into poverty, and becoming financially resilient. In developing nations women have limited access to financial services. Being financially literate can help women navigate formal financial systems and enhance their access to banking and other financial services like loans, insurance etc., leading to greater financial inclusion and as an effect contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment.

A rights-based perspective focuses on capacity development, both of financial institutions to develop appropriate products, services, and approaches for reaching and addressing the barriers that women face, as well as building the skills, resources, authority, and motivations of women to claim their rights.

This paper examines financial literacy of women domestic workers in the Delhi region and their engagement in formal financial institutions. Based on the primary data collected using a mix of qualitative and quantitative tools, the paper explores the barriers marginalised women face and discusses strategies to improve their financial education. Additionally, an effort is made to

identify various strategies for enhancing the women's financial literacy. The assessment identifies key challenges women face and factors that can pave the way for women to be able to take robust financial decisions for themselves and their households. It is also suggested that tailor-made financial literacy programmes designed specifically for women should be developed for enhancing reach and access to financial services and their financial inclusion.

Unstable and Uncertain: Informal Settlements and the Politics of Policy Categories in Guwahati City

Brishti Banerjee, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

Many people live in informal settlements without formal access to property rights or secure tenure. It includes various housing arrangements on different land types like slums, shanty towns, squatter settlements and unauthorised colonies (UN-Habitat, 2003). Informal settlements or slums are not just a manifestation of demographic change or globalisation. They result equally from the failure of housing policies, laws, and service delivery systems. Across the globe and in India, governments and institutions have adopted different policies for slums, especially in the housing context. To a large extent, policies and planning designs depend on how the state sees, defines, and categorises these spaces.

Britton argues that categories are intrinsic to the 'language of policy' and require close scrutiny (Britton, 2007, p. 65). Bhide (2021) observes that categories cited in policy documents may limit understanding of the reality of informal settlements. Bhan notes that through such naming practices, the state 'naturalises socio-spatial hierarchy' and promotes 'differential and inegalitarian urban citizenship' (Bhan, 2014, p. 22). Scholars believe it is crucial to examine the working of these categories constructed by the state, which includes questioning both 'their internal logics' and countering 'the discursive and political effects of their circulation' (Bhan, 2014, p. 22; Bhide, 2021). Hence, this underscores the need to dig deeper into the categorisation process and question the logic of categories in policymaking (for overviews, see Britton, 2007).

Given the context, a central theme in urban studies literature has been the importance of going beyond dominant geographies (Bunnell & Marigranti, 2010). Within India, there are also particular geographies that are especially neglected, like the North-East. Scholars working in North-East India remark that there is little research on the region's urban history, urban life, or urban phenomenon (Bhattacharjee, 1993; McDuire-Ra, 2016). Although in the last decade some scholars have engaged in understanding urbanisation, urban governance, housing, militarism, capitalism, and urbanism (for overviews, see Mahadevia et al., 2014 & 2016; Khaka, 2019; Kikon & McDuire-Ra, 2020; Singh & Singha, 2020; Kamath, 2020; Gogoi, 2020), the urban literature in the region continues to be thin.

In this paper, I develop the case of Guwahati City in Assam, the largest urban agglomeration in the North-East region with the highest slum population. The city has emerged as a frontrunner in championing the central government's urban agenda within the North-East region. Guwahati is also characterised by its unique geopolitics and social realities like ethnic conflict and insider-outsider politics rooted in the region's history. Further, these factors are closely intertwined with land contestations and violence in the state (for overviews, see Baruah, 1999).

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, I explore two main questions in this paper: How does the state construct policy categories for slums? What are the lived implications for people living in informal settlements? In this context, I examine the history, processes, and underlying logic of

state-constructed policy categories for slums. I investigate the politics of such policy categories in under-researched urban geographies in India like Guwahati. I argue that the policy categories for slums in the city exhibit inherent ambiguity, arbitrariness, and a dearth of rationale. Such categorisations persist without formal announcements or clarifications, giving rise to discrepancies in policy formulation, which, in turn, have far-reaching repercussions on the vulnerable population inhabiting informal settlements. Consequently, the state's deliberate perpetuation of such ambiguities significantly distorts the lived reality.

Methodologically, I ground my analysis based on several data sources, including field notes and memos, to understand this complex reality of policy categories that play out in the context of slums in Guwahati. I utilise multiple methods like engaged observations, semi-structured in-depth interviews (some longitudinal interviews), informal conversations, focus group discussions (FGDs), and personal communication with various stakeholders over ten months of fieldwork to consider evolving perspectives. I employ constructionist and critical ethnography to understand the 'how' and 'what' questions. I also analysed policy documents, slum lists, and available archival data from the Assam State Archives. Besides, I derive insights by drawing upon my professional experience as a former development practitioner who has worked with inhabitants of informal settlements in the city.

Considering categorisation as an integral part of the policy-making process and its crucial role in the 'conception, design, and implementation' of policies (Britton, 2007, p. 61), I utilise the theoretical viewpoints and discussions in the literature around policy categories. I refer to the scholarly literature on migration, race, and refugee studies (for overviews, see Zetter, 1991; Edelman, 1993; Britton, 2007; Bakewell, 2008; Crawley & Skleparis, 2018; Houllier-Binder & Lutringer, 2022) in order to identify the scope of using this conceptual framing for slum categories. Following that, I make explicit the "official" informal settlement categories across the globe and in India and their role in shaping policies. After that, I provide a detailed explanation of the slum and slum categories in Guwahati city to set the context for my larger argument on ambiguities and complications associated with slum categories, documentation and legality. I argue that the state's "category fetishism" is an act of illusion and is driven by political motivations. Further, the deliberate perpetuation of such ambiguities limits understanding the reality of informal settlements. It simplifies and homogenises the experiences of people living in these settlements and discards the specificities associated with such settlements across the city's unique geography—hills, wetlands, and plains.

Based on my analysis, I also note that the categories for Guwahati's slums seem to be characterised by secrecy and arbitrariness, deviating from the ideals of systematic and consistent policy knowledge. These categories lack transparency and precision, undergo procedural changes, and remain unannounced. Further, this is coupled with unequal scalar politics that reflect the political aspirations of the state to centralise power, characterised by the increasing intervention of the state government in the municipal geographies of governance.

Drawing from accounts of residents of informal settlements and reflections based on ethnographic fieldwork, I illustrate how the covert and precarious nature of slum categories in Guwahati produces continuous uncertainty and obscurity that prevents people or communities living in informal settlements from claiming their rights.

In conclusion, I emphasise that the state's knowledge of slums and slum categories is fragmented, and there is a gap between the same and the lived reality. Policy categories for slums in the city are unstable, uncertain, arbitrary and distinct from reality. These categories are also not transparent internally within different agencies of the state and outside in relation to the society or the residents living in slums or informal settlements.

Further, such categories are utilised as a tool of convenience by the state, evident through multiple and contradictory slum lists. It adds to the complication and exposes loopholes in the policy-making process, severely impacting people inhabiting informal settlements whose everyday lives revolve around land insecurity, eviction threats, and the struggle to formally access basic services. Empirical accounts from the field also emphasise the impracticality associated with policy categories, slum categories in this case, and the urgency to reimagine the informal settlements and housing policies in the city.

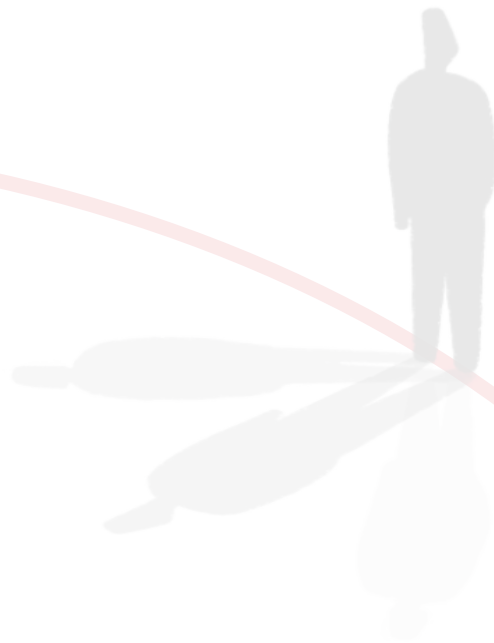
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PANEL 8

Urban Marginalities: Methods, Design, and Social Change



Unmapping Kolkata: Urban History at the Margins

Sujaan Mukherjee, The Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta

Overview

Early maps of Calcutta, dating back to the mid-18th century, were drawn primarily in the interest of military strategy. Two features stand out prominently. The first is the old Fort William, built in 1696 to defend the East India Company's (EIC) factory, beyond which maps contain vague markers of "native" habitations. The second is an incomplete boundary along the northern, southern, and eastern limits of the township, marked by the Maratha Ditch, constructed in the mid-18th century to defend against a possible Maratha attack. The consolidation of the latter was perceived as the EIC's attempts to enact political markers of sovereignty and was partly responsible for provoking an attack on Calcutta by Siraj-ud-Daulah, Nawab of Murshidabad (erstwhile capital of the Bengal subah) in 1756 (Ehrlich, 2022, 9). The old Fort William was destroyed and, after the British reoccupation of Calcutta, rebuilt further south by displacing large numbers of "native" settlements from the village of Gobindapur.

In 1794, Calcutta's boundaries were officially "fixed to be the inner side of the Mahratta Ditch" (Ray, 1902, 56), with the river Hooghly forming a natural boundary to the west. As part of the restitution for the siege of 1756, the EIC acquired from the new, British-friendly Nawab, zamindari rights over several villages or *mauza* beyond the Ditch, which were collectively known as Panchannagram (fifty-five villages) (Ray, 1902, 53-56). These villages or neighbourhoods that fell under the Suburban Municipality would be incorporated within the city limits in the late-19th century. They continued to constitute the urban peripheries until the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass project was undertaken in the 1980s, to connect with new townships in the east, such as Salt Lake/Bidhan Nagar, and later Rajarhat, Newtown, and so on.

At present, this "fringe area" (Richards, 1914, 26) forms a central part of the Kolkata's map as the city expands eastward. Ironically, however, in urban historiography and sociology, as well as in cognitive or cultural maps of the city, these neighbourhoods retain a marginal status owing to a long history of civic, social, and political marginalisation. The proposed presentation, based on my postdoctoral research, focuses on four neighbourhoods, Tiljala, Topshia, Tangra, and Dhapa, which had been regarded as sites of the city's refuge—spaces to which urban functionalities considered "unsanitary" or "impure" were relegated systematically. It tries to situate the problem of urban marginality historically and, in order to do so, proposes a methodological intervention that can open up possibilities of writing subaltern urban geographies that are underrepresented in colonial and postcolonial archives.

The methodological critique is founded upon the recognition that colonial mappings not only contained information (or silences) about the territory, they propagated certain spatial analytics based on the empirical information. In turn, the understanding of space—the conceptual categories, as it were—informed and delimited the possibilities of empirical information gathering. Belying colonialist claims of achieving objective representation, the circular logic that informed the formation of the archive of "geographic knowledge" (Harvey, 2004, 103), was

severely limited by a Eurocentric understanding of urban space, patterns of habitation, and an apparent binary between the human and non-human (Chattopadhyay, 2010, 649). Thus, apart from attempting to write a history of these neighbourhoods, the project launches a critique of two key spatial analytics outlined above: the notion of a clear boundary between town and suburb; and the historicised idea of urban segregation operating along racial lines as suggested by the Fort/Black Town paradigm (Brown, 2003, 151).

Civic and Social Marginalisation

Next to a popular eatery that lies at the threshold of Tangra and Dhapa, a remarkable political graffiti offers testimony to the diversity of the political constituency. The message announcing the Martyr's Day procession (21 July) is written in the Chinese script (with a few errors). The artwork shows a collective marching flag-in-hand, arms raised. There is a Muslim man in a skullcap, a couple of Chinese figures, a Christian missionary with a crucifix hanging off his neck, and one (token) woman. In front of the wall runs an open drain that floods the lane every time there is a drizzle; behind it rise the towers of the Aarus housing complex. Although Tangra, with its diverse demographic profile, is not the fairest cross-sectional representation of the neighbourhoods that lie between the old boundary of Kolkata and the E.M. Bypass, it serves as a useful branching off point from where it is possible to access multiple ethnic and religious geographies.

Figure 16: "Martyr's Day" (2022) political wall graffiti, Tangra, Kolkata



(Source: Author)

The close co-habitation of Dalits, Mul-vasi-s, low-caste Muslims, and Chinese in this region is no coincidence. Through the 18th and 19th centuries, several things that were expelled from the city limits, such as non-Christian burial grounds (low-caste Hindu, Muslim, Chinese, Jewish, and a Parsi Tower of Silence), tanneries and slaughter-houses, waste disposal and management systems, facilities for contagious diseases and insane asylums, were relegated to these areas—

or, one could argue that, to begin with, the city boundaries were drawn with a view to demarcating and distancing itself from the space of the abject. Thus, ethnic and religious minorities and caste groups associated with these professions too came to occupy these neighbourhoods, safely distanced from the city whose space was claimed by the combination of what Sudipta Kaviraj identifies as “two different mappings of concepts related to the material world, based in different cosmologies”, i.e., “the Brahminical concept of cleanliness and purity” and the “emergent Western ideas about hygiene” (Kaviraj, 1997, 98). But as Qudsiya Contractor points out in her work on filth in Mumbai, “there is a continuum in the way in which religion is used publicly to demarcate urban space post-Independence,” with successful spatial strategies linking “in a durable and ideologically credible way, abstract (imagined) spaces to concrete (physical) places” such that these ties “also bind people to particular identities and to the political/practical consequences that they entail” (Contractor, 2021, online).

Inhabiting the Margins

Although the larger project aims to write histories of multiple communities, the proposed presentation will focus on only one illustrative case: the Chamar community of Tiljala. There are multiple communities in the area—particularly Tiljala and Tangra—who are involved with leather trade, of whom the Chamar is one. The main space of assembly is a *gurughar* or temple, housed in a three-storeyed Art Deco-inspired building, constructed in 1939, which sports on the roof a golden dome surrounded by four minarets. The patron saint of the Chamars is the mystic and poet, Guru Ravidas, who is supposed to have hailed from the same community. Kuldeep Jassi, the President of the Adi Dharma Seva Samity, which runs the *gurughar* and adjoining par, clarifies that his community does not acknowledge Brahminical caste hierarchy but subscribes to the Adi-dharma, within which Chamar is purely a profession-based category, just like someone working with iron or *loha* would be a Lohar. Although traditionally non-idolaters, Jassi explains the presence of a model of Ravidas in the temple by recalling how his elders, after setting up the temple as a community space, wanted to bring Chamars from Bihar and Jharkhand into their fold; and, in order to adapt to alternative belief systems, introduced the model for worship. The community, the trade, and the operations of the temple are closely interlinked. Punjabi tanners practised “veg tanning,” a chemical-free process which uses the bark of the Babla tree, Jassi explains. Afterwards, the husk would be sold by the firms to the Calcutta Racecourse for lakhs of rupees and the proceeds would be donated to the gurughar, overlooking private gains.

Tanneries, as Partho Datta notes, were subject to scrutiny in the early-nineteenth century. However, given that a large number of tanneries were owned by Europeans “‘expelling a very numerous and useful class of men from the town’ was against their financial interests” (Datta, 2012, 27). The situation changed in the late-nineteenth century following the Act 14 of 1856, which categorised tanning among “Offensive and Dangerous Trades” (Theobald, 1857, 127). Perhaps encouraged by the presence of leather-working communities on the outer side of the Circular Canal, Tiljala and Tangra became the logical destination for relocations that started taking place towards the end of the 19th century.

The year in which the Sree Guru Ravidas Mandir was conceived (1928) also witnessed the establishment of the Ravidas Mahasabha in Calcutta by Jagjivan Ram, a Dalit leader hailing from the Chamar community (Jaffrelot, 1988, 98). He joined the Indian National Congress in 1930 and was promoted by them “as a counterweight to the growing influence of Ambedkar,” given that his views aligned with that of the upper caste leadership (Jaffrelot, 1988, 99). In 1946, Ambedkar would contest the Constituent Assembly elections from Bengal with the support of Jogendranath Mandal, an event with which the Ravidasia today claim lineage. Jassi recalls hearing from their forefathers that “when Ambedkar fought the election from here, members of our community associated with this gurudawara—particularly the Punjabis—had *gherao*-ed Raj Bhavan with sticks and swords.” Leaders like Mandal, who believed in Dalits’ right to self-determination through electoral politics, saw a window of opportunity for political mobilisation and building solidarity—among Dalits but also with Muslims against Brahminical supremacy—in the 1930s (Sen, 2018, 78).

Figure 17: “People take part in a rally during Sant Ravidas Jayanti celebration in Kolkata on 5 February 2023.” Photograph by Kuntal Chakrabarty/IANS



(Source: Social News XYZ, 5 February 2023)

The Calcutta Corporation, as Rajat Ray has demonstrated (Ray, 1979), had emerged in the early-20th century as a site of nationalist politics, and Mandal was elected to a reserved Schedule Caste seat in 1940 with Congress’s backing. Previously, one of the most influential activists of the Corporation, Sarat Chandra Bose, had written to Chief Minister Fazl-ul Haq that Schedule Caste was “an entity so artificial and unreal that no better label could be attached to it” (Sen, 2018, 77), a symptom, Sen argues, of an ideology that “sought to deny Dalits political subjectivity”, to misrecognise the right to equal political and social participation and to speak for themselves (Sen, 2018, 12). The move to accept Congress support for Mandal’s candidacy, therefore, did not sit well with a number of Dalit leaders but received the validation of Ambedkar (Sen, 2018, 102-

3). Post-partition, “the constitutional rights of Dalits went systematically ignored, and the political process seemed designed to thwart the reemergence of aspirations to Dalit self-determination in West Bengal” (Sen, 2018, 15).

In a city that carries the colonial legacy of naming streets after eminent persons— usually either European or elite Hindus and Muslims from the worlds of culture and politics—Khatick is an unusual surname to encounter. Listed among Schedule Castes in West Bengal, Khatick are traditionally engaged as butchers or vegetable cultivators. One rare exception is one of the arterial roads in Tangra, which is named Pulin Behari Khatik (1894-1961). True to his caste identity, is supposed to have owned a large piggery in the New Municipal (or S.S. Hogg) Market founded in 1874. He had emerged as an important public figure during the Bengal Famine of 1943, apparently feeding 1500 people daily and, subsequently, contributing substantially to the Mayor’s Tuberculosis Clinic, the Corporation’s Maternity Home, and to a number of schools. He had contested elections from the Tangra area and represented his constituency at the Legislative Assembly in 1937 during the Muslim League Ministry. Later, Khatick had returned to the West Bengal State Legislative Assembly from the same constituency and served as Councillor of the Corporation between 1938 and 1948. After his death, the Councillor had proposed renaming a portion of Tangra Road as Pulin Khatick Road to commemorate the “prominent citizen of the Tangra area” and his “lovable personality” (Nair, 1987, 691). Nonetheless, so far as we are aware, Khatik’s political career has gone unnoticed in histories of caste mobilisation in Bengal. It is possible that unlike Mandal, he had chosen to operate at the level of municipal politics, rather than making larger claims for Dalit self-determination. Although writing and making meaning of these narratives will require longer, more serious engagement, Khatick serves another example of entry-points into history that cannot be found in the existing archives. The “political/practical consequences” Contractor alludes to become apparent when we try to map the politics of civic and social marginalisation on to the trajectory of Dalit politics, particularly in the municipal arena, in West Bengal, through the lens of urban geography.

Conclusions and Propositions

The methodological intervention suggested here, “un-mapping,” proposes a delinking of attempts to narrativize the spatio-temporal dimensions of the city from the epistemic implications of the “deep structures of geographic knowledge,” in David Harvey’s sense of the expression, produced and sustained through coloniality. Broadly situated in the field of “critical cartography”, the approach is based on the recognition of the fact that, like maps, archives maintained by the state and allied institutions, are also ideologically selective in terms of what they represent, which by implication, defines the limits of and authorises what may be said and is sayable, dispatching a great deal besides “to a domain outside of history” (Pandey). Alongside an attempt to recuperate in a literal sense “unarchived histories” of marginalised neighbourhoods and communities, the article acknowledges, following Gyanendra Pandey, that the cartographic and archival omissions—literal and cognitive—are a result of prejudices that have insidiously blended in with a methodology, which, having established its anticolonial credentials, sees itself as being freed from hegemonic ideologies.

Thus, rather than starting with the colonial archive, the project takes as its primary entry point the city itself. Through fieldwork and interviews— “the archive of the feet” (Schama, 1995, 25)— the project aims to identify cues that help reconstruct neighbourhood histories and, eventually, connects back to associated events in existing archives. While “unmapping” is concerned with cartography, it differs from methodologies and strategies like “counter-mapping” in that it does not immediately seek to offer a cartographic alternative that poses a challenge to the power structures of hegemonic spatial meaning-making; rather, it focuses on developing a method of writing marginal urban narratives that, being alert to the epistemic biases of cartography, attempts to recognise and think with local spatial logics, and balances the visually and textually dominant geographic knowledge archive with direct, lived sensory experiences.

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New Social Mix in Nantou Ancient Town in Shenzhen

Daria Lisaia, Vanke Urban Research

The New-Type Urbanisation and urban development in China introduced a new set of tasks, including integrating urban heritage into urban planning [1]. Since 2016, the micro-renovation approach for revitalising historic urban areas has received government support in China. Great transformations are taking place inside the 'historic urban areas', which over decades have developed strong socio-spatial patterns and own cultural traditions. The relationship between the tangible assets (spatial characteristics) and the intangible assets (social, cultural, and economic factors) defines and shapes the unique urban landscape. Socioeconomic changes affect the spatial aspects of the built environment, which, in turn, shape the lifestyle of the residents. Therefore, the strategy for the conservation and micro-renovation of historic urban areas could consider the tangible and intangible aspects of improving the urban environment.

Figure 18: Nantou Ancient Town



(Source: Author)

This article explores the causes and impact mechanism of the socio-demographic changes after the application of the Nantou Ancient Town (NAT) Conservation and Adaptive Reuse Strategy of Shenzhen. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used for the investigation of the 'new' social mix patterns in the neighbourhood. The following questions were explored: 1) What urban design strategies were applied in the revitalisation of NAT? 2) What results were expected to achieve after the project implementation? 3) What changes have occurred in the socio-demographic structure after the completion of the project in NAT in 2022 compared to 2018? 4) How to achieve a harmonious social mix and create a healthy community in NAT?

Figure 19: The author participated in the 'Community Building' activities, initiated by the 'Nantou Ancient City' office and implemented by 'FATURE' company (Chinese: Weilai Qiyu).



(Source: 'FATURE' and Author)

Policies for the Preservation of Urban Heritage and Regeneration of Urban Villages in Shenzhen

In Shenzhen, policies for the preservation of urban heritage and regeneration of urban villages were created following the national and municipal government decisions. 'The Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics', 'Measures for the Administration of Urban Purple Lines', and other laws and regulations put forward the task of protecting historically and culturally valuable urban areas and urban heritage. The urban villages regeneration programme was officially launched in 2019 by the Planning and Natural Resources Bureau of Shenzhen, which released The Master Plan of Comprehensive Improvement of Shenzhen's Old Urban Villages for 2019–2025. The conservation and adaptive reuse of Shenzhen's urban heritage and comprehensive improvement of urban villages have become important issues, aiming to improve urban space and basic facilities, protect and inherit urban heritage (tangible and intangible), and maintain social stability.

Urban Heritage Protection in Shenzhen

The modern city of Shenzhen occupies an area that until 1979 was Bao'an County with numerous settlements and villages, some of which had a long and rich history. The 'urban heritage' of Shenzhen is not an example of 'typical' urban heritage, such as in Guangzhou, Nanjing, and other historical cities of China. The most outstanding example of the symbiosis of urban heritage before and after 1979 is Nantou Ancient Town with over 1700 years of history. It is an important historical and cultural landmark of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Throughout its history, Nantou has undergone some major transformations and currently combines the two identities of the historical 'county seat' and the contemporary 'urban village'.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Nantou was the administrative centre of Xin'an (Bao'an) County in Guangdong Province, which covered the area of the modern cities of Shenzhen and Hong Kong, as well as the political, military, economic, and cultural centre of the Lingnan coastal area. In 1953, the government seat moved to Caowuwei and Nantou became a rural community. In 1979, Shenzhen City was founded, and in 1980, the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone was founded. In 1988, Nantou Ancient Town was designated as a municipal-level heritage site. Since the 1980s, Shenzhen City pioneered land, institutional, socio-economic, and financial reforms,

which brought to life the ideas of the Reform and Opening up policy, making the young city a symbol of China's success in building a modern socialist country. In the 1990s, the successful development of the city attracted migrant workers from all over the country. At present, Shenzhen is a first-tier city and China's technology giant. It covers an area of 1997.47 km² and in 2021 had a population of 17.6 million. In the 1990s–2000s, during the initial stages of urbanisation, Nantou became an urban village that supplied the city's new residents with affordable rental housing. By the 2010s, 90 per cent of indigenous villagers had moved to more comfortable residential areas in Shenzhen or immigrated. Before the revitalisation project (before 2019), nearly 25,000 people were living in Nantou, including about 2,500 people with local household registration. The floating population constitutes over 90 per cent of the total population.

Currently, NAT is a residential community with great historical and cultural value due to its well-preserved urban fabric, and rich historical and cultural resources. In September 2019, the municipal government launched the Nantou Ancient Town Conservation and Adaptive Reuse Project to mark the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. The Nanshan district government sponsored; Vanke Urban Research implemented it in 2019–2022 with the citizens' participation.

Theoretical Framework for Evaluating the post-Regeneration Socio-Demographic Changes in NAT

To evaluate the socio-demographic changes after the revitalisation strategy, it is essential to develop a theoretical framework. The author conducted a literature review, which includes the following disciplines: public health, urban planning, urban regeneration, sociology, and anthropology.

Public Health in Communities Planning

In 1986, the World Health Organization initiated the Healthy Cities movement, which aims to improve and promote the creation of an accessible social, physical, and cultural environment that facilitates the pursuit of health, well-being, and high quality of life as guiding principles of public health and urban planning. The population's health is determined not only by the provision of medical care but also by the comfort and safety of the living environment, that is, the quality of the internal and external environment of residential and public buildings, as well as the social environment of the community. Since 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Goal 11 'Sustainable cities and communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' takes into account global migration processes and socio-economic trends that influence the change in the sociodemographic structure in communities. Experts predict that the residential communities of the future will be open, diverse, and equitable urban spaces, offering greater choice without compromising human health and negative impact on the ecological environment [2, 3].

Urban Planning and Protection of Urban Heritage

The heritage buildings and historical sites have high cultural value and cannot be rebuilt or replaced. Therefore, the regeneration of the areas with urban heritage has a special status among other urban regeneration projects. They require a special approach that takes into account the unique characteristics of these territories, preserving and carefully updating historical and cultural resources, using the potential, and adapting the area to modern needs. At the same time, the social components of the local community can include the strengthening of social capital, accumulation of human capital, and creation of new values and innovation by integrating cultural and creative industries in the local economy to ensure the comprehensive update of urban culture. In 1995, the World Bank [4] introduced the concept of wealth. In 2014 the 'national wealth' assets share were recognized as 20 per cent of national wealth is natural capital, 16 per cent is produced capital (economic), and 64 per cent is intangible capital (human and institutional). Human capital is the most important component of intangible wealth for all countries, especially for high-income countries. Thus, human and cultural capital are the most valuable assets that should be enhanced.

The planning structure of historical cities, quarters, and the typology of residential blocks in China is based on the human scale. Since the implementation of the Reform and Opening Up Policy, China's economy has developed rapidly. The development of urbanisation and urban growth have an impact on the physical and mental health of people. In large-scale, high-density new urban blocks, it is more difficult to develop social networks. The small-scale historical quarters are more suitable for walking, building, and maintaining social relations, and communication. The streets' public space is filled with vitality and social activity, which provides an opportunity to use the cultural potential of the urban heritage for the accumulation of the human, social, and economic capital of the city [5, 6, 7, 8].

Urban Regeneration and the Comprehensive Improvement of Urban Villages

UN-Habitat Experts Group Meeting concluded that urban regeneration has been recognised as one of the most comprehensive and effective tools to transform urban areas into more diverse and vibrant neighbourhoods and extend those positive impacts into the wider city scale [9]. The purpose of regeneration is to bring back underutilised assets and redistribute opportunities, increasing urban prosperity and quality of life by transforming urban areas and involving new sustainable economic models. To build inclusive, sustainable, and accessible urban spaces, you need to achieve a balance in the socio-demographic structure of communities by expanding a variety of housing typologies for purchase or rent for individuals or households with different incomes.

The 'social mix' concept offers a set of principles that can become the basis for the future development of urban communities. Applying the principle of 'social mixing' in neighbourhood planning and redevelopment is 'ideally' considered to be an effective method to reduce socio-spatial segregation between groups with different socioeconomic statuses [10, 11]. It supports a stronger local economy and creates benefits such as the provision of better services, less crime, and better employment prospects for social tenants. The concept of 'social mix' promotes health:

research data show that low-income families living in mixed-income communities are healthier and have a higher quality of life than those living in low-income communities [12, 13, 14].

The 'social mix' concept is a topic of political and academic debate and a central component of European and American urban regeneration policies [10]. For China and several post-socialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, during the period of central planning, government policy was aimed at reducing socioeconomic inequality and creating a classless society [25, 26]. For these countries, the issue of 'social segregation' has become more acute as a result of socioeconomic transformations in the change from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. Around the 2000s, scholars began to investigate the application of the principles of 'social mix' in urban residential areas. Nevertheless, this approach didn't find wide application in housing planning under the new conditions of the initial stage of the commercial real estate market development and the fast rate of urbanisation. After 20 years of socio-economic development, China has achieved significant progress in the provision of social services in urban and rural areas, improvement of public security, and increase of educational level and income of the population allowing authors to open again the discussion about the 'social mix' idea, see Figure 20.

Figure 20: Harmonious principles of social mix in the community

Social structure	Harmonious principles of social mix in the community	Housing stock structure
Residents with Hukou Residents without Hukou (floating population)	localized cluster housing for different social groups, so-called 'family spaces'	Market-rate and assisted affordable rental housing Owned housing
Low-, Middle-, High-income residents	meet the needs of different social groups	
Blue-, White-, Golden-collar workers	ensuring housing and security issues balance between privacy and community more job opportunities	

(Source: Author)

Sociological and Anthropological View on the 'Urban Villages' in Shenzhen

The phenomenon of 'urban villages' influences the formation of a 'dual structure of urban governance'. During Shenzhen's active construction phase in the 1990s and 2000s, the government didn't have the time or opportunity to plan and manage 'urban villages', and the municipality couldn't meet the growing need to provide affordable housing for all incoming migrant workers. Therefore, the original villagers of the 'urban villages' have responded to the housing needs of migrant workers by building a large number of rental houses. At first glance,

the problem of the existence of 'urban villages' seems to be a spatial problem, but in fact, it comes from social problems and is their spatial reflection. In times, when a municipality was unable to provide public housing for 'new' citizens, the self-organising mechanism of 'urban villages' quickly responded to emerging needs for affordable housing and produced the type of housing the 'new' citizens need. Such a self-organising mechanism reduces the social costs for the state (government) for the rapid receipt of GDP and, even in the lack of public services, can contribute to industrialisation. The main response to the two main problems (spatial and social) in the large cities is the acute need for migrants for housing.

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Mapping as a Tool for Social Change: Exploring Urban Marginalities of Female Street Vendors in Raghbir Nagar through a Collaborative Method

Saleha Sapra, City Sabha, New Delhi

Tanya Rana, City Sabha, New Delhi

Delhi is a metropolis with a population of nearly 30 million. Over 80 per cent of Delhi's population is part of the informal economy, of which 55 per cent are women. The city continues to urbanise at a rapid rate. One of the primary challenges of this fast-paced urbanisation is that the plans dictating the future of urban environments are devoid of people.

Without adequate public participation, counter tactics have cropped up through the efforts of multiple Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), social impact initiatives, and creative practitioners engaging with vulnerable groups. However, while many do impactful work, they operate in silos in different city pockets. And so, questions around realising collective actionable change remain unaddressed.

At City Sabha, we aim to make the planning process more actionable and accountable. We are a collective of architects, geographers, and development practitioners based in New Delhi. Our practice is rooted in collaboration, creativity, empathy and deliberation, and we enable people to have a positive relationship with their urban environment via research, action, and advocacy.

During the extended COVID-19 lockdowns in 2021, City Sabha worked with female street vendors of Raghbir Nagar in New Delhi, who had limited access to their workplaces, exacerbating everyday vulnerabilities. Hunger and extreme poverty presented as far harsher realities than the threat of COVID-19. Initially, we worked to transform their informal markets into 'COVID-safe' spaces through participatory design and capacity-building campaigns to demonstrate that informal markets as market hubs can also be integrated into re-imagining Delhi's inclusive future. We applied iterative design methods to understand their imminent needs as workers in a public workspace. We enabled them to follow COVID-safe protocols, so their work and mobility would not get disrupted due to stringent lockdowns.

Towards the end of our engagement, we co-developed a People Place Inventory (PPI) framework, summing up our interdisciplinary inquiry for the public who wanted to know more about this community of cloth vendors, their place and complexities in the urban realm. The PPI stemmed from multiple mixed-media tools such as community mapping, zine-making, photo-voice, and sound scaping used to document oral histories, activity-based circles or *baithaks*, walking interviews, and informal conversations. It collates crucial information about the quality of public spaces in Raghbir Nagar, as experienced by the women¹.

The snapshot of the PPI tool below presents the questions it attempts to answer:

¹ We wrote a 4-part series for *BehanBox* on our engagement with female street vendors of Raghbir Nagar. The stories can be accessed here: <https://behanbox.com/2023/02/09/placing-work-mapping-places-stories-of-raghbir-nagars-women-informal-workers/>.

Figure 21: Public Space Inventory (The framework presented to CSOs is based on a methodology adapted to input it in as much detail and nuance as possible.)

II) PUBLIC SPACE INVENTORY



You can limit or add to the X and Y-axis based on your context. Try to answer the cue in each box with as much specificity as possible.

		scale →		
		INDIVIDUAL <i>Citizen awareness and proactiveness</i>	NEIGHBOURHOOD <i>Neighbourhood-level issues</i>	CITY <i>City-level issues</i>
roles	CITIZEN ACTION <i>How people collectivize and initiate action</i>	What action do individuals or groups take to realise change in the urban environment?	What steps are taken at a neighbourhood-level to realise change in the urban environment?	What steps are taken at a city-level to realise change in the urban environment?
	GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES <i>Efficacy of state actors such as Urban Local Bodies, police, MLAs, etc</i>	Are individuals proactive in raising civic issues and challenges with concerned local authorities? If yes, what issues have they raised?	Mention issues of maintenance and cleanliness levels of the neighbourhood, presence of working street lights, CCTV cameras, basic infrastructure like drinking water and public toilets	Mention governance responsibilities that cater to similar stakeholders across the city
	PLANNING PRIORITIES <i>Gaps in existing planning provisions and future priorities</i>	Have individuals taken up initiatives to be involved in planning of the neighbourhood? Are they aware how planning processes affect them?	Describe the presence of adequate parks, physical infrastructure (water supply, sewage) and social infrastructure (education, health) at the neighbourhood level as per Master Plan provisions	Describe availability of transport, infrastructure, green spaces for similar stakeholders across the city
	POLICY LANDSCAPE <i>Existing policies and their implementation</i>	Are individuals in the community aware of their legal rights and responsibilities and how policy implications affect them?	Are the relevant policies effectively implemented in the community? Do the community members benefit from the provisions laid down in the policies?	Are the relevant policies effectively implemented in the city?

Source: City Sabha²:

The PPI is envisioned as a synthesis of issues, ideas, and re-imaginings from various marginalised communities across the city. It attempts to bridge gaps in communication and collaboration by facilitating an exchange of experiences, methodologies, learnings, and findings among diverse actors involved in grassroots interventions in Delhi's urban realm. It is a collective effort that builds upon the work of different organisations, researchers, artists, and urban practitioners working on the ground and whose practices engage local communities. In this sense, the PPI traverses geographies and places isolated communities on one collective map. It explores the possibility of creating a citizen-led account of public spaces, which is hyper-

² Ragubir Nagar's place inventory can be found here: <https://www.citysabha.org/tools>

local yet has the potential to counter top-down planning approaches by informing decision-making at the city level. The target audience is two-pronged. First, for decision makers (planners, policymakers, councillors, corporators, etc.) to understand people's issues, demands, and priorities. Second, for citizens to devise actionable steps in response to their issues by knowing which concerned authorities to approach. It also acts as a direct response to the Master Plan of Delhi 2041, inclusive of governance action points. Thus, the PPI is responsive to the level—policy, planning, and management—and the scale—individual, community, and city-level—of public space interventions.

At the same time, PPI is imagined to be place-agnostic. It foregrounds issues and challenges of diverse citizen groups, placing them on a grassroots collective map. This inventory is applicable in other contexts in a way that is readable and understandable to most stakeholders, which can be extended to the whole of Delhi to keep a citizen-driven account of the city's public spaces.

To elaborate on how the PPI is being adapted in other contexts, we are currently working with other CSOs engaging with marginalised groups whose places of residence, work and voices typically do not fit the formal planning paradigm. We have deduced that safety is based on varied lived experiences and the everyday vulnerabilities encountered. For example—for a group of female street vendors in Raghbir Nagar, fear and uncertainty arise not just from violence by men but from the state's indifference and attitudes towards female vendors navigating the urban realm. Whereas for the women of Okhla Vihar who are mothers of children with different disabilities, they feel more or less safe in their neighbourhood as their access to public spaces is limited to care responsibilities within homes. When they get to spend some time in open spaces or commuting via buses, their fear arises from how people stare at their children, which adds to the uncertainty of their growing up in a neighbourhood that is insensitive to their disability. We are documenting these nuances through the PPI so that citizens can articulate their priorities and appropriate allocation of resources can thus be deployed by the State.

Figure 22: Using place flashcards stories of fear, violence, and discrimination, among other everyday vulnerabilities, are discussed to collate the priorities of individual mothers of children with disabilities in Okhla Vihar.



Source: City Sabha

We hope that through this panel at IHS's Urban Arc 2024, we can bring to the fore the need for collectively reimagining these diverse forms of urban marginalities through the participatory PPI framework.

Space, Territory, Time: A Mapping Method to Capture the Complexities and Negotiations of Everyday Urban Life

Bhavya Trivedi, CEPT University

Keywords: urban mapping, southern urban theory, territory, spatial negotiations

The study proposes a mapping method that is appropriate to the southern urban context. Directly responding to southern urban theorists' calls for producing knowledge from the understanding of actual urban practice, the paper presents a practical rethinking of urban mapping. Cities of the Global South are misrepresented as problematic in urban research because of the layered ways in which they function. Maps are misused to aid these processes, telling narratives of chaos which will be righted by design, failing to reveal the complex relationships between urban space and urban agents.

The study examines the streets of Ahmedabad, India, from the lens of 'territorial inhabitations'. Through observational, temporal mapping, it investigates territorial tendencies and interactions between agents in space, over time. The study finds that the street acts as an enabler of territorial inhabitations. These inhabitations are undertaken by various urban agents who spatially negotiate to maintain an equilibrium of claims and occupations. Territorial agents exhibit a strong agency to reconfigure streets and create 'grey zones' to perform their habits. These habits are complexified by the extreme dynamism of time related changes that static, unidimensional street designs unsuccessfully try to eliminate.

The study demonstrates the potential of maps to dissect complex urban contexts into layers of space, territory and time, enabling comparative analyses to take place across locations and through specific and general instances. It asserts the need for an urgent rethinking of urban mapping methods that can recognise the power of urban agents and catalyse a paradigm shift in the research of urban practices, directly participating in creating the experience of everyday urban life.

Introduction

Cities of the Global South have often been labelled as problematic because of the complex ways in which they function. In response, cities of the Global North have been looked towards as models and generators of theory and policy, which have been repeatedly proven as inappropriate for the southern context (Roy, 2009).

The binary categorisation of 'North/South' is residual of colonial ideologies that necessitated dualisms such in creating and implementing colonial power (Jacobs, 1996). In its translation to everyday life, this framework assigns binaries of formal/informal and, therefore, legitimate/illegitimate to everyday acts and occupations of space, causing marginalities in urban practice that exist constantly under the burden of removal due to a lack of legitimate recognition.

Southern urban theorists and practitioners¹ have widely recognised that the lenses of negotiations and interrelationships are better suited to study southern urban practices, stating that binary grammars cannot capture these complexities because of which new frameworks of thought need to be generated in place.

Directly responding to their calls for producing theories that are tied to the understanding of actual urban practice, the paper presents a practical rethinking of urban mapping. Breaking away from the binary categorisations of formal/informal and legitimate/illegitimate, it attempts to observe everyday activities on the streets of Ahmedabad from the lens of 'territorial inhabitations'.

Habraken proposes that acts of spatial inhabitation are territorial, exercised by agents in space (2000). Through mapping, the paper investigates the territorial tendencies of urban agents and the spatial negotiations they undertake to collectively inhabit the street.

Methodology

The study focuses on the spatial occupations of pedestrians, parked vehicles and everyday commercial activities such as grocery outlets, *paan gallas*, barbers and tea stalls. Through a mixed-method approach of observational and temporal mapping supplemented by photographs, it analyses the territorial inhabitations and negotiations of these activities.

The study first builds an understanding of territorial habits across mixed-use sub-arterial streets of Ahmedabad. It then observes these activities over time at two selected street locations with varying conditions of street infrastructure: Mahadeva Temple Complex (Law Garden vicinity) and CG Road.

The Potential of Mapping

The potential of mapping lies in its powerful ability to produce new imaginations and directly participate in the future unfolding of urban design and planning (Corner, 1999). Through its ability to layer and combine agents, space and time, it is able to visually induce 'unthinking' and by implication, a 'rethinking' from alternative perspectives (Cunha & Mathur, 2009), especially in the urban context. Its agency is particularly pronounced in its ability to assign legitimate space within the map to specific agents and users, awarding them recognition as occupants of space. Such characteristics make mapping a well-suited method of investigating complex contexts such as urban spaces of India.

The (Mis)use of Mapping

In the Indian design and planning fields, maps are largely misused to represent everyday realities as narratives of chaos that will be righted by design. They are employed as data collection and surveying techniques to capture existing conditions of a given geographical site prior to the implementation of a project (Figure 23).

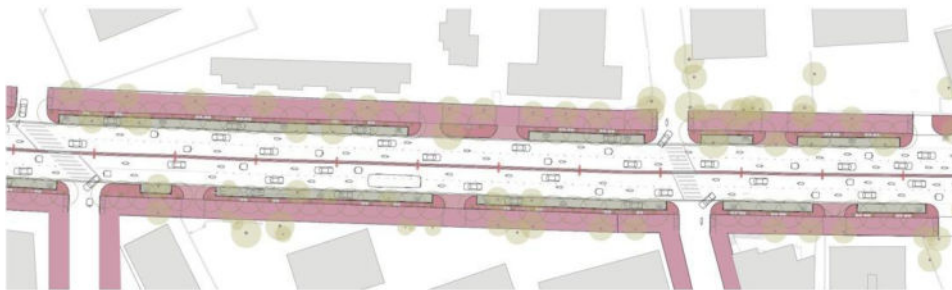
¹ This paper is informed by the works of Ananya Roy, Asef Bayat, Arjun Appadurai, Gautam Bhan, Himanshu Burte, Teresa Caldeira, and Solomon Benjamin.

Figure 23: Pre-design studies of CG road, Ahmedabad, identified conflicting demands on the street between high pedestrian footfall and traffic congestion. The design aims for CG Road to function well as a retail street while improving the pedestrian experiences to

Mapping of CG Road, Ahmedabad



Redesign of CG Road, Ahmedabad



(Source: HCP. (2018). C. G. Road Redevelopment, Ahmedabad, 2018. Retrieved from hcp.co.in/urbanism/c-g-road-development/)

Their potential is limited to tracing elements as direct reflections of reality in the form of distinctly categorised layers of activity, labelled as 'vehicular movement, pedestrian movement, commercial activity', etc.² By capturing discontinuous screenshots of surges in spatial occupation, they misrepresent the given context to be overburdened and chaotic instead of complex and layered.

The maps fail to inform designers that the perceived chaos results from complex territorial negotiations undertaken by urban agents. Through their intense effort to organise and designate in order to eradicate the 'chaos', formally designed everyday urban spaces, such as streets, plazas, markets and parks that emerge as a result of such maps, seem alien compared to spaces untouched by interventions. As expected, the activities return, labelled as encroachment: informal occupations conducted by unwanted agents (Figure 24).

² This limitation is carried over to and borrowed from pedogeological practices in India which rarely promote attempts towards rethinking mapping lenses prior to the research and design proposals of projects in design and planning schools.

Figure 24: Post-design study of CG Road shows a return of activities that were initially removed to support the project's aims



(Source: Author)

This return is suggestive of a vital relationship between agents and their modes of spatial occupation that design interventions cannot seem to sever. The paper asserts that this relationship needs to be identified and understood to inform design decisions correctly of the urban practices of its everyday users.

Territorial Habits

The study reveals that regardless of the physical conditions from which the commercial activities operate, they tend to exhibit the same set of territorial habits: claim and occupation (Figure 25). Therefore, current frameworks that assign differing levels of legitimacy to everyday commercial activities based on whether they operate out of 'shops' or '*laaris*' (carts) and other mobile vending devices, are evidently inappropriate.

Spatial clues: Physical elements such as trees and boundary walls, indicate spatial cues based on which territories establish themselves. In this way, a street context acts as an enabler of territorial activity by providing opportunities for inhabitation.

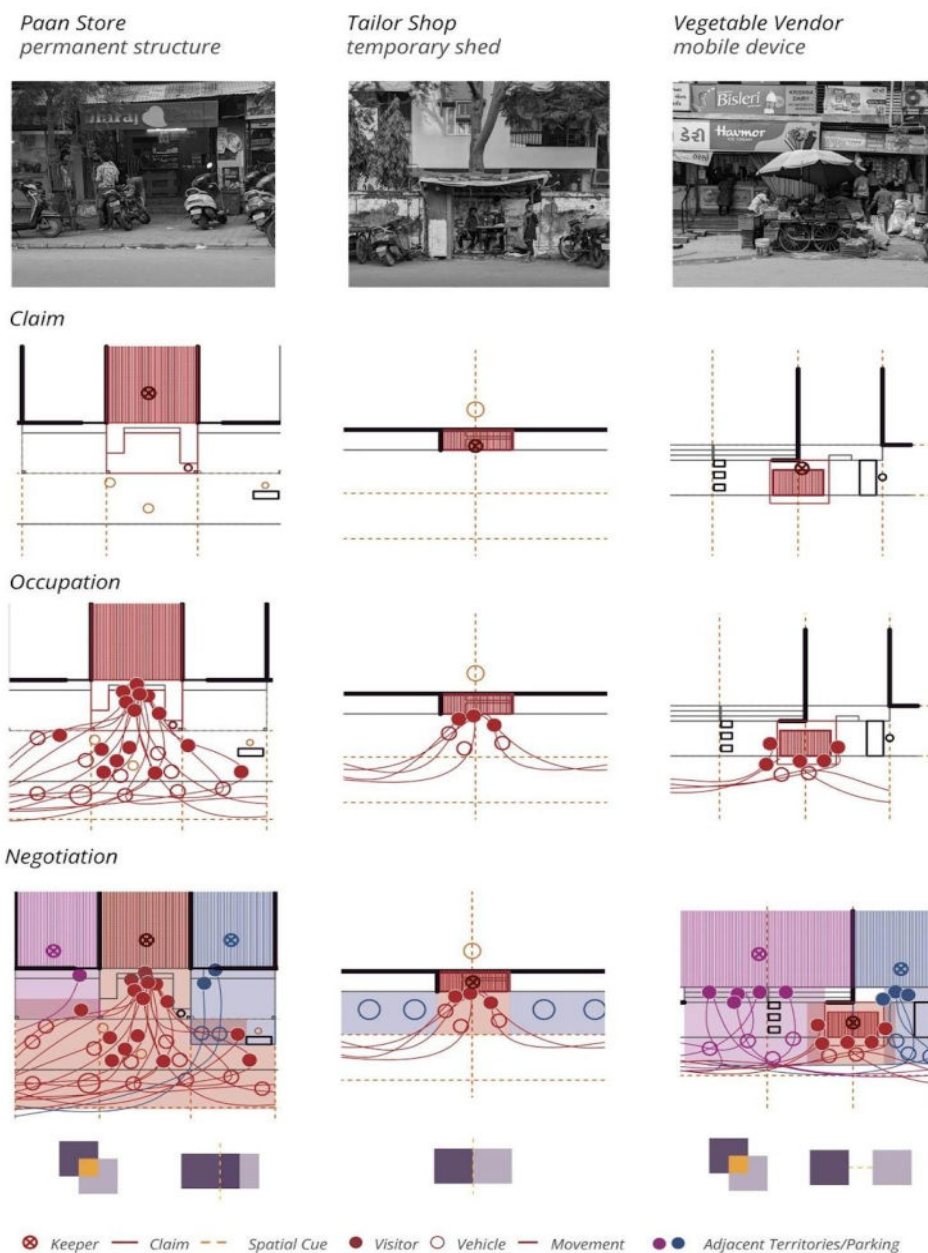
Claim: Territorial claim is asserted in public space, physically demarcated through elements such as plinths, signboards, dustbins and chapras (tin roofs). Territories that function out of built forms tend to exhibit this beyond what is offered in the private domain. Claim is exercised by the 'keeper' of the territory. Territories necessarily need to be kept up by their keepers (shop owners/ vendors/ workers) in order to maintain their presence in public space and prevent infiltration (being taken over by other territories).

Occupation: Territorial occupation is exercised by an alternative agent, who is a 'visitor' to the territory. The extent of occupation is dependent on the type of activity the territory presents. A paan shop is widely recognised to be a place of gathering for men, who engage in conversation

and interaction during their time at the shop. Their occupation of space is therefore consistently larger than of a clothing store.

Negotiation: The overlaps caused by claims and occupations of adjacent territories result in various spatial negotiations that take place. Their complexity can be systematically analysed to reveal repeating patterns of negotiation. The various urban agents are important negotiators who spatially negotiate amongst themselves to uphold an equilibrium of territorial inhabitation throughout the day, so that all forms of territorial acts, including parking, can be accommodated without conflict. This reveals the presence of a user-generated system with an inherent ability to accommodate the spatial needs and strong territorial tendencies of its users.

Figure 25: Analysis of territorial claim, occupation and negotiation



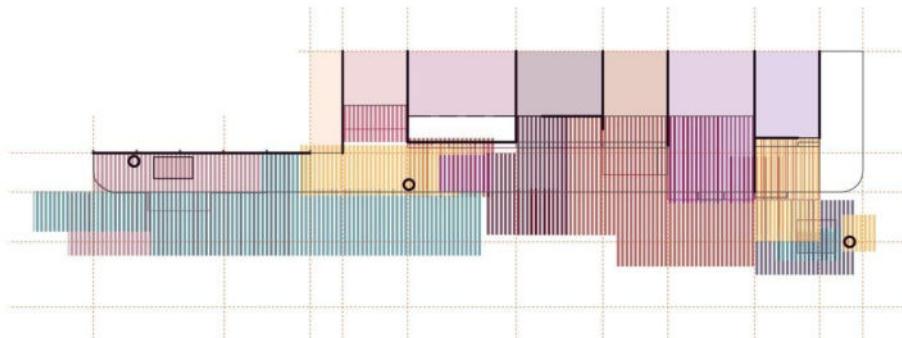
(Source: Author)

Complexities

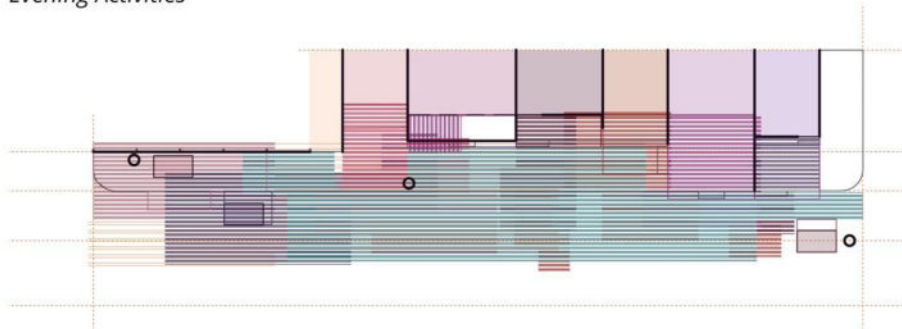
Territorial inhabitations are complexified by the extreme dynamism of time related changes. Territories experience a varying density of activities throughout the day that streets must host (Figure 26). Current mapping methods do not capture these dynamisms to their extremities, leading to street designs that are static and unidimensional.

Figure 26: Timewise overlays of the territorial inhabitations of the Mahadeva Complex location show that there is a distinct difference in the territorial patterns during morning hours in comparison to evening hours, with parked vehicles significantly taking over

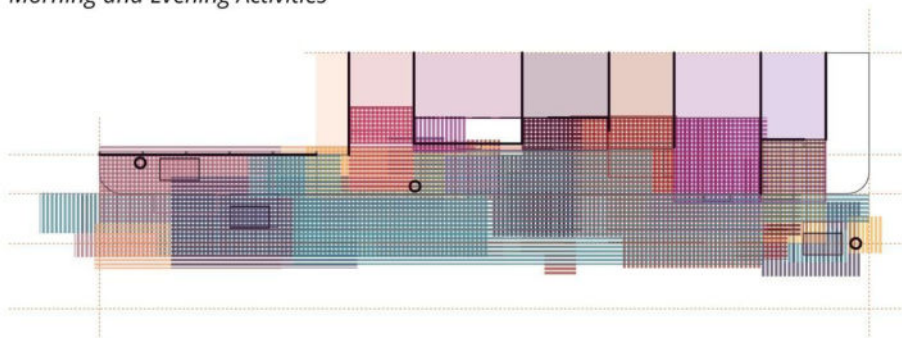
Morning Activities



Evening Activities



Morning and Evening Activities



|||| Morning ≡ Evening ● Territories ● Pedestrians ● Parked Vehicles

(Source: Author)

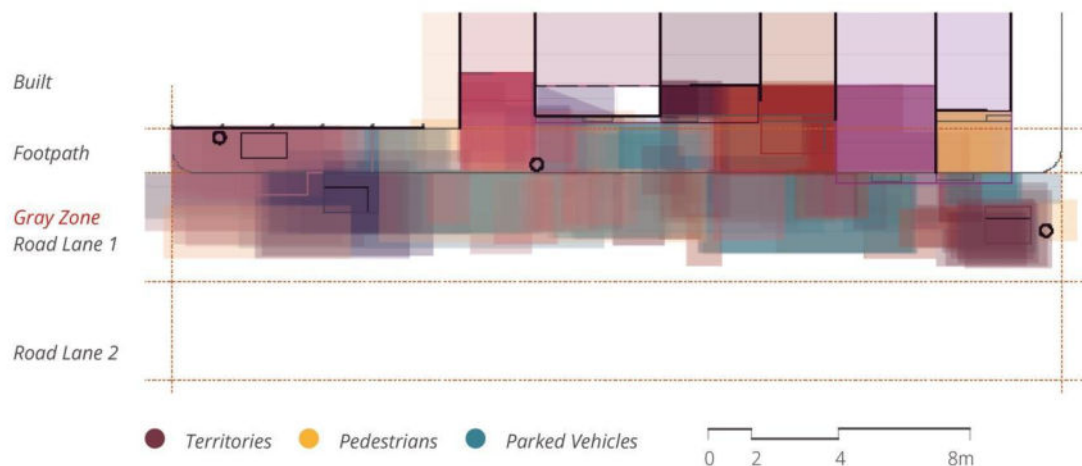
In street contexts which have poor street infrastructure design such as no designated parking or proper footpaths, parked vehicles emerge as significant infiltrators of space (Figure 27). The analysis indicates an urgent need to reconceptualise urban mapping to capture the range of changes and to reconceptualise urban design processes to accommodate and enable this dynamism.

Streets as Enablers of Territorial Inhabitations

The study finds that there is an inherent relationship between space and territory. Street configurations enable territorial inhabitations through spatial cues and street design. On the other hand, territories reconfigure streets by creating 'grey zones' in order to perform their territorial habits.

The Grey Zone: Analysis reveals the existence of a 'grey zone', situated between designated pedestrian and vehicular lanes, where a wide range of temporal commercial activities take place. The grey zone is constantly negotiated between territories and parked vehicles. It allows temporary parking and visitors' occupations, where visitors spill over while they engage with territories. This spill-over is crucial to the functioning of everyday activities that tend to place themselves in locations of high volumes of movement, such as tea stalls, paan shops and vegetable vendors. The grey zone's immediate proximity to vehicular lanes as a point of access is locationally crucial in order to bring visitors to territories.

Figure 27: The Grey Zone condition at Mahadeva Temple Complex. The map overlays all evening and morning activities.

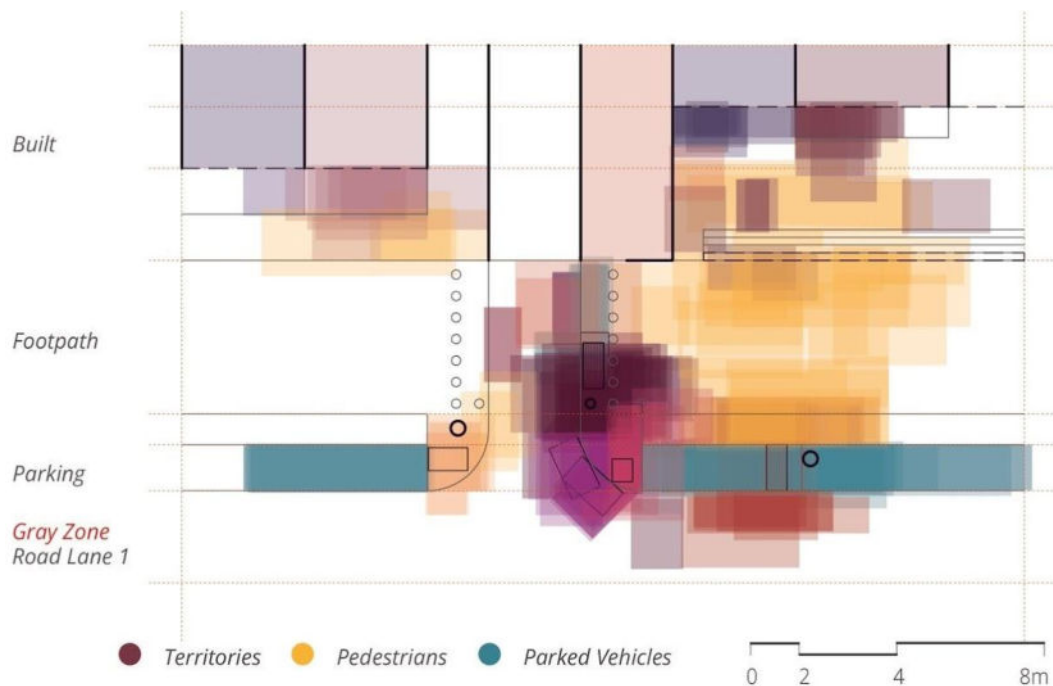


(Source: Author)

Because the current configurations of the street do not design for this grey zone condition, these activities also tend to take over the assigned footpath. As a result, pedestrian space is compromised, rendering the footpath a failed designation without the necessary designation of a 'grey zone' meant for temporary territorial activity.

Reconfigurations: The ability of territorial agents to reconfigure streets to suit their territorial habits is telling of a powerful agency held by them. This agency is also observed to be exercised in street contexts that are deliberately designed to prevent territorial inhabitations, indicating a strong control over space that territorial agents exert through their inhabitations (Figure 28). Design interventions fail in prolonged control over urban activity because they do not acknowledge the existence of this power through their mapping processes.

Figure 28: The Grey Zone condition at CG Road. The map overlays all evening and morning activities



(Source: Author)

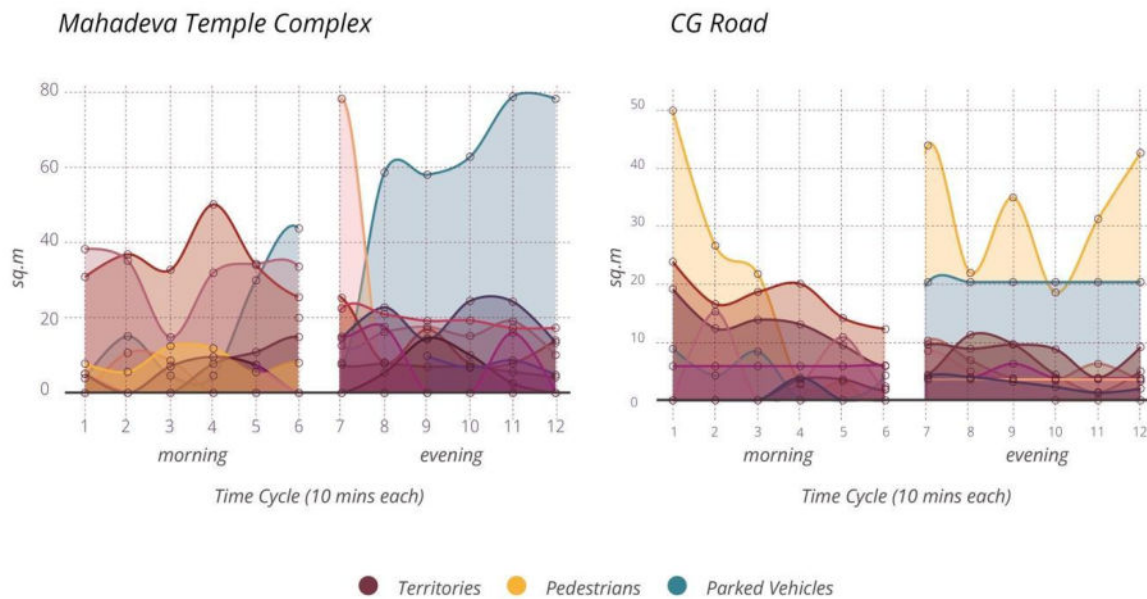
There is a distinct disconnect between what the street is designed to offer to its agents versus what the street actually enables, which are lanes of opportunity for territorial inhabitations to take place for commercial activities, pedestrians and for parked vehicles. The study proposes that this disconnect can be bridged by recognising the grey zone in urban mapping and providing it through design as an integral component of the street environment.

MAPS AS DATA

De-territorialising Maps: For knowledge on territorial tendencies to emerge from across geographies, mappings need to be systematically de-territorialised. As suggested by Roy, this enables comparisons and juxtapositions of urban experiences so that they can be borrowed and inferred across contexts (2009). When mappings are de-territorialised, these instances can be converted into spatial quantifications that serve as data for comparison between locations (Figure 29). This allows for findings to be gathered from multiple locations incrementally and studied simultaneously.

Legitimising Practice through the Generation of Data: Spatial quantifications legitimise activities in urban space by generating data. The study demonstrates how maps can dissect complex urban contexts into layers of space, time and territory which can further be extrapolated into spatial data, enabling comparative analyses to take place. In this way, a complex context is no longer narrated as a chaotic empirical particularity but has the potential to add to the knowledge of urban practices through the accurate representation of general patterns and specific instances.

Figure 29: Space-Time-Territory maps can be converted into spatially quantified data that can reveal patterns of territorial inhabitation and be compared across locations.



(Source: Author)

General and Specific Instances: General and specific patterns are necessary to understand a context in totality (Atmodiwirjo et al., 2019). Present methods of studying urban spaces through mapping only consider specific instances that have high volumes of activity, misusing them to provide a general narrative built on instances of surges in activity triggered at specific times. As outlined by Corner, a map's ability to territorialise, de-territorialise and re-territorialise events can capture everyday complexities across space and time in general patterns and specific instances to present a more comprehensive view of the context (1999).

Reflections

The agency of maps in assigning recognition to agents in space has immense potential in complex contexts such as India. The study establishes that the street as a complex urban environment cannot be mapped and represented as individual layers. Urban space is strongly connected to the urban agents and the interdependency between them is reflected in agents' patterns of territorial inhabitations and their power to reconfigure street environments. It is vital for urban mapping methods to reveal these relationships in order to be an effective technique of urban research and analysis.

There is an urgent need for a rethinking of urban mapping methods that can recognise the power of urban agents and catalyse a paradigm shift in the research of urban practices. They are a crucial component of urban design processes and must directly and correctly participate in creating the experience of everyday urban life.

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The Spatial Type of Servant Quarters: Understanding Their Design and Manifestation in Apartment-Type Housing

Ujjvala Krishna, Independent

Domestic servitude confuses and complicates the conceptual divide between family and work, custom and contract, affection and duty, the home and the world precisely because the hierarchical arrangements and emotional registers must coexist with those of workplace and contract in a capitalist world.... it encompasses and is realised through differences of gender, race, caste, class, and power, in the home.

(S. Qayum & R. Ray, 2007, pp. 3)

This quote by the authors in their book *The Cultures of Servitude: Modernity, Domesticity, and Class in India*, defines the complex relationship between the served and the servant in our country. The culture of servitude is becoming increasingly prevalent in contemporary society in India, with inequality and economic disparity on the rise. The urban poor often get trapped in cycles of domestic servitude, leading to work without dignity. Government estimates say around 6 million people work in the domestic servitude sector, employed as *'maids, ayahs, cooks, cleaners, and nannies'*, though the number is expected to rise to 11 million people in 2022 (KPMG-NSDC, 2013). The culture of work, production, and labour in India is not geared towards dignity. Rather, productive relationships and systems of work are at play in dialectically creating and changing these socio-cultural relationships, often negatively. Suspicion and distrust even without facts are a constant, often leading to a loss in personal dignity.

The KPMG report done for the National Skill Development Centre in 2013 reports on the Draft National Policy on Domestic Workers, which defines a domestic worker as a person who is employed for *"remuneration whether in cash or kind, in any household through any agency or directly, either on a temporary or permanent, part time or full time basis to do the household work but does not include any member of the family of an employer"* (KPMG, NSDC, 2013, pp. 2). This definition does not take into account or define the variety of household work that is demanded of a domestic help. The definition further trivialises the concept of household work as it confuses the understanding of chores as done by an outside person versus those done by a family member. Today, domestic servitude within the culture of servitude is closely related to economic realities of a capitalist world, even though the relationship of work and labour with domestic help closely resembles that of a paternalistic or maternalistic society (Ray & Qayum, 2007).

Dignity of work is defined as *"the quality or state of being worthy, honoured, or esteemed"* (Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2021). As is obviously visible from our personal experiences as well, domestic helpers and their work is not seen as either worthy or honourable work, and nor are the workers themselves esteemed, and the disparity and inequality are rigidly woven into the social fabric. If one had to conjugate this dignity of work to the dignity of inhabitation, it would translate as *'the quality of a space of being worthy of inhabitation by a human'*. A space needs to fulfil a few basic criteria to be called as dignified of human habitation. According to International

Human Rights Laws, everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living (The Right to Adequate Housing, UN Habitat, 2014).

The general trends of current research on housing in India glosses over an entire culture of servitude apparent and existent in the domestic sphere, and there is little architectural research and documentation available. There are large gaps in the knowledge in the public domain in drawing relations between space and disparity, inequality, and segregation relating to servitude, and social science discourse very rarely interprets architecture as a relevant factor.

Domestic servitude and the culture it creates, sits in the larger socio-economic and political sphere of influence, and the resultant culture can always find connections to one previous. India with its colonial history along with the culture of servitude in the pre-colonial period, sees splashes of these in the contemporary culture of work and domesticity. For example, servants in Britain, during the Victorian and Edwardian eras, resided in the homes of their employers. Large houses and manors had designated sections to house the multitude of servants employed for various jobs within the home, in servant rooms. Robert Kerr's book 'The Gentleman's House: How to Plan English Residences' (1865) illustrates plans and detailed designs for British mansions. It illustrated and demarcated clearly, the relationship between the served and the servants in 19th/20th c. Britain. There was a clear distinction between the areas marked for servants, separate from the rest of the house.

As ubiquitous as servitude was in the pre-colonial period, a new order of domestic servitude¹ emerged during the colonial period. Systems of labour were institutionalized, with a new social group of servants (Sinha & Varma, 2019). As noted by N. Sinha and N. Varma in their book 'Servants' Pasts, Vol 2', *"Domestic servant was not a self-evident occupational category or a readily identifiable social identity in the early modern and early colonial periods"*. In the imperial setting, the essential employer and servant relationship formed the base in many ways, of the progress and growth of both colonialism and capitalism (Dussart, 2014). Cantonments in India were signifiers of imperial domesticity, navigating the power systems and manifesting them onto the landscape. The planning of these cantonments was also rooted firmly in establishing the division of power between the 'natives' and the colonial power, and further complicated by looking at gender and class. As Alison Blunt (1997) writes in her book 'Traveling Home and Empire: British Women in India', she discusses imperial domesticity at the household scale and focuses on the management of the homes and bungalows of British officials by their wives, who navigated the racial and class division part of the colonial culture of power.

In the Defence, remnants of the colonial culture of domestic servitude are still apparent and indicative of a stark and unequal socio-cultural relationship between that of the served and the servant. Most housing in Defence cantonments and campuses across the country today, are designed to accommodate a servant in an attached demarcated quarter. The cultures of servitude within the Defence leads one directly to the spatial type of Servant Quarters, a ubiquitous component of a housing scheme within a military establishment. These quarters are built usually towards the back of the officer's house, either within an apartment block, or even in independent bungalows and houses. They are attached to the housing units in multi-storied

apartments and walk-up apartments and are usually accessible from a separate entry as well as an attached doorway that connects the main house to the quarter, usually placed in the kitchen of the doorway. This attached quarter is usually a one-room space, sometimes with a separate cooking area and a toilet.

This culture of servitude also finds its way into developer driven apartment housing. Often new housing developments have Servant Quarters clearly marked on plans, sometimes even becoming a selling point for the property. Usually, upper middle-class housing (3 or 4 BHKs) incorporates a Quarter or a Maid's room within the apartment unit. These rooms are sometimes not drawn on initial liaison plans, rather added & subsequently built post clearance.

Building Regulations and Building Byelaws in India are also indicative of the inequality and disregard shown towards the design and construction of Servant Quarters. This manifestation within regulations and building codes is indicative of the deep-set systemic socio-cultural ideas of disparity and segregation based on class and caste. Moreover, the disregard is further enhanced by the disposition of these documents towards the design and construction of Quarters—they are mentioned briefly as 'ancillary' (like in the Gujarat GDCR, Part 2, 2017) or not at all.

They briefly mention the spatial type of 'Servant Quarters' while giving minimum details towards construction and anthropometric considerations. The Gujarat GDCR mentions them in the same breath as 'storage sheds' and 'motor garages', which limits the space as not being considered as inhabited by people. This is especially useful in interpreting the design of this type of housing with reference to spatial organisation, minimum area, and inhabitation and the inequality present. Similarly, the Unified Building Bye Laws of Delhi (2013), say that "*servant's room as part of the dwelling unit [...] shall be allowed maximum size as 25 sq. m*" (Unified Building Bye Laws, Delhi, 2013). Moreover, such quarters are designated under EWS category of housing, which is important to understand their ownership, tenancy, and contractual details.

Domestic work is a form of labour work that takes place inside the home. The household as a place of work is usually not recognised as a legitimate place of work. Due to the unorganised nature of the domestic work sector, domestic workers in India face systemic difficulties to protect their livelihoods and face exploitation and abuse in their place of work. Developing further on this intersection between space, policy, and economy, a research thesis was undertaken. This research aimed to recognise and interpret the role of spaces in contributing to a division in society, by manifesting physical boundaries within the socio-cultural and economic sphere. The methodology included the development of a framework of analysis, which was then applied to nine case studies in which the Servant Quarter was compared to the Main Attached Unit based on a set of architectural parameters and analysed. This was further correlated to regulations, policy, and building byelaws.

The analyses painted a picture of deliberate and unnecessary creation of disparity, segregation, separation, and inequality through the design of Servant Quarters. Our homes are ossified narratives of our economic, social, and political customs. This is firstly a direct manifestation of

the culture of servitude that exists and is practiced. Socio-cultural aspects find their way into our spaces, clearly manifesting boundaries and divisions. But more importantly, this intentional manifestation of disparity, creates a cycle of inequality, exclusion, and segregation. It seems to be a premeditated and calculated effort to create this deliberate segregation. Often it could rather just be subconsciously manifesting the socio-cultural aspects into design and subsequently space. Though this approach highlights how intrinsic this socio-cultural division is within our psyche as a society. There already exists a lack of dignity of labour associated with this sector of work. The design of these Servant Quarters further reduces the dignity of inhabitation for domestic workers, 'othering' them. This exacerbates the problems plaguing this sector of work.

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Marginalisation as an Act of Design

Naomi Mehta, Harvard University

Priyanka Salunkhe, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Keywords: Architecture, design, iconic, marginalization, informal work, domestic workers, street vendors, critical analysis, repair and retrofit, architectural pedagogy, responsibility, agency.

It is interesting to ponder over the fact that everyone around us enters the world as a human and yet has a different lived reality. In the context of India, these differences are shaped by societal perceptions that historically began through division of caste extending to continued persistence of caste disparities in education, income, and social networks even in the 21st century (Desai & Dubey, 2012). One also discovers the reproduction of caste in cities in the form of informal work sector. Kaveri Gill in her book *Of Poverty and Plastic* draws the dynamic relationship between low co-caste status, poverty, and engagement in the informal sector in India, which is further a marginalised sector. Discrimination hence extends its arm to biases of economic class, and we see these differences further manifest physically. As Preeti Mann rightly points in her work on *Urbanization, Migration, and Exclusion in India*, "While cities may be melting pots that have arguably helped mitigate historical and traditional caste-based discrimination and marginalisation, they need active reiteration that urban spaces are generating newer forms of inequalities and exclusions that go beyond caste." She further argues that this is visible in the contrasting urban forms of the city where "glitzy buildings", "fancy offices", and "attractive arcades" coexist with "shanty towns and slums" comprising a large part of our country's informal sector living in poor conditions. A large number of communities in these regions are employed as construction workers, domestic workers, auto and car drivers, street vendors and security personnel amongst other things. They form the backbone of our cities but "their needs and vulnerabilities are overlooked or ignored in the planning and vision of urban development" (Mann, 2013).

The verb "marginalise" means "to relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within society or group." The word ascribes a sense of "otherness" to some groups of society, overlooking their presence. (*Deconstructing Bias: Marginalization - NICHD Connection - Science@NICHD*, 2023). Marginalisation then further manifests spatially through the creation of margins in the urban. These margins are sometimes imaginary lines that exist as notions through acts of exclusion within the society. They dictate the privilege and opportunities that one group gets over the other. What is not so imaginary and much in grasp are the physical margins one sees in the urban.

On paper, a margin is made on the peripheries around the primary space of usage. It is a line of separation designed by us. When such a line thickens, it becomes a wall in the architectural drawing. The position of this wall in a plan begins to include and simultaneously exclude someone and something. In the urban space, these margins take the form of boundaries that are spatially manifestations of exclusions within society. In our work, we argue that marginalisation is an act of design. It manifests spatially through the creation of margins in the

urban. It is for us to question what are the implications of “designing” such lines? These physical margins, that we call lines, can be negotiated, mitigated and challenged through the act of drawing lines, through the act of design.

Like other fields of law and sciences that base themselves off precedents, in the field of architecture, *iconic* buildings are always looked up to as references or successful case studies by students and professionals both to get inspired and produce new forms in the built environment. As Kevin Low rightly suggests that it is imperative to learn from the failures of architecture rather than its iconicity (Low, 2021). The critique towards this practice arises when such productions inadvertently lead to reproductions of underlying practices of marginalisation, when design becomes a silent perpetrator of exclusion.

To be able to challenge these precedents means to be able to critically understand them. In our research, we have followed a method of critical reading of plans, sections and photographs (typical tools/ modes of engagement used by architects) of Modern iconic projects through diagrams as a means of inquiry. The intent was to deconstruct these drawings by identifying all the users of the project and trace the absence and presence of spatial articulations by which one group gets prioritised over another.

In this alternate mode of reading a well-known project, arises the need to imagine a design response to enable an inclusive approach to the identified marginalised groups. To demonstrate the possibilities of our design approach, we reimagine the chosen cases of study through methods of repair, retrofit and reuse. In this manner, it remains cognizant towards ongoing conversations on sustainability and demolition in the built environment. We believe that a sensitive way to deal with our urban contexts today is to be mindful of the embodied energy that goes into creating/building new interventions. Hence, we propose design iterations in existing buildings, at different scales of design to suggest possibilities of adaptive reuse employing the method of repair and retrofit, that recognise the equal responsibility of design towards all sections of the society.

The beginning of every architectural project is an outline of the programme and the users. We believe that it is at this stage itself that design starts invisibilising certain groups of people and their patterns of inhabitation, because they aren't the “primary users” of the commission. We take two such predominantly marginalised groups; street vendors and full-time domestic workers/security personnels and see how their presence is dealt with in Golconde, Pondicherry and Kanchanjunga Apartments, Mumbai (respectively); two *iconic* works of architecture in two very different urban contexts in the country.

Golconde, Pondicherry

Best known for its simplistic yet elegant and sophisticated design, Golconde, a four-storeyed dormitory was conceived with the idea of housing the disciples of Sri Aurobindo, an Indian philosopher whose preachings seemed to have influenced a huge portion of the population in and around the province of Pondicherry in the early 1900s further leading up to the formation of

the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1926. After his death, Mira Alfassa, famously known as the Mother, built a dormitory meant exclusively for the disciples to practice their *sadhana*.

As stated by Raymond, it was hence clear that *“the purpose of the dormitory was not primarily the housing of the disciples; it was the creating of an activity, the materialization of an idea, by which the disciples might learn, might experience, might develop, through contact with the erection of a fine building.”* (Golconde Ashram, 2022)

This idea was two-fold:

1. Divine Consciousness: This encompasses a spiritual journey of reflection, meditation, and *asanas*, which brings the disciples to the realisation that all external life details are relatively inconsequential in the larger scheme of things.
2. Human Unity: Aurobindo believed that human unity is the deepest spiritual need, a future necessity. However, this concept is fraught with many dangers, given the complexity of the present nature of humanity.

Hence, this building intended to manifest a way of living preached by Sri Aurobindo. As much as it was supposed to provide a safe space to the disciples to practice their *sadhana*, it was also supposed to practice ideas of inclusion with the marginalised groups of the city to promote the idea of *human unity*.

However, instead of engaging in any capacity with the extended community, which is the city, Golconde draws a solid line around it that articulates itself as a 3.3 m high boundary wall wanting to do nothing with the city. Social institutions such as *ashrams*, given their virtue of receiving donations, carry with them an underestimated potential to meaningfully mitigate marginalities that otherwise exist in the urban space. Especially in the case of the Golconde ashram, given the very vision of the deity to engage with the marginalised, it allows disciples to live the life as aspired by him.

As the scope of the project further allowed for us to suggest alternate imaginations of design through the inclusion of marginalized groups, it became imperative to understand the dynamics of the city of Pondicherry at the time Golconde was constructed. Golconde is placed in the historic precinct of the French colony and a straight axis road with a canal divided the entire city into the French town and the Tamil Town (at most times referred to as the *White Town* and *Black Town*, respectively) (refer Figure 30). The city hence carries with itself a history of oppression on the basis on race and colour. This colonised mindset further dictates the ways in which margins are perceived and realised.

Figure 30: Placing Golconde in the urban context of Pondicherry along with other Sri Aurobindo institutions

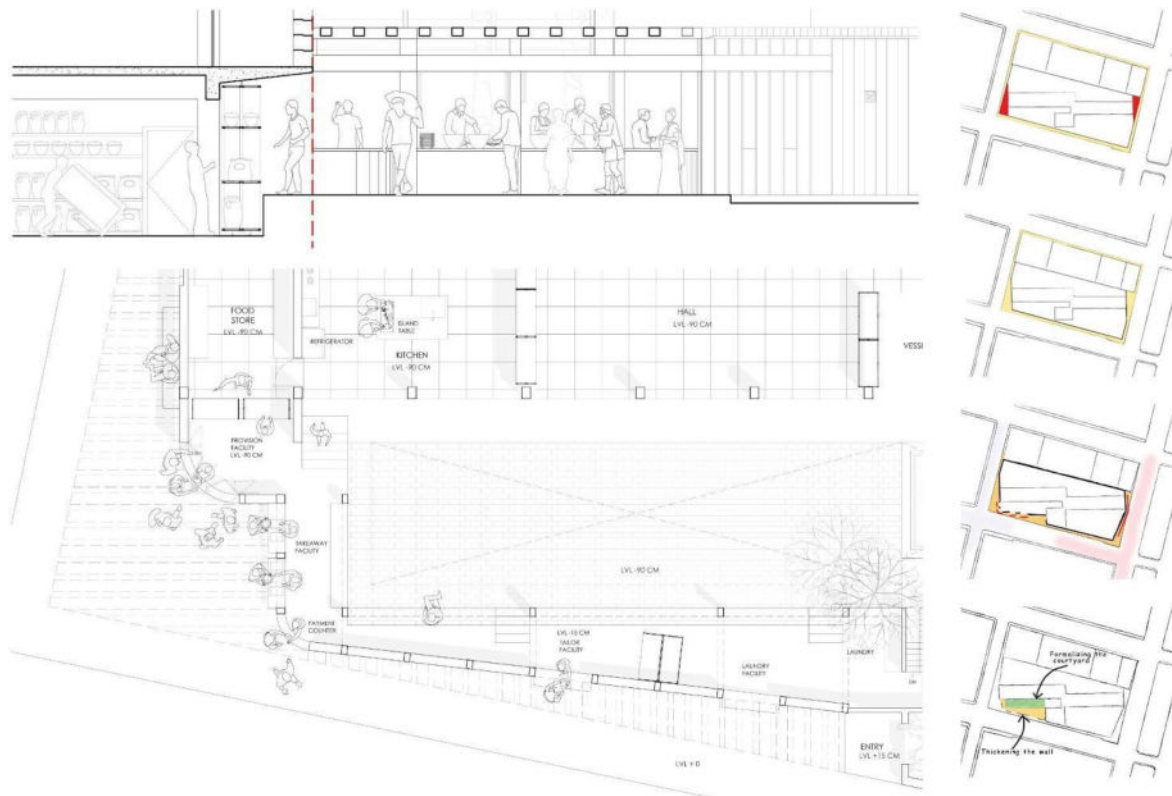


(Source: Author)

Hence, as the project is based in today's context, goes forward to understand the increasingly marginalised group of the city, the street vendors. Street vendors today are the most marginalised segments of the urban poor counting up to 5–6 million street vendors in India. In Puducherry particularly, through the introduction of the Smart City project, the street vendors are threatened to be relocated to other parts of the city. While the Street Vendors Act 2014 provides Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending, the government has still outsourced the daily rent collection to a private firm, and the workers are harassed by thugs to pay more than fixed rates, further experiencing seclusion in the city (*"Smart City Project Has Nothing for Us", Say Puducherry Street Vendors | NewsClick, 2022*). They constitute almost 50 per cent of the city's population and suffer from the *informal* tag associated with them, rendering them the most vulnerable group in the city.

In our proposal, we systematically address the raised critiques through spatial interventions. As mentioned before, the method used to engage with the same was that of repair and retrofit. The boundary wall, a rather unexplored element in the field of architecture, is a building's first interaction with the city. The intervention attempts to create an interface via the boundary wall and extend activities that are very much a part of the oeuvre of the ashram, such as cooking and laundry, and extend them as services to the extended community of Golconde, the vendor community of Pondicherry (Figure 31). This group would benefit the most from the services extended by the ashram, hence also promoting Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of human unity.

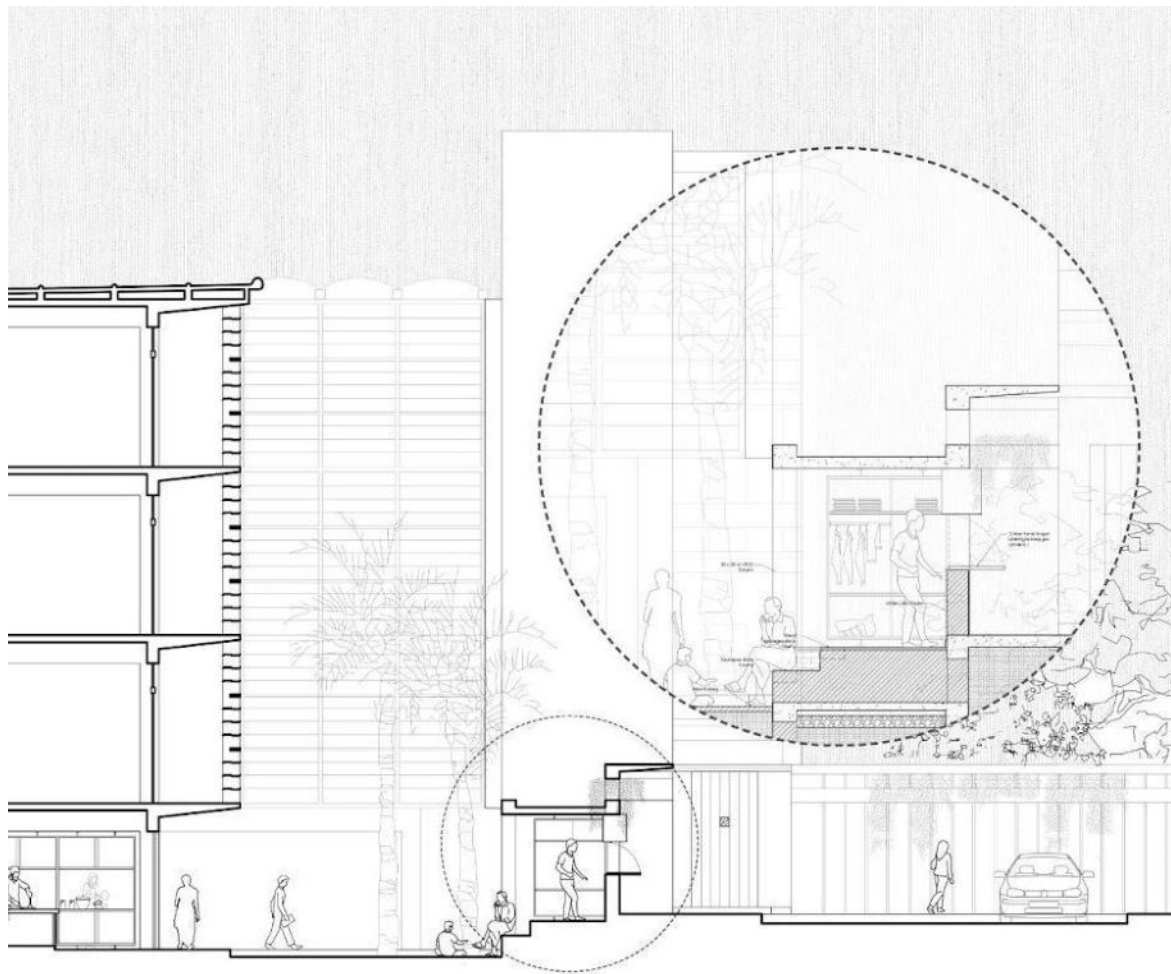
Figure 31: Proposed Intervention: Portals along the boundary extend service of subsidised cooking and laundry facilities to the marginalised group of street vendors



(Source: Author)

The architectural expression of this *service* is articulated in the form of *portals* along the boundary wall. These portals open once/twice a day, and the cooking activities extend themselves as both a provisional facility (provisional store) as well as a takeaway facility. The laundry activities extend themselves as laundry facilities. The *portal* picks up clothes in the morning and returns them in the evening.

Figure 32: Portals



(Source: Author)

The section across the kitchen also encapsulates the spirit of the new Golconde, one that engages with the marginalised group of street vendors through portals.

Kanchanjunga Apartments, Mumbai

In the wave of the post war housing crisis of the 1900's several projects exploring ideas of vertical living were built around the world. During this time the densifying city of Bombay was responding to the rapid increase in population with compact and modular apartment living. In 1983, The Kanchanjunga Apartments in South Bombay designed by Architect Charles Correa sought to deviate from the existing paradigm of "matchbox living" by proposing a novel scheme of split-level apartments stretching from facade to facade. These were combinations of 3-, 4- and 5-bedroom apartments that interlocked with one another sectionally, making them a breakthrough in vertical luxury housing. Unlike many apartment units built in the time, they came with the promise of a cityscape view facilitated by double volume terrace gardens cantilevering on each corner. All of these ideas together delivered the promise of "A bungalow in the air" through an iconic section depicting maximized cross ventilation rooted in local climatic response (Correa et al., 2015).

Within housing units of upper echelon neighbourhoods such as these, exists a wide range of employees such as domestic workers, security staff and drivers that allow the idea of luxury to persist. Despite this, there are perpetual signs of marginalising them, treating them as the “other”. Haven’t you walked into lobbies of such buildings with elevators marked “staff not allowed” or seen security personnel relegated to small 2x2 m cubicles on the periphery of the building or sometimes simply on plastic chairs along the gate. Many building complexes lack any restroom facilities for the domestic staff on ground, who sit there in hours of scorching heat and rain. Poor working conditions can be detrimental to the health of staff over time. The Occupational Safety and Health standards defined by the International Labour Organization state safe and healthy workspaces as fundamental rights for all workers (*Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) (Eastern Europe and Central Asia)*, 2023). The lack of spatial articulation or ascribing liminal spaces to staff becomes an act of marginalization.

A celebrated project, the Kanchanjunga apartments when read critically suggests marginalization through space at the ground level, the unit level and within the detail of the unit itself. In an apartment complex with multiple functions and car owners, the security and driver staff still occupy a crevice of the lobby, the dingy parking lot basement and an isolated cubicle at the gate through times of heat and rain (Figure 33). As designers we fail to acknowledge that the ground which is often seen as a space of movement and parking for most is actually a space of prolonged occupancy for many. We envision our places of work to be inspiring and well-designed but fail to provide this aspiration to domestic workers in their workspaces. Is this not an act of exclusion?

Figure 33: (left) Kanchanjunga Apartments situated in the dense fabric of Bombay. (right) A visualisation of possible circulation patterns of different user groups on the ground floor and the existing locations for them reveals the disproportionate and poor condition of spaces in which domestic workers work despite being dominant users at ground level in the Kanchanjunga Apartments.

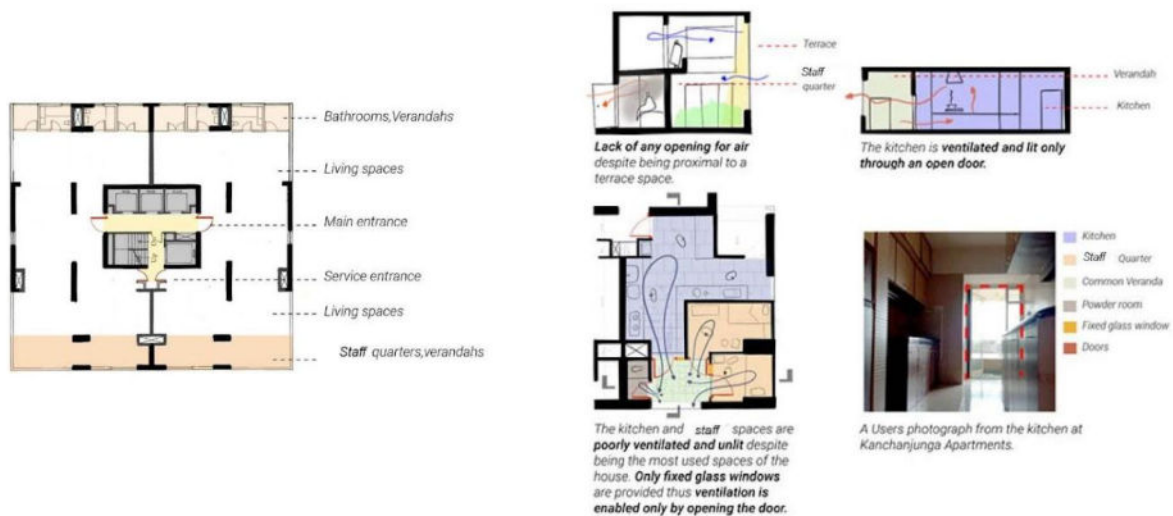


(Source: Author)

In the apartment building the unit plan has been designed with a hierarchy of living spaces placed centrally and a zone of buffers surrounding it (Figure 34). These “buffer” functions are

meant to shield the inner spaces from the extremities of climate borne by the bare concrete facade. Within the outer zone lie the staff quarters alongside terraces and washrooms. The quarter also lacks a source of direct ventilation having provision of light through a fixed glass window (Figure 34). In a section meant to succeed in its climate response and ventilation strategies, does this sensitivity not extend to all of its users? Are we not asking the same questions of care across our entire project? Are we failing to address staff quarters with the same humane sensibilities and architectural quality that we ascribe to other spaces in a house?

Figure 34: (Left) The plan showcasing the “core” and the “buffer” spaces. (Right) The kitchen and the staff quarters can both be recognised as domains commonly occupied by domestic workers. Both of these spaces are ventilated primarily through open doors. The staff quarters are enclosed within rigid shear walls, with no access to a view of the city which is emphasised in other spaces of the house.

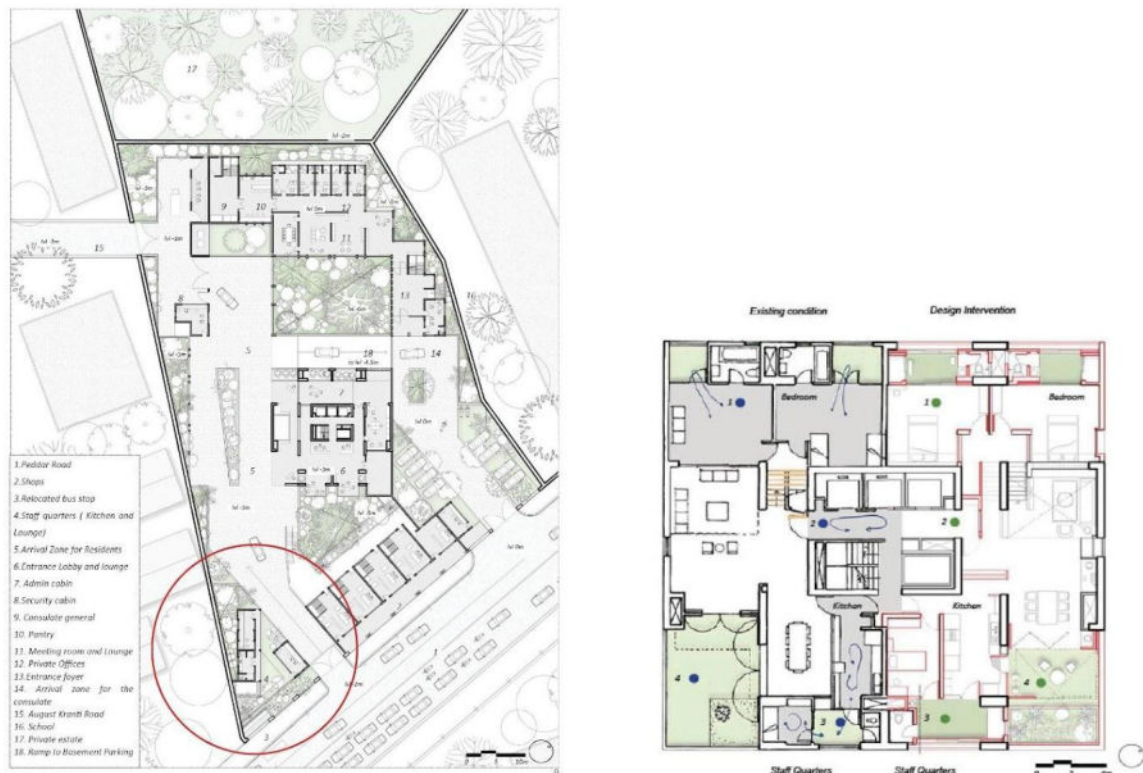


(Source: Author)

To address a raised critique on space, it is imperative to respond with a suggestion spatial in nature. The interventions in the apartment building extend at ground level and unit level through reorganisation in the plan being cognizant of the structural restrictions imposed by a shear wall structure.

In reorganising the ground floor plan with plentiful courtyards is the approach to create a staff quarter complex within the apartment complex, a space they can make their own and use with privacy for rest, respite and interaction with each other. This could be a meaningful space in Indian society where female workers often get their children to work as they cannot afford daycare services. The organisation along the “front” of the building deviates from the taboos of designing them in invisible crevices of the building. It places them close to their place of work. At the unit level, the staff quarter is moved out of the “buffer” zone and redesigned with new thresholds of light and ventilation (Figure 35).

Figure 35: The reorganised plan at ground level and unit level attempts to bring an equitable approach to designing housing schemes.



(Source: Author)

Conclusion

In both the projects we see how spatial articulations make specific communities invisible either by excluding them from a space or providing poorly designed spaces to them. Such physical manifestations of marginalisation through design become direct ways of making specific individuals feel excluded in the built environment. It becomes a part of their everyday experience and realities. Hence as architects and urban designers, we find ourselves at the crucial juncture of designing a built environment that challenges existing templates of exclusion and exercise our agency to break away from it. We have the opportunity to bring lesser heard voices to the forefront by catering to their needs in space. We believe our work addresses a crucial yet often underestimated lens to look at the act of marginalisation in the urban—through physical design. By the virtue of questioning architectural pedagogy that idolises iconic works of architecture and perpetuates marginalisation, we believe that we can contribute to expanding the conversation with not just spatial designers but also other disciplines in the conference.

Physical and spatial manifestation of marginalities through the act of design is one of the most direct ways in which one feels excluded on a daily basis in urban space. It is an everyday, bodily experience, felt every moment. Architects and urban designers hence, being at the crucial juncture of producing the built environment, need to challenge existing utilitarian templates that have deep historical connotations of marginalities ingrained in them. Designers hold the agency to propagate or break away from manifestations of exclusion.

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PANEL 9

Activating the Public Role of Universities: Engaging with Marginality



Activating The Public Role of Universities and Research Institutions: Engaging with Marginality

Chair: Barbara Lipietz, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UK

Héctor Becerril Miranda, Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología CONACYT, Mexico

Gautam Bhan, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, India

Joiselén Cazanave Macías, Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría CUJAE, Cuba

Francisco Comarú, Federal University of ABC, Brazil

Azadeh Mashayekhi, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UK

Zarina Patel, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Julia Wesely, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, AustriaD

This hybrid roundtable discusses the topic of marginality through the lens of universities' core teaching, research and public engagement functions, and their related endeavours to uphold their role as progressive urban actors. We gather perspectives from a diverse set of speakers working on the Urban through the looking glass of planning, architecture, sociology, and geography, and located in public and private universities as well as other research and teaching institutions in Brazil, Cuba, France, India, Lebanon, Mexico, South Africa and the UK.

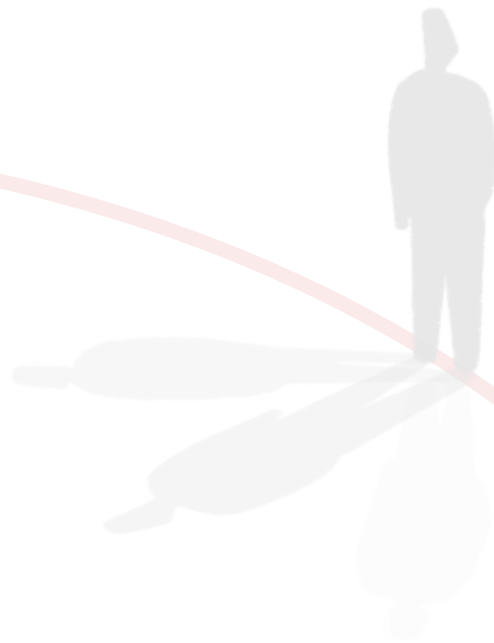
The aim of this roundtable is, first, to unpack how marginality is addressed in teaching, research or public engagement. For example, in terms of supporting marginalised groups of students, co-producing research with people living in marginalised neighbourhoods, or fore-fronting marginalised voices in knowledge production on the Urban. At the same time, we critically reflect on our roles as marginalising actors. That is, we reflect on how universities and other knowledge institutions are contributing to gentrification and elite enclaves in their cities, how academia maintains its status as gatekeeper that thrives on limiting access to knowledge, and so on.

Second, we debate the notion of the 'public' role of the university, and how it is understood across the diverse contexts of the speakers: Who are our publics in teaching? How is this 'public' role reflected in our values and our research processes? At what scale do we engage with different publics in our public engagement/third mission/extension? And how, then, do these reflections help us re-think marginalities and address the inequalities and injustices embedded in them?

The final part of the roundtable seeks to distil the importance of hosting such reflections on the public role of universities in a collaborative and transnational fashion: how does it allow us to practically address the multiple and intersecting 'glocal' crises we currently face? How can we use these networked conversations to help build truly global scholarship and foster more diverse knowledge circuits? And how do these inputs help us sharpen our thinking and practices about the public role of our own institutions?

PANEL 10

**Gender in the City:
Labour, Aspirations, and Marginalities**



Researching the Marginalities: Exploring Bazaar as a Site of Pollution, Respectability, and Marginality of Women Workers

Sandhya Gawali, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Keywords: Public space, *Bazaar*, Respectability, Marginality, Caste, Gender relations at the workplace

The spaces such as *Bazaar* and *Nakas* have always been at the margins of and repeatedly stigmatised and criminalised by the popular discourse on public spaces. What one needs to understand is why society does ignore these spaces and why people, especially women who access them, are viewed in stigmatised or derogatory ways. The paper utilises space and marginality as a conceptual framework to explore how caste, class, workplace, and gender intersect and work together to constitute the marginality of women workers in *Bazaar*. Contextualising marginalisation of women workers in *Bazaar* could be peculiar and distinct to understand when compared with other workplaces because *Bazaar* has already remained in the margin.

The paper explores how the everyday process of marginalisation is mediated and structured in women's experiences in the *Bazaar*. It explores the Chatrapati Shivaji Wholesale Vegetable Market in Pune city, popularly known as Market, *Bazaar* or Mandai in the local language, as a research field with a detailed ethnographic account followed by in-depth interviews with 88 women workers. The paper suggests that the context of marginality should not be only limited to socio-economic exclusion, but it should be viewed in terms of spatial context as well. It concludes further that caste, gender, and socio-cultural factors play an important role in shaping *Bazaar* as a polluted, impure workplace for 'respectable' women.

Introduction

Bazaar or Marketplace has always been a central part of the informal economy; however, very few scholars (Brahme & Sonalkar 1976; Avchat 1976; Chakravathy 1992; Gaikwad 2016) engaged with it. These scholars majorly focused on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the *Bazaar*. However, it did not intensively intervene in how space produces marginality in women worker's life. The dominant discourse on public space marginalises spaces that poor urban migrants majorly inhabit and access. These spaces include *Bazaar*, *Naka*, and *fair events*. The present paper tries to reflect on one of the public spaces—*Bazaar*—an urban wholesale vegetable marketplace in Pune city. It tries to understand how an already marginalised space, here *Bazaar*, produces and reproduces the marginality of people who inhabit and access it.

The paper starts its entry point by raising important questions: first, why does a space like *Bazaar* get stigmatised or criminalised? Second, how is *Bazaar* structured by gender, caste power dynamics, and inequalities? Third, how do caste, class, workplace, and gender intersect and work together to constitute marginality of women workers in *Bazaar*? And fourth, how do women workers make meaning of *Bazaar*—a male-dominated space? The paper tries to explore the possible reasons behind the marginalisation, stigmatisation, and criminalisation of *Bazaar* and

argues that the negative connotation of *Bazaar* is a colonial construct. Similarly, other social-cultural factors, such as caste purity and gender relations, played out an important role in constructing negative connotations. The paper has followed an ethnographic approach and conducted in-depth interviews with 88¹ women workers based on a simple random sample. Verbal consent of women workers was taken before conducting the interview. The names of respondent women workers have been omitted and initials of their first names and surnames utilised to maintain confidentiality.

Space and Marginality

Ali argues that the public sphere failed to reflect on the plurality of cultures, resulting in inaccessibility and marginalisation of marginalised communities (Ali, 2001, 2419). Some scholars reflected on counter-public spheres and brought diverse cultures of working, labourer classes, caste power dynamics, and gender inequality (Fraser 1990). In this context, *Bazaar* can be seen as a counter-public space, accessed and inhabited by marginalised communities for different purposes. *As a public space, Bazaar* has been shaping people's social, cultural, and political lives for a long time. Similarly, as Parkinson argues, the place gives meaning to space with identity and representations of people (Parkinson, 2012, 77). In the *Bazaar*, symbolic objects, daily labour practices, socio-political power and gender relations, and accessibility are shaping the nature and meaning of *Bazaar*. Therefore, *Bazaar* becomes an important site to study the continuous political, social, and cultural contestation and negative connotation.

Researching the Marginality²

I am discussing marginality in terms of exclusion and using it as a conceptual framework to explore the everyday process of exclusion of women workers in the workplace. Braun and Gatzweiler define marginality as 'position of people on the edges, preventing their access to resources and opportunities, freedom of choices, and the development of personal capabilities' (Braun & Gatzweiler, 2014, 3). Similarly, Bell Hooks underlines the relational context between margin and centre, stating that "To be in the margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body..." (Hooks, 1989, 20). She tries to underline that margin cannot exist without centre. It is always relational and context specific.

Ferguson and others (1990) argue that marginalised groups have challenged and negotiated with the centre's power. Therefore, reading Bell Hooks' work on marginality as a site of resistance becomes inevitable. In the field, I observed that women workers experience marginality in terms of socio-economic, sexuality, and cultural status. However, they resist, negotiate with it by using various strategies (Gawali, 2023, 413).

The data shows that widowed and deserted women work in large numbers and their marital status plays a vital role in the marginalisation. Similarly, women from the scheduled castes are

¹ 88 women represent the 20% of total population of sample.

² The title of the paper researching the marginalities is inspired from Pitts and Smith's work.

highly concentrated in manual and degrading work such as *pala*³, picking, sweeping, and *matere*⁴ work. The workspace they access is viewed with negative connotations as well as in a metaphorical way to represent *Bahar* 'outside' to '*ghar*' (domesticity). Women who spend long hours outside the '*ghar*' are seen as promiscuous. Thus, patriarchal society often calls them '*Bajaaru Aurat*' as opposed to the implicit connection of 'good housewife' (Chakravarty, 1992, 543). The *Bazaar* is often represented as a dirty place with filthy drains, 'disgusting sellers', and crowded and noisy lanes (Chakravarty, 1992, 541). The socio-cultural angle of viewing *Bazaar* as polluted is undoubtedly embedded in an inter-mixture of castes (Rodrigues, 2009, 115). *Bazaar* is not inhabited by any particular caste or class. Men from marginalised communities, for instance, middlemen, coolies, retail customers, truck drivers, and hawkers from different castes and classes are deployed to do work in the *Bazaar*, and if women come in contact with them, they are considered polluted as are caste(s). Thus, to maintain caste purity, control on women's sexuality and access to spaces becomes a vital task to caste patriarchy. Similarly, spaces like *Bazaar* or street corners are known for sexual solicitation as women get clients easily. Therefore, sexual solicitation is one of the reasons behind viewing *Bazaar* as a polluted and impure space for 'respectable', 'good' women. Therefore, women are discouraged from accessing public spaces like *Bazaar*. If they access it, they are portrayed as characterless, opposite to the 'respectable', 'ideal' woman. In the interviews, majority of women and men workers underlined that *Bazaar* is a disgraceful, bad place for 'respectable' women. Women who do not have 'respect' can work here or keep their '*izzat*' at home or at the gate of the Market and enter in search of livelihood. In this circumstance, knowing how women workers give meaning to the *Bazaar*, as they inhabit the polluted, impure male-dominated space is important.

Conclusion

The paper addressed the fact that public spaces can be studied as a site of marginalisation. Public spaces such as *Bazaar*, *Naka* are often seen as dirty, noisy, and worse, filled with 'unfriendly bodies'. These spaces are seen as not only threat to women's safety but also a threat to caste purity because of the inter mixture of different castes, classes, and religions. People who share these spaces, especially women, do not get respect or dignity. For instance, women and men both use *Bazaar* to secure paid work but only women workers are stigmatised and marginalised. Market women in general become publicly sexualised figures due to their social location and workplace. Women who do access the *Bazaar* space have often underlined that it is their '*Majburi*' (helplessness) to work in *Bazaar*. Women's *Majburi* is embedded in lack of economic opportunities in formal labour market. They neither have a problem with *Bazaar* nor the socio-political image of *Bazaar*. What women are concerned with is being viewed as 'promiscuous', 'bad', and 'Mufat', if they assert and claim their bodily integrity in such spaces. Women's relatives often cast doubt and assassinate their character, taunt them, and label them characterless, cunning women. Women working in the *Bazaar* are already on the margin of the socio-economic pyramid, and labels such as 'ideal', 'good' women push them more towards marginality.

³ Women who do segregation of rotten potatoes are called as *pala* workers.

⁴ Women those work in the grain section are known as *matere* woman. The field data shows that women belong to Mang community are highly concentrated in the grain section.

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Gender Norms and Bargaining Over Child Care in Urban Spaces: Case Studies of Working-Class Women in the National Capital Region, India

Shraddha Jain, Centre for Development Studies, Kerala

This paper is based on the research conducted with 'working class' women employed in the National Capital Region of India (NCR hereafter). These were those in low wage occupations which are often referred to as 'unskilled' or 'semi-skilled' and which require little or relatively low levels of education. We delve deeper into the process of bargaining over childcare by women for this social class. The process highlights the intertwining of events during the life course, available infrastructure/care alternatives, job opportunities, aspirations and the urban networks.

We wish to contribute to the discussion of urban marginality which, as noted in the concept note, is multifaceted and manifested along the lines of livelihoods, health and education. We highlight that women and their preassigned roles remain at the margins of the discourses of urban policy. The situation becomes starker for those belonging to the working class who struggle between making livelihoods, aspire for economic mobility and have to cater to their gendered roles. Their disadvantages due to gender and class are intertwined with other social identities such as caste and migration status. Urban spaces that also experience an influx of people looking for livelihoods, are devoid of conceptual frameworks that envision care as social and public responsibility assuming urban dwellers have families to take care of the same. Informality related to the urban labour market and neglect from the state lead to failure of reaping the benefits of limited opportunities in the legal and policy space.

Through the bargaining approach as discussed by Agarwal (1997), we understand that gender norms mediated through social location of class, caste, migration, social network, and aspirations for economic mobility along with the absence of care infrastructure, structure the bargaining process over three aspects: provision of full-time care, care giving (by parents themselves and those who provide alternate care), and care management. We use Fisher and Tronto's (1990) framework that explains care as process involving four phases: caring about, taking care of, care giving, and care receiving.

Our sample, comprising of 74 working class women, included women who were between 19 years and 45 years old. Average age of marriage was 16.5 years, and 55 per cent of the women had three or more children. Because women in this class married early, some of them had older children who could manage on their own. The 74 women in this segment had a total of 198 children of whom 54 were older than 15 years of age at the time of the interviews. However, the experiences of women with children of different ages were useful because it threw light on the life cycle dimension of the interaction between child care and employment. Marriage at an early age confined several women to household care responsibilities and there has been an implicit expectation from them to take care of family members and the children. When women

expressed their desire to take up work, they were denied permission to work or the childcare support for the same.

Table 1: Occupational Distribution for Working Class Women

Occupation	No. of women	Percent
Construction	16	21.33
Domestic work	24	32
Factory	16	21.33
Housekeeping	8	10.67
Security	7	10.67
Drivers and mobiliser	3	4
Total	74	100

Source: Field Work

All the 74 women in our sample held informal jobs and the distribution of their occupations is provided in Table 1. There are legal mandates for childcare facilities at construction sites and in the factories. However, workers in our sample could not benefit from these. The informality associated with these two sectors led them to work at workplaces devoid of such facilities. The construction workers in our sample said they didn't work at a permanent site with any specific builder. Wherever they went, they had to just tie the child's leg to a tree and were concerned about them eating mud. Factory workers also reported that although the Factory's Act mandated day care in the factories, the owners could easily flout the norms. Some even said that one such room was opened on the day of audits. Some workers also worked as daily wage earners who were not on the payroll of the company. Some women also reported that although domestic work was also an option, they didn't take it up as employers don't allow children at workplaces. It was possible to take children to the construction site. Anganwadis were not helpful to many as there were no Anganwadis nearby. They were open for brief periods and there was no one to drop the child there. One woman reported that the child was lost while returning alone from the Anganwadi.

Our respondents pointed out that childcare involved greater responsibility for mothers. Working women had to negotiate employment and childcare. Only in rare instances, were they able to access paid care facilities. Hence for most part they were compelled to take children to the workplace or leave them in the care of extended family or others including older siblings and neighbours. While some women left children behind in the village, where possible, mothers with children living in the NCR adjusted work timings to avoid leaving their children unattended at home.

We also found that more than 60 per cent of the respondents took full time care of the children at least till the age of one year or until they could be left under others' supervision. Nine women left infant children (less than one year old under replacement care) with others and nineteen

women provided full time care to older children while they sought replacement care for younger children. Further, only 19 women out of 74 women had had some sort of paid employment before marriage. The differentiating feature has been that most women from the first category belonged to historically privileged and Other Backward Classes while most women from other two categories belonged to disadvantaged castes. Women belonging to the first and the largest category, held jobs in all occupations. However, the second category comprised mostly of the construction workers and the last category had mostly domestic workers. Apart from economic compulsion, women sought paid work for providing better living conditions and to ensure education for children which most of them were denied.

The detailed analysis suggests that women had greater responsibility for children both in terms of care provision and management of childcare. The early marriage also meant women didn't engage in discussions about employment or distribution of household tasks prior to marriage. The narratives suggested that when women did not provide full time care, they proposed or planned alternate care for children. Only a few mentioned that men were actively part of alternate care. Men rarely participated in household and care activities except for a few looking after older children's education or dropping children to school. Otherwise, mothers had sole responsibility for management of childcare activities such as managing schooling or medical requirements. Only a few women could ask for contributions from their spouses such as dropping children for helping them in the morning.

Little less than half of the women in the sample had migrated to the NCR at different points of time except women who had migrated to NCR as single women to work as domestic workers. Others hardly had any agency in the decision-making process on migration related matters. Some women migrated with marriage, but many others migrated when the male spouses needed them for social reproduction or when they were not able to draw support from extended households in villages. The mere presence of family members didn't mean ease of care organisation for women. Many women had to bear huge household burdens and stay away from paid employment for families' pride.

Among the range of care alternatives, more frequently, children were left to family members (other than spouses and siblings), who lived either in the same households or elsewhere. Except a small section who sought family support when the children were not even a year old, care was outsourced to family members when the children were grown up. Similar was the case when neighbours took care of the children. In the few rare cases when children were left in paid care, mothers were held responsible if the child fell sick during that period. Very young children were left either with family members, older siblings or fathers.

Men's contribution to care management (taking care of) and caregiving can be categorised as follows: those who didn't make any contributions, those who made minimal contributions or did some tasks after a lot of persuasion, then who helped their wives after discussion and asking, and lastly those who participated voluntarily. However, except for a few, their contribution had been in phases. i.e., there were men who participated in childcare either in the early phases or in the latter. Some women could negotiate after some years of marriage while many didn't ask for

any participation either to avoid any conflict or based on their spouses' general behaviour. Women also narrated that they would wake up earlier and sleep later than their spouses to make time for household responsibilities. Mostly, women shouldered the mental load to look for care alternatives. In best scenarios, men responded to those. For instance, a domestic worker could not take up paid work unless her mother was available for childcare. A security staff took her neighbour's help when her husband raised concerns about childcare if she joined paid work.

Gender norms along with lack of caring infrastructure influence women's shifting from full time care and double burden. Anganwadis were located far off and children needed an older person to take them there. As noted above, leaving children at unsafe work sites or under sibling care highlight the adverse situation. Some of these older siblings had to forego regular schooling to take care of younger children. Several statements and responses from women highlighted that lack of affordable and reliable care alternatives also had implications for the shift from full time provision of childcare. Women emphasised that they took up paid work only after having two or three children or made a remark that since everyone around was going to work, it was not possible to leave them anywhere. Another woman said she could not admit children to school for 2 or 3 years, there being no use of being in school if there was no money. The National creche Scheme which could have been useful step in the direction, has faltered in last few years (The Hindu, 2023).

The literature informs us that the economic or material resources are important for bargaining and sometimes the negotiating parties might have to bargain over the economic resources themselves (Agarwal, 1997). The narratives reveal that earnings for women were also determined by gender norms and labour market norms. For instance, domestic workers took fewer part time jobs to balance their earnings and childcare responsibilities. They avoided cooking jobs that would entail two shifts. Construction workers said that women only worked as helpers and their wages were always half the wages for men who worked as masons. Also, since the construction workers had casual jobs, they skipped going to work if there was too much housework and if it was difficult to manage school going children. Some women explicitly said that only women who can earn higher incomes can bring changes in intra household relations and their meagre income of Rs. 6000 to Rs. 7000 would not do anything.

Apart from the above, the process of bargaining involved an implicit understanding that women take care of children and the household post marriage and seek employment after children grew up. However, women took full responsibility of managing time with minimal support from others like grandmothers feeding children. Explicit negotiation only involved asking for minimal tasks. Women have been able to take decisions and voice their opinions only after a few years of marriage. For instance, very few women worked in the first year of marriage and if there was objection to taking up paid work, they could negotiate based on the inadequate earning of males. In spite of explicit displeasure about their employment, women took financial and childcare management on themselves with older children supporting them. Providing full time care until children (at least older children) grew up meant the care giving tasks changed from needing the full-time presence of only the mother to be supervised by others. For a small group that left children to alternate care when the child was not even a year old, the process involved

explicit discussion about aspirations to seek employment and better living. But these women had part time jobs which needed spousal contribution for few hours. This was also enabled by the availability of jobs for men that involved shifts and a paid care facility, and women were involved in very proactive management of care.

The above discussion calls for social policy for affordable and reliable public childcare and early education framework.

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Women at Work: Viewing the City of Ahmedabad from the Perspective of Women Labourers

Jemini Sara Nainan, Mudra Institute of Communications

Pooja Thomas, Mudra Institute of Communications

Introduction

The twin processes of industrialisation and urbanisation in the city of Ahmedabad have reorganised the working and settlement patterns of the people living in the city. The gradual urban growth along the western periphery of Ahmedabad has been crafted in such a way that it caters to the high and middle-class population whereas the eastern part of Ahmedabad accommodates small-scale industries and houses the low-income, working-class population (Mahadevia et al., 2014a). Tall multi-storey buildings, shopping marts, community clubs, and malls that spread across the western fringe, are a result of what Mahadevia (2014a) calls “Branding Ahmedabad” to make it a world-class city. This process of organising the peripheries, especially in the western part, has created a group of labouring poor (Bremner, 2002) who cater to these middle-class groups by working as domestic labourers, construction workers, street vendors, and waste pickers in the region. While studying the construction workers who had migrated to Ahmedabad, Jayaram et al. (2019) argue that though these labourers form the backbone in the process of making Ahmedabad a world-class city, they are excluded and discriminated against by being absorbed only as casual and unskilled workers, given low wages along with frequent cases of non-payment and underpayment. Among these informal labourers, women working in this sector are further discriminated against. McDowell (1997) while describing the organisation of work in Britain during the 1990s, said that most of the women in paid employment are at the bottom end of the labour force and hence the organisation of work was deeply gendered as women were either involved in low-paid jobs or were part of the reserve army of capital (Massey, 1994; McDowell, 1997; Agarwal & Agarwal, 2015; Winders & Smith, 2018). According to a statistical report by WIEGO in 2020, women domestic workers and construction workers earn Rs 202 and Rs 248 per day respectively, as compared to a minimum wage of Rs 375 per day in India (Raveendran & Vanek, 2020). These women labourers and their work are invisibilised, as argued by Jayaram et al. (2019) since many of the women migrate to the city as a partner accompanying the male worker and not as an individual who has come to search for work. They are recruited as a couple and their remuneration is given to the male member; this also devalues their labour. Such practices of exclusion are gender-based challenges that Jayaram et al. describe as ‘gendered burdens’ and which emanate from the gender norms around multiple roles women typically perform—wife, mother, and worker in a city.

The traditional notion of a sexist city, as reiterated by Jarvis (2009), was rooted in the gendered binary division of the physical spaces in the city such that spaces of employment were separated from home and the spatial segregation of masculine outdoor work and feminine indoor work including responsibilities of care. While traditional cities translated into gender role confinement, the neoliberal city was believed to be with emancipatory potential (Jarvis, 2009) such that it aided both men and women to be employed and hence provide socio-economic mobility. In contradiction, Kern (2010) maintains that despite the freedom experienced by urban women,

traditional gender roles and norms around women's place(s) of work, women's needs and desires are used as visions to build the city. The social interactions in a particular kind of city are constructed to include and exclude the various social actors within that space (McDowell, 1997). Therefore, the spatial organisation of work is one of the key factors that result in the social construction of the workers and simultaneously a gendered understanding of work and workplaces which also reproduces gendered inequalities (McDowell, 1997; Jarvis, 2009). This specific case aligns with what Massey (1994) argues that 'space and place, spaces and places and our senses of them (and such related things as our degrees of mobility) are gendered through and through... And this gendering of space and place both reflects *and has effects* back on the ways in which gender is constructed and understood in the societies in which we live' (p. 186). Describing these interrelations between space and gender, Massey (1994) maintains that space is conceptualised as the construction out of 'interrelationships, as the simultaneous coexistence of social interrelations and interactions at all spatial scales, from the most local level to the most global (p. 264). This leads to the notion that social relations are constitutive of the spatial and vice versa and affirmed by Massey (1994) such that the social and spatial are co-constitutive. In the context of informal women labourers, the place(s) of work—whether outdoor or indoor often overlap which doubles their gendered burdens and blurs the spatial distinctions of work and home for them.

Experiences of the migrant women labourers in a city are closely related to their experiences of work which often merge with their private roles of caring. Previous studies have focused on the plight of women construction workers (Jayaram et al., 2019), waste pickers (Wittmer, 2023), and home-based workers (Mahadevia et al., 2014b) and have extensively elaborated on the challenges they face in their daily life. However, this study emerges from the gap of the previous studies in understanding the migrant women labourers purely from the perspective of work-home dichotomies. Experiencing the city at the peripheries also unravels intersections of work-home with themes of leisure and fear among the women labourers. Therefore, this study aims to highlight ways of reviewing the city through the lens of women workers.

Methodology and Preliminary Insights

This study began with the primary objective of understanding women labourers' perceptions of their work and the city of Ahmedabad. For the same, a pilot study was conducted during the months of December 2022 and May–June 2023 among 25 women labourers who worked as construction labourers, domestic workers, and agricultural labourers in Shela, Ahmedabad. Ethnographic research methods such as interviews and observations were used to explore notions of work and city. Preliminary interviews with women labourers highlighted intersections of experiences of leisure and fear while experiencing the city through work. Based on the evidence from our pilot study among the women labourers in Ahmedabad, they majorly navigate through the city only with a purpose, in this case, a major part of their daily routine is spent at work and the rest at shelter, hence limiting their mobility in the city. However, their limited spatial mobility has unravelled varied instances of leisure and fear for the women.

Experiencing Work and the City

Leisure

Devika is a 24-year-old construction worker from Chattisgarh. She has been working in Ahmedabad for three months and hopes to return to her village in the following 2–3 months. She likes her work as she claims *“Mujhe ghum-ghum kar kaam karna pasand hai”*, translated as “I like to move around places while working”. At construction sites, her allotted work is to sweep and wash the site. She is happy about her work as it allows her to move within the site which gives her freedom and mobility. Resting in between work is important for Devika which she mentions as “timepass”. Routray (2022) maintains that activities of timepass work “provides opportunity to forge sociality and relationships that remain critical in receiving welfare entitlements...these activities blur the distinction between production and social reproduction” (p.995). For Devika, moments of timepass are usually spent in watching TV serials on YouTube, dancing to videos of Jas Geet and watching TikTok videos. Timepass activities also involve spending time with fellow workers, talking and gossiping about labourers from other ethnic backgrounds—mainly the Bhils from Gujarat. Therefore, spaces of work also become spaces of leisure for Devika. However, her idea of “being mobile” is not limited to her choice of work, but also to the way she experiences the city. She claims that within her limited time in Ahmedabad, she has visited *Lal Darwaja*, a heritage site in the city, to experience the city as a tourist as well as to explore the markets around the heritage site. *“Aas paas jitna bhi market hai, mein waha sab chala gaya hu”* or “I have visited all the nearby markets”, sometimes with a reason, to buy vegetables, clothes or grocery but sometimes, to explore the city.

Fear

Gouriben, is a 49-year-old domestic worker, living in the village of Shela. The construction of bungalows in the peripheries of the city are also parts of her village. According to her, the construction of bungalows, high rise buildings are beneficial for her as she has higher prospects of work as a domestic help in these houses. Her motivation to go for work is the familiarity with the area and the short distance between home and workplace (here, bungalows)

Gauriben dislikes her work primarily because the memsahibs (ladies at the bungalows) do not pay her according to the work she does and do not allow her to take holidays in case of any emergency. She claims *“mujhe unse chutti mangne mein darr lagta hai”* as “I am scared of asking for holidays” as the ladies pile up the utensils until I come back from holiday and wash a heap of utensils which is physically tiring. She preferred working in offices in the city as they have fixed time and structure of work which will provide her time for rest. However, Gauriben is scared of the city. Navigating beyond the familiar areas of her village, through the other parts of the city is associated with feelings of fear of being lost. She is scared of the city as people and places are unknown and prefers to visit them only with the company of her family. She claims, “As I am not educated, I feel I will be lost, and people will not be nice to me which adds on to my fear. If I were educated, I could work in the offices in the city”.

Future Research

Emotions felt experiencing the city and work are spatially determined by Anderson and Smith (2001) as emotional geographies which are defined as the emotions attached to places and bodies. According to them, there are certain moments and spaces where life is lived purely with pain, happiness, joy, love, compassion, frustration, and anger. These emotions shadow the political and economic relations embedded in that particular time and space. Considering the heightened vulnerability of women informal workers in Indian cities, articulations of their emotions are missing in the existing literature. Though scholars have focused on the emotional geographies of transnational communities (Kobayashi et al., 2011), prison work (Nylander et al., 2011), illness and disability, death, locating emotions in the bodies of tourists, older people, and queer (Davidson et al., 2007), this study aims to map the emotional geographies of women labourers in Ahmedabad.

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Drivers of Masculinity: Marginality, Manhood, and Mobilities in Hyderabad, India

Sneha Annavarapu, National University of Singapore

In 2017, I began to do fieldwork in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad in order to understand the cultural and material conditions of driving in the city. Key to my research was getting a sense of how app-based cabdrivers¹ (henceforth just “cabdrivers”) navigated city traffic since transport workers are often portrayed as being rule-breaking, disobedient, and the source of disorder and chaos on the road (Chowdhury, 2021; Govinda, 2020). However, while exploring how cabdrivers experienced and adapted to the road traffic in the city, I realised that I had to reckon with mobility as meaning more than just physical movement in the city; for the cabdrivers I was interacting with especially those that were below the age of 40, physical and spatial mobility was deeply tied to questions around social mobility, migration, marginality, and masculinity. Many of these drivers were migrant men—but they were also new migrants who had moved to the city of Hyderabad from nearby towns and rural areas in order to work as professional drivers (see Annavarapu, 2022b). These were men who had moved to the city solely to earn a living through the labour of driving and several of the men I spoke with had moved without their families, lived in single-room dormitories in the margins of the city, and made weekly trips back home. As several scholars have noted, the influx of migrant cabdrivers to big cities in the past decade is a clear response to companies like Uber and Ola incentivising the uptake of their technologies coupled with growing demands for car-based transportation in urban India (Surie & Koduganti, 2016; Kashyap & Bhatia, 2018; Prabhat et al., 2019). The backbone of gig economy ridesharing in major Indian cities are drivers who often move from their rural areas to keep cities moving.

On the 24th March 2020, the Prime Minister of India announced a total lockdown in the country in response to growing cases of COVID-19. The national lockdown which lasted 21 days was followed by less severe and yet significant curtailments of movement and mobility which were brutally enforced by the police all over the country and adversely impacted the lives of labour migrants in particular. Before the lockdown could go into effect, for instance, circular labour migrants in various urban centres all over the country began to scramble to go back to the towns and villages which some people have dubbed the biggest internal displacement of people since the Partition of 1947 (Ellis-Petersen & Chaurasia, 2020; Mukhra et al., 2020). Images of people desperately seeking to go back to their hometowns in buses and trains dominated the news, while transport services slowly started to shutter down to comply with the requirements of the lockdown. Nonetheless, countless images of people quite literally walking—with bags, children, exhaustion, and fear in tow—for hundreds of kilometres made news and served as a stark reminder of the violently unequal ways in which the pandemic shaped people’s lives. Amongst

¹ Due to the regulations around app-based transit in India, drivers for Uber and Ola too must get a special license plate—yellow in colour—and apply for a taxicab permit to be able to legally drive for these apps. While Uber and Ola term their drivers “partners”, for all practical purposes, the route to becoming an Ola and Uber driver resembles the route to becoming a taxicab driver. Hence, I use the word “cabdriver” to include those driving for Ola and Uber. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that while the traditional taxicab industry in India is subject to regulations, app-based firms in India operate out of a regulatory gray zone and this has been a matter of contention amongst labour rights activists who point out how behind the veneer of entrepreneurialism that these firms offer is a shirking of any real responsibility towards the welfare and rights of their workers.

those that were severely affected by the pandemic and the governmental response were the cabdrivers I was studying. As a spokesperson from the Indian Federation of App-Based Transport Workers said, “drivers are being reduced to beggars in the city.” (quoted in Mahale, 2020).

In a collaboratively written article, Xiang et al. (2023) conceptualise shock mobilities as “migratory routines that are radically and abruptly reconfigured in response to acute disruption. They involve both sudden surges and stoppages of movement as manifested in varied forms including panicked emergency flights from epicentres, mass repatriations, lockdowns, and quarantines.” The case studies that illustrate the potency of this definition showcase how shock mobilities do not just yield stasis and suspension but also movement and navigations. The navigational responses to disruption that constitute shock mobilities are, thus, worth examination. As Priya Deshingkar notes, “relations of exploitation and migrant agency are intricately folded together and, thus, were constituted, disrupted and reconstituted when the pandemic hit.” (2022, p. 177) In a previously published article, I outlined how these shock mobilities unleashed by COVID-19 forged the aspirations and goals of some of the migrant cabdrivers I had encountered during my fieldwork (Annavarapu, 2022b). Thinking through I showed how the very experience of waiting—of displacement, of lockdown, and of suspension of income—shaped the very “capacity to aspire” (Appadurai, 2004) amongst migrant cabdrivers that were already bearing the brunt of the lack of social protections that characterise the informality of the gig economy.

Here, I trace how the pandemic—as an epidemiological event—shaped the intersubjectivity of two groups of cabdrivers in Hyderabad: migrant and local drivers.² This perspective matters to better understand how the pandemic transformed not just the economic lives of migrants but also their relational masculinities in the ecosystem of driving in Hyderabad. While the interrelationship between marginality, migration, and masculinity has long been a subject of academic inquiry (see Donaldson et al., 2009; Broughton, 2008; Osella & Osella, 2000; Govinda, 2020; Rai, 2020; Shrivastava, 2014; Choi, 2018; Kukreja, 2021), there is not as much understanding currently around the pandemic has transformed and/or affirmed ideas and practices of masculinity. This article is an attempt at addressing that lacuna. Further, building on Romit Chowdhury’s insight that “for the working-class urban male, exercising [such] tenuous proprietorial control over a public transport vehicle becomes a form of enacting masculinity in the city” (2021, p. 78) I offer that tracing the effects of the pandemic on two groups of drivers that self-identify differently along the axis of migration enables a tighter grasp on how masculinity manifests in the urban, particularly during times of crises. Extending the idea of shock mobilities, this article wonders: is there scope to consider what “shock masculinities” look like?

While it seems rather obvious when I foreground the highly gendered nature of cabdriving, my intention going into my research was actually not to do with masculinities at all. I was interested in women’s safety and how the stereotypical representation of cabdrivers as being sexual predators structures their self-understandings and interactions with women passengers—about

² I go by self-identifying labels here, depending on how drivers characterised themselves since I am interested in the narratives drivers put forward about themselves.

which I have previously published (Annavarapu, 2022a) —but I was not quite analysing taxi-masculinities. Instead, it was the pandemic that necessitated I pay attention to the emergent masculinities which, then, made me look over my field notes and interpret much of the material I was looking at as being incidental to my research as being quite central to an understanding of cabdriving. It became clear, then, that several moments in my interlocutors' lives called for a closer attention to how they were narrating themselves and others through the register of manhood and manliness. In this way, the pandemic prompted a conceptual shift in my interpretation of my own field notes and made clearer the stakes of engaging with “a range of urban processes in relation to ideas of masculinity” (Chowdhury, 2023, p. 28).

In the following pages, I highlight how understandings of expertise and masculinity animated the intersubjective relations between the two groups before the pandemic. I then elaborate on how disruptions caused by the pandemic troubled the material conditions of survival and subsistence for these groups and how that then reshaped these previous understandings. I emphasise, finally, how mutual aid and networks of support inaugurated newer ways of relating to one another. This brings to bear newer light on existing research on marginality, masculinity, and urban life.

Data and Methods

In this paper, I follow through time the lives of eight drivers: four migrant drivers (restricted to drivers who had migrated to the city after 2014)³ and four local (self-identifying as “local”) drivers. The migrant drivers had moved to Hyderabad to drive for app-based cabs. Two of them owned their cars and two of them drove rented cars on a daily commission. The average age of the sample is 34 with the youngest driver being 22 and the oldest being 42. Two of the migrant drivers were married and both had at least one child; and three of the local drivers were married and had at least one child. All of these drivers are men. Three of the migrant drivers are Hindu and one is Christian. Two of the local drivers are Hindu and two are Muslim.

The core of the data for this paper is drawn from long-term ethnographic fieldwork conducted over several periods in the city of Hyderabad between 2017–23. I used unstructured and semi-structured interviews, ethnographic observations as well as analysis of news media with a view to understanding how drivers of various social backgrounds understand the culture of driving in the city. As part of my research methods, I specifically interviewed drivers of app-based cabs like Uber and Ola. Participants were recruited at random as well as by snowball sampling methods. While I did not conduct in-person fieldwork in 2020, I kept in touch over phone calls and WhatsApp texts and, when I was in Hyderabad in 2021, I met a couple of my participants all the while practicing safe masking and social distancing norms. I interviewed one interlocutor again in 2023. The interviews that I am analysing for this paper were all conducted, transcribed, and coded by me. They were almost all conducted in a mix of Telugu and Hindi with a smattering of “Indian English” phrases.

³ Uber started operations in Hyderabad in 2014 and many of the migrant cabdrivers I interviewed moved after. I use 2014 as a placeholder.

Moving Apart: How Local Cabdrivers Otherise Migrant Cabdrivers

In middle-class and elite discourses, the source of unruliness and chaos on the road has always been the working-class cabdriver. However, *within* the cabdriver community, there exist more careful calibrations around who is the “actual” source of unruliness, chaos, and danger on the roads and who is the expert at cabdriving. One way in which masculine pride manifests amongst local cabdrivers is through the notion of expertise and a mastery over the city. In her book *Mumbai Taximen*, anthropologist Tarini Bedi (2022) shows how *joona* drivers⁴ in Mumbai distance themselves from *naveen* drivers.⁵ She argues that the self-understanding of who are the “original taximen”⁶ is inextricably linked to a matter of expertise—of the road, of the trade, of the city itself. Similarly, in Hyderabad too, the question of “who is an expert at driving?” became a modality through which local cabdrivers evaluated themselves vis-à-vis migrant drivers and often Otherised them.

For local cabdrivers, the markings of rurality were manifest in a drivers’ knowledge (or lack thereof) of routes and roads and the quality of “driving”.⁷ For instance, Muqem, a cabdriver for *Dot Cabs* who had been driving for about 15 years in the city, told me that he could tell if a cab was being driven by a local or a migrant simply by evaluating how “rashly” it was being driven. When I pointed out that most car-owning middle-class and elite people I was speaking with said that cabs *in general* seem to be driven rashly, he said:

These drivers from villages, they give all of us cabbies a bad name. They learn to drive on tractors and trucks and then drive cars. They do not know how to handle cars or even urban traffic. They are used to driving in villages! “Rough and rash type” men. Local cabdrivers, we know the city like the back of their hand, and so even if we drive fast, we are not rash. Expert driving means not just driving fast; it is about driving smartly. Smartly means: knowing the shortcuts, police checkpoints, and when traffic will be bad on what route. We understand Hyderabad and its twisted routes and rhythms. Our experience shows in the way we drive. (Field Notes, January 2019)

The reliance on knowing the city without relying on GPS-enabled maps came up time and again and became a modality of narrating driving skill which, in turn, was linked to masculine pride. For instance, in my observations, I noticed a consistent pattern in how correcting a local cabdrivers’ choice of route or asking them to use the GPS to optimise the route resulted in contention and pushback, especially if the passenger were a woman. When I asked the president of an autorickshaw drivers’ union about this, he told me, “When you question a local cabdriver’s choice of route, it is like you are questioning his authority or his intelligence!” I asked him, very directly, if it were also linked to masculine pride (*mogatanam*). He grinned and admitted, “what isn’t?” This way of relationally positioning themselves against migrant cabdrivers resulted in linking masculinity to the question of belonging in a city.

⁴ Taximen who identify as being “original” in the taxi trade

⁵ “New” or more recent drivers

⁶ Although, in Bedi’s work, the “joona drivers” themselves articulate their identity as migrants to Mumbai and trace their migratory history back to Gujarat.

⁷ Emic term used by drivers to denote driving as a labour practice.

Another terrain on which local cabdrivers crafted the Otherisation of migrant cabdrivers was in their manners and conduct with passengers, particularly women. For instance, Venkat, a local cabdriver who drove for a travels company insisted that local drivers embodied a genteel masculinity and a certain respectful professionalism as they tended to have more experience with dealing with a wider variety of customers as opposed to migrant drivers who were unfamiliar with the diverse demographic:

These drivers that come from villages, they don't know how to behave with customers, especially women customers. They talk brashly with them, or they stare at them, or engage in some indecent acts. They are not used to seeing modern women—they are not used to the clothing style, behaviour of city women—and it takes them a while to start understanding the culture of the city. (Field Notes, October 2018)

While there is no empirical proof of Venkat's claim, this idea that—somehow—migrant men are more *likely* to be the source of danger for women was widely held as being indicative of a cultural difference between the “rural” and the “urban”. In my research amongst women passengers that I have written more about elsewhere (see Annavarapu, 2022a), I found that women passengers *were*, in fact, wary of migrant cabdrivers especially if they did not understand the language in which drivers were speaking or if the drivers seemed unfamiliar with routes in the city. In the broader context of sexual assault against women in cabs in India, these suspicions of “traits” and the stereotypes around peri-urban and migrant men being “sexual savages”, migrant cabdrivers come to exemplify or stand in for the backwardness associated with rurality. This is not just a spatial issue but a temporal one; the “rural” stands in for a space of abjection but also one that is lagging behind in terms of catching up with the modern city (Amrute, 2015; Srivastava, 2014).

Some local cabdrivers interpreted the attitude of migrant cabdrivers towards driving as a function of material conditions and their role as breadwinners. Pasha, a driver for Uber who called himself “*pakka* Hyderabad” (categorically Hyderabad, as opposed to a migrant) pointed out how there are material motivations for migrant drivers to drive “rashly”:

You have to understand. For migrant drivers, Hyderabad is a source of income. They drive rashly because they just want to earn as much as they can five days in a week to make the “incentive” that Ola and Uber offer so that they can go back to their village/small town for two days. You ask any migrant driver, they do this. They are mostly here to drive for four or five days a week and so are keen to make more money. They live in between two worlds. The city is their place of work, but it is not their home. (Field Notes, March 2019)

My point here is not to verify or refute Pasha's pithy analysis around why migrant cabdrivers maybe driving in ways that get framed as risky or rash. What is interesting to me is the *narrative* around migrant cabdrivers and their driving style and the link between the migratory motivations of migrant drivers and their driving behaviour on the road. In pointing to the material conditions of driving and the incentive systems of apps like Uber and Ola that have “gamified” driving (Rosenblat, 2018), Pasha was articulating the socio-economic compulsion and

migratory conditions of driving. Driving, thus became, a function not of rural masculinity but a *migrant* masculinity: it was the in-betweenness of their position between the city and the non-city that constituted the texture of driving.

Moving Together: Migrant Masculinities

Migrant cabdrivers that I spoke with were not, on similar terms, characterising local cabdrivers in the register of Otherness. Migrant masculinities were, instead, emergent in relation to the conditions of driving, their motivations to be breadwinners for their families back home and/or to fulfil individual aspirations towards “respectable masculinity”.⁸ In other words, while local cabdrivers narrated their status vis-à-vis migrant cabdrivers, the reverse was not necessarily true.

Mohan moved from a village near Vikarabad to Hyderabad in 2017 to become an Uber driver. In his late 20s, Mohan did not own a car. He, instead, had an arrangement that is fairly common in the city: he drove for Uber and Ola on a rented car; that is, he paid Krishna⁹, the car owner, Rs. 500 (\$6) every day. Whatever he made over and above that was his to keep. Mohan made this arrangement because he did not have any money to invest in a new car. His plan was to make enough money over the next decade to eventually move back to his town, invest the money he makes in a small business, and “settle down”. Even though the popular conception of transport workers is that they occupy a low-status job (with connotations of it being “dirty work”), for Mohan, the allure of driving a cab in the “big city” was unmissable:

All of my family is settled in the village, and nobody ever moved to the city. Me coming to Hyderabad and driving a cab—it is a very big deal. Many of us [men] are finding those opportunities in driving. People in the city they look at drivers like it is a dirty job but for people like me who have not gone to school beyond 10th class, this is the best option: quick money and there is some style in driving. I used to work in the garage in the village as a mechanic and nobody used to respect me. Now I am driving a cab and that too for big companies like Uber or Ola, so it is a step up. At the end of the day, I have to feed my family but there is some status in doing this job than being a mechanic (Interview, 2019).

Mohan believed that driving an Uber/Ola cab would work in his favour as the branding of these apps was that of technological charisma and entrepreneurialism. He called them “brands” later in the interview by which, I surmise, he was gesturing to their legitimacy as recognisable transport services. By pointing out that local cabdrivers see cabdriving as a “dirty job” but not migrant drivers like him, Mohan articulates precisely what a lot of my local cabdriver interlocutors would themselves say: that, in fact, driving a car is “cool” but driver *udiyogam* (the labour of driving) is a low-status job that is often stigmatised.

And yet, for many of my local cabdrivers too, driving was also a source of masculine pride. Venkat, for instance, would constantly tell me how the ability to tolerate back pain was the

⁸ This is in line with the vast literature on migration which documents how the “breadwinner” trope characterises how migrant men enact and perform respectable masculinity in their kin networks. See Klein (2010); Kukreja (2021); Choi (2018).

⁹ who owned several cars and leased them out to drivers like Prakash. This sort of a “low investment” and flexible model of app-based driving worked particularly well for young men like Prakash who came to the city with no assets in hand.

hallmark of being a good cabdriver and that it's a tough job that only "real men" can do. He would reiterate the toughness of cabdriving to mock white-collar masculinity *and* to dispel any notion of cabdriving being a viable profession for women. Similarly, for Prakash, a migrant cabdriver in his early 20s, cabdriving helped him get closer to performing a masculinity that is both respectable *but* also a conduit to showcase his capacity to endure toughness and pain:

See, we come from an agricultural family. My brothers and cousins, they all initially made fun of me for becoming a driver. For them it is an easy job: sit in the car and drive with AC on! (laughs) They don't realise that driving in a big city means that it is a hard job, tough job, and it takes a certain level of endurance to deal with. It's a man's job! I drive for 14-16 hours a day. I sleep for 4 hours max. My body aches, but because I am young and healthy, I don't care. I drive nonstop because somewhere I get a thrill of doing so. Then I go back to my *ooru* every weekend and show them how much money I have made...it gives me a real kick! (Interview, 2019)

As Prakash put it, the pace and intensity of his day was very closely linked with his aspirations of upward mobility. But they are also linked to him getting a "kick" out of both being able to endure tough conditions and be a breadwinner; that a "man's job" is also fetching the promise of upward mobility. Prakash's migrant masculinity was further situated in relation to his aspirations of becoming a desirable son-in-law; his motivations for earning money "real quick" were also linked to his plans of marrying his girlfriend, Sumana, who came from a relatively higher caste family. His plan was to earn enough money and go back to his village to, then, convince Sumana's family to let her marry him. In Prakash's words, the only way he could impress her family was by making enough money to assure them that she would have a good life.

Shock Mobilities and Shock Masculinities

"I never thought I would be comfortable with my wife working. I never wanted her to. With COVID, all that changed." – Narayana, a migrant cabdriver

One of the most obvious ways this manifested was when the lockdown directly resulted in a total loss of daily income. As Nixon (2009) and Choi (2018) have argued, unemployment often gives rise to the feeling of emasculation amongst men and this feeling was articulated in various ways by cabdriver—both local and migrant. The precarity experienced by cabdrivers during this time was framed as inevitable and yet a sharp reminder of how upward mobility cannot be taken for granted. Several of my interlocutors were quick to point out how their already thin savings were being eaten into by the loss of daily income and that the practice of *waiting* was actively eroding not just their material conditions but also their aspirations, dreams, and goals.

For most cabdrivers, the uncertainty of the future and the urgent need for money meant not just an experience but an articulation of vulnerability like never before. Narayana, a local cabdriver, shared with me how he has never seen as many men in his life have tears in their eyes—of fear and shame. He was speaking especially in relation to the deaths of loved ones but also the inability to perform their breadwinning duties. When I spoke with Shaik Saluaddin, the president of a cabdrivers' association, he similarly told me how most cabdrivers are not used to precarity and stress about finances, the congealment of this economic vulnerability with medical

vulnerability was producing a sense of helplessness that upwardly mobile drivers were not quite prepared for. For instance, Pasha, a local cabdriver lost his mother and his brother to lack of oxygen availability during covid and he narrated to me how he had never experienced this kind of absolute helplessness, not even when his father had passed away when he was very young:

When my father died, I was just eighteen or nineteen years old. I had three younger siblings to take care of. Even then, I did not cry. I just had to get out and earn money and support my family. As the eldest man in the household, that was my duty. This time? I could not even do that. It all felt dark and like there would be no way out. *Jaise qayamat aa gayee*. As if the end of time¹⁰ is here.

Resorting to a religious-spiritual outlet was for Pasha a means to find some strength. He also, as he told me, shepherded his wife and children towards spiritual solace by making them watch religious discourses online. He impressed that doing so felt like his way of making them feel secure in some way; that, materially or spiritually, he felt the paternalistic duty to protect his family. Similarly, Senthil, a driver in his mid-40s would often send me WhatsApp forwards of motivational Biblical verses. When we talked later, he indicated that while he was not as religious before the pandemic, he had begun to realise the value of a religious anchor. He, too, articulated how he wanted to be an example for his children and be the source of resilience and support that his family sought. None of this is to say that Senthil or Pasha were *not* keen on seeing themselves as spiritual leaders in their families prior to the pandemic but that the pandemic threw into sharper relief these alternative ways of maintaining a gendered hierarchy in the household—a version of the “masculine compromise” that Choi and Peng (2016) outline in their research.

The pandemic also shaped cabdrivers’ relationships with the women in their lives. For instance, when I met Prakash again in 2021, he told me how Sumana was engaged to be married to someone else—a man who, I learned later, had a secure government job in a local school and was of the same caste as her. Prakash did not bother approaching Sumana’s parents as he and his family had taken such a financial hit during the pandemic that the chasm between his family and hers had grown even wider. Sumana, he claims, started showing signs of not being as interested in him and his feeling of emasculation was quickly turning into a quiet resentment against women; in his words, “my bother told me that crises reveals women’s true colours...they will always choose money over men.” While it is, of course, hard to make categorical statements based on only Prakash’s versions of events, the pandemic might have shaped the trajectory of his personal life and certainly left an impression about women.¹¹

On the other hand, Narayana, a local cabdriver who is quoted at the beginning of the section, admitted that while he was wary of his wife working outside the home, after the lockdown was lifted, he felt compelled to let her work to supplement the household income. While earlier he felt like letting her work would result in their children not being taken care of, the pandemic

¹⁰ Also translated as “doomsday” or even “Judgment Day”.

¹¹ This is not to judge Prakash for his views or make necessarily a claim that those ideas would not change over time. I did not do more follow-up interviews to get a sense of Prakash’s ideas on women, so I am hesitant to make any strong claim here.

reframed “care” for him in that it made monetary pressures more palpable. His wife, Seetamma, started working at a neighbourhood boutique embroidering sequins on sarees and blouses, and this started bringing in some income. Last we talked in late 2022, he was beginning to appreciate the financial support she was providing, and it helped him work a little less and spend some time with his children. This might seem like a very glossy representation of how the gender dynamics within one household changed for the better, but it is worth bringing up not to glorify the pandemic but to prompt more empirical research to illuminate similar gendered effects in its aftermath.

Finally, taking help in the form of mutual aid and asking for monetary assistance within kin networks became not just inevitable but also actively produced a more communitarian feeling amongst both local cabdrivers and migrant cabdrivers.¹² While “providing for one’s family” was earlier narrated more in the register of heroism or duty carried out by the individual male member of the family, the pandemic compelled my interlocutors to more explicitly articulate the importance of community and interdependence in their lives. This community-feeling was mediated through digital spaces like WhatsApp groups which made physical distance and distancing irrelevant. According to Mugeem (local cabdriver) who was active in collecting funds and crowdsourcing for medical emergencies in Hyderabad:

Earlier, we used to all forward cab related information, jokes, and political news on WhatsApp, and we didn’t discuss about families unless there was some good news—someone’s daughter getting married or something like that. During COVID, our WhatsApp group itself became like a family. Before this, we were all only relating to one another as cabdrivers. During covid, we became brothers—local, migrant, whatever. It didn’t matter. You can be in Hyderabad, or you can be somewhere else. Ultimately, we were all having similar problems. (Field Notes, March 2021)

Becoming “brothers” in the face of a crisis was one way in which other cabdrivers too felt a sense of community and kinship with one another. This kinship was not born out of their professional identities alone—it was an identification forged out of financial, medical, and emotional vulnerability. This is also not to say that there was no mention of communitarian lives earlier; but it was less so in the context of desperation and precarity. Since much of the discourse around Uber and Ola tended to privilege *individualist* upward mobility and since Hyderabad does not have as strong a trade union for cabdrivers as do cities like Mumbai, Delhi or Kolkata, the resurgence of an articulation of being members of a community during the pandemic was striking—particularly so in the realm of informality in terms of their employment. As Mohan (migrant cabdriver who no longer drives for Uber and Ola but is, instead, driving for SkyCabs, an airport taxicab), who was on a similar WhatsApp group of around 200 cabdrivers put it:

¹² While local cabdrivers relied much more on formal associations such as the Telangana Four Wheelers’ Drivers Association which crowdsourced money and supplied basic rations like rice, pulses, sugar, and milk to cabdriver households. These urban associations were cutting across caste and religious lines—although of course more specific caste and religious associations also did similar things—unlike the kinds of networks migrant cabdrivers had access to which were much more clearly related to caste communities and kin networks. This made the versions of “community” a bit different in each case. Local cabdrivers teamed up with other gig workers—food delivery riders—to demand that companies like Uber and Ola provide some sort of welfare payment in the face of this unanticipated crisis—which, of course, Uber and Ola were refusing to since they argued the drivers are not employees but independently contracting “partners”—whereas migrant cabdrivers were relying much more on local politicians and elected representatives.

I am not normally the kind of person who likes to think of union and all that. I find such politics to be a waste of time. Even now, I think union politics are waste of time. But, still, just having an association to even think about our welfare was important during the pandemic. For men like us who have people depending on us and not much savings or any insurance, having a space where we can share our suffering became like a second home. Even on that group, even though we were all suffering, we were donating whatever little bit we could whenever someone had an emergency. There was some security. Even now, many of us are in touch and that group is active. That kind of bonding does not go away. (Field Notes, June 2023)

The emphasis on bonding, community, and solidarity amongst cabdrivers points to the affective bonds that brought people together in the wake of a disaster. Different, perhaps, from a union which was more oriented towards securing better financial ends and better employment conditions, a more ephemeral community that was carved out of mutual aid—financial and emotional—enabled a self-narrative of these men cabdrivers as being interdependent above and beyond the individual roles they were performing within their families.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have traced the trajectory of how different ideas of masculinity and manhood have structured the self-understandings of the men cabdrivers I encountered in my fieldwork in Hyderabad, India. I explored these ideas along the axis of migration status and along the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. The “shock mobilities” that the pandemic gave rise to, I argue, need to be understood in terms of their gendered effects. To that end, I show how the pandemic prompted subtle rearticulations in the personal and community lives of some of my interlocutors.

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Failing the Working Mothers: Are Women Paying the Price of Motherhood in their Commutes?

Sila Mishra, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Keywords: Gender equality, commuting time, Time use survey, geographic labour mobility

Employing India's first pan-India Time Use Survey of 2019 and using the decomposition technique, we find that women with children spend less time commuting for work than males with children as women economise on the energy expended on market work by seeking employment requiring less travel time. Owing to the "motherhood penalty" the commuting time gap is predominantly on account of unexplained factors. This aligns with the legacy of sturdy gender norms, which compel women with children to face tighter time constraints and disincentivise them to invest in market human capital. We contribute to the literature on child penalties by examining how parenthood has a heterogeneous effect on the commute time of mothers and fathers. Moreover, the findings partly explain the reason behind the stubbornly low and decreasing LFPR of women in India.

Introduction

Jayanti Gandhi has been commuting on the same route for 35 years—his 300 km (185 mile) journey between Surat and Mumbai takes five hours each way.

"It costs too much to stay overnight in Mumbai," he says. "I work in the photographic business and have to go to Mumbai three times a week. This whole train could be filled with just the season ticket holders."

(Commuters' tales: No room to sit - even in the toilet, BBC, 2016)

Documenting the pattern of mobility, Economic Survey of India, 2018 notes that 'India is increasingly on the move—and so are Indians'. The report further recounts an unprecedented surge in labour mobility in India as evident from the doubling up of internal migrants in the 2000s relative to the 1990s. Interestingly, the survey demonstrates a marked shift in the distribution for females (indicating more outflows), much more than the shift for males. Women seem to benefit less in terms of earnings from job mobility compared to men. However, they gain more in proximity to new workplaces, suggesting a greater willingness among women than men to exchange potential wage increases for shorter commutes (Petrongolo & Ronchi, 2020). In the recent past, a burgeoning stream of literature has explored the gender gap in commuting given its nexus with spatial planning, gendered labour market structure and household dynamics. Broadly, three theories have been proposed in the literature to explain the shorter commute of women for work. First, the *Household Responsibility Hypothesis (HRH)* states that women are faced with a disproportionate burden of household chores leading to shorter commutes in turn impacting their financial autonomy and agency. Second, the *Willingness to Work (WtW)* theory based on rational utility conjectures that women are less attached to the labour force which causes shorter commutes. Third, *Social Norms* at the workplace and home established especially for women lead to gender inequality in the labour market. Studies

examining those factors have looked at supply-side factors like cultural norms (Jayachandran, 2021), household responsibilities (Deshpande & Kabeer, 2021), motherhood penalty (Deshpande & Singh, 2021; Kleven et al., 2019; Angrist & Evans, 1998) and demand side factors like unavailability of steady gainful employment (Deshpande & Singh, 2021).

Over the last 15 years, there has been a 'stubbornly and persistently low' Female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) (Deshpande, 2020). Although women's educational and occupational achievements progressed compared to men over the past decade, the gendered gap in labour market outcomes has concurrently grown. There is a more pronounced disparity between the incomes of low-wage workers and high-wage earners (Deshpande et al., 2018). The causes of the gender gap in labour market outcomes remain actively debated as the differences cannot be solely explained in traditional human capital inputs (Bütikofer et al., 2023). There is a burgeoning stream of literature discussing the gender variations in labour market outcomes due to the inclination to compete, gender differences in job preference, and perceived work-related benefits like flexible work arrangements, family-friendly workplace environments, and proximity of the workplace. A stream of literature attributes the gender gap to career costs associated with parenthood. As opposed to fathers, mothers experience considerable and enduring declines in earnings following childbirth (Kuziemko et al., 2018; Kleven et al., 2019; Bütikofer et al., 2023). The child penalty seems to arise partially because new mothers often shift to employers that are more accommodating to family needs, causing them to lag in their occupational status. Additionally, these penalties may be influenced by gender variations in commuting preferences and the associated costs immediately after giving birth. Recognising and addressing the gendered commuting needs has the power to foster inclusivity in society and can potentially affect their respective wage levels differently (Redding & Turner, 2015). To tackle this issue, it is crucial to begin by gathering and analysing data on gender-specific mobility patterns. As highlighted by Gimenez-Nadal and Molina (2014), the Time Use Survey is particularly valuable in this context. This survey allows individuals the freedom to report whether an activity should be classified as commuting or not, making it a useful tool in transportation research. Mobility patterns constituting women's revealed preferences are affected by various extraneous factors. However, literature examining commuting has found several factors related to income status, quality of the home, education status, male gender, nature of employment, the distance of work trips, mode of transportation, safety, willingness to pay and household responsibilities among other factors. Despite this, the relative standing of these competing justifications remains obscure.

Through this study, we contribute to the literature on child penalties by examining how parenthood relates to the commuting time of fathers and mothers. The rationale stems from the hypothesis that parenthood increases the opportunity cost of commuting and mothers may experience a greater rise in the cost of commuting compared to fathers because they often bear a disproportionate share of childcare and household responsibilities (Bütikofer et al., 2023) and they economise on the energy expended on market work by seeking employment requiring less travel time. This means that some part of the commuting gap between these two groups would be attributed to observable or measurable characteristics whereas, a considerable portion of the gap can only be on account of unobservable factors like sturdy gender norms and public

amenities. The motivation behind finding the drivers of commute time also stems from the argument that there is still ambiguity in the role of gender on commute duration in the literature. The present study thus provides nuanced evidence on commuting in the context of a developing country like India which to the best of our knowledge is limited. The study underscores the importance of complementing a gender lens in human settlement planning, transportation policies, and infrastructure. It brings in special inculcation of the Indian context in the burgeoning stream of literature on the gendered commuting phenomenon not frequently examined due to the unavailability of large-scale nationally representative data.

Considering commuting time for work as a complex spatial phenomenon we incorporate socio-economic and demographic dimensions to find that commuting for work is a gendered phenomenon in India where women spend relatively less time than males on the commute for work. In our estimates, we observe the marriage penalty as a factor impacting the commuting time for work. The estimates of Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition and OLS regression point toward the 'motherhood penalty' causing women to spend less time than males with children commuting for work. The current study notes that despite the literature pointing towards the convergence in conventional human capital factors, there still prevails persistent gender differences in commuting time for work. This article explores a somewhat overlooked yet related aspect: gender differences in willingness to commute in the Indian context. In the subsequent section, we review some of the related literature, followed by and discussion of the data. We then explore the gendered nature of commuting for work in India, finding that women spend less time commuting than men, with the presence of a marriage and motherhood penalty. We would end the results with a conclusion and policy implications.

Related Literature and Research Gap

The role of commuting in labour and urban economics has been extensively examined in the economic literature. Economic agents acting rationally are anticipated to engage in longer commutes if appropriately compensated, as evidenced by studies such as Jacob et al. (2019). Commuting, resembling a form of short-term migration, constitutes a daily endeavour for individuals seeking a better life despite immediate challenges, as highlighted by Yadava et al. (1981) and Kahneman and Krueger (2006). The ongoing debate surrounding whether commuting brings utility or disutility persists. Summarized in Table 1, existing research sheds light on the factors that influence commuting behaviours, considering both the supply and demand aspects.

Table 2: Review of Literature

	Findings	Literature
Commuting is a psychological cost	It causes disutility It ranks among the lowest activities in terms of the "instant enjoyment" obtained by individuals	Evans et al. (2002); Kahneman et al. (2004); Frey and Stutzer (2008); Novaco and Gonzalez (2009); Gottholmseder et al. (2009); Jansen et al. (2003); Jacob et al. (2019); Kahneman and Krueger (2006).
	It gives a positive utility	Mokhtarian and Salomon (2001); Ory et al. (2004)

Findings		Literature	
Factors impacting mobility	Supply side: Household Responsibility Hypothesis (HRH) and social norms	Patriarchal power relations: Gender inequality and freedom restrictions	Coltrane (2000); West and Fenstermaker (2002)
		Women commute shorter distances and times than men	Crane (2007); Konrad (2016); White, 1986; Gordon et al., 1989; Deding et al., 2009).
		Household Responsibility Hypothesis (HRH)	Hanson and Johnston (1985); Silveira Neto et al. (2015); Gimenez-Nadal and Molina (2016); Lee and McDonald (2003)
		Marital status	Gordon et al. (1989); Madden (1981)
		Child-care	Schwanen (2007); Liu et al. (2012)
		Spouse's commuting distance	Deding et al. (2009)
		Sharing of unpaid work by partners	Chidambaram and Scheiner (2020)
		Taste and demographic factors determine commuting behaviour	White (1986)
		Gender difference in same sex couple	Smart et al. (2017)
		Demand side: Occupational segregation/ about market structures hypothesis and economic disparities	Workspace requiring a short commute
	Association between education and income and high mobility practices		Schwanen et al. (2004); Lück and Ruppenthal 2010; Sandow (2014); White (1986)
	Full-time employees commute longer than		Zolnik (2010); Axisa et al. (2012); Maoh and Tang (2012)

Findings		Literature	
		part-time employees	
		Gender wage gap and gender commuting time	Boll and Lagemann (2018); McGregor and McConnachie (1995)
		Difference in employees and self-employed persons	Reuschke and Houston (2020); Shin (2019); Gimenez-Nadal et al. (2018); Rosenthal and Strange (2012)
	Individual specific factor: Internalized gender differences.	Attitudes, taste, and preferences	Hakim (2000); White (1986); MacDonald (1999)
		Transportation	Taylor and Ong (1995)
		Rural-urban	Molho (1995)
		Housing prices	Rouwendal and Nijkamp (2004)
		Intensity of land use	Van Acker and Witlox (2011)
		Age and life cycle	Loewenstein (1965)
		Race and ethnicity	Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist (1990)
		Positions in the household	Schwanen, Dieleman, and Dijst (2003)
		Women have greater environmental concerns.	Davidson and Freudenburg (1996)

Note. Based on author's review of literature

The supply of commuters is influenced by factors like gender, norms, marital status, spousal dynamics, region, and demographic traits. Conversely, demand for commuting is intricately linked to workplace characteristics such as market density, distance, cost, activity status, the gender wage gap, and women's willingness to commute. Notably, the Indian literature offers valuable insights, with studies by Bhatt, Chandrasekhar, and Sharma (2020) emphasising rural-urban connections, while Sharma and Chandrasekhar (2014) shift their focus to labour mobility. These studies reveal that commuting serves to narrow regional unemployment gaps and rural-urban wage disparities, resulting in improved dietary diversity for rural-urban commuters (Sharma & Chandrasekhar, 2016).

Acknowledging the policy significance of time valuation (Ferranna et al., 2022), research on commuting dynamics in low- and middle-income countries remains limited (Whittington & Cook, 2019). Despite aspirations for "time savings" through development in these nations, scant attention has been devoted to understanding the intricacies of commuting in the Indian context. Yadava et al. (1991) studied mobility patterns without a gender-based analysis, while Sridhar and Nayka (2022) explored commute times specifically in Bengaluru, leaving the broader Indian scenario underexplored. Our study aims to address pressing concerns such as

India's declining workforce (Kannan & Raveendran, 2018) and the low LFPR of women (Deshpande & Singh, 2021), by delving into commuting patterns, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by women.

This emphasis on maternal care contributes to reinforcing gender distinctions that extend beyond childbirth to encompass caregiving roles (Becker, 1985), subsequently influencing labour division and the accumulation of human capital. Despite their efforts to match male labour force participation, household responsibilities hinder women's earnings underscoring the persistent "motherhood penalty" (Jee et al., 2019). Extensive prior research demonstrates that mothers tend to earn less than their childless counterparts (Budig & England, 2001; Budig & Hodges, 2014) and their increased maternal responsibilities often go uncompensated (Shen, 2022).

Studies in global context accentuate the impact of the motherhood penalty on income disparities (Anderson et al., 2002, 2003; Amuedo-Dorantes & Kimmel, 2005; Lundberg & Rose, 2000). The economic role of the family, as elucidated by Mincer and Polachek (1974), contributes to a division of labour influenced by complementary skills. There are gender disparities arising from motherhood (Lundberg & Rose, 2000; Kleven et al., 2019) as the dynamics following childbirth impact both labour force participation and wages (Anderson, Binder & Krause, 2002). Our study endeavours to bridge two critical research domains: gender inequality within labour markets through examining commuting experience despite the existing body of migration-related research and the gendered aspects of time allocation. It aligns with prevailing research on gender disparities in aspects like human capital, occupation, discrimination, and parenthood (Kleven et al., 2019; Altonji & Blank, 1999; Blau & Kahn, 2017). Furthermore, our work delves into the concept of time as a resource, often unevenly distributed due to various constraints. Gammage (2010) underscores the dual utility of time and money for consumption, while Sen (1999) and Yaqub (2008) highlight the far-reaching consequences of time poverty on individual capabilities. The policy implications of recognising the value of time are particularly vital, especially within low- and middle-income countries (Ferranna et al., 2022; Whittington & Cook, 2019). Despite efforts for gender equality via equal opportunity laws, childcare policies, and parental leave, the ongoing persistence of childhood penalties on women prompts the question: Why? While completely evaluating the policies is beyond the scope of the current study, we aim to bridge the knowledge gap through the lens of time use.

Data and Variable Selection

India's Time Use Survey, 2019

This study exploits India's Time Use Survey, 2019 which is the first of its kind nationally representative data conducted from January 2019 to December 2019. It collected data on time use based on personal interview methods by people of age six years and above. The respondents were asked for information on time use covering a period of 24 hours with a reference period of 24 hours split into 48-time slots, each of duration of 30 minutes (from 4.00 a.m. on the day before to 4.00 a.m. on the day of the interview). Further, the activities on

which people spend their time were codified into a 3-digit code following the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016). It covered 1,38,799 households in its data enumerating 4,47,250 persons of age 6 years and above. The survey measures the participation rate and time spent on paid activities, care activities, unpaid activities, etc (PIB, 2020). As a matter of fact, the earliest TUS in India was conducted in 1976-77 by Devaki Jain and Malini Chand (Jain & Chand, 1982) in six villages in Rajasthan and West Bengal. The first national (pilot) survey was conducted by the MoSPI, in 1998-99 in six major states in India (Hirway, 2009). For this study, a special focus has been placed on the time use of people Travelling and commuting for employment (Code 181- Employment-related travel and 182- Commuting). A limitation of India's Time Use Survey in the given context is that the survey does not collect data on the mode of transport, location or the distance travelled by the commuters.

The first variable of interest is the 'commute time for work' which was ascertained by summing up the time spent by individuals on activity codes 181 and 182. We have also collected data on sociodemographic and economic variables such as age, gender, literacy rate, sector (rural/urban), employment status, marital status, nature of dwelling, social group (SC, ST, OBC and Others), usual principal activity status, the industry of work, land holdings, monthly consumption expenditure of the family. For the regression analysis, I have excluded individuals below the age of 18 years. Lastly, I consider the commuting pattern across marital status.

Methodology

This paper explores the commuting behaviours of individuals for work, using the time use data for India obtained from India's Time Use Survey. We focus on the duration of commutes, and how they correlate with individual and family characteristics. We first explore the duration of commuting for work (in minutes per day), for the whole sample of individuals. For each individual i , we estimate by OLS the following equation:

$$C_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 Y_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

C_i is the commute time by individual i , X_i is a column vector of individual i 's demographics, Y_i is the monthly consumption expenditure and land size and ε_i is the error term. Individual i 's demographics include age, female dummy, urban area dummy, caste dummy, ever married dummy, employer dummy, literacy, nature of dwelling dummy among other variables. Following the results from the regression for the full sample sorting of the sample is done based on age structure, gender, and marital status. We quantify how much of the observed changes in commuting time are due to this sorting.

Blinder-Oaxaca Decomposition Technique

Following the seminar work of Oaxaca and Blinder (Blinder 1973; Oaxaca 1973), the decomposition methods widely known as Blinder-Oaxaca (B-O) technique has been widely applied in investigating "discriminatory behaviours of employers resulting in gender/racial wage gaps" (Etezady et al., 2021). To begin with, if the two groups are female, F and male, M and the

outcome variable, Y denotes the time spent on commuting for work then the linear regression models for these two groups are:

$$Y_F = X_F' \beta_F + \varepsilon_F \text{ and } Y_M = X_M' \beta_M + \varepsilon_M \quad \text{where, } E(\varepsilon) = 0 \quad (1)$$

Mean value difference of commuting time for work for these two groups is:

$$\Delta E(Y) = E(Y_F) - E(Y_M) = E(X_F)' \beta_F - E(X_M)' \beta_M \quad (2)$$

The sample version of (2) which is also the B-O threefold decomposition with respect to female and male respectively are:

$$\Delta \underline{Y} = (\underline{X}_F - \underline{X}_M)' \beta_F + \underline{X}_M' (\beta_F - \beta_M) + (\underline{X}_F - \underline{X}_M)' (\beta_F - \beta_M) \quad (3)$$

$$\Delta \underline{Y} = (\underline{X}_F - \underline{X}_M)' \beta_M + \underline{X}_M' (\beta_F - \beta_M) + (\underline{X}_F - \underline{X}_M)' (\beta_F - \beta_M) \quad (4)$$

We are examining how would the mean commuting time for the work of female would converge to those of males. The first term of (4) i.e., $(\underline{X}_F - \underline{X}_M)' \beta_M$ is the Endowment component (E) which denotes the mean change in the commuting for work of males if males have the values of explanatory variables akin to females while holding the coefficients constant. The second term $\underline{X}_M' (\beta_F - \beta_M)$ is Coefficient component (C) the difference in the male and female on account of the difference of group coefficient. In other words, if E is held constant then the second component is the average change in the commuting for work of males have, they had the coefficients of females. The third term, $(\underline{X}_F - \underline{X}_M)' (\beta_F - \beta_M)$ is the Interaction component (I) difference in the commuting for work of males and females due to simultaneous change of E and C . Alternatively, I is indicative of the gap remaining after controlling for E and C . This article makes use of a threefold B-O decomposition technique to investigate the difference in the commuting time of males and females with children below the age of 14 years. Ideally, we should have examined the difference in commuting time for work before and after the birth of the child, however, longitudinal data to the best of our knowledge is unavailable in the Indian context.

Commuting for Work in India

The descriptive statistics reveal several interesting findings related to commuting for work (Refer to Table 2). Firstly, commuting for work is a gendered phenomenon, with a much higher percentage of males (96,267= 42.33%) commuting for work as compared to females (24,683= 11.24%). Additionally, on average, males spend more time commuting to work (84 minutes) than females (70 minutes). Secondly, individuals residing in pucca houses spend the longest time commuting for work, with males and females spending 84 and 70 minutes respectively. Thirdly, currently, married males and divorced females spend the longest time commuting for work, with males spending 84 minutes and females spending 77 minutes. Fourthly, the age group of 45-59 for males and 25-34 for females spend the most time commuting for work, with males spending 85.09 minutes and females spending 72.5 minutes. Fifthly, females who are not currently employed but are looking for work spend more time commuting for work (86 minutes) than males in the same category (85 minutes). Sixthly, the duration of commute for work increases with higher levels of educational attainment. Seventhly, individuals residing in urban areas spend more time commuting for work than those in rural areas, with a larger gap observed among females compared to males. Lastly, both males and females belonging to the 'other

caste' category (Non-SC, ST, OBC) spend the longest time commuting for work, with males and females spending 87 and 73 minutes respectively. These findings provide important insights into the gendered nature of commuting for work.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Per Participant)

Categories	Average	Male	Female
Code 181 (Employment-related travel)	75.1	77.1234 (41247)	66.13229 (9462)
Code 182 (Commuting)	75.1	77.529 (62183)	65.9489 (16810)
Average time spent on Travelling and commuting for employment (181 and 182)	80.8	83.6	70.0
Age group			
<15	54.2	54.9	53.1
15-24	78.0	79.7	70.8
25-34	82.5	84.4	72.5
35-44	81.5	84.9	69.7
45-59	81.6	85.1	69.9
>60	81.4	84.5	69.7
Literacy status			
Illiterate	77.6	82.6	68.9
Below primary	75.5	78.6	64.8
Primary	78.6	81.2	66.8
Upper primary/middle	80.8	82.8	68.1
Secondary	82.6	84.5	68.2
Higher secondary	82.7	84.4	69.7
Diploma course (up to secondary)	89.1	89.8	83.3
Diploma course (higher secondary)	84.7	86.6	76.1
Diploma course (graduation & above)	82.7	84.9	73.0
Graduate	87.0	88.5	79.4
Postgraduate and above	86.6	88.1	82.5
Rural	79.9	83.1	68.1
Kind of dwelling			
Kutcha	80.2	83.2	69.4
Semi pucca	79.1	82.0	68.9
Pucca	81.6	84.3	70.5
No dwelling	66.6	69.1	59.7
Usual principal activity status			

Categories	Average	Male	Female
Own account worker	86.9	88.0	72.8
Employer	88.3	90.3	72.5
Worked as helper in household enterprise	75.9	82.4	69.6
Regular salaried/wage employee	84.4	86.4	76.5
Worked as casual wage labour: in public works	77.3	78.9	70.0
Other types of work	76.6	79.1	66.8
Did not work but was seeking and/or available for work	85.6	85.4	86.5
Attended educational institution	57.5	58.1	56.4
Attended domestic duties only	67.6	86.7	65.9
Attended domestic duties and was also engaged in free collection of goods	71.1	87.8	69.6
Rentiers, pensioners, remittance recipients, etc	72.4	72.9	71.1
Not able to work due to disability	85.8	89.8	68.5
Others (including begging, prostitution, etc.)	70.8	74.7	62.6

Empirical Results

The previous section represents a descriptive exploration of individuals' commute for work behaviour. However, the differences in commuting time reported could be driven by a host of socio-economic factors such as gender, age, nature of dwelling, geographical location etc. Thus, here, the observed heterogeneity of individuals and the conditional correlates of commuting for work has been investigated.

According to the regression results presented in Table 3 with NSS-regions fixed effects, *ceteris paribus*, as the age of the individual increases by one unit, the time taken for commuting to work increases but at a decreasing rate. The regression analysis also shows that females, on average, spend 9 minutes less than males on their daily commute to work. Individuals residing in rural areas spend statistically significantly more time than the ones residing in urban areas commuting for work which is also irrespective of the subgroup of males and females considered. However, when the analysis is broken down by marital status it shows that women spend less time commuting (journey-to-work) compared to men (Crane & Takahashi, 2009; Crane, 2007; Hanson & Pratt, 1995). Moreover, married females spend on average 18.77 minutes less than married males on their daily commute, while unmarried females spend 2 minutes less than

unmarried males. This could be because married females may have more flexible work arrangements or may choose to live closer to their workplace, while unmarried females may have fewer commitments and more freedom to choose where they live and work. It suggests that when women get married, they feel the need to work closer to their homes and are less flexible than their male counterparts. This isn't surprising; after all, given the gender norms and household responsibilities, women are faced with tighter time constraints. Moreover, there is a difference in the social roles of men and women where women must adapt their commute patterns in relation to their household responsibilities. It may so be the case that due to their household responsibilities; women may be more likely than men to use public transport (World Bank, 2022; Gimenez-Nadal & Molina, 2019). The gender-specific findings in the analysis suggest that policies aimed at reducing the gender pay gap and promoting work-life balance could help mitigate the commuting gap for married women. The study also shows that the type of employment has a significant impact on commuting behaviour, which could be an important consideration for employers and policymakers when designing transportation and employment policies. In columns (2) and (3) it can be observed that on average females tend to increase their commute time for work in response to an increase in per capita monthly consumption, while males show a smaller surge. Possible explanations for this gendered difference are occupational segregation, family responsibilities, safety concerns, social norms, and access to transportation options. In India where females are often concentrated in low-paying jobs with limited opportunities, a higher per capita consumption expenditure could be impacting the daycare arrangements the women could afford for their children, means to access safer transportation options to mitigate safety concerns among others.

Furthermore, the analysis reveals that in the male cohort, married individuals spend 3 minutes more than unmarried on their daily commute to work. However, in the female cohort, married individuals spend 3 minutes less on their daily commute than unmarried ones suggesting the role of some gender-specific factors like family responsibilities or social.

Finally, the analysis reports that on average, individuals spend 15 minutes more on normal days on their daily commute to work than on casual days. This could be due to a variety of factors such as rush hour traffic, mode of transport, congestion, or flexibility in schedule. Additionally, when the analysis is broken down by the usual principal activity status, the study finds evidence of commuting being associated with the type of employment. Employers, regular salaried, and casual wage employees spend 18, 23, and 16 minutes more on their daily commute to work, respectively. Moreover, females spend less time on their daily commute to work than males, regardless of the subgroup considered, such as region of residence or marital status. This difference is particularly striking in the cohort of married individuals, where females spend an average of 19 minutes less than males on their daily commute suggesting that females, especially married ones, may have different work arrangements or commute preferences that enable them to spend less time on their daily commute.

TUS, 2019 classifies self-employed as those who worked in household enterprises as an own-account worker, as an employer or as helper and casual labour as someone who has worked as a casual labour in public works or in some other types of work. Compared to self-employed

individuals those who work as regular salaried employees and casual wage labourers spend 23 minutes and 15 minutes more time on their daily commute to work respectively which could possibly be due to less spatial friction in workplace selection among self-employed (Ommeren & Straaten, 2008). These findings resonate with the research on commute time in other countries (Reuschke & Houseton, 2020; Gimenez-Nadal et al., 2018; Rosenthal & Strange, 2012). Moreover, the results hold true irrespective of any sub-group considered i.e., male, female, married or unmarried. The findings contribute to the literature on shorter commutes among self-employed than employees with respect to gender which is limited to Rosenthal and Strange (2012) and Reuschke and Houseton (2020). India has been on the path of reducing regulatory norms for a smooth setting-up of businesses and has improved its position from 143rd rank in 2014 to 63rd in 2022 in the Ease of Doing Business and the findings are noteworthy in this context. On the other hand, individuals who work in the 'others' category such as helpers in household enterprises, currently not employed but seeking work, attending educational institutions, attending to domestic duties, rentiers (or pensioners or remittance recipients, etc.), unable to work due to disability, and others (including begging, prostitution, etc.) spend 31.57 minutes less time than self-employed individuals on their daily commute to work. Moreover, the analysis reveals that in both, male and female cohorts regular salaried and casual labourers spend more time than self-employed on commute for work. The difference in commuting time could be due to the location of their workplace, the availability of transportation options, or the type of work they do. Further research is needed to understand the underlying factors that influence these differences.

Motherhood Penalty and Commuting for Work

In this section, we argue that mothering can have implications on the commuting time for work just like education (Anderson, Binder & Krause, 2002) wherein women choose occupations that are compatible with caring for the children. Both academic research and popular media often claim that flexibility in work arrangements is a critical resource that helps parents manage competing demands across domains. This notion holds relevance when examining the commuting time for fathers and mothers within the family. Here, we employ the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition technique and the OLS regression restricting the sample to the head of the household or their spouses to investigate whether there is any difference in the commuting time for fathers and mothers in the family. Moreover, the estimates of B-O reported in Table 4 are restricted to the individuals who have children below the age of 14 years in the family.

In Table 4 Blinder-Oaxaca technique divides the gap in commuting for work (among commuting individuals) between, men and women into a part that is explained by differences in determinants of commuting time for work such as age, education, region of residence, religion, caste, type of day, household size or the per capita monthly consumption and another part that cannot be explained by such group differences. The estimates show differences in commute time for work among Male and female groups with children. In our analysis, the average commuting time for males in our sample is 83.87 minutes, while for females it is 69.53 minutes, indicating a statistically significant time gap of 14.34 minutes between the two genders with children below the age of 14 years. The difference is further decomposed into three components viz endowments, coefficients, and interaction. *Endowment* reflects the average increase in

women's commute time for work if they had the same characteristics as men (covariates included in the B-O technique). The difference in the endowment accounts for 13.55 per cent (1.944 in proportion to 14.34) in the commuting time for work that can be attributed to the variations in their observable characteristics or the covariates like age, educational attainment, usual principal activity, per capita monthly consumption expenditure or the rural/urban status of residence. The estimate of the second component, *coefficient*, being 12.10 (84.37 per cent) quantifies the changes in women's commuting time for work when applying the coefficient of men to the women's characteristics i.e., there would be an increase in women's commuting for work by 14.34 minutes. This proportion of the variation in the difference between male and female commuting time represents the role of unobservable characteristics like sexual division of labour, unsafe public spaces, inaccessible public utilities, systemic biases, sturdy gender norms, cultural expectations, or discrimination that are not easily quantifiable. The commuting time gap between male and female with children being predominantly attributable to unobserved characteristics also highlight serious consequences on women's LFPR and earnings because of the 'energy argument' proposed by Becker (1985) wherein the earnings of women are poorly affected who want to participate in the creation of market human capital as much as men because of household responsibilities and are less able to "take jobs requiring much travel".

The regression estimates in Table 4 also point toward the motherhood penalty where controlling for a host of individual and household characteristics, the coefficient of females being -40.46 suggests that, on average, females have a significantly lower commuting time for work compared to males. Additionally, the coefficient of -0.843 for the interaction term between gender and the number of children suggests that the effect of gender on commuting time differs depending on the number of children. This negative coefficient indicates that the presence of children may further reduce the commuting time for females compared to males, again holding other variables constant. The results hold true in column (3) as well where the children below the age of 14 years have been considered. For many families, integrating work and care remains a challenge. The variance in distances travelled by mothers compared to fathers with children could be ascribed to conventional gender norms, caregiving duties, job segregation, adaptability of workplaces, quality of transportation systems, and societal prejudices. Women commonly encounter difficulties in managing caregiving alongside employment, leading them to seek employment closer to their residences. Work flexibility and ease of transportation might provide advantages to men, whereas biases and unfair treatment could exacerbate discrepancies in commuting experiences.

Table 4: Estimates of Regression with NSS Region

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
VARIABLES	original model	male subgroup	female subgroup	unmarried subgroup
age	0.357***	0.260***	0.229***	0.398***
	-0.0252	-0.0458	-0.023	-0.0625
Age squared	-0.511***	-0.512***	-0.258***	-0.630***
	-0.0282	-0.0506	-0.0268	-0.0985

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
rural	0.991***	1.059***	1.260***	1.405***
	-0.195	-0.34	-0.148	-0.245
female	-9.565***			-2.549***
	-0.162			-0.15
married	0.0512	3.503***	-3.646***	
	-0.289	-0.521	-0.254	
Normal day	15.50***	21.22***	7.348***	5.419***
	-0.247	-0.383	-0.232	-0.239
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION				
	-0.593**	-1.204**	-1.105***	0.331
	-0.274	-0.51	-0.215	-0.495
	-1.101***	-1.452***	-1.571***	-0.575
	-0.267	-0.502	-0.209	-0.505
	-0.768***	-0.835*	-1.759***	-0.584
	-0.266	-0.497	-0.2	-0.54
	0.0432	0.919*	-2.321***	-0.096
	-0.291	-0.535	-0.204	-0.58
	0.218	1.288**	-2.105***	0.424
	-0.317	-0.574	-0.232	-0.633
	5.039***	6.937***	0.33	4.123***
	-1.138	-1.562	-1.251	-1.464
	2.689***	3.122**	1.36	3.471**
	-0.912	-1.302	-1.077	-1.514
	1.599*	2.936**	-0.58	3.518*
	-0.971	-1.466	-0.922	-1.8
	2.589***	4.400***	-0.449	2.695***
	-0.379	-0.65	-0.339	-0.786
	3.136***	4.121***	1.940***	4.510***
	-0.601	-0.948	-0.685	-1.302
USUAL PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY STATUS				
	23.67***	20.01***	32.57***	27.63***
	-0.445	-0.527	-0.786	-0.994
	15.16***	13.66***	20.12***	16.88***
	-0.383	-0.458	-0.623	-0.992
	-31.57***	-37.24***	-17.89***	-33.46***
	-0.262	-0.427	-0.36	-0.714

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
0.000266***	0.000389***	0.000203***	-5.30E-06	0.000493***
-4.44E-05	-7.19E-05	-4.62E-05	-6.47E-05	-5.84E-05
-0.248	-0.376	-0.0461	-0.327	-0.137
-0.206	-0.359	-0.157	-0.252	-0.288
-1.018***	-1.719***	-0.208	-0.649**	-1.120***
-0.24	-0.423	-0.178	-0.285	-0.334
-0.517*	-1.608***	0.828***	-0.246	-0.516
-0.273	-0.471	-0.228	-0.342	-0.377
-0.900***	-2.017***	0.626***	-0.374	-0.926**
-0.295	-0.511	-0.24	-0.356	-0.41
-1.321***	-2.975***	1.022***	-0.436	-1.567***
-0.33	-0.56	-0.29	-0.411	-0.454
-0.336	-1.215	1.287***	-1.591***	0.624
-0.495	-0.843	-0.425	-0.545	-0.677
-0.101	-1.894*	2.099***	-0.0431	0.209
-0.582	-0.967	-0.56	-0.806	-0.761
-1.008	-2.473	0.82	-0.208	-0.879
-0.912	-1.54	-0.826	-1.29	-1.186
-2.263*	-4.361**	0.837	-2.591*	-2.07
-1.301	-2.188	-1.16	-1.461	-1.831
-3.093***	-5.558***	-1.089	-1.338	-3.905***
-1.059	-1.867	-0.822	-1.439	-1.38
-10.73***	-14.67***	-2.809*	-8.868***	-12.17***
-2.424	-4.013	-1.522	-2.243	-3.583
0.489*	1.594***	-1.397***	-0.540**	0.664*
-0.253	-0.46	-0.135	-0.265	-0.374
-2.007***	-2.738***	-1.194***	-1.156*	-2.090***
-0.498	-0.845	-0.453	-0.661	-0.668
-0.766	0.0783	-2.004***	-1.128	-0.707
-0.794	-1.314	-0.755	-1.147	-1.056
1.622	4.87	-2.689***	0.772	2.206
-2.173	-3.992	-0.922	-4.175	-2.487
-1.607*	-3.664**	0.905	0.493	-2.614**
-0.967	-1.522	-1.092	-1.571	-1.207
0.79	1.611	0.131	-0.0499	1.002
-2.476	-4.312	-2.584	-2.34	-4.198

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
-0.493	-1.792	1.364	-1.067	-0.644
-0.975	-1.542	-1.082	-1.108	-1.434
-0.0752	-0.135	0.0687	0.276	-0.255
-0.285	-0.501	-0.211	-0.324	-0.403
0.232	0.759	-0.374*	0.465	0.159
-0.276	-0.488	-0.204	-0.31	-0.396
0.553*	1.201**	-0.385	0.875**	0.478
-0.322	-0.553	-0.278	-0.373	-0.451
0.193	0.495	-0.335	0.896***	-0.0374
-0.299	-0.512	-0.263	-0.345	-0.419
0.149	0.713	-0.783***	0.631*	0.109
-0.319	-0.55	-0.264	-0.37	-0.448
21.17***	20.69***	9.568***	32.36***	5.118*
-1.989	-3.776	-1.214	-2.99	-2.758
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
4,06,912	2,15,563	1,91,349	1,46,369	2,60,543
0.327	0.26	0.305	0.376	0.303

Note. The omitted category in NSS region is Jammu & Kashmir (Mountainous), land size is less than 0.005-hectare, religion is Hinduism, dwelling is kuccha house, social group is the Scheduled tribe and usual principal activity status is self-employed (either work in household enterprises as own account workers or employer or as helper). Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 5: Motherhood Penalty

VARIABLES	B-O: overall		Regression	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female		-40.46***	-41.14***	
		(0.567)	(0.501)	
Number of children		0.621***		
		(0.209)		
female# Number of children		-0.843***		
		(0.213)		
Children below 14			0.462**	
			(0.224)	
female# Children below 14			-0.767***	
			(0.228)	
Male	83.87***			
	(0.232)			
Female	69.53***			

VARIABLES	B-O: overall	Regression	
	(0.364)		
Difference	14.34***		
	(0.431)		
Endowments	1.944***		
	(0.218)		
Coefficients	12.10***		
	(0.445)		
Interaction	0.289		
	(0.255)		
Constant		66.34***	
		(3.577)	
Covariates	Yes	Yes	Yes
NSS region fixed effects	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	96,623	169,950	169,950
R-squared		0.509	0.509

Note. In the regression results the covariates are the same as the ones used in Table 3. Robust standard errors in parentheses *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

At a time when India is experiencing a declining LFPR of women, the evidence of women with children spending less time than men with children on commuting time for work implies that there are underlying unobserved factors like societal expectations, that continue to shape gender roles in parenting and influence women's employment decisions. Moreover, this also sheds light on the limitation of the Time Use Survey, 2019 in providing information on the mode of transport and distance to commute. The findings suggest that women with children tend to choose occupations that are closer to their homes, potentially driven by the need to be available for their children and fulfil traditional gender roles in parenting.

Summary and Policy Implications

India is experiencing an unprecedented decline in the absolute number of workers (Kannan & Raveendran, 2018) and a stubbornly low and declining level of LFPR of Indian women (Deshpande & Singh, 2021). In light of this, our paper advances the existing literature on mobility by investigating the patterns of commuting time for employment in India. The research on commute time for work in developing countries is limited, particularly regarding the influence of gender on commute duration. Using the decomposition technique, we argue that women with children spend less time commuting for work than males with children as women economise on the energy expended on market work by seeking employment requiring less travel time. Further investigation highlights the existence of a "motherhood penalty" and suggests the influence of societal expectations and gender roles in parenting.

The analysis emphasises the need to have policies inclined towards gender and family-friendly transportation services, introducing round-the-clock public transport facilities, affordable and reliable childcare facilities, investment in urban and rural infrastructure, tax incentives for families with working females as well as social awareness campaigns on sex education. Some policies like the launching of pink buses, pink police booths, 24 by 7 women helpline numbers,

and creches at the workplace are some of the welcome steps in this direction. While summing up we add that "It is only by reducing the friction in commuting we can ever move towards an ideal mobile society" envisioned by B.R. Ambedkar.

The current study is also not devoid of any limitations. First, the Time Use Survey, 2019 is cross-sectional and thus we can only study conditional correlations. Second, results may be driven by unobserved heterogeneity, which cannot be controlled for with cross-sectional data. TUS, 2019 does not provide data on the mode of transportation used and distance covered for commuting which might underestimate the gender difference. This could be addressed by future studies if the longitudinal data gets available in India's context. Thus, through this study, we also suggest a frequent collection of Time Use data by including information on the availability of transport with the person or information on the mode of transport used for commuting, and commuting distance. As a future prospect, there is a need to examine the welfare implications of commuting for work and how does it shape everyday experiences of people.

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Negotiating Marginalities: Possibilities and Aspirations on the Site of Higher Education in Contemporary India

Sayali Shankar, Savitribai Phule Pune University

Nupur Jain, Savitribai Phule Pune University

Sinu Sugathan, Savitribai Phule Pune University

Bhagyashree Jawale, Savitribai Phule Pune University

In this paper, we attempt to unpack how the subjectivities of women students get shaped through aspirations, classroom experiences, campus life, and friendships within the space of higher education. This paper emerges from our experience of working as Research Assistants for a collaborative research project “A research study to further gender equality in higher education”, by the Department of Women and Gender Studies, Savitribai Phule Pune University and Brunel University, London. While the research study looked to further gender equality in higher education by trying to address gendered disparities generated by the intersections of language, caste, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, and sexual orientation, for the purpose of this paper, we deliberate upon the question of gendered subjectivities in the context of a rapidly expanding landscape of higher education. Contemporary landscape of higher education is witnessing unprecedented expansion and increased gender parity, while at the same time there is a decline in work opportunities for women in times of jobless growth. To delve further into subjectivities, we move beyond the question of access and ask what happens to women students once they enter the space of higher education, and how hierarchies and marginalities get (re)produced and operationalised in different ways.

By foregrounding the paradox of women’s empowerment and its celebratory discourse, we analyse the data from two states, Kerala and Jharkhand, and four partner institutes (two in each state), to unpack existing hierarchies and the marginality of gender in the contested space of higher education. This is a multi-sited, mixed method research project rooted in feminist research methodology. Our research revolved around linkages between education and its translation into employability, student’s interaction with the campus space, and factors enabling marginalised students to continue higher education. In this paper, we delve into questions of student aspirations, sense of belonging to the campus, and their everyday lived experiences. We arrive at the question of gendered subjectivities, not merely to address it as an emerging theme, but to foreground our own engagement with the research, beyond its completion. This is a post-project engagement where we, as researchers working on the project, choose to revisit our data to explore gendered subjectivities and other interlocking thematic areas.

We begin by probing into the different ways in which students from marginalised communities continue to face discrimination in higher education, and the ways in which they negotiate the everyday and fraught experiences. The question of access in higher education is not new, rather it has been explored continually across different key concerns. We move beyond access to ask how the space of higher education itself gets constructed, where it simultaneously co-constructs caste-class-patriarchal structures that strengthen pre-existing hierarchies. This leads to overt and covert forms of exclusion for marginalised students in higher education, which becomes all

the more complex in times of neoliberalism, where we are witnessing heightened political, social, and communal upheavals. Christy et al. (2018) in their work, argue that when students negotiate these realities and structural hurdles on an everyday basis in their educational journeys, it leads to an intellectual ambivalence which is riddled with casteism and leads to the subsequent alienation of marginalised students. Taking Christy's argument further, we argue that this then, becomes not just a fight for access or assimilation, but for belongingness to the space of higher education. It is then, not just a fight for dignity, but one for survival, which is hindered by the myriad ways in which higher education not only reproduces structures of marginalisation, but co-constructs it. This experience shifts and changes the meaning and purpose of education for students from marginalised communities where they are forced to live at the peripheries of the hallowed walls of our institutions, and struggle to experience education beyond its instrumental purpose of attaining degrees.

It is in this context that we foreground the question of gendered subjectivities. We inquire into the ways in which one can move beyond the framework of women's access to education and locate it in their subjective experiences. What does the framework of subjectivity grant us towards unpacking the sense of self/belongingness to the institutional place in terms of locating visible and invisible experiences? The exclusionary structures of higher education push marginalised students into ghettos, either as a strategy or as a consequence, which in turn shapes their sense of self and belongingness. These negotiations are however, not limited to the educational spaces. Women students simultaneously challenge, fight, embrace, and escape patriarchal spaces not just on the site of institutions but also in familial spaces and structures. Women students who leave their home in search for freedom, mobility, autonomy, or as a result of material constraints often find themselves at the crossroads of multiple realities and negotiations with self and the world around them. To assume these fraught experiences as dichotomies would be a grave mistake, as they are not only interlocked but also feed into each other. This is particularly visible in the ways in which attempts at 'fitting in' by marginalised women in higher education are intrinsically linked to their material and marginal realities. Their attempts to 'become part of' something gets co-constructed by their material realities and their sense of self which is in a constant flux.

What does this tell us about student aspirations? Students' aspirations do not get produced in silos, neither are these experiences strictly individual. They are shaped by relationality, by context, and are built around markers of caste, class, gender, ability, family, community, as well as institutional structures, which, as argued earlier, also get produced in particular ways. Can we then argue that students' aspirations are merely linear? We believe that students whose lived realities are so complex, pursue and aspire for a freedom and rewards of conformity simultaneously. Without discrediting the other, their desire to be accepted as 'good' students, especially good 'girls' co-exists with their desire to experience a world that offers something more than what their familial and community spaces do. We draw here from Meenakshi Thapan (2009), who argues that the aspirations of young, marginalised women are nurtured by familial bonds. Even while aspiring, thinking about their futures, they do not imagine a world without familial / community responsibilities. The lives of adolescents from disadvantaged families are consumed by the training into domesticity, marriage, early sexual experience, and a desire for

conjugality and childbirth. In other worlds, there is visible resistance to an 'authentic womanhood' which they are socialised to aspire for, but there isn't a complete denial or rejection of this construction. This ambivalence is what shapes their gendered subjectivities, for they allow us to see the everyday visible/invisible lived experiences of students, marking significant transitions and transformations in their worldviews, even if they do not visibly challenge existing structures of exclusion.

By focusing on this fraught, contested, constantly negotiated lived experience, we seek to understand the ways in which students carve out spaces to aspire, dream, transgress, and conform simultaneously. Can we analyse the ways in which interpersonal solidarities, negotiations and conflicts (in terms of friendships, family support, teacher-student dynamics) contribute towards shaping their everyday sense of self? Specifically, why and how do friendships forged in the place of higher education institutions become important to reflect on the themes of aspirations, autonomy, and sense of self? These spaces give students a chance to escape and move into a world that offers something different; where they are able to critique institutional structures, but also feel a sense of belonging to these spaces which include not just their big/small moments of triumph, but their mundane everyday experiences as well. This is a space that nurtures their desires, autonomy, dangers, possibilities, and aspirations while shaping their sense of self. Failing to do so, in times where student's aspirational mobilities are crystallised through educational projects would do disservice to their lived realities. Lukose and Mathew take those arguments further and says that it is through institutionally mandated, culturally accepted, socially legitimate ways that institutions produce pathways for assimilation and aspirations for young people. We draw from her to think about the celebratory discourse on women's empowerment in the context of higher education, where we are critiquing the additive, and 'assimilated for beautification' narrative, for overlooking not just structures, but also everyday fluid experiences. This subjective experience can be further understood when we look at the ways in which students put faith in the institutions, amidst their fraught experiences of belongingness. The institute at once becomes a substitute for family, and sometime more—for it offers that which familial spaces cannot, a bleak opportunity to transgress and experience their sexuality. How is this linked to the shaping of gendered subjectivities, in a space where one is granted entry to attain a formal degree, but transitions into a being who aspires for more—friendships, romance, freedom?

The contested terrain of higher education further complicates the idea of freedom and agency. Can we imagine freedom with impunity? Educational institutions constantly reproduce structures of surveillance, control, and restrictions on women's sexuality. This attempt to control ideas of freedom and pleasure often result in segregation of boys and girls in educational spaces. And yet students continue to fight and get education because it offers an opportunity to imagine a different world, perhaps an aspirational world with possibilities that nurture students' sense of self. The possibilities that this space holds point to the way in which subjectivities get foregrounded, where the fraught, non-linear, and complex experiences are what make higher education a contested terrain.

So how do we read these possibilities? How does it complicate existing narratives about higher education being an exclusionary space? We argue it is more than that—a space that reproduces and co-constructs structures, but at the same time produces space where it can be challenged through subjective experiences and lived realities.

So then how does the place of higher education contribute towards shaping these gendered subjectivities of women students and address the questions with regards to formation of sense of self and belongingness? It is through reading and revisiting our data that we find ways to understand how subjective and embodied experiences have clear links to location and the exercising of agency, along with constant struggles with self and the structures. Through this paper, we attempt to think of alternate frameworks to understand the struggles/gendered subjectivities /subjective experiences of women students in higher education.

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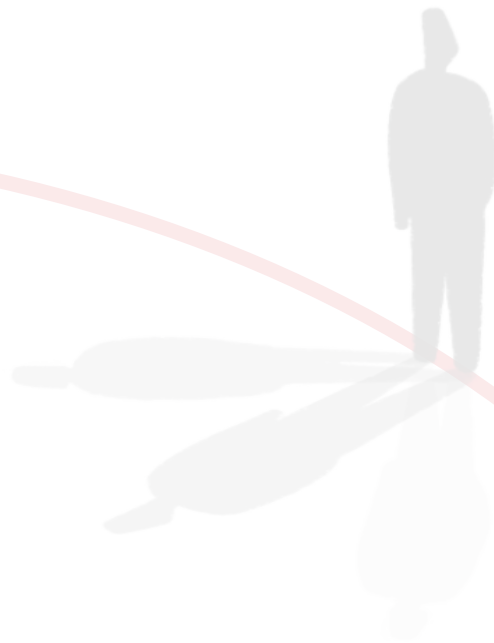
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PANEL 11

Urban Services and Systems: Marginalities in the Global South



Cleaning up after a City: Sanitation Work and the Politics of Waste in Colonial Bombay

Meera Panicker, Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence

Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak sparked a spate of media attention and news reporting highlighting the importance and essential nature of sanitation work amidst the ravages of a global pandemic. In as much as sanitation workers were cast as frontline warriors securing the country and its citizens from the virus, there was little regard for the nature and circumstances of work they performed. Not only is sanitation work in South Asia a hazardous occupation but also, any brief enquiry into the caste composition of sanitation workers in the subcontinent overwhelmingly point to the accretion of Dalit communities in sanitary works. This abiding centrality of caste has unequivocally shaped the urban experience of marginality among Dalit workers who have been quintessential to urban public health infrastructures. The experience of marginality that stems from performing stigmatised labour also extends to all aspects of urban life such as housing and access to public resources. In 2021, a Parliamentary response to the question of 'religion and caste factor in manual scavenging' noted that out of 43797 manual scavengers whose caste details were identified, 97.25 per cent belonged to Scheduled Castes (Government of India, 2021). Despite the fact that sanitation workers suffered some of the biggest casualties from COVID as a function of their labour conditions, there is no national level data on the number of people employed in the sanitation sector (Government of India, 2021). It is often during times of acute public health crises that sanitation work is revealed to be a decisive domain of urban governance.

This paper interrogates the intersection of caste and labour in urban space at a constitutive moment of urban planning in mid-nineteenth century Bombay with the creation of the Bombay Municipality and the institutionalisation of sanitation work under the health department. Between the mid-nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries colonial bureaucrats, engineers, health officers, as well as native elites grappled with the problem of managing the public health of Bombay city to further its commercial capitalistic production as well as to protect city-dwellers from the ravages of epidemics like cholera. Towards this end, a labour force deemed suited to deal with the waste produced in the city was raised from among Dalit groups that had been traditionally providing custom based services of clearing nightsoil and household refuse. I argue that the mapping of caste onto the urban geography of Bombay was a process that was coeval with the first attempts to sanitise the city. The paradox of sanitation work as 'essential' but at the same time degraded needs to be unravelled in the light of the intersection of space, caste, and labour in a historical context.

Historiography

Although the study of caste has been one of the most persistent obsessions of twentieth century scholarship on South Asia, the socio-economic imbrications of caste were understood to be most vicious in traditional village settings and more mitigated in urban centres. In the anti-caste writings of the twentieth century, the city was imagined to hold the potential of a radical

subversion of caste. Even as Indian nationalism under the aegis of the Congress and especially Gandhi idealised villages as true representatives of Indian civilisation, Ambedkar's critique of the same foreclosed any possibilities of an anti-caste struggle emerging in the context of the Indian village (Garza, 2014). For Ambedkar, the city opened possibilities of emancipation offering Dalits not only spatial mobility but also a respite from the forced demands on their labour. This did not mean that the city lay outside the ambit of caste, but urban space became an important site for the negotiation and contestation of power (Shaikh, 2021). Bombay in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a crucial staging point for many radical working-class movements that have quintessentially informed the historiography of labour in modern South Asia. It was also one of the first cities where Dalit modernism came of age, and the issues concerning the economic exploitation of 'untouchable' workers were broached as a political rallying point (Rao, 2009). This paper situates itself in conversation with scholars like Anupama Rao, Juned Shaikh, Waqas Butt, Sheetal Chhabria, and others who have sought to extract caste from the narrow domain of the 'socio-religious' and as a site of enquiry limited to cultural historians, to place it at the centre of urban governance, labour relations as well as political modernity thereby making visible how caste imbricates and informs the everyday.

With some exception, most of the twentieth century scholarship concerning the histories of labour, and the formation of Bombay's working classes have predominantly focused on class in the context of industrial mill workers. This incline would seem justified given that some of the most radical labour mobilisations were undertaken as a direct outcome of the contestations produced between workers and mill owners at the site of the textile factory. In 1918 the number of textile mills in Bombay alone stood at 90, employing more than one lakh workers (Chandavarkar, 2009). But until 1914 strikes in the cotton mills were largely confined to individual departments and mills. Dalit workers were predominantly employed as general or unskilled labour in the mills and caste antagonism that prevented these workers from doing higher paying skilled jobs like spinning in the mills was often overlooked in histories that foregrounded the creation of a class consciousness. Attuned to periods of frequent boom and slump, labour in the mill industries was also particularly sensitive to the creation of an excess supply of workers and uncertain conditions of work. The Marxist conceptualisation of labour as expended in the production of commodities with an exchange value neatly accommodated such categories of work that could be linked to the production of tangible products. Even as the site of the factory dominated all questions concerning labour, community and social identities were seen as merely transitional (Morris, 1965). Not only that, the assumption that industrial workers represented the advance guard of modern labour that all other types of labour emulated, created the impression that the working class movement in South Asia was solely concerned with the 'organised' industrial sector.

The Bombay Halalkhore System

The link between caste and stigmatised labour was instrumental in how the colonial state envisaged its sanitary infrastructure in nineteenth-century Bombay. When the Bombay Municipality espoused the idea of sanitation as a civic virtue, the labour for its urban sanitation programmes was recruited on the basis of existing caste structures where cleaning and picking waste was a traditional, hereditary occupation performed by Dheds, Mahars, Mangs, Meghwals,

Bhangis etc. The Bombay Halalkhore System, eponymously named after the practice was first institutionalised by the Bombay Municipality was a system 'for the removal by hand of all excrementitious matters from the precincts of the town' (Tulloch, 1872). The system was underpinned by the notion that filth in the local milieu was best handled by caste groups that had been traditionally handling waste in the subcontinent. By the nineteenth century, the term Halalkhore which originally referred to Dalit Muslims castes that performed scavenging in the Northern provinces of India had assumed a generic label used to describe communities that engaged in manual scavenging. On the one hand, in the Bombay Presidency, manual scavenging was predominantly undertaken by members of the Bhangi caste who had originally migrated from the Gujarat region and later on by Mangs, native to Maharashtra. Mahars, on the other hand, cleared dry refuse from the streets and thoroughfares. Even as sanitary accounts and health reports deplored this practice as 'intolerable and loathsome', sweepers and scavengers were seen as an indispensable component of the sanitary system (Clemensha, 1910). The Halalkhore embodied the sanitary institution of tropical climates (Turner, 1914). They collected faecal refuse from the rear side of homes connected by a common passage—generally referred to as sweeper's gullies since it was built for the express purpose of providing access to sanitation workers. They emptied the night soil collected in these privies into bamboo baskets, and the contents from an entire street were gathered and deposited into carts that were transported by bullocks to the nearest receiving station from where they were transported further to the Central Depot at Chinch Bunder and emptied into an underground reservoir. The passing of a nightsoil cart in any street was 'invariably made known by a distinct effluvium' that became a nuisance as soon as a string of these carts snaked their way across the streets every morning.

The most advantageous aspect of the Halalkhore system despite repeated complaints by health inspectors and sanitary officials regarding the offensive nature of the job was that it was a cost-effective alternative to constructing a complete network of underground sewers in the city. The cost of setting up a house connection in Bombay was reckoned to exceed that of constructing a house itself (James, 1902). Henry Conybeare, the Superintendent of Repairs, in his report of 1853 held the Halalkhore system of Bombay in high regard and as better than the arrangements made for nightsoil disposal in London and Paris since the Halalkhores ensured the rapid transport of excreta from individual privies to collection depots (Conybeare, 1853). John Wallace, the chief engineer at Bombay, remarked in his manual for municipal sanitary engineering that 'the objection is really not entirely against sanitary reforms, but largely against the cost of it'. The low cost of labour and the comparative poverty of people suggested 'a greater employment of manual labour in the sanitary works than would be possible in England' (Wallace, 1893).

Within the seven islands of the city the spaces that waste journeyed through were also key sites of labour—sweeper's gullies and privies, from where nightsoil and household refuse were carried away by sanitation workers in bamboo baskets and handcarts to cesspools, dumping grounds, and railway sidings. Handling waste was accounted for as unskilled or general labour and was almost entirely carried out by migrant Dalit workers of the city, a majority of them being women. These circuits and infrastructures of waste were crucial in determining the social geography of Bombay city and the production of highly segregated spaces therein.

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Marginality, Water and Blood: Water Infrastructure in Kusumpur Pahari and Women's Menstrual Practices in Everyday Life

Prerna Singh, University of Edinburgh

Kusumpur Pahari, an urban slum in Delhi, finds itself within the dichotomy of India's metropolitan capital city and is surrounded by upper-middle-class houses and shopping malls in an affluent area of South Delhi. In this paper, drawing from existing literature and my ongoing fieldwork, I employ ethnographies of slums in my field site, angling the existing scholarship on slum women's everyday lives and health towards menstruation within a severe lack of water infrastructure. Ethnographies of slums in South Asia have provided a counterpoint to the dominant middle-class imaginary of slums as dirty and chaotic while emphasising them as not just areas embedded in various structural violence, but also as social cauldrons where millions of rural poor people have flocked to cities in search of work, greater income, education, and healthcare options. Indeed, these slum dwellers provide the labour that keeps cities running (Parkar et al., 2003). Using his study of shanty towns in Latin America, slums are defined as a stepping stone to reaching mainstream urban economies by Alejandro Portes (2000). Certainly, slums present an urban marginality due to weak housing, water, and sanitation systems, as well as worse legal standing than other settlements. Their health requirements are not taken into account in terms of health policy needs, and they hardly even count as residents of the city (Gupta & Mondal, 2014). The slums of Delhi, a result of rapid migration from rural areas in search of economic opportunities, are heterogeneous communities within clustered infrastructural spaces. As the city expands, slums are further pushed into cramped spaces (Snell-Rood, 2015).

The residents of slums, especially women, find themselves in unfamiliar harsh conditions in terms of severe poverty and inadequate living conditions (Thorbeck, 1994; Das & Tasa, 2019; Snell-Rood, 2015). As Meenakshi Thapan (2009) notes, women's bodies become 'instruments of survival' in such harsh conditions of poverty. Thapan demonstrates how a woman uses her body to carry out a variety of tasks, from employment to household work, and to uphold social ties within the community. Also, women find themselves in more marginalised conditions in how they negotiate new relations within families, communities and their cultural identities (Thorbeck, 1994; Das & Tasa, 2019). Women define their lives and their selves through this process of transition, with a particular focus on families, kin, and community relationships within these new spaces.

The conditions in the Delhi slums provide a means of understanding how migration transforms the long-standing cultural practices/customs in the way menstruation is managed. Learning from the existing ethnographic studies on slums, my aim is to reflect, from qualitative ethnographic cultural analysis, on women's lived experiences in urban slums, exploring the interactions between class locations, infrastructure, and cultural practices, and examining menstrual

management as a dynamic individual experience within spaces of marginality and constant negotiations.

I take forward the insight that menstrual practices become defined through the presence of infrastructural, social and interpersonal relationships, and thus how cultural norms are constantly negotiated through the presence of available infrastructure (Mahon & Fernandez, 2010; Kumar & Srivastava, 2011). The literature employs a top-down approach to look at how to improve menstrual practices through increasing access to infrastructure and facilities while employing individual responsibility for improving conditions. Social inequalities leading to marginalisation based on class, gender, and caste form the basis of structural violence as embedded in acute marginalisation and its consequences (Farmer, 2004; Herrick & Bell, 2020). This takes a particularly gendered form since menstruation is embodied within the gendered experience of women, not only biologically, but also in how they manage that within a strict patriarchal structure. This idea of structural forces and individual responsibility also puts the burden of poverty, cleanliness and hygiene on people who are most affected by the structural infrastructural violence within lack of space and proper access to resources.

Menstruation is categorically positioned within the developmental ideas of how menstruation should be managed, re-circulating discourses about urban places as 'modern'. Definitions of Menstrual Health Management (MHM) and other menstrual-related interventions put an overt emphasis on hygiene, access to products, running water and clean toilets, and waste disposal systems. Infrastructure-focused studies highlight the lack of infrastructural facilities and capital to manage menstruation, showing how this has dire biological and sociological effects on the health and hygiene of women (Bobel & Fahs, 2020). Moreover, the lack of privacy and clean infrastructure is shown to discourage young adolescents and women and further the shame around menstruation (Garg et al., 2012; McCammon et al., 2020). Thus, the focus of the WASH literature is to provide access to products, safe spaces to change products, access to water and soap, and space to wash their bodies (Sommer & Sahin, 2013; Hennegan, 2020; Benschaul-Tolonen et al., 2020). Another important issue is the disposal of menstruation products. There should be access to proper disposal facilities when using single-use menstrual products and clean and airy spaces to dry reusable menstrual products (Benschaul-Tolonen et al., 2020; House et al., 2012; van Eijk et al., 2016).

Within this background, we look at Kusumpur Pahari which has grown haphazardly after the first influx of migrants in the late 70s and early 80s (thus a huge number of families have been living there for around 50 years). As the area around the slum grew and became more and more urbanised, it led to new and expanding job opportunities and the informal sector. Respondents in the field site reiterate that Firstly, men migrate to slums for job opportunities, followed by their families and women finding work. A lot of people then call their extended families as their network in the slum community and the informal job market grows. However, as job opportunities are increasing, they are almost all in informal and precarious occupations. There is this understanding among residents that labour is abundant, and they are disposable, thus they don't have a lot of bargaining power in workspaces.

The overwhelming sight of blue cans of water lined up is the first thing one notices as one enters Kusumpur Pahari. The slum is distraught with a lack of water access and residents get access to water by filling huge cans of water (40 litres) from tankers that come through the narrow lanes of the slum. The conversations around marginality are important in Kusumpur Pahari because the residents exist in the middle of one the most economically well-off areas in South Delhi, as most of the residents work within these spaces. The economy of the slum sustains the sprawling economy outside of the slum through informal labour. Within such a space, no access to piped water has been a reality for the past 50 years in slums. As a resident exclaimed to me "Nothing changed in the way that I been living here for 50 years and collecting water for 50 years". The only change in water infrastructure she could remember is that earlier they had to cycle to get water, but now a water tanker provided by Delhi Jal Board comes to the slums. As Jacob Doherty (2001) mentions in his work on waste management in Kampala, infrastructure tends to be working when it is invisible (pp.69), and thus the lines of water cans in Kusumpur Pahari are a visible scene of marginality and failure of infrastructure. Due to really low levels of groundwater, borewells also don't end up working regularly in this space.

The slum is divided into five blocks, each roughly inhabited by the residents based on areas they migrated from. Each family has a member who gets to fill up the water by showing their identity and each member has a chance to fill the water every 15 days. Each day only 30 members can fill water from one tanker. Each block gets one tanker. However, a lot of conversations with people revealed that women have formed alliances and relationships with other members, and every day the member who has to fill water fills for 14 other families, and distribute it. At the same time, it came to light that it was not uncommon for fights to break out around water due to limited availability, and the negotiations maintained to distribute water were very precarious.

When material infrastructure is lacking, workers' bodies step in to fill the void, using their own embodied labour to support the city's continued growth (Doherty, 2021). During my time continued time in the field, the collection of water is overwhelmingly gendered, you can see most of the people collecting water are women and young girls. They often transport water through cycles and ask their daughters to guard the cans as they transport two cans at a time through the narrow lanes. Thus, a lot of labour is required by women for collecting water. Conversations around water revealed that cooking and drinking are the number one priority when negotiating water access in families which is also managed by women. Within this marginality and structural violence, women's lived experience of agency and everyday lives become important to understanding menstruation and reproductive health.

A chain of informal group conversations and interviews in the field reveals how lack of water majorly affects the community and personal hygiene, particularly in summer. The slum does become a breeding ground for waterborne and mosquito diseases. Chakravarty et al. (2019) talks about how municipality officers in Delhi slums complain about people building structures on drains without permission, which affects the drainage system. Thus, the way the literature looks into infrastructure doesn't highlight the systematic hierarchies in the lives of people living in slums. Women emphasise how building toilets is the number one priority in most households. Due lack of proper privacy and facilities in public toilets leads to most households having toilets,

even if they are makeshift. A lot of information and conversations around toilets revealed that since there are only two community toilets in the slum people end up choosing to build in their houses is possible. Travelling to Public toilets is time-consuming and there are added concerns around dirt and hygiene as it is not managed properly. With winter coming and shorter days, using community toilets in the evenings becomes difficult for women due to concerns about safety. Sometimes, in case of emergency people use neighbours' toilets. Public toilets themselves don't have running water and people have to carry water which adds to difficulties in using public toilets, and having toilets in homes provides much more privacy. However, at the same time, haphazard access to water makes maintaining private toilets extremely difficult and often leads to unhygienic conditions when public toilets become important. This is particularly important for menstruation because privacy is a requirement for women within menstrual practices.

The above-discussed everyday realities in Kusumpur Pahari led to conversations about how water is not only an infrastructural need to manage menstruation but also how its distribution is affected by other cultural, social, health and economic aspects. Women's migration stories are very intrinsically linked to the changes in kinship, community, infrastructural access, and by extension their menstrual practices. Lack of water to wash cotton clothes, a very favourably looked upon sanitary product because of its easy accessibility, is replaced by disposable sanitary napkins due to lack of water to wash them and space to dry them out. Domestic work with a 'good employer', as mentioned to me, allows for a new space to use toilets or get access to products for women. Body aches due to carrying heavy cans of water lead to worsened cramps during menstruating changes what 'rest' means during menstruation and who gets that particularly when women constantly negotiate both the private and public spaces. As seen in some literature, women's separation and restriction on mobility might also allow them to rest from the labour they perform particularly within household space (Gottlieb, 2020; Mendlinger, 2020), however the questions around what kind of 'rest' women get from social reproductive labour within households and how this is experienced and perceived are important.

The cultural connotations attached to the 'pollution' of menstruation changing within new meanings of hygiene and cleanliness as personal and community hygiene is so dependent on access to water, and one respondent mentioned to me regarding menstruation 'it's dirty only if people can see it'. Mary Douglas' (1984) work on purity and danger is particularly important to understand how pollution and taboo are perceived within societies, and what is considered to be 'polluting' or not is based on hierarchical social systems that dictate the balance of everyday life within societies. Dynamic and changing practices of menstruation due to changing circumstances become intrinsically linked to how cultural practices are adopted, as explained by a woman that the practice of not washing your hair during menstruation is quite helpful in times of low water access.

Thus, menstrual practices and their heavy dependence on water transform how women negotiate to find personal and private spaces and negotiate with cultural practices which become dynamic in nature. The marginality that urban spaces create for informal migrant women, has a direct impact on the dynamic agencies they assume to negotiate space,

infrastructure access, cultural norms, work and family life in relation to ever-changing menstrual practices and reproductive health. This paper discusses these varied aspects of water, infrastructure and culture in relation to menstrual practices through ethnographic data from Kusumpur Pahari in Delhi.

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Dystopia in Healthy Urbanisation Permanent Temporaries: Pathologies of Illegalities

Maryam Riasat, National University of Medical Sciences, Islamabad

Keywords: Islamabad, development, utopia, dystopia, modernism, urban planning, urbanization

The post-colonial transition of the economy exploded a wave of restructuring in modernity and capitalism. A tangible tool of post-coloniality was necessary to operate the modalities of power. For the functionality of power in a hierarchy, the construction of Islamabad became essential to claim true independence. The development of Islamabad was one of the most ambitious projects of the twentieth century which was celebrated both nationally and internationally as an embodiment of progression. The progression towards modernity and growth only became tangible through foreign planners and advisory councils. The city was planned to contain well-being as a holistic concept for every citizen but while idealising a utopia, dystopia became a reality. The research is an attempt to understand the aetiology of dystopia in the urban planning and development of Islamabad. It looks into the Abadi populace (slums, squatter settlements, permanent temporaries of the city) and forced populace to make an understanding of (ab)normalcy of representation in colonial modernism. The research is a case study of Islamabad, which is looking into both extremes of the city and trying to find a place outside of the dichotomies to make a sense of poor, elite, and CDA (Capital Development Authority). In the process of development of urbanized modern capital, the 'universal human rights' were also transitioned from being universal to relative. The relativities of these universalities depend on the land one owns in the city. The research into the (in)equalities of basic human rights such as water, shelter, and health. And the dissemination of resources for well-being that is decided by the established structures of authorities within the city. The urban ecology has reduced societies into class, status, and sectors of Islamabad where they are controlled or confined. The study is purposive in locating the subaltern realities and how they are patronage in settled and planned hierarchies of Islamabad. Participants' observation is used to see the phenomena of urbanism that is the relation of the populace with the city. It is also used to see the living scenarios of the underprivileged populace. A literature review is done to understand the already established theories about urbanization, urbanism, class, and power. In-depth interviews with the locals and academic experts were conducted to develop an understanding of different narratives. Focus group discussions were also conducted to know the already built normative of privileged about the underprivileged which was analysed by the literature.

“Urbanisation and city development is engendered through feudal temperament”, said Dr Abdul Manan—a philosopher, who stressed that material, concrete, and planning is just one aspect of a city, it has to be seen through the holistic lens of sociology, politics, and environment. Feudality exists in modern terms in Islamabad where class war is instilled and infused. The rapid urbanisation, industrialisation, and capitalist expansion in Pakistan reflect colonial modernity (Cho, 2012) which is static and coherent. Modernity is also relative where some were modernised, and some were abandoned. Cities as Lewis Mumford said, have packed people together in walled, defensive citadels (Mumford, 1961). Modernity is also fortified, people are

modern in forts, modern as civilised, law-abiding, and legal. However, the populace settled on the peripheries are not modern, therefore, they are uncivilised, barbaric, illegals, and criminals. The evolution of slums is a direct consequence of the master planning of Islamabad. “The pillars of the city” (AWP, 2023) are the people with no legal status, they are in lower echelons of labour employed in construction works, vegetable market, sanitary work, transport work, house-help, security works other menial jobs. The planning authority labelled them as temporary requirements of the city (Waheed, 2021). This populace is either contract-based or daily wagers who are not associated with the income centralization therefore their social, political, and physical needs are forfeited. The people of Abadis are pocketed in temporary settlements under the construction of construction workers or labourers. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the capital authority was more sensitive towards the housing of the low-income class, following the hierarchy of rich, middle-class, and poor, sectors established on variability. However, the authorities forget to add people who are not included in either category. The daily wagers or construction workers are poorer than the poor and eventually have no space in the capital ecology. Dr Sajjad claimed this populace was the “required people” (درکار). The statement gives a dynamic understanding of the Abadi populace essentiality in the city who manage the capital but their relationship with the city is asymmetrical. The asymmetrical relation of politics, economics, health, education, and overall well-being with the Abadi population is institutionalized. The informality of Abadi is developed through planning. Construction workers or daily wagers are contained in the ghettos to control. These ghettos are temporary as it is settled on allotted roads of parks, schools, and roads. When mega-projects start, these settlements are displaced to another location. Therefore, Dr. Arslan Waheed called these settlements as “*Conditions of permanent temporaries*” (Waheed, 2023). They are temporarily settled on a land of no value. They are settling temporarily for a permanent tenure of their lives. These permanent temporary settlements—small, congested pockets—are built with inferior housing which is a dire panopticon. These ghettos are segregated from the city and class. A modern class concept of untouchables rises in Islamabad in the context of class war. The Western concept of white supremacy is instilled in the army and business elites of the capital where material has characterised people in different classes based on their capital and social habitus (Howe, 2011). When segregation was planned so was the labelling with strict surveillance, (Waheed, 2021). Non-modern pocketed sectors were otherized and criminalised, as barbaric, evictees, and outsees (Hull, 2012), and we called them the slum dwellers.

The settlement in the early development stage was negotiable as the city needed construction workers, but when the construction was done eviction started such as settlements were displaced as PIMS was established, conflicts arose, and people died. At first two camps were arranged by the authorities but later as the city was flourishing it was suggested to the Abadi by the CDA to arrange their tents or camps near construction sites which were demolished later on by the CDA. At this time, it was more of a reciprocal relation between CDA and settlers than a politico-economic relation. The settlers were distributed into small pockets near F6 nallah and F7, under CDA patronisation, as these plots were unvalued at that time. There were no plans for the labourers in the master plans, no spaces were allotted to them as they were not needed but required at the same time. This generated the conditions of permanent temporariness (Waheed, 2023), the authorities made the temporary housing and jobs a permanent feature of their lives.

Now that CDA has fully contained them to control them, they designed the illegality and depicted a picture of malevolence. This malevolence also comes with extra-cost of monthly bribes locally called "*Bhatta*". The authorities give a deprecated area for the settlers which was reciprocated with money seemingly portraying "you mind your own business, I'll mind mine". "*We give money, and we get harassed every day, the officials entered our homes, we are dishonoured but what can we do, we have to live with this, if we want to live here*" (Resident, 2022).

This monthly share of money does not provide security of tenure to the Abadi residents i.e., they do not have the legal status, on the other hand, CDA holds the legality and eviction power over the Abadi. The case of Afghan Basti which was a Pashtun colony of 30000 to 35000 people in 2015 was bulldozed even when the court issued a stay order. These residents lived there for over 20 years but have no legal status as when the location was required for another mega project, the whole colony was demolished. The legal power was with the state when they encouraged these settlements in the name of malevolence and political interest but kept on exploiting and blackmailing the Abadi populace. This relationship of exploitation is a part of the policy which is not documented but implemented by the CDA on the Abadis.

The Abadi is segregated and labelled with criminality. The relationship of uncertainty and fear of the Abadi is nurtured with time as a by-product of CDA's strategy to justify their actions of criminal labelling. But interestingly as the communities are completely segregated, enclaved residents do not have to talk with the Abadi populace, they have not been snatched or robbed by the residents of a particular settlement, and they have no personal experiences so why the narratives of criminalities are reproduced as justified truth. Oscar Lewis (*Lewis, 1966*), in his thesis "*The Culture of Poverty*", labelled the behaviour of the poor under capitalistic ideology. The poor are called lazy, have weak ego structures, they tend to be uncivil and criminal, similar to the colonial masters who labelled the colonies as primitives, uncivil, and barbaric who have to be trained and tamed. The socialisation structure follows Lewis's thesis of anti-poor which is a false thesis that believes that hard work will give you whatever you desire but the structure of violence, exploitation, and hierarchies of the rich goes unnoticed. Things that are not aspired to or things that cannot be understood tend to make people believe and reproduce these false truths. This made us either hate the unknown, avoid them, or fear them. The hegemonic ideas of privatisation and capitalisation created the "otherized narratives" for the consumption of money and material which is reflected globally and is not peculiar to Pakistan or Islamabad alone.

The legality and illegality of capital are regularised as the capital's inception is anti-poor, which was discriminatory and capitalist (Waheed, 2021). The value of people and human rights depends on the value of land. The privatisation of land on highest bidding in an open auction administered by CDA, skyrocketed the real estate price just in January 2023 a land transaction of 24 billion was done. When capital is included labourers as Karl Marx said can be replaced and exploited, under the hoax of human rights which are dealt with on the upper surface to maintain the status quo. To maintain the hoax blame is shifted to the unprivileged- the victims of exploitation. Social stratification is the problem of have and have not which raises new cultures in urbanisation. Industrial urbanisation is based on a capitalist mindset which is also colonial. The construction cost is divided between government and private citizens. The land is the major

detrimental factor in the relationship between CDA and Abadis and their legalities. The cycle of settlement and displacement is the story of 60 decades. People are displaced (Hull, 2012), villages are razed and nature which is a partner of well-being, is exoticized to obtain money by the state and institution. The institutionalised hoax of human rights and legal status is supported by CDA, settlers are displaced from one settlement to another with the encouragement of CDA, and they re-established their homes from basic particles, but misery doesn't stop here another official will come to get kharcha pani (Sajjad, 2022) from the people already living in dumps. If a social worker or NGO questioned the authority, it would be formalised and the tale would end but formalisation and legalisation could never be the result but the first step to reach a conclusive happening. The exclusion of Abadi from Islamabad revolves around the mindset of class war that patronages the poor to use inferior construction to create an unhealthy house in an illegal periphery of the capital, to get a permanent illegal economy from the temporaries.

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Unfolding Adolescent Responsiveness of Urban Primary Health Centres: A Case Study from Surat, India

Anuj Ghanekar, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Mohit Sood, Urban Health and Climate Resilience Centre of Excellence

Khushbu Chauhan, Urban Health and Climate Resilience Centre of Excellence

Greg Armstrong, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

Vikas Desai, Urban Health and Climate Resilience Centre of Excellence

Pradip Umrigar, Surat Municipal Corporation

Ashish Naik, Surat Municipal Corporation

Introduction

The urban population is a diverse group, encompassing a variety of sub-groups, each with its own unique characteristics. Among these sub-groups, urban adolescents, aged 10 to 19, have distinct health vulnerabilities [1]. According to the 2011 Census, they constitute 19.2 per cent of the urban population in India.

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of the United Nations on Good Health and Well-being (Goal 3) is directly linked to the health of adolescents. Adolescent health issues are multifaceted but largely preventable or treatable. Those range from reproductive and sexual health problems, persistent undernutrition for decades, rising burden of overweight and obesity on another side, increased risk factors for non-communicable diseases due to mass media use and increased sedentary lifestyle, mental health issues, addiction disorders, unintentional injuries like road traffic accidents and intentional violence [2,3]. More than a third of the disease burden and nearly 60 per cent of premature deaths among adults can be traced back to behaviours or conditions that originated or occurred during adolescence. [4,5]. This highlights the critical importance of addressing these issues during this formative period. Scholars have made concerted efforts to map the morbidity statistics and patterns among urban adolescents. [1, 2, 6-10]

While India does not have a national policy specifically dedicated to adolescent health, initiatives such as the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) represent emerging responses to the health needs of this demographic. The RKSK programme extends beyond reproductive and sexual health, encompassing a broader range of adolescent health issues, behaviours, and interactions with the health system. Primary health centres serve as the key implementation sites for the RKSK's 7C paradigm shift, where the 7Cs stand for Coverage, Content, Communities, Clinics, Counselling, Communication, and Convergence. These centres play a crucial role in executing various RKSK activities, such as the celebration of the quarterly Adolescent Health Day (AHD). [4,11]

Surat, a city in Western India, was one of those few cities where 24 Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) were selected as urban pilot models for RKSK. Surat is renowned for its economic growth, urbanisation, high influx of migration, climate vulnerability, and urban reforms implemented following the 1994 Plague episode. With a mid-census estimated population of

6,078,457 in 2018, Surat is home to 646,459 adolescents, accounting for 10.6 per cent of the total population, as per the Family Health Survey (2018). The Surat Municipal Corporation's (SMC) health department delivers primary health care services through 41 UPHCs.

In this context, the specific research question posed in this paper was: What processes and mechanisms determine the responsiveness of urban primary health centres in Surat towards primary healthcare of adolescents in order to implement Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK)? The research question was primarily explanatory with implicit "Why" and "How" into it. World Health Organization recommends a transition from "adolescent-friendly" to "adolescent-responsive" health services. Conceptual frameworks on general health system responsiveness are growing. However, "adolescent responsiveness" theorization demands fieldwork-based studies and the need to capture it from the stakeholders' lens.

Methodology

The development of a contextual case study can serve as a valuable tool for understanding adolescent responsiveness, providing evidence to support policies, and advocating for programmes like the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK). The case study method, with its flexible research design, is particularly well-suited to capture the complexity of these issues and glean insights from real-life settings.

This research adopted an embedded case approach where one type of case was nested within the broader case. The broader first-level case was the "on-ground policy rollout of urban RKSK". This was investigated by examining the overall process and experience at two case-study sites¹ within the health system- Rajanagar (RN) Centre and Sarita (ST) UPHCs. The selection of two centres was based on defined criteria and in consultation with the local health department.

The scope of this study was confined to the services provided for adolescents by Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs), encompassing both in-centre and outreach services. The neighbourhoods falling under the jurisdiction of the UPHCs were included in the study in relation to service benefits and context. Data collection, conducted from March 28th to July 12th, 2022, primarily involved qualitative data, supplemented with some quantitative data. Multiple methods were employed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the situation. The perspectives of relevant health and non-health service providers, (n=67) as well as representative adolescents who use and do not use UPHC services, (n=78 for exit interviews and 84 participants from Focused Groups) were taken into account. The observation of health centre processes was completed for 138 hours.

The qualitative data were analysed manually through reflexive iteration, while the quantitative data were analysed using MS Excel. The inquiry was holistic in nature, utilizing the theoretical underpinnings of the "7C" framework of RKSK to guide the conduct and interpretation of the case study.

¹ The names of case study sites are changed to maintain confidentiality.

Findings-based Policy Recommendations

These emerged across the 7C components of RKSK- Coverage, Content, Communities, Clinics, Counselling, Communication and Coverage. However, it must be noted that the conceptual boundaries between these components are sometimes overlapping.

Coverage

The case studies of both UPHCs revealed certain strengths in terms of adolescent “coverage”. These include well-defined UPHC catchment areas, the availability of maps, the implementation of annual Family Health Surveys (FHS) that provide rich, adolescent-specific information, and the system of Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM)-wise micro-planning. However, it was clear that the UPHCs need to enhance their understanding of the target adolescent population for the RKSK strategy. The key recommendations that emerged to enhance coverage were:

- a) Restructuring the broader urban healthcare service pyramid ensuring higher physical access or “proximal healthcare” models below the level of UPHCs like sub-centres or nursing stations
- b) A dedicated UPHC-level vulnerability mapping exercise, Population-based distribution, and special efforts to increase the reach of adolescents from the slums and slum-like colonies far from UPHCs
- c) The practice of regularly segregating adolescent-specific morbidity data and analysing patterns for evidence-based action, enhancing the existing ARSH processes for data accuracy, and holistic UPHC catchment area study/ situation analysis, UPHC should receive data feedback from higher authorities
- d) The integration of RKSK adolescent data with other vertical programmes
- e) Adequate health workforce to avoid disproportionate work burden and a better time-work management model for health centre staff
- f) Shifting the focus from the administrative target numbers to long-term health outcomes
- g) The capacity building of staff for adolescent health data collection and leveraging community collectives for the same

Content

RKSK policy identifies six strategic priority thematic areas for adolescent health- nutrition, sexual and reproductive health, non-communicable diseases, substance misuse, injuries and violence, and mental health. Various service providers narrated several conditions aligning with these thematic areas. However, the problems beyond this RKSK thematic scope were also expressed during the overall field interactions, such as infectious diseases, skin diseases, and problems related to eye-ear-dental care etc.

In the current situation, adolescents visit UPHCs mainly for “curative” services as compared to preventive and promotive services. By and large, adolescents visit UPHCs for nutritional issues, menstrual issues, skin-related infections, minor injuries, acute respiratory infections, malaria and gastrointestinal infections. The field experience, however, provided a bigger picture and indicated that the spectrum of adolescent health concerns is much beyond the above conditions for which they need UPHC services. Issues and conditions like substance misuse, mental health, gender-based violence, bullying in schools, social media addiction, learning problems, road

traffic accidents and adolescent pregnancy are prevalent among adolescents. However, UPHCs are not a “go-to” site in case of such issues for adolescents and their families.

Some emerging recommendations for this component were:

- a) Local adaptation of the RKSK programme and flexibility to adapt it to contextual adolescent health conditions must be encouraged
- b) The range of UPHCs for adolescent health concerns must be expanded from “curative” to “preventive-promotive”.
- c) Health and non-health service providers have rich field-based experience in adolescent health concerns. This wisdom must be documented as an “institutional memory” and local adaptation of the RKSK must utilise it.
- d) Adolescents themselves had a clear definition and conceptual understanding of what health means. Their understanding was also holistic encompassing all physical, mental and social aspects of health. It was not limited to the “curative level”, but they also talked about the aspects of the preventive and promotive levels. They also had a deeper understanding of health vulnerabilities, and they could relate their health outcomes with their daily life experiences. Sharing learning dialogues with adolescents- must be an integral part of all capacity-building exercises planned under RKSK like the Adolescent Health Day (AHD) celebration, training of counsellors and CHWs, Peer Educators (PE) activities etc.

Communities

RKSK design offers a great platform for adolescents to become “active” stakeholders in their health rather than passive programme beneficiaries. However, platforms like AHD and PE models have seen delays at case UPHCs due to the pandemic.

The current models of AHD and PEs have certain gaps like- judgement based informal selection of PEs, gendered challenges in mobilisation and participation of adolescents, limited participation of other community collectives or stakeholders like Mahila Aarogya Samitis (MAS), barriers in retaining PEs due to lack of financial incentives, limited capacities of RKSK staff to engage adolescents age-group, limited innovations in the implementation of models and more focus on completing the administrative targets.

The key recommendations in this regard were:

- a) Increasing adolescents' and PEs' participation by offering non-financial incentives like livelihood or life skills training,
- b) Measures to include non-slum (non-AWC) adolescents
- c) Minimising the gaps between health “knowledge” and “action” of adolescents through habit coaching and behaviour change programmes
- d) Strengthening the overall community processes like the MAS, the Jan Aarogya Samiti model proposed under the Health and Wellness Centre programme and ward committees
- e) Non-judgemental formal processes of PE selection, efforts for their retention, research to understand their needs and their systematic capacity building

- f) Learning from the innovations brought by NGOs like Adolescents' systematic visits to UPHC (Bal-mela), innovations by ICDS like Mamata Taruni Abhiyan (sakhi-sahsakhi) model, state innovations like the Adolescent health card
- g) Systematic capacity building of RKSK implementation staff like counsellors, ANMs, and ASHAs with specific skills to deal with adolescent groups.

Clinics

Both the UPHCs had the necessary infrastructure in place and scored high on criteria like availability of centre facilities, equipment, medicines, cleanliness, perceived comfort of users, visual and verbal confidentiality and overall OPD-service user adolescents' satisfaction.

The major gaps were observed in aspects like the centre's visibility, neighbourhood adolescents' awareness of the centres and ARSH services, the active promotion of the centre by the service providers and the overall demand generation. The management of patients at the centre and referral-follow-up processes needed improvement. The centre's timings also played the role of its limited accessibility. Demotivation among UPHC staff members for various reasons was also found to hamper the service provision. Current UPHC users also put forth some additional demands like more laboratory services, proper explanation of services like medicines prescriptions or laboratory reports to users, health check-up camps in the neighbourhood, 24*7 availability of doctors, availability of lady doctors etc.

Some key emerging recommendations were:

- a) The visibility of UPHCs and RKSK activities should be enhanced, and demand should be generated with measures like direction boards, separate promotion drives about services, the promotion through media and creating a social media presence, suggestion boxes promotion for feedback
- b) Adolescents' sensitive timings for ARSH and RKSK services
- c) Effective management of services inside the facility with measures like linear patient flow movement, additional non-Gujarati signages inside the centre for language compatibility, SOPs for systematic health screening of all adolescents who visit the facility, staff capacity building for increasing user-friendliness
- d) To attract adolescents to UPHC, the centres should become integrated spaces of creative expression, play, education, life skills, and livelihood skills along with health-related activities. The convergence with other stakeholders will be helpful here.
- e) The centre should build an appreciation and encouragement culture for its staff members by executing appropriate non-monetary and monetary incentives and facilities and also preferred development opportunities.
- f) Technology-enabled services should be given by enhancing the quality of technology hardware, software and overall IT support.

Counselling

In the current scenario, the counsellors under the city's STD-HIV counselling programme look after ARSH and RKSK programmes. However, the existing shortage of human resources, current counsellor personnel occupied in other activities, and the holistic and extensive nature of

adolescent health work were the reasons because of why both UPHCs unanimously demanded separate adolescent health counsellors.

Community Health Workers (CHWs)- ASHAs and ANMs serve as primary contact points for counselling adolescents at the field level. They reported mostly girls approaching them for counselling as compared to boys.

The counselling thematic scope was found limited to physical health problems, nutrition, menstruation issues among girls, HIV-STIs, hormonal changes and skin problems. The scope needs expansion for issues like mental health concerns, school and study issues, bullying, relationship problems, gender-based violence, social media addiction, substance misuse etc.

Without any exclusive adolescent health counselling training, the counsellor and CHWs use multiple experience-based strategies. Those must be acknowledged, and further capacity needs to be built. They mostly experience challenges in communication, handling certain behaviours of adolescents, cooperation from families and the wider community etc.

Some other emerging recommendations apart from above mentioned were:

- a) Formalising counselling protocols—Standardised mental health screening tools like PHQ-9, and SDQ can be made operational. There can be SOPs for informed consent, confidentiality, feedback and follow-up, systematic record-keeping, and operationalizing the use of counselling resource material like flipcharts, and flashcards. Language compatibility can be ensured at every step.
- b) RBSK can also bring diverse counselling approaches and techniques appropriate for adolescents like family therapy, REBT, art-based therapies etc.
- c) Counsellors and CHWs also need supportive supervision and field handholding to practically execute the knowledge and skills they receive from training.
- d) Habit change and life-skills programmes—UPHC Counselling clubbed with AHDs and PE models can be an opportunity to foster sustained habit change and acquire life skills like critical thinking, decision-making, empathy etc.

Communication

The major thrust of existing adolescent health communication was on banners, posters and leaflets on various general topics covered under national programmes and ARSH. The “beyond paper” communication channels involved RBSK teams using PowerPoint presentations and video screening in schools/Anganwadi Centres. The existing communication material was mainly in the Gujarati language and lacked catering to the needs of the multi-lingual migrant population. Some of the material was common for urban-rural contexts and chances of misfitting to urban settings were there.

Some other key recommendations in this regard were:

- a) Shifting communication from one-way to two-way by promoting the feedback suggestion boxes, helplines, UPHC/neighbourhood level adolescents charter of demands, youth advisory groups etc.

- b) The communication material should curate more adolescent-specific messages, channels that appeal to their generation, language compatibility, and use of visuals and animation.
- c) Partnering of RKSK with existing events—Schools, AWCs and NGOs reported the existence of fair stalls, melas, street events like U-turns, school-AWC level exhibitions, competitions and festival celebrations, and theme-based programmes like Child sexual abuse prevention or Swachh Bharat programmes—involving adolescent age groups.
- d) Technology-enabled communication—The use of WhatsApp and other social media is recommended. Existing channels like Satcom in AWCs must be leveraged.
- e) Social behaviour change Communication strategies should also make adolescents aware of using the message responsibly. The role of peers in communication must be leveraged.

Convergence

Multiple health and non-health stakeholders along with UPHC are working for the betterment of the adolescent age group- schools, ICDS, STD-HIV, RCH, RBSK, Police, child protection, social welfare, NGOs etc. But they were found working either in silos or with situational partnerships. To build and/or strengthen the convergence processes, the following key recommendations emerged:

- a) Mapping common area of command, deciding common age definition of adolescent age group
- b) Ensuring adolescent-specific data-sharing and action practices
- c) Adolescent-specific separate capacity-building initiatives, joint training between UPHC and other program cadres, joint periodic review meetings and joint evidence-based action practices
- d) Cross-learning- Joint training opportunities as all programmes have some good practices in place but vertical fragmentation of programmes prevents them from learning from each other.

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Planning For Urban Infrastructure of Care in Vulnerable Neighbourhoods of Global South

Arunima Saha, World Resources Institute India

Globally, there are around one billion individuals residing in informal settlements and slums, and among them, an estimated 350-500 million are children below the age of 18 (The 2018 revision of World Urbanization Prospects, 2018). Projections suggest that by 2030, a staggering 60 per cent of urban residents in the global south will be children living in these conditions (Singh et al., 2022). Exposure to poverty, access to basic caregiving facilities such as primary schools, health centres and opportunities to play in open spaces with connection to nature can lead to risk factors associated with differences in brain structure, behavioural problems, poorer cognition, and mental health symptoms in children (Blair & Raver, 2016). Consequently, children born into these adverse circumstances, including disasters, and the looming spectre of climate change, often face a relentless cycle of socio-economic hardships and limited developmental opportunities. It is imperative to disrupt this cycle to secure a brighter future for these vulnerable children through planning for care in vulnerable neighbourhoods.

Recent pro-poor development policies of underdeveloped and developing nations of global south has been seeing slums no more as a place of removal, or replaceable entities. Instead acknowledging slums as growing economic sectors which has brought out the strength in many developing countries over global south. However, these policies often fail to address the needs of the caregivers and children because of an underlying assumption that meeting the basic needs of households and communities covers caregiving needs. Recent research on urban infrastructure of care (Binet et al., 2022) and resilience-building variables that foster wellbeing in the face of adversity (Patton et al., 2016) have drawn more attention towards integrating care into planning decisions and practices to distribute caregiving resources more equitably for easing burdens of care for caregivers in cities (Binet et al., 2022). This paper aims to integrate the perspectives of caregivers and children into planning for care in vulnerable neighbourhoods, with a specific focus on factors empowering women caregivers and young children within these communities to actively manage their own well-being.

Contextual Analysis of the Current Situation in India

With more than 37 million children under the age of five residing in urban areas throughout India ("Status of Children in Urban India: Baseline Study 2016," Smartnet), it's worth noting that 1 out of every 8 children lives in slums ("Forgotten Voices: The world of urban children in India," PwC India). For these children, under-five mortality rate, underweight newborns statistics in India fall below the standards of developed nations ("Respecting the rights of the Indian child," UNICEF, 2011). Although growing attention towards child friendly cities in India through initiatives and challenges has become popular, the focused need of urban caregiving for the most vulnerable through planning and policies are sectors which are yet to be explored.

Case of Odisha: Government of Odisha in India recently has successfully implemented acts and policies to develop slums in the state. In 2017, the Odisha Land Rights to Slum Dweller Act

(OLRSDA) and the Odisha Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Act (OMC) were passed, accompanied by the launch of the Odisha Liveable Habitat Mission, also known as the JAGA mission (state-wide land titling and slum-upgrading programme) garnering international recognition and nominations, like the UN-HABITAT, Asia-Pacific Housing Forum awards. Recent upgrades of the state scheme of JAGA mission to integrate the existing approaches with national level schemes has helped the state to converge multiple parallel missions and schemes to come together under one umbrella to provide all the facilities (sanitation, water, electricity, drainage, and open play spaces etc.) together in vulnerable slums and upgrade them as colonies.

Slum improvement policies such as these often adopt a developmental approach that primarily prioritises securing basic amenities within these areas. In Odisha, many local governments entrust small and large basic infrastructure projects such as these amenities, including maintenance, to local Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs) which are primarily comprised of caregivers from vulnerable communities. One notable consequence of this approach is increasing care burden without the promotion of equal empowerment within households and the equitable distribution of caregiving responsibilities between male and female parents. Consequently, these policy limitations impose additional burdens that hinder women caregivers from pursuing socio-economic opportunities. Caregiving women in the family facing housing, water, and sanitation challenges, possess unique abilities as natural organisers and communicators. Thus, they play a pivotal role in driving community-wide change, fostering cohesion, peer learning, resource management, and navigating construction complexities.

As part of the on-ground technical support for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge (NNC) an initiative by the Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), supported by the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) and World Resources Institute (WRI) India as technical partner, to transform Rourkela into a child-friendly city in Odisha, I have been fortunate to facilitate the convergence of various policies on the ground. This effort aims to identify opportunities for clustering caregiving interventions through existing parallel policies. By leveraging convergence with local funds such as Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) and Rourkela Smart City Limited (RSCL), District Mineral Funds (DMF), state schemes such as Jaga (land titling and slum upgrading programme), MUKTA (Mukhyamantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan), Mission Shakti (Women self-help groups, WSHG), UNNATI (Urban Transformation Initiative) missions and national mission AMRUT has helped the city to cluster caregiving amenities and facilities in vulnerable settlements involving communities.

Figure 36: Clustering of caregiving facilities in slums of Rourkela through convergence of national and state missions



(Source: Rourkela Smart City Limited)

While working with these WSHGs on the ground, (who are also often part of Slum Dwellers Associations) we were able to observe that, these associations are predominantly led by caregiving women from vulnerable RSCL communities. Since then, involving them in the planning, implementation, operation, and maintenance of child-friendly projects has been instrumental in creating public spaces in slums tailored to young children and caregivers needs. This approach has generated positive momentum, including combating decade old stigmatisation of leper colonies, empowering tribal women in traditionally male dominated public spaces, and facilitating women-led data mapping for project identification in Rourkela.

The approach provides an opportunity to assess whether such policies cater to the need of planning for care while developing such vulnerable neighbourhoods, including the empowerment of caregiver communities, providing caregiving opportunities, and ensuring healthy early childhood development. The analysis can also help to create a replicable model within the existing governance and policy framework in India and other countries of global south to truly acknowledge the importance of caregiving in these vulnerable settlements.

Methodology

The methodology encompasses identification of obstacles hindering access to caregiving services, particularly concerning spatial considerations through an exploratory data analysis approach that combines participatory geospatial data collection with caregivers. This method aims to contribute to the integration of care into theories of vulnerable neighbourhood planning and climate action plans. It seeks to identify ways to restructure existing policies to better align with the specific needs of caregivers in vulnerable settlements. This multifaceted approach will enhance our understanding of the barriers affecting the well-being and healthy early childhood development in these vulnerable communities. Ultimately, it will also aim to empower these most vulnerable caregiver segments of communities to play a pivotal role in reshaping slum redevelopment planning and policy approaches.

1. Informal settlements, particularly, pose significant challenges for women and children, primarily due to the limited availability of affordable transportation options and their constrained walking range, which is typically comfortable, extending to a 10-minute

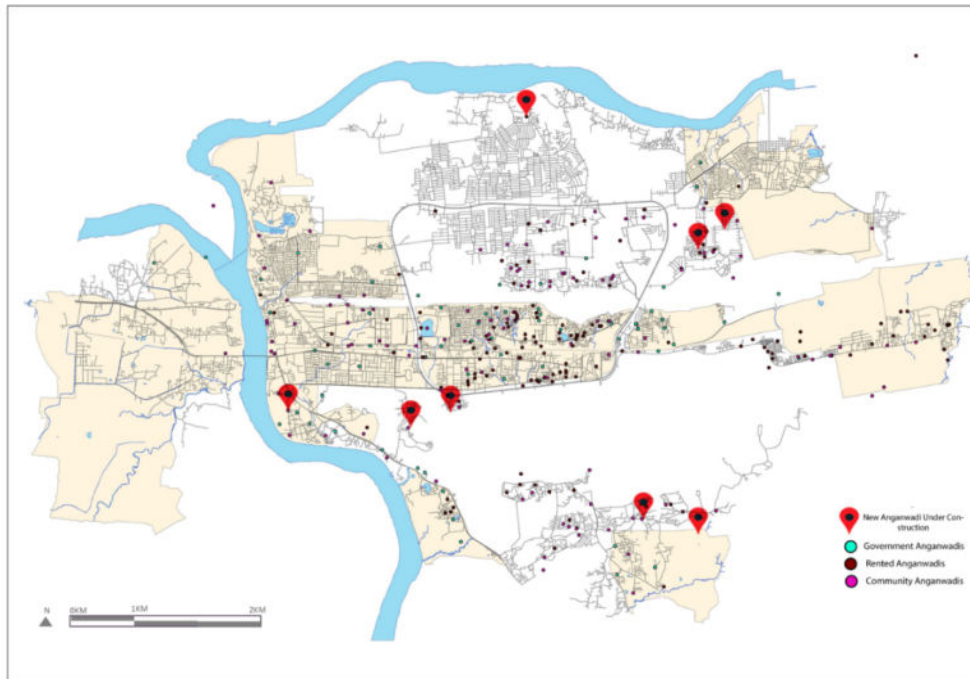
walkshed within a 300 metre radius (Infant, Toddler, Caregiver-Friendly Neighborhood [ITCN] Framework and Guidelines, 2019). It has also shed light on barriers that limit caregivers from providing their children access to daily healthcare, early education, spending quality time with them through play, even providing breastfeeding in public spaces while being involved in daily wage labours. To address these issues, conducting a pilot survey with household-based travel diaries can facilitate the mapping of the shortest routes and road networks, thus revealing the walkable area (walkshed) within which caregivers residing in these settlements can access caregiving facilities. Involving a combination of satellite imagery digitisation and collaborative mapping in partnership with community stakeholders (De Albuquerque et al., 2019), Participatory Geographic Information Systems (PGIS), Participatory Action Research (PAR) tools were found to offer valuable insights for such communities. To maximise benefits, it is essential to involve caregivers, front line workers involved in caregiving ecosystem from the outset, allowing them to define needs in existing services and integrating the findings into collaboratively developed solutions. This approach will play a pivotal role in strategically planning future caregiving facilities to enhance caregiving services in vulnerable communities.

Figure 37: Conducting capacity building of frontline workers of Anganwadi centres for data mapping in ICDS Centre Udit Nagar, Rourkela



(Source: Author)

Figure 38: Based on the demand and gap analysis 10 new anganwadis planned in Rourkela.



(Data Source: Rourkela Municipal Corporation; Image source: Author)

2. While collaborating with Rourkela City, we implemented frequent capacity-building programme for caregivers and *anganwadi* (early childhood education and care centres) teachers located in slums. Using GIS based data mapping of *anganwadis*, intercept surveys and data from the Women and Child Development website, we systematically categorized these *anganwadi* centres based on criteria such as roofing materials, enrolment capacity, shared spaces with community centres, and overall development status in the city's slum areas. Engaging caregivers and *anganwadi* teachers in data collection and analysis played a pivotal role in planning 120 new *anganwadi* centres in vulnerable settlements across Rourkela. This process has helped to mobilise *anganwadi* teachers and women caregiver's capacity building and active participation in care planning, allowing them to influence district-level urban infrastructure planning, financing policies and gain control over critical metadata.
3. Caregivers and young children are highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Even relatively low levels of air pollution exposure during pregnancy can lead to the birth of smaller babies (Svanes et al., 2022). Most vulnerable areas within cities often coincide with the most climate-vulnerable zones (Kasperson & Kasperson, 2001), where caregivers and children are more susceptible to heat-related issues, their developing lungs are highly vulnerable to pollution, and their smaller stature and increased respiratory rates increase the likelihood of them inhaling polluted air in urban environments.

Effective care in urban planning and governance can bring about meaningful changes in daily community practices in vulnerable settlements. For example, during our collaboration with Women Self Help Groups (WSHG) in Rourkela, we integrated plantation drives with air purifying plants, rainwater harvesting pits into every child-

friendly project and community open space. This initiative opened up the potential to turn vulnerability into an opportunity, benefiting both urban poor community and the city. Women caregivers, driven by maternal instincts, bridge vulnerability with survival instincts and the motivation to act for their young children's well-being. They actively addressed environmental crises, collecting data, monitoring, and reporting during adversities. This discipline proved highly resilient in crisis management. Empowering and involving caregivers can effectively address significant climate action plans through small yet impactful spatial interventions.

Conclusion

Increasing awareness of the challenges faced by vulnerable women caregivers in an urban setting due to inadequate planning, policies and climate action plans, and to support the future generation an opportunity to equal growth and healthy development by providing access to care is crucial. Policies and planning methods of urban care strategies in vulnerable settlements will help to ensure quality of life for the most at-risk section within these communities. Prioritising young children's and caregivers' health, well-being, inclusion, and integration into broader city systems, the paper aims to formulate theories to guide local policymakers in using spatial analysis to prioritise protective built environment policies in vulnerable areas, empowering caregiver and young children's communities to lead a global movement for urban care.

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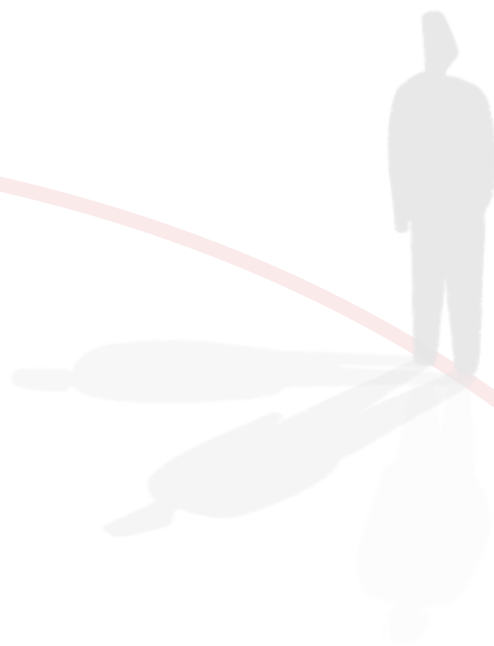
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PANEL 12

Representing Marginalities: Images and Imaginations



Understanding Marginality and City-Making through Images and Aesthetic Governmentality: Childhood Unfolding in the Urban Margins of Delhi

Priyanka Mittal, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies

A notable consequence of the economic liberalisation in India in the 1990s has been a widespread movement of labour from rural areas to urban landscapes. A great number of these migrants find employment opportunities majorly in the unorganised sector, thus rendering them badly underpaid and economically insecure. This, among other precarities, also translates into their inability to find housing in the city, and even if and when they do, their living is spatially concentrated in such areas where they do not receive even basic civic amenities, like clean water, regular power supply and proper sanitation, let alone the access to affordable and yet quality education and healthcare. This, as Shyam Menon highlights in his foreword of Gunjan Sharma's recent 2021 work, has led to the emergence of "urban slums" (Sharma, 2021, p. vi). These urban slums become important sites to be paid attention to, as they represent the "excess" of the state, much like a storeroom that represents the excess of a house—something which is inherently required but must also be desperately hidden. These urban margins thus carry the burden of the city that is critical for its everyday functioning and sustenance, and yet these very spaces are made invisible in the everyday life of the city. These spaces are painted and perceived to be sites of chaos, disease, non-hygiene, irrationality, disorder, and lawlessness, thus creating fertile grounds for them to be detested by the "legitimate" residents of the city. As a result, this territorial as well as conceptual category of "urban margins" nudges one to rethink beyond the dichotomy of what counts as core/legitimate and what constitutes periphery/illegitimacy. As Das and Poole (2004) point out, such margins are a necessary condition of the state, much like the state of exception is a necessary condition of the law (Das & Poole, 2004, p. 4). What is happening in the margins, therefore, is not a failure of the state, but rather a critical reflection of how the state functions and affirms itself in the first place. It is against this backdrop that my work is focussed on an ethnographic inquiry into the practices and politics of life, particularly childhood, in the margins.

Contrary to the widely perceived assumption that social divisions and hierarchies become less stringent in urbanised environments which are popularly characterised by the ideas of modernity, progress and meritocracy, there is a growing recognition that the experience of exclusion and marginality gets manifested in multifaceted forms in the urban space, as a result of complex intersection among various axes of class, caste, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and/or language. I would like to draw upon one of my interactions with a few children of the slum site in South Delhi where my fieldwork situates itself, to discuss how children engaged in making sense of their experiences and identity around various social distinctions in an urban setting: On one of the days when it somehow came up that I belong to Haryana, Sumit (a boy of 15 years of age) said that Sapna Chaudhary (who is a popular Haryanvi dancer) also belongs to Haryana. At this, a girl of 12 or 13, Angel asked my fieldwork partner (Arjun) if he also belonged to Haryana to which he replied that he belongs from Uttar Pradesh. Angel then said:

Angel: *hum toh balmiki hain*. Lucky (another boy of 14 years of age) then intervenes: *didi, mai bhi balmiki hun, jo bhi in jhuggiyon me reh rahe hain na yahan se vahan tak, sare balmiki hain*. At this point, another girl of 15 or 16, Rubina, interrupts Lucky: *balmiki bolna zaruri hai?! Sumit then says to me: didi, mai na har roz mandir jata hu, aur vrat bhi karta hu, aur subah shaam puja bhi*. This is followed by the arrival of another boy, Prince of about 14 or 15 years of age who, with an air of superiority, says: *didi, hum chauhan hain, sabse zyada bade insaan. Hamari mam bol rahi thi ki chauhan ki ijjat bohot zyada hoti hai, mam ye bhi keh rahi thi ki chauhan na bohot zyada vo hote hain...* to which I asked: *kya...?* Prince's sister, Angel, then said: *badi jaati ke...* Prince continued: *haan, badi jaati ke, aur na bohot unche khandaan ke bhi, bohot zyada ijjat ki jati hai chauhano ki*.

An urban landscape thus seems to produce new kinds of marginalities, an experience which these children are navigating by either (a) asserting their caste identity (like Lucky telling me about him being a “balmiki” or Prince taking pride in his being a “chauhan”); or by (b) resisting their caste markers (as witnessed in Rubina wanting to curb Lucky's assertion of being a “balmiki”); or by (c) attempting to overcome their caste (as reflected in Sumit's account of his religious observance and practice). These various ways of children's negotiation to seek not merely inclusion but also membership in the socio-political discourse of the city (of which I might seem to them a potential embodiment), reflect the tension of margins with the boundary-making function of the state.

Furthermore, what is worthy of attention in such explorations is the question of aesthetic governmentality, as in the present times, we increasingly find statecraft invoking a form of governance and legitimacy that works at the level of senses itself. As a result, illegality gets asymmetrically distributed on the spectrum of informality, thus rendering certain informal as illegal and certain other informal as legal, based on sensory codes of aesthetics. Asher Ghertner (2015) through his ethnographic study of slum clearances in contemporary Delhi, showcases how certain aesthetic (and not rational) dispositions have become the dominant mode of planning a city and governing the urban landscape (Ghertner, 2015). What is more interesting to note is the collective and enthusiastic will to participate in this city-making discourse even among those whom the process affects adversely. So how does the imagination of the state become the will of the masses, and especially the margins? My interest broadly lies in exploring how various images help in manufacture and dissemination of such sensibilities that characterise the spatial category of a slum with chaos, disorder, and illegality, and how those located at the margins traverse through this conundrum. More specifically, I try to understand the aspiration of children situated in these urban margins to find a belongingness in the city, and I try to understand this by focussing on their attempts to seek proximity with what “looks” valued in the accepted codes of visual appearance, so as to gain legitimacy in their desire of not being seen as a nuisance but rather a rightful ally in the process of city-making in Delhi. Such attempts of theirs have strong undercurrents of (a) desperately distancing themselves from those ‘images’ that are associated with their own symbolic realm in the popular consciousness of the legitimate members of the city; and (b) seeking closeness and familiarity with those ‘images’ that represent the clean, orderly and legal world of the city—to thus not be merely included in the political community but also be a member in true political terms. This gets reflected in my fieldwork, when a boy of 14

years of age, Lucky tells me, *“didi, meri Anju bua ki shaadi ke time pe humne bhandara bhi kiya tha gareeb bachchon ke liye, ye paas wala mandir hai na, vahan pe”*; or when in one of the other instances, while talking about a neighbourhood girl, he says, *“didi, aapko pata hai, yahan pul ke neeche se 3 saal ki ek ladki kidnap ho gayi... vo pul ke neeche ghum rahi thi, ek bike wala aaya, usne ladki ko bulaya ki cheez dunga... ab aapko toh pata hi hai ki ye rainbasere ke chhote bachche kaise hote hain cheej-veej ke chakkar me, toh vo chali gayi bike wale ke paas, aaj tak nahi mili didi vo, ab hume kya pata use kaat-koot ke usse bheekh mangwa rhe ho!”* One can clearly see an attempt in Lucky to create a distance and alienate himself from the images—of *gareeb* or *rainbasere ke bachche*—which closely constitute his own social community too. Similarly, a girl of 17 or 18 years of age, Varsha (who had been working as a house help as well as a beauty parlour girl) expressed that there wasn't much “money” or “respect” in these jobs and thus she wanted to learn English to find better jobs, *“mujhe na jaldi se jaldi English seekhni hai... maine classes bhi join kar li hain, par mere pas yahan practice karne ke liye koi hai nahi, yahan ke log na aese hi hain, ab aap aur mai toh samajhte hain ye sari batein”*. It is interesting to note how, during this conversation, she kept othering her own neighbourhood while simultaneously trying to identify with me who might likely represent to her the image of an educated, English-speaking, legitimate body reflecting the state, and thus her potential and desired claim to the city.

My work will further attempt to draw from Lacan's theory—of ontologically fragmented ego and its imaginary specular image (Lacan, 2006) —to argue that margins seek a unity/fulfilment of their own fragmented life world through an image-based (and thus imaginary) identification with the state and its members, particularly because of the absence of a more concrete, symbolic engagement between the ‘beautiful’ , ‘legitimate’ world of the city and the ‘chaotic’ , ‘unclean’ , and ‘illegal’ world of the margins. In such a discourse, perhaps the interaction of margins with the city then becomes an interaction through images. How do we think through this question? What can these images show to us about the aesthetic turn that governmentality has taken? To delve into these questions more organically, this study tries to look from the margins and not at the margins, as Veena Das and Deborah Poole articulate beautifully in their 2004 volume (Das & Poole, 2004). This study is therefore primarily a result of primary research, where the field visits were conducted to an urban slum site in South Delhi, and a deep engagement was developed with the field using ethnographic methods (participant observation, focussed group discussions, interviews, in-depth conversations with the community) over the course of one and a half years.

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Activating Museum Research: A reflection on Action-Research within Museum Spaces in the UK

Clara Cirdan, London School of Economics

Keywords: cultural transformation, action research, museums, cultural democracy

My doctoral research investigates cultural transformation in two museums in the UK, which are placed in marginal communities. One of them, the Migration Museum in London is situated in one of the boroughs are amongst the most economically deprived in London according to Lewisham Poverty Commission (2017). The second research site is Turner Contemporary in Margate, a coastal town in England which also deals with high levels of poverty and exclusion (Kolbe et al., 2020). My study looks comparatively at how these two museums both reproduce and challenge levels of inequality - specifically addressing cultural inequality and its implications on both institutional cultural policies and visitors' experiences. In the current paper, these are seen in the context of the marginalised urban spaces museums are part of.

Cultural democracy is one of the contemporary framings of these tensions (which overlaps between both the cultural sector and the academic debates); however, its political ethos is largely missing within contemporary discourse and, whenever present, is largely discussed through a depoliticized language, often part of the neoliberal marketing strategies museums get co-opted into. Moreover, existing forms of cultural democracy within both academia (Wilson et al., 2017) and the cultural sector (64 Million Artists with Arts Council England, 2018), are focused on forms of cultural participation that problematise what is defined and legitimised as 'culture', but more infrequently problematise what 'democracy' refers to. Thus, despite 'cultural democracy' being a contested political concept, it is often discussed and practiced in a depoliticised and ahistorical manner (e.g. democracy as the freedom of cultural expression, which does not always consider cultural power imbalances). However, as the ethnography on site of the two museums studied reflects, politics is a constitutive element of cultural democracy (whether consciously or indirectly), which should therefore be accounted for within sociological studies.

David Stevenson and Leila Jancovich (Jancovich, 2022) reflect in relation with participation in cultural studies, that it is represented by 'stories of success, histories of failure': despite the call for participation, critical reflection around the status quo is not encouraged. Following this activist line, my study explores the possibility of critical reflection through action-research and, in this paper, its relevance for the question of reproducing and challenge cultural hierarchies when the researcher becomes involved on the sites studied.

Some of the research questions are:

- How do museums in the UK reproduce and challenge forms of cultural hegemony?
- How can research in museum spaces enhance their transformative potential?

These questions are interrelated, as the idea is to explore to what extent does more action-oriented research both illuminate different dimensions of cultural inequality (e.g. political, social, affective etc.), as well as how it can produce a difference on the field it is part of. The research focus is on the cultural processes taking place on the site of the two museums that are socially engaged and have an interest in their local communities, which represents the initial point of comparison between the two institutions. The study is ethnographic in nature and data collection took place over the course of two years (2020-2022), where, as researcher I had the role of volunteer, doing front-of-house, facilitating workshops, and producing research on audience.

The current paper is focused mainly on the methodology of the research, more precisely on the how Ethnographic Action-Research relates to exploring marginality both conceptually and practically. Marginality is here understood in relation with research sites that are not amongst the most well-known and highly established cultural institutions, but which are, to different extents seen as elitist, despite their respective efforts to get more diverse audiences (in terms of class, race, levels of education etc). It is within these institutions that are on the border where the potential for transformation lies.

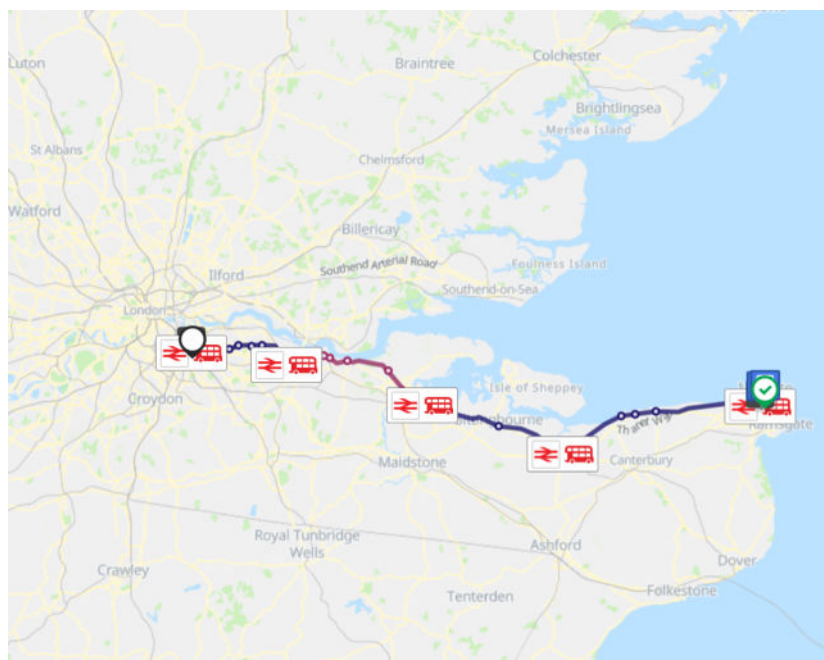
Ethnographic Action Research is a methodology largely used in development studies (Slater 2009), and, more recently, in media studies, and which has some of the following key features: reflexivity embedded in research at every stage, collaboration between the researcher and participants, working towards actionable practices (i.e., the research also has socially relevant outcomes). This methodology is suitable for cultural and museum studies as well since it allows more on-site engagement from the researcher which enhances the understanding of both how transformative cultural practices are conceptualised and experienced. This dialogic approach offers a more complex understanding of how cultural hegemony and its respective forms of symbolic violence are reproduced and articulated in the contemporary context of global movements, migration, the aftermath of the pandemic and rising levels of ethnocentrism.

To explore to what extent active research participation can challenge the (re)production of cultural hierarchies that lead to forms of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1979), I refer to the co-produced learning workshops I facilitated across the two research sites mentioned. I used Ethnographic Action Research (Slater et al 2007) to compare the Migration Museum in London and Turner Contemporary in Margate, where the focus was on the relation with the local audiences and the role of educational practices (workshops, exhibitions, volunteering programmes) within and across the two institutions. The workshops were done over a period of 8 months with help from funding from KEI (Knowledge Exchange Impact) that I applied for as researcher and staff members from both institutions participated. My role was to facilitate the meetings and actively participate in the workshops on both sites.

One of the first findings discussed in the paper is the way in which the research becomes more decentred through Action-Research and the implications it has on the questions cultural legitimization and hegemony (Gramsci, 1992).

Travelling with participants from on site to another (see image below) led to an understanding of the discourses cultural practitioners had in a more nuanced way, captured through informal discourses. For instance, one of the staff members mentioned the importance of being friendly with colleagues and getting to know them better through the different projects assigned. Previously, she has worked at the British Museum where roles were clearly defined, and it was difficult to know what other team members were working on specifically. Moreover, travelling and the informality it begets also illuminated more nuanced views: for instance, not all cultural practitioners agree museum should/should not be activist; some claim offering access to a larger variety of audiences is more important, as it bridges the gap between 'the left and the right and shows how our different stories and histories are interconnected' (Andrew, interviewee, Migration Museum 2021).

Figure 39: Train journey from Lewisham (London) to Margate



(Source: Google Maps)

Secondly, doing Action-Research provided insights into how the museum symbolic power operates. Institutions and urban spaces generally are suggestive in terms of how visitors and passer-byes should feel and behave on their respective sites.

The second section of the implications of Action-Research discusses the answer of one of the workshop participants from the Migration Museum. Upon arriving on the site of Turner Contemporary, he mentioned how 'the building itself felt excluding and elitist...walking up the stairs made me feel this is a space where I do not belong' (Alex, interviewee Migration Museum). He reflects in the session on diversifying audiences how difficult it is to implement accessible

educational practices in more traditional museum settings (otherwise referred to as temple museums in museum literature (Cameron, 1972).

During the intervention within the two museums, what looked like a high-class event took place in one of the rooms of the gallery, which we passed through in order to get to our meeting space. The big windows overlooked the seascape and offered a stunning view. The setup seemed ready for an exclusive event, with white aprons on tables, sparkly glasses and bottles of wine ready to be opened. Some staff members from the Migration Museum observed the event and asked questions about how spaces are usually rented and what the estimate costs are. The discussion paved the way for understanding what the gallery is for in Margate, completing the insights from interviews with senior staff members: "For us, it's not just about the money you raise, it's working with organisations and the people involved," says Diament in (Phillips, 2021). "In London it was the art world talking to the art world, but here, the sense of community is so strong, generous and wonderful." (Victoria, *ibid*).

Figure 40: Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK



(Source: Photography from the museum website)

In comparison, the way visitors feel when arriving at the Migration Museum is radically different. Having a piece of the Berlin wall in front of the museum, the institution is appreciated by passersbyes and has the aim of telling rich stories and histories of migration, as the staff members reflect during the visit from Turner Contemporary. The museum stands for what is referred to as the 'forum' museum (Cameron, 1972) in literature, which encompasses more community-oriented museums that usually engage in more informal cultural practices. As the Migration Museum is placed in a shopping centre, there are a variety of reasons people step in: some are attracted by the shop, placed at the front of the museum which offers products made by local migrants, T-shirts, candles, books on race and migration and recipe books. Others come in because they are curious about the art installations after seeing the works in the window display, whereas some are simply lost and arrive at the museum by chance. Regardless of their motive, there are quite few who come in prepared for the visit; for most, it's rather the museum that comes to them, as visits normally occurs spontaneously (70 per cent of the visitors are passersby¹).

¹ As revealed from museum demographic research accessed internally

The discussion with members from Turner Contemporary in front of the entrance enhanced the various ways in which the museum is seen operating.

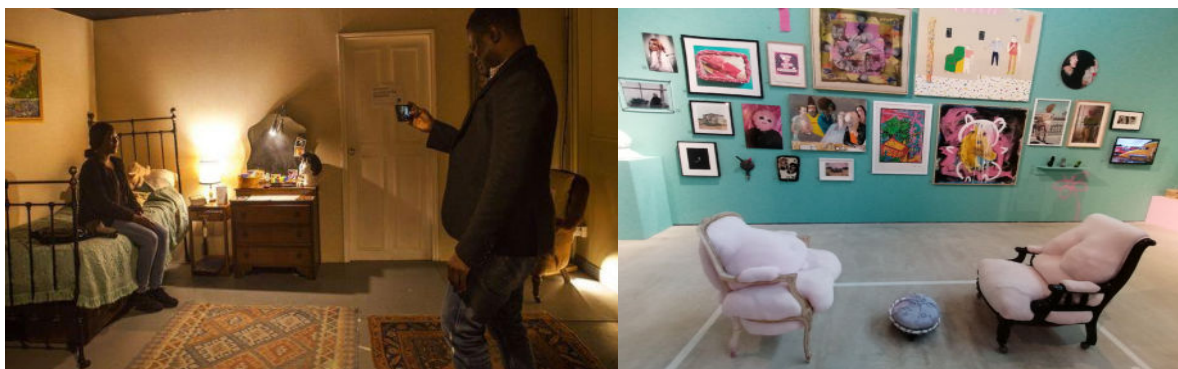
Figure 41: Pieces of the Berlin Wall, Migration Museum, London



(Source: Migration Museum Website)

The second part of the section focused on the material and symbolic museum function section addresses the objects and atmosphere within the museums and compares how an object (an armchair) is used at the two museums to resist traditional museum behaviour by either creating a sense of ease (Migration Museum), or by encouraging the viewer to think about the queerness of things (Turner Contemporary). The two different uses of these objects reflect both the different ethos of the two cultural institutions (forum—community museums, temple—edifice of the art), as well as the different interests of the artists and viewers inside.

Figure 42: (Left) Exhibition 'Room to Breathe', Migration Museum, London²; (Right) Exhibition from Pride Room, Turner Contemporary, London⁴



Lastly, the final reflection considered in the paper is around the nature of work at the two museums, as reflected within the co-produced workshops.

² Photo from museum website: <https://www.migrationmuseum.org/>

⁴ Photo done by researcher

Firstly, I address the relation between art and a sense of community. I discuss a creative exercise done with participants from both museums to reflect on how the two museums envision the relation between creativity and the museum's ethos.

Figure 43: Photo from the Access group exhibition, Turner Contemporary, Margate.³



On the one hand, curation practices can allow the group members to enhance their community ethos. They can also create a group ethos, when participants do not know each other well beforehand, such as in the case of Access group (photo above), where members used different patterns and colours (mainly tones of blue) to generate what 'access' means for their group ethos and how they envision visitors to make sense of their practices.

In relation with working practices I also discuss the nature of volunteering at the temple versus the forum space and how volunteering in two economically deprived areas can take place and what that means in relation to offering agency to participants and creating a museum ethos in relation with views from participants: 'because of the rising levels of unemployment in Lewisham, it is hard to vouch for volunteering' says one of the educational practitioners at Turner Contemporary.

But taking a look at the different levels of unemployment provides a more nuanced picture;

³ Photo done by researcher

Figure 44: Levels of unemployment in Lewisham⁴

Labour Supply				
Employment and unemployment (Jul 2022-Jun 2023)				
	Lewisham (Numbers)	Lewisham (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
All People				
Economically Active†	196,800	87.1	78.8	78.6
In Employment†	182,300	80.5	75.1	75.6
Employees†	153,600	68.0	63.2	66.0
Self Employed†	26,700	11.6	11.7	9.3
Unemployed (Model-Based)§	9,100	4.7	4.6	3.8

Figure 45: Levels of unemployment in Margate⁵

Labour Supply				
Employment and unemployment (Jul 2022-Jun 2023)				
	Thanet (Numbers)	Thanet (%)	South East (%)	Great Britain (%)
All People				
Economically Active†	71,500	84.0	81.2	78.6
In Employment†	64,300	75.6	78.3	75.6
Employees†	49,700	60.5	68.1	66.0
Self Employed†	14,600	15.1	10.0	9.3
Unemployed (Model-Based)§	3,400	5.1	3.4	3.8

Despite being high in both locations, levels of unemployment are not necessarily the main cause for the differences in volunteering patterns at the two institutions. As it comes up during interviews with staff members and volunteers themselves, the nature of the museums, their ethos and placement within their respective localities are better suited to explain the differences.

The paper mainly articulates the methodological pursuits that led to an understanding of the pedagogical museum practices through action; it suggests how methodological approaches focused on action-research offer new angles within cultural sociology, such as access to different forms of discourses (formal and informal) and behaviours unmediated by the museum, depicting the intersectional nature and often (self)contradictory nature of the processes of cultural transformation.

Research practices within institutions that both challenge and reproduce forms of social and cultural inequalities are comprehensive and nuanced and require a longitudinal approach. Participatory research methods such as EAR are not only approached for understanding cultural transformation in-situ, but represent the scope of the research as well, motivated by a desire to offer something back to the sites which gave me their consent to conduct an ethnographic

⁴ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157320/report.aspx?town=margate>

⁵ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157254/report.aspx>

project. Upon being involved in these workshops, members of both sites reflected on how it offered them tools and reflection exercises to consider for future exhibitions and collaborative practices within the museums. It also offered a more complex view on the conditions for generating social change within the museums (the implication of poverty, gentrification, rising levels of racism etc.).

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How Short-Form Content Apps Transformed the Shape of Mumbai's Marine Drive

Apoorv Shandilya, Manipal University

"We have said that space is existential; we could just as well have said that space is spatial" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.293)

In the case of Mumbai, at issue is the claim that public spaces in the city's urban neighbourhoods, south of the Sea-Link are a result of three intersecting categories: limited geographical territory, personal wealth, and accessibility. Consequently, landscapes such as The Marine Drive, have picked up on shifting cultural phenomenon in the city and passed ownership from the public to a select urban elite. This paper explores one such new phenomenon driven by the medium of short-form content apps that has lent itself to the production and consumption of media. Since the question of ownership in reference to private and public space is controversial, it deserves explicit attention.

Shifting Cultural Phenomenon within Mumbai's Urban Centre

Upon a cursory glance, or a trip through the most iconic locations in Mumbai, one discovers the divide between the Suburbs and the rest of Mumbai as soon as you get on to the Iconic Sea Link. Not only does it mark an engineering marvel albeit grossly overpriced, but its path towards the peninsular end of the city, is marked with a distinct lack of autos or buses. Admittedly, there is some value to the State's arguments behind this ban, autos crowd an already packed space in the South of Bombay. After all the official territory that Urban Mumbai covers is a mere 468 square kilometres. The other reason quoted often by the state is that it takes away from the aesthetics of the city. However, unlike Fort Calcutta, Kolkata, Fort Bombay/Mumbai, Fort Madras/Chennai, and Lutyens Delhi, Mumbai's architecture is devoid of any story beyond that of its colonial rulers. This is certainly not to say that Mumbai is devoid of any aesthetic pleasure. Instead, the voyeuristic pleasure in Mumbai derives itself from the aesthetics of the rich.

"Our psychological sense of selfhood has a spatial dimension which we recognize in our feelings of comfort or unease in response to the places we visit or inhabit" (Eltin, 1998, p 1). The spatial dimension inherent in the perception of self has significantly influenced the configuration of urban built environments in close proximity to the urban elite. Paradoxically, this phenomenon constitutes a point of convergence among divergent architects such as Walter Benjamin and Le Corbusier. These architects, despite their disparate perspectives, share a consensus on the pivotal role played by formal architectural and urban design gestures as indicators of societal transformations.

Cultural shifts become far more evident in depictions of Mumbai's built environment in films, and literature. Take, for example, the case of *Shantaram*. In Robert's novel, the slums of Mumbai form the backdrop of the story where conflict and comradery are a result of proximity rather than kinship. Another case is made in Vjyayanthi Rao's, anthropologist, article, "Proximate Distances: The Phenomenology of Density in Mumbai." The paper presents the readers with the

example of *Ravan and Eddie*. The drama elucidates the case of Mumbai's chawls as a site that often breeds conflict and mutual contempt as a result of closeness and familiarity. (Rao, 1978, pp. 227-248) In examples like these, Mumbai is devoid of the same kind of aesthetic pleasure that popular culture associates with metropolitan cities like New York, or the historical lineage of Venice or Paris. Instead, it fits the description of Daniel Liebeskind's take on Mumbai. In his observations, Mumbai's urban landscape is not a narration of its architecture but instead substituted by its people, and in turn demographics of the city's density.

In a recent article, Manish Chalana's, "Of Mills and Malls: The Future of Urban Industrial Heritage in Neoliberal Mumbai," cites much of this cultural reflection as a memory of the past. In his critique of modern Indian cities, he notes, "Cities across the country are allowing their built environments that represent unique cultural preferences and aspirations to be replaced with new ones that reflect the aesthetics and planning ideals of global capitalism with little relation to the local context." (Chalana, 2012, p.1) In Mumbai's example, the Coastal Road Project which seeks to connect Kandivali in the North to Marine Lines in the South, is an imitation of the West's failure in mitigating traffic. By constructing larger, bigger roads, the city invites the rich to buy more cars to occupy the increased number of roads. In the end, the roads remain contested, without leaving any space for public transportation. Yet, there is an argument for the rich that is to be made here. In its invitation to the rich the newly constructed roads mark a value system that gives preference to property held by individuals. At the same time, the consequential poor public transportation system prevents those living in the suburbs from occupying the urban nexuses of the city. "In the dystopian contexts of many of today's cities, urban designs are being achieved not by using rational principles of planning but by the inadvertent designs perpetrated by speculation or the unintended consequences of self-planned communities." (Rao, 1978, pp. 227) Simultaneously, Mumbai's image as India's financial capital and its disposition towards attracting foreign investments has translated into an expansion of territory in its limited space. As a result, vertically expanding skyscrapers have mirrored the likes of other cities like New York. Peculiarly, Mumbai too now has a billionaire's row.

Personal Spaces and the Aesthetics of the Rich

In an Exploration of Personal Space in Richard A. Etlin's (1998), *Aesthetics and the Spatial Sense of Self*, he writes:

In *The Silent Language* and *The Hidden, Dimension* Hall distinguished between four different spatial bubbles, which he labelled as covering intimate, personal, social, and public distances, ranging from under 6 inches to over 25 feet: intimate distance (close phase under 6", far phase 6"-18"), personal distance (close phase 1.5'-2.5', far phase 2.5'-4'), social distance (close phase 4'-7', far phase 7-12'), and public distance (close phase 12'-25', far phase 25' or more). Though a universal phenomenon, these spatial bubbles are partly culturally determined to the extent that Latin peoples tend to compress the zones of personal and social distance whereas Nordic peoples tend to expand them (p.2).

Not only is the spatial bubble then influenced by cultural phenomena distinct between communities but also greatly impacted by class consciousness. "People actively attempt to

achieve their desired level of social interaction by the ways they locate themselves in their settings and the ways they use and arrange their settings." (Sundstrom, 1977, p.513) In reflecting the desires of the 'personal,' properties catered to the rich in Mumbai offer liminal spaces that overlook the Arabian Sea, and in the most premium parts of the city (Malabar Hills, Nariman Point) offer what Chalana calls "nonplaces." Nonplaces in the context of public space constitute underutilized urban spaces in place of cultural contexts or artifacts. In Mumbai's most affluent neighbourhoods, this translates to the erasure of spaces that can occupy those without the same level of wealth. Not only does personal space then constitute oneness, but also those who can come close to it. Spaces for the working class to occupy remain few and far between, offering a view of the aesthetics of the rich. In many ways then, the public space is transformed into a stage that offers voyeuristic pleasure and not much else. The most blatant example of this is a 3 kilometre-long promenade along the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Road in Mumbai, known as the Marine Drive or the *Queen's Necklace*, a testament to the colonial influence in the neighbourhood. While it offers views of the Arabian Sea towards the west in the day, its east hosts premium hotels that cater exclusively to the uber-rich.

Conclusion

This paper explores the iconography of density, phenomenology, and the crowd with reference to the Marine Drive. The exploration of these themes is focused on Mumbai, especially because of the role that the crowd in Mumbai has in shaping the city's cultural consciousness as well as its participation in the recreation on popular media. Moreover, this study aims to investigate the tangible influence of short-form content applications on the shifting ownership of the public space that is Marine Drive. I endeavour to demonstrate that this transformation has occurred in two distinct ways, affecting both the crowd and the physical space they inhabit. Firstly, the widespread accessibility of platforms such as TikTok, Moj, and Instagram Reels has provided a larger population with a means to create and consume content without significant financial constraints. Secondly, these applications have redefined Marine Drive from a stage for voyeuristic pleasure to a space conducive to the production and consumption of short-form content, thereby evolving it into an artifact embedded in a cultural context.

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Visibilising Marginalised Lives in Delhi and Mumbai Through Literary Nonfiction: The Case of Aman Sethi and Sonia Faleiro

Marianne Hillion, University of Strasbourg

Mihaela Mihai has argued that literary works can open up new spaces in the readers' knowledge and beliefs through 'epistemic friction' and the encoding of unfamiliar experiences of marginalisation; this, she says, is also valid for works written by non-epistemically marginalised artists, provided they do not, in turn, silence marginalised voices (Mihai, 2018). In this paper, I examine the possibilities offered by but also the limits of literary nonfiction in English to represent marginalised individuals and to challenge the social, economic, and epistemic injustice they face in large Indian metropolises today.

Indian literary nonfiction on the city is part of the global conversation on urban change and sheds a new light on issues much discussed in academic, institutional, and activist discourses, such as the unequal distribution of space or the critical role of the informal economy in the rapid yet uneven development of major Indian cities. While some narratives focus on the new urban experience of the growing Indian middle-class or of the elite (Dasgupta, 2014), others are drawn to those who are cast aside by the new urban configuration, such as migrant labourers, street-vendors, or informal settlements' residents (Faleiro, 2011; Sethi, 2011). In the context of a national public discourse intent on changing the image of Indian metropolises from worlds of deprivation and collapse into that of a new frontier of capitalism (Searle, 2016; Kaur, 2020), documenting the lives of those who are excluded from this triumphant narrative of ascent is already critical gesture. Yet, to what extent do these works avoid reproducing silencing and epistemic injustice? The aesthetic, ethical, and political pitfalls attached to the representation of these precarious lives are many for the middle-class, often high-caste, Anglophone Indian writers addressing an Indian and a global readership, suspected of ethnocentric objectifying or ventriloquising marginalised groups, as is arguably the case of Suketu Mehta's sensationalist reportage *Maximum City* (2004) (Shinvagi 2014; Srinivasan 2017).

This paper focuses on Sonia Faleiro's *Beautiful Thing: Inside the Secret World of Bombay's Dance Bars* (2010) and Aman Sethi's *A Free Man: A True Story of Life and Death in Delhi* (2010), two literary reportages, written by English-speaking, middle-class, foreign-educated journalists, and first published in India, then in the United Kingdom and the United States. Both narratives explore the everyday life of one precarious city-dweller: Faleiro charts the path of Leela, a young woman from Meerut who fights her way through the dance-bar line in Mumbai, while Sethi attempts to understand the life of Mohammed Ashraf, a Bihari construction worker living in the streets of North Delhi. While Leela is far richer than Ashraf, her belonging to the informal workforce makes her income and her place in the city almost as precarious as his. The writers thus use a hybrid form, which blends reportage, biography and fiction, in order to explore urban *precarity*, implying an insecure livelihood but also an uncertain place in the city, and lifeworlds that are constantly subject to state and market violence (Dwivedi, 2021; Lau & Mendes, 2021).

In fact, the two reporters write in a context of increased marginalisation of these outcast individuals. *Beautiful Thing* was researched and written in 2005, as the ban on bar-dancing established by the Bombay Police (Amendment) Act came into force, depriving more than seven thousand bar-dancers of their livelihood (Morcom, 2013), part of the wider hygienist revamping of Mumbai into a 'world-class' city. Mohammed Ashraf, the protagonist of *A Free Man*, was among the dwellers whose informal settlement was destroyed as part of the beautification campaign launched in 2004 in the run-up to the 2010 Commonwealth Games, an event that also intensified the application of the anti-begging law in Delhi, *de facto* criminalising pavement-dwellers (Bhan & Menon-Sen, 2008; Batra, 2010; Dupont, 2013). From Mumbai to Delhi, these oppressive policies manifest the wider 'politics of forgetting' implemented in major Indian cities, aiming to clear urban space from ostensible undesirable elements (Fernandes, 2004).

Using insights from urban anthropology to study literary texts, their narrative strategies, their conditions of production and reception, and their political effects, this paper has three main purposes.

My first objective is to investigate the ways in which both writers use the formal hybridity of the documentary narrative, blending ethnographic methods (such as participant observation) and novelistic techniques (such as interior monologue), to foreground their protagonists' voices and views of their own life, thus breaching through the readers' assumed knowledge about urban marginalities. I also argue that the immersion into a social world and the emphasis the narratives place on individual agency never result in overlooking the uneven social structures that have shaped the protagonists' lives, thus managing to steer away from delusory aspirational narratives and from what Ananya Roy calls 'subaltern urbanism' (Roy, 2011). In fact, the two texts expose the celebration of the individual quest for economic success as a destructive myth, which conceals and sustains a deeply unequal distribution of resources and space in urban India. They do so in distinct ways: while *A Free Man* focuses on Ashraf's deliberate escape from the pursuit of material wealth, *Beautiful Thing* portrays Leela's fearlessly flinging herself into this fierce and uneven competition. These portraits enhance the way the two workers constantly adjust and shape their aspirations to the restricted range of possibilities the Indian uneven city offers them, challenging the image of the city as a 'great equalizer' (Faleiro, 2011, p. 119). By shedding light on various ways in which urban marginality is coped with and conceived of by individuals themselves, these texts point to artistic works' ability to challenge, although with humility, epistemic injustice.

My second objective is to analyse the ways in which the reporters point to the biases of their own perspective and the limitations of their project. While the self-reflexive texts put forward Ashraf's and Leela's voice and their resistance to the reporters' inquiries, they do not erase their own presence from the narrative, thus obliquely pointing to the conditions of their reportage. Oscillating between distance and proximity, Faleiro and Sethi register their always incomplete, precarious grasp of these lifeworlds, as well as the uneven power relationships tying them to their protagonists, drawing the readers' attention to their own position and complicity with structures of domination. In fact, while Sethi insists on his familiarity with the workers and

Faleiro displays the confidence she managed to gain from the dancers, they also highlight the limits of their “participation” and the unbridgeable chasm separating them from their subjects.

Finally, my inquiry will focus on the ability of these narratives to effect political changes. In fact, despite this powerful critical gesture, the political effects of these narratives remain uncertain. The emphasis placed on the antagonism between the individual and society might unintentionally dim the possibilities of collective resistance. The restricted range of investigation enables the writers to encode one informal labourer’s coping with the oppression of both the state and the market, registering the ways in which neoliberal capitalism further fragments the labour force into isolated monads in urban India. Admittedly, both Faleiro and Sethi account for the social ecosystem their protagonists are part of, yet they mostly insist on ephemeral friendships and fragile solidarities, as the protagonists’ aspiration to *individual* independence seems to overtake any desire for community. The case of the Indian Bargirls Union, which has been instrumental to the Bombay High Court’s overturn of the bar-dancing ban in 2006, is only alluded to by Faleiro’s narrative, which somehow pushes collective action into the background of the narrative. Whether Leela’s pugnacity or Ashraf’s refusal to be “enslaved” by a contractor may be converted into larger, collective forces, remains suspended. Other artistic forms that imply self-representation, such as *Trickster City* (Sarda, 2010), or Anamika Haksar’s recent film *Ghode Ko Jalebi Khilane Le Ja Riya Hoon* (Haksar, 2019) might offer other avenues for unpacking urban marginalities in contemporary urban India.

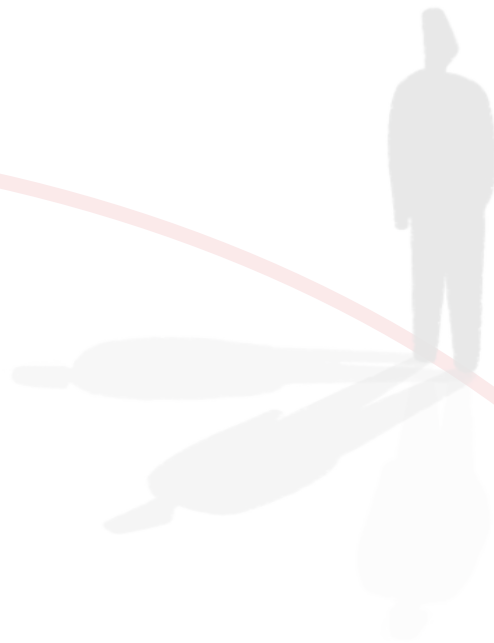
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PANEL 13

**Living Off-Grid Food and Infrastructure
Collaboration (LOGIC): (Re)Thinking
the Off-Grid City**



Living Off-Grid Food and Infrastructure Collaboration (LOGIC): (Re)Thinking the Off Grid City

Sudeshna Mitra, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Vrashali Khandelwal, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Iromi Perera, Colombo Urban Lab

Herry Gulabani, Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Nicholas Nisbett, Institute of Development Studies Sussex

Hayley MacGregor, Institute of Development Studies Sussex

Jodie Thorpe, Institute of Development Studies Sussex

Dolf te Lintel, Institute of Development Studies Sussex

Gareth Haysom, African Centre for Cities

Issahaka Fuseini, University of Ghana

The experience of infrastructure in many cities, particularly in the Global South, is rarely in the way envisaged by planners, i.e., a progressive realisation of access to a formal, city-wide 'grid' (Pieterse et al., 2018). Rather, the experience is often shaped by infrastructure 'assemblages', i.e. the multiple arrangement of infrastructure access determined not only by physical infrastructure, but the social, ecological, and political relationships and ideologies operating and influencing access at multiple city scales. While infrastructure systems are often planned in silos, their daily experience, especially from the perspective of marginalised urban populations, is in terms of how infrastructure constraints intersect and combine to exacerbate vulnerability to longer-term shocks and stresses and affect threshold abilities to meet basic needs. Food and nutrition is one such basic need, which is significantly dependent on infrastructure. With food in urban areas being a commodity, research on urban food and nutrition requires methods and theoretical frames that acknowledge that urban food flows, availability, and price-points are mediated by infrastructure assemblages via market and social systems. Research on urban infrastructure—food interactions to incorporate grid/ off-grid systems of infrastructure and across multiple scales—i.e., city, neighbourhood, household scales—has the potential to open up innovative conceptual, and methodological insights to better understand the everyday means of coping, systemic gaps and governance mechanisms that are implicated. This provides an entry- point for urban planners and policymakers to rethink infrastructure planning, urban food markets and urban governance from more integrated perspectives, and address lacunae and constraints, to facilitate urban well-being and urban metabolism, not just through technical silos/ solutions of infrastructure grids, but as relational and socio-culturally mediated grid/ off-grid systems of infrastructure and food.

Between 2020 and 2023, five partner countries worked across multiple sites located across the cities of Colombo (Sri Lanka), Epworth (Zimbabwe), Bangalore (India), Mossel Bay (South Africa), and Tamale (Ghana) to unpack intersections between infrastructure and food systems in urban areas, at multiple scales, including those of the household, the neighbourhood and the city.

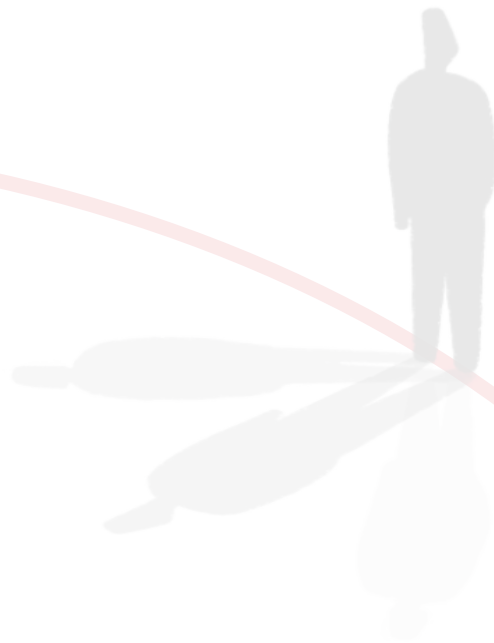
The panel discussion will draw on the empirical, methodological, conceptual and pedagogical implications of this multi-sited research, and explore new knowledge and pathways of impact that have emerged from the work, which speaks across concerns of urban health and nutrition, food systems, urban studies, planning, governance, policy studies and urban sociology.

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PANEL 14

Social Marginalities: Identities and Negotiated Spaces



Muslim in Indian cities: Landscapes of Belongingness

E P Sarfras, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar

Keywords: Muslims, Indian cities, Belongingness, segregation, New Delhi, Everyday lives

This paper will describe how the young Muslims in Jamia Nagar, a segregated Muslim neighbourhood in New Delhi, are experiencing their lived space and their *everyday social* through their everyday life practices. Through an ethnographic observation of space, this paper will first describe the sensorial landscape of Jamia Nagar to show how they experience their sense of belongingness. Further, it will focus on how they utilise their minimal space to achieve their desires and aspirations informed by the neo-liberal city. Looking beyond socio-cultural stereotypes and academic studies that focus on the uneven development, or the structural violence faced by Muslims in Indian cities, this paper argues to focus on how such neighbourhoods as lived spaces are perceived and made a part of their everyday lives through an ethnographic lens.

Introduction

Jamia Nagar is a neighbourhood in New Delhi located in the Okhla constituency in the South Delhi district. It neighbours Jamia Millia University, and the area is known for its high concentration of Muslims. Apparently, the area has a population of about 14 lakh, most of whom are Muslims. It has a cluster of unauthorised colonies (UAC) recognised by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). As a result, many parts of the locality face a lack of amenities like proper drinking water, cooking gas connections, proper roads, and various other infrastructure, and due to the huge population, the neighbourhood is highly congested, showing all the visible markers of spatial segregation and spatial inequality.

Through an ethnographic inquiry consisting of participant observation and open-ended interviews, this paper will discuss how young Muslims of Jamia Nagar are actively constructing their lived space by describing their experiences of the sense of belongingness. Further, it will describe how they are utilising their lived space to achieve their desires and aspirations while living in a globalised world. By focusing on the experiences of the residents of Jamia Nagar and how they experience their lived space, this paper departs from the common scholarly notion that mostly talks about social inequality and violence faced by Muslims who live in the margins. Even though that inequality is true, this paper would argue for the need to equally focus on the lived experience and the sense of belongingness of the people. Most of the scholarship about neighbourhoods like Jamia Nagar, with a high density of Muslim residents, has focused on the marginalities and violence faced by Muslims in Indian cities. While this focus is important, I take a different focus and use the 'social constructionist' (Low, 2017) approach to understand the everyday lives and experiences of the Muslims in Jamia Nagar. Using theoretical aspects from Lefebvre (1991), Low (2000, 2017), and G and S (2017, 2019) on space, experience, and everyday social, I focus on the experience of belonging among the young residents of Jamia Nagar and also how they utilize their lived space to achieve their desires and aspirations.

I have primarily conducted ethnographic observation of Jamia Nagar, its streets, markets, cafes, masjids, and the Jamia Millia Islamia University during a two-week visit in March 2022 and the whole of December 2022. Inspired by Low (2000), one of the major approaches I employed was to walk down the streets to grasp what the people do and how they are making their every day in the space. Along with my own observations, the views of my interlocutors, who include students, workers, entrepreneurs, etc., were very important for my work. The interviews were open-ended, where they described their lives, and what I tried to do was just to record those and not interpret them too further.

Muslims in Indian Cities

The Sachar Committee Report of 2006 (Sachar et al., 2006) showcased the socio-economic backwardness of the community and the spaces they are living in by highlighting their underrepresentation in various indexes of human development, like access to education, employment, and infrastructure. Based on this report, many academic works have been produced that engaged with the socioeconomic conditions of Muslims in India from the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, and political science (Ahmed, 2017). Scholarships on the everyday lives of Muslims in Indian cities with regard to the level of spatial segregation have looked at the reasons for the historical formation of Muslim neighbourhoods, the level of segregation, exclusion, and structural violence faced by them (Chatterjee, 2018; Gayer & Jaffrelot, 2012; Jamil, 2017; Mehta & Chatterjee, 2007; Shaban & Khan, 2013; Shaban, 2018). If we take the case of Muslims in Delhi, Ghazala Jamil (2017) discusses the condition of Muslims in Delhi, a neo-liberal city. She argues that Muslim neighbourhoods are created and sustained for the needs of the market economy, and even the aspirations of Muslims are shaped by it.

The approach given by Jamil, along with various other scholars, views space as something produced and maintained by the dominant power structure. Through everyday life practices, the inhabitants actively create their own space distinct from what the power structure intended, even as the structure certainly continues to wield its own forms of power (Low, 2017). By using this 'social constructionist' approach, I will show how the young people of Jamia Nagar are actively creating their space by describing their experience of belongingness in their space and also how they utilise space to achieve their desires and aspirations.

Living And Belonging

This section describes the sensorial landscape of Jamia Nagar through ethnographic methods like 'walking in the street' and open-ended interviews. This is used to show how the young Muslims of Jamia Nagar are sensing their social space and how they feel belongingness through their sensory fields. While we walk through Jamia Nagar, we sense the 'Muslimness' of the neighbourhoods because of multiple sensory markers like the nature of the street, the type of clothes people wear, the nameboards of shops, Masjids and the crowded nature of the streets. Other sensory markers like sound, smell and taste comes into play to make us feel we are in there. This involves the sound of Azaan, rickshaws, smell of perfumes, and the smell and taste of meat. These senses communicate the presence of social space that helps Muslims to experience their sense of belonging. Guru & Sarukkai (2019) stated that the experience of belongingness in a social creates the ownership of the social, which would further open up possibilities in the

social. By using this premise, I will describe how the young people of Jamia Nagar utilise their space to achieve their desires and aspirations.

Desires and Possibilities

Since the inception of the neo-liberal regime and the free-market economy in India, the Muslim community has also been striving for socio-economic mobility by being a part of it (Jamil, 2017; Khan, 2015; Fazal, 2022). In the case of Muslims in Delhi, Jamil (2017) argues that the capitalist economy is sustaining the segregation of Muslims to meet the needs of the market. Many tourist organisations in Delhi take people there to cherish the Mughal past of Old Delhi. Jamil (2017) calls this a “museumization,” a process where the community and the space are commodified to become a living museum. However, Jamia Nagar is not static, as the idea of a museum suggests. In the layers of the neighbourhood, as described above, there is also space for striving, belonging, and the production of different kinds of space as food, sound, the built environment, and the monuments act both as tools of sociability as well as economic gains for Muslims as they use and produce their lived space.

For example, if we look more specifically at Jamia Nagar, the students are trying to focus on the professional courses offered by JMI that will help them suit market demands. Not just in the education and the job sector, the young Muslims of Jamia Nagar are trying to integrate into the globalised world by adjusting their consumption, like fashion, usage of media technologies, and even their eating habits. De Certeau (1984) proposed the concept of “ways of operating,” arguing that people are not passive consumers of what the dominant forces are producing. Instead, they are active participants by appropriating what they have. By achieving education and employment and modifying their lifestyles through a change in food and dress codes, the young people of Jamia Nagar focus on integrating into the global market economy through the possibilities they have in space.

Conclusion

Drawing from De Certeau’s (1984) ‘ways of operating,’ I would say that the Muslims in Jamia Nagar are not just passive agents inside a neo-liberal market economy; rather they are actively striving to lead a good life even though they are segregated. Young Muslims have articulated their observations and also their own personal experience about their attachment to their lived space and also how they and the space around them are aspiring to go forward along with the globalised world. In this sense, the young Muslims are actively involved and organising their lived space to make the best out of it. By narrating these experiences and activities in Jamia Nagar, I want to emphasise the lives of the people living inside the margins, their nuances, and everyday actions rather than looking from above.

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Sexuality at the Margins: Understanding Space, Self and Agency of MSM, Men Who Have Sex with Men in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Shailja Tandon, Krea University

(The work submitted here is part of my Mphil dissertation which has been recently published as a book by Palgrave Macmillan, International and Ane Publishing, India. I am eager to present this work and receive critical feedback so as to extend this work for a PhD. The paper submitted here is taken from chapter 5 and chapter 6 of the book. I am exclusively stating this to avoid self-plagiarism.)

Introduction

In modern India, scholarship on the sexualities of same-sex relationships has focused on the history of existence and practices in ancient and British India. The analysis focused primarily on the eunuchisation of Indian men and interrelated notions about homosexuality and moral decadence (Boyce, 2006). Srivastava argues that scholarly work on sexuality and particularly alternate sexualities has extensively focused on the vocabulary of history as concrete analysis in the South Asian context (Srivastava, 2001a) and (Srivastava, 2004). There is a necessity, he claims, to reflect on the relation between history (for example, the history of sexuality) and the “contemporary non-scholarly subjectivities” (Srivastava, 2001a) and (Srivastava, 2004). This subjectivity is a formulation of activities and practices in the past, then how this past is understood in the “lay engagements” (Srivastava, 2001a) and (Srivastava, 2004). Srivastava argues that when the focus is on the historical formation of identity, it is construed as the politics of the present. Thus, the need of the hour is to investigate the terrain of sexuality as one of the sites where the modalities of economy, culture, political, social, and global play out.

On the other hand, studies on male-to-male sexuality have been conducted from the perspective of psychoanalysis. The scholarship on this, Boyce states, has focused on theories of sublimation in the formation of masculinity. In summarising the scholarship on male-to-male sexuality in India, Boyce argues that there is an “analytical absence” of studies on male-to-male sexualities as “actual lived experiences of contemporary men” in modern India. This absence is complimented by these practices' lack of societal acceptability in modern Indian culture (Boyce, 2006). In a similar vein, Gayle Rubin argues that sexualities that are non-acceptable socially are rarely accorded the status of analytical complexity (Rubin, 2002).

Conceptualising men who have sex with men under the rubric of contemporary sexual subjectivities in post-colonial modern India is crucial to understanding questions of sexuality, masculinity, gender, self, agency, structure, health (HIV/AIDS), and surveillance (Aadhaar), performance, civil society, and violence. In this research, an ethnographic effort has been made to understand sexual subjectivities that do not fit in the heteronormative framework and cannot be categorised as heterosexual or homosexual. For this purpose, the framework of the sexual subaltern is used, thereby expanding the theoretical underpinnings of Queer theory. This

attention to the local configurations of the everydayness of subalterns will help to analytically refine the relationship between the state and them in the postcolonial period. And will help to bring into the analytical fold the imaginative and affective aspects of subalterns and the practices and ideology of the dominant group.

Fieldwork: An Outline

To understand the sexual subjectivities of MSM in contemporary India, the author conducted fieldwork in Lucknow in June 2018. This was the culmination of being in the field for two years and an endeavour to understand and study the lived experiences of MSM. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 40 respondents who had been identified as MSM by Bharosa Trust¹, which closed down in Lucknow in 2017. The author had a questionnaire (annexed) through which she wanted to understand their constitution of identity, their age of understanding their sexual orientation, and the process of 'coming out' (if there was any). The response of their family/friends if they knew, their understanding of the categories gay and MSM, how they were introduced to the category of MSM, do they find it appropriate for them or do they reject it, do they feel that it is a hidden identity? How do they negotiate this identity in their everyday life about work, police, government, family, friends, etc.? What have been their support mechanisms in their daily life, what do they expect from society and the government, what do they think of section 377 (which was in place at the time of fieldwork), and questions regarding HIV testing and the linking of testing with Aadhar?

Fictive names are used in the paper owing to the nature of the inquiry, as the sexuality of the respondents is most often the hidden aspect of their lives due to the stigma associated with these sexualities. Interviewees' names and other details have been altered to protect the identity of the persons concerned. Resemblance to any particular person is therefore purely coincidental.

The author interviewed Arif Jafar, gay rights activist at Naz International, who was implicated in the Lucknow incident of 2001 and was one of the petitioners against section 377, which has now been scrapped.

The respondents were aged between 18 to 50 years. Most interviews were conducted after 7.30 p.m. in various parks and markets of Lucknow. A few interviews were conducted in the afternoon. These places were Chandra Shekhar Azad Park, Gol Chauraria, Mahanagar; Ghanta Ghar Chowk, Aminabad; GPO Park, Hazratganj; Ram Manhor Lohia Park, Khun Ji Rd, Chaupatiyan, Chowk; Haider Ganj Road, Shekhpur near Rajajipuram; Naz Foundation International, Raj Apartments, Dalibagh, Raj Bhavan Colony, Lalbagh.

The respondents belonged to the working class. Around 30–35 respondents were engaged in the informal sector, such as daily wage labourers, painting, washing utensils, salesmen, giving tuition at home, care workers, and street hawkers. In this group, some respondents were unemployed

¹ Bharosa Trust was a non-profit organisation formed in 2000. It worked in legal, human rights, education, and health and was specially abled. It has also extensively worked on MSM as targeted interventions for the past 14 years. It closed as it was embroiled in legal and financial issues.

and looked for work daily. The other two respondents worked in the private sector, one was engaged in business, and the other worked as a balloon and make-up artist.

The author also visited three Integrated Counselling and Testing Centres (ICTC) in government hospitals in Lucknow: Civil hospital, Balrampur hospital, and King George Medical University.

In the following sections, based on the observation sheets, the author has noted common and diverse observations from the field and semi-structured in-depth interviews, which sometimes extended to group discussions, individual chats, and conversations, and elaborated on the findings from the field.

Understanding Sexuality: Orientation and Identity

The interviews happened in the fields or hotspots, that is, Lucknow's various markets and parks. They are called hotspots and fields by the respondents as these are places where they meet each other and their community and look for sexual partners. In the interviews, the author began by asking for their personal information, which entirely depended on whether the interviewee wanted to share it. Almost all the respondents shared their personal details, such as their original names, occupation, home address, places where they had sex, and sexual partners. Sometimes, the author visited their homes and did interviews there too. This, too, helped in building trust and rapport. The author then asked them about their sexual orientation and when and how they understood their sexual desires and orientation.

In the various hotspots that were visited and interviewed, the realisation of sexual orientation for the respondents happened as early as when they were three years old and as late as 28 or 29 years old. This realisation of sexual orientation was never an experience of 'coming out' as the realisation occurred through various manifestations in their everyday life. Rohit was unemployed and, to earn a living, took tuition. He was well-informed about issues around sexuality. When asked about his experience of realising his sexual orientation, he asserted that it occurred at three. He said:

The identity that I associate myself with the most is feminism (I asked what he means by feminism, and upon clarification, he told me that the word feminism for him means feminine feelings). I am a male from the outer appearance, but inside I have felt like a woman. I am confused about stating my age as from puberty; my inclination was towards the male. Women can be good friends, and we can share, but I cannot have any sexual feelings for them. When I was three years old, I would put nail polish on, wear a frock, and put on makeup. I am confused as I realised when I was three years old and not puberty. Isn't this than natural than adopted? If it is adopted, it will not be by birth and should be at puberty when one is sensible enough to know. Is this *kudarti* (natural) or adopted? I do not know. I am confused.

Thirty-six respondents' families were unaware of their sexual orientation. Even in situations where the family members came to know, it was more of an open secret that was never to be acknowledged, let alone discussed. In cases where the family came to know, they resorted to violence. Very few respondents' families knew and accepted them. In some instances, the entire

family was unaware, and only a few members knew. Another senior outreach worker, Mukesh, stated, "Only my sister-in-law (Bhabhi) knows. She is an amazing lady and supports me completely."

Thus the "coming out" was not an experience that can be explained as the ritual of coming out, in which one's sexuality is made known primarily to parents and friends. The respondent's response to the phrase "coming out" referred to the instances of their private sexual encounters in which they became aware of their sexuality. The "coming out" experience was partial to friends or their community. It can be stated as a 'hidden "coming out" spatially experienced. It was experienced in one's house, park, street, or a deserted (sunsan) place. In a few cases, it was a sexual encounter with an unknown person, which became the experience of "coming out."

For some, there is never a "coming out." Kailesh, who works at the Mahanagar police station and is a caretaker of one of the parks where interviews happened, told the author, "It was a matter of hearts, but now that I have got married, I have lost interest. If I do *galat kaam*, then I will be destroyed. I am married and must shoulder the responsibility of my kids and wife. Once you have that on your mind, you run more for livelihood than sex. Also, I will tell you why all this happens. In older times, a girl and a boy hardly spoke; times were strict. So, boys engaged in such sexual activities with other guys."

The fact of not "coming out" in their vocabulary was '*khul ke nahi aye*.' The word '*khul*' had the same meaning as 'coming out.' Respondents would say that being kothi, giriya, panthi, murad, or double-decker² is a hidden identity (*gupt pechan*). Salim, a tailor by profession, who has no fixed job now, told me, "We could not express our sexual orientation as we have a family. If we come out or express ourselves, society will stare, pass comments and taunt us. We, too, have some respect in society. (*Hum khul ke nahi aye kyunki parivar hai. Khul ke ayenge toh public hume buri nazar se dekhegi*, taunts and comments pass *karegi. Samaj mein humari bhi izzat hai.*)" However, "*khule ke hai*" was increasingly associated with being gay. Being gay meant they came out fully as they were in public. The term gay underwent a change in signification over time.

Srivastava argues in the context of the outreach work carried out for MSM by NGOs such as Naz Foundation in Delhi that same-sex relationships experienced in the non-middle classes do not take on a "purely homosexual identity" (Srivastava, 2001a; 2004). Paul Boyce tracing colonial history, similarly argues that subject formation in British India did not fit into a proper homosexual individual due to the homophobia prevalent in the administration and official circles, for this subject was simultaneously engaged in heterosexual activities. Boyce remarks that this is "a sexual subjectivity achieved in ambiguous relation to such dichotomies" (Boyce, 2006). This indistinction also finds residues in modern times; for instance, Ruth Vanita argues that marriage in India generally happens early; thus, having pure same-sex relations is a bleak

² Giriya, kothi, panthi, murad and double deckers figured in their vocabulary as it was part of the farsi language. Giriya means the person who penetrates his sexual male partner. Kothi, is the person who gets penetrated. Panthi, too penetrates but is the younger as compared to the giriya. Double deckers or versatile, penetrate and get penetrated.

possibility (Boyce, 2006).³ Boyce further adds that marriage marks men's adulthood in India, and the construction of sexuality around discrete selfhoods is a bleak possibility (Boyce, 2006).

The notion of marriage further entrenches the ambiguity that characterises same-sex subjectivity. Most of the respondents interviewed were married and had children. They married under societal and family pressure. Few of the respondents occasionally engaged in same-sex practices but had no relationship and wanted to stop with the "*galat kaam*", as after having children, they felt ashamed. Very few respondents who got busy with family life and had no time did not engage in sexual activities but liked to dress up and wear makeup. Suvrat, who works in the private sector and has been married for almost two years, stated, "Well, now, when someone tries to know me or see me, I have to be very active and alert. Earlier, I did not have to care as much or have an objection as it was a student life, a bachelor's life. In the past, I was normally doing whatever I thought was good. Now I think about my past and realise it was incorrect as I have a family and a daughter who is a year old. I am happy to be changing myself for my daughter. This is my identity and trying to go far from my earlier self. My identity now I want to be active." When intervened and asked, "What does it mean to be active?" he replied, "It means to be a 'man'."

Few had got recently married and avoided contact with their community. As stated earlier, Mohit, who had tried to attempt suicide, is looking for a job, adjusting, and settling into his new phase of life. He said, "I got married in March. It has almost been one year since I have been in touch with my friends from the community. Whatever happened in the past happened, but now I have to better my life. When society comes to know, they will look at them with bad intentions (*huri nazar*)." However, later in the interview, he told me that there is psychological, mental, and emotional stress that he goes through. Whenever it becomes insufferable, he visits the Naz Foundation office as Bharosa Trust is closed. Most of them hid their "*ganda kaam*" because they were scared that their children/family would know, and so would society.

Shahir, who is 35 years old and stays in Alam Nagar, is married and has kids, told me, "It has not stopped but has decreased substantially after marriage as I don't have that much time anymore. Also, I have to look after my family and am concerned about what if they come to know. However, if an opportunity arises, I sometimes go for it." For around thirty-five respondents, marrying was a compulsory tradition primarily for the family's happiness and society. It helped them maintain the respect (*izzat*) of their family and themselves. For some, marriage became a path to redemption after their family was aware or caught them having sex with another male or if they had inclinations considered feminine. Even after going through the ceremonial requirements of marriage, some respondents have or had partners as dear to them as their family.

The identity they most associated with was that of a kothi, which they identified as being a woman from the inside. Sanjeev works as a transwoman sex worker and begs too. His livelihood

³ Vanita, R. (2002a) 'Introduction' in Vanita, R. (2002a) editor, *Queering India: Same-Sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture and Society*, New York: Routledge cited from Boyce, P. (2006). Moral ambivalence and irregular practices: Contextualising male-to-male sexualities in Calcutta/India. *Feminist Review*, 83(1), 79-98. Pg 83

entirely depends on this, and he primarily works at night. He was diagnosed with AIDS in 2006 or 2007. He explains, "I was eight years old when I came to know myself. I had no idea about this. I would put on mehendi, do makeup (*sringar*) and wear a frock in a closed room. My family came to know, and they beat me up. Then they left me to myself and got me married."

Further, he says, "It is my life; they can't change me, and why should I change? I will change when I have to. I am like this, so how can I change? Since childhood, I have been like this. If I can change, then won't I become God?"

Therefore, the sexual subjectivity of the respondents categorised as MSM by Bharosa Trust is formed in a state of flux. It is not a linear expression of their sexual orientation, which many discovered in their childhood or early teens. This discovery of one of the aspects of the self can neither be wholly expressed nor acknowledged. As stated before, it is expressed spatially among friends from the community. This sexual subjectivity is a constant struggle for the respondents who cannot form a consolidated self-based on this subjectivity. The self-understood in the Indian context is unlike the self-formed in the western context. The self in the context of the west is wholly determined by sexual object choice, as whom they have sex with defines their sexual being.

In the Indian context, the self is moulded in partial response to the modalities of the state which has categorised these sexual subjectivities as a 'high-risk group' in need of attention. The other picture of this response lies in the modern processes discussed earlier. In this context, Paul Boyce, Sanjay Srivastava, and Akshay Khanna have explained how the self is formed or experienced in the contemporary period. Moreover, this process of self-making has led to each of them providing a different conceptual understanding of sexuality in a non-western context.

Sanjay Srivastava provides insightful analysis to understand the conceptual underpinnings of sexuality in India (Srivastava, 2004). In the conceptualisation of the erotic, bodily materiality is a part of the erotic, which is an important site of desire and fantasy. In this formation, there is no strict binary between desire and materiality or desire and eroticism, so desire gets saturated in the assigned domains. He argues that desire is the remnant element that rifts apart from the body for the self to be reconstructed to place itself in the esteemed social processes and through entities that have nothing to do with anything sexual and become embroiled in the various sites of life and its ventures.

Thus, Srivastava describes sexuality as an empty category in a state of flux, as always filling up and being released with the desire to be whom one wants to be (Srivastava, 2004). In a similar thread of argument, Boyce argues that the self is established socially rather than individually in India. Paul Boyce, in his work, explores his findings from his ethnographic fieldwork in West Bengal (Boyce, 2014).⁴ He views the sexual as a "moving target" which is neither exhausted by

⁴ His fieldwork is informed in the backdrop of the expansion of "community-based HIV prevention and rights-based initiatives for sexual and gender minority people. He conducted his fieldwork in West Bengal as the state appeared significant since BJP does not rule it. It has, though, witnessed changes in its governance. These changes have been supplemented by disputes over socioeconomic growth, advocacy on the ground for economic rights, and the debates between the right and left wings of politics. Boyce, P. (2014). Desirable rights: Same-sex sexual subjectivities, socio-economic transformations, global flows and boundaries-in India and beyond. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 16(10), 1201-1215. Pg 1204

native sensibilities nor by the flow of transnational discourse of ideas and concepts massed at the junction of these social flows (Boyce, 2014). This conception surfaces in the everydayness of life, in which he situates his work and explains:

Practical and symbolic terrains wherein sexual subjectivities are conceived in relation to transformations in immediate life-worlds, especially in respect of the ways in which people may have a strong investment in personal secrecy and social-cultural opacity regarding their sexual lives (Boyce, 2014).

His ethnographic study in this context raises salient questions about the relation between the state and the sexual subject, for instance, how sexual subjectivity is perceived in civil society and as an actual lived experience. Khanna conceptualises the concept of sexualness to mark its distinction from sexuality.⁵ Khanna argues that sexuality refers to an aspect of personhood. What one desires sexually defines what one becomes. This has been particularly endorsed by biomedicine, which, a century back, designated itself the sole authority to speak the truth about sex and desire. Sexualness, for Khanna here, means that the “Erotic or the sexual need not speak of the sense of self or the definition of the self at all --- for instance, men who have sex with other men or are erotic with other men without thinking of themselves as any ‘different.’” A “sexualness” escapes the frame of sexuality, desire, and eroticism that flows through people without constituting them as subjects (Khanna, 2016).

Srivastava and Boyce have considered the structural realities that go into making a self and subjectivity, thereby arriving at their understanding of sexuality in the non-western context. Khanna and Boyce, to an extent, consider the construction of sexuality around a self to be impossible. However, focussing on the processual notion of self, which is discussed in the next section, Uday Chandra and Atreyee Majumder argue that the modern self is made up of multiple selves in response to various structures of the social (hetero/homo), political (difference between personal and political), economic (livelihood) and cultural (taboos/traditions) world (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). Thus, acknowledging the impossibility of discrete selfhoods, the author argues, based on her fieldwork, that a processual self in the play of multiple selves is possible.

Self, Agency, and Space: The lived experience of MSM in Modern India

The understanding of self in this paper symbolises the subjective being or lived human experience. Uday Chandra and Atreyee Majumder argue that the self is made of multiple selves in response to the world's political, socioeconomic, and cultural structures (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). According to Sanjay Srivastava, the modern self does not mean a concrete locus of subjectivity that can be investigated. Self in post-colonial modernity finds expression in the public sphere, and the necessity is to look for “multiple contours, contexts, manifestations and dissolutions” (Srivastava, 2001b). Thus, he argues there are “other senses to the self in the non-western culture that we have to focus on” (Srivastava, 2001b).

⁵ Eve Sedgwick argues that sexual orientation in Europe was determined based on gendered sexual object choice, and other expressions of sexuality were treated as discrete selfhoods. See Boyce, P. (2014). Desirable rights: Same-sex sexual subjectivities, socio-economic transformations, global flows and boundaries—in India and beyond. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 16(10), 1201–1215

Borrowing from Chandra and Majumder, an attempt is made in this paper to study the processual notion of self, which is in a state of fluidity. Here, the processual idea of self implies focusing on local narratives and sensibilities impacted by the larger socio-cultural and political structures and processes. The latter must be more significant while talking about the processual self. They argue that making and remaking the self is an ongoing process. Thus, this paper focuses on the various sites (gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, surveillance, performance, modernity, economy, the welfare state, etc.) of post-colonial self-making in India concerning MSM. The focus is to understand MSM's life world in their everyday life.

To elaborate further on the notion of the self in this paper, the psychological, sociological, anthropological, and philosophical underpinnings of the self will be explained. The psychological perspective on self-views the self as an amalgamation of the cognitive, which they term "internalist, and the interpersonal, which they call externalist facets" of one's being (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). The self, however, cannot be reduced to cognitive responses to the environment or the reactions towards others in society. Following developmental psychologists Chandra and Majumder state that the self and the consciousness of it is an evolving process that one figures out in her lifetime and in response to the politico-socio-economic and cultural structures that one finds herself in. Insights from sociology supplement this notion of self-informed by psychology.

The sociological perspective on self helps us to map the course of self in what Pierre Bourdieu calls social "fields" (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). The selves embedded in the social 'fields' are constantly involved in meaning-making exercises that narrow the divide between consciousness and action. Chandra and Majumder highlight this process of making selves is not only about using individual agency but a micro-process by which new structures supplant the older structures. However, social transformation is not about structural change but changes at the micro-level of individuals. Therefore, the making of selves denotes the process of "structuration", where new structures emerge (Chandra & Majumder, 2013).

The anthropological and the philosophical matted together help to understand the self and self-making process. Quoting Aihwa Ong's analysis, Chandra and Majumder emphasise sincerely taking the project of self-making as the subjectivities formed and experienced are not wholly influenced by macro-social processes (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). Many anthropological studies on postcolonial India argue that the 'civil society' and the 'political society' are too expansive and ambiguous to arrest empirical peculiarities and the complexities of self-making (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). In this context, they argue it becomes imperative to focus studies on singular selves in definite spatio-temporal situations and, from here, to trace these selves in the larger socio-political domain.

One has to bear in mind that focusing on empirical realities does not compromise the philosophical austerity of the project. As quoting Michael Foucault in their work, Chandra and Majumder argue that the intricate micro-exercises of the self-constitute the modern technologies of the self that are connected to the macro-structures of state formation and social discipline (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). The social recitals of the micro-practices of self and self-

making influence the understanding of the nuances of theoretical concepts such as power, gender, class, caste, culture, economy, capital, etc. This is instrumental in researching and understanding what Julia Kristeva calls “abjection”, which means that forming boundaries between people and groups has an eminent impact on affective and instrumental aspects of political, economic, social, and cultural life (Chandra & Majumder, 2013).

In this process of self-making, ethics plays an important role. The socio-political structures that impose on postcolonial selves imbued in ethical contours make the deliberations and choices of right and wrong substantial. The modern self, in its orientation, imbibes a “radical reflexivity” by which it contemplates its deeds and subjective actions (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). Thus, the self-making process delineates the contours of ethics in a specific Spatio- temporal context. This occurs against a framework of social and cultural meanings embedded in the South Asian context.

An important question in the context of MSM is how their modern subjectivity is constituted through the confluence of governmental discourses of risk, biomedicine, sexuality, and the penal. Conceptualising modern subjectivity in the non-western context is one of the tasks of this paper. The task is further complicated by attempting to understand this subjectivity in the formation of masculinities in the context of Indian society, which must constantly negotiate with the category of risk. This task is set in the terrain of a medico-legal governmental regime. In exploring masculinities, attempting to ground modern subjectivity will also help us explore the questions of self, agency, and space (Srivastava, 2001b).⁶

Michael Foucault has been influential in explaining the groundwork for building the modern self, particularly concerning sexuality. The author believes that though Foucault’s work is significant, she agrees with Srivastava on the view that Foucault’s work is context specific. It is based on European history and society, which cannot unproblematically be applied to other contexts, like the Indian context (Srivastava, 2001b). There are nuances ‘in the field’ one must bear in mind to provide the whole picture. Srivastava quotes Bryan Turner to validate his view to explain the modern processes that have a bearing on the subjectivity of the modern self (Srivastava, 2001b). Turner argues that the image of the modern self-set by Foucauldian analysis is devoid of:

The significance of consumerism, fashion, and lifestyle on contemporary notions of selfhood...the new self is far more mobile, uncertain and fragmentary than the bureaucratic image of the self in the work of Weber and Foucault because the modern self-corresponds to and is produced by a new uncertainty, differentiation and the fragmentation of the risk society (Srivastava, 2001b).

⁶ To quote Sanjay Srivastava’s notes from his article, “a theoretically sensitive ethnographic analysis can provide a more complex and dynamic picture of everyday practises that result from the interface between ‘tradition’ and the realities of late twentieth-century life.” See Srivastava, S. (2001b). Non-Gandhian sexuality, commodity cultures, and a ‘happy married life’: The cultures of masculinity and heterosexuality in India. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 24(s1), 225–249 Pg. 227

In a similar line of argument, Gayatri Reddy, in her article based on her fieldwork in Hyderabad, identifies two models of same-sex sexuality (Reddy, 2001), namely the modern gay model and the traditional kothi model. Based on her analysis of the exchanges that take place between the two models, she raises concern about the Foucauldian underpinnings of homosexuality in modern times as a linear expression of "supersession." (Reddy, 2001) She further critiques Foucault's understanding of modern sexuality as he does not consider the international exchange of information, ideas, people, things, and knowledge and how these exchanges impact our understanding of sexuality in the non-western parts of the world (Reddy, 2001).

The first model has been stated as the 'modern gay' model, and the second is the 'traditional kothi' model. She problematizes the distinction between the models, arguing that they can neither be distinguished systematically nor can each model be a unique indicator of tradition and modernity. The interactions between the two models help her understand the 'local' domain of homosexuality by comparing the sex/gender distinction of traditional kothi and modern gay models. In the process, she aims to locate the complexity and negotiations that go into making the sexual self in modern times. Thus, exploring the formulation of conceptions of sexuality, identity, culture, and modernity.

The identity construction in the gay model, she states, is based on sexual object choice, which has a different set of rules than the kothi model, which conforms to a given set of rules. However, disputes do exist in the latter model too. She states the difference between these two models who occupy the public spaces and the hijra community based on her identification of the patterns of desire. The Hijra community has a hierarchical set-up of membership rules and various idiosyncratic behaviours (gender experiences, ritual performance, and asexuality) attached to them. In the gay/kothi model, the emphasis is on sexual object choice, and all the persons can be loosely called gay (Reddy, 2001).

She elaborates further on her analysis from her fieldwork. She argues that the gay men in Hyderabad view themselves as distinct from heterosexual men, similar to how homosexuality was considered a distinct category of person in the nineteenth-century West. This distinction is based on their sexual orientation than on anatomy or gender experiences. Therefore, she argues that in the construction of contemporary sexual identity, the 'idiom of consumption' plays an influencing role. It serves as a function of sexual object choice and related activities. In the two models, the persons are identified as gay in the gay model, unlike in the kothi model, where people are identified as penetrative/receptive kothi/panthi. However, Reddy cautions that these identifications are not fixed as they are used fluidly (Reddy, 2001).

Boyce rejects the over-deterministic view of sexuality, and the classification of sexual orientation based on object choice, as people might experience their sexuality outside this purview. He cautions over the deterministic view of sexuality and assumes that sexuality per se exists in all cultures and languages. There may be different ways of addressing the same, and one should move from a universal analysis of sexuality. Boyce argues this necessarily opens the route to understanding the complex terrain of sexuality by raising experiential and theoretical questions about how we study sexuality anthropologically. This will also direct us to understand relations

of care and affect and to evaluate how sexuality configures to understand subjectivity eventually and as a term for policy making, law, and legislation (Boyce, 2014).

'*Galat kaam*,' '*ganda kaam*' and '*bimari*' figured prominently in the vocabulary of the interviewees. Their response was three-fold when asked why they consider same-sex activities as *galat kaam* or *ganda kaam*. It is unacceptable to society; the family does not know and will not accept it. Lastly, it is hidden. Hence it is wrong. However, few responded that it is *galat kaam* if one has intercourse in public spaces. The use of *galat kaam*, *ganda kaam*, or *bimari* does not necessarily have a negative connotation. Rather it signifies the awareness and experience of the respondents vis-à-vis how same-sex practices are looked upon in society, including their family, friends and workplaces.

They use the language of society to denote the meaning accorded to it and are moulded by the substance it carries for them. Based on this, they engage in same-sex practices characterised by a sharp distinction between public and private. This public and private distinction so integral to the project of feminism has helped us to understand and expand the workings of power. This has enabled us to expand the boundaries of the political. In the context of same-sex practices in Lucknow, the author wants to unpack this homogenised understanding of public and private.

The public for the respondents is society. It was their workplace, the markets, and the streets, as the understanding of the public is. However, the respondents had found their community in these very public spaces. The community existed and was located in these very public spaces where *galat kaam* or *ganda kaam* were condemned. This community nested on a vast identification network with particular feelings considered feminine, contact, affect and friendships. The community for them also stands starkly different from society. There is us (community) and them (society). The straight friends are considered by them straight and normal and are not aware of their orientation. Few straight friends are familiar and have also engaged in same-sex practices but prefer to call themselves straight than gay or kothi. The community understands the locational sensibilities of what constitutes moral and immoral activities. It is in these public spaces that it also meets and expresses itself.

There is temporality to the existence of this community. They meet after work in the evening. Kunal, a balloon artist by profession, stated, "When I am under stress, I come here to the park and meet my community. I share my issues, and they share theirs. We then feel light and go back to our homes." Sunil, who washes utensils at a shop and is unmarried, said, "We have fun and laughter, which is the best remedy to forget our troubles and the day's hardships." Piyush, the senior peer educator, is called mummy by her younger sisters, as she helps and counsels them, for instance, on how to use condoms, etc. According to Piyush, "We come here and relieve ourselves, in a sense, act feminine (*latak-jatak haath thoda guma liya*) and address each other by their community names such as Rekha, Munni."

The community meets in various parks and other distinct spaces to live and express itself, which is hidden and in flux. The realisation of this self-amongst the other multiple selves they live, in the web of their homosociality wherein sexual is not the prominent impulse. As most of the

respondents interviewed were in this community whose central stimulants are, to quote Naisargi N Dave, the “need for relationality, care and sociality”, which is central to “the queer politics of invention given the solitude, secrecy, and unknowability within which same-sex love is generally lived” (Nilsen & Roy, 2015). In this very public space, personal is realised, flourishes, and is instrumental in helping them build a discrete self around their sexuality. It is here that the realisation of self happens.

For many respondents who identify as kothi, the personal in their everyday life gets infused with what is typically understood as the public. Mohan, who is currently an outreach worker and works in Jaunpur, said, “If people (*log*) came to know, they would give you a bad stare (*huri nazar*)?” A young and shy guy named Mohin was unaware of the dynamics of the community as he was new to it and had been introduced through a giriya with whom he had sex (the giriya was also interviewed), stated, “that I engage in body touch, is a hidden identity, if revealed, people will give me a bad stare (*huri nazar*)” Ahmed, a twenty-year-old student stated, “I came to know at the age of 10 when I noticed people and realised I am different. I realised further that my thoughts were different when I thought about it. My friends commented on my differences too. I am gay and not MSM. Gay boys are different. It should be a hidden identity, as when people come to know, they behave weirdly and ask others to stay away. The third gender is different. It is not hidden. I am not in touch with family or people as they view you with bad intentions (*log galat nazar se dekhte hai*).”

As in their personal lives, the self that is realised is the self that exists in the public domain. They have to be cautious of their behaviour around their family and society. This complicates the understanding of privacy. Privacy is considered an attribute of the personal. In this context, privacy also exists in public. There are different modalities through which they live their private sexual subjectivities. Meeting their community is one. The use of their language is another.

What is *huri nazar*? What is it constituted of? This is the imagination of the upper and middle classes. The personal and the public are based on upper-class moral values⁷, who get sufficient latitude to have a personal within a public. For them, their private inclinations do not spill over to the public. Even if it does get expressed in public, they have enough social latitude, which allows them to exist and live. Therefore, the public and private distinctions are different across class divisions. This distinction is a constituent of social power, which is the prerogative of the elites. This power also constitutes the notion of space. The social imposition of the social power (heteronormativity) forbids the self to form as a whole for the respondents and results in the creation of multiple selves.

The social constitution of the spaces raises essential questions of acceptance. Acceptance here becomes a class question. Upon being asked what they expect from society? most respondents

⁷ The actual lived experiences of the same sex practices is experienced in the sharp distinction between public and private. The public sphere in post-colonial India has been formed around the politics of modernity. This means, as Srivastava points out too, the public sphere has gradually cemented as a moral space and imbricated in this are the ideas of nationalism, upper caste politics, as well the politics of ‘proper’ gender and sexuality. I am complicating this binary. Srivastava, S. (2004). *Sexual sites, seminal attitudes: Sexualities, masculinities and culture in South Asia*. SAGE Publications India.

answered that they should be accepted for who they are. Some were wary of anything positive from society. The question of acceptance is also significant for the tradition of marriage. A few respondents said they would not marry without societal and family pressure.

A kothi named Manish was interviewed, who has been married to her giriya for the past 25 years. He had a huge temple of the goddesses Kali in his room and, by profession, performed in religious events (*jagaran*). The kothis around him described him as a religious person engaged in daily worship. The author briefly got to see his husband. When his husband came home, Manish quickly completed the interview and left. Piyush and Mukesh told the author that the husband does not like Manish talking to people, and when he comes home, he wants him to be present and dedicated to him. The family and neighbours know and have accepted it. They live in a three-storeyed building whose landlord is a kothi himself. He is 50 years old and is married with children. He was interviewed too. Manish and his husband live as husband and wife. Manish, a kothi, is the wife in this marriage. He performs all the 'wifely duties.' His husband, a giriya, maintains all the practices associated with a husband in a patriarchal society. This division of roles is premised on sexual acts. Kothi is the one who is penetrated, and her partner, giriya/panthi⁸, penetrates. This division of functions into feminine and masculine fits in with the heterosexual imagination permeating the class division. The modern sexual self, Chandra and Majumder argue, aims to create new structures within the existing structures, which they call the 'process of structuration' (Chandra & Majumder, 2013). Although the kothi/giriya or panthi relation operates within heterosexual notions, there does exist agency, but it is non-sovereign in nature.

Lipika Kamra argues that subjects are produced at the crossroads of multiple modalities and structures of power. The subject's agency is an outcome of these various discourses of power as the subject is embedded in them. The subjectivities of the subject as agents need to be formulated in the everydayness of their existential conditions, which is characterised by bargaining. This helps in understanding the nuances of various facets of subject formation (Kamra, 2013). In this paper, the MSM, in their everydayness of life, negotiate and bargain with the micro and macro structures of power that helps to understand how their agency is constituted. Therefore, the constitution of their agency can be formulated as a 'non-sovereign agency.'

Their agency is fundamentally linked to the notion of space.⁹ It is in the space of the community that they can express themselves. Some respondents told the author that they would dress up as women in Delhi or Mumbai as no one cares how they are, and no one stares at them. They feel liberated as they can be whom they want without much public gaze and feel that society is more accepting. They travel to nearby places such as Agra and Kanpur. They enjoy being anonymous and roaming around as a group in these places. Their agency is, in a way, also

⁸ Giriya and Panthi are age-based distinctions. The older partner is called giriya, and the younger one is called panthi.

⁹ Vasudevan distinguished between "the intimist mode and the public orbits of expressing individual male identity; it is the register of everyday that is the terrain of intimist mode." Gender, power and self are conceivably reconstructed. The zones of these "intimate reflections of the world of experience are neither home nor workspaces, but a third other space which seems to be the 'home' of masculinity." Similarly, Radhika Chopra argues that the "street" represents a zone external to home and work, representing a typical zone of male companionship and an expression of "alternative and non-coherent masculinity." See Chopra, R., Dasgupta, C., & Janeja, M. K. (2000). Understanding masculinity. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1607-1609.

spatially defined. This is also possible because cities such as Delhi or Mumbai have a robust civil society, and NGOisation¹⁰ deepens this presence.

In Lucknow, civil society is gradually forming its presence. It is at a languid pace, as in 2017, Lucknow organised its first pride walk. Arif Jafar, who was implicated in the 2001 Lucknow incident and was a petitioner in the case against 377, holds a different view. He disagreed with the practices associated with upper/middle-class gays, for instance, pride walk, dressing, etc. He argues that events such as the pride walk do more harm than good. He states that injustice that is meted out to them due to their sexual orientation cannot be solved in such events.

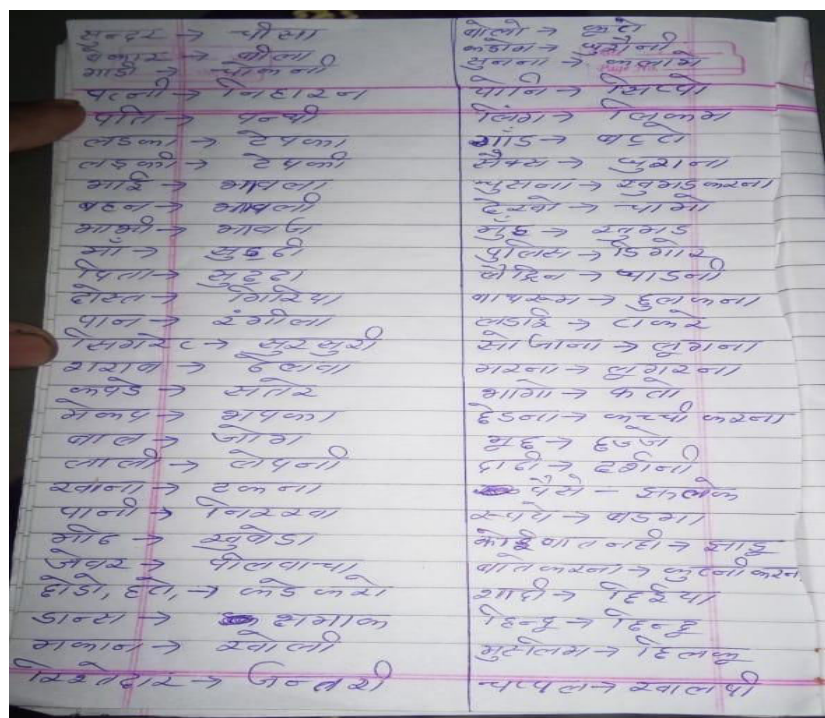
On the other hand, these events entrench more stereotypical notions associated with being gay and further complicate the lack of acceptance by society. Society grows more opposed to such events and deepens its prejudice. He states that one should try to behave appropriately to assimilate into society. Unless you have acceptance, he expresses these events are wrongly construed by society with little or no understanding of who we are.

Farsi: A Language of their Own

Based on the distinction between public and private that was elaborated on earlier, the liminal space in the public in which their community comes alive is one of the ways they exercise their agency. They operate within the norms of the society but can carve that liminal space for themselves. Thus, they experience liberation as they can be whom they want to be, the sexual subjectivity that is most hidden (*gupt pechan*) for them. However, this experience of liberation does not come due to the disruption of the status quo. New structures emerge not to disrupt the old ones but to exist with them. A modality through which they exercise their agency in the liminal space they have is the usage of their language. It is called Farsi and is passed on from generation to generation. Here the older kothis are called *mummies* who play an essential role in the passage of their language.

¹⁰ Ngoisation in metropolitan cities helps to develop a sense of understanding on various issues, which helps to broaden the horizon of people, make them aware of the issues they face, and help to address the same through the language of rights. There is a caveat here. NGOs also form a gateway for the government to access knowledge about subpopulations categorized as targeted interventions or with whom the government has a contested relationship.

Figure 46: The author took the photo on 20th July 2018. One can notice that a policeman's uniform is in the background, and the copy is placed over it. This picture powerfully reveals how they exercise their agency in the everydayness of their lives. It also depicts that their lives exist at intersections of what has been unproblematically assumed as neat divisions of private and public.



The language is instrumental in making the community come alive and for MSM to express themselves. Language is a glue that binds the community together; through language, they can express their hidden feelings. Through this Farsi language, they communicate amongst themselves in public spaces and carry on with their idiosyncrasies without the public knowing much about it. Pankaj, a peer educator who hails from Nepal and runs a chowmein street shop described the usage of the language. He explained, “When we are in the park, I want to engage in sex and need a condom. I cannot say condom, so that I will tell my fellow kothi, please arrange for *helmet* (condom).” Rohan, a makeup artist, jokingly told me, “We want to check out men and call them beautiful without people around us knowing. So, we will call a beautiful man amongst ourselves *cheesa* (which means beautiful in farsi). Sometimes, we use our language when we walk on the street and want to call out names. This way, we have our fun, and no one comes to know.”

Language also helps them circumvent the public and private distinction. Usage of farsi in public is the central impulse for the realisation of inner hidden selves and identity. Through language, they can also live and express the discrete selves that Khanna and Boyce found impossible. It is the inner self which they can sustain through language and community that exists amongst the other multiple selves. Since this inner self is alive, they can exercise non-sovereign agency. The society also has its language to address them, such as calling them '*chakka (hinjra), gandhu, meetha* (police primarily use these two terms.) Another path to the realisation of their agency is the performance of masculinity in their lives, expanded in the next section.

Masculinity as a Performance

Here are some of the responses from the respondents upon being asked, “What it means to be active or to be strict or stiff” “What it means to be a man” or “How do you become a man.” This performance of masculinity is another self they have to play in their lives—among their wives, family, workplace, straight friends, and the public. They had to become active, stiff, and strict. All these adjectives are associated with being a man, which is how to behave like a man. Masculinity was performed to hide their inner feelings and feminine behaviour and not arouse suspicion in their familial life. Sushil, who works at a medical shop, told me that as a man, he had to keep everything intact, “I got married and have children. Initially, I resisted as I did not want to get married. This made my parents believe that ‘my boy has some flaws (*ladke main kami hai*).” Mohit, who married in March and is trying to adjust to the new phase in his life, explained in detail how he behaves like a man and what characteristics are associated with it. He elaborates:

There are changes in my present life as compared to my earlier life. My friends in the locality who knew about my earlier self also accept that I am changing for the better and acknowledge that he meets us normally as we do. I hurl abuses while talking. I have to do it forcefully even when I don't want to throw abuse while talking. I have to do it as no choice. I have a wife at home. I have to talk to her too. Sometimes in conversation, I purposely have to use abuse here and there. I have to do all this to reflect my manhood (*mardangi*). I have to keep a beard, and everyone is watching you as they are suspicious of me being different. They watch with whom I hang out and all. My friends with whom I hang out told me to change as they said you might be different, but we have to see ourselves too. What will people think of us when we hang out with you? You will have to change yourself. Change your style of walking, sitting and how you go about yourself (*uthana baithne chalna firana thoda change karo*). I just have to show off being a man (*dikhawakarnahotahi*). But how much you try to be a man reflects somewhere in my inner self. I avoid my community friends as I have to change myself. When I clean and shave, my face looks different, and people watch me suspiciously. I would call myself heterosexual, which means with man and woman.

Gopal, married and works in a private company, said, “I am a man as I have always been, but I can't let go of my inner feminine feelings.” The performance of masculinity was crucial for him in the family as he feared they might know. He states, “I have to be a man in the sense sexually satisfy my wife; otherwise, she will grow suspicious. She will gossip around, and my in-laws and family will come to know.”

As mentioned earlier, Suvrat no longer engages in same-sex relationships and has been married for almost two years. He states:

I have to be very active and alert. Earlier I didn't have to care as much or have an objection as it was a student life, a bachelor's life. In the past, I was normally doing whatever I thought was good. Now I think about my past and realise that it was incorrect as I have a family and a daughter who is a year old. I am happy to be changing myself for my daughter. This is my identity and trying to go far from my earlier self. My identity now I want to be active.” When I intervened, I asked, “What does it mean to be active?” He replied, “It means to be a ‘man.’”

The author interviewed Rakesh on one side of the road in Haider Ganj. He was taken aback that, being a woman, the author so casually asked questions about sex and condom. He enquired after the interview that it doesn't make the author uncomfortable asking such questions. The author explained to him in detail about her research that she had been in the field for almost a month, and that the respondents made it easy for her as they shared stories from their lives with her. In the interview with him, he repeatedly referred to being stiff. The conversation with him to understand this process of being stiff to be a man went like this, "*Pehle* (earlier) I was open, now I have become stiff, so no one taunts." When asked, "What do you mean by being stiff?" He replied, "I have a family and daughter now. My family got me married, so I stay in this line now. I have become stiff and a man." The author asked again, "What is to be man/stiff?" He said, "To be a man is to fulfil your responsibility, look after your family and stay away from these types of people (kothis)."

Similarly, other respondents had an analogous understanding of being active, stiff, or strict. It is in their everydayness of lives that they have to perform the behaviour associated with masculinity. In Farsi, to become a man means to become '*karatal*.' As respondents told the author, whenever in public space in their community, they behave feminine and see police or people approaching, they immediately warn each other, "become a man (*karatal ban jao*)."

The performance of masculinity reminds us of Simone de Beauvoir's acclaimed quote, "one is not born, but, rather, becomes a woman." (Beauvoir, 2014) The kothi, considered an effeminate male, has to negotiate this identity in her everyday life. She becomes 'he' in a particular sphere of life and stays 'she' in her community. In a city like Lucknow, deeply entrenched in heteronormativity and homophobia, the Kothi has to become a man to not only exist but live a life of dignity for themselves and their family.

Dignity and respect (*izzat*) were the most common terms used by respondents when asked why it is a hidden identity. The conceptualizations of sexuality in the South Asian context have to be sensitive to local vocabularies and sensibilities, which shed new light on understanding the self and modern subjectivity. Sanjay Srivastava argues that in the Indian context, the urges and impulses around sexuality and sex have to also negotiate with the political economy of the sexual subalterns, as this also raises important questions of redistribution, equality, and justice in the post-colonial nation.

On the performance of masculinity, Srivastava's analysis applies well. He argues that the "making" and "producing" project is pivotal to the scholarship on gender as this helps to locate their historical and social character (Srivastava, 2018). He argues that understanding the everydayness of gender relations and their workings in the domestic spaces contributes to the more significant debates on gender relations and making policy at the national level (Srivastava, 2018). Identity formation in India, Srivastava argues, is contingent primarily on religion and cultures of masculinity. He argues that portraying "proper" masculine behaviour in cinema, novels, songs, folklore, commercials, and their enormous archives exposes masculinity's fragile and delicate nature as it has to be continuously reinforced (Srivastava, 2018). This dislocates the notion that it is a "naturally endowed characteristic" (Srivastava, 2018).

Masculinity, then, Srivastava argues, is enacted than expressed. He argues that when a thing is expressed, it already exists. However, gender-based identity does not exist naturally or biologically (Srivastava, 2018). He says enacting masculinity is a whole project of “building and rebuilding, consolidation, representation, and enforcement; in other words, we must think of gender identities as works in progress.” (Srivastava, 2018) Thus masculinity is in a state of constant flux. It is not a biological state but a state that one has to always exert oneself towards. Thus, the unstable state of masculinity where one has to relentlessly demonstrate their manliness is enacted in various social domains, particularly in the realm of sexual life (Srivastava, 2018).

Performance, Srivastava states, becomes the keystone of men’s sexual activities and terrain in which men have to negotiate within the framework of experiencing power. “Semen anxiety”, as Srivastava terms it, demonstrates the fixation on a normative understanding of sexuality and how it is idealised in the social and cultural spheres. This significantly affects the making of law and its judgments, policy, domestic spaces, economy, and the self. Ironically, though this has captured the social and cultural landscape claiming to represent the ultimate truth, it is a ‘silent sphere’ (Srivastava, 2001a). This is a piece of the puzzle called sexuality in the Indian terrain, and to complete the puzzle, “little traditions” that are considered deviations should be included to know the whole truth (Srivastava, 2001a). The performance of masculinity contributes to the obliteration of non-heteronormative sexualities and their history as they are assimilated into the “monolithic nationalist myth of heteronormativity.”(Srivastava, 2018) Colonial history and post-colonial modernity are entrenched with the obliteration and devaluation of identities based on sexualities and gender that did not conform to the hyper-masculinist ideologies formed due to the concert of expatriate discourses and the native elite who aimed to imitate colonial customs. (Srivastava, 2018).

Understanding masculinity in the non-heteronormative structures of gender identity and sexual identity will reveal the process of learning that men undergo and the processes of male sociality and power. This interrogation will also disclose the quotidian practices of producing men as the “universal subject” of history and generate a “theory of practice” that seeks to understand the constructions of power through quotidian performances (Srivastava, 2018). Radhika Chopra, Chaitali Dasgupta, and Mandeep K Janeja argue that investigating the question of masculinity and understanding its ramifications has become intrinsic to gender studies. This, they claim, has unfolded as a result of three events. First, the historical temporality of the feminist political project and its engagements with subaltern studies focusing on gay and lesbian perspectives. This historical juncture disrupted the belief of masculinity as naturally endowed with power and brought to the fore the existence of fragile masculinities devoid of power. The spread of HIV/AIDS was the second event that raised concern about the homogenous composition of heterogeneous males and their fixed sexual activities. Men as a collective¹¹ were positioned as targeted interventions of epidemiological interventions. This led to a pathological understanding

¹¹ I want to differ from the article's authors here as men who came under the epidemiological gaze were men from the working class and on the lower rung of class and caste hierarchy.

of masculinity. Academics in women's studies identified women as the first subaltern gender and focused on their entrenched disempowerment. This translated into policy and activists who improvised policy to redress the 'powerlessness' in their lives. In this interaction, an explicit understanding arrived that the participation of men is crucial to addressing this disempowerment (Chopra et al., 2000).

Chopra, Dasgupta, and Janeja's analysis in the context of gay men in India echoes the arguments Srivastava made earlier on the social process of learning that men undertake. They observe that gay men hide their idiosyncratic gay behaviour and styles and don "an armour of excess: a style of machismo and hyper-masculine images" influenced by popular culture. (Chopra et al., 2000). This understanding of masculinity is deeply embedded in society, and men tend to hide their emotional bonding with other men. They argue that gay men in India have to live with the gender discourse set in society, which makes them live dual sexual lives complicating the question of bisexuality "as a grey area within the politics of male sexuality" (Chopra et al., 2000).

Similarly, Paul Boyce argues that one cannot term same-sex relationships as bisexuals as they constantly bargain between homosexuality and heterosexuality. Calling them bisexuals obfuscates the negotiations in their everyday lives and depicts a clear and uncomplicated terrain of bisexuality. This causes immense angst and discord in the making of the masculine self. Body type plays an influential role in grading masculinity on the physique. Therefore, the body becomes the twofold locus of angst and assertion of masculine identity. The social process of learning masculinity is not uniform, as it is moulded by variations crisscrossed by the components of age, class, caste, gender, and work.

It is through these processes that masculinity is continually learned, cultivated, shaped, and approved (Chopra et al., 2000; Boyce, 2006), which too, to an extent, applies to the kothis that the author met in Lucknow.

What does it mean to become a man? Why has this social learning process become essential and a natural phenomenon impossible to escape? Suresh, an employee at Naz Foundation, has been working on MSM for eleven years. In the Lucknow incident of 2001, Suresh was present in the office when the police came to search the office. He told the author, "We are averse to the bodily movements that gay and Hijra people have. Why does all that become more noticeable and create problems? Dressing up and behaving like a man does not create any ripple." More importantly, for many respondents, behaving normally was directly linked to the question of the economy.

Acting like a man was imperative not only to get the job but also not to get fired. Anuj has no family and is unmarried. He lives with other kothis and states, "I am unemployed as the people I used to work with came to know about me. I had to leave." Therefore, the performance of masculinity is crucial to stay in a job. Being a man was crucially linked to the question of property and inheritance. Few feared that the loss of being a man would also be a loss of property and estate. This was also linked to marriage as to who will take care of property once parents pass away or if the respondents do not have children.

Also, to be a man lets you be indifferent to other inequalities, as Srivastava states. He argues that gendered notions of power, contrary to other modes of power, differ in their residual composition. One can, for example, forgo the advantages of caste, class or race, but this forgoing does not compromise the benefits of gender. One becomes a male through the social process of learning and is immune to criticisms directed at other modes of power. Srivastava further argues that in situations with a relation between the gendered notion of power and inequality, homosexual men in India who are considered feminine and thus inferior still desire to ascribe to masculinist ideas (Srivastava, 2018).

Being a man is also linked to the aspirations and expectations of the family. It is primarily fulfilled through marriage. Societal pressure, too, acts as a catalyst. Marriage is also considered necessary for offspring and the continuation of a lineage and family name. It is also, as stated before, linked to the question of property. Some respondents expressed discomfort in being with their wives, as it was in this domain that their performance of being a man was most important. Fulfilling her needs and looking after her gave the husbands some latitude to have the dual lives they lived. If the wife was not satisfied (materially and sexually), it always threatened them. They were more emotionally attached to other kothis as compared to their wives, few respondents had adjusted well to their new lives and were slowly on the path to dispose of their earlier life. Mukesh, the senior outreach worker, has had a partner (*giriya*) for the last fifteen years. His wife came to know about them. He said, "My wife came to know and fought with me. I simply told her what the issue was. You are getting what you want."

In talking to the respondents, whose ages varied from 18 to 50 years, the author could decipher that in comparison to women, men are mostly not socially aware and conscious of their bodies. Women, at an early age, are socialised to be deeply aware of their bodies, given the level of violence that they face. On the other hand, boys are not so socially conscious of their bodies and touch. Among friends, the consciousness of the body does not exist as it is in fun (*dosti* and *yaari*), and they sometimes experience same-sex practices. The author interviewed some respondents who had been raped or sexually harassed. This had significantly impacted them but telling it to their parents or family never occurred as it would reflect something wrong with them or their masculinity. Girls and women being aware of their bodies do not necessarily translate to sharing incidents of sexual violence and harassment, as we can see with the MeToo campaign. But here, the author wants to point out that men are less conscious of their bodies than women. An activity among friends that may be loaded with meanings is passed off as fun (*masti*). Thus, one must look into the questions of sexual violence and harassment when discussing masculinity as a whole.

In the workplace, a masculine self has to stay in place. Livelihood relates to behaving properly and fulfilling the role man has been socialised to do. This, in turn, is connected to marriage and other roles that have to be fulfilled. This has been discussed earlier. The author came across a vital view that Rohit, who was unemployed, told her. He said that people think we are lazy and don't want to work but face specific issues at the workplace. He said, "When we work in an office, and there is a break, men hang out with other men, and similarly, so do women. If I want to hang out with a woman, I will be labelled feminine; if I hang out with men, I will again be labelled

feminine or someone interested in men. So, what should I do? I feel suffocated.” This is a significant analysis to understand the workplace environment and culture. These microsites of everydayness are essential to understanding how modern subjectivity is formed. The self is performed in different ways, but at the same time, the performance may not grant desired results. Not fitting in can be a source of distress and trauma in the lives of MSM. So, the performance is in a state of flux, whereby meeting the community and shedding that distress restores both the self—the hidden and the self that is always performing.

Conclusion: Queer Community—Disjuncture between Political and Politics?

The NACO categorises MSM as a high-risk group, and sizeable epidemiological data is produced on them with the aid of the HIV surveillance system, one of the most extensive systems in the world. The knowledge produced on this group in the state's language characterises them as a bridge population and hence a threat to the general population. The state acknowledges the existence of this group not in the normative sense but through the language of health and policy management. Post the introduction of antiretroviral therapy, the AIDS epidemic has become manageable. As a result, there was a significant shift in the discourse of the state. The knowledge of AIDS no longer remained confined to the experts. It has acquired a social presence where the subgroup in question also became responsible sexual agents charged with the responsibility of condom distribution. These changes have also affected a transformation of the governmentalization of sexuality. It has now become a matter of direct governance and policy intervention. For instance, the recent reports of the NACO have expanded the definition of the key population to include gay men as well.

With the eventual aim of achieving the target of an AIDS-free India, an expansive 'last mile' approach was adopted in 2017 by the National Health Policy (NHP). The 'National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS and STI 2017–24: Paving the way for an AIDS-free India. The new vision and vigour have done little to change the governmental discourse around the subpopulation of MSM. The government continues to identify MSM as a risky group and a key population, with a substantial modification in that the language of risk has been extended to include gay men in the report. It reinforces stigma about the community, which becomes a source of discrimination and exploitation.

The scrapping of section 377 of the IPC brought home optimism and hope for the queer community in India: they are no longer criminals for choosing to be what they want to be. But a new challenge meets them on the way ahead; an interviewee from the queer community expressed this sentiment on an NDTV programme post the judgment, "we have been decriminalised, but we have to work towards our identity (*par pechan toh abhi banana hai*).¹² It is noteworthy to bear in mind that while in the domain of legality, the queer community have been decriminalised, in the medico-sociocultural space, the gay community has been included in the revised vocabulary of risk. The gay community is now a part of the large sub-populations of the

¹² The news programme aired on NDTV 24x7, when the judgement was given on 6 September 2018. The news correspondent interviewed the people from the queer community.

queer who got categorised as risky. This is not a normative acceptance and keeps the shadow of deviant sexualities strictly in place.

The outcome of the contradictory strategies pursued by the neo-liberal governmental regime is the minimisation and minimalization of complex sexual realities into medical sorting and grouping (Khanna, 2007). The paper explores this phenomenon and derives insights from the fieldwork, looking at the lifeworld of people categorised as MSM. The field study aims to understand the alternative practices of the MSM, who takes on the identity of a medicalised subject in their negotiations with the state. These alternative life practices of MSM have been understood through the frame of non-sovereign agency as they do not rupture any structure but make multiple structures in their negotiations with the state. The instance of an alternative life practice that emerged in the fieldwork is the performance of masculinity. They must constantly engage and mould themselves to become active, stiff, and strict in their everyday life. This, in their vocabulary, means to be masculine. Being a man is fundamentally linked to the questions of occupation, as any suspicion about their manhood could make them vulnerable to taunts and prejudices or even force them to leave their jobs. The masculine identity is also bargained in the domain of familial relations, as any suspicion will lead them to proclaim him as an abnormal son. This is important for being a 'man' relates to the question of inheritance and property and fathering a child. The performance of masculinity is also imbibed in the politics of symbolism. Sexual prowess, that is, to satisfy their wife; use of abuse in their conversations; donning a beard and conversing in a heavy tone are symbolic ways of being masculine. The process of structuration is also associated with the processual notion of self, which is formed in response to modern society's political, social, and cultural structures. Multiple selfhoods are formed in this relationship of the bargain with the various structures of the state and society. Therefore, to understand modern sexual subjectivity, a discrete self is not possible, formed on the classic liberal distinction between private and public. This complicates the binary of public and private and raises important questions about privacy and how it is a class-based conception and experience.

The realisation of their modern sexual subjective self, which is hidden in public owing to the stigma it carries, exercises its agency in public through the usage of their language, *Farsi*. Though a discrete self is not possible based on the binary of private and public as understood conventionally, the author argues that a discrete self is formed. It is transient and spatially realised through the tradition of their language. It helps them to live their personal in public spaces, parks, markets, and deserted places. Thus, language allows them to express themselves and forge tighter community bonds.

The research is an effort to bring to the fore the native sensibilities and sensitivities of things and people considered trivial and hidden somewhere in the ordinary affairs of life and place them on the academic plane of critical investigation. However, the complex realities and dynamics of these people's lives warrant a more sustained theoretical and empirical engagement. The current research can take several possible directions, for instance, the performance of masculinity, the impact of Aadhaar and public health, and so on. A particularly intriguing aspect of the fieldwork is the significance of language and its role in modern sexual subjectivity.

A critical reflection that dawned on the author in her engagement with the process of categorisation is the disjuncture between the political and politics of the Queer Community. In the domain of political, a sexual subject becomes a political question, while in politics, a sexual subject is not a political question. Hence, the Queer Community is unable to capture the state and has a long way to go to actualise and realise their rights for marriage, adoption, finances, etc., and most importantly, to change the mindset of the people.

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Marginal Religious Spaces and Dissonant Heritage: Negotiating Adaptive Agencies at Mausoleums and Dargahs in Dhaka and Delhi

Imamur Hossain, Sonargaon University

Madhuri Agarwal, Sonargaon University

Introduction

Historic mausoleums, dargahs, and mazars are the significant symbols of shared spirituality, which often occupy pivotal roles in the urban niches of Global South. They act as spiritual loci for followers who embrace their mystical yet unifying forces (Ernst & Lawrence, 2002; Werbner & Basu, 1998). These heritage spaces have transcended the conventional religious boundaries set by doctrines, embedding themselves deeply in the complex urban cultural landscape of the Global South. They predominantly serve as interaction hubs for marginalized communities, providing a unique blend of spiritual and social sanctuary (Yoginder, 2003; Carolyn, 2011).

This study explores the dynamics of these sacred urban niches, which, despite their profound spiritual connections to communities (Bigelow, 2010)—sometimes spanning centuries, often embody the characteristics of 'dissonant heritage'. Smith (2006) describes dissonant heritage as encompassing conflicts and contradictions in the interpretation and valuation of heritage across different social and cultural groups. These groups often assign varying interpretations to the same heritage object or site. In the context of mazars and dargahs, the conventional religious views which are predominantly influenced by dominant cultural narratives, tend to perceive these spaces in a linear fashion, primarily as places for 'devout' believers. However, these spaces hold a different, community-specific meaning for their followers, aligning with a deep sense of belonging and identity. They are particularly significant for followers from marginalised communities, offering them a space of recognition and reverence that they may not find in other areas of urban life. By offering this, these sacred spaces provide a counter-narrative to their marginalisation, allowing these communities to find harmony and solace within the urban landscape.

The religious participation in these spaces, which are often overlooked or interpreted as dissonant by the dominant cultural discourse, unfolds within a contrasting mainstream urban social territory (Jenkins, 2008). In the backdrop of the Global South's rapid urbanization, our research aims to investigate how these religious heritage 'enclaves', beyond their roles of places of worship, demonstrate dynamic adaptability and active engagement with their urban environments. This research explores to understand whether these spaces serve as sites of harmony and so some extent resilience for marginalized urban populations, potentially reconfiguring the narrative of their 'perceived' marginalization within the broader urban landscape. It questions whether the places' adaptability extends beyond physical urban growth and transformation to involve a deliberate negotiation with surroundings, reflecting an ongoing exchange between dominant and subaltern cultural narratives. The expected outcomes of the study will illuminate the complex interaction between the revered nature of these spaces and

the evolving urban context. Furthermore, the study will critically examine how these urban sanctuaries, often located at the outskirts of urban life or overlooked within the mainstream urban framework, are maintained and cherished through the dedicated contributions and devotions of their communities. These individuals, largely from economically and socially marginalized backgrounds and frequently adhering to alternative religious practices, are posited to exhibit a profound connection between these heritage places and their communities. Taking case sites from Dhaka and Delhi, this connection is anticipated to challenge prevailing urban discourses and provide a unique perspective on non-conventional heritage sites and the social dynamics within urban settings in the Global South.

Through a critical analysis of activities and the built environments of these sacred spaces, this paper explores the meanings of collective embodied encounters within them. It investigates how religiosity transcends place dynamics, fostering a sense of community and identity among marginalized urban populations and often expressing cultural resilience. This study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of shared spirituality, highlighting the critical role of mausoleums, dargahs, and mazars in negotiating and facilitating adaptive agencies within the urban fabric of India and Bangladesh.

Objectives

1. Exploring Dissonant Heritage in Urban Marginal Spaces: To investigate how mausoleums and dargahs serve as embodiments of dissonant heritage within urban marginalities in India and Bangladesh is our primary objective. To achieve this objective, we will examine their roles as symbols of shared spirituality and cultural identity, particularly for marginalized urban communities, and investigate how these spaces reflect diverse and sometimes conflicting cultural interpretations and values.
2. Analysing the Role in Negotiating Marginalisation: To evaluate the function of these sacred divergent spaces in negotiating the complexities of urban marginalisation, our second objective aims to explore how mausoleums and dargahs provide adaptive strategies for marginalised communities to assert their cultural identities and navigate socio-economic challenges within the urban landscape.
3. Assessing Interactions with Urban Development and Policies: To assess the interplay between these religious spaces and the broader urban development processes and policies in India and Bangladesh is the third objective. This involves understanding how these spaces influence and are influenced by urbanization and socio-economic conditions, and their role in shaping the resilience and adaptation strategies of urban marginalised communities.

Methodology

To effectively address the objectives of this study, a comprehensive qualitative methodology is employed, encompassing a case study design and a multi-faceted approach to data collection and analysis:

1. **Case Study Approach:** The study will focus on two selected mausoleums and dargahs as Golap Shah Mazar in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Nizamuddin Dargah in Delhi, India. These sites are chosen based on their historical significance, the diversity of the communities they serve, and their relevance to the themes of dissonant heritage and urban marginalisation.

Figure 47: (Left) Golap Shah Mazar in Dhaka (Source: Trawell.in, n.d.); (Right) Nizamuddin Dargah, Delhi



(Source: Daily Sun, n.d.).

2. **Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews:** Key stakeholders, including religious leaders, marginal community members and urban heritage experts will be interviewed. These interviews aim to gather diverse perspectives on the roles of these spaces in cultural identity formation, urban marginalization, and adaptation strategies within the urban landscape. The interviews will also explore personal narratives and community stories to understand the lived experiences of marginalization and heritage.
3. **Thematic Discourse Analysis:** Discourse analysis will be conducted on the interview transcripts, focusing on themes of dissonance, cultural identity, and urban marginalization. From this analysis, it will help identify patterns and variations in how different stakeholders perceive and interact with these sacred spaces.
4. **Participant Observation:** Field visits to the selected sites will be conducted for participant observation. This will provide insights into the everyday use of these spaces, religious practices, and the interaction of community members within these environments. Observations will focus on the physical layout of the sites, the activities taking place, and the informal conversations with visitors.
5. **Document Analysis:** Relevant documents, including historical records, urban planning documents, and policy papers, will be analysed to understand the broader socio-political context in which these religious spaces exist and operate.

Given the sensitivity of studying religious and cultural sites, this study will obtain informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and being respectful of the cultural and religious significance of the sites and their communities.

Result and Significance of the Work

The study anticipates uncovering nuanced perspectives on how mausoleums and dargahs serve as embodiments of dissonant heritage. This includes how different social and cultural marginal groups within urban areas interpret and value these spaces, highlighting conflicts and synergies in these interpretations.

The interviews and observations are expected to reveal rich narratives about the role of these sacred spaces in shaping cultural identity and fostering social inclusion for marginalised urban communities. This would include stories of personal and communal significance, illustrating the deep emotional and spiritual connections people have with these sites. The research also aims to provide insights into how these religio-cultural spaces interact with and adapt to urban development processes and policies. Findings will highlight on how these spaces are affected by urbanisation, and how they contribute to the resilience and adaptation strategies of urban communities, particularly marginalized groups.

Finally, this study expects to highlight the role of these marginal sacred urban enclaves in promoting interfaith dialogue and shared spirituality. It will reveal how these sites function as platforms for cross-cultural and inter-religious understanding, fostering a sense of unity and harmony in a diverse urban context.

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Discriminatory Developments: Unveiling Marginalisation in Revitalised Public Spaces in Dhaka City

Kanak Kanti Saha, Leading University

Arpan Shil, Leading University

Anamika Das Champa, Centre for Housing & Building Research

The urban expansion of Dhaka is characterised by rapid surges in population attributed to continuous rural-urban migration, coupled with unregulated spatial growth, and intense competition among residents for access to the city's centralised socio-economic opportunities. In recent years, this dynamic has given rise to a consumerist urban society marked by pronounced social stratification, the pervasive commercialisation of everyday spaces, and the progressive deterioration of open public spaces essential for social reproduction. The relentless struggle for survival in this highly competitive urban milieu has resulted in an inequitable and often inhospitable landscape, thus it marginalises anybody who has any sort of disadvantages in the given context; regardless of whether it is in terms of economic condition, class, race, power, or even gender.

Open, free, accessible to all public spaces are the lifeline of a city. For better physical as well as psychological health of citizens of all ages (especially children and aged people) parks and playgrounds are mandatory. Needless to say, community bonding, social capital, and political freedom depend on quality public spaces that inspire positive thoughts. Despite the fundamental right of citizens to access quality open green spaces for recreational and social purposes, a stark reality unfolds for socially vulnerable groups in Dhaka. Reports indicate, only 16 per cent of the residents of Dhaka city have proximity to playground facilities, while Dhaka lacks 795 playgrounds to meet international urban standards relative to its burgeoning population (Islam, 2022a; Report, 2022). Over the past three decades, the cityscape has undergone a transformative shift, witnessing a rapid expansion of built-up areas that has resulted in the irrevocable destruction of green spaces, open fields, and parks (Moniruzzaman et al., 2020; Rahman & Zhang, 2018). According to Bangladesh Institute of Planners study published in 2020, there are a total of 235 playgrounds in the capital, of which only 42 are open to people, 16 are restricted as they are either leased out to clubs or occupied by influential people, 141 are owned by various educational institutions, 24 are colony (gated communities for government employees) grounds, and 12 are Eidgah-cum-playgrounds (Khan, 2020). Forty one city wards of a total of 129 wards in the two city corporation areas (Dhaka North and Dhaka South) do not have a single playground (Islam, 2023a). According to the development authority of capital city 'RAJUK', the per capita green space in 1995 was 0.5 m², which dropped to 0.052 m² as recorded in the 2009 Detailed Area Planning (DAP) review and the amount is decreasing every year.

Thorough mapping and studies reveal a distressing pattern wherein areas inhabited by low-income populations exhibit higher density and acute deficiencies in quality open green spaces, further exacerbating the challenges faced by these marginalised communities. Survey we conducted among low-income people also highlights that a substantial proportion of people lack access or opportunity to enjoy quality open green spaces. Sadly, the few remaining parks that

these marginalised populations can visit without charge have deteriorated over time due to inadequate maintenance (i.e. Zia Uddyan, Suhrawardy Uddyan, Mirpur Zoo, Fazila Children's Park), facing restrictions (i.e. Ramna Park, Dhanmondi Abahani Club field), closures/ commercial encroachment (i.e. Farmgate Park, Dhanmondi Lake Park) or generally extremely crowded on weekends (i.e. TSC, Suhrawardy Uddyan, etc.) (Naher, 2023; Daily Star, 2023a; Daily Star, 2023b; Rahaman, 2022; Rights, 2018). Rests of the places they visit (according to the survey) are generally museums or historical heritage sites managed by public authorities, offering affordable ticket prices.

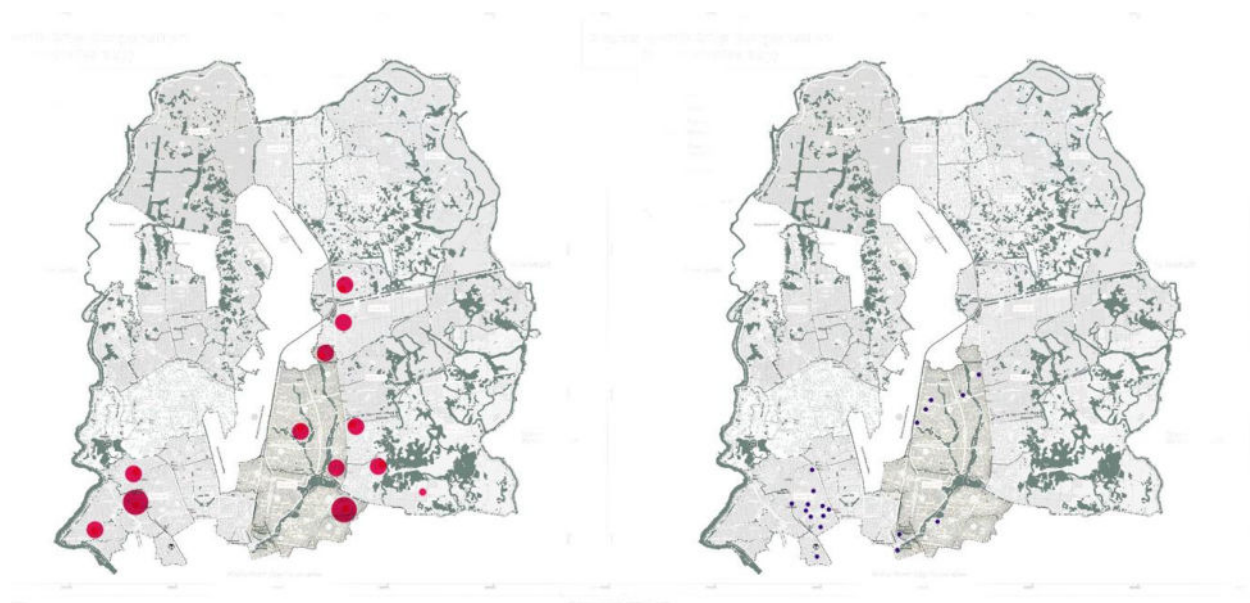
Recognising this suffocating scenario, Dhaka city authorities have initiated several park and playground renovation projects. Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) started a project titled 'Modernisation, Development and Greenery Works of DNCC Open Spaces', to modernise 18 parks and 4 playgrounds (Sumy, 2023). Also, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) initiated another project titled 'Jol Sobuje Dhaka' to renovate 19 parks and 12 playgrounds in their designated area (Mohith, 2017). Notably, the most recent Development Plan (DAP) articulates an ambitious vision, aiming to create a 2 acre open playground and 1 acre park area for every 12,500 people, with the proposal of at least one playground in every ward (RAJUK, 2022). While these initiatives are laudable in their intent, this paper intends to investigate the recent refurbishment and redevelopment done by the city authority of previously existing or underused open spaces in Dhaka in terms of their usage and user pattern, locational attributes, control and ownership, and quality of facilities to understand if they truly contribute to minimizing the inequitable scenario.

The methodological approach involves the collection of primary data through site observations, comprehensive photo and video documentation, mapping exercises, and open-ended interviews conducted with diverse stakeholders, including the general public, users of the renovated open spaces, authority officials, and subject matter experts. Desk research with literature reviews of newspaper articles, previous research works on Dhaka's playground and parks formed a major part of the secondary data.

Critical analysis of the data shows many of these projects are not designed and implemented as 'people-centred spaces', the positive idea of the city authority is lost in the implementation approach; as a result the overall publicness and inclusivity might be questioned. Our study and observation shed light on some of the major issues which are described below:

- a. Disparity in locational distribution: A higher percentage of the projects are concentrated in more affluent areas of the city thereby neglecting the densely populated low-income areas that arguably requires more immediate intervention and support. As an example, two-third of the projects (on-going or completed) initiated in Dhaka North are in Mohammadpur, Banani, Gulshan, and Baridhara areas, all of them are known as residential areas of upper-middle class residents. Whereas low-income residential areas like Korail, Adabor, or Badda in the capital barely have any open land. Additionally, the area, quality of infrastructure, and amenities remain subpar in the projects done in low-economic areas even after redevelopment.

Figure 48: (Left) Areas inhabited by Low-income people and (Right) renovated Park and Playground location, showing the disparity in locational distribution in Dhaka North



(Source: Author)

- b. **Restricted, Monetised Spaces:** Many of these new spaces have been securitised, subjected to imposition of restrictive rules (regarding access/dress codes/timing), or commercialised; which exacerbates existing social divides, further marginalising low-income individuals and creating barriers to social cohesion among people from different socio-economic classes or racial backgrounds (Islam, 2022b; Khan, 2023; Noman, 2022; Rahaman, 2022; Sultan et al., 2022). Of the many such examples we noticed from our site survey, the park in Banani Block-C, and Baisakhi Park in Banani block-F are open for only 5 hours a day after redevelopment, the playground is open for only 2-3 hours. During rainy days use of the playground is strictly prohibited because it might hamper the turf and grasses of the field. Also, local users have to pay a monthly fee to use the walkway. There is a similar situation with strict time limits in Uttara sector-7 Park, Shaheed Zayan Chowdhury Playground in Banani, Iqbal Road Park in Mohammadpur. In some of them there are boards with instructions from the management authority for people to wear appropriate sports attire and footwear (which is unaffordable for poor people) when accessing the field. In Dhaka South's Shaheed Abdul Alim Playground, if anybody wants to use the field outside the allowed time frame, they have to take the local administrative authority's permission and might also have to pay fees. The beautifully landscaped and designed Shahbuddin Park in Gulshan has two gates with security guards the whole day who prevent entry of any beggars and hawkers to dwell in the park. Also, an outlet of the expensive coffee shop 'North End Coffee Roasters' inaugurated in the Shahabuddin Park built with public money, is a sign of the commercialisation of public space. We found the Dhaka South City Corporation is constructing a shopping mall in the Dhupkhola playground at Gendaria under the 'renovation project' ignoring the protests of local people. At the same time, Shaheed Motiur Park, Sikkatuli Park in Dhaka South has become an amusement park charging people money to enter/use the amenities after the

renovation work, which was once free for all and a place for the low-income people to relax.

- c. Architecture of Alienation: Elements of built/ designed spaces, especially materials, texture, and spatial organisation has a psychological effect on the potential users, as users always seek to create a comfortable connection with the space. Feedback from low-income groups underscores the psychological barriers created by the post-redevelopment material and architectural changes, inhibiting their free use of these public spaces. Imported and expensive materials like turf, lawn grass, noise-cancelling glass walls, high metal fences, and amusement rides have been introduced in the renovated projects with positive ideas, although they somehow alienate the low-income marginalised children and people.
- d. Management Puzzle and Never-ending Construction: It is also to be noted that the prolonged timelines associated with many of these redevelopment projects due to planning complexities and the disparate attitude of the newly appointed management committee worsen the suffering of the people living in the surrounding areas. Less than half of the park and playground renovation work is still unfinished, even six or seven years since its initiation. Parks like Sheikh Russel Children's Park, Karwan Bazar Community Park were kept closed for more than a year after reconstruction. Panthakunja Park, Osmani Udyan, historic Dhupkhola playground and Mukhtangan Park in the capital still remain closed. Dhaka North's redevelopment work for 22 parks and playgrounds was supposed to be completed by March 2019; it was not yet completed till date. The Dhaka South City Corporation could not complete renovation and modernisation of 19 parks and 12 playgrounds in seven years under Jol Sobuje Dhaka Project which was taken up in July 2016. (Sumy, 2023; The Daily Star, 2023a). The management and maintenance of the open projects have become a headache; as most of them are now maintained by certain residential communities, or local politically influenced personnel, or the space is leased to a certain group for maintenance. These new committees do not welcome outsiders or poor people from surrounding informal settlements to enter, impose rules or regulations, commercialise the public arena with shops or food stalls or introduce maintenance fees for users. (Islam, 2022b; Islam, 2023b; Noman, 2022; Sumy, 2023).

In conclusion, the findings from the study underline that even though the initiative of redeveloping existing underused parks and playgrounds is very commendable effort from the city authorities; after implementation these projects exhibit discriminating features like unevenly distributed investments, prioritizing profit over public welfare, political influence which leads to policies and regulations that favour the interests of the economic elite, and architectural designs that does not entirely contextual or user friendly for the low-income group. There is a dire need to reevaluate the planning, design, and implementation process to make these open green spaces more inclusive and to welcome people from all classes. Additionally, the study prompts broader questions about the potential influence of the neoliberal economic system and the existing political processes on the disparate development projects witnessed in the capital city which needs to be explored further

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Unpacking Marginalities: Manipur in the context of rest of India

Iman Bhattacharyya, Sattva Media and Consulting Pvt. Ltd

Introduction

Located in the easternmost part of India, sharing its border with Myanmar, stands Manipur, the land of jewels. This beautiful state laden with rich cultural heritage and biodiversity has also historically been a site of complex conflict between various ethnic communities on issues related to identity, autonomy, and political representation. After a few decades of relative peace, Manipur saw one of the worst ethnic clashes of its modern history in 2023. The ongoing conflict has seen extensive rioting, burning of settlements, displacement of people, and a shutdown of movement across the state for several months. Present at the centre of the controversy that led to the ethnic clashes, is a demand for reservation i.e. a call for recognising marginalisation by the Meiteis, an ethnic community historically associated with the fertile, prosperous urban plains of Manipur, and the opposition to their demand by the Kuki-Zo communities historically associated with the remote, barely connected, majorly rural hills of the state.

Marginalisation is a complex, multi-layered issue that leaves communities devoid of resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes by pushing them to the peripheries. This paper focuses on one of the aspects of marginalisation: access to urban space. It reflects on historical access to urban spaces by the main ethnic communities of Manipur: Meiteis, Kuki-zo, and Nagas, before arriving at the present-day ethnic clashes. As an extension, this contemplation is taken further to look at the marginalisation of Manipur with respect to the rest of India.

Figure 49 : Location of Manipur in India



(Source: Google Maps)

Methodology

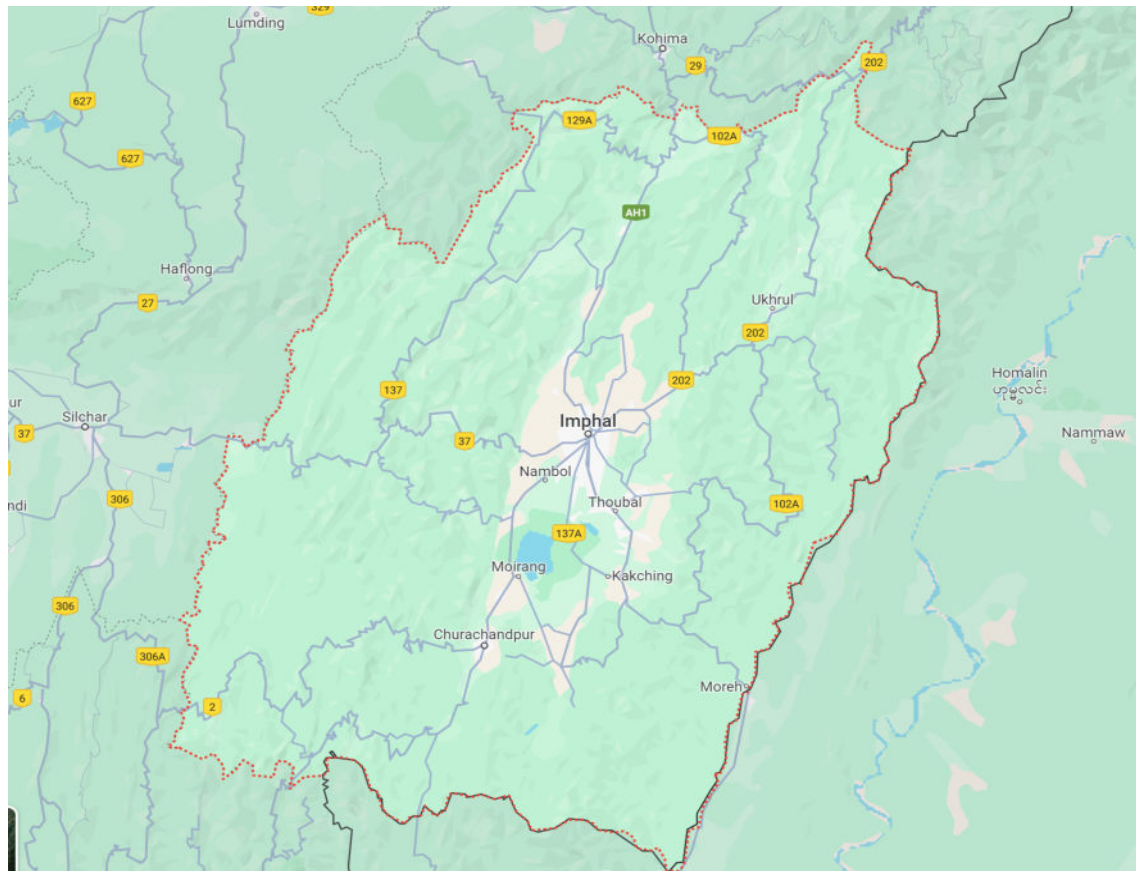
This paper has been written by reflecting on 23 months of engagement with Manipur through the social impact consulting firm—Sattva and Anaha Trust, a philanthropic organisation that focuses on livelihoods, health, education, and peace-making in Manipur. Through this period, I

have worked closely with Manipuri civil society organisations— Maolkeki Foundation, Sunbird Trust, Tandan Trust, Hope Foundation, society leaders Pradip Phanjoubam, Dr.Thangjam Dhabali Singh, Dr.Pibarel Meetei, and ex-bureaucrat Chandrashekhar Balagopal which forms the basis of the paper. The arguments are also informed by reflections from my visit to the state in January 2023 when I travelled to Imphal, the state capital, two valley villages—Sinam Kom present in the valley region of the hill district of Senapati and Kadajit village, Bishnupur district, and two hill villages—Oinam, Senapati district and Puichi, Noney district. The narrative is further informed through a literature review of works of Pradip Phanjoubam, Chandrashekhar Balagopal, articles from Journal of Northeast India Studies, and Economics and Political Weekly alongside news articles and opinion pieces covering the inter-ethnic conflicts in the state.

Geography of Manipur: Hill and Valley Divide

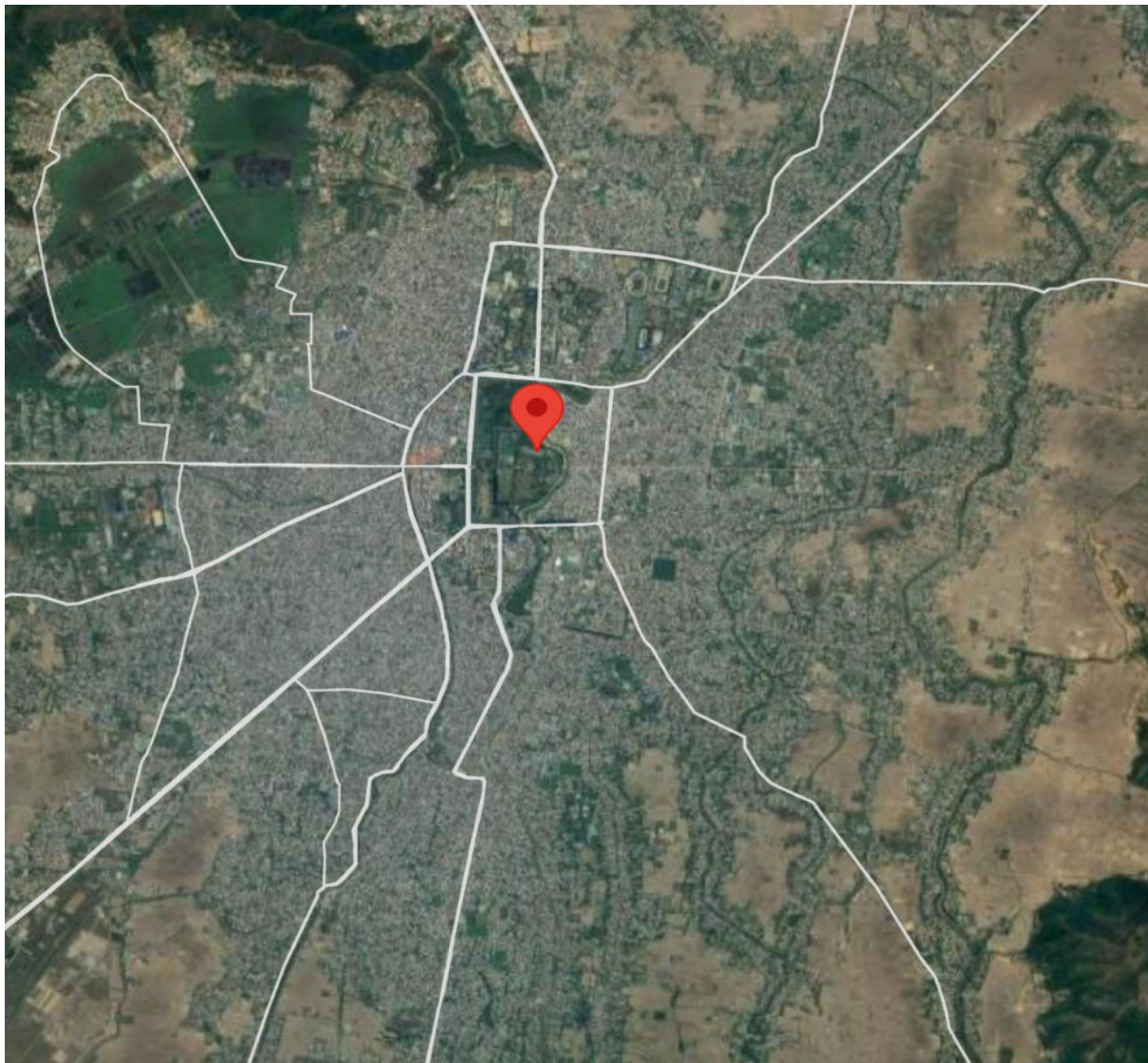
Manipur covers a nearly rhomboid landmass of 22,327 square kilometres, and 89 per cent of the area is mountainous terrain that surrounds the valley from all sides housing 33 per cent of the population. Of this area, 11 per cent or 2,238 square kilometres is an oval-shaped valley located almost accurately in the middle of the state. It houses 67 per cent of Manipur’s population spread between rural and urban settlements. Almost all the urban settlements of the state find their home in the valley. Further, being fertile plains, it also accounts for over 50 per cent of Manipur’s agricultural land. (Phanjoubam, 2016).

Figure 50: Map of Manipur



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 (Not to scale))

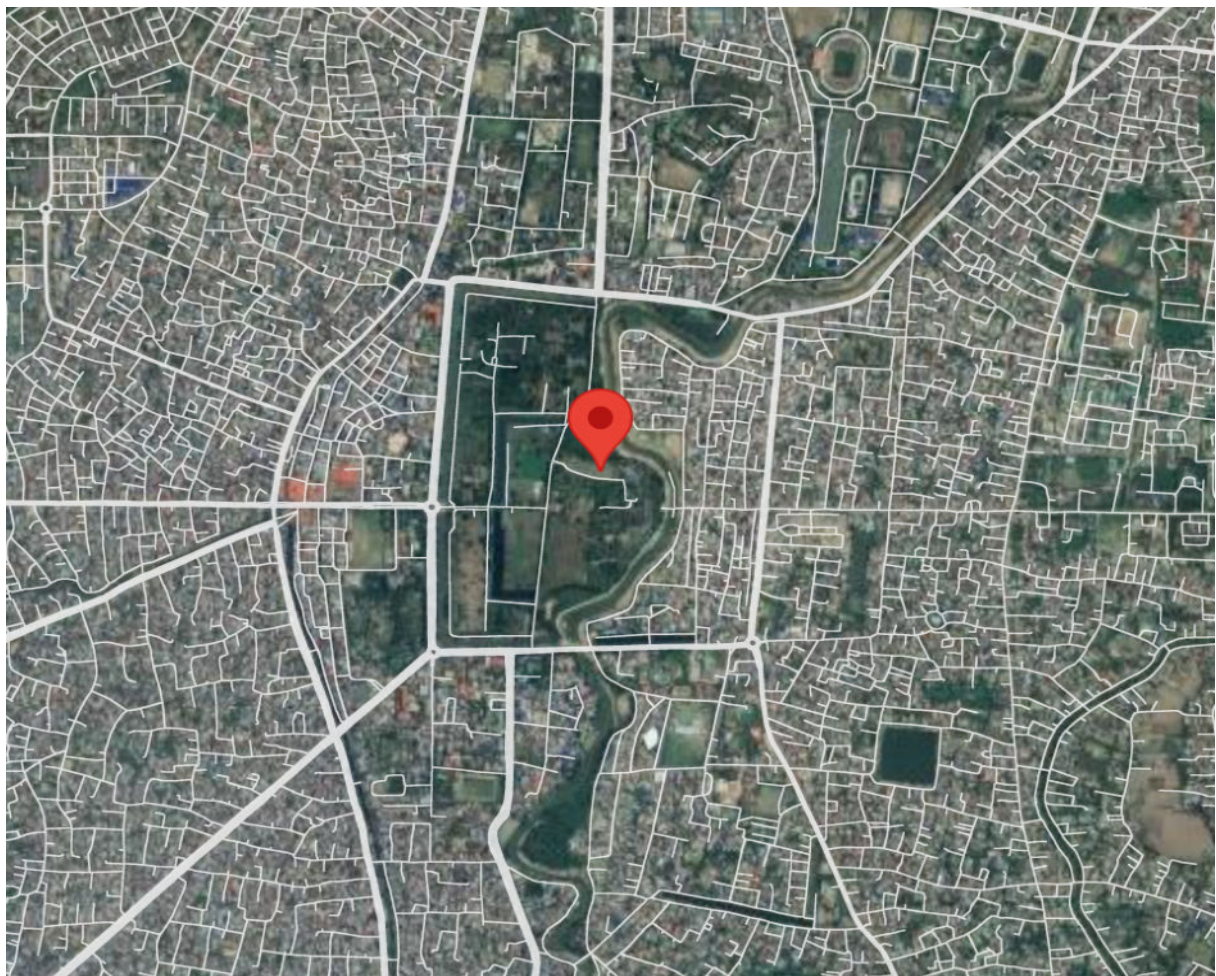
The city of Imphal is located almost accurately in the centre of the valley and thus the state. It is said to have been the major centre of power of this landmass since 33CE. Until 1947, Imphal served as the centre of the Princely state of Manipur ruled by the Meitei community. After 1947, the state briefly moved to an independent democratic setup before finally merging into the Republic of India in 1949 (Phanjoubam, 2016). At present, Imphal is the biggest city of Manipur and one of the biggest urban centres in North-East India. It has an urban typology not so different from cities like Guwahati and Ranchi which grew rapidly over their older street patterns. Much like those cities, Imphal too sports broad metalled roads jammed with confused traffic that are lined with shopfronts on the ground floor of 3–4 story high commercial establishments that appear to have sprouted within the last two to three decades. Sometimes these roads find themselves awkwardly and suddenly turning acute corners when reaching an older intersection that dips down into a narrow street of a bazaar continuing deeper into a milieu of houses not more than 1–3 stories high. Bustling with a population of 5.7 lakh people in the centre of the state, Imphal stands as the capital city of Manipur. (Planning Department, Government of Manipur, 2019).



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 (Not to scale))

The Kangla Fort sits at the geographical centre of Imphal. It is a fortified palace that has been the historical seat of power and religion for the Meitei community. Having been used as the administrative centre for several centuries, the palace now is a public heritage space sporting religious spots and museums alongside the royal palace. Additionally, the Republic Day parade conducted by the armed forces in Imphal also starts and ends at the Kangla. The entire Fort which spans over 95.8 square kilometres falls directly under the Assam Rifles, a central paramilitary force under the Defence Ministry of India. In this light, it is interesting to note a local mythology that claims that the control of Manipur lies in the hands of whoever controls Kangla (Rajesh, 2000). For over half a century, the armed forces have had the freedom to exert uncontrolled brute force under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in Manipur. (Subramanian, 2022).

Figure 51: Arterial roads spreading outwards from Kangla Fort



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 | (Not to scale))

The major rule of power in the state has historically radiated outwards from Kangla. This radiation of power has been etched into the space through roads. All major arterial roads of Imphal and Manipur start at Kangla and radiate out in seven directions connecting all of Imphal and then continue out of the city to become the state highways connecting the entire state. As the roads cross Imphal, they hit the expansive valley plain that houses three other districts apart from Imphal: Bishnupur, Toubul, and Kakching which house the next most populous urban

centres after the capital city. All these districts house a majority of Meiteis and minor populations of Nagas and Kuki-Zo. The spaces between the urban centres are mainly fields cultivated mostly with rice along with other crops by clusters of villages and small towns. The roads follow a vista of green fields of the valley dotted by urban and rural settlements extending up to the horizon where the flat valley meets the hills. Two of these roads pierce through the hills to reach the neighbouring country of Myanmar through Moreh and Behiang, two of them become the national highways within India that bring goods into the state, while the rest branch out in the hill districts.

As roadways spread out from a centre point, urban growth largely follows in a concentric pattern. As one travels further from the centre, the level of urbanisation and population density keeps decreasing gradually and sees a sharp decrease as the roads climb up the hills that house a largely rural population in remote settlements. This became evident during my travels in Manipur along three of the seven arterial roads mentioned above. The hills are the indigenous home to a large number of tribes that are clubbed under two major ethnic groups—the Nagas and the Kuki-Zo. Largely the northern hill districts of Tamenglong and Ukhrul act as home to the Nagas whereas the southern hill districts and part of eastern and western hill districts act as home for the Kuki-Zo community.

It is important to note here that the southern town of Churachandpur, district headquarters of Churachandpur district, a majorly Kuki area and the northern town of Ukhrul, headquarters of Ukhrul district are two of the key exceptions to the above pattern in being two major urban areas in the hill districts. They are the fourth and fifth most populous towns of Manipur (*Khwairakpam, 2015*).

Figure 52: Kangla Fort and its surrounding density



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 | (Not to scale))

Figure 53: Density of settlement in Imphal



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023)

Figure 54: Density of settlement in a valley village -Kadajit, Toubul District



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 (Not to scale))

Figure 55: Density of buildings in a valley village at the edge of the hills—Sinam Kom, Senapati district



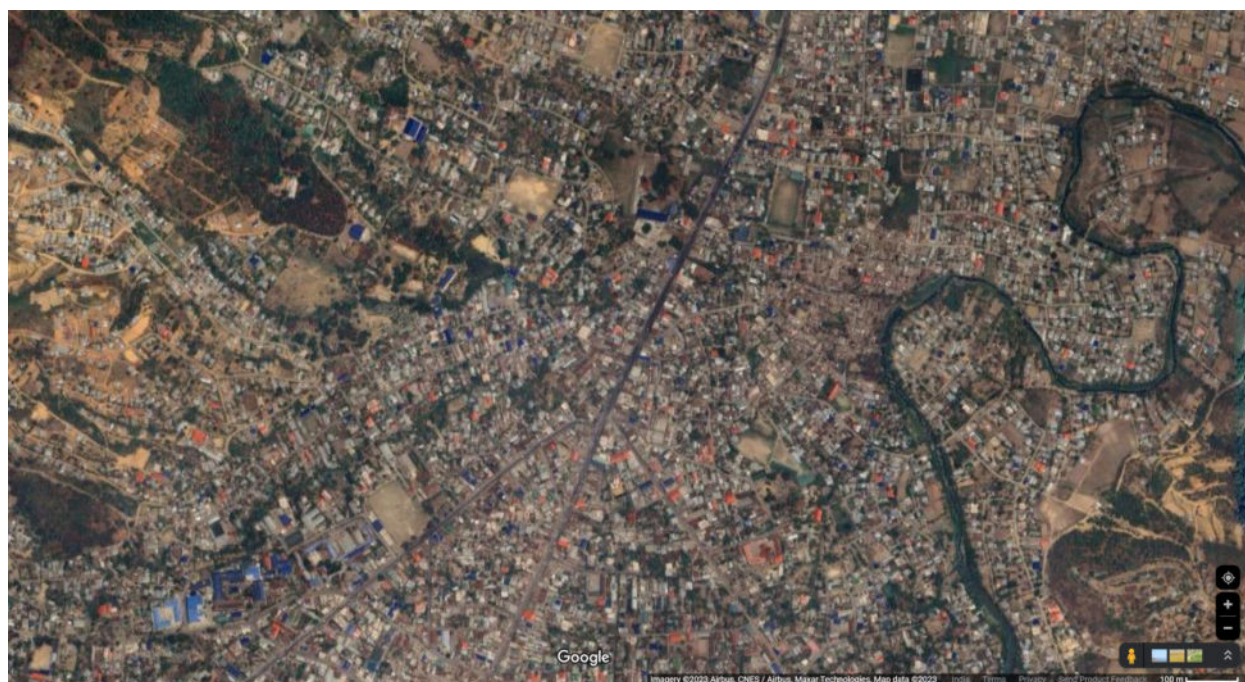
(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 (Not to scale))

Figure 56: Density of settlement in hill village of Puichi, Noney district



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 (Not to scale))

Figure 57: Density of settlement in Churachandpur town, Churachandpur district



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 (Not to scale))

A Mythology from the Land: Tale of Two Brothers Who Parted Ways from the Hills

Eminent journalist Pradip Phanjoubam, in his book *Shadow and Light, A Kaleidoscope of Manipur* relates a popular and touching mythology that sits in common for the various ethnic groups about migration within Manipur. He tells the tale of two brothers who parted ways from their home in the mountains. The elder decides to remain in the security of the well-established mountain home, while the younger more adventurous opts to look for his fortune in the valley below. The valley-dwelling brother later becomes the Meitei while the elder who stayed back becomes the hill tribes of Nagas, Kukis. (Phanjoubam, 2016).

The fertile valley had no doubt created an optimum setting for settled farming and permanent settlements, giving inroads to greater prosperity for the Meiteis and increasing the income divide with the hill tribes that relied on a wandering, primitive lifestyle as a response to the geography. The chasm between the hill and valley, as Phanjoubam notes, has grown wider with ethnic identities solidifying and giving way to ethnic friction and has been one of the biggest challenges for the Manipur administration.

Reservation in Manipur: Increasing Ethnic Frictions

India in the 1950s-1980s saw the implementation of reservation, a major initiative for affirmative action to bring socially and economically disadvantaged classes of people at par with the privileged. Through reservation, an elaborate classification of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward castes was codified across the country to legally enforce access to education, opportunities, and jobs for them, thus removing social barriers put forward by privileged classes (Frequently Asked Questions, 2023). The level of inaccessibility to institutions for different castes, tribes and minority groups was studied and opportunities for each section was accordingly designed. The Lokur Committee Report of 1965 identifies Scheduled Tribes (ST)

to have 'primitiveness, geographical isolation, shyness and social, educational & economic backwardness due to these reasons' as traits that distinguish them from other communities. (Department of Social Security, Government of India, 1965).

The hill tribes are said to have checked all the traits identified in the constitution, thus receiving ST status. The Meiteis, on the other hand, are said to have rejected consideration under ST. Their socio-political identity as a dominant community of Manipur is said to have been one of the motivating factors for the rejection. However, given the challenge of access to the rest of India, they have been listed under Other Backward Classes (The Wire, 2023).

With reservation coming into play, small sections of the hill tribes that could manage to reach the facilities and opportunities by the government climbed up the socio-economic ladder and descended down the hills to settle in the plains. It is important to note here that the climb would have been a hard one given that government infrastructure in Manipur has been centred in the valley and their reach to the hills has been far from bare minimum till date. The Eighth Five Year Plan 1992-97 noted an acute lack of infrastructure in the hill districts (Gonmei, 2013). The coming three decades saw relative improvement however, a paper in the Economic and Political Weekly journal from 2019 notes 'a huge disparity between the hills and valley districts in all key indicators of development. Major infrastructure such as roadways, power, medical services, banking, educational institutions, telecom services, and airways are mostly located in valley districts' (Ziipao, 2019). To date, there are villages in the hills that have had no access to electricity, roads, or mobile networks.

Very small sections of the hill tribes who could thus access the opportunities of modern education and government job opportunities bought land in the plains and made their houses in hill villages pukka houses. Given the difficulty of access, it is decipherable that mainly the powerful and resourceful people among the tribes could make this journey, meaning that it was mostly the village chiefs/ tribal heads and their families who could make this journey. It is worth noting here that the tribes largely follow a collective land-ownership model with control of landholdings sitting under the tribal chief who is revered by the entire group. Thus, the relatively powerful individuals amongst the tribes now had access to the valley land while the rest, who form the masses of the hill tribe, stayed back, cut off from resources.

On the other hand, the Meiteis could no longer lay claims to land on the hills as a land reforms act from 1960 prohibited the transfer of tribal land to non-tribal persons (The Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms Act, 1960). With reservations opening doors for the hill tribes, they also started seeing new competition in education and job opportunities that had previously been exclusively for them. While their OBC status enabled them easier entry into government institutions across India, it made no difference to their opportunities within the state. The lack of higher education and access to job opportunities at par with other regions of India creates a push for the educated elite to migrate out of Manipur. A sense of deprivation within the community is thus, understandable.

In the meantime, differences along the lines of identity, other historical grievances, and ethnicity continued to increase friction and led to several inter-ethnic conflicts in the state. The sense of deprivation of the Meiteis added to it. In the following decades, the consideration for their inclusion in the ST category came up twice in 1982 and 2001, getting rejected on both occasions with the reasoning being the non-display of tribal characteristics and being a dominant group in the state (The Wire, 2023).

The Meitei demand for reservation points at an understandable sense of deprivation and the Kuki retaliation points at legitimate insecurities over their fears of loss of agency, opportunities and land in the hands of the historically powerful Meiteis. After several decades of brewing under the surface, the tensions reached a boiling point with the revival of the ST category demand by the Meiteis Tribe Union this year.

Comparing Narratives of Marginalisation: The Non-linear Nature of the Manipur Case

Parallels can be drawn for the Manipur violence with the Mandal Commission protests of 1990s against reservation in government jobs based on caste in India that saw upper caste students at the helm resisting affirmative action for socially and economically backward classes. Though the protests could not achieve their desired effect, they are said to have been the moment in the history of Indian politics that fragmented voters in North India on the lines of caste (Team Frontline, 2022).

A sense of deprivation by the upper classes can be seen as a root cause in both, but it manifests differently. In the case of Manipur, the sense of deprivation resulted in the privileged class attempting to join the marginalised to get equal aid of affirmative action which in turn saw powerful backlash from the unified marginalized tribes. The national stance on the subject is yet to be seen.

On the other hand, the Mandal Commission protests saw the privileged class blocking the path of affirmative action by the Nation for the marginalised and not being able to sway the nation's stance on reservation. The voice of the marginalised finds no room in popular discourse. The Nation, in a paternal fashion, protected the interests of the marginalised.

The two events show diametrically opposite power struggles between the privileged and the marginalised. In the case of the Mandal Commission Protests, a clear hierarchy shows the power of the privileged over the marginalised, where the Nation steps in to build a platform for equity. Whereas in the case of Manipur, a reverse hierarchy is displayed where the united voice of the marginalised opposes the privileged with equal force, blocking their path of claiming marginalization. The Nation remains on a back foot in making any decisions.

Ethnic Violence of 2023: A Timeline

March 2023 saw the Manipur High Court directing the State Government to act on a decade-old petition demanding Scheduled Tribe status for the Meiteis. The timing coincided with the state government's indifference to petitions by tribal bodies to stop eviction drives of tribals and farmers in reserved forest areas and villages. The eviction drives allegedly led to the demolition

of churches in Imphal. This led to tribal bodies (mostly Kuki and Nagas) holding protest rallies during the chief minister's visit to Churachandpur, the predominantly Kuki hill town leading to the imposition of section 144 at the end of April 2023. (Vallooran, 2023).

On May 3, allegedly more than 60,000 people came for a Tribal Solidarity March called by the All Tribal Students Union of Manipur (ATSUM) to protest against the inclusion of Meiteis in the ST category. This ended in violence erupting in the town and spreading like wildfire across Kuki and Meitei areas causing rampant killings, rapes, and burning of the other's settlements and places of worship in massive numbers across the state including in Imphal. The rioting went on for days stopping all activities. Internet, road, and movement blockades happened across the state. Curfew was imposed with heavy deployment of armed forces and police across the state (Vallooran, 2023). Government officials including police got divided along ethnic lines and had to flee from their districts of postings (Basak, 2023).

In the meantime, bleak attempts were made to pacify the situation and bridge the gap. Among other efforts, the state government also briefly resorted to mythology. It went back to the second part of the aforementioned mythological tale of two brothers that predates the state's history of ethnic conflict. The brothers who had parted ways on the hills with one moving to the valley, are said to have made a pact with each other to meet after the harvest festival every year and exchange gifts (Phanjoubam, 2016). This meeting time came to be celebrated as a festival called Mera Houchongba which has been officially revived since 2017 to increase hill-valley solidarity. 2023 too saw the celebrations take place, however, in a highly subdued form amidst vociferous demands of a separate administration from the Kuki tribes. (Press Trust of India, 2023). The elder hill brother seems to have lost all hope of kinship with his young one. As per information from civil society organisations in the state, the Meitei and Kukis have completely separated to the point of not even uttering the name of the other.

As of today, the mobile internet ban in Manipur that began in May 2023 continues to stay in place, and transport and logistics continue to be partially disrupted at the time of writing of this abstract in November 2023. Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, a draconian act giving supreme powers of control to the armed forces that had just been slated to be removed in March 2023 from select regions after decades of civil society protests (IFP Bureau, 2023) is back in action and extended till 2024 (The Hindu Bureau, 2023) Mainstream media channels in India continue downplaying the seriousness of the violence in the state and the continuing after-effects while the Chief Minister of Manipur is confirmed to be in 'advanced stages of peace-talks' with a valley-based Meitei insurgent group (Express News Service, 2023). At the same time, The Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) of the Kuki-Zo community declared self-rule in three districts with no heed to the Meitei Manipuri government. It is interesting to note that ITLF is headquartered in Churachandpur, (The Wire, 2023) the fourth-largest urban area of Manipur (Khawairakpam, 2015) and the largest urban area with a majority of Kuki-Zo tribe.

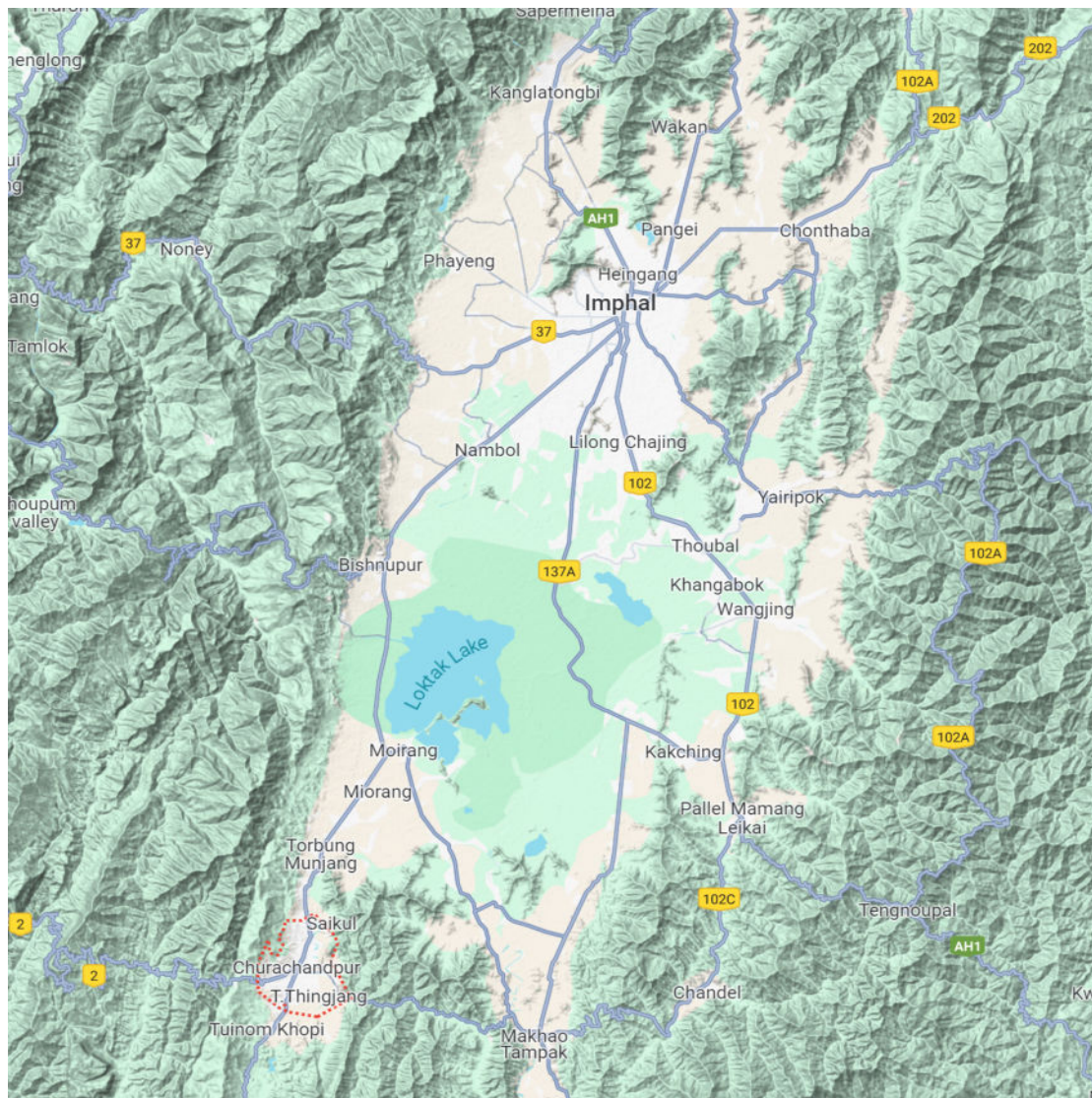
Churachandpur: Can it Emerge as a Second Centre of Power in Manipur?

For the longest time in the history of Manipur, urban spaces have been limited to the valley that has been occupied by Meiteis with power radiating out from the centre of Imphal. Opportunities

that come with living in an urban area have assisted the Meitei tribe in maintaining their stronghold in ruling Manipur.

However, with reservation among other factors uplifting sections of the Hill tribes, and the eventual albeit slow reach of infrastructure networks in the hills, urban spaces have started to spring up despite difficult geographical terrain. Churachandpur in this case, has emerged in a rather strategic position. Located in one of the farthest corners of the valley, and housed between Kuki hills, it has the advantage of flat terrain, Kuki majority as well as easy access to Imphal. Being the fourth largest urban centre in Manipur and the only one outside Meitei majority lands, Churachandpur's eventual emergence as a second centre of power in the state is imaginable. Though far away from railway and air connectivity, the city, however, acts as a junction of three major arterial roads coming into the state, two of them coming from the neighbouring state of Mizoram and one coming from Myanmar. Both these neighbouring areas are also homes for the Kuki-Zo tribes.

Figure 58: Location and geography of Churachandpur compared to Imphal



(Source: Google Maps, November 2023 (Not to scale))

Imphal's abrupt and knee-jerk response of military force deployment and internet shut-downs in the hill districts in the light of the violence thus can be seen as the fear of the loss of Meitei administrative strong-hold in the face of a rising second power centre.

The emergence of a second centre of power need not be seen as bane but a boon. In the case of several states in India, the co-existence of multiple urban nodes in states has ensured distribution of powers thus reducing the pressure of development on one central node. This leads to overall improved infrastructural development in the state. One can take the example of one of the most developed states of India here: Kerala, (Gandhi, 2011) which had been a collection of warring kingdoms prior to unification in 1956. The state houses the cities of Trivandrum, Kochi, and Kozhikode among others, all of which had been capital cities of separate kingdoms that kept warring with each other and with other kingdoms across southern India, annexing some parts, retracting from others at times (Noble, 2023). Post unification as a state, in the last 50 decades, the urban nodes have worked together and created a united Malayali identity that covers up from popular memory its fragmented past.

The Kuki-separatist movement also seems to be a knee-jerk, reactive, short-term gains decision that turns a blind eye to the benefits of partnership with the Meiteis, cooperation with whom can take them a long way in furthering development and quality of life in the hills.

Manipur and India, at large, have a lot to gain from a unified Manipuri identity over and above the hill-valley chasm, which could create a domino effect of situations in favour of India. It ensures development in the region thus ensuring improved coordination with the rest of the country and secures one of its key border states. Further, being a land of permutations and combinations of numerous ethno-religious differences, India can come up with really good strategies for handling diversity across the country, if they are able to crack the Manipur case.

Finding Answers for Peacekeeping in a Common Past

Phanjoubam provides a hint for the answer to the hill-valley chasm in the same mythology of the two brothers again. He claims that the tale that predates the state's history of ethnic conflict has another part to it. The brothers from the mythology are said to have devised a way of communicating with each other in those days of poor communication. Every evening after sunset in the harvest season of October-November, the younger brother would hoist a lantern atop a bamboo pole for his elder brother to be assured of his well-being and communicate his promise of meeting him at the end of the season when the two brothers would meet to exchange gifts on Mera Houchongba—the festival we came across earlier in this paper (Phanjoubam, 2016).

The ritual of hoisting the lanterns in their houses in the valley is said to have percolated through generations up until a few decades ago when many Meitei families used to carry on the practice without knowing the significance of their act.

Taking inspiration from the hoisted lanterns as an innovative communication tool solving for physical distance, it is high time that Indian civil society catalyses alternative, innovative

communication forums that can bring Kukis and Meiteis on the same table and remind them of the benefits of brotherhood again.

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IIHS BENGALURU CITY CAMPUS

197/36, 2nd Main Road, Sadashivanagar,
Bengaluru 560 080. India

T +91 80 6760 6666 | F +91 80 2361 6814

IIHS CHENNAI

Floor 7A, Chaitanya Exotica, 24/51 Venkatnarayana Road,
T Nagar Chennai 600 017. India

T +91 44 6630 5500 / 6555 6590

IIHS DELHI

803, Suriya Kiran, 19, Kasturba Gandhi Marg,
New Delhi 110 001. India

T +91 11 4360 2798 | F +91 11 2332 0477

IIHS MUMBAI

Flat No. 2, Purnima Building, Patel Compound, 20-C,
Napean Sea Road Mumbai 400 006. India

T +91 22 6525 3874