REFUGEE WATCH

A South Asian Journal on Forced Migration

Teaching Migration: Responding to a Mobile Time

64 & 65

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(Special Issue)

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CONTENTS

Ananya Chatterjee — Introduction: Teaching Migration: Responding to a Mobile Time — 1

Essays

Mohamed Shafeeq Karinkurayil — Teaching Literature of Economic Migration — 13

Indira Chakraborty Bhattacharya — 'Homing' and the Desire for 'Homing': Reading/Teaching Kamila Shamshie's *Kartography* Through a Migrant's Experience — 23

Azeemah Saleem — Audio-Visual Resources in Teaching Migration to Students Enrolled in Professional Courses — 35

Kuldeepsingh Rajput & Sakshi Rajput — Educating Children of Seasonal Migrant Workers: Missing Pedagogical Orientation and Praxis in Teacher Education — 51

Sreetapa Chakrabarty — Rohingya Children and the Pedagogy of Forced Migration and Refugee Studies — 63

Sanjay Barbora — High Ground: Reflections on Colonialism, Conflicts, and Environmental Justice in Northeast India — 76

Ayse Caglar, Giorgio Grappi Lydia Potts, Saima Farhad, Sandro Mezzadra — Innovative Methods of Research — 90

Samir Kumar Das — Syllabus on Migration Studies — 107

Somali Bhattacharyya — Between Cities and Borders: Environmental Migration and Urban Mobility in the GBM Delta — 112

Book Review

Prajot P. Asolkar — The Paradox of Belonging: Understanding Identity and Rejection in Modern France — 129

Teaching Migration: Responding to a Mobile Time

By

Ananya Chatterjee *

This special issue of the journal *Refugee Watch* is the result of Calcutta Research Group's (CRG) engagement with Refugee and Migration Studies as an academic field of study as well as other fields emerging as essential in many social science and humanities courses in both India and abroad. Keeping the rapidly changing nature of the field as well as of the classroom in mind, and in responding to what is popularly, and erroneously called migration crises, CRG organised a series of courses and workshops for professionals already teaching or interested in teaching migration and forced migration. In the Teachers' Workshops held in December 2020, September 2022 and in August 2023, participants discussed the essential ideas/concepts of refugeehood, voluntary/involuntary migration, statelessness, etc., that need to be flagged in any course dealing with Migration and Refugee Studies, the ethical challenges and considerations in field work as well as in classroom discussion, the potentials and pitfalls of drafting new syllabi, the importance and challenge of using global concepts in local contexts, and the urgency of it all in a mobile, volatile world. The second Teachers' Workshop themed on "Teaching Migration: An Interdisciplinary Teachers' Workshop in Migration and Refugee Studies" critically engaged with the emerging and ongoing discussions on learning migration and teaching migrants.[1]

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) advocates for education as a basic right in the context of 1951 Refugee Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Article 22) and its 1967 Protocol, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees, and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4).[2] UNHCR in its *Agenda for Protection* explicitly underlined the importance of education as a tool

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for protection.[3] "Healthy, cognitive, and emotional development of children and adolescents is promoted by a secure environment and opportunities for learning. Yet, there are many hundreds of thousands of children living in refugee camps and settlements, or internally displaced, whose security has been shattered, often violently, and who have lost or have been separated from friends and family members. Education provides a vehicle for rebuilding refugee children's lives, through social interaction and gaining knowledge and skills for their future lives. For some, the alternative is depression and idleness, and for others, a range of anti-social activities and the thought of revenge through a renewal of arm conflict".[4]

As of the end of June 2024, there were an estimated 122.6 million people around the world who have been forced to flee their homes. Among them, nearly 43.7 million were refugees.[5] There were also 4.4 million stateless people, who have been denied a nationality and lack access to basic rights such as education, health care, employment, and freedom of movement. The refugee and migrant population are struggling to meet their basic needs as they are left to choose between either complete dependence, isolation, humiliation, indignity or a bleak future. New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (2016) mentions that "access to quality education, including for host communities, gives fundamental protection to children and youth in displacement contexts, particularly in situations of conflict and crisis." Though these Declarations received support through several subsequent drafts and plans, refugees till date remain in the real danger of being left behind in terms of their education. "Of the [total refugee] population, 14.8 million are school-aged—49 percent of whom are estimated to be out of school. That means 7.2 million refugee children are missing out on an education."[6] The problem of accommodating refugee children in schools in host countries becomes more acute for the older ones. In 2020–21 school year, the enrolment rates for elementary schools were 68 per cent but for high school it was significantly lower at 37 per cent and refugee girls remains all the more disadvantaged as very few of them enrolling in primary schools and the number dwindles in secondary schools with only 34 per cent girls enrolling compared to 36 percent boys.[7] In 2022–23, "similar to previous years, the average gross enro[l]ment rates for refugees was 37 per cent at the pre-primary level, 65 per cent at the primary level, 42 per cent at the secondary level, and 7 per cent at the tertiary level. Despite obstacles to pursuing higher education, refugees who partake in national examinations tend to have high pass rates at all levels—at times exceeding the national average. In UNHCR's reporting countries, 82 per cent of refugee students who took primary exams passed."[8]

According to the UNHCR data, as of 31st January 2022, more than 46,000 refugees and asylum seekers are registered with UNHCR India who are mainly from Myanmar and Afghanistan.[9] India has no international or domestic refugee policy. This absence of a formal law allows the state to deal with refugee groups on arbitrary and basis. The refugee policies in India are directed not by humanitarian or constitutional considerations but by geopolitical and diplomatic concerns, domestic electoral politics, and local socio-cultural dynamics. India is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention or its

1967 Protocol which secure the rights of the refugees to seek asylum and protect them from being sent back. India also does not acknowledge the administrative role of the UNHCR within its territory. Many refugees and migrants remain undocumented in India. They have no access to basic facilities like healthcare, education, and employment.

For refugees and migrants, education may be the one of the vital tools for socio-economic success and overcoming difficulties in societies. Equal access, enabling "all learners to realise the capabilities they require to become economically productive, to develop sustainable livelihoods, to contribute to peaceful and democratic societies, and to enhance wellbeing," is a core tenet of education.[10] Proper education paves the way for social inclusion, socio-economic mobility, and development of the individual. Though education is a basic human right, access to it is not universally guaranteed. Children having irregular or undefined status, the refugees, and the migrants face man hurdles in obtaining formal education. Such children are denied access to schools or charged fees beyond their means.[11] In addition to formal restrictions, they face other challenges that come with being displaced such as language barriers, gaps in their education history, discrimination, and alienation.[12] Undocumented migrants avoid formal enrolment in schools for fear of revealing their identity, which might result in detention or deportation. Children who migrate unaccompanied by adults are especially vulnerable, as work requirements to survive, poverty, poor health, and language barriers can easily exclude them from schools.[13] Deportation policies have detrimental effects on migrant children and their education. Parental detention and deportation result in the disruption of education, which causes economic strain, housing instability, adversely affecting health of children due to lack of food and increased cases of depression.[14] Studies conducted in the United States show that such separation during the period of detention results in diminished academic achievement and learning outcomes, increased drop-out rates, and impaired intergroup dynamics and life-course outcomes.[15]

Human migration is as old a phenomenon as the history of human civilization itself.[16] But the overall scale and scope of people on the move today is unprecedented.[17] Across the world, refugees and migrants represent a growing proportion of people affected by forced displacement, whose needs for relief and development have never been more compelling. By the end of 2020, 41 per cent of the refugees under UNHCR's mandate i.e., 10 million persons globally, were children.[18] Behind these statistics are real people, often migrating for very different reasons and facing very different challenges and circumstances. As educators we are drawn to immigration because its intricacies implore us to think critically and reflectively. The teaching of migration as a curriculum content is urgent and at the same time complex. It is such an issue that brings to the fore not only the questions of nation and culture but also those of race, class, religion, language, criminality, and gender. The compelling question that needs to be addressed in its urgency is what models and resources do we need to understand and teach effectively about the newly emerging patterns of migration—patterns that can longer be

satisfactorily explained through the traditional methods and tools. We need new methodologies to understand human migration. In most of the cases, the Social Science Studies objects in their stationary state and mobility is often inferred as chaotic. As Creswell has stated, "[m]obility seems a chaotic thing– chaotic in the sense that moving things are often chaotic in the way we experience them. Stationary, sedentary life, on the other hand, is hard to see as chaos."[19] Despite migration being a constant feature of human history, it is becoming "more and more controversial".[20] Although increasing political and legal mechanisms have been put into order to restrain the flow of people, yet over the past few years the number of people forcibly displaced around the world has continued to grow at an alarming rate. Under these circumstances, it stands to reason that young people (including refugees and migrants) should be encouraged and supported to decipher this delicate topic and understand different perspectives, representations, and stories related to it. Young people and their educators should be provided with necessary support since the complexity of this issue is rarely reflected in public and media discourse.

According to Blanck, "[t]eaching is about making choices and acting based on teachers' professional reflections on pupils and content."[21] Parker mentions of knowledge blindness when it comes to teaching migration and advocated for knowledge-based human rights education.[22] McIntosh, Todd, and Das argued for the need to teach migration across disciplines because contents related to migration involves different subject areas, not only English and History.[23] Issues of belonging and identities of the students often intertwine with teaching migration thereby making it a very delicate and sensitive topic and controversial to teach at times and some teachers avoid teaching social issues that could appear controversial.[24] However, as Diane Hess emphasises, the solution is not to avoid controversies in the classroom, but rather to use them in the democratic education.[25] Teachers need to be better equipped to teach migration sensitively and effectively.[26] One way of making teachers better equipped could be to examine the possibilities of connecting specialised knowledge, often associated with science with teaching in practice, to address the knowledge blindness and to incorporate the value issues.[27] The previous knowledge and experience of all students needs to be acknowledged in teaching.[28] Gessner points to the importance of using the students themselves as a starting point when teaching migration and emphasises the learning needs and experiences of migrants in relation to civics to empower them.[29] The everyday knowledge of the student can be used as an opportunity to furthering knowledge; subsequently, their conceptual understanding is broadened.[30] To introduce any subject matter with the students previous knowledge is a familiar principle in teaching.[31] The value of involving the learners' whole experience and identity as a basic trope to teach "identity texts" is an effective teaching strategy especially beneficial for newly arrived or students from marginalised groups.[32]

Education can be seen as a practice in which action and interaction constitute knowledge through which social life is organised, reproduced, and transformed.[33] Teachers must choose the kinds of knowledge and capabilities that are significant and relevant to the pupils in their educational practice.

Carlgen argues that the task for teachers is to create a *knowledge practice* where knowledge is being reconstructed and reinterpreted in a new context thereby obtaining a concrete meaning Reconstruction refers to the act in teaching during which a subject content is reconstructed into an example, story, picture, model, task, problem etc., to make it teachable and learnable by the target group. The role of the teacher is, according to Carlgren, to create a functional practice that makes it possible for the students, with the help of all available resources, including the teacher, to acquire this knowledge.[34] It should be reiterated here once again that learning is a combination of teachers' efforts, curriculum, and social activity. Sengupta and Blessinger argues that learning cannot be accomplished in isolation and needs the company, support, and stimulation of everyone involved which helps to overcome the multiple challenges faced both by the educationist and the receivers.[35] Though classrooms play an important part in this, but learning does not end within the walls of the classroom. Vanegas draws on both these areas to propose task-based learning which encourages realistic and autonomous activities within the classroom.[36] Allwright talks about the possibilities of practitioner-led research ("exploratory practice") in addressing reasons for not learning.[37] Kleinmann highlighted refugee-specific barriers, and challenges, highlighting "survival, prevocational and occupation related language goals".[38] Several external factors also affect learning like "nesting patterns" and "transition anxiety".[39] Zahirovic study shows that the difficulty in learning English among the refugees can not only ascribed to difficult learning conditions but is also a reaction to exile.[40]Blake suggested that the training provision for refugee women is underpinned by ideologies that actually pose a barrier to learning.[41] Asylum seekers are in effect both "physically and symbolically 'out of place'—the 'other in our midst'".[42] Mental health is a factor that impacts significantly on educational performance.[43] Many refugees and migrants are forced to live in camps which often leads to depression, apathy, delinquent behaviour or aggressive acts to situational mental disturbances, drug abuse and suicide. In many cases, this may also reflect the high level of anxiety and despair within the refugee community as a whole.[44] One of the participants in Damian Spiteri's research on experience of asylum-seeking students in higher education system in UK mentioned that he had spent time in a refugee camp and had a feeling of being "severely locked in without the possibility of building a future," when at the camp. While another participant mentioned the importance of friends, networks, and social capital apart from parental help. Another participant spoke of his competencies that received little attention at the university.[45] This repression of past experiences, or what Kibreab calls *tabula rasa* occurs when "refugees [are] treated as if they were tabula rasa with no history, past experiences, culture, anticipation, skills [and] coping mechanisms to interpret new situations."[46]

According to Simons and Piche a "courses on international migration and globalisation should include the teaching of three kinds of related knowledge: a) factual knowledge, b) analytical or theoretical knowledge, and c) applied or policy-relevant knowledge" with general objectives like: "1.

Developing an understanding of the main patterns and trends in global international migration. This includes understanding the characteristics of the migrants and the data sources on migrants and migrant flows. 2. Acquiring an understanding of what constitutes 'globalisation' and how it both shapes and is shaped by international migration. 3. Gaining insights into the main policy issues that influence research and professional work on contemporary international migration, including the questions listed above."[47] Media representations, and even migration scholarship, contribute to oversimplified stories that dominate contemporary understandings of migration. Numerous individuals and institutions, including Facing History and Ourselves, Migrantas, Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting, The Advocates for Human Rights, UNHCR, and Voice of Witness are concerned with developing thoughtful migration related educational materials that might serve as a counterpoint to the existing public narratives described above and/or invite young people to ask critical questions about migration and how it is represented. Voice of Witness, for instance, uses oral histories to bring attention to human rights issues. Their curriculum introduces migrant voices into classroom conversations about migration as a way to humanise political debates about on migration. Similarly, the Advocates for Human Rights Immigrant Stories curriculum offers lessons based on videos created by immigrants and provides a historical overview of immigration policy and immigrant experience in the United States as a way to help contextualise and humanise conversations about migration. Out of Eden Learn curricula, an online laboratory and research and educational initiative joined by scholars and young activists globally, developed by Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education focuses on three core learning principles: "1) slow down to observe the world carefully and listen attentively to others; 2) exchange stories and perspectives about people, place, and identity,, and; 3) make connections between their individual lives and larger human stories and systems." Migration is an essential part of being human. Yet at this critical moment—one marked by unprecedented movement of a huge numbers of people, divisive rhetoric, and the lightning-quick relaying of opinions and information around the world—it is perhaps more important than ever to offer educators guidance on how to engage youth around this significant yet potentially sensitive topic.

Keeping in mind the needs of this present moment, as well as the Calcutta Research Group's nearly three decades' long investment in Migration and Refugee Studies, the present issue includes articles that tackle the question of educating migrant and refugee children, as well as teaching students (in higher education), through literary and interdisciplinary methods. Mohamed Shafeeq Karunkurayil's article on teaching the literature of economic migration in a multicultural classroom takes concrete examples from Malayalam literature produced in the Gulf countries to both indicate the importance of treating economic migrants as cultural agents and the importance of going beyond the notion of migrants as caught between two cultures, arguing that such a view overlooks the interconnectedness of cultures and the role of migrants in shaping host societies. This article

emphasises that migration literature should not be treated simply as an anthropological document or a means to scrutinise "the other". Instead, it should facilitate introspection and reveal the connections between migrants' experiences and the reader's own life. The classroom should avoid objectifying students from migrant backgrounds, recognising their lived experiences while encouraging critical self-reflection. The text also stresses the importance of a more inclusive approach to migration literature, recognising the links between various forms of cultural production—such as film, oral traditions, and media—and the experiences of migration. Indira Chakraborty Bhattacharya attempts a similar exercise with one text, Kamila Shamsie's *Kartography*, and poses a set of questions to the reader who may be a teacher in a classroom involving migrant students. The author reflects on her own position and the crucial concepts that need to be flagged to make sense of the novel in the South Asian context, at the same time, mindful of the explosive and disturbing potentials of the same concepts.

Moving beyond the literature classroom, Azeemah Saleem's study documents an interdisciplinary pedagogical approach aimed at enhancing communication, critical thinking, and decision-making skills among professional students, focusing on the sensitivity toward forced migrants. A Workshop on "Forced Migration and Rights" was conducted with around 200 students from diverse fields, including Bachelor of Technology, Business Administration, and Design. The Workshop used audio-visual tools to explore the emotive experiences of forced migration, prompting students to reflect on their perceptions of refugees, displaced people, and the reasons behind forced migration. The Workshop was structurally divided in three sessions. In the first, participants were asked thought-provoking questions to encourage them to consider forced migration as a human condition involving suffering, survival, hope, and resilience. The second session delved into the history of forced migration, covering topics like the Partition of India and the ongoing climate crisis. It used discursive and observational methods to gauge how the students understood and empathized with refugee experiences and their rights. In the third session, students engaged with audio-visual materials, including the UNHCR's Global Trends Report, an *Indian Express* video on Indian migrants, and Charlie Chaplin's film *The Immigrant*. The most important part of this methodology also involved an "exit" survey directed at identifying the change in students' response to various refugee and migrant issues after this pedagogical exercise.

Azeemah Saleem's paper acts as a crucial link between the first two and the next two articles in the issue, both of which respond to the challenges of educating migrant and refugee students. Kuldeep Singh Rajput and Sakshi Rajput's article analyses teacher education syllabus in India and argues that teacher education curriculums often overlook issues of exclusion and marginalisation, particularly for disadvantaged groups like migrant children. It legitimises this silence by failing to adequately address the structural barriers, social stratification, and exclusion present in society. The curriculum implicitly promotes certain knowledge that reflects the values of socially dominant groups, while under-representing or excluding crucial topics related to these

marginalised groups. The omission of such topics suggests a belief in a society free from exclusion, which is far from the reality. This silence perpetuates the idea that enrolling disadvantaged students (through policies like the Right to Education) is sufficient for inclusive education, assuming that once enrolled, all students are equal in the classroom. It overlooks the specific learning needs of migrant children, who often face learning gaps due to their mobility. Mainstream educational approaches tend to blame students if they do not meet the expected learning outcomes, rather than examining flaws in teaching methods or school structures. In the aftermath of the Covid-19 lockdown, thousands of migrant children dropped out of formal schooling system.

Sreetapa Chakrabarty's article delves into the situation of Rohingya children, particularly in Bangladesh, marked by extreme precarity due to their statelessness and displacement. The 1982 Burmese Citizenship Law led to the emergence of many Rohingya children as de facto stateless, forcing them to flee Myanmar. The 1993 Child Law in Myanmar recognised the right to education but only for children who are citizens thereby effectively denying this right to Rohingya children. Rohingya children face significant discrimination, violence, and exclusion from education. Their situation is largely overlooked compared to European refugee children, such as Ukrainian refugees, who have better educational prospects. In Bangladesh, Rohingya children are not allowed to access formal education based on National Curriculum. They are instead provided with informal education through learning centers, NGOs, *Madrassa's*, and private education institutions primarily in languages other than Bengali which limits their integration into Bangladeshi society. Bangladesh, not a party to key international refugee conventions, only recognises Rohingyas as "Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals," complicating their legal status and access to education. Chakrabarty documents several initiatives to educate Rohingya children in Bangladesh camps and the challenges that hinders the process. Contrasting with the situation of Ukrainian and Roma children in Europe, Chakrabarty argues that the deplorable educational condition of Rohingya children is also a result of their location in the Global South, away from the infrastructure and the funds available for the benefit of migrant students in the Global North.

This issue also includes Sanjay Barbora's evocative exploration of environmental justice in the context of Assam using maps as popular teaching aids. Delivered as the valedictory lecture in the 2023 Workshop on "Teaching Local Histories and Geographies of Climate Induced Migration," Barbora draws on his experience as a field-based researcher and a civil and political rights activist in the Brahmaputra valley to negotiate with the changing landscape of climate change in the area, any consideration of climate justice inseparable from consideration of forced displacement and citizenship.[48] Somali Bhattacharyya's study draws on the rural-urban migration in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) Delta through a comparative study of the Kolkata in India and Dhaka in Bangladesh. Both being cosmopolitan capital cities draws economic migrants also those displaced due to environmental changes like land erosion or increasing salinity in the Sundarbans. This special issue includes a syllabus collated from various syllabi

developed in and after subsequent Teachers' Workshops at CRG that attest to the long and collaborative process that finally led to this volume and transcript of a lecture on innovative research methods. We are grateful to the IWM Vienna which partnered with us in the workshops, as well as to the many teachers and colleagues who worked as resource persons and facilitators.

Notes

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Teaching Literature of Economic Migration

By

Mohamed Shafeeq Karinkurayil *

Teaching literatures of migration in a multicultural classroom cannot be isolated from the textual entanglements with other media through which such a literature maps on to a culture. This essay will deliberate on how economic migration in the contemporary world differs from the earlier phases of diasporas, reflect on the critical analysis of its representation in contemporary literature on migration and highlight the fault lines of such conceptualisation. Further, it delves on practices in classroom in the teaching of this literature, and possible outcomes of such a course on literatures of migration.

Defining the Literature of Economic Migration

Speaking about migration, Ranajit Guha once characterised it as "absolute discontinuity".[1] For long, migration is thought about as a giving up of one's homeland for the foreign. However, there clearly was a shift in the terms of being cast away by the late twentieth century. Reflecting on this, Carine M. Mardorossian draws up a binary between the earlier literatures of exile, which are premised on the possibility of return to one's homeland and in which the figure of the exile is caught midway between one's homeland and one's place of exile, and the literature of migration, which is characterised by the impossibility of return, conscious as it is, of the perpetual change that is affecting one's homeland such that no return to a homeland as one left it is possible.

> Because of her displacement, the migrant's identity undergoes radical shifts that alter her self-perception and often result in her ambivalence towards both her old and new existence. She can no longer simply or nostalgically remember the past as a fixed and comforting anchor in her life, since its contours move with the present rather than in opposition to it. Her identity is no longer to do with being but with becoming.[2]

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Much of this account is informed by the optimism of a globalising world in which the migrant identity stands as the node of resistance to monocultures and territorial powers–an optimism that properly belonged to the time when the wall between the East and the West came down in Europe. Writing around the same time and sharing the mood, Arjun Appadurai could conceive of the migrant archive as the migrants 'capacity to aspire for a new and better world.[3]Writing half a decade later, Vijay Mishra's study of diasporic literature is coloured by the knowledge that migrants cannot be banked on to provide an alternative to totalising and repressive territorial cultures. The impossibility of mourning that characterises the diasporic literature according to Mishra is the impossibility or even the undesirability of ever attaining that home that one so also longs for.[4]This impossibility is also the resource for both progressive and regressive politics that migrants can have with regard to their home.

There is a disconnect between such characterisations of migration and the contemporary reality of advanced technologies connecting people physically or virtually. Writing against the cliché of the migrant being *in-between two cultures*, Leslie A. Adelson questions the idea of cultures which exist in isolation to each other. The discourse of "in-between" is a [desperate] attempt to keep the two worlds separate, ignoring the myriad ways in which the worlds have been connected, and the role of the migrants in the making of the host culture.[5] Following this, Adelson reads German literature by Turkish writers as instances where one can find the breakdown of traditional boundaries and the seepage of spaces into one another. The telephone, the television, the mirror, and the reverberation across the walls in the domestic space, all become welded in the creation of a new space, one which does not yield itself to boundaries premised on blood and birth. In this literature, the author may find her mother in Istanbul in a woman at a railway station in Germany, while the mirror on the wall overlooking the courtyard relays the sun that upsets the divisions of East and West. This neighbourhood in Germany has its nodes not only in Istanbul and Africa, but also the vast sky through which the televisions and the pigeons transmit messages.[6]

The characterisation of migration in the paradigm of death and loss is even more disconnected from the experience of circular migration, where the migrants keep coming back to the homeland, and mostly settle post-retirement. As has been noted as a peculiar characteristic of Gulf migrant memoirs in Kerala, which has a long history of circular migration to the Gulf,

> When memory is studied with relation to migration, it is a truism that it is home which is remembered from one's location in the place that one has migrated to (Marschall 2018). For the Keralan migrants to the Gulf, owing to the circular nature of the Gulf migration, however, it is the place one had migrated to, the Gulf, which is often the remembered place.[7]

One way of thinking about this circular economic migration is the idea of temporariness built into it. Characterised as "Temporary People" the idea of migrant temporariness brings to the fore the need for developing a new language to speak about migration for those migrants who have no hope of ever settling in the host countries and will have to leave the host land eventually. Understandably then, Deepak Unnikrishnan, in his work *Temporary People*,

substitutes the discourse of exile with that of *absence*, thus accounting for the "temporary" time of migration from a point of view that is understood to be the only permanent place, that of home, and of mother.

> And by the time you've done the math in your head, everything you've missed, what's been gained, you'll come to realize what the word pravasi really means: absence. That's what it means, absence. When you write your book, address my Hari personally, and tell my beautiful, beautiful boy, tell my son that's what it's always meant: absence.[8]

As Priya Menon notes in her study of *Temporary People*, temporariness "disturbs the distinction between future, past and present". The recognition of spectrality therefore is the mode of existence of the migrants and the failed disjunction of time is a step towards developing a new vocabulary of the migrant experience in the Arab Gulf.[9]

While temporariness may not characterise all economic migrations of the contemporary world, it definitely extends itself to more than the condition of migrants in the Arab Gulf. Any migration aimed at remittance back home and unable to imagine a settled life in one's destination may easily fit into such a paradigm. One could also think of other migrations, say, that of rural China to its urban centres, where the discourse is that of escape from a place that has nothing to offer, to one of personal development.

> My youth began when I was 21. At least, that's when I decided it began. That was when I started to think that all those shiny things in life–some of them might possibly be for me.[10]

The aspiration that is built into such migration, one that is at work in economic migration in general, can similarly be a distinguishing factor from a discourse that is built on a language of alienation. More importantly, the question of aspiration forces us to relocate the frames of culture, not just of host (like in Adelson's critique), but also that of homeland, thus further destabilising the notion of between-ness and alienation that is the legacy of diasporic discourse in the study of migrations. Aspiration signals to the already permeated nature of home, in which the elsewhere is built as that where and/or through which a better home can be realized. Fundamentally, it can offer a popular repudiation of the national frames in which modernity is imagined in postcolonial discourse, while also bringing to the fore sites other than the West as the resource for imagining better lives.

To teach the culture and literature of economic migration is to consciously mark a new time in understanding migrations, and to build this consciousness into one's reading.

Economic Migration in a Literature Classroom

A fundamental task that an instructor of literature of migration is entrusted with is to treat the literary texts of migration as literary texts. These are not texts of truth-telling but texts which operate in a specific field of production. They are not ethnographic records of migration as they are records of a literary culture. The text is not direct-from-the-heart testimonial as it is an operation within the existing practice of the use of various literary themes and plot devices, stock

characteristics and motifs. Literatures of migration, inasmuch as they are produced by migrants, are testimonies of migrant creativity, a niche in the shared language, more than artefacts arising from a globally readable transparency of the migrant condition.

Often, migration literature is treated as a universal category and is not situated adequately in the literary field. Already the task of Comparative Literature has come under criticism for its smoothing over of fundamental differences over what constitute literature, or if at all literature can be considered a universal category.[11] When it comes to diasporic or migration literature, it is treated as a category in itself. While this has pragmatic value, as pointed out elsewhere, migrant literature operates within the context of regional/vernacular/national (in many instances these can be simply called linguistic) literatures. For example, Amitav Ghosh, author of *A Circle of Reason* has stated that his said work [a novel in English, and perhaps the first novel of Indian literature to feature the Arabian Gulf] was his response to the paucity of writing in Bengali literature on the Gulf.[12] Similarly, the strategies employed by Malayalam Gulf writers, such as the use of world literary figures, can be read in the context of the power structure within the Malayalam literary field and the placement of these authors within this field.[13] This placement in the field of regional literature is one of the ways in which new migrant literature is different from the older diasporic literature.

> As for the Indian diaspora, while writers can be seen to use their diasporic status as a ploy to reassert their identity in the alien environment, in the absence–except in the case of a few like A.K. Ramanujan and Gayatri Spivak–of any organic connection with a specific linguistic culture in India, the Indian identity they construct for themselves often turns out to be a myth suspended in a cultural vacuum. India for them is still a cultural monolith that communicates with the international community through what they consider to be the only pan-Indian language, English.[14]

The migrant literature of contemporary economic migration is part of, and makes its presence felt, in the field of linguistic literature of the homeland. The success of the Malayalam original of *Goat Days*, titled *Aatujeevitham* (2008), is a case in point. The novel was published by Green Books, established just five years before. Benyamin, the novelist, was a migrant in Bahrain at the time. The novel went on to become an unprecedented commercial success, also receiving critical acclaim. Not only did it establish Benyamin as an author to reckon with, and his subsequent works published by the well-established DC Books, the novel also cut out a bigger space for Gulf writing in mainstream Malayalam publishing industry. While many new works got published, some of the earlier ones were brought to light from the obscurity that had greeted them in their initial publication.

To treat the migrant literature as literature is to also recognise its overlapping with an established mode of writing, and its departures from the latter. The established mode of writing on migration, the literature of diaspora, as an older tradition, is characterised by the themes of trauma and mourning, alienation and assimilation. Teaching the literature of migration, the first task before the instructor is to move away from the frames that have dominated the

literature of diaspora and forge a new language of migration. The literature of diaspora is caught in the logic of the single language states, where movement between territories are also movement between sovereign and monolithic, monocultural nations. Even multiculturalism is a cultural trait in such a narration. This is essentially a nation-state interpretation of territory. While the power of the states cannot be underestimated in globalisation, instructors have to factor in the multiple temporalities that exist within the state and without being in opposition/resistance to it. The different logics of mobility, such as being mobile but inhabiting the authentic, being immobile but cosmopolitan, etc. that characterise tourism is one example.[15] To account for the multiple temporalities that occupy a space without it being in resistance to the state, and to develop a language to discuss these temporalities divergent from the individualist-statist logic of alienation/assimilation is the second task at hand for the instructor on the culture of economic migration.

A third task that confronts the instructor is to convince that literatures of economic migration are worth studying. There are many factors why one might be convinced otherwise. First, like mentioned, these are not stories of cultural alienation and the pain of assimilation. This is not to discount the fact that many literatures of economic migration do feature alienation to a large extent, under the weight of a literary tradition. This in itself should be subject to scrutiny. Secondly, literatures of circular economic migration are not stories of an eventual departure. They do not narrate an exodus or fleeing. Rather they are stories of travel taken more or less to be part of the ordinary for the community even if they are of immense biographical value to the individual migrant. We need to balance between the individual-evental and the communal-routine nature of this migration. Thirdly, these are stories of people who seek economic betterment, but whose economic worries are not as basic as food and shelter, but rather propelled by what are understood to be vices–such as the need to give a dowry for one's sister, the need to have a middle-class life style, such as a fridge, an AC, etc. In other words, the migration is towards ends that shouldn't elicit our sympathy, which doesn't fit well when dealing with diasporic literature.

Consider, for example, how Najeeb, the protagonist of Benyamin's *Goat Days* (2012), narrate the reason why he chose to migrate to the Gulf,

> When a friend from Karuvatta casually mentioned there was a visa for sale, I felt a yearning I had never experienced before. How long have I been here, diving for a living? How about going abroad for once? Not for long. I am not that greedy. Only long enough to settle a few debts. Add a room to the house. Just the usual cravings of most Malayalis. Not just that. There was a rumour that sand mining from the river was going to be regulated. It that too is gone, what work can I get? Can one go hungry? I have, in the past. But things are different now. Now, at Ummah's insistence, I am married. My wife is four months pregnant. Expenditure will now mount up like a mound of sand. Moreover, I have recently developed a recurring cough and cold – perhaps from staying in the water for long stretches of time. Can one refrain from diving into the water fearing pneumonia? This must be an opportunity from the Lord Himself. I should not waste it.[16]

The possibility of starvation in the event of being jobless, a creeping sense of ill-health if one is to continue in the present job, a state-sponsored denial of one's livelihood–all of these are undeniably part of the reasons for migration. However, there is also something normal about the Gulf dream, "the usual cravings of most Malayalis".[17] The "cravings" themselves suggest a kind of excess involved, the realm of desire rather than need. The journey itself, while one requires much thought on the part of the protagonist, is nevertheless part of a chain which is no doubt formed as part of earlier migrations by others of the kin or region.

If migration can only be palatable if they are made under duress, if only such stories as those of exile or migration out of need deserve the pathos, then the literature of contemporary economic migration asks for a revision of terms in which migrant literature is to be read. The less than admirable purpose of travel, the relative taken-for-grantedness in this movement, and the continuing living link between oneself and one's homeland fit uncomfortably in a tradition of moving out into complete alienation, out of desperation, and for noble aims. In addition to devising a new language to speak about the multiple temporalities of community irreducible to state but not necessarily in resistance to it, the task is therefore also about demonstrating ordinary journeys for livelihood as meriting literary output, and about contextualising mobility such that aspirations of economic mobility can also be seen in its multi-dimensions of social mobility, or political resistance, or aspiration itself as a basis of desirable future for all. It is here that the reading syncs with the intended effect of the text itself.

In the age of "airport literature" where literature is treated as the window to unknown worlds, it is important that studying/teaching literature does not become a means to exerting one's gaze over the other.[18] Literature should not be an occasion to speak about other lived cultures, as if our powers of analysis render the world transparent before us. Instead, as Spivak notes on the practice of comparative literature in a multicultural classroom, literature should be an occasion to find the resonances of the stranger within us, to connect us to our own situations, and subject ourselves to introspection, rather than subject the other to our scholarly scrutiny.[19] Classrooms in any reputed university in India are populated by students who have had to leave their hometowns and villages for the purpose of education and livelihood. The fact of migration is especially affectively resonant in such a classroom, and the literature of migration should offer us the space to explore the others within us, and regain the planetary potential that migrant archives were hoped to hold within themselves against totalitarian and autochthonous dispensations.

Two related concerns pertaining to the conduct of the classroom need to be mentioned here. One, to not treat literature as anthropological document should also involve strategies to avoid any student or group of students becoming an object of the gaze of their fellow students or the instructor. Any university in India is bound to have students from different regions of India, some with a long and established history of migration to other regions. These population groups might also be subject to racial othering and may be the target of derogatory discourse in dominant culture. The instructor should be sensitive

and careful in arranging the classroom setting and teaching methodology so that students from such regions of long-standing migration are not treated as specimens. The obverse of the situation (and the two situations can co-exist) is that the students from regions with a long history of migration turn themselves into native informants. Not only does such a situation confer an authority on a student without the necessary checks to ensure the person deserves it, the discussion again has the potential to dislodge a text from its embeddedness in a literary culture to it being a piece of transparent ethnographic data.

Any study of literary culture cannot avoid bringing to the classroom the connectedness that literature has with aural and visual cultures. This is especially true when the segment of migrating population has weak relations with the established literary culture but much greater influence on other media such as films or has a different system of literature from the dominant culture, such as the predominance of oral culture. Often the texts from other media can offer a counterweight to the image of migration and migrant lives offered by literature.

> Pictures can move away from the weight of diasporic thought based on alienation and *Bildungsroman* and academic rationalizations of remittance and mobility. They present us with an imagery that accounts for the network of relations as a fact of diasporic existence, the foreign space as a space of leisure, the laughter and banter of migrants, and the affective intensities of the unfamiliar.[20]

Teaching literature of economic migration therefore cannot ignore the organic link between the migrants and the cultural products not only among themselves but also on the cultural production back home. The study of literatures of migration requires us to move beyond methodological nationalism and explore literature as it is caught in the web of multi-sited connections, in terms of its genre and its geographical precincts.

The Syllabus and Course Outcomes

The objectives of a course on economic migration will be to introduce the students to a range of literature coming out of the context of contemporary economic migration, to signal towards the need for a new vocabulary to speak on migration as departing from the discourse on diaspora, to delineate the links of the literary culture to diverse media, and to deliberate on how such a recognition could help change the terms of literary criticism. It is in designing the syllabus as much as in the conduct of the classroom that these issues can be addressed. The syllabus will have to factor in the multi-sitedness that has been referred to previously. The syllabus has to have primary texts from a range of migratory situations and regions. The situations referred to here are of regional, internal, and international migrations. It should ideally feature transnational migrations as well as migrations to metropolises within nations. The syllabus should also cover a variety of geographic regions and population groups. For example, one could think of a syllabus that brings together, Turkish migration to Germany with the Keralan migration to the Arab Gulf (both being international migrations), the migration from rural China to its urban centres

with the migration from the smaller towns and villages of India to its urban centres. One could think of reading Emine Sevgi Özdamar (2005) with Deepak Unnikrishnan (2017), Anjum Hasan (2009) with Xiaolu Guo (2009).[21]Other than the literary texts which will serve as the primary reading/reference lists, syllabus should also include works from other fields of study, such as anthropology, development reports, etc., feature other textual materials such as films, interactive games, songs, etc. which will help the students to locate the specific discursive universe in which the given piece of literature makes meaning. One could juxtapose Özdamar (2005) with Nermin Abadan-Unat (2011) and films by Fatih Akin; Benyamin (2012) with Leela Gulati(1993) and films by Salam Kodiyathur; Jahnavi Barua (2010) with Duncan McDuie-Ra (2012); or Guo (2009) with Lixin Fan's *The Last Train Home* or the interactive game *The Long Day of Young Peng.*[22] This is of course in addition to the readings on the literary culture itself as a way of glimpsing the specific field of production of the literary piece. The proficiency of the class would vary with each of these instances, but one could always make an effort.

The aim of the syllabus should be to bring to attention not only the specificity of each migration culture and the literature produced as part of that culture, but also to understand the cross-cultural connections, in the network of ideas and images, in the similarities in aspirations and the comparabilities of the idioms, that would allow us to develop a planetary approach to such literatures. The immediate outcome of the course will be that the students will be aware of a few texts of literature arising out of a range of economic migration in different parts of the world. A more fundamental aim should be to capacitate the students to engage in new reading practices. These practices should enable the student to look at themselves and their 'own culture' critically. The assignments for the course can be directed towards an active engagement on rethinking aspects of migration cultures on the part of the students. While students can read and analyse literary texts not discussed in the class, or introduce the class to other migration cultures, the course can also encourage the students to extend their reading skills beyond this. An example is reading personal letters from and to migrants as part of the textual culture of migration. Similarly, cassette letters, a practice prevalent in some migration cultures in the cassette age, could be read both along literary axis as well as for what it can tell us about the popular appropriation of mass culture, and the genre crossings in migration cultures.[23] The activities that students could involve themselves in as part of the course can have a greater impact beyond the classroom. The course could be a starting point to engage meaningfully in the local cultures of migration and develop an archive of this migration. The students could do a team work of collecting various artefacts connected to migration at the local level, and thus expand the local community engagement of the institution. These could be the first steps to recognising the importance or even the centrality of migration to contemporary culture.

In conclusion, teaching the culture of economic migration can be a step towards rearticulating the position of the economic migrant as a cultural agent while also contributing to situate the migrant cultural products in the wider, mostly territorial, culture, and channelled towards community engagement on

the part of the instructor and the students, with a planetary orientation.The task is not just to look at migrant creativity, to recreate their life in the foreign land, or to look at the history and society from their perspective. What we have to do is to speak about migration as it is part of this soil and our bodies and the trajectory of our collective existence. And for this we need to develop a language that is as yet in its elementary stage. The course could be the student's first foray in forging and speaking a language that befits the new world of travel and communications. It can develop the necessary self-distance that education is supposed to provide that could be the beginning of imagining the world anew.

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‘Homing’ and the Desire for ‘Homing’: Reading/Teaching Kamila Shamshie’s *Kartography* through a Migrant’s Experience

By

Indira Chakraborty Bhattacharya *

Situating the Migrant Student in a Migration Studies Classroom

The first attempt that one should make while talking about Refugee Studies or Migration Studies especially while teaching to any group of migrant youngsters about any particular text is to define under which category does that particular text fall, i.e., whether the text has been written by any migrant author who pens his/her experience as a migrant, or the content of the text is about migrants and their experiences in a particular place. The texts are roughly classified by scholars as into sub-categories of Migration Literature or *Ecriture Migrante/Ecriture Immigrantesī* within the discipline of Literature.[1] In a classroom before teaching these migrant texts it is necessary to build trust between the migrant student, the institutional system and the teacher to develop a sense of inclusivity that might make the migrant student a little more comfortable about reading migrant literatures and corelate with its relevance. Amy Burge in “What can Literature Tell Us about Migration?” mentions the above categorical terms with an objective to see how Literature as a discipline in general, and any text classified under any of these sub-categories in particular critically views the dominant narratives of history of the present country. It also challenges nationalist discourses, provides historical perspectives and may also channelise the suppressed emotions of a migrant (reader/student) to a therapeutic end. Amigrant goes through social and cultural changes especially if one had migrated under some religious or political duress or sometimes even both. In the Preface to *Writing Across Worlds* (1995) Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White mentions the varied changes and challenges a migrant has to encounter and endure, changing notions of gender roles, expectations and demands on

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their cultural, social or political loyalty.[2] They argue even though Social Science as a discipline has failed to capture the "essence of what it is like to be a migrant" despite its diversity, they think that literature, even though it might not have formed a very important part of study of migration, still has the potential to unravel the nuances that might remain unexplored in historical details that are institutionally documented.

With the increasing commodification and privatising educational institutes especially higher education and degree programmes, it is slowly becoming an exclusive elite economy accessible to a few. The current study is based on the experiences of interaction with students both as a faculty at St. Xavier's University, Kolkata, an autonomous privately funded Jesuit University in India, and with students from different walks of life through chance interactions, sometimes on institutional basis, sometimes through random meetings. For this study, students here are seen not as a homogenous gamut but as a heterogenous class and put them in a hypothetical setting of a privately funded educational institute which is both relatable to the current synthesis and a scenario of abstract yet realistic infrastructural setup easier to conceive with the years of teaching experience. Students enrolled in this University in Kolkata belong mostly to upwardly mobile or upper middle-class sections of a city and even outsiders. Like most self-financed institutes, this University too has limited welfare schemes, and the existing ones are conferred only based on the merit of the applicant. It is therefore difficult to imagine a student on the same campus where a migrant (especially a forced migrant) can be. Also, if the student is financially not privileged then it makes their chance even thinner since that would mean financing for the entire fee-structure for the applied course. But this might not mean that teachers do not get the scope for teaching students who are/were migrants. In this hypothetically probable situation one can imagine students coming from neighboring countries such as Bangladesh, for instance, for better opportunities of education. Although teachers in general might not every time have a heterogenous batch of students enrolled for a specific course including migrant students, but in this hypothetical situation it is to be considered that such is the case and a new course on Literature and Migration have been introduced and taught for the last few semesters and it is through the experiences of this classroom interactions that one identify where fissures appear that needs to be flagged for a pedagogical change before commencement of a new semester. So, before any new syllabus is introduced, it is imperative that we keep these issues also in mind as to who a potential migrant student is, which makes it easier to identify the plausible problems that might occur.

Kartography: Charting Pedagogic Route Map

The text to be taught in the new syllabus is the novel *Kartography* published in the 2002 by a Pakistani novelist Kamila Shamshie. The syllabus should be designed in such a way that it flags the major causes and potential areas of oppression and discrimination faced by migrants and refugees. Sometimes, students who research on migration build close connection with migrants or

refer to texts written by migrants, but in the course of framing their research methodologies and writing theses they encounter challenges. The probable challenges can be analysed through the lens of the below-mention research questions in reference to a specific curriculum on migrant texts in South Asia especially India:

1. How do teachers and students perceive the concept of a refugee in the context of India, West Bengal and beyond? How are their perceptions formed? What are the comparative axes in these different notions of a refugee?
2. To what extent do teachers and students identify with refugee identity and why?
3. What are the feelings of the teachers and students about refugees in the context of India and beyond? When teaching a novel like *Kartography* how are migrant responses reciprocated?

It is important, primarily, to understand who a migrant or potential migrant is referred to here. It is usually assumed that a migrant is inevitably a person who is underprivileged especially in terms of access to facilities that protects their rights in a different country. But if a classroom consists of almost no migrant or at least a migrant who is not underprivileged (here irregular, economic migrants are not being addressed) then the classroom setting, pedagogical methods and learning approaches are different from issues that needs to be sensitively considered when there is a migrant student who is underprivileged or have moved under certain extreme political/religious circumstances, having faced persecution. When it comes to teaching literature to migrants that are experiences of migrant writers or even texts containing characters representative of migrant experience, they then act as teaching tools. However, the very idea of classification of teaching migration itself is very much problematic. When it is said that migration itself is fraught with myriad categories and cannot possibly be homogenised, it becomes imperative that even in classroom settings consisting of potential migrant students/teachers, where teaching-learning takes place, communication between the signifier and the signified becomes doubly difficult. There are diverse challenges that a teacher and student face in the pedagogical process ranging from learning materials and tools to psychological challenges. Teachers and students both, in a set-up where the student(s) have an experience of displacement, might experience alienation due to the barriers of language owing to its specificity of context. Political experience could also be different for either of them. Issues of trust and the fear of marginalisation or exclusion could also be equally demoralising. Sometimes lack of political experience of the teacher or an informed initiation of the politics at the least, similar to the one faced by the migrant could also lead to over-assumption or undermining of the migrant/migrant experience.

Teaching a migrant about the migrant experience or even literary texts representing migrants entails several challenges. The ease or difficulty of teaching a literary text also depends upon the genre. Literary forms like novels, fictions, poetry, plays or even a memoir has its own topicalities and uniqueness

and therefore different approaches are necessary to understand these specificities. For instance, a literary text which is not widely and popularly read, the nuances expressed will be understood only by a handful of academically oriented/trained individuals. While there are several other kinds of texts like graphic novels, for e.g., *Illegal* (2018) by Eoin Colfer, Andrew Donkin and Giovanni Rigano, and *Arrival* (2006) by Shaun Tan provide different narrative extremes like lack of intelligible language and dialogue to show the fluidity of experience of the migrants.

Words and Worlds: Placing Muhajir in Context

In classrooms with mixed batch of young adults having migrant students who have experienced displacement a teacher needs to be sensitive while discussing novels like *Kartography*. In the novel, Shamshie talks about a sociopolitical context that complicates the lives of two young people amidst the war and internal ethnic crisis in Pakistan. The novel revolves around the lives of two childhood friends Raheen and Karim, growing up to become lovers, remaining estranged for years in between without actually knowing the reason for this estrangement. They discover their estrangement, common disillusion and antipathy for each other after a very long time. But they discover that this antipathy is rooted in love and an extreme form of dependence that was escalated by a growing physical and psychological distance between them. This distance could only be fathomed or traced through the exchange of letters between them for years. Letters that reflected their realisations both within and outside the city, about the people and the places. They finally meet after years in the same city where they grew up and got separated amidst an internal crisis among certain ethnic groups whom they term as muhajirs/mohajirs indicating a long history of "original migrants" from Mecca, the holy shrine of Muhammad. Raheen had been a people's person, always backing friends, whereas Karim was a person who would think of cartography and their associations with landmarks or memories instead of actual maps. Letters that he would send would inevitably talk about maps, maps that contained memories embedded of lanes and by-lanes named after the most memorable incidents, local or personal. Both loved Karachi and know it like the back of their palm. They finally meet after years in the same city where they grew up and got separated amidst an internal crisis among certain ethnic groups whom they term as *muhajirs/mohajirs* indicating a long history of "original migrants" from Mecca, the holy shrine of Muhammad. Raheen had been a people's person, always backing friends, whereas Karim was a person who would think of cartography and their associations with landmarks or 'memories' instead of actual maps. Letters that he would send would inevitably talk about maps, maps that contained memories embedded, lanes and by-lanes named after the most memorable incidents, local or personal. Both loved Karachi and know it like the back of their palm.

In the novel there is frequent reference to *muhajir* while exploring the socio-cultural milieu of Islamic societies particularly in the context of migration. Shamshie discusses the socio-political connotations of the word *muhajir* and

how that affects intra-communal discourses. It is an Urdu word with Arabic roots meaning migrant. *Muhajir* or *mohajir* as they are sometimes known as, have been defined as migrants who have migrated owing to the Partition of India in the wake of formation of a new country Pakistan. Muhajirs comprise a considerable population of Pakistan and have been considered as major inhabitants in places like Karachi. In Urdu, the term mohajir means a migrant or refugee who has decided to leave his/her place in the fear of preservation of faith. A mohajir is someone who has performed the act of *hijarat*, the root of the word is from Arabic and connotes to the ideas of separation, migration, specifically alluding (in sense) to the flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. The muhajirs/mohajirs after they enter a separate territory somehow, are treated as outside-insiders and sometimes totally as outsiders. Their position politically or socially is problematic and is often ambivalent. The position of muhajirs in Pakistan has been problematic since the time of the birth of the nation and is defined with a religious bias, their positions being mostly negated since they are not acceptance by a section of the society. *Kartography* deals with the problems of the angst of people who are uprooted from the lands and become victims of identity politics. Shamshie mentions the same in her novel *Kartography* by defining muhajirs,

> Oh, now who's forgetting history! Muhajirs loved being called Muhajirs. Loved the religious connotation of that word, linking them to the Muslims of Mecca who immigrated to Medina with the Prophet. It wasn't that you weren't welcome—it's just you would have died rather than be absorbed.[3]

The very idea of border, nation, and home have also been problematised in a different way. The nuances of teaching this text to a class consisting of migrants following one single pedagogical approach might seem impossible because of the dichotomy of finding coherence and order despite themselves having a chaotic subjecthood is what goes into posing the biggest threat to any form of nomenclature or classification although it is necessary as already mentioned at the onset of the article. For instance, in the above-mentioned text, the idea behind the word mohajir debunks the position of any teacher teaching migration studies to the members of Islamic community since it might trigger their insecurities embedded in experience of the past (possibly in their home country) of having been termed a mohajir or even the fear of the same. All these reasons lead scholars/researchers/teachers to believe in the usage of a common diction that might capture the nuances of fissured subjecthood without encroaching on the privacy of the individuals. The present research is an attempt to at least identify these challenges of teaching (if not address them) about the silences and nuances that have gone unnoticed or unregistered about the processes of homing, of the muhajirs in *Kartography* who have been historically marginalised not for their religion but for the sake of maintaining the sanctity of their beings, to a group of young migrant students having had the experiences of marginalisation themselves. This question of sanctity as often formalised/institutionalised is highly suspicious and mostly instrumentalised through the centres of power. Attempt should also be made to unravel these trajectories of power and the nuances that follow in the process of sanctification of both political and

religious identity and also document potential responses between communicators in a teaching set-up such as the one mentioned above. Language acquisition and lack of a requisite exposure to the politicised climate might be conceived as some of the other challenges in teaching a novel like *Kartography*. Identifying a common diction, as mentioned earlier, could possibly be another challenge because such literary works use the language of affect, which could also trigger traumatic responses, requiring specialised training on part of the teacher to be able to contain that. The progression of the current discussion might also blend into several challenges including the making of an inclusive syllabi content to facilitate the deliberations that will take place.

The idea of borders is fluid and elusive just like the subjecthood of refugees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) figuratively represent and define respectively, what comprises an individual's status as a refugee. UNHCR defines refugees as displaced individuals who cross national borders under forced circumstances, while those who move from one part of a conflict affected country to another are considered internally displaced. The fact that borders cannot be strictly territorialised is further complicated by the presence of several other factors. Borders, although are fixed territorial demarcations, changes its functionality of territorialisation of nation and space depending on the perception of border by a citizen versus its porosity and accessibility and claims of seeking refuge by a migrant/displaced/refugee. The complexity of where the border lies and what claims have one to it makes it difficult to ascribe one single definition of migrants as one could layered with all its sub-categories and types. Similarly, not all kinds of displacements are classified as migration in accordance with the internationally accepted definitions but only those cross-border movements resulting from international migration leading to uprooting and loss of access to homeland can be considered as refugee/migrant who suffer from a sense of unfamiliarity and lack of belongingness in the host country. People migrate when natural calamities alter the landscape and topography making the place either inhospitable to live in or no longer remaining economically viable for livelihood, or due to religious or political persecution and sometimes both. To have an unbiased understanding of what it means to be a refugee it is necessary to situate their lived experiences. It is essential to draw on these experiences and corelate these sensitivities with similar experiences of the Internally Displaced Person(s) who neither get the international recognition of being a refugee nor any legal protection despite facing almost similar kinds of trauma of forced displacement. These understandings/perceptions also materialise in different ways especially in diverse settings such as classrooms as one cannot assume migrants to be a passive homogenous group. This is applicable not only for teachers and but also to students especially if one is a migrant or probably have had an experience of going through some kind of displacement within or outside the country. This experience of displacement stems from conscious political underpinnings. Migrants can be categorised under various categories—voluntary or forced, economic or political, legal or undocumented. But in whichever category they

are identified one must acknowledge the role of compulsion behind their decision/choice to migrate. In courses on Globalisation or International Migration, one needs to carefully introduce the causes which makes an individual to become a migrant or an asylum seeker or pushes them into itinerant refugeehood. There are diverse reasons behind international migration and the sovereign or the state's role in instrumentalising it. Each case of international migration is unique yet not entirely different from their neighbouring countries, especially as it imitates certain patterns of migration with the evolution of the World Trading Systems.

While discussing migration or migrants, the question of loyalty of the individual and with whom their loyalty should lie has always been a dilemma. In *Kartography*, the growing estrangement of Raheen and Kareem was rooted in their love for the place of birth, Karachi. For Raheen Karachi was still home, but for Karim it was a place where all the original estrangement and bitterness began long back from 1971, with his mother Maheen being separated, almost uprooted because of her Bengali bloodline. So, for any West Pakistani (as it was known then) to love a Bengali (East Pakistani) was sacrilegious and might even question one's loyalty to one's country. Loyalty becomes a question to begin with, a very complex and difficult thing to trace or even trust the individual about whom the question is asked. For both Zafar (Raheen's father originally betrothed to Karim's mother Maheen) and Maheen, loyalty was questioned. So, it was diffusive and extremely difficult to prove, as was expected from either side in a politically volatile situation such as that which influenced lifelong decisions in seconds and moments of vulnerabilities changed human lives forever. At the final moment of revelation, when Raheen discovers their parent's historical "fiancé swap" as Shamshie terms, in retrospect she considers,

> And then I saw. Aunty Maheen. Young, beautiful and in love, but with a heart that was daily further cleft by emotions more complicated than anything conjured up by the word 'politics', 'patriotism', 'loyalty'. Who every day heard the news, heard what was reported and what was not reported, heard things that I couldn't pretend to know because no ever talked about it, no one ever talked about those days and told us what the people who raised us had to bear and what they made others bear, and what could not be borne.…Why does any of this matter now? But it did. It mattered in ways that crept into the blood stream, too diffused to locate and examine.[4]

In a class of students comprising migrant students (from Bangladesh for instance) studying this text with other non-migrant students, might interpret the text along the line of their lived experience. The initial set of challenges that they might go through can be somewhere between self-definition especially in the geographical, geo-political location they are staying and also how others might think of them as. This context continually places them on the margins and might as well complicate their position which might further force one to introspect and ask the following questions:

1. How do migrant students relate to the content of the text?
2. How does this text tell them about the fissures of undocumented history through the stories of personal lives? Do they find any relevance with their personal lives?

3. How does the text question or challenge the dominant narratives of migrancy in the context of the political events and what kind of response generates in them?

The essay began with a proposition of categorising while teaching a particular text and the objective for doing so. This is in tandem with the above-mentioned introspections. Loyalty plays a very important role in defining one's position in a host country as well as in the institutional ideology in which one is inducted. In a country like India, which is already so diverse, questions of loyalty based on one's religion, ethnicity, caste and other markers of identity play an important role. In addition to these factors, political and institutional ideology pose challenges to the migrant student to express their bare a spontaneous self, since there is always a fear of loyalties being set apart during times of political crisis. Another related challenge might also stem from the fact that the given text might do two things—firstly it may make the reader/migrant student question its relevance and categorisation, i.e., whether the text (as most literary texts function) properly justifies its position as an essential part of "Literature of Migration" or *Ecriture Immigrationes* in relaying the experiences of migrants reliably and authentically. Secondly, the reader's trauma owing to their family's experiences during their stay in the home country or trauma induced by the chronicles running within the family might get triggered after reading the text.

Negotiating Trauma and Memory Through *Kartography*

These challenges might as well aggravate the situation especially when one considers grand narratives that are constructed as an act of commemorating or remembrance from the state. Memory of the collective is created through agencies, just as individuals curate memories of the past through photographs, souvenirs, magazine clippings, collectives so on so forth. But the fact is that what is to be remembered becomes complex and problematic. Elizabeth Jelin states that "contemporary culture of memory is in part a response or reaction to rapid change and to a life without anchors or roots. In such a cultural climate, memory has a highly significant role as a symbolic mechanism that helps strengthen the sense of belonging to groups and communities. Furthermore, especially for oppressed, silenced, or discriminated groups, the reference to a shared past often facilitates building feelings of self-respect and greater reliance in oneself and in the group."[5] Jelin talks at length about how memory is constructed as a by-product of the state's policies (which she calls as "memory explosion" in the Western societies) of what is to be remembered and who essentially are the "recipients" of these "memories". Jelin opines that the "fear of oblivion" and the "presence of the past" remains and almost impinges on the present. She also talks at length about how settling accounts of the past might become traumatic to the individual at present. "For the individual subject, the imprints of trauma play a central role in determining what the person can or cannot remember, silence, forget, or work through. At the political level, the processes of settling accounts with the past in terms of responsibilities, accountability, and institutional justice are overlayered with

ethical imperatives and moral demands. These imperatives, however, may be hard to settle given the political hostilities prevailing in settings where conflict is unfolding and where social catastrophes unleash the destruction of social bonds."[6]

Literature based on migrant experience acts as a kind of literary reconstruction of the past events, piecing together of the fragments of memory with the hope of understanding the violence, trauma, remembering and sometimes revisiting the past wherever necessary and moving on with the memory or coming to terms with it. Jelin proposes that past acquires meaning only by an intersection with the present, it then becomes imperative for the migrant student to also find relevance in the current literary text so as to find a safety valve that would allow a window to the repressed emotions and find out the fissures that will help them to interact with the present. Therefore, the present of the migrants is made meaningful by their interaction with the literary texts (fiction, memoir, or any testimonial) as they look at it in retrospect. These intimate spaces that they discover might act as disclosures of violence, which seeks justice. They also might try to understand how these testimonials have become part of the public memory. The cathartic experience of the migrants shapes their perspectives of the past and intergenerational trauma that might have been passed on to them from their parents or family. Several scholars like Cathy Caruth and Judith Herman talk about trauma, and state that either immediately or remotely after an event how an individual tries to unconsciously go back to the event over and over again. This kind of a behavioural disorder is termed by Sigmund Freud as "repetition compulsion" in his book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. However, there are contrasting opinions in recent psychoanalytical findings to what Freud stated. While Freud was shifting from his Seduction Theory to Oedipal Theory, he talked about this compulsion stating that trauma repeatedly disturbed and waned the capacity of an individual to deal with other challenges and the victim "reaped the repeated materials as a current experience" which is what he termed as "repetition compulsion".[7] He believed, unlike the recent scholars the aim of repetition is to gain mastery over the past but recent findings state otherwise. Caruth states that repeatedly going back to the same event is no longer a method of cure instead a literal return to the actual event. She states,

> While the precise definition of post-traumatic stress disorder is contested, most descriptions generally agree that there is a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or events, which takes the form of a repeated intrusive, hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviours stemming from that event.
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> The returning traumatic dream startles Freud because it cannot be understood in terms of any wish or unconscious meaning, but is, purely and inexplicably, the literal return of the event against the will of one it inhabits. In fact, modern analysts as well have remarked on the surprising *literality* and non-symbolic nature of traumatic dreams and flashbacks, which resist cure to the extent that they remain, precisely, literal….The traumatized, we may say, carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess.[8]

Freud believed that not just neuroses caused by the trauma of war but in fact any trauma is capable of triggering repressed emotions from past experience. Besides there are issues in the commonsensical notion regarding the transmission of memories across generations. We speak about post-war generation, the '68 generation so on and so forth. Jelin opines that,

> The succession of generations-in the demographic sense of the replacement of one generation by another-is closely related to processes of social memory. What traces of the past are irrevocably erased? Which remain active or dormant in oblivion, only to be recuperated in the future? How does the work of "memory entrepreneurs" intervene in the actualization and renewal of recollections and in the meanings of the past themselves?
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> First there is personal growth, maturation, and aging. The life course is an inexorable process. In each person, moreover, both new experiences and the horizon of future expectations change over time. Memories of lived events, lapses and amnesias, and the feelings involved in them also change.…Second is the temporality of historical time itself. Public events and historical processes take place in and over time, transecting institutional, demographic, political, and other dynamics.…This leads us to a third temporality, that of the generational succession and replacement of historical agents. Institutions may operate within a time frame of *la longue duree*, but their social location, their significance, and their personnel are under constant renovation.[9]

Thus, going back to our original discussion in the context of *Kartography*, generational memory which is transmitted to the present generation plays an important role in a migrant's life. The present generation (who might also be a migrant), overwhelmed by trauma of the past tries to reconcile between remembrance and oblivion.

> In such contexts, the question regarding the possible change that generational succession may bring about remains open. New generations may arrive to the political stage with alternative views, based in part on the lessons of past experiences (rejecting armed struggle, for example), while at the same time they may reawaken memories,questioning their elders about their commitments and their experiences in the conflictive and repressive past.[10]

Paul Ricoeur addressed the fundamental question of the representation of the past by examining the reciprocal relationship between remembering and forgetting. Forgetting is sometimes linked by Ricoeur with forgiveness as "if it has a sense, and if it exists—constitutes the horizon common to memory, history and forgetting. Always in retreat, this horizon slips away from any grasp. It makes forgiving difficult: not easy but not impossible."[11]

Such traces of intergenerational trauma can be felt in the ethnolinguistic divide that is present in characters of *Kartography* which makes the text relatively more relatable to the student perhaps. This was the contention that this article began with. Petroula Antoniou and Michalinos Zembylas studied refugeehood and its definition by diverse people. It was observed that in a primary school in Cyprus those who were either internally displaced (IDP, Greek-Cypriots ousted by Turkish-Cypriots) were not recognised by the International Refugee Convention as refugees and for some of the non-displaced teachers/students the definition of any displaced person was bracketed non-legally as a refuge. The attributes they identify with them were

"depicted as impure, immoral, terrorist, and criminal in a "pathologization of uprootedness"".[12]

The key challenge in teaching Migrant Literature is identifying a text and further categorising it into a sub-typeappropriate for classroom setting, relevant to a migrant studentand situate it in a specific social set up where both the contents of the text and experiences of the learner interject. Knowing the diversified background of the students will help the instructor to teach different perspectives on migrant and non-migrant and explore the concepts in the interaction process, in this case teaching *Kartography*, often it is seen that home and the sense of belonging as central elements of refugeehood as discussed by teachers and students and the definitions that come out in process generates similar feeling of empathy and meaning.Home is not just a place, but a feelingdynamically connected. Petroula Antonio and Michelinos Zembylas mentions that it is important understand the "complexities and tensions between legal definitions and the situatedness of the concept of refugee in lived experiences. Contextuali[s]ing the concept of refugee can create pedagogical spaces for the affective dimension in teacher and teacher professional development, which is critical to understanding the lived experience of refugees in more complex and nuanced ways, especially within conflict-affected settings. This work might fit into longer-term peace building or peace education efforts to communicate to each side of a conflict the emotional consequences of refugeehood that burden all sides.…Hence, peace education efforts may include the design of programs and activities that highlight the lived experiences of refugees from all sides of a conflict in order to show both the emotional power of these experiences and their socio-political consequences—for example, how contemporary public and media discourses of refugeehood in Cyprus and beyond influence understandings of the concept of refugee. As it has been argued, the construction and signification of refugee is driven by social, emotional, and political discourses; therefore, peace education has an important role to play to provide critical spaces to further understand and challenge these discourses."[13] Working on these challenges will help in making policies or designing syllabi which will be more inclusive and sensitive not only in terms of its content but also in terms of its delivery.

Notes

[1] Cited in Amy Burge, "What Can Literature Tell is About Migration?" NODE/UK Japan Initiative, Institute of Asian Migrations, Waseda University, Institute for Research into Superdiversity, University of Birmingham, Working Paper Series, no. 37/ 2020, 7–8, https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2020/what-can-literature-tell-us-about-migration.pdf

[2] Russel King, John Connell and Paul White, preface to *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration,* ed. by Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White (Routledge, 1995), ix-xvi.

[3] Kamila Shamshie, *Kartography* (Bloomsbury, 2002), 224.

[4] Shamshie, *Kartography*, 238.

[5] Elizabeth Jelin, *State Repression and the Labors of Memory*, trans. Judy Rein and Marcial Godoy-Anativia (University of Minnesota Press, 2003)

[6] Jelin, *State Repression*.
[7] Sefa Bulut, "Freud's Approach to Trauma," *Psychology Psychotherapy Research Studys* 3, no. 1 (2019): 1, DOI: 10.31031/PPRS.2019.03.000554
[8] Cathy Caruth, "Cathy Caruth: From *Trauma and Experience,*" in *Theories of Memory: A Reader*, ed. Michael Rossington and Anne Whitehead (John Hopkins University Press, 2007), 199–205.
[9] Jelin, *State Repression*.
[10] Jelin, *State Repression*.
[11] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathreen Blamey and David Pellauer (University of Chicago Press, 2006), 457.
[12] Petroula Antoniou and Michalinos Zembylas, "Conceptualizing and Contextualizing the Concept of Refugee in Education: A Phenomenological Study of Teachers' and Students' Perceptions in a Conflict-Affected Society," *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 13, no. 2 (2018): 3, https:/doi/org/10.1080/15595692.2018.1538045.
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Audio-Visual Resources in Teaching Migration to Students Enrolled in Professional Courses

By

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Teaching Migration and Refugee Studies requires a sensitive and complex methodology of inclusive pedagogy using varied teaching aids like narratives, that helps to develop analytical behaviour, conceptual understanding while being mindful of thevaried background of the students in the classroom some of whom may have directly experienced displacement or somehow related to it through familial ties or may be in a situation to experience one. Teaching is a consistent process of learning in itself, developing new learning simulations, making it appropriate for learners to their corresponding grades in which they are enrolled for easy knowledge transfer. The teaching-learning process, hence, varies and becomes more complicated with higher grade students as there is mix of both learning new information and unlearning at the same time. Teaching students from professional courses requires more careful responsive pedagogy to make them ethically knowledgeable towards the challenges faced by the marginalised, to understand the rights of the vulnerable, andbecome sensitive towards the refugees, which sometimes becomes a daunting and challenging task as these students at a mature age comes with a set of sociopolitical beliefs influenced by their immediate surrounding. Each interactionwith these students should aim forthought-provoking learning environment, inhibiting open-mindedness, and enhancing reflective learning. At times, it is challenging to incorporate a sensitive and humanist approach toward the *different others* in a homogenously motivated classroom, when the approach is merely focused on financial future.

India's competitive higher education system measures success on the effectiveness of knowledge, innovation, marketing ideas, and economic outcomes. However, the quotient of inculcating value-based education with moral obligations towards the vulnerable, and sensitivity, lacks mostly within in the professional courses in India.[1] Value-based education enables the

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learner/students to acquire more holistic perspectives by developing kindness, compassion and empathy that improves decision-making and problem-solving skills. It controls the growing consumerism and aggressive rush for self-fulfilment.[2] Even the Indian National Policy on Education (1986) emphasised bridging the rich and varied culture with former traditions. "In our culturally plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism."[3] To impart social and moral values, especially concerning the marginalised, it is necessary to introduce courses on Migration, Gender, and Rightsto expand the scope of inclusive education systems that will enhance the moral judgement capacities based on both effective and affective reasoning. Inculcating values such as equality, fraternity, and justices will help to remove discrimination on the basis of culture, social background, caste, religion, gender, community, or region. As part of the inclusive pedagogic initiative to develop value-based consciousness among the professional students toward the marginalised, besides focused curriculums on their core professional subjects, two-Workshops on "Forced Migration and Rights" were organised by the Centre for Communication and Critical Thinking at JK Lakshmipat University, Jaipur, Rajasthan in India on 1 and 15 October 2022. Around two batches of 100 students from Bachelor of Technology, Bachelor of Business Administration, and Bachelor of Design participated on each-day of the Workshop. The primary aim of the Workshop was to engage the students affectively in understanding the marginality of the others and analyse the patterns of the desired learning outcomes, i.e., changes in their cognitive-behavioural attitudes in appreciating the different vulnerable. The reflective impact of value-based education became evident, while discussing forced migration with the students, and observing their behavioural changes in their discursive approach.

A systemic syllabus was designed specifically for the Workshop that emphasised on using effective audio-visual tools to make participants aware realistically through its visual materiality towards the vulnerable and the marginalised, especially refugees, their sufferings, the violation of rights and dignity they face, the process of cultural adjustment, social complexities and cohesions one has to undergo while in refuge in the process of discussing forced migration and its implications on both the host societies and the migrants througha conceptual discussion of rights, and moral values. Understanding and contextualising the concept of migration and refugee in education requires both critical understanding of the historical processes that crafted protracted refugee situations like 1947 Partition of India or geopolitical crisis in Palestine and Afghanistan, as well as awareness of contemporary emergent exigencies like Syrian Civil War, Russia-Ukrainian War, or cognitive consciousness of the rapidly changing climate displacing millions and forcing them to seek refuge. Along with the discursive conceptual framework, using audio-visual aids like documentaries, films, and short videos, shows the realities of the lived experiences of migrants and helps to promote visual imagination about

complexities of refugeehood, thereby, creating a space for accepting the difference and marginality of others.

This article discusses the outcomes and results of a phenomenological study of the professional students' perceptions of the vulnerable, when imparted a value-based education on forced migration reflecting on the wide indifferences of the society towards the refugees and migrants and discussing pathways to integrate, accommodate and accept refugees and migrants in the society with sensitivity, empathy and with an ethical sense of moral responsibility. The objective of this study is to underline the significance of value-based education for professional students and identify the impact of audio-visual aids enhancing the quality of value of the knowledge transfer, and how an inclusive pedagogy on forced migration can develop empathy and sensitivity among the students.

Methodology of the Study

One of the aims of the Workshop was to experiment with methods as well as learning tools and resources to understand as teachers and instructors how an interdisciplinary pedagogical approach can impact a professional student's skills of communication, critical thinking, and decision-making capabilities in relation to the vulnerable populations who are positioned critically as a migrant or have the potentiality of becoming one. The themes were selectively chosen to engage students with a vibrant and diverse discourse to develop critical perspective and make them sensitive toward the vulnerable, especially the forced migrants. To give life soul to the complex theories of migration, to make the students conscious of the sensitivity of the concept and consequences of refugeehood, three specific audio-visual resources like documentaries, films as well as news and reports were selected as critical and essential learning tool: a) *Explained: India Migrant, Across India*, a news feature by the *Indian Express*, b) *The Immigrant*, a movie directed by Charlie Chaplin in 1917 and also starring him as the immigrant, and c) *The 1%: UNHCR's Global Trends Report in Forced Displacement* by UNHCR.[4] Media analysis after screening each of these films/documentary/news feature helped to reflect on the effective cognitive development and awareness of the students in relation to the discursive understanding of the different themes introduced on migration (both internal as well as forced migration) in the Workshop. The inclusive pedagogical approach aimed to introduce migration not just as an academic discipline but a global human reality as well to develop their interest and empathy in seeing through the existing societal complexities of "refugeedom" and explicitly show the participants how our conscious empathetical approach can change the nature of experiences of the future refugees and migrants and politics of the migrant generation processes and vice versa. So, audio-visual resources not only serve the purpose of seeing a refugee but also "seeing like a refugee" alongside seeing with a refugee and seeing through a refugee. Seeing, therefore, becomes a personalised experiential process of internalisation.

The Workshop was divided into three segments—introduction, analysis, followed by synthesis of the knowledge gained as a life skill for

improving interpersonal relations. The Workshop started with a short story as an entry point to complex maze of forced migration and simplify the basic understanding of what it is meant to be a migrant. To map the pre-existing knowledge of the participants on migration, they were asked specific questions like: How they perceive forced migration? Have they seen any refugees or internally displaced people in their life? How do they feel about refugeehood? What are their preliminary thoughts on forced migration? The preliminary introduction was aimed at setting the classroom environment with these nudging questions that suggestively made the participants to think of forced migration and refugees as an existing and increasingly emergent human condition, a cognitive category of hope and resilience, suffering and survival. The second session focused on conceptualising forced migration: a) from a historical perspective, especially, from the time of Partition of India in 1947 to the ongoing climate crisis both generating refugees and migrants (both internal and international) at two different spectrums with different causality and linked causalities, b) reasons for increase in the number of refugees and the role of the international organisations in dealing with refugee crisis, and c) refugees adjusting in a society, their access to rights and claims of seeking protection. Discursive and observation methods were used in the second session to analyse how students perceive the discourse on forced migration, and how or does it at all affect their conscious sensitivity towards the vulnerable. The open-ended discussions laid the foundation for learning the theories of migration and created a scope for continuous evaluation of the extent to which the participant understood and could relate to the concept of refugeehood. In the third session, *The 1%: UNHCR's Global Trends Report*, *Explained: Indian Migrants*, and *The Immigrant* were screened as different narratives of migration from which students can form their ideas of displacement. The Workshop concluded with a survey in which the students were asked specific questions with the objective to evaluate their ability to differentiate between the lived experiences of "us" versus "others" using the lens of forced migration involving the questions of legality and access to rights.

The study showed how the inter-relations between the background of the students and audio-visual resources used can impact the nature of knowledge transfer by stitching an emotive connection with the lived experience of forced migrants. Digitised cartoons (Image: 1, 2, 3) were also used to visually represent forced migration that affects the interpretative cognitive ability by exploring layered perspectives of vulnerability of the marginalised and its implications on the society. Audio-visual resources used helped to develop interests as it allowed the participants to visually analyse migrant situations from multiple perspectives by way of recognising differences and opened space for mindful discussions on the politics of otherisation and marginalisation of refugees in our society. The observations of the students as well as the evaluation of the survey documents submitted reflected a positive change in their cognitive understanding to situate the vulnerable. The varied use of visual resources with audio support specifically having a human narrator like the in-news feature *Explained* or reports like *The1% Global Trends* by UNHCR or non-

verbal audio-visual resources like the silent movie *The Immigrant* screened in the Workshop showed that audio-visual resources although an umbrella term is

Image 1: Jeemol Unni, "Robots Takes Over Jobs," in "Learn, Unlearn and Relearn," *Unni-Verse*, 29 December 2019, https://jeemolunni.com/2019/12/29/learn-unlearn-and-relearn/.

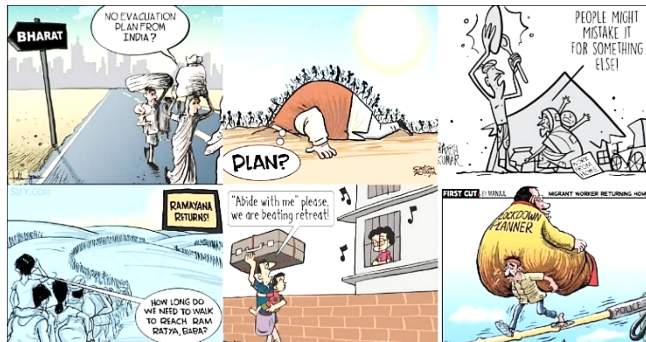

Image 2: "Coronavirus: How India's Cartoonists have depicted the Migrant Workers' Exodus," *Scroll*, 1 April 2020, https://scroll.in/article/957769/coronavirushow-indias-cartoonists-have-depicted-the-migrant-workers-exodus.

Image 3: Cartoonist Satish Acharya, "Please Pay and Help Them Survive! #lockdown," Facebook, 13 May 2020,https://www.facebook.com/cartoonistsatishacharya/posts/please-pay-help-them-survive-lockdown/3248249801853352/.

not a homogenous category even operationally as audio and visual sometimes works separately and sometimes in unison to achieve its desired objective in knowledge systems. Hence, if one thinks that use of language in audio format, i.e., having a human voice can empathetically impact the viewer to concern themselves with the analysis of the social, the political, cultural, and economic injustices and shape their human behaviour, then non-verbality has its own potential as gait, postures, emotions keep the zone of interpretation open for viewers discretion. Frequent exposure to audio-visual learning resources widens student's perspective and possibilities to empathise with the vulnerable, specifically, if one interacts with a migrant/refugee or become a migrant themselves. The process enables the students to connect with the lived experience of refugees empathetically and use languages consciously and in a sensitive and accommodating way that does not unconsciously hurt the dignity of the migrant. This broadens the learning perspective when integrated with their professional training and impact their behaviour in forming a responsible social cohesive force and start new discourse based on ethical and value-based objective. Workshops designed with such pedagogical inclusive approach will help professional students to become conscious and aware of migration and develop interest and empathy towards the forced migrants and their existing complexities.

Inclusive Pedagogy: Analysing Students Behaviour Towards Marginalised

Teaching is a form of interpersonal relation in a specific learning ecosystem that has the potential to influence and change the behavioural pattern of another person. A teacher is a facilitator of knowledge in the learning process. In an educational system, curriculum has a key role to play in the cognitive development of a student. Imparting value-based education, specifically in the context of forced migration, is necessary along with their professional course to expand the horizon of their thinking capability and problem-solving ability. To subjectively understand the behavioural development of students while teaching migration and rights, the parameters of inclusive pedagogy has been highlighted:

Communication: In the teaching process it is necessary to accept students as individual self and as critical thinkers having their opinion and judgments. It is important to channelize knowledge in different ways to make students aware of the different perspectives that help to enhance their reasoning and cognitive ability. Communication is the teaching process that helps the students clarify concepts and apply it to the world around them. Easy and effective verbal communication creates an engaging classroom environment and allows teachers an insight into the child's thoughts/ideas/opinions/issues whereas the students get the knowledge of the teacher's expectations, knowledge and skills.[5] Lectures were arranged thematically in the Workshop to explain different types of forced migration, and the related theoretical distinction of the concepts such

as migration, internally displaced people, refugees and asylum seeker, underlining the terminological difference and its respective implications. Using questionnaire survey had a positive impact on students as it helps them to understand and clearly distinguish and conceptualise the discourses on and meaning of internal and international migration, rural-urban migration, shock migrants, climate migrants, permanent and circulation migration and other forms of migration. The difference in opinion of student participants can be attributed to their differences in educational attainment, economic standing, marital status, etc., all of which have a key role in understanding how each individual experience and express their opinion on migration. The propensity to tolerate, appreciate, and accommodate "others" depends on the ability to articulate the differences. While discussing migration, majority students shared their experiences migrating toa new city/state/area for education and how challenging it had been to conform to the values and norms of their new community. Such conscious adjustment made resulting in acceptance by the host, made them realise the significance of accepting difference with respect and dignity. Wigforss argued that human communication plays an important role in how you develop an intellectual mind and the way knowledge is transferred to the next generation.[6] Communication of concepts and definitions is a way of transferring thoughts, ideas, opinions and knowledge. Teaching the fundamentals of forced migration can become a signifier in the improvisation of the society, and communication ease the process of imparting values in the educational process.

Selection of Pedagogical Content and Context: The content of the Workshop focused on: a) terminologies of forced migration, b) various push and pull factors that influences communities to migrate, c) the process and approaches to accommodate the newcomers, and adjust in a new setting, d) internal and international social, economic and political factors leading to forced migration, and e) the role of intellectual discourse and policy making in solving complexities arising out of migration. To understand the complexities, it is significant to understand how the conception and perception of refugees are connected to students' feelings about refugeehood. The concept of refugee is understood contextually because the category of refugees should not end up as an empty label with diminished analytical usefulness.[7] It is critical to understand the lived experience of refugees in a nuanced way, especially in a conflict-affected setting, that will possibly help in long-term peace building efforts and peace education to communicate with either side of a conflict and lessen the emotional stress of refugeehood on either sides.[8] Thus, it is significant to design the content of a workshop that enables students to become critically reflective, not only developing empathy towards the marginalised, but how the new media and the public discourse represent various categories of refugees and migration and their adversities. Contextualised training engages students with the philosophical, social, and legal discussions on forced migration, local-political issues and emotional stresses of forced migration. The Workshop curriculum included history of migration, contextual understanding of internal migration, specifically the direction of movement i.e., from rural to

rural, rural to urban, urban to urban and urban to rural, and spatial dimension especially intra and inter-state along with the reasons and duration of migration. While exploring the reasons of migration, the curriculum included themes on economic, social, and political causes behind migration, the push and pull factors as well. Economically, unemployment, wage disparity, poverty and socially, lack of education, poor services, poor medical care, politically persecution, civil war and conflict were the primary reasons discussed with the students. Discussions on international migration focused on forced, voluntary, irregular, and undocumented migration, its effect on both the country of origin and destination and contextually analysing migrations within the ambit of human rights. Thus, the content contextually dealt with the terminological difference, with its' relevance to the marginalised. The nature of content opened the space for discussions on diverse issues with the morally conscious and ethically trained students to understand their perspectives to deal with the marginality of the others. Students shared their observations and opinions on cultural practices of migrants, adaption to new lifestyle, ways to strengthen bonds brotherhood, and social life of individuals. The students positively perceived Article 1 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood," and supported the necessity of being treated as equalsin the society. While exploring the history of migration, especially in the context of 1947 Partition of India, few students shared their family's historical pasts and challenges faced while accommodating in new places across the border. Students whose families had directly experienced Partition had stories as heirlooms that shared their emotional reflections of uprootedness, loss of home, lack of belonging and shared a feeling of connectedness with contemporary issues such as Rohingya refugee crisis. Many students while discussing internal migration reflected their lived experiences of adjusting to new environments, the emotional changes they experienced which helped to empathise with the lived experiences of the other and the marginalised. Thus, a pedagogical space of teachers and students to discuss the complexities and nuance of the concept of forced migration and lived experience of marginalised both locally and globally is important as it is a sensitive and critical way to produce contextualised curriculum materials.[9] In a nutshell, a teacher's pedagogical knowledge of the content affects the nature of cognitive effect on student and the learning outcome may depend on the nature of instructional tools used. Teachers identify specific misconceptions of students in a classroom and guide them towards conceptual clarity.[10] Thus, it suggests, that whereas pedagogical content knowledge has an impact on cognitive activation, student learning depends on other instructional characteristics such as visual content delivery, role playing, and image (cartoon) analysing than just conventional learning.[11]

Utilisation of Audio-Visual Tools: Using audio-visual tools while teaching enhances a teacher's ability to present a lesson in a simple, easy, and effective

way, it makes learning more impactful for the students, as they use more than one sense to learn and hence tends to leave a more permanent impression on memory. The multiple lens in seeking a narrative enhances critical thinking and develop a systematic problem-solving approach in understanding the marginalised or the vulnerable. To concretise students' learnings, extensive workshops, activities, and interactions within the field, value-added education, forms students' moral and humane behaviour, and enable their professional empathy from diverse ethical prism. Audio-visual aid in teaching makes learning process effective, provides knowledge in depth and in details, brings change in the classroom environment, motivates both the teachers and the students[12] simply by stimulating thinking and understanding.[13] It gives a chance to the speaker to make more professional and consistent presentations, concretise knowledge induction and help in making learning experience real, living, and vital[14] as utilised in the Workshop on "Forced Migration and Rights". With the growing use of technology in education, conventional classrooms have given way to technology-based classroom that has continuously enhanced the teaching-learning process.[15] In the questionnaire given to the students, they mentioned that seeing reports like *The 1% UNHCR's Global Trends*[16] helped them to understand the causes behind the consistent rise in the number of refugees globally and agreed that multilateral humanitarian policies between different supranational institutions is necessary to address this crisis. Whereas the news feature *Explained: Indian Migrants, Across India*[17] sensitised the students about the desperation of the migrant workers to take up journey on foot during Covid-19 pandemic and left a permanent impression on their subconsciousness. Conceptual clarity and supplementing the arguments with visual aids helped to explain the reasons behind such drastic steps taken by the migrants, role of the government policies in managing the pandemic, and critically analyse the moral responsibilities and obligations of the state in dealing with the migrant community. Moreover, the movie *The Immigrant* by Charlie Chaplin highlighted that irrespective of time and location, people taking dangerous routes to migrate, insecurities of cultural difference, and adjustments at socio-economic and political levels have always been prevalent and only with the modern times with growing securitisation and border control, migrants have become a fissured entity. The participants shared their observations of satirical movie and interestingly it was found that students have developed the cognitive ability to analyse unsaid context, and most importantly, interpret the complex layers and the seriousness of the issues in the contemporary scenario. Thus, videos or any actualisation through media brings students into a much more contextualised learning experience, although books and other printed remain the basic aids in teaching.

Any media form, for e.g., audio-visual media, is important to engage students in the learning process. Media represents objects and events generating differential response from the students in relation to the nature of message conveyed. Effective teaching occurs when both the teachers and the students actively participate in the learning activities by listening to their ideas, comments, and questions and sharing their own thoughts. Videos can be used easily in the teaching and the learning process of any classroom environment.[18]

Active students' participation encourages other students to appreciate and accept diverse viewpoints. It not only enhances and develops social and communication skills, but create awareness, and wider imagination of the lived experiences. Using audio-visual tools to teach forced migration, especially to professional students helps in promoting their communicative competence, increases effectiveness of teaching methods and foster's learning outcomes. The content and the duration of audio-visual aids impact the active and passive participations of the students. Audio-visual content can be categorised into three categories: educative, inspirational, and motivational. The shorter duration keeps the concentration intact with better understanding and students can reflect or interpret it in different ways to express their ideas. It encourages expression of their contextual viewpoints and helps teachers analyse the understanding gained by the students. The duration of the audio-visual media influences the nature of peer discussions. Duration is the essential aspect that should be considered by the teachers before selecting any video for screening. Determining the length of the videos is the major priority after determining the content. When the duration is too short, like a minute, students tend to have discussion with their peers immediately after the video. If the duration is quite long, students might lose their concentration.[19] Media acts as a stimulus in gaining new knowledge and information beyond what is served to them. If the content is satirical and interesting like *The Immigrant*, then it enhances interpretative cognitive ability specifically as students tends to read through the labyrinths of cultural adjustment and economic limitations that migrant protagonist suffered in the movie. During the Workshop when asked many students successfully interpreted the highlights of migrant experiences in the movie, however, the minute details of the movie were either misinterpreted, ignored, or forgotten due to the long duration of screening.

Existing studies confirm that students innovate ideas if audio-visual resources are used in the learning process as they become empathetic in the process of watching and such pedagogical consciousness makes them aware and motivates them to work on the issue, indicating that students have successfully gained knowledge, decoded the information, and interpreted situations on case-to-case basis according to their lived experiences. They have the choice to select the part that they would like to work, based on their background or existing knowledge. The different versions among the students in decoding information could not be the benchmark for whether the learning is successful or not, because the way they receive their information may vary from one to another. Thus, it reflects how the students' writing can be more substantial while being careful of any generalisation by engaging in discussions that generate difference in perception and enables exchange of ideas. Most importantly students' participation is also influenced by the learning environment such as teachers' treatment of the students, type of interdisciplinary discussions taking place in the classroom, opinions of their peers, acceptance of an individual student's opinions in a classroom as well as personal motivations results in active participations of the students.[20] Students enjoy watching videos because they can visually understand what they are

learning which enhances their sensibility. Fambona and Pascual states that audio-visual media offers a great amount of entertainment. Thus, expressing ideas and thoughts in the classroom and the discussion stimulates students' participation.[21] Short videos play an important role in problem solving and in teaching and learning by facilitating self-directed and collaborative learning. It promotes students' engagement in the classroom learning activities, enhance knowledge acquisitions, and finally improve instructional effectiveness.[22] It could be understood more easily and quickly than longer ones through interactive sessions. Videos with less than five minutes duration focus on specific topic with a short time span to view which is easier to draw attention and arouse interest. Shorter videos may allow teachers and students to convey information or interact with each other flexibly using different communication styles such as eye movements. Shorter videos may also be able to keep the limited attention of learners focused with interesting content and enhance learning engagement due to their attractive presentation.[23] They are brief and concise and do not occupy much time and space of the learner. Learners can pick them up easily, whenever they are ready. Probability and flexibility, the main characteristics of short videos, easily draw learners' attention and enhance their engagement in learning since they never limit them to a certain space. Short videos can carry diverse information integrated through texts, pictures, and sounds.[24] However, if long videos are not tailored appropriately for students, then irrelevant, uninteresting or redundant facts present may exert a negative impact on students, who may then be distracted easily and the fundamental purpose of the video may fail. It further undermines the seriousness of the content and fails to develop sensitivity.

Documentaries are useful in classroom teaching.[25] Online videos integrated with face-to-face interaction are an effective educational model for teaching.[26] Video lecture and online activities promote student's engagement in the classroom as students prefer to watch course related instructional videos and practice online exercise rather than textbook readings.[27] Students prefer immersive learning where teaching process provide a good platform for peer discussion and critical thinking by engaging in opinion sharing that help students memorise key knowledge and conceptions.[28] Documents, short films, and movies aid students to understand the severity of global forced migration, and its emerging complexities. Students feel satisfied and thus engages in video watching due to the ease of understanding and convenience of time and venue.[29] In contemporary blended teaching, due to its popularity and affordability, videos are widely used in classrooms.[30]

Cartoon Pedagogy on Students Cognitive Development: In the Workshop showing e-cartoons fostered an intellectual environment and active rather than passive learning took precedence as students honed a wider range of skills by interpreting these cartoons which enhanced their unique understanding of migration and ethnicity (Image: 1, 2, 3). It resulted in expanding intellectual breadth that will positively affect their lifelong learning, inquiry, critical thinking, communication, global-multicultural knowledge, and awareness. Digitised cartoons raised theoretical questions like changing definition of

gender and race that transcend national borders. Caricatures added transnational dimensions to the study of refugees and migrants deepening the understanding of the cartoon and its context. It helped in recognising assumptions, acknowledge complexities, interpreting alternative, and constructing intelligent and synthetic arguments. Digitised cartoons enabled simplified understanding of forced migration in many ways as it has greater control over the learning schema and promoted active learning by exposing the students to high-order thinking.[31] Teaching necessitates inclusive pedagogy using new strategies, technologies, and ideas which can make this task easier. Cartoon have been abundantly used as a teaching aid for a very long time. They have made learning an easier enabling a better experience for the students. Cartoons bring in life into a dull page of books and adds liveliness to the hidden secrets of the subject. Students tend to remember what they see in the form of cartoons, or what actions were performed in the cartoons or anything else, if used in a correct way. During the lectures in the Workshop, resource persons used cartoons on forced migration that acted as a link between value-based education and sensitivity of the students. Cartoons with innate sense of fun and humour drew attention of the students while discussing forced migration and became a method of developing conscious of the emerging issues with a better understanding. While exploring conceptual understanding of forced migrations, digitised cartoon fuelled their critical ability to interpret and connect the relevance within artistic realm. In teaching forced migration digitised cartoons can become part of value-based moral education as any story of migration can be easily narrated, and students can grasp concepts that are difficult to comprehend theoretically, and students can learn how to handle and deal with sensitive situations. Cartoons enhances thinking skill, as they required critical thinking to interpret what cartoon is saying. There may be many possible outcomes but choosing the right one requires higher order thinking. Image analysis opens up space for discussion of complex social, cultural and economic issues leading to clear understanding of terminological distinction within forced migration, cultural challenges faced by the forced migrants and the host, and the power equation of the privilege and the underprivileged migrants.

Emotional Engagement and Inclusive Strategies of Learning: The scale of the students' engagement can be measured from the cognitive, behavioural, emotional, and social engagement which can be classified in sub-scales of self-efficacy and self-regulation.[32] In the Workshop, the use of audio-visual aid during lectures created a space for debates and discussion about forced migration, for e.g., the concerns and challenges of learning new languages when someone migrates, the question of cultural and traditional assimilation, the principle of ethics in policy formulation towards the host and migrants remained the core focus of discussion. Despite having contradicting views on learning host society languages, assimilations, or ethical consensus on policy formulation, the core point "to treat all human being as equal and just" was unanimously agreed by every student in the Workshop reflecting that contextualised knowledge was successfully gained through the inclusive

pedagogy on forced migration. *Indian Express* reports on the migrants walking thousands of kilometres during Covid evoked students' emotions as they understood migrants' desperation to take such drastic steps. For professional students, unless they are connected with values, morals and emotions of the common people, it will be challenging to proceed with a humane approach in their professional and personal development making it merely a robotic materialist tendency towards others. Inclusive strategies of teaching include cultivating inclusive relationship as the foundation of basic classroom management techniques, collaborate with the students and actively engage with them creating a positive and safe listening and learning space with opportunities for both the students and teachers where questions can be asked freely, clarification can be sought fearlessly, and thoughts can be shared in order openly to learn and grow. To make sure that all students have equal representation and are allowed an experiential and expressive learning environment it is necessary to relate classroom learning with real world situations as they gradually understand how important it is that every individual's difference is accounted for. One can celebrate the beauty of the uniqueness and culture in the classroom, accept the difference and learn to be accept these changes and differences in their life creating a true spirit of inclusiveness. To teach them safety, belonging, compassion, and understanding will lead to healthy relationships, community bonding, and will become indispensable and invaluable in the life course as they mature, grow and learn. Inclusive pedagogic strategies enhance students' participation, compassion towards the vulnerable, most importantly, make them conscious of the inhuman condition of the marginalised. It further motivates and train them to take decision or to solve problem related to human rights violation or securing or devising methods to assure one where it does not exist, resulting in enhancing learners' attitude, interest and intrinsic motivation. In the process, students pre-conceived notions of migrants as the freeloaders takes a backseat. Audio-visual aid sensitises students' behaviours towards the marginalised and forced migrants, to accept the difference, and motivated to incorporate ethical values in their decision making and problem-solving approach.

A Methodological View

The process of selecting pedagogies to ensure and incorporate participants opinion creates a complex yet secure and attractive maze of transferring knowledge and good practices irrespective of context. It is important both for the instructor/teacher and participants to navigate together and experiment with different instructional designs and its best suitable acceptance to subtly bring about positive attitudinal change while being attentive of the socio-political setting of the institution in a particular region, nature of student participants, i.e., their professional orientation, class, gender, social background, affiliations etc. Incorporating audio-visual aids in the learning process is not to measure the academic impact it is making in reference to understanding forced migration but create a sense and solidarity with millions displaced globally. The personalised way of communication allows free speech, exchange of

information and positive interactions influencing and impacting others. Audio-visual resources develop learners' affective potential and verbal cognitive skills as referred to in many multimedia teaching principles. Inclusive pedagogy debunks many stereotypes among the students with regards to the forced migrants by exploring their struggle and survival tendencies that helps to develop empathy, sensitise their consciousness the importance of rights as citizen and securing humanitarian aids and rights for the vulnerable fleeing their nation and seeking refuge and finally understanding that refugees should neither be considered as "other" nor "marginalised" and treat them as humans as equal and should not be left to charity of maltreatment but ensure a life of dignity even as a refugee. Conducting such workshops is a basic way to introduce students to understanding forced migration. However, audio-visual aids in teaching comes with its inherent limitations. The imaginative understanding is limited due to particular representation of refugees as either deprived or extractors of national resources and refugees as positive contributors to the economy and nation building or other aspects are sidetracked with exceptions. Sometimes, it is difficult for students to imagine beyond the capacity of the audio-visual aids and limit their learning outcome. The process, if not supervised properly, result in the monotonous learning leading receding interest. Teachers as individuals while defining forced migration unconsciously presents their respective perception sometimes or refers to more than one perception and lands in misty understanding of what forced migration is. Many students refer to refugees without being able to make any connection to refugeehood or identifying their experience. It is true for even those who are descendants of refugees. Nonetheless the importance of audio-visual aids in teaching cannot be underscored. In a lecture-based classroom setting, images create lively atmosphere for discussion amongst the peer group and motivate analysis of the varied lived experience of the migrants and non-migrants and how identities are created in relation to the politics of resource utilisation thereby classifying who belongs and have the right resources.

Notes

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Educating Children of Seasonal Migrant Workers Missing Pedagogical Orientation and Praxis in Teacher Education

By

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Internal migration is an important and pervasive feature of the Indian economy and society. The current dominant discourse on migration primarily focuses on international and cross-border migration even though the number of internal migrants is relatively higher than cross-border migration.[1] The number of internal migrant workers in India has increased over a period. The Census of India defines a migrant as a person who is enumerated in a place (village or town), which is different from their place of birth.[2] The Census of India estimated 232 million internal migrants in 1991, 314 million in 2001, and 453 in 2011. The trend indicates that internal migrants increased by 82 million between 1991 and 2001, while the number rose by 139 million between 2001 and 2011. By 2020, the number was estimated to be 600 million[3] of which around 200 million, i.e., one-third would be inter-state and inter-district migrants.[4] Further analysis indicates that among internal migrants

Types of Movement	2001	2011
Internal Migration	314 million	453 million
Inter-state Migration	12 %	11 %
Inter-district Migration	24 %	26 %
Intra-district Migration	64 %	63 %

Table 1: Types of Movement Among Internal Migrants
Source: Table D:02, Migrants Classified by Place of Last Residence, Sex and Duration of Residence in Place of Enumeration (All), Census of India, 2001 and 2011, Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, PC01_D02 and PC11_D02.

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most prefer short-distance intra-district migration (64 per cent in 2001 and 63 per cent in 2011) compared to inter-district and inter-state mobility. Among the internal migrants in India, a significant number of migrants are seasonal migrants moving for employment purpose and the most critical livelihood strategy is adopted by the poorest section of the country.[5]

Seasonal (Distressed) Migration

The term 'seasonal migration' is often used interchangeably with circular, temporary, short-term, spontaneous and oscillator migration.[6] Seasonal migration usually involves labour migrants leaving their source areas at specific periods, usually coinciding with the post-harvesting period beginning around October-November, to regions with a higher demand for labour.[7] Seasonal migration is a common coping strategy among rural households and has played a key role in accelerating urbanisation. Distress (seasonal) migration exists in almost all (Indian) states, although to varying degrees.[8] It is evident from the available literature that there is a widespread occurrence of temporary and seasonal migration for employment in developing countries.[9]

In India, most rural households are engaged in the agriculture sector, and the prevalent reason for their seasonal mobility lies in the existing regional, rural-urban development disparities which hinder their employment opportunities. The rural poor are vulnerable to more severe and frequent shocks than urban households.[10] Seasonal migrants include workers irrespective of caste affiliations but those at the bottom of the social hierarchy (Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes) are often engaged in the hardest work with the worst living conditions.[11] Agricultural degradation, climate change, frequent crop failure creates a vicious circle of poverty and indebtedness together with inadequate credit facilities, and unemployment create distress conditions in the rural area, consequently pushing off rural poor, labour and marginal farmers towards cities.[12] Particularly, irregular crop cycles in rural agrarian areas create periods of seasonal deprivation, or pre-harvest lean seasons, when work is scarce and skipping meals become frequent[13] leading to indebtedness and food insecurity[14] creating a despair condition ultimately resulting into rural-urban migration. This migration pattern has escalated due to persistent drought and environmental degradation.[15] Shortage of basic amenities such as healthcare and schooling is another critical factor pushing rural-urban mobility.[16]

The migrants move to the city with expectations of significant change in their socio-economic lives. However, migrants have to pay a considerable cost for their movement and remain critically marginalised in the host cities. Their precarious condition is reported to continue after migration. The mass exodus during the first lockdown during Covid-19 pandemic in India made all realise the plight of internal-seasonal migrants. In cities and urban centres, seasonal migrants are predominantly engaged in the informal sector. They are absorbed into urban informal activities such as construction, brick kilns, street vending, rag picking and textile mills. Migrants' mobility is primarily motivated

by survival instinct and a strategy to improve their standard of living, livelihood sources, and desire to break the vicious circle of poverty and debt. The rising contribution of cities to India's GDP would not have been possible without migration and the migrants. Internal (seasonal) migrants are indispensable and invisible key actors in the social dynamics of the culturally innovative and economically prosperous. However, it is paradoxical that these migrants in the urban informal sectors remain highly ignored despite their immense potential, contribution and crucial role in the development process. The destination cities function as "exclusionary zones"[17] and push the migrants to the margin. In these cities, they experience multiple levels of discrimination, exclusionary practices and interlocking axes of subordination. They experience several layers of socio-economic and political vulnerabilities and remain on the extreme margin.[18]

Children of Seasonal Migrants: Most Vulnerable and Educationally Excluded

Among seasonal (internal) migrants, the children migrating with their parents to different destination (usually) cities are probably the most at-risk groups. Research on distress-driven internal migration in India focus on the migrating adult population. Although they constitute a significant number, the issues of children in the migration process have still not been adequately explored and addressed.[19] Migrant children are vulnerable primarily on account of being invisible and excluded from social protection and services and faced enormous physical and mental hardships during the Covid-19 pandemic.[20] Due to precarity of the existing circumstances seasonal migrants have no options but to migrate with their dependent children. According to Census data, one of every five migrants is a child, resulting in an estimated 92.95 million migrant children.[21] This situation is an insidious promoter of child labour as migrating children often join the labour force as helpers.[22] Children of migrants are highly invisible, and over time, their learning crises has received little attention from the state, policymakers and development stakeholders. The role of education in social empowerment concerning international and refugee migration has been widely discussed, however, in the context of children of internally migrating families, equally pertinent questions (related to their educational exclusion) are rarely asked and prioritised.[23] Poverty shapes children's educational aspirations, opportunities and experiences and in turn, affects the attainment of education,[24] The marginality of migrating children is multi-dimensional and derives from the socio-economic and spatial context of mobility. Their vulnerability is aggravated because they lack access to the support which non-migrant children automatically have.[25] The "Education for All" movement and successive UN led Monitoring Reports have highlighted that migrant groups are highly marginalised in education provision around the world.[26] The 2015 Sustainable Development Goals framework also identifies migrants as one of the most vulnerable groups that must be empowered and provided inclusive and equitable quality education.[27] *Samagra Shiksha*, a framework document of

the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE) recognises migrant children as "belonging to most underprivileged groups".[28]

Access-Centric Efforts and Policy Perspective

Over the last two decades, several legal and development steps have been taken by the state to ensure the inclusion of different socio-economically disadvantaged students. In 2002, Article 21(A) of the Constitution of India was introduced under the 86th Amendment, which made the Right to Education a Fundamental Right in India for children under the age of 14. The 10th and 11th Five Year Plan focused on strategies to reach the "hardest to reach" children and interventions were taken accordingly. In 2000–2001, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) was launched to achieve universal access and retention, bridging gender and social category gaps in education and enhancing the learning levels of children. The RTE Act, 2009 provides free and compulsory elementary education of equitable quality to all children, including the children of migrant workers, of 6–14 years old. According to the Act, the local authorities shall ensure admission of children from migrant families (Section 9K) and that the child has the right to seek transfer to any other school (except private unaided and special category school) and will be immediately issued a transfer certificate by the head teacher or in-charge of the school (Section 5).[29]

The Ministry of Education, Government of India instructed all States and Union Territories to conduct household surveys annually to identify out-of-school children, including children affected by (labour) migration of their families. In order to ensure their enrolment in elementary education, various interventions are supported under Samagra Shiksha, such as the provision of seasonal hostels, residential camps, mid-day meals, free textbooks and free uniforms.[30] The Samagra Shiksha, framework document of RTE, recommends identification of migrant-intensive districts and adoption of "innovative and effective strategies" to ensure enrolment, retention and continuation of education across source and destination.[31] If we glance through the enrolment statistics, it seems India has made significant quantitative progress in enrolment and experienced a steady decline in out-of-school children.[32] According to the National University of Educational Planning and Administration, 2014 report, enrolment in primary education from 2000-01 to 2013-14 has increased from 113.8 million to 132.4 million. Expansion of schools and consistent enrolment undoubtedly have brought millions of disadvantaged students to mainstream education. Recently, Government of India has approved the establishment of over 2.04 lakh primary schools and 1.59 lakh upper primary schools, 1021 residential schools with accommodation capacities of 1,08,275 children.[33]

From Access-Centric to Equity-Centric Education

In India, the concept of access to education has been narrowed down to access to the formal mainstream schooling. But all early efforts after Independence were access-centric, thus emphasising on student enrolment. After

implementing SSA and RTE in India, focus was primarily given on student enrolment and access. However, it comes with limitations within the formal schooling model. The rigid and fixed-place schooling and the "ontological crises" of modern schooling, i.e., formal mainstream school model prefers fixed, permanent residence accommodating students and the student attends the school for a prolonged period.[34] Such a model of schooling is unfavourable for migrating children. Migrating children is not a homogeneous category due to "enormous differences in their lived realities," hence, their educational exclusion is a multi-dimensional, complex and intersectional phenomenon.[35] In education policy discourse, due to the high influence of structured, "geospatially-fixed" formal schooling pattern and "traditional sedentarist mindset" the "seasonal mobility of parents" is perceived as the problem and regarded as the root cause of out-of-school migrating children.[36] Due to the ill-founded and prejudiced perceptions the state education functionaries and non-government organisations holds unwilling parents as solely responsible for their children's frequent mobility and irregular attendance in school without considering their larger structural conditions.[37] Bringing them to school for attendance and to prove their presence on the document for official purposes is extremely unethical. Such adverse and forceful inclusion in school push these migrating children into deeper learning crises, resulting in self-elimination or drop-outs. Therefore, overemphasis merely on the access part (enrolment) in the attempt to universalise elementary and secondary education needs to be questioned. This is the dominant and unreflexive education policy approach in which the state pushes the government functionaries to increase the number of schools and perceive enrolment as an answer to solve the problem of disadvantaged migrant students. However, the approach is monolithic and has failed to recognise the exclusionary and discriminatory practices that take place silently within the four walls of the classroom and heavily relies only on the assumption that bringing children to school will make a significant change in their lives. Therefore, to achieve meaningful educational inclusion, equitable teaching–learning practices are critical. The National Education Policy of India (NEP, 2020) has recognised the issue of inequity in education and attempts to address students from the socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Pedagogical and Epistemological Orientation in Teacher-Education

The role of teacher-education is critical in preparing student centred pedagogy for teaching and empowering students coming from the disadvantaged sections. Indian society is highly stratified and inequalities, discriminatory practices are mirrored in school institution in multiple forms. When the effects of hierarchies within the society get carried over into the educational sphere, students who are at the lower rungs of these hierarchies are the ones that are most adversely affected which shapes their educational aspirations, learning opportunities and participation.[38] Despite being repeatedly alarmed of the problem of exclusion and segregation in schools, the education departments at the centre and in the states, do not officially admit this.[39]

Migrating children have their unique needs. For them, the formal mainstream sedentary school model is unsympathetic and unfriendly as it overlooks their mobility and diverse needs. It also overlooks the learning gaps that occur due to their periodical mobility. Teachers and the entire school model assume that these children can deal with the learning gaps independently and will catch up with the current classroom. It is necessary to strongly reject this "positivist pedagogy" which assumes all students are equal and learn at a similar pace, consequently promoting the adoption of monotonous and unidirectional teaching methods in the classroom. Such teaching methods usually miss out on minute and invisible learning differences among students. UNESCO in its 2010 report on education, states that marginalisation starts long before children enter school and continues into adult life.[40] Hence, schools play a vital role in counteracting early childhood disadvantages and help break the transmission of illiteracy across generations. However, schools can also reinforce disadvantages and perpetuate marginalisation.[41]

The role of a teacher is important in the entire process of empowering socially disadvantaged students in general and migrating children in particular. Teachers are the key actors in either perpetuating inequalities or bringing equitable education into reality. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) recognised teachers as key to educational reforms, equitable quality education, and lifelong learning for all.[42] For an effective inclusive and equitable education, essential teaching skills and content knowledge must be developed through teacher-education institute. In the absence of equitable teaching-learning strategies, migrant children may not be able to cope up with the formal schooling model. Without realising the importance of equitable education, mere enrolling migrating children could bring adverse consequences for these children. Forceful inclusion through enrolment may create a sense of stigma and a feeling of helplessness among migrating children, which eventually could push them out from the formal schooling.

Meaningful pedagogical interventions based on equitable education strategies is important to initiate a learning process based on equitable pedagogy is critical to ensure the right to education that may significantly change the lives of migrating children. Teaching disadvantaged students (seasonal migrating children) needs a special pedagogical orientation and skill set that must be introduced to them during their teacher-education course. A trainee-teacher must be oriented about the persistent structural inequalities in Indian society and the complex nature of social exclusion in classrooms and school spaces. As a part of the teacher education course, the internship or actual teaching lessons should be planned in different alternative schools such as *Ashram Shala, Bridge School,* and *Mobile School*. They should be given opportunities to work with non-profit organisations working for migrating children. Theoretical and practical orientation based on equitable education in teacher education courses may create a sensitised and knowledgeable approach towards equitable education and consequently will be fruitful for teaching migrating children. On this ground, it is essential to examine the teacher education syllabus to understand its approach toward equitable education and pedagogy. The official curriculum

is often the key reference point for teachers in many contexts, specifically in South Asian countries.[43] Therefore, it is critical to examine the teacher education syllabus and its guidelines to prepare trainee teachers for educating excluded groups like seasonally migrating children. A study of the teacher education degree level syllabus of Savitribai Phule Pune University (Maharashtra) has been selected and critically analysed from inclusion and equitable education perspective.

Content Analysis of Teacher Education Syllabus

To analyse teacher education syllabus, the content analysis method has been used. Total thirteen indicators, four inclusion treatment scores were prepared for the content analysis and ranking was given according to the analysis [Table 2]. The four inclusion scores indicated four levels of sensitivity of inclusive teaching, i.e., if inclusion score is 0, it means "No Reference"; 1 means "Nominal Passing Reference"; 2 is "Better Reference"; and 3 suggests "Strong Reference". Table 2 indicates that teacher education syllabus is giving nominal and passing reference to the topics such as social exclusion, marginalisation and sociological orientation for equitable education. The content analysis indicates that there is no mention of orienting trainee-teachers for the equitable education with reference to seasonally migrating children, their educational exclusion, remedial teaching and alternative schooling models for educating them. The syllabus is silent to much extent on developing teaching competencies through micro-teaching, simulation and integration of lessons for equitable education in general and seasonally migrating children and alternative pedagogies for them in particular Syllabus is not promoting teacher education institutes to visit slums, outskirts or different non-government organisation working for migrants and street children. There is a mention of planning of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to cater diverse needs of students, however, it is largely oriented towards educating differently abled children. Consequently, there is a lesser possibility that trainee teachers will realise the relevance of educating migrating children and, hence, teachers are deprived of essential pedagogical skills and orientation to address the issue of educational exclusion of migrating children.

Sl	Indicator (Theoretical Orientation)	Treatment	Score			
			0	1	2	3
1	Sociological orientation for equitable education	Nominal Passing Reference		√		
2	Social exclusion and marginalisation	Nominal Passing Reference		√		
3	Social exclusion and poverty	No Reference	√			
4	Equitable education with reference to Seasonally Migrating Children (SMC)	No Reference	√			
5	Remedial teaching with reference to SMC	No Reference	√			
6	SMC and their educational exclusion	No Reference	√			
7	Alternative Schooling Model for educating SMC	No Reference	√			
Indicator (Orientation on Pedagogy and Teaching Methods)						
1.	Developing teaching competencies for equitable education	Nominal Passing Reference		√		
2	Developing teaching competencies through micro-teaching, integration and stimulation lessons for equitable education in general	No Reference	√			
3	Developing teaching competencies for SMC in particular	No Reference	√			
4	School visit to slums, outskirts, farms	No Reference	√			
5	Studying non-government organisation working for migrants and SMC	No Reference	√			
6	Planning of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to cater diverse needs of students, particularly SMC	No Reference	√			

Table 2: Inclusion Scale to analyse the content of teacher-education degree syllabus at Savitribai Phule Pune University, India, with reference to seasonally migrating children, their educational exclusion, remedial teaching and alternative schooling models for educating them.

Conclusion

The epistemological framework reflected in teacher education curriculum legitimises the silence on exclusion and marginalisation of learners and trainee teachers are not adequately oriented towards it. This is an institutionalised form of discrimination embodied in the teacher education curriculum which policymakers and scholars have overlooked. Teacher education curriculum silently promotes "particular knowledge" by under-representing and excluding orientation on the existing structural barriers, stratification and exclusion (of migrating children and other disadvantaged groups). It reinforces it as "worthwhile knowledge" favouring some socially dominant groups of society. The question of what is worthwhile knowledge and worth teaching and what should be excluded from the curriculum is a sharp reflection of the social fabric in which they are located.[44] The decisions regarding inclusion, exclusion, under-representation or misrepresentation of communities in the curriculum development process reflect deep seated social hierarchies and reproduce a system of inclusion and exclusion through the exercise of power.[45] The silence of the curriculum also portrays a picture of a developed society where there is no more existence of exclusion and marginalisation. It also makes trainee teachers promote that achieving enrolment of disadvantaged students (primarily through RTE) in school is the ultimate goal of inclusive education. The disadvantaged students (migrating children) after enrolling are considered at an equal level and the classroom is regarded as a homogeneous group. Hence it is presumed that there is no requirement for additional (remedial) efforts to help the migrant children to deal with their learning gaps occurred due to their mobility. The dominant mainstream schooling approach assumes that if the child cannot show progress as per learning outcomes, the child is at fault, not the teaching and the school. Without prioritising equitable education and pedagogy in the teacher education curriculum, the aim of inclusive education will never be achieved. Therefore, a mere increasing number of schools and enrolment will not address the needs of the migrant children that is contextual to their lived realities and in absence of such curriculum marginalisation of migrating children will continue. We need to train teachers who will be able to understand and identify the "exclusionary zones" in teaching learning processes and who will be capable of opting for equitable pedagogy.

Notes

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Rohingya Children and the Pedagogy of Forced Migration and Refugee Studies

By

Sreetapa Chakrabarty *

Bordered lives in the past few decades have found resonance in the sphere of education, resulting out of the precarity that characterises the existence of a large number of migrant, refugee and stateless children, especially in South Asia. "Previous research on preschool and migration shows that educational challenges related to the education of migrant children often have been explained as a problem of differences in culture, ethnicity, and language of the migrants…What is viewed as a problem or problematic is often conceptuali[s]ed as being situated within the children and the families, rather than as the effects of structural or other factors, and only on rare occasions is diversity presented as an asset."[1] Michel Foucault characterised school as an edifice of discipline, leading to an "individuali[s]ation of multiplicities rather than something that constructs an edifice of multiple elements on the basis of individuals who are worked on as, first of all, individuals."[2] Yet, schools are significant today, in imparting education, which despite not being a homogenous category, is significant in constructing the lives of children through the formal curriculum. This paper focuses on the Rohingya children in South Asia, whose invisible lives have not formed parts of any formal or full-scale education in South Asia.

In Burma, with the implementation of the 1982 Citizenship Law, the traditional category of *de jure* stateless was massively challenged, and a large number of Rohingya children emerged as *de facto* stateless beings in practice and were forced to flee the nation in which they were born and growing up. This precarity of existence was reflected in the spirit of the 1993 Child Law in Myanmar. "Despite recogni[s]ing that every child has the right to life and is equal before the law, the Child Law particularly mentioned that every child shall have the right to citizenship in accordance with the provisions of the existing law." Thus, in its essence, the new Child Law laid down rights, including the right to education, not for all but for only those children who were considered as citizens under the 1982 law.[3] In subsequent times, the world witnessed increasing discrimination and violence against Rohingya children, including

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them getting dispossessed of their right to education. In forced migration studies greater attention has been afforded till now to the European refugee children and their educational attainment. Today, the Rohingya in general and the Rohingya children in particular are among the no-where people in South Asia not only excluded from mainstream educational discourse but also lacking prospects of a better future through informal education in the camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. In this context, the chapter explores two aspects: a] the current scenario and challenges of Rohingya children's education in Bangladesh and b] how this situation differs markedly from the educational status of European refugee children, particularly the Ukrainian refugee children and the Roma children in Europe.

Contemporary Education Scenario of Rohingya Children in Bangladesh

The world today is characterised by a mixed and massive flow of migrants which includes several overlapping and contested categories of which the Rohingya have been identified as the world's most persecuted minority, who are stateless not only legal-juridically, but also practically. The 1982 Burmese Citizenship Law, according to Mathew Walton "did not actually 'strip' citizenship from the Rohingya, but that in implementing the law, many authorities refused to re-register 'Bengalis,' who submitted their documents, but instead had 'white cards' issued to them, thereby allocating them a 'non-citizen' identification."[4] The Rohingya were further excluded from the list of 135 ethnic groups of Burma. Thus, Rohingyas did not remain restricted within the ambit of people "not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law,"[5] but they became stateless in practice. "Since then, the category of non-state persons has come into existence with the concept of citizenship, which on the one hand indicates certain rights, and on the other hand increases the miseries for those who are deprived of citizenship rights."[6] These nuances often get trampled under majoritarian discourses in pedagogical curriculum, especially in postcolonial nations like South Asia. Behind the veil of the majoritarian focus on European refugee and stateless children and their education, Rohingya children have been rendered as, in Bhabha's terms, radically rightless beings undeserving of any qualitative education due to their state of being stateless. Mainstream educational paradigm is hegemonic, yet it is significant and legitimised, because, as Willis says, "it provides equivalents which can enter into other successive exchanges which are to the advantage of the individual. The most important chain of exchanges is, of course, that of knowledge for qualifications, qualified activity for higher pay, and pay for goods and services."[7]

Right to Education, which also serves as a benchmark for fulfilling the best interests of a Rohingya child is a significant human right emphasised in International Human Rights Law such as Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Further, universal primary and quality education is also encompassed within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030. However, for the Rohingya children

languishing in the camps, these rights remain unenforced in a country which rendered them stateless, in this case, Myanmar, and in a country which might shelter the largest number of them, in this case, Bangladesh, but not much beyond that. Bangladesh currently hosts 9,89,585 Rohingya with 52 per cent of children residing in the makeshift camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.[8] Like her South Asian counterparts, Bangladesh is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Absence of a common national legal framework for adjudicating the legal status of large number of refugees and stateless children currently residing in Bangladesh. With such a complex legal background, few instruments of assessing citizenship and citizenship rights on a case-by-case basis are the 1972 Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Citizenship Act of 1951 and the Rules of 1952, the Citizenship Order of 1972, the Bangladesh Citizenship (temporary provisions) Rule of 1978, the Foreigner's Act of 1946, the Naturalisation Act of 1926 and the Rules of 1961, and 5 other legislative and administrative rules and orders and judicial pronouncements. However, the Foreigner's Act of 1946 and the Control of Entry Act of 1952 do not explicitly talk about refugees. Further, like most other South Asian nations, Bangladesh does not provide for jus soli citizenship and neither do Rohingyas are considered as refugees in Bangladesh.[9] They are only considered as Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN). However, Bangladesh is a party to major human rights laws and conventions like the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and therefore, on humanitarian grounds have indigenised several international human rights and refugee law instruments based on whether Bangladesh is a party to them or not. In this complex legal-political scenario, scope for education has been limited to the informal, elementary level. Lacking citizenship and nationality, these children are waiting in the camps for a prospective higher education in future. "The refugee camps are restricted areas known as 'exceptional places,' which are not under the jurisdiction of the local laws applicable to the citizens of Bangladesh."[10]

Coupled with the challenges of education in these camp spaces, is the factor of childhood which restricts them to a state of becoming rather than being. Several sociologists of childhood have differentiated between the biological component of childhood on the one hand and the socio-cultural components of childhood on the other, which renders children as necessarily weaker beings as compared to mature adults. "These different social and cultural conceptions of what childhood is and should…manifest in laws, policies, and a range of age-based social divisions and institutions that contextualize the everyday lives of children in any society. It is the dynamic between the structuring effects of these social institutions and children's experiences of and reactions to them that composes what James and James (2004) have termed the ongoing cultural politics of childhood."[11] Therefore, the cultural politics inherent in the phenomenon of childhood maybe considered to be significant with regard to children as citizens or non-citizens,

and their educational progress, anywhere in any country. Currently, the *de-jure* and *de-facto* stateless Rohingya children in Bangladesh are not allowed to access formal educational curricula in consonance with the Bangladesh's education system. They are provided only with informal education by various learning centres and NGOs, not in the Bangla language of the country but in the Myanmar-Chittagonian language. They are also taught in English. Apart from education through learning centres, Rohingya children are also being taught through Madrassa and private education in the camps. After October 2017, an alternative informal or non-formal educational framework was developed on the basis of recommendations both from the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and the Rohingya community. It was named as the Learning Competency Framework and Approach (LCFA). "Based on the LCFA, the GoB drafted a policy called 'Guidelines for Informal Education Programming' (GIEP). However, it has remained unauthorised and uncertified, with only Levels I and II being approved for use in Cox's Bazar, i.e. the equivalent of pre-primary levels up to grade 2 in a formal school system...Levels III and IV, the equivalent of grades 3 to 8, which target adolescents, continue to await approval from the government. Thus, access to education for Rohingya children in Bangladesh is currently restricted to basic levels."[12]

Since 2017, a growing desire for formal curriculum and education in line with the Myanmar pedagogical framework has been witnessed, as a large number of Rohingya children and youth are waiting for repatriation and wish to prepare to join the schools when they go back to Myanmar. They are currently denied access to the Bangladeshi curriculum in the Bengali language and this restriction is guided by the assumption that these stateless Rohingya children will be repatriated within two years in line with the Bangladesh-Myanmar Repatriation agreement of November 2017. Subsequently, the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot (MCP) was launched by the Government of Bangladesh, UNICEF, along with other partners, in November 2021, with the objective of replacing the LCFA. This project, according to UNICEF has been considered as "a critical step forward towards ensuring the fundamental right to education for Rohingya refugee children. It will help prepare the children for their return to Myanmar."[13] This framework further aims at ensuring and improving quality education within the camps and intends to fill a "critical secondary education gap: It provides schooling also for older children who have largely lacked access to education."[14] However, this is problematic from various aspects, especially keeping in mind that the country of origin, in this case, Myanmar, is not yet ready to take the Rohingyas back. MCP can only come into effect if it obtains the legal approval and certification by the Government of Myanmar, prospects of which seem bleak, keeping in mind the current conflict that is going on in Myanmar.

In Bangladesh, Rohingyas are not provided education in the national language, which may hinder their future assimilation in the country socially, educationally, and inevitably, politically. Many Rohingya children, especially the ones who came to Bangladesh during the 2017 exodus, have expressed their feeling of missing their home way back in Myanmar, the desire to return, and the dream of joining schools and continuing their education. For instance,

Khadija is an 11-year-old girl, who arrived in Bangladesh during the 2017 exodus and lived in Camp 4 extension goes to a learning centre and studies various subjects such as English, Burmese, Tainshah, Maths, Tippe, Potoui, and Tamma. She want to return to Myanmar someday and be a teacher there.[15] "However, to do that, they must not be allowed to live in limbo in the camps of Cox's Bazar without access to their rights, while they wait for conditions to change in Rakhine state so that they can return some day."[16]

Under the current circumstances, prospects for safe and voluntary repatriation are still bleak and all these assumptions seem to exist in an unfounded way. Although repatriation was done following the 1978 and 1991 exodus of Rohingya into Bangladesh, the situation now is far more complicated than ever before. In 2017, following the atrocities of August, Bangladesh engaged in a bilateral agreement with Myanmar for repatriation of the Rohingya, which ended up in a failed attempt. "The repatriation efforts were unsuccessful not only because Myanmar authorities were unwilling to take the Rohingya back, but also because the Rohingya did not feel safe to go back to Rakhine State."[17] Further, the Covid-19 pandemic hindered the education of the Rohingya children to an unsurmountable extent, including hampering the progress of the MCP.

A significant factor which makes formal education for the Rohingya children challenging in Bangladesh is the difficulty of birth registration and getting birth certificates. Birth certificates are essential nationally for legalising the personhood of a child, for obtaining passports and National Identity Cards (NIDs) for enrolment in schools. However, "in Cox's Bazar the current practice involves a local government representative providing references for children enrolling in primary school by declaring that they know the family and requesting access to services without requiring a birth certificate...The headmaster of the primary school then issues proof of enrolment that allows the child to access secondary education….It is unclear how accessible such references are and if payment is required."[18] These informal routes make a way for enrolment in primary and secondary schools but hinder their registration for external board examinations, for instance, the Secondary and Higher Secondary certificate examinations.

Children without birth certificates have the additional risks of child labour, child trafficking and lack of access to legal justice mechanisms. However, with respect to legal justice, the Bangladesh Children Act of 2013, which has garnered appreciation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its fifth periodic report, has the prospect of serving as a mechanism of providing some relief to the Rohingya children. This Act defines children as "all persons up to the age of 18 (eighteen) years"[19] in contrast with the Myanmar Child Law of 1993 which provided definitions and laid down rights only for the citizen-children. Thus, the Bangladesh Children Act has expanded the horizon of rights, including setting up children's courts where all children would have equal access. Further, in the absence of a legal existence on the one hand and formal and inclusive education on the other, Rohingya children are likely to be recruited into military groups, abducted or involved in crime. In Cox's Bazar,

> parents are concerned that the longer their children are deprived of education, the greater risk that they will be exposed to exploitation and abuse. "Educated people have a value wherever they are," said Mohamed Hussein, who sends two of his children to a Learning Centre in Camp 18. "Whether my son goes back to Myanmar or to Malaysia or anywhere else, the same is true."[20]

Thus, integration for the Rohingya children into mainstream educational curriculum, like their European counterparts is not easy as their everyday experience is shaped not only by trauma but by a state of perpetual liminality. They are waiting for a normal life "[w]hile some of them strictly hold their Rohingya identity amid their statelessness, Rohingya identity conflicts with their self-claimed Bangladeshi identity for others. Many Rohingya are confused about their identity because they belong to a place, Burma, that does not consider them "citizens," and they exist in a place, Bangladesh, that neither recognizes them as "residents""[21] or even refugees. They reside in a liminal space characterised by endless waiting and hope.

> Using the concepts of "liminality" and "legal non-existence," Cecilia Menjivar developed the concept of "liminal legality" to explain the social impact of Central American immigrants' uncertain status. Victor Turner's concept of "liminality" was used to conceptualise the "becomingness-state" or the transitional period between two relatively fixed or stable conditions.[22]

Rohingya children are characterised by this perpetual dilemma of becomingness which significantly affects their experiences in education.

Abdul, an 11-year-old Rohingya child living in the Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh lost his home in Myanmar during the 'clearance operation' in 2017. "When the Myanmar army attacked their village, burning houses in 2017, Abdul and his family fled to safety in Bangladesh. The journey was incredibly traumatic, and they tragically lost Abdul's younger sister, who fell into the water as they were boarding a boat to escape. They had to leave her behind and her body was never found. When the family arrived in Kutupalong, Abdul began attending one of our learning centres, but he struggled to learn. His teachers noticed he was finding it difficult to concentrate. The trauma of losing his sister was seriously affecting him and he told his parents he could not forget the pain of leaving her behind in the river."[23] Now, after immense support from the teachers of the learning centres, he has gained confidence. Lisha is a teacher who trains Rohingya volunteers in the camps about violence and discrimination. She "educates girls about the hygiene, menstruation and healthcare during pregnancy."[24] Jui Sen who works as a teacher at MUKTI in Cox's Bazar, said,

> I have thirty-three students in one shift and ninety-nine in all the three shifts…I adjusted very well with them and I can understand why are they depressed…now they are very excited that they are getting so much love and care. In my learning centre we only have grade two. Here I teach them English, Math, Life Skill and Drawing. We don't only give them an education we look after their health as well."[25]

In recent years Madrassa education has also gained popularity in the camps. Madrassas are significant institutions of education in Asia especially for imparting Islamic knowledge and providing basic Islamic education to Muslim children. They are varied in nature and "differ in terms of the levels of religious

education that they provide their students, from the small Maktab or Kuttab attached to a mosque and catering to small children, providing them with skills to read and recite the Quran and perform basic Islamic rituals, to university-size jamias and Dar al-Ulums."[26] Inside the camps in Cox's Bazar too, apart from various learning centres, there are Madrassas or Muslim elementary schools for the Rohingya children, which are called *Maktabs*. Apart from imparting Islamic education, these *Maktabs* are considered as very crucial in imparting and teaching Rohingya history, language, heritage and culture. Some of them are associated with large Mosques and can accommodate up to 400 students. Many Rohingya children attend two or all the three modes of education currently prevailing in the camps—learning centres, Madrassas as well as private education. Nafisa is a 9-year-old Rohingya girl living in Camp 4 Extension. She Goes to the Maktab in the morning, then to school and then comes back and helps her parents. She says,

> I want to go to a proper school like other Bangladeshi children. I feel very sad when I see and hear about school uniforms. I also want to go to school in uniforms, just like any other normal Bangladeshi child.[27]

Currently, the position of Bangladesh is more of hospitality rather than protection, and it is assumed that the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals will return to their country one day—a nation which was never their own. "Mohamad Sufire, 14, said he was in class 8 when he fled from Myanmar, and now studies with a tutor. Asked by a Human Rights Watch researcher if he could read and write in English, Sufire wrote (in English): "We need education because education can change our life.""[28] Many Rohingya children have now been shifted to the island of Bhasan Char. Since February 2021 Myanmar has been ruled by the military government following the February Coup. The current prospects of the Rohingya children going back to Myanmar are bleak, especially keeping in mind that the position and existence of the Myanmar nationals themselves are very precarious now under an overwhelming dictatorial power, who are fleeing the country now in large numbers. Further, prospects of a safe and dignified repatriation and the emergence of a "political will" seems further confounded, especially keeping in mind that "mostly Muslim Rohingya are denied citizenship and other basic rights in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, which claims they are "illegal migrants" from South Asia."[29]

Contrasting Rohingya Children with Ukrainian and Roma Children in Europe

Education, like the global space is "a densely heterogenous field in which borders and differences are always made rather than given."[30] Currently, due to the lack of citizenship and identity documents of the Rohingya children, there is no possibility of them getting formal school, college and university education anywhere in this world, a plight which is very different from European refugee children like the Ukrainian children in the context of the Russian onslaught on Ukraine and the stateless Roma children in Europe. As on 1 September 2022 the UNICEF reported that "182,000 Ukrainian refugee children were enrolled in the Polish education system during the previous academic year but the

number for the 2022/2023 academic year, which will be released in the coming weeks, is likely to be significantly higher."[31] Further, according to a report published by the UNHCR on 5 January 2023 "of the individuals aged 1–24, 59% were enrolled in a school/childcare in Poland in the current school year, including 47% enrolled only in Poland and 12% additionally following Ukrainian curriculum."[32] As identified in this report, few areas of support needed for education of Ukrainian refugee children in the Polish schools are Polish language classes, material school supplies, laptops and tablets, equipments like bags and uniforms, internet connection and so on. Further, for supporting higher educational futures of Ukrainian students, some initiatives were adopted by the European Union Member States are as follows like construction of dedicated websites, as has been done by the Governments of Bulgaria, Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Denmark, France, Finland and other states; undertaking solidarity actions by states such as Albania, Czech Republic, Georgia and Spain; providing teaching resources and enhancement of teachers' capacities to cope with emergency situations as implemented in countries such as Sweden, United Kingdom and France, and providing additional resources, including information on education in times of crisis.[33] This situation is diametrically opposite to the condition of the Rohingya children who are languishing in the makeshift camps in Bangladesh, an already over-populated developing nation, where education is accompanied by various challenges "including limited funding, lack of adequate learning centres, lack of a proper curriculum, inadequate scholastic materials, few students, and many untrained teachers. The situation is compounded by abysmal WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) conditions; there is also not enough separate washrooms for girls, which can help explain their poor attendance."[34] With the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the dismal educational situation in the camps in Bangladesh exacerbated.

As reported by the Bloomberg, Poland "threw the door open to Ukrainians, the government built a 116-mile border wall with Belarus, ostensibly to prevent illegal crossings of refugees from the Middle East."[35] This racialised approach may also be attributed to the fact, as the OECD has laid down in its policy response in July 2022, the labour force for some countries likely to witness a massive increase by the end of 2022. "For individual countries, the largest labour force increase is found in three countries: the Czech Republic (2.2%), Poland (2.1%), and Estonia (1.9%). For several other countries, the impact is estimated between 1% and 1.5% (Hungary, Latvia, the Slovak Republic, Lithuania, Romania)."[36] Thus, educating Ukrainian refugee children has been much beneficial from all aspects as compared to refugee and stateless children from other countries like the Middle East, Afghanistan and Myanmar, who do not exist legally, and for whom getting engaged in labour practices formally is almost an impossibility. In this precarious situation, for instance, many Rohingya men and young adults get engaged in informal labour at the cost of getting exploited, where they systematically get much lesser wages than their Bangladeshi counterparts.

The educational situation of the Roma stateless children in Europe also speaks volumes about the disparity between children of the Global North and

children of the Global South. For them, the challenge is successful integration into the national education system rather than languishing in a state of endless waiting. One of these challenges faced by these children especially in countries like Croatia is a high degree of social exclusion which hinders their progress in higher education. Yet, in the 2020 school year, a total of 314,284 Roma pupils attended primary school in Croatia.[37] A number of policy frameworks and initiatives have helped the Roma children, in contrast with their South Asian Rohingya counterparts. In 2021, the European Council Recommendation (EU)2021/1004 established a European Child Guarantee where it recognised the need for "equal access to quality and inclusive early childhood education and care and education," especially for Roma children. It also recommended states to identify "children in need," especially "children with a migrant background or minority ethnic origin, particularly Roma."[38] Further, policies such as the *Inclusive Schools: Making a Difference for Roma Children* (INSCHOOL 3) aiming to implement national inclusive educational policies in a wide range of countries such "Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Portugal and the Slovak Republic, in line with European standards and principles for quality inclusive education"[39] have worked significantly for the Roma children. Although the legal status of the Roma children is different from the Rohingya as not all Roma children are stateless, yet these policies are significant indicators of the failure to implement the universal right to education. More significantly, "in Croatia, Roma communities represent less than 1% of the total population, and are one of the 22 recognised national minorities that are protected in the Constitution and through other law…Inclusion in pre-primary, primary and secondary education programmes for Roma children is ensured to bridge the gap caused by their socio-economic situation and to increase the possibilities for their success through compulsory primary education."[40] "After Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, people across Poland sprang into action to welcome and help refugees from the neighbo[u]ring country. Poland has accepted more of the war's refugees than any other nation… With the war about to enter its sixth month, the camp at the Lauder Morasha School in Warsaw reflects the type of programming being developed to meet the changing needs of refugees. Mornings were devoted to Polish, English and math lessons so the children will be in a stronger position to adapt to school. Many of the Ukrainian kids who arrived in Poland since February finished the Ukrainian academic year remotely but will be entering Polish schools in September. Campers spent afternoons doing arts and crafts, playing sports and making excursions to city museums and parks."[41] This scene is from the Lauder Morasha Jewish School in Poland. The following scene is from another public school in Poland. "Principal Magdalena Mazur had prepared a special welcome for the 80 Ukrainian students who showed up on the first day of class at Primary School No. 12 in Krakow. Shy first-graders and rowdy pre-teens, they were invited in small groups into a dedicated classroom where they found a table piled high with new school supplies. "Take a backpack," Ms. Mazur urged. "Do you need notebooks or a ruler? Welcome to our school. We're so glad to see you.""[42]

Conclusion

The condition of the Rohingya children languishing in the refugee/Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) camps in Cox's Bazar represents a polemically opposite and gloomy picture that one can ever imagine. No refugee crisis is desirable, and no two persecutions can be compared. However, the responses to different refugee and stateless situations amidst the mixed and massive flow of migrants across the globe exhibit blatant violation of the principle of equal access to the universal right to education and that of the "best interests of the child," especially within camp settings. Paolo Freire and Ira Shor's conversation maybe cited here which reflects the significance of official intellectual discipline as well as throws light on the politics of reading, knowledge and curriculum. He says that intellectual discipline "is absolutely indispensable. How should it be possible for someone to have an intellectual exercise if he or she does not create serious discipline for studying? Yes, we need that. We need to read seriously, but above all we need to learn what it really means to read!"[43] Probably this echoes the sentiments of the Rohingya children who languish today not only in the camps but also in the zone outside mainstream, official education.

For the Rohingya children, perhaps these camps are representative of the Foucauldian utopic as well as heterotopic mirrors. The mirror, as Foucault explicates, "is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also a heterotopia in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there...The mirror functions as a heterotopia in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there."[44] Rohingya children exist today like those shadow figures in a place where they are legally absent. Simultaneously in their everyday lives they also discover the absolute as well as the real space which they inhabit, connected with a country which can merely provide them shelter but not permanent status, refuge or official education. Thus, in the absence of any comprehensible solution for the Rohingya, the Rohingya children are likely to be continually perceived as unimagined communities in the national, educational space, required to be shifted as a burden rather than taken as a responsibility. Meanwhile, hundreds and thousands of Rohingya children are watching their childhoods slip away without the sense of belonging and protection that comes with a nationality when their road to repatriation and rehabilitation remains entirely elusive.

Considering the vulnerability of the situation, pseudonyms have been used for all persons interviewed by the author, transcripts of which are made available in this article.

Notes

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High Ground: Reflections on Colonialism, Conflicts, and Environmental Justice in Northeast India

By

Sanjay Barbora *

This article is the valedictory lecture delivered by Sanjay Barbora (then of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati) at the Teachers' Workshop on "Teaching Local Histories and Geographies of Climate-Induced Migration," organised by Calcutta Research Group in collaboration with the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), Vienna, in August 2023. The lecture and the accompanying images reproduced here are in concurrence to the same used during the Workshop with minor modifications.

At the outset, I wish to thank my colleagues at Calcutta Research Group, their partners from the Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna, and the Chair Prof. Anita Sengupta, for this kind invitation to deliver the valedictory address today. I also wish to express my thanks to Prof. Ranabir Samaddar for two decades of intellectual mentoring and gentle provocations, as lot of the issues I engage with, are a result of his generosity in sharing his ideas and political vision of a more ethical world. As one would expect, there are many issues that he has encouraged many of us to confront, but the ones that seem most urgent right now, are: a) inequity, b) precarity, and c) lack of solidarity. In the next few minutes, I wish to draw your attention to the various ways in which these issues have manifested themselves in Northeast India in the past few years. Some matters have remained constant in our rapidly changing world. Floods and landslides have continued to cause havoc throughout the monsoon seasons; we also have new conflicts between animals in the wild and humans that have increased with the expansion of agriculture and other human activities, and we are still very divided on the issue of identity, autonomy, and sharing of resources. Environmental justice, as a historical evolution of movements for social justice, is a theoretical lens that allows me to gather these disparate elements of our social and political realities to understand how pluralism and inclusion play out in our times. In fact, the turn of the millennium years has been nothing less than extraordinary in exposing the political, social, environmental, and moral risks associated with present forms of governance.

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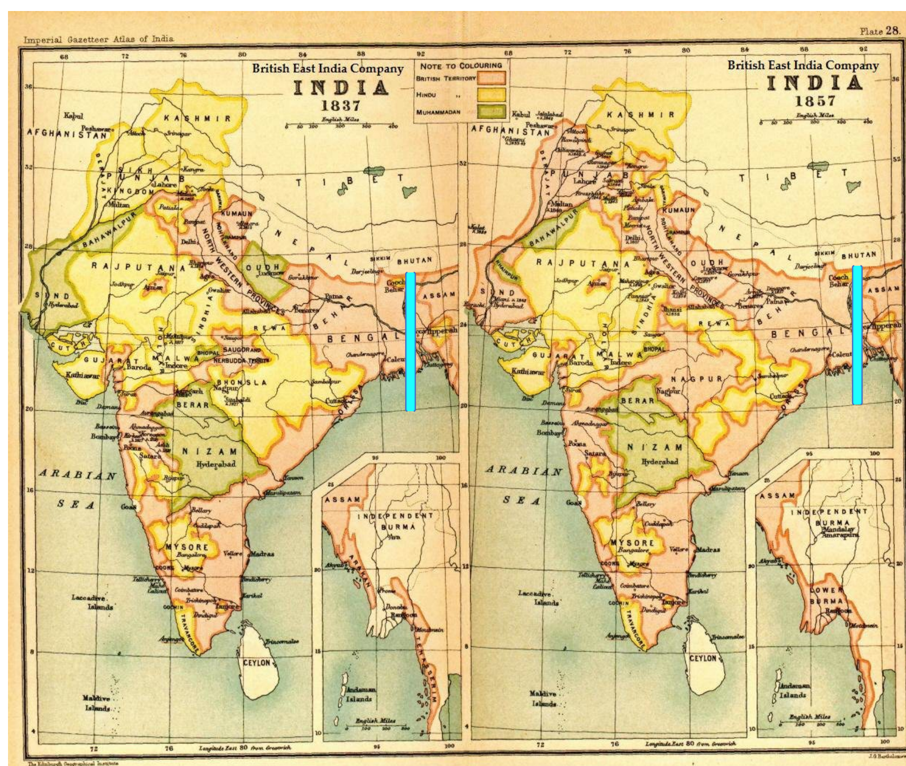
The concept of environmental justice, to reiterate, has been instrumental in drawing together some of the most profound critiques of this crisis.

My observations, descriptions, and analysis, emerge from two decades of professional involvement with civil and political rights movements, as well as field-based studies on social change and economic transformation in the region. Much of the data that I can validate and stand by, come from the geographical area we call the Brahmaputra Valley and its adjoining upland areas. While I speak tangentially about neighbouring states and places, I defer to interlocuters and researchers who have engaged with issues there for longer and with greater intensity than I, and I am aware that their comments will be included in this series.

My presentation rests on the story of three maps of a region I categorise as South Asia's eastern frontier. The categorisation is not mine. It began as a colonial project in the 19th Century, achieved fruition after the Second World War, and has been subjected to much scrutiny by scholars and politicians since then. Maps help us to focus on one thing in the world and ignore everything else. Every map, in that sense, is the world seen through a particular lens.



Map 1: "India in 1837 and 1857 showing the British India Territories, Imperial Gazetteer Atlas of India, Plate 28," Wikimedia Commons, India1837to1857.jpg, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:India1837to1857.jpg.

Hence, for the British in the Indian subcontinent in the 19th Century, it was the territory under their control. You will notice that the map has three colours. The pink signifies the areas under direct control of the British, the yellow and green, of areas controlled by supposedly Hindu or Muslim rulers. That lens, as many historians of late medieval and early modern India have told us, is a very problematic one. The territories had mixed populations, and the rulers had many officials from both faiths in their administration.

At this point, I would like you to look at the eastern extremes of the maps, where a light blue line has marked out a region that we will be discussing at greater length. You can barely make out the words "Assam" etched onto the pink part of the map. It had been brought under British control in 1835, just nine years after the first Anglo-Burmese War that was fought between 1824 and 1826.

The Anglo-Burmese Wars heralded the end of the 600-year-old Ahom dynasty in eastern Assam. The War itself was brutal and had caused much devastation to the region. A faction of the Ahom nobility had appealed to the British authorities for aid, and it brought several European mercenaries to the region. One of them was a Scottish explorer called Robert Bruce, who befriended the local Singpho chief Bissa Gam, whose people were already drinking a beverage made from the wild tea plants that grew in their territory. Robert, who died shortly after this meeting, passed on the plants and information to his brother Charles, who was a soldier in the East India Company's expeditionary force. Charles Alexander Bruce soon gave up his commission with the army and opened a tea company. He started a tea nursery in eastern Assam in 1836 and was soon sending out processed tea to other parts of the British Empire.

Tea, for the lack of a better phrase, was a perfect gateway crop for the colonisation of Assam and expansion of the British Indian Empire to the east. It convinced the East India Company that they needed a better, more militarised presence in the region. The discovery of indigenous tea plants in a new colony also encouraged a significant inflow of capital and labour to the region. In 1838, the colonial authorities enacted the Wasteland Settlement Rules to encourage European planters to lease out vast tracts of lands that were not under paddy cultivation. European planters received long leases from 45 to up to 99 years to convert vast tracts of forests into tea plantation. These rules were instrumental in the establishment of the plantation complex in Assam. By the middle of the 19th Century, it had set in motion two disruptive processes whose impacts are still felt today. First, it stopped old ties between people of the hills and the valley. Highland communities were restricted from access to plantation areas and the forests that were once treated as commons. Second, the plantation complex began to induce and coerce thousands of workers from different parts of the subcontinent. They came to Assam under terrible conditions that were reminiscent of the trans-Atlantic trade in slaves between west Africa and the Americas that existed in between the 16th and 19th Centuries. Today, about six and half million people in Assam trace their ancestry back to the traumatic events of the 19th and early 20th Century. Many of them continue to work in the

tea plantations, where they receive less than the mandated minimum wage and continue to experience the effects of structural violence.

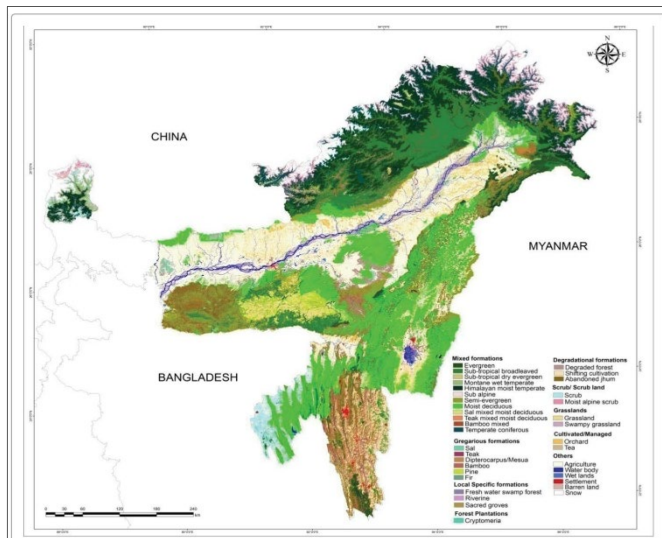
As I had just mentioned a while earlier, the tea industry facilitated further exploitation of the landscape in the eastern frontier of British India. The first coal fields were systematically mined in 1888 and a decade later, the Assam Oil Company was set up in Digboi township in eastern Assam, not very far from where Chief Bissa Gam had shared his tea plants with Robert Bruce. While these complex, lifechanging events were taking place in eastern Assam, the 20th Century had a dramatic beginning in India. The new British Viceroy, Lord Curzon, decided that it would be best to partition the revenue rich province of Bengal into a Muslim dominated east and a Hindu dominated west. This reinforced political ideas about religious nationalism, as well as coincided with large-scale migration from the low-lying delta regions of Bengal to Assam. These matters became increasingly important by 1947, when the British were ready to partition the subcontinent, resulting in the emergence of two independent countries. In the chaotic and violent times, Indigenous communities like the Naga people, who lived on both sides of the India/Burma colonial divide, demanded that they be allowed to administer their own territories. The newly independent state of India responded by militarising the entire region, as well as creating smaller states to accommodate demands for autonomy among indigenous communities in the former colonial province of Assam.

Map 2: Northeast India and its transnational neighbourhood in Prapanna Lahiri, "Lack of Development in the North-Eastern Part of India–A Historical Legacy," Concept Research Foundation, 21 April 2017,
https://conceptresearchfoundation.com/2017/04/21/lack-of-development-in-the-north-eastern-part-of-india-%E2%80%95-a-historical-legacy/

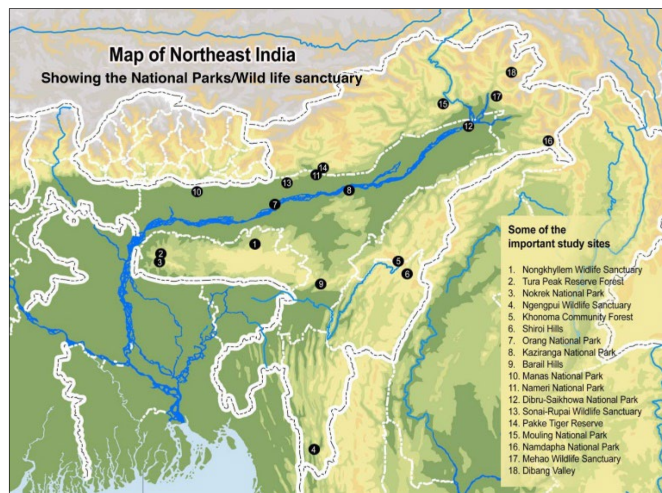
The Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 was another milestone that impacted on the nature of political discourse and the politics of map-making in the region. From being the eastern wing of Pakistan, dominated by Bengali-speaking people, it became the independent country of Bangladesh that shared a land boundary with West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram that are all part of the union of states in India. Northeast India, on the other hand, as the map will show you, is the part of the country has shared boundaries with all its land-based neighbours to the east. As one might imagine, this is also a cause for much conflict. Ever since 1979, the primary civic and political issues that continue to impact on social life in the region have centred around the axis of autonomy and identity. For many relatively smaller Indigenous communities, colonisation of their lands and subsequent independence from Britain have not solved the issue of use, distribution, and control over their resources. As the Government of India continues with its strategy of managing conflicts through counterinsurgency campaigns and co-optation of radical identity-based movements, the region has become even more volatile with inequalities continuing to grow. The states of Northeast India, barring Mizoram, compare poorly to the rest of India when it comes to education, health, and employment. While the old extractive industries set up in the 19th Century begin to wane, the Government of India has set its eyes on hydroelectric power generation and expansion of palm oil plantations, as new avenues for revenue generation in the region. Expectedly, such visions trigger immediate responses about beneficiaries and victims. The recent debates around the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the opposition to India's discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), are further proof of the contentious grounds on which we apply our lens of environmental justice. This brings me to the third and final set of maps of the region.

There is an apocryphal comment attributed to one of Assam's best-known geologists, Prof. Dulal Goswami. In one of the many public meetings to discuss the impact of big dams on livelihoods and wildlife in the region, he is reported to have pointed out that there are three important elements whose interactions will determine the future of the region. They are: a) geology, b) wildlife, and c) human beings. While applying a geological lens, he stated, that the regions rivers and water will flow from higher to lower elevations. If one were to block its flow, it would surely find a way around it after a while. The region's wildlife, he said, would always head for higher ground when the low-lying areas were flooded seasonally or semi permanently. He claimed that one could almost apply the laws of physics to these two elements of the mix. Of humans, he was less certain. Let us now focus on each of the three elements at greater length.

The map shows the highlands, that hem in a huge mass of water that is the Brahmaputra River that runs from east to west and then turns south to enter Bangladesh. The valley, shaded in pale yellow, is perhaps one of the most densely populated parts of the Indian subcontinent (Map 3a). The shades of brown and



Map 3a: Map showing Brahmaputra River, vegetation and land-use in Northeast India, in Shri Kant Tripathi, et. al., "Perspectives of Forest Biodiversity Conservation in Northeast India," *Journal of Biodiversity, Bioprospecting and Development* 3, no. 2 (2016): 1000157, doi:10.4172/2376-0214.1000157



Map 3b: Biodiversity hotspots in M. Firoz Ahmed and Abhijit Das, "Tortoises and Turtles of Northeast India: Saving them from Extinction: Survey, Assessment of Present Status and Conservation of Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles in Northeast India," Division of Herpetology, Draft Technical Report, Aaranyak, HRCP: 01/10, 6, https://www.conservationleadershipprogramme.org/media/2014/11/100206_India_FR_Tortoisesturtles.pdf.

Maps 3: Map showing the vegetation, plantation, agriculture, wildlife of Northeast India.

green signify some of the region's biodiversity hotspots, while the various wildlife parks are marked by dark dots (Map 3b). The Government of India that sees this area as its exclusive domain wishes to add another lens to the map, that of Hindu nationalism, which is reminiscent of the first one with which we started this talk. Of the many conflicts generated by this view of the world, the most pernicious is the one that distracts from human solidarity against injustice and inequalities. What the sum of these three maps seek to outline, therefore, are the challenges that we confront while addressing the issue of justice in militarised places. How do we persuade governments to demilitarise? How do we convince communities to cooperate, instead of competing over resources? How do we reconcile long histories of antagonism? How can we ensure reparation for past indignities? How do we ensure rights of Indigenous communities, while recognising the economic and political vulnerabilities of those who have settled in their lands? Most of all, how do we build platforms of dialogue that can sustain the principles of justice and peace?

In the following images, you will see an example of the state's response to the flood issue in the Brahmaputra valley. A question that arises from this photograph is: Why build embankments? Most geologists and community leaders working on flood relief work will tell you that embankments are not the best solution in the first place. The application of technology, as one might recall, was a hallmark of government policy for farmers in the country, especially during the 1960s and 1970s. It was during this period that engineers and agricultural scientists spread out from the colleges and universities across Assam and began to make yet another significant transformation of the landscape. Canals, dikes, embankments, and other infrastructure to manage the flow and levels of water in Assam's rivers and water bodies, , were taken up with an urgency during this

Image 1: Embankments in "70% embankments in Assam are Vulnerable; State Must Tackle Issue," *The Sentinel*, 13 July 2020, https://www.sentinelassam.com/topheadlines/70-embankments-in-assam-are-vulnerable-state-must-tackle-issue-488324

period. Foreign aid and government policies of extending support to farmers meant the expansion of shallow tube wells all over the valley. The postcolonial state was keen to show that it would work for the peasants, since they provided an important political base for political mobilisation and populist policies. This also elicited enough discussion in Assam through the 1980s and 1990s and radical youth had a significant role to play in it, especially in the way agricultural societies were to be represented.

Mozidbhita is a *char* that is close to Balikuri non-cadastral (NC) village in Mandia Block in Barpeta district. It is, in many ways, a typical settlement of the itinerant poor in Assam. According to the 2011 Census figures, Mandia is largest rural block in Barpeta district, which covers 587.06 sq. kms. It is also one that has the highest number of households ar 65,511. It has a National Highway (NH 427) that runs through it. There are no major industries in Mandia and of the 1,09,270 workers enumerated in the Census, a little more than half are engaged in agriculture. There are no major industries in the Block, so most of the predominantly male working persons are engaged in daily wage work and petty trade (Census of India 2011). Situated approximately twenty kilometers west of Barpeta town and across the Beki River, Mozidbhita in 2018–19 had 208 households, a significantly smaller number than the 296 who had moved to the current *char* around four years ago. The families had moved due to the erosion of their land and homesteads by the river. They had come from four neighbouring villages: Mozidbhita, Tapajuli, 4 No. Bhera, and Balikuri NC (non-cadastral). In the summers, monsoon rains along the flood plains and in neighbouring Bhutan always bring vast quantities of water to the district. In 2004, engineers and administrators of Bhutan's Kurichhu Dam, situated upstream on the River Beki had released water, causing unprecedented floods in Barpeta. The annual monsoon-induced floods make it imperative for government departments and aid workers to recover such civil engineering related data for their work. Mozidbhita would qualify to be included as a part of the increasingly vulnerable spaces of human habitation that is likely to be affected by rising levels of water on the planet, both due to climate change and human-induced follies like construction of faulty embankments and dams.[1]

Houses in the *chars* like Mozidbhita are built on elevated land that is usually raised with extra soil from elsewhere. The materials used to build the houses are a combination of bamboo, mud, and corrugated tin. This makes them extremely cold in the winter and unbearably hot in the summer. However, such material is easy to come by and once the earth has been adequately raised, members of the community construct the houses. Although there are three primary schools in the area, one was lost due to land erosion in 2018. Children are taught in Assamese; most struggle to complete high school as they must go to nearby Balikuri or further to complete their middle elementary and higher elementary levels. Most families in the *char* grow *bao* rice and jute during the summer, and vegetables and lentils during the winter months. In the past few years, the local families have had access to high yielding variety (HYV) seeds and fertilisers for their winter vegetables and some families use both abundantly. Almost every existing household have cows and buffaloes, which

they often used to sell in times of distress but are not able to now, as the price of cows have decreased since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) formed the Government in 2014. There are three shallow tube wells that are used in winter to grow the vegetables. However, during the summer rains, they are almost always inundated by floodwater from the Beki River. In winter, the Beki is situated 200 mts. away, a distance that is rendered redundant in the summer when the river spreads across the plains in every direction, making settlements like Mozidbhita look like tiny, marooned rooftops and homesteads waiting for relief and rescue. The families in Mozidbhita have two major sources of income: daily wage and from the jute and vegetable farming produce. The plant-based and daily wage incomes are seasonal. In some years, certain families earn more doing daily wages than from farming. The average income for a family of five would be approximately Rs. 6,000 per month, but this is never steady and expenses for medical needs are very high. Social scientists use a variety of terms to describe the motivations of people who live in such adversarial spaces. Most often, they are seen to be people escaping the reach of the state; or those who are given to deterministic fatalism, for wanting to risk their lives in the face of natural disasters of calamitous proportions. Both descriptions come to mind during the floods, as the jute plants struggle to stay above the surging water, livestock scramble to the cramped raised land, and shallow pumps and latrines disappear under the water.

One of the most stable and safe buildings in the area is the Parag Kumar Das Char Library, named after the journalist and human rights activist who was assassinated by a death squad for his forthright views on the right to self-determination for the people of Assam. For many Assamese intellectuals, Parag Das embodied a fiercely autonomous political spirit that was symptomatic of struggles for self-determination in the region. It was started in 2015 by Left-leaning activists from the area as a statement of their political beliefs. During the floods, the raised earth provides refuge to cattle and people alike. At such times children are not able to access the library, nor do they see the need to refer to the eclectic books on display. The activists had requested their comrades and sympathisers in urban Assam to donate books that would be useful for children, with an expressed request for material that had been published in Assamese. Instead, many of the books on the four wooden shelves are in English and range from children's novels to computer software guidebooks. They are stacked against corrugated tin walls, where there is a bullhorn microphone dangling on a shelf, "to warn people when the river starts breaching the banks at night," said one of the activists who lives in the area.

The activist group has been working in the area since 2015 and have among them graduates of Social Work and other Humanities subjects. Educated in some of the reputed universities and institutes in Assam, they zealously promote development of the *char* areas and focus mainly on education, health and livelihood issues. Other than English, the activists are keen that children in the *char* area learn Assamese, a language that frequently lands the older and unlettered residents vulnerable when they travel to parts of upper Assam to work in the brick kilns. Their inability to speak a particular

tonal form of Assamese allows local student groups to exercise everyday acts of micro-aggression on the migrant communities. This kind of humiliation rankles the activists, driving them to focus on issues of poverty with greater passion. Their internal discussions and debates with other groups of developmental NGOs have made them concentrate on the flood as a particularly universal experience for the people of the *char,* one that requires a similar collective remedial effort. Raising the plinth of the houses is an obvious engineering innovation that they feel will help reduce a cascading effect on vulnerabilities for the people of Mozidbhita. In 2019, only a few homes survived the rising waters of the Beki despite having raised plinths and once again, many families were forced to move towards the highway and neighbouring areas where they could live in makeshift camps until the waters had receded.

I shall pause here for a moment and move to the second element of Prof Goswami's puzzle: animals. On 30th April 2019, patrons of my gym in Guwahati were glued to the television sets instead of the wall-to-wall mirrors. They were following live coverage of the various local TV camerapersons following a young elephant who had strayed into the city in the afternoon. The elephant was subjected to much jeering and heckling from bystanders and shopkeepers. Several forest guards armed with old rifles were trying to create a safe passage for the elephant, while the police had happily run away. My fellow gym goers were on the elephant's side of the encounter. One wanted him to knock over a particularly irritating motorcyclist; another urged him to kick a few cars out of the way. "Where is this happening?" someone asked, trying to gauge if we were in trouble. Satisfied that the spectacle was happening considerably further than where we were located, she announced for all of us: "It's not his fault, where will he go if we keep taking over his space in this manner?" As we made our way back to the treadmills of life, I remember one of the trainers berating a young man for wanting to change the channel. For a moment, the elephant's suffering created an atmosphere of solidarity, even as the crowds on our city's main street were left with other anxieties about their property.

The following morning, I met with a former student and friend who was then a senior official working for an international NGO that deals with conservation in Assam. Our conversation quickly moved to the elephant in the town. Between us, we counted three aspects of the encounter that would be hard to forget: a) the jeering crowds, b) the stoic but helpless forest guards who were trying their best to protect the elephant, and c) the almost tranquil responses of the young pachyderm, who must have been scared out of its wits. This story had a tame end, as the elephant was eventually tranquilised and taken back to be reunited with the herd in the nearby forest. However, as the numbers of human casualties rise in the elephant-human encounters, it is more likely that there will be a more violent response from people, of the kind that heightens the impermeable nature of the relationship between the two species. In places like Manas National Park (MNP) along the Assam-Bhutan border, organisations like WWF India have been dealing with such issues for more than a decade now. Rice growing farmers along the fringes of the National Park had

often complained about elephants damaging their crops, as they crossed from one country to another following their corridors. My former student and their office ensured that farmers were compensated for the loss of crops, as well as encouraging them to grow lemon trees as a fence crop so that elephants would find alternate routes to avoid being pricked by the thorns of the lemon tree.

The second thing that we spoke about was the unhappy role of forest guards who were meant to escort the elephant away from the city and back to the forest. My friend laughed at their predicament: "Did you see those old rifles?" she asked. It was true that the forest guards seemed completely out of place, but the elements of the whole interplay were a bit overwhelming anyway. The city had extended into forest areas that were part of the elephant corridors. Therefore, such episodes would only increase in the future. However, questions would remain about who were best suited to deal with them: forest guards, whose default action was to chase people away from forests? Police, whose default action was to lock up the source of problems? The third topic we covered that day was about the elephant's disposition. Until a few years ago, elephants and humans had had a well-documented relationship with one another. In South Asia, humans have both revered and exploited elephants for a very long time. Even as late as two decades ago, a person in Assam was considered wealthy if they owned a few elephants. They were a key element in the clearing of forests and establishment of plantations throughout the 19th and 20th Century. The modern story, however, can be understood in reference to the story of counterinsurgency and militarisation of the region

Counterinsurgency has been central to the governance of Assam since 1990, when the Central Government declared President's Rule and brought in the army to contain the activities of independentist rebels from the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB). Since then, the presence of the army has been ubiquitous in Assam, though its visibility in public spaces has reduced considerably since 2009, when sections of ULFA agreed to talk to the Government of India about their political issues. Two decades of counterinsurgency had resulted in the erosion of trust between the people and the security agencies that included the army, paramilitary, and local police. This condition was further exacerbated by the illiberal use of draconian laws like the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 that allowed blanket impunity for security personnel who had committed human rights violations during their campaigns against rebels. In effect, this created a social world where communities were perpetually in fear of their neighbours and the state in equal measure. Here, I draw inspiration from anthropologist Eleana Kim's work on the Korean Demilitarised Zone (DMZ), where she focuses on a complex set of entanglements between humans and non-humans that emerge during militarisation of landscapes. Kim argues that militarised ecologies defy a straightforward moral evaluation of relationships, a view that I find particularly insightful in my own analysis of the association that has emerged between elephants (indeed other wildlife) and humans in Assam's militarised landscape.[2]

Between 1990, when the army was called out, and 2003, when the first of a long series of suspension of operations were signed between the government and various insurgent groups, Assam was subjected to a sustained military crackdown on insurgents, as well as their perceived support base. In conventional counterinsurgency vocabulary employed around the world, this encapsulated the full spectrum of life that included classifying certain areas and lives as dangerous for the nation, subjecting such areas to armed suppression as well as creating trusted networks of support for the state. This helped sustain a violent geography, where violence was both routine and spectacular, with death squads and impunity paving the way for the corrosion of solidarity among communities. An important aspect of counterinsurgency was the calibrated introduction of financial rewards and benefits to those who were persuadable to join the government's efforts. This meant that contracts and business licences were part of a pecuniary package for insurgents who crossed over, leading to many subtle and flagrant forms of intimidation in public life. There were two products of counterinsurgency that are important to the story of the elephant and other forms of wildlife: a) creation of a fearful and aggressive public, and b) evolution of an economy that was marked by threats and greed of a wide range of actors.

The interplay of these two factors results in a fascinating study of intentions. An important NGO, the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) believes that both elephants and humans are in danger of further exacerbating conflicts, as humans expand their cultivation areas resulting in the reduction of foraging spaces for elephants along the Nepal, Bhutan, West Bengal and Assam corridor. The combination of fear, violence and constant focus on development created a milieu that was characterised by aggressive display of wealth and power. On the other hand, counterinsurgency also encouraged large scale movement of young people from villages where they were subjected to constant physical surveillance and control by the security forces to the urban areas. This was not a condition specific to Assam, as social scientists have pointed out similar processes among Indigenous communities in other parts of Northeast India and Southeast Asia.

This form of displacement and enforced migration adds to the increase of micro-aggression among marginalised urban youth (mainly men), as well as an increase in punitive actions against the poor in most parts of the developing world. Since the turn of the Century, the city of Guwahati has grown exponentially to accommodate the migration of youth from rural areas. Guwahati has certain unique geographical features that impact its growth. The city has the river to the north, the state of Meghalaya (where there are a separate set of laws for land acquisition and transfer) to the south, the hills, Amchang Reserved Forest and Wildlife Sanctuary to the east and the airport to the west. This unique geography prevents the rapid expansion of the city to the south, even though there have been several developmental initiatives such as the setting up of universities by private groups who have permission from the Government of Meghalaya. The city's growth to the east is also restricted because of the presence of Amchang forest, though many migrants have settled

in these areas. The wooded hills that ring Guwahati, which once were part of elephant corridors, have now become home to several thousands of settlers from rural Assam, who have moved to these areas following conflicts and natural calamities like floods and erosion.

This brings me to the final element of the puzzle: humans and our ability to organise our societies to sustain ourselves and the future generation. On 30 July 2018, the Government of Assam released the draft National Register of Citizens (NRC), wherein the names of more than four million persons had not been included. According to the Office of the NRC, more than 32 million persons residing in Assam had applied with documents to have their names registered as residents of the state. A figure of four million (and some) who were not included raised the spectre of impending violence and the possibility of many being declared stateless in the bargain. In Assam, this fact alone is emblematic of the many strands of political activism that has gone into the making of citizens, insurgents and outsiders since the Assam agitation (1979–85). In fact, the NRC process, with its proponents and critics, could be read as a milestone event where the politics of autonomy, indigenous rights and co-optation of radical ideas have come to rest for a moment.

In Assam, the NRC was viewed as the legal and political way to address the two issues that have influenced political mobilisation since the mid-20th Century: autonomy and social justice. The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019, on the other hand was seen as a reiteration of a peculiar colonial relationship between Assam and India, periodically emphasised by the disregard for political opinions of Assamese and Indigenous people. While autonomy demands reflect the desire for territorial control over land, social justice demands reflect an insistence on citizenship and equality under constitutional law. Both issues have a very tense relationship with one another. They have led to decades of violent conflicts, where the state has used a combination of military subjugation and co-optation of dissenting voices to deal with the situation. Hence, political commentators and representatives of civic and political organisations from Northeast India have had a difficult time explaining to the rest of the country and the world, why they have either supported or opposed a Supreme Court monitored process to survey the legal status of every inhabitant of the state, even as they have differing positions on the Citizenship Amendment Bill. When did they, or their ancestors make Assam their home? Could they prove their presence in the state going back to the Partition of British India? Or did they come to Assam after the formation of Bangladesh in 1971?

As the dust was settling on the NRC debate, on 8th January 2019, the Lok Sabha passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill of 2019. The bill that had been introduced by the BJP Government to ensure that non-Muslim minorities from India's neighbourhood be given citizenship on grounds of persecution in their countries of origin. Representatives of political and civil rights groups in Northeast India, including Assam expressed their dismay and anger at the Bill, arguing that it would pave the way for non-Muslim migrants from other parts of the region (including Bangladesh). Some also argued that the Bill went against the secular spirit of the Constitution, adding that the burden of reminding the

country of this reality ought not to fall on the region that had been most militarised. These debates are crucial to understanding the paradoxical positions that emerge from the tensions around autonomy and social justice. The NRC involved all departments of the Government of Assam, as well as key institutions of the Indian State such as the Supreme Court, Registrar General and Election Commission. Its supporters ranged in a spectrum of positions on immigration and citizenship. What united them, however, was their belief that a state would embody its Hobbesian role, rising above narrow sectarian interests.

The Bill had a different genealogy from the NRC. It was evident from the very beginning that it was aimed at Hindus and other non-Muslim minorities in the South Asian region. In Northeast India it was specifically aimed at Bengali Hindus, and Chakma and Hajong Buddhists from Bangladesh, leading to vehement opposition by political leaders and civil society in Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, and Assam. Organisations that welcomed the NRC came out in opposition to the Bill, while many who were opposed to the NRC, especially in the Barak Valley supported the enactment of the Bill. Civil society remains polarised along language and regional lines even after the Bill was allowed to lapse in the Upper House of Parliament on 13th February 2019. Bengali speaking Hindus, especially in the Barak Valley, felt betrayed by the government's cynical mobilisation of communitarian politics, while most Indigenous communities celebrated collective victory in the aftermath.

The NRC/CAA issue has not been laid to rest. In fact, it has been revived or erased during elections. It propels us right back to the first map with which we began this lecture because it is emblematic of an exclusionary politics that is at odds with the realities of our time. One of the theoretical foundations of environmental justice is the fair treatment and involvement of all people with respect to development, implementation, and regulation of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. As I conclude, I submit that our explorations and understanding of environmental justice to address the growing inequities, precarities and lack of solidarity in societies, will deepen only if we are able to unpack the geographical, and historical layers that underpin movements for social justice and peacebuilding.

Thank you!

Notes

[1] Nigel W. Arnell and Simon N. Gosling, "The Impacts of Climate Change on River Flood Risk at the Global Scale," *Climate Change* 134, (2016): 387–401, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-014-1084-5; Yukiko Hirabayashi, Roobavannan Mahendran, Sujan Koirala, Lisako Konoshima, Dai Yamazaki, Satoshi Watanabe, Hyungjun Kim, and Shinjiro Kanae, "Global Flood Risk Under Climate Change," *Nature Climate Change* 3 (2013): 816–21, https://doi.org/10.1038/nclimate1911.

[2] Eleana J. Kim, *Making Peace with Nature: Ecological Encounters Along the Korean DMZ* (Duke University Press, 2022).

Innovative Methods of Research

By

Ayse Caglar, Giorgio Grappi, Lydia Potts, Saima Farhad, Sandro Mezzadra *

In 2020, Calcutta Research Group organised a two-day Teachers' Workshop on "Research Methodology and Syllabus Making in Migration and Forced Migration Studies". Lydia Potts, Saima Farhad, Sandro Mezzadra and Giorgio Grappi and Ayse Caglar participated online in a roundtable titled "Innovative Methods of Research" that discussed, as the title clearly indicates, was a discussion centred around the relatively new thematic approaches to migration studies for researchers and faculty. The discussion was moderated by Lydia Potts while Saima Farhad responded to the panellists. The following is a transcript of the discussion, edited only for grammar, otherwise, unchanged.

Lydia Potts: Greetings to all! It is really a pleasure and an honour to moderate this session. Our first presenter is Sandro Mezzadra, who is a Professor of Political Theory at the University of Bologna in Italy and also an adjunct at the University for Culture and Society of Western Sydney in Australia. Sandro Mezzadra has done research on issues of globalisation, migration, capitalism, as well as on postcolonial criticism. And his latest books include *Border as Method or The Multiplication of Labour*, *The Politics of Operations*: *Excavating Contemporary Capitalism*, etc. I would expect Prof. Mezzadra to speak about his book *Border as Method.*

Sandro Mezzadra: Thank you very much. It is always a pleasure to be with you in Kolkata, although only virtually. And yes, we will talk about the *Border as*

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Method. Let me say that both *Border as Method or The Multiplication of Labour* and *The Politics of Operations* are books that I co-authored with my friend Brett Nielsen, who is also a good friend of the Calcutta Research Group. And as far as *Border as Method* is concerned, I think it is important to stress at the very beginning that it's a book born out of struggle, which means out of our involvement in the struggles of migration in different parts of the world in the early 90s. I will limit myself to four points and then I hope we will have time to discuss. The first point has to do with the very notion of border that is often considered, according to its cartographic representation, as a margin. In the *Border as Method*, we challenge this idea of the border as a margin. We rather contend that the border is a privileged epistemic point of view on global processes. When we started to be interested in borders, in the early 1990s, as I was saying, there was a widespread image of globalisation, an image nicely encapsulated by the title of a book by Kenichi Omae, *A Borderless World*. And the idea was precisely that globalisation was reducing the relevance of borders and even challenging their very existence. From our point of view, that is, of course, part of a wider critical debate, the opposite is true. Globalisation, global processes are structurally linked with a multiplication of borders. And this is the reason why borders are privileged points of view on global processes, on global conflicts, on the tensions surrounding global processes. This means in a very concrete way that what happens, for instance, in the Mediterranean, around the European maritime frontier, or in the Bay of Bengal, is not marginal. It's something strategically important for the shape of global processes. And what happens in the Mediterranean or in the Bay of Bengal is something that we try to grasp in the book through the notion of border struggles, of struggles around the topic of mobility and borders. I come to my second point. It is important to carefully analyse what I was calling before the multiplication of borders in the framework of global processes. But to this multiplication, a process of heterogenisation, which means profound transformations of the very institute of borders, corresponds. And this leads us to emphasise the relevance of a panoply of internal borders. In the debate within critical border studies, we argue that there is a need to go beyond a unilateral focus on international borders, even to understand the operations of international borders. And I think that the current pandemic has given us a lot of arguments to further develop this point. Since in the current pandemic, we have witnessed a kind of medical hygienic reinforcement of international borders, but at the same time, a proliferation of internal borders that became apparent, for instance, in India, with the massive exodus of internal borders from metropolitan centres to the countryside. And I hope we will have time to talk more about borders in the current conjunction. A third point. In critical border studies over the last twenty years, the main approaches have emphasised the relevance of legal and political concepts in order to understand current operations of borders. Of course, we analyse legal and political developments of border regimes, but we contend that there is a need to develop a critique of the political economy of borders. A critique of the political economy of borders implies, on the one hand, a focus on the way in which borders, in their heterogeneity, concur to frame contemporary capitalism at the level of the word market. On the other hand,

what is important for us is to look at the roles, at the paramount roles, that borders play in the production of labour power and, of course, of the subjects that are bearers, to put it with Marx, of labour power. A fourth and last point—writing *Border as Method,* we have come to strategically alter the title of a famous book by James Scott, and we have contended that there is a need to see like a migrant, to develop a migrant gaze in order to look at borders and to grasp the complexity of the operations of borders. This is the attempt we make in the book—we prioritise movement when we look at borders, even when we look at walls, even when we look at fortress Europe. This is something that is in line with the development over the last twenty years of a specific critical approach to migration, which means the autonomy of migration. Seeing like a migrant is for us, I repeat, a crucial methodological point. A crucial methodological point that has important theoretical and political implications, which means that seeing like a migrant allows us to underscore not only the relevance of what we can call necropolitical devices in the operations of borders, but also a political potential. A political potential that is connected with the challenge of migration, the stubbornness of a challenge that migrants pose to borders in many parts of the world. To international borders, but also to the panoply of internal borders that I was mentioning before.

Lydia Potts: Thank you very much. That was perfect. Not only in terms of time, but I also think it was a very concise introduction to *Border as Method.* I would now like to give the floor to Giorgio Grappi, who is also based at the University of Bologna. Dr. Grappi is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Political and Social Sciences in Bologna. He is also a researcher in the "Logistics as Global Governance" project, on labour software and infrastructures along the New Silk Road, which is run by the University of Western Sydney in Australia. He is also a very engaged researcher and has quite a number of publications to his name. Giorgio, the floor is yours now for your intervention.

Giorgio Grappi: Thank you! I also begin by saying that I am really happy to be here together with the friends of Calcutta Research Group. I miss them all. It's a long time we can't meet in person, but I take the opportunity of this Workshop to say hello and also to greet all the participants to this Workshop. In my intervention, I have been somehow asked to reflect on the nexus between militant research and migration studies. I think that this suggestion came also from the fact that I study migration, it's part of my research, but I am also engaged with migration. It had probably started before as an activist rather than as a scholar. The two issues are strictly related to me. In this intervention, I will try to reflect also on this link, starting from some questions that are: How can we understand the position of migration in today's world? How can then research help us in understanding this position? What does it mean to be critical or militant in studying migration? Let me say that I could quote most of the things that Sandro just mentioned, so I take it as a background also for my intervention. Let me begin with a phrase used by Étienne Balibar more than twenty years ago when he was discussing the Saint-Papier movement in France.

He argued that what we owe to the Saint-Papier is the reversal of the political discourse about illegality, the showing of the emergence of it as the modern proletariat, and the revelation of institutional racism and the transnational dimension of social transformation. I think in this way, Balibar invited us to think of the politics of migration as a sort of problem of proletarian politics rather than just of definitions about who are migrants. Here, proletariat is meant as something different than working class in sociological terms, pointing at a political subject that aims at going beyond the reproduction of the conditions of its existence. We can start from here by recognising that migrants' problems are more often problems of working and living in a world of extremely precarious conditions, dominated by the global dimension of capital than just issues of solidarity or humanitarian help. And this also invites us to think about the fact that struggling against discrimination and racism should be somehow related to this global dimension of capital. And to quote Balibar again, immigration poses also a problem, the problem of its economic causes and the transformation within the history of capitalism, and the political effects of their struggle. He also observes that majority of migrant workers are employed at the time in assembly lines, construction sites, public works, places where labour power is extensively exploited and utilised with a frightening speed and accelerated turnover. These are words taken from another text on 1972, a particular time for struggles of migrants in France, but we can make a parallel between these occupations where today labour is intensely exploited and frightening speed and requires accelerated turnover. One of these sectors is logistics that was also mentioned in the introduction in this one of the fields of research where I am engaged and also that has produced some innovative methods to quote the title of the workshop—to read migration today. Broadly speaking, logistics has to do with mobility and its conditions and the way mobility is organised, but as a discipline of global production chains, logistics is also the logic of contemporary capitalism. Seeing through logistics means thus connecting the analysis of the politics of migration with a critical look at the framework of power exploitation and insubordination in which struggles within capitalism happen and asking what kind of implication emerged for an understanding of migration today. In discussing the practices of mobility in China during the pandemic, Biao Xiang observes that the focus on migration has shifted from how migrants move and explore to how they are moved. This means that the intimate relation between migration and labour market is increasingly expressed in the fact that the control of labour in the working site is in a way supplemented or sometimes even substituted by the control of transnational mobility. If on the one hand this tendency revealed the fantasy of migration policies that respond to what has been named as logistification of migration policies and emphasise the need to organise migration from origin to destination, on the other hand this focus on how migrants are moved to which we can add how migrants are allowed to move which determines the conditions of their regularity, irregularity, irregularisation and deportability has distanced the discussion of migration policies from the reality of how migration move. This distance is one of the elements that allows policymakers across the globe but also many migration scholars to separate the view of migration from the

violent effects of migration laws and border policies as Sandro also mentioned as well from the structural role of migration policies as a component of the governance of labour on a global scale. Logistics is thus a way to look at different dimensions of this nexus, to see how migrating people themselves build up their own logistics infrastructures, to look at how border regimes are shaped by logistics and techniques that are taken from logistics and to see how the logistification of the migration regime is related to changes in the mobility paradigm which itself is shaping the broader transformations of work today. And let me just mention that many migrant workers are also involved in logistics across the globe and in specific positions within the logistics industry that are mainly warehouses. A second point in my presentation deals with an element that I see as included in this picture that is that of understanding institutional racism, a term that has been discussed in different ways. Let me just briefly recall a critique that was made by Sara Ahmed to the way in which institutions themselves recognise institutional racism. She analysed the Macpherson Report drafted in UK in 1999 where institutional racism is defined as the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In this way institutions are 'racist' because they fail to do something. The presumption is that racism is a sort of distortion and institutions, by recognising that there are issues, it's like if they say: "okay we are racist and this is the way for us to stop to be racist". A different way to understand institutional racism is that that originated within the struggles of the black power movement where institutional racism points at what we can call systemic racism which is something different than the result of a failure. Institutional racism, in this way, marks the active role of institutions in defining specific conditions, positions and hierarchies within society and this is produced by varying degrees of institutional intervention. We have laws, defining documents, legal statuses, we have treatments of specific conditions lived by migrants or their denial in relation for example to housing, receptions etc. We have the production of international agreements and schemes that try to direct mobility within the needs of the labour market, but we also have violent interventions against migrants raising their voice or occupying the public space with the production of extreme vulnerability by police means at the border or inside territories. This produces social divisions and segmentations along the line that are institutionally reinforced, and they contribute to the reproduction of the materiality of racism. The specific legal conditions of migrants or their isolation produced by the non-recognition of the same treatment as other members of society contributes to their positioning in the lower segment of the labour market and this positioning in turn marks them as separate from others. The lenses of logistics help us in unravelling the way in which institutional racism is a product of different often incoherent schemes that bring together institutional actors, private employers and social actors that are at times unaware of the systemic role of their actions. Let me just mention the way in which integration schemes for refugees and asylum seekers in Europe after 2015 have led to the production of a reservoir of extremely flexible labour force to be employed just in time in the logistics warehouses in peak moment or when actions or strikes often lead by other migrants erupt and I come to the

last point of my intervention that deals directly with the critical or militant stance of research. Some years ago in reflecting on militant research I described some problems related to it as a militant research conundrum, raising some questions which are the following—is militant research a category or a concept to be applied to the work of the researcher or is it something else that applies to the realm of politics and organising? and then how can militancy relate with research when one takes into account that research is a particular form of labour largely precarious but also highly institutionalised? and then how do we deal with the outcome of research which is namely communicable knowledge discourses concept interpretations that are often included in the elaboration of governance measures? and then lastly how do we pose it to a researcher vis-a-vis migrants and the social politics of migrations? This remains an open question to me. Militancy is, literally speaking, the act of being active in support of a cause so the question would be to what cause the militant research wants to contribute to. To come back to my initial quote from Balibar, I just want to mention how in discussing the role of immigration within imperialism in the 70s, he was raising two issues—the need to go beyond a double opportunism, the fetishisation of migration as a true proletariat, something that today we can sometimes see in, for example, celebrations of the subjectivity of migrants or nomadic subjects, and another danger that of crystallising the division between migrants and the others, and leaving migrants to their fate on one hand, or on the other hand, just posing problems of economic, social inequality, only calling for the betterment of condition for disadvantage, but leaving those separations within society the same. Following the previous discussion, my position is that migration scholars should be, or at least in my understanding, on the side of migrants in their daily struggle to escape the conditions imposed upon them by institutional racism, by the nexus between institutional racism and exploitation. There is a sort of goal of constantly refusing normalisation of research as just an element in the production of knowledge that is used to reproduce this nexus. The challenge is that of acting against the very condition that produced the separation of destiny between migrants and others. This means not just to think about the common interests of workers as a whole in old fashioned terms but always try to put at the centre the nexus between the specificity of migrant conditions and the role they play inside the social relations of production. The other side of the coin, which is the most relevant one, is that this recognition should lead us to recognize migrant struggles as crucial in the struggles at large against exploitation and the conditions of oppression. The recognition that the tension between the category of the worker and that of migrant bridges any narrow demarcation between the workplace and broader social terrains. Migrants with the wide spectrum of claims related to living conditions alter what we could call the micro systems of struggle that exist within society and in working places. And they remind us that the conditions of social reproduction are internal to the relations of production within capitalism. I conclude just by saying that the pandemic, as Ranabir Samaddar has argued in his treatment of the pandemic in India, had shed light on the appealing policies and practices with regard to labour in general and migrant labour in particular. These questions appear to me even more urgent than ever. Thank you!

Lydia Potts: Yeah, thank you very much, Giorgio, for this explanation of the nexus between militant research and migration studies. Our next presenter is Prof. Ayse Caglar from the University of Vienna in Austria. Ayse Caglar has many distinguished appointments, but I would just like to mention her latest books. There is one in German from 2019 on urban protest revolt in the neoliberal city. Then there are two that were published in English, *Migrants and Citymaking, Dispossession, Displacement and Urban Regeneration*, which she co-authored with Nina Glick Schiller. And one that's a bit older from 2011, *Locating Migration, Rescaling Cities and Migrants*. This book is co-edited with Nina Glick Schiller. And Ayse Caglar has written many book chapters and journal articles on migration. So, she is in a very prominent position to introduce us to new methods in migration studies.

Ayse Caglar: Thank you very much for your generous introduction. And I am really happy to be part of this panel and to be together with Sandro. I was asked to talk about the urban question being a migration question. I am very glad to do so. I think the urban question has always been a question of migration, that we cannot think of cities without various forms of migration and migrant labour. In fact, if we were to simply follow Brecht in his famous poem, “Questions from a Worker Who Reads” which starts with the question: “Who built Thebes of the seven gates?” and continues to ask about those who erected the triumphal arches of Great Rome and about those who cooked the feast for the victors? And ask ourselves: Who built the cities? Who enabled the running of the services, logistics? Who maintains and cleans the offices? hospitals? Who works in the construction and especially in the infrastructure projects that are crucial for urban growth? We will quickly find the displaced and dispossessed migrant labour at the heart of cities, together with any other kind of dispossessed labour. And it is almost, that is why I think it is almost impossible to think of city making without migration and migrant labour. But today, this is even more so, especially because cities are up front in the generation of wealth, within the neoliberal ordering of economy, because they are strategic sites for regimes of accumulation, as centres of trade, investment and innovation. They became the locus and focus of power. Many cities utilise “entrepreneurial strategies” to enhance their competitive advantage to accrue capital and power. They utilise such strategies in pursuit of greater local, national and global connectedness, so as to be able to generate growth, wealth and power. Migrant labour is crucial to the processes of restructuring of capital, state and territoriality, which are acted out in the city as reordering the urban spaces, regimes of value and above all of urban governance. Cities are not only major sites of hyper-commodified land, sites of extraction, mainly based on rent and logistical nodes, they are also crucial sites for new forms of servicing, new place-based services, which are central to the logistics industry, economic and financial sectors. Within this neoliberal reordering, cities require flexible, easily disposable, increasingly informalised labour in variegated forms of legal, economic and legal standing and rights. It is in variegated forms of dispossession. Labour that is fractured in terms of its social, economic and legal

standing and rights is at the heart of these cities' growth-based economies. This is the migrant labour which the bordering regimes multiply, dispossess in various ways and continue to fracture through frontier policies, which are crucial for the governance of migrants and labour. In that sense, I am lucky to talk after Sandro, as I do not need to develop this point, but just build on his perspective on border as a method in the multiplication of labour. These multiplication processes are essential not only for the production and the circulation of labour in particular forms, but to keep labour disposable, dispossessed and most importantly simultaneously mobile but also space bound. This is inherent to capitalism and even more so for neoliberal cities. Without this kind of form of labour, it is very difficult to imagine the functioning of the neoliberal cities. In that sense, cities act as the frontiers of migration in the real sense of the term. I think it is important to note that what we see here is not only the multiplying differentiation of labour, but this variegated migrant labour is juxtaposed on differentiated spaces of neoliberal cities that are fractured by a plethora of zoning and varying social, economic and legal regulations in terms of rights, working conditions, tax regulations, etc., you name it. So, we have the juxtaposition of dual, a double fracturing processes, that is to say juxtaposition of multiplied labour to differentially regulated city spaces and territory, and that is very much the neoliberal territoriality. This is crucial, I think, in making urban question, a question of migration, migrant governance in the context of urban politics and urban governance. However, having said that though migrants are crucial to the city making process as labour, I do not think that their location in these processes could be reduced to labour. In addition to the centrality of migrant labour to the accumulation of capital in and through urban restructuring, migrants definitely become part of multiscalar financial, cultural, commercial and politicised religious networks in multiple ways. They take up multiple social, economic and political positions as a resident, taxpayer, student, debtor, moneylender, tenant, landlord, household member, official and activist. Their subjectivities entail, actually, there is not a kind of a homogeneity of their subjectivities, and they are situated, and the cities provide the ground for that kind of multiplication of those subjectivities. Thus, in order to capture the ways migrants can be understood as actors of making and remaking of the city, it is important to focus on migrants' emplacement in various domains of the cities as agents contributing to the city's repositioning, reconnection efforts within a particular geometry of a given time. Neoliberal urban regeneration and most importantly its paradoxes shape the value regimes in the cities. It entails processes of, as we know that, as I said, accumulation, dispossession, but also the revaluation, processes of revaluation in the form of both valorisation and devaluation of city spaces, population segments and particular periods of cities' pasts and related practices. The interrelations, I think, between the repositioning of the city through urban regeneration, restructuring and the emplacement of migrants within these processes are part of, or it would be useful to look at it as part of this revaluation processes that entail, as I said, different spaces, actors and institutions. These processes of urban restructuring and migrant emplacement are in fact mutually constitutive of each other. So,

the argument here is that we cannot think of the migrants' positioning and subjectivities and also the city making without looking at their relationship to each other. The regeneration processes in each city we have studied in our book that you have kindly referred to were intertwined with incentives to revalue property, particularly city spaces, local histories, as well as particular segments of the population, sometimes involving migrants. In each city, migrants, but also some minorities, acquired an increased value in relation to these revaluation processes that are connected to accumulation of wealth and power at a particular historical conjunction. In different cities, we found that, for example, migrants were integral to the processes fuelled by the real estate and international subprime mortgage industry. They served as real estate and mortgage brokers, and as city residents who redeveloped property, stabilised neighbourhoods, took out subprime mortgages, and also suffered foreclosures with the collapse of the property market. In a similar fashion, migrants and refugees revalued the ageing housing stock or stored value in decaying houses; apartments, by simply occupying them and became part of the financialisation of housing and property markets, as much as they contributed to the construction sector, infrastructure projects, logistic industries, service sector, which are crucial for the neoliberal city. So, their positioning was multiple. In several places, migrants and refugees became the ground through which property developers were able to access, and one should never forget, those developers are usually within the public-private partnerships, where the cities, municipalities are also part of it, to access funding, federal funding, or supranational funding, as well as to power institutions of various scale. Migrants became the actors and subjects of the plans, mechanisms, narratives of urban development, real estate, and property revaluation strategies. So, by facilitating cities to reach the power-laden networks of multiple institutions, migrants became city makers in multifarious ways beyond migrant labour. So, in a similar fashion, I think, migrants also became part of the cultural industries in connection to capital and urban restructuring strategies of cities, geared to establish and enhance their competitive work in order to attract capital and access funds, national, but again, international and supranational. As soon as cultural industries became part of the re and devaluation processes, acted out in and through urban regeneration, they opened possibilities and spaces for migrants and refugees to be located within the institutions and networks of cultural production, namely in music, literature, film, theatre production, and their circulation. What happens, how they captured these positions and made use of them and made it part of their political projects, is a different story. And it is, of course, done, and there is that kind of, you see the autonomy of migration functioning actually there, but I'm talking about the perceived spaces of it. For example, in one of the cities we have worked, we have seen very clearly that the neoliberal restructuring of the city has depended heavily on urban development projects within which migrants' presence played an important role in reaching out to the cultural institutions' funds, which in turn were important to perform the suitability of the city for investment and capital flows. Migrants and particular kind of artistic production and architecture, also, connected to them became desirable within the image of the city. Here I am not saying that

we need to approach these productions and practices from within an instrumental logic, but we need to situate their valorisation within the broader dynamics of cities and the location of migrants in them at a given time. In order to understand the processes of revaluation and devaluation processes, in short, the value regimes of the neoliberal order of the cities, it might be useful to approach these dynamics from the perspective of the colonial and racial logic of capitalism, namely from the perspective of coloniality of power. Coloniality of power reminds us that the legitimising and naturalising narratives of racialised, culturalized, and gendered differences are fundamental for the appropriation and the dispossessive processes underlying capital accumulation. Thus, we need to analyse both processes in relation to each other. Most importantly, this is true not only for dehumanisation and demonisation narratives of appropriation, but also for the valorisation of particular spaces, practices, groups and pasts, which are also part of those appropriations. So, both forms of valorisation and devaluation processes, especially in relation to migrants and refugees take place simultaneously. I think this is important as part of the neoliberal city strategies and dynamics of accruing capital and power. I am arguing that we might think of the new presence of migrants in artistic networks and city imaginaries in relation to the increasing presence and importance of cultural industries in neoliberal cities. Let me come to my last point. Such an approach, I think, this coloniality of power perspective, enables us to situate the migrants in the city making processes in another form. This is, in a way, a call to embark on an analysis of the political economy of cities' cultural industries and of the location of migrants in them. Here, I am also including scholarships as part of that kind of cultural industry too. The dynamics of cultural institutions and practices and the cultural reach of cities in their given temporality, but also the location of migrants and refugees, which is often ambiguous, selective, and contradictory, might become, I think, more legible in relation to the dynamics of restructuring processes. The proliferation and valorisation of migrant and refugee literature and artistic productions could be situated within this frame. Again, this is not being against their proliferation and increasing presence and visibility and or saying anything against their content and equality. But it is about situating these productions and their actors within the neoliberal city's regimes of value.

Lydia Potts: So, in a way, connecting the first two presentations by looking at it from the perspective of the urban context, I would now like to give the floor to our discussant Dr. Saima Farhad. Saima Farhad teaches at the University of Kashmir, and she is interested especially in research on everyday life, resilience, disaster, gender, conflict, food security, and media representation. And she has several book chapters, journal articles on media conflict and marginalisation, on the making of a disaster, conflict, intractability, and governance contradictions in Kashmir. So, Saima, the floor is yours.

Saima Fahad: Since morning, we have been listening to such fascinating and rich sessions. And starting from the feminist methodologies, archival research, and quantitative research, and it is kind of summing up in this session with the

keyword innovation. Even though each session since morning dealt with epistemological and methodological innovation at various levels, this session complexifies and problematises the idea of borders, migratory pathways, the researcher-participant-activist interface. Borders emerge as contested sites, as zones of exclusions, as sites of transition, or as lived, and as sites of research alongside the various contextual difficulties. In the first paper, the point on seeing like a migrant was particularly interesting, as it gels with my disciplinary background in social work and focuses on empathetic understanding. However, seeing like a migrant would also have to take into account helping the migrant realise and articulate the possibility of realising his or her rights in the next step. It connects to the discussions on militant research and the struggle against structures which promote, create systems of suffering and exclusion and exploitation. As Grappi explained, there are many areas where logistification affects the paradigms for understanding migration and migrant experiences. And institutional racism or systemic institutional exclusions towards migrants came to fore in complex ways in the pandemic experience, in the ways migrant labour moved, were treated or quarantined, as well as in the association of migration and the pandemic on markers of religion in India. It also means that not just government and private actors, but media discourses also promote institutional racism for militant research or activist research, identification and countering of such racist and exclusionary discourses is a critical area. However, in a context like India today, such research on the migrant has to tread a careful balance, particularly as exclusionary and majoritarian regimes hold sway. From social work, the do-no-harm approach or the do-no-harm principle can be an important principle for critical militant research. As in the third paper, it identifies a complex urban milieu where city making and disposition operates side by side. Within the dynamic, migrant labour is centrally placed in logistics, services, etc. But it is easily dispensable. Clearly in the Indian context, the so-called illegal Bangladeshi migrant is a part of many sector services in many cities. At one hand, he or she is an intruder in idealised nationalist urban geography. But on the other hand, he or she, through the law of paid informed labour is tolerated but not spoken of. So, clearly, we need a new type of politics or new methodologies to deal with such contexts, at least one which is not silent, but not overtly confrontational rather innovative, tactical and long term. So, this is how I have summed up three papers.

Lydia Potts: El Sayed El Sehami would like Sandro to explain more on the notion of seeing borders as a migrant. What is the methodological productiveness of this to migration research? So, Sandro, would you elaborate on this?

Sandro Mezzadra: Yes, I am happy to do that. Moreover, this is a point that Saima also touched upon. She was saying that seeing like a migrant would also necessarily imply helping them to get their rights. And I completely agree. This is maybe one of the implications of what Brett and I call "seeing like a migrant". More generally, I think there is a need to be aware of the fact that borders are not neutral. That the border takes a different shape depending on the side from

which you look at the border. And if you look at the border from the point of view of people on the move, you see something that you don't see if you remain focused on border control. Just take the instance of a border wall. If your gaze is focused on the wall itself, you see fixity. You see rigidity. If you look at the wall from the point of view of migrants, you immediately start to look for ways to circumvent and cross the wall. So, the wall is not anymore so fixed and rigid. It takes a different shape. But regarding my society, I think it is important to look at the border from the point of view of migrants. Not focusing only on international borders, but rather on the panoply of borders that circumscribe and shape migrant experience also in our cities. And I think that the picture of migration, to put it shortly, that you get this way is significantly different from other pictures of migration. I just conclude by saying that seeing like a migrant is, of course, a metaphor. We cannot see like migrants if we are not migrants. And we have to keep this important distinction in mind. It is a question of methodology, but it is also a question of ethics of research. So, you always have to inhabit this gap.

Lydia Potts: Yes, Sandro, this leads to the question from Indy Frieden, who is pointing out that, for example, in Mexico, political activity is forbidden for non-nationals or non-citizens. And that is the case in many countries. So, a political act for especially irregular migrants always carries the risk of being arrested by police or border police. So how can we as scholars study and understand the political agency of migrants and refugees without putting politically active migrants and refugees, their activities and strategies in danger? And I would like to give this question first to Giorgio, because that was his starting point—the bridge of activism and scholarly activity. So, Giorgio, would you like to comment on this?

Giorgio Grappi: Yeah, I can try to comment on this. The first thing that came to my mind relating to Mexico is to put together this information that we get with the experiences we have seen, especially in last years, in recent years, of mass migration movement within Mexico in the forms of the caravan that can be seen as a collective answer to both the explicit forbidden to organise politically, but also the informal forms of violence that they have to face while crossing Mexico, both from the police and from private gangs or other groups. So, I think that somehow these collective forms of action show the strategies that migrants can enact. And in this, the role of people in solidarity with them in organising the marches, in supporting the marches has been, I think, a very important logistical support. But I want to stress that for migrants, besides any formal limitation to their political agency, political agency is always a risk. This leads me, for example, to think of the recent struggles we have seen in Italy, in the logistic sectors, led by migrants, enacting road blockades that are a peculiar form of struggle within logistics to stop circulation. And of course, blockades are at the limit of what is legal or illegal. And for migrants to enact a road blockade is always, even if it is a regular migrant, even if he is entitled to struggle, a way to expose himself to retaliation, for example, by the police, because a criminal offence can lead to the losing of residence permit, and then became

irregular, and then being exposed to the risk of deportation. And this is something that happened with the officers, also threatening migrants with this. It's something that we hear in migrant struggles, the fact that their legal condition is used as a way to try to limit their own action. But again, I think that we should somehow maybe recognise that there is a link, but also a gap between what we could call the formal capacity of migrant struggles to gain something in terms of rights, or documents, or housing, or whatever they are claiming, and the capacity to gain some form of a political capacity or political power. If we think, for example, to the Saint-Papier movement going on in France right now, this is going on for, okay, many years, but the last phase for weeks and months, with mass demonstrations. If we look to what this demonstration obtained in terms of what they claim, they obtained nothing. They have been evicted from camps, informal camps. They have not obtained regularisation. But it is also clear that they have, I think, obtained a form of capacity of being present in the public space, and affirm their presence, and overcome the sort of isolation that what we are calling institutional racism imposed upon them. I think that there is also the need to recognise these different dimensions of what migrant movements and migrant struggles can gain, and to recognise that showing up for migrants is also always, I think, a way to communicate and to challenge this kind of isolation, and this kind of pushing them to the margin of political activity. And regarding what can we do in order to support this, I think, firstly, to recognise that this is the case, and the different ways migrants use to struggle and claim, are not just actions by desperate people in need of help, but are political actions that call for activists and people that want to support or be in solidarity to find ways to organise together and sometimes to leave the preconceptions that social movements have in mind or the researchers have in mind and try to see how to help, to empower those movements and actions.

Ayse Caglar: Okay, because I think this is very important not to think only that it is that they are not allowed to this kind and what they do, this kind of movement and the protest or politics. I think this is very important to look at the kind of ruptures, cracks, the people when they engage and express a voice or act from the positions that they are not entitled to. And they actually introduce a crack into the order of the governance. And I think this is very important to see where the migrants and "non-migrant", when they become claimants for social justice movements. And these challenge the heart of the ordering of the society, the social and then the political order. And that's why I think it is very important to underline the point that also Giorgio was bringing up. When Saint-Papier supports EU citizen Romas claim to be asylum seekers, it is just like in kind of an oxymoron, but that is they are EU citizens. They want to be asylum seekers in a cave, and they get support from Saint-Papier. I think this is a very important political act which goes beyond those categories. I just wanted to add that. Thank you.

Lydia Potts: So, there are several questions to you, Ayse. There are questions from Justina Salanska. Justina starts by mentioning that it is not enough to look at the cities from neoliberal perspectives, as that seems to be limiting for

migrants and for the cities. So, her first question is: Is the neoliberal growth the ultimate aim of the city? In many European cities it was replaced with sustainable growth and social cohesion. Her second question is: How would you describe migrants' emplacements in cities through the prism of sustainable growth? And then there's also a question from Lydis Gabouvan, and you were her Professor at CEU. So, she would like you to talk about how you understand the future of migration in the city post-Covid-19. Would there be an attempt at reducing the movements of people by populist regimes, but not only? So Ayse, the floor is yours again.

Ayse Caglar: Thank you very much. Of course, it would be limiting in terms of locating the migrants in making an urban question as only in relation to the neoliberal cities. But this is that I was just particularly underlining what we know about the location of migrants in the city making becomes much more accentuated and proliferated in a particular way. That is why I think it is very important to look how they become in terms of the financialisation of those cities too. In terms of thinking that the cities which go for social cohesiveness and for sustainability, I would be very hesitant to put them in terms of in Europe, certain kinds of cities as being aspiring to reproduce a kind of a sustainable growth and cohesiveness. I would like to make it clear at the beginning that cities have never been cohesive places. Cities are antagonistic sites also. So, imagining a city under cohesion and we know what it does or how it situates in scholarship, but also in popular imaginaries, how this kind of an approach situates migrants. Once we take the city as cohesive, as if a unified entity, and what it does to the migrants and migration in terms of scholarship discourse, but also politics and governance, I think I will be very wary about taking this model as operating as if the cities were cohesive and it would be an alternative to a kind of neoliberal cities. It is in a way, right now, I am not trying to fetishise neoliberalism, but in terms of the way that the cities are located in the economies and in terms of the state imaginaries and in relation to growth, I don't think that we could easily find that kind of alternatives right now under sustainability. I would also say that goes to that far that this cohesive idea of cities, actually is a political statement that denies in a way the conflicts and then the antagonistic dynamics in the cities which have always been a part of it. It's a different kind of way of looking at it. I think it was very important to underline what also Giorgio was saying, but also Sandro was saying that the Covid in a way changes certain, might introduce certain kinds of dynamics, but what Covid did is actually that showed the existing fault lines in a very strong way despite all sorts of cause of those kind of restrictions, mobility restrictions, border closures and temporary workers or everywhere that the seasonal workers were exempt. There were always groups of labour and very often the migrant labour was very much exempt for that. So definitely it might introduce some different kinds of regulations to mobility, but I am not seeing that Covid actually stopping any kind of mobility. This enabling kind of mobility also simultaneously bounding people to particular spaces is very inherent to the workings of capitalism.

Lydia Potts: Thank you, Ayse! So, there are three questions left that I should forward to you. But before I do that, I would like to make a remark that you might want to comment on. For me, these three presentations that we have heard this morning were excellent explorations of the methodology of research. So, the inner logic of research and they were closely connected very importantly to epistemic dimensions. I am wondering if you would agree that in order to look at the full set of innovative research methods, we would need to ask: What are the empirical tools or what does that mean for empirical tools that we are using? To what extent can and should these tools be innovative? And I am thinking about, for example, visual methods, poetry and music, theatre and all these potential instruments of research that would also maybe connect with what Sandro pointed out, that seeing like a migrant is a metaphor, but maybe these research methods would allow us to dig deeper in this regard. So, that would be my comment. And now I would like to connect it with the remaining questions from our audience. So, there was Zeynel Amak who was pointing out, the question remains, can the subaltern speak? And then a question from Lydis Gabovan to all presenters: "My first question is about militant research, whether this concept could also include a collaborative aspect, e.g. the arts and social sciences, such as using theatre as a reflection and call to action, like the theatre play *Lampedusa* by Anders Lustgarten?" And there is a question from Anna Sotelo. She asks: "Prof. Mezzadra explained that there is a need to see the world like a migrant. However, is it possible that international migrants become gradually independent of its causes, like a living organism? And in that sense, could we say that the site of migrants shifts from an individual vision to a social group and a vision as the site of the social perspective of migrants?" So, I would suggest that our panellists now each have two minutes or so to conclude the session with final statements, hopefully also answering these questions. Sandro, would you start again?

Sandro Mezzadra: Sure. I think that this phrase, "seeing like a migrant" has struck the imagination of many people. I want to emphasise that it is a metaphor, because I acknowledge the continuous relevance of the question asked by Gayatri Spivak more than thirty years ago, "Can the subaltern speak?" So, you must remain aware of the fact that it is a metaphor because otherwise you kind of expropriate the subjectivity of migrants without being migrants. You play a tricky and even dangerous politics of representation to go back to the central issue of the intervention by Gayatri Spivak. As I was saying before, there is a gap. You want to see like a migrant, but you never forget that you are not a migrant. And it is precisely in this gap that you have to play, encountering migrants, listening to migrants. Because as Gayatri Spivak very well knows, subaltern speaks. Even colonialism was not able to take from the subaltern, the capacity to speak. The point is the way in which the words of subaltern are kind of worked and manipulated by scholars, by critical scholars, even by revolutionary activists. So, I repeat, you always have to remain aware of that. And this has a lot to do with Lydia's remark regarding the empirical tools. I am engaged in activism and research projects in the Mediterranean, which are the empirical tools that allow me to listen to the words of migrants challenging the

European border regime in the Mediterranean. They must be some kind of innovative tools. And we would need a whole session to start to talk about this important question. And then the remark on international migrants becoming social subjects. I totally agree. In a way, also this question has to do with what I was saying about the metaphor of seeing migrants and about Gayatri Spivak's question. The point is that migrants are every day in the process of becoming a social subject. When you meet migrants in these rubber boats in the Mediterranean in precarious situations, but you immediately realise that there are social connections among them. That you are not confronted simply with individuals or even families. That there is this dynamic of becoming a social subject or think of the caravans across Mexico that Giorgio was mentioning before. There is a very nice notion that is circulating a lot in Mexico in the debate on caravans, i.e., "*acuerpamiento*" (gathering of bodies). The emergence of a collective body. So, these are all very important kinds of processes that are already underway.

Lydia Potts: Giorgio, would you like to have some final remarks?

Giorgio Grappi: Yes. I pick up from the point where Sandro stopped. I mean, the word that he was using about the collective body. Because I think this is important. And it's what I also tried to stress before. By saying that there is a formal dimension of emancipation that is put in this way. But there is another dimension that is maybe more political. That has to do with this coming together of a collective body. That, of course, in the case of the caravan is extremely visible. And has to go to direct confrontation and physical risks. But this collective body emerges, I think, also in other ways that are less visible. But where migrants show up together to speak out, to tell what they need, what they want. And most of the time, in being part also of these actions, I think that they speak out about conditions in which, of course, there is a difference between us, in this case, and them. But these differences speak about the way in which the society we live in, the economic system we live in, the production system we live in, is built and works. So, they speak out to everybody. Not just in terms of generally speaking about rights or this kind of thing.

Lydia Potts: I would request Ayse to give some concluding remarks.

Ayse Caglar: Thank you very much. I will pick up two points. In terms of what you had brought out and different for those kinds of different tools, in terms of visual, in terms of music, poetry, and whether that kind of instrument. And what today, I mean, how do we situate those ones? And I would like to connect it to the metaphor that Sandro was talking about and link it to my talk too but way of putting a question mark. Because I think they are very important in the sense of being open modes. That especially in relation to the scholarship, that they actually defy putting closures in terms of there is an openness in including art for any kinds of narratives. Why am I saying this? Because this question that came in relation to "seeing like a migrant," "can the subaltern speak" is really a question about the politics of representation. And it takes us to the question of

voice and how to situate the voices in multiple ways of mediation. Because then it is a question about whether or not we have unmediated voices. All the voices are mediated. So, but it is related to the question of that not being. So, against reifying, against mystifying, these methods also now that within the cultural industries that I was talking about, entail the danger of co-opting and mystifying and reifying and commercialising as migrant ways of seeing or being. But because if we keep that, it is not being but becoming. And in terms of construction and elaboration of subjectivities, always being in flux, then I think these methods, these kinds of instruments would be useful despite my worry about the possibilities of co-optation. And they become now the new modes of representation of migrancy. And I think it is very important to go beyond that.

Lydia Potts: Ayse, I think these were wonderful concluding sentences. I would like to thank all the panellists. I think today's discussion really compliments the theme of the Workshop. I would also like to thank the discussant and the audience who put in very interesting questions. And I do think one might think of a follow-up to this session in terms of a switch from methodology to methods and then explore maybe more in depth what does all this, what you highlighted today mean actually in the field and for methods. Thank you all for such an enriching and engaging discussion. Thanks to IWM Vienna for collaborating with us for this Teachers' Workshop, which is a part of CRG's program in Migration and Forced Migration Studies supported by the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM) Vienna.

Thank you again so much!

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Syllabus on Migration Studies

By

Samir Kumar Das *

Calcutta Research Group (CRG) remained engaged in framing a model syllabus on Migration and Forced Migration Studies during the last few years. Besides organising several workshops mainly with college and university teachers, we solicited drafts from experts in the field, which were subjected to several rounds of discussion both in in-house and open sessions. At one point, I was asked to collate them into one and give them a near formal shape. This was finalised in a session on "Syllabus Making on Migration Studies" in the international workshop on "Teaching Local Histories and Geographies of Climate-Induced Migration" organised by CRG in collaboration with the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), Vienna on 25 August 2023 in Kolkata. As the Chair of the session, I had the opportunity of introducing it to the resource persons attending the Workshop. The syllabus will of course speak for itself. But at the outset, it is important to mention that the exercise began with a couple of assumptions: First, the social world looks remarkably different if viewed from within the lens of moving people. In the words of Nietzsche, "thoughts reached by walking are of value". Second, we also noticed that the prevalent pedagogical methods turned out to be ruefully inadequate, calling for bold, new experiments with newer teaching methods. Existing syllabuses on the subject, not unsurprisingly, is marked by what I sarcastically described as 'methodological sedentarism' according to which social beings are assumed to be in a sedentary state. In our search for stasis, we focused on the static points of departure and destination keeping whatever happens between them outside the purview. Migration was the key missing term in Migration Studies. CRG will feel rewarded if this model syllabus is put into practice in colleges and universities of India and abroad perhaps with adaptations necessary to keep pace with the changing world and context.

The present syllabus "Understanding Forced Migration and Refugee Studies" takes its shape as it is develops on the draft syllabuses prepared by Ananya Chatterjee (Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology,

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Understanding Forced Migration and Refugee Studies

Unit I Theories and Concepts

a) Migration and Refugee Studies: Evolution, Definition, and Scope
b) Concepts and Types: Voluntary and Forced Migrants, Refugees and IDPs, Asylum Seekers and Stateless Persons, Mixed and Massive Flow; Typology (Labour Migration, Circular Migration, Shock Migration, etc.)
c) Sources: Development, Climate and Conflict
d) Intersectionalities: Race, Ethnicity, Caste, Class and Gender
e) Responses to Forced Migration Crisis: Role of State, Non-State and International Actors
f) Studying Camp as a Liminal Site

Unit II Methodological Issues

a) From 'Methodological Sedentarism' to a Case for Studying People on the Move
b) Quantitative Methods
c) Qualitative Methods: Case Studies, Historical and Archival Methods; Ethnography; Text and Discourse; Visual Anthropology

Unit III Law, Culture, and Media

a) International Law: Guiding Principles on the IDPs; Regional Compacts
b) Municipal Laws and National Instruments (Like Human Rights Commissions); Policies of Resettlement and Rehabilitation; Case Laws and Judicial Interventions
c) Forced Migration in Popular Culture: Select Case Studies
d) Media and Representation: From Victimology to Victimhood; The Question of Subjectivation
e) Ethics of Research and Reporting on Forced Migration

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Between Cities and Borders: Environmental Migration and Urban Mobility in the GBM Delta

By

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Human mobility due to environmental factors is not a new phenomenon. Over the past few years' migration, mobility and displacement have become the key foundational component of critical urban theory and have become central to understand how urban spaces are produced and contested.[1] Oxford Dictionary defines mobility as "the movement and circulation of people, goods, and information locally or across scales".[2] Scholarly literature on forced migration has expanded this definition by framing mobility within the discourse of voluntary and involuntary movements.[3] Involuntary mobility or forced migration typically arises from environmental disasters, conflicts, or persecutions compelling individuals or communities to relocate. This form of mobility is often characterised by urgency as migrate for safety and survival. The drivers of forced migration are multifaceted, encompassing economic instability, political oppression, and sudden environmental disasters leaving the affected with limited agency and often relocating under dire circumstances without the opportunity to make informed decisions about their movements. On the other hand, voluntary mobility is generally associated with the pursuit of better opportunities, such as employment, education, or improved living conditions. Individuals exercising voluntary mobility have the autonomy to weigh their options and plan their relocation strategically. This form of mobility is influenced by personal aspirations and the desire for enhanced quality of life. However, even in voluntary migration, underlying structural factors such as economic disparity, social networks, and policy frameworks play significant roles in shaping their decision. The dichotomy between voluntary and involuntary mobility reveals a spectrum rather than a binary distinction. Many migration scenarios involve a combination of both voluntary and involuntary elements. For instance, environmental degradation may gradually undermine livelihoods, prompting individuals to move in search of better opportunities before a full-blown crisis necessitates immediate relocation. In such cases,

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mobility is both proactive and reactive blurring the lines between voluntary and forced migration. While mobility has always been a strategy for survival, environmental changes in the Bengal Delta uniquely intersect with rapid urbanisation and border politics. This interplay demands a deeper exploration of how displaced populations reshape the materiality of cities such as Kolkata and Dhaka, challenging the traditional concepts of citizenship and belonging.

The Bengal Delta, encompassing the historical regions of West Bengal in India, and two-thirds of Bangladesh, is characterised by its intricate network of 700 rivers, including the three major rivers: the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Meghna. This transboundary geological region covers an area exceeding 1,05,000 square kilometres, with 60 per cent of the delta located in Bangladesh and 40 per cent in West Bengal, India.[4] This region, one of the most densely populated and ecologically sensitive regions in the world, is undergoing severe environmental change—the degradation is multifaceted, involving a combination of natural and anthropogenic factors.[5] Frequent and severe flooding is a significant problem in the Bengal Delta. The region's topography and the confluence of three mighty rivers results in substantial seasonal inundation due to floods causing extensive riverbank erosion, loss of arable lands, displacement of communities, and destruction of infrastructure.[6] Erosion not only affects the physical landscape but also disrupts livelihoods, particularly for farmers and fishing communities who depend on the deltaic aquamarine resources. The intrusion of saline water into freshwater systems is another critical issue. This salinisation is exacerbated by rising sea levels and reduced freshwater flow from upstream due to damming and diversion projects. Increased soil salinity severely impacts agriculture, reduces crop yields negatively impacting food security, drinking water supplies and the overall health of the ecosystem.[7] World Bank has predicted that by 2050 nearly 40 million people would be internally displaced.[8]

South Asian countries except for Afghanistan are not signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. This region has both produced and received refugees due to a multitude of factors, including conflicts, wars, violence, persecution, social origins, political inclinations, religion, caste, communalism, sub-regionalism, and geophysical events. The potential link between environmental degradation and migration in South Asia has been a subject of academic discourse for many years, reflecting growing concern over the impact of environmental changes on human mobility in the region along with its inability to form a unanimous understanding to address the affected population.[9] In the absence of a formal structure or specific refugee laws, South Asian countries, till date, have relied on *ad hoc* and volatile administrative measures to address the needs of refugees and asylum seekers and the measures often result in arbitrary, discriminatory, and preferential treatment.[10] Historically referred to as the Bengal Presidency, the region is home to communities that share similar ethnicities, languages, and lifestyles. The Ganga-Brahmaputra Delta, one of the world's most densely populated Low Elevation Coastal Zones (LECZs) encompasses two major metropolitan areas: Kolkata in West Bengal, India, and Dhaka in Bangladesh, located on its fringes. As the economic centre for both regions, the delta sustains an average

population density of over 1280 people per square kilometre.[11] The Ganga-Brahmaputra Delta primarily situated in the tropical wet climatic zone encompassing three distinct terrestrial ecoregions is divided by the Radcliffe Line as the international border between India and Bangladesh since 1947. Sundarbans with the world's largest mangrove forest is home to a unique array of flora and fauna in its 54 islands that makes the region spans across this border.[12] With shared ethnicity, language and lifestyle, mobility within the delta region has always been a common phenomenon until 1947. After Partition people from East Pakistan crossed the newly formed border and entered the sovereign territory of India. Although population movement was an ongoing process the numbers surged in 1971 during the Bangladesh Liberation War. The initial waves of post-1947 migration was primarily due to political upheaval caused by Partition. Similarly, the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971 triggered another substantial migration wave as political turmoil and violence forced many to seek refuge in India. Recent studies, however, emphasise the role of environmental degradation in shaping migration patterns. The region's susceptibility to flooding, erosion, and salinity intrusion has increasingly forced people to move in search of safer living conditions and viable livelihoods.[13] Moreover, circular migration, characterised by temporary and repetitive movement, has become a critical survival strategy for many, affected by changing climatic condition and environmental disasters.[14] This article explores how environmental degradation, and disasters act as a catalyst to the neo-liberal shifts in urbanisation of the Global South in the 21st Century that challenges traditional concepts of mobility, belonging, and citizenship within and across borders, reshaping urban and rural identities and economies in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) Delta. The Bengal Delta's environmental challenges—flooding, salinity intrusion, erosion and frequent cyclones—serve as a backdrop for examining urbanisation in the Global South and its intricate relationship with borders. As displaced populations move toward metropolitan centres like Kolkata and Dhaka, the dynamics of borders and urban spaces become critical in understanding how environmental migration shapes cities and citizenship.

Urbanisation and the Dynamics of Borders in Contemporary Cities

Urbanisation in the past two decades is characterised by mobility, periphery and in-between spaces. With passing time cities are growing rapidly and incorporating and excluding citizens at the same time. Sociologists and political scientists conceptualise borders and borderlands as politically and socially constructed boundaries, continually contested and negotiated by diverse actors and agents.[15] These boundaries are not static but dynamic, reflecting ongoing political, social, and economic interactions. Historians, on the other hand, interpret borders as products of cumulative historical events, particularly shaped by colonial and postcolonial developments.[16] They view these boundaries as legacies of historical progressions that continue to influence contemporary political and social landscapes. Anthropologists however, define

borders as demarcations that separate distinct social forms, people, and regions. They describe borderlands as regions and sets of practices defined and influenced by these borders, characterised by "conflict, contradiction, and a mix of material and ideational elements".[17] Mobile demography, thus, situated in the periphery are never confined within its borders, in fact, they never stop moving or being moved, being included or excluded based on their positionality within the urban structure.

Kolkata and Dhaka, the two largest metropolitan cities situated at the edges of the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna Delta, separated by an international border, have become key destinations for environmentally displaced populations in the region.[18] These cities, historically significant and economically vital, attract those seeking a more secure future amidst growing environmental uncertainties. However, the promise of stability and opportunity in these urban centres is increasingly under scrutiny, given the ongoing challenges of rapid urbanisation, inadequate infrastructure, and socio-economic disparities.[19] The continuous influx of displaced individuals seeking refuge in the metropolitan areas of Kolkata and Dhaka constantly navigate their marginal status within the existing urban structures. This ongoing migration challenges the cities capacity to integrate these populations, often exacerbating socio-economic inequalities and testing the limits of urban infrastructure and services.[20]

The Sundarbans, a vast deltaic forest region in the southernmost part of West Bengal in India, and Bangladesh is formed by the deposition of silt from the Hooghly, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers along with their numerous distributaries. This forested area covers approximately 10,000 sq.km. of which only about 4,260 sq.km. lie within Indian territory.[21] The Sundarbans have long served as a crucial natural barrier, protecting West Bengal and its capital, Kolkata, from cyclonic surges originating in the Bay of Bengal. This unique mangrove forest supports the livelihoods of over 3.5 million people who depend on its resources for sustenance and economic activities.[22] Kolkata, situated on the eastern bank of the Hooghly River in the lower Ganges Delta, faces significant challenges of overpopulations. Gradual sea-level rise, soil erosion, and salinisation have severely impacted agricultural livelihoods in the deltaic islands. These issues have been exacerbated by violent cyclonic surges over the past decade, leading to increased migration from these islands.[23] For instance, the submergence of Ghoramara island has compelled its residents to move to higher ground on Sagar Island in the southwest Sundarbans, and further west to Kolkata.[24]

Dhaka, on the other side of border, the capital city of Bangladesh, with an estimated population of 15 million people is another city of the migrants from all over the country.[25] The city has always been a destination of the poverty-stricken rural migrants and gradually that drive has associated itself with environmental factors. The country situated in the low deltaic plain suffers from frequent flooding and intrusion of saline water within fresh water leading to massive scarcity of drinking water in the rural areas, forcing people to move out. Approximately 2,000 people migrate to the city daily in search of livelihood significantly bulging the population pressure and causing the city to become

increasingly overcrowded.[26] The continuous influx of individuals seeking better economic opportunities strains the city's infrastructure and resources, exacerbating existing urban challenges. One of the critical issues facing Dhaka is land subsidence, primarily caused by excessive groundwater extraction and the loss of wetlands.[27] Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation have led to the encroachment and destruction of the natural ecosystems. Environmental degradation in Dhaka, therefore, has profound socio-economic implications. The sinking of the city increases the vulnerability of infrastructure, risk of waterlogging during the rainy season which threatens the livelihood of millions of people living in informal settlements. Depletion of groundwater resources poses a significant challenge to water security, impacting both domestic and industrial water supplies.[28] While the nature of urbanisation in the Global South transforms cities into magnets for displaced populations, the intersection of migration with border politics adds layers of complexity. Policies aimed at securitising borders redefine urban spaces, determining who has access to the city and who remains marginalised.

Urban Citizenship and the Border: Identity and Access in a Securitised Landscape

The Radcliffe Line, established in 1947 to Partition India and Pakistan, initially served as the boundary between India and East Pakistan. Following the independence of East Pakistan and its emergence as Bangladesh in 1971, the Radcliffe Line remained the official international border between India and the newly formed Bangladesh. This border holds a substantial strategic and geopolitical significance, influenced by historical, political, and economic factors.[29] The colonial legacy, nation-state policies, global trade, and local politics shapes the trans-local and cross-border interactions along the India-Bangladesh border. The border region, particularly in West Bengal and the Northeastern states of India, is characterised by complex social and economic exchanges that transcend the physical boundary. The proximity of Kolkata, only 75 kilometres from the India-Bangladesh border, make it a significant urban market for labour and goods connected to the border, acting as a magnet for cross-border migration and informal trade.[30] Kolkata's role as an economic hub attracts both legal and undocumented migrants from Bangladesh seeking better economic opportunities. These migrants, often driven by poverty and lack of opportunities in their home country, are vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous agents who take advantage of their precarious legal status. The mobility of goods and people across the border highlights the permeability and fluidity of the Radcliffe Line, despite its official status as an international boundary.[31] The Border Security Force (BSF) stationed at the borderlands are tasked with safeguarding the border and regulating cross-border movement. These officials wield significant power in determining who is allowed to cross the border and under what circumstances. Their actions are influenced by broader political and security considerations reflecting the contentious and often contradictory nature of border management.[32] This dynamic nature of the

border region necessitates a nuanced understanding of the interplay between local practices and state policies.

The European Union (EU) promotes a human security that aims to balance the interests of its citizens with solidarity towards migrants. This approach emphasises a humane and inclusive treatment of migrants, although the reality often falls short of these ideals.[33] In stark contrast, the Indian's approach to migration from Bangladesh is heavily securitised.[34] The right-wing political structure frames Bangladeshi migrants as a severe threat to national security, fostering a narrative of infiltration by dangerous immigrants. This securitisation is reinforced by mass media, which amplifies the perception of threat. Bangladesh, however, denies allegations of large-scale illegal migration, asserting that its economic development reduces the impetus for emigration.[35] Given the historical, linguistic, and cultural ties with the Indian state of West Bengal, impoverished Bangladeshis often cross the border seeking better livelihoods. Under these circumstances, it could be argued that, in the absence of universally binding legal framework for managing migration and displacement due to environmental factors—and given the fluctuating political perceptions surrounding border regions—effectively addressing and distinguishing among economic migrants, individuals crossing borders without formal and legal authorisation, and those displaced by environmental forces is profoundly challenging.

In contemporary South Asia, the popular political ideology of the urban structure commodifies the concept of border security transforming it into a marketable product that capitalises the collective fear and hatred of an imagined threat. This commodification process not only exploits societal anxieties but also influences the selection of migrants who are permitted to exercise their "right to the city." This selective inclusion and the criminalisation of the "others" are facilitated through legal mechanisms like the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), which was mandated by the 2003 amendment of the 1955 Citizenship Act and has been implemented in Assam.[36] The politicisation of migration and the construction of an imagined "other" in contemporary South Asian political discourse have redefined the porous India-Bangladesh border. Once a space of fluid mobility has now transformed into a contested periphery of present urban and political imagination reflecting deep-seated anxieties and shifting notions of identity and belonging. This border, historically a zone of cultural and economic exchange, has become a contested space where the rights of individuals are continually negotiated and redefined.[37] This securitisation and commodification of migration have profound implications for urban spaces and the rights of migrants. Urban areas, particularly in northeastern India, have seen an increase in surveillance and policing, which creates an atmosphere of fear and exclusion for undocumented migrants and those perceived as outsiders.[38] Furthermore, the transformation of the border into a fortified periphery reflects broader trends in urban planning and governance, where security concerns overshadow inclusive development and social justice. People living in these peripheral zones must continuously negotiate their right to belong, often without the legal and social protections afforded to recognised citizens.[39]

Migration and Belonging in Contemporary Urbanisation

By the end of the 21st Century, global urbanisation is expected to encompass most of the world, driven primarily by a dramatic increase in population from approximately 1 billion in 1950 to an estimated 6 billion by 2050. During this period, the proportion of the global population residing in urban areas is projected to rise from 30 per cent to 66 per cent.[40] This rapid urbanisation has led to the rise of megacities, defined as metropolitan areas with populations exceeding 10 million. In the 1950s, there were only two megacities: New York and Tokyo. By 2014, the number of megacities had surged to 28, each with populations surpassing 20 million. Projections indicate that by 2030, the number of megacities will increase to 41, with the top seven located in Asia, highlighting the region's rapid urban growth.[41] The first significant wave of urban migration in the modern era began in the 18th Century coinciding with the onset of the Industrial Revolution. During this period a substantial number of rural inhabitants migrated to urban centres in search of employment opportunities created by burgeoning industrial economies. This rural-to-urban migration was driven by the promise of better livelihoods and the mechanisation of agriculture, which reduced the need for rural labour.[42] The second wave of urban migration occurred during the first half of the 20th Century. This period was marked by rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, particularly in Europe and North America. The aftermath of World War II further accelerated urban growth as economies rebuilt and expanded. Urban areas offered better living standards, healthcare, and educational opportunities, drawing even more people from rural regions.[43] A century later, we are experiencing what can be considered the third and most significant wave of urban migration. The global urban population has surged with more people living in urban areas than ever before. This contemporary wave of urbanisation is driven by several factors especially economic opportunities as urban areas continue to offer more diverse and higher paying job opportunities compared to rural areas. The growth of service industries, technology, and knowledge-based economies in cities attract rural populations.[44] Access to better healthcare, education, and infrastructure in urban areas improving the quality of life makes cities more attractive places to live.[45] Advances in transportation and communication technologies have made it easier for people to move to and within urban areas facilitating the flow of migrants globally.[46] Environmental degradation in rural areas have acted as a push factor for the populations towards cities where they perceive greater safety and stability.[47] The current wave of urban migration has significant effect on urban planning, infrastructure, and sustainability as urban areas need to manage the challenges of overpopulation leading to housing shortages, traffic congestion, pollution, and increased demand for resources and services. The rapid growth of megacities highlights this need for sustainable urban development strategies.[48]

The economic performance of a city is a critical determinant of its attractiveness. However, the ideal model of a well-functioning city often based

on examples from the Global North does not fully capture the complexities and challenges faced by the cities in the Global South. Cities in the Global North, such as those in Europe and North America, typically benefit from well-developed infrastructure, effective governance, and robust economies where cities are often planned with a focus on sustainability and quality of life, resulting in a relatively balanced urban development.[49] Cities in the Global South, however, face distinct challenges. Rapid urbanisation in these regions often outpaces infrastructure development, leading to issues such as inadequate housing, poor sanitation, and limited access to essential services. Informal settlements or slums are a common feature, in this region, highlighting the disparity in living conditions.[50] Additionally, governance structures in these cities might struggle with corruption and inefficiency, further exacerbating urban challenges.[51] Scholarships on southern urbanism that tend to challenge theories developed from the experiences of the Global North, view the process of urbanisation as "multiple scales of peripheralization"[52] where the urban is built with heterogeneous and interconnected networks of multiple zones of centre and the edge. The materialist approach towards understanding the ontology of southern cities includes an interconnection with the political economy.[53] Therefore, perceiving two delta cities of the Global South, Kolkata and Dhaka, at the global urban turn, becomes paramount, specifically because of their unique geographical location.

Building on Harvey's interpretation of Lefebvre's concept of the "right to the city" that addresses urban inequality through inclusive and democratic urban governance, this paper argues that the 21st Century southern cities and the phenomenon of rapid urbanisation needs to be analysed considering the massive influx of environmentally displaced populations.[54] While Lefebvre's principle of universal accessibility and equity in urban spaces is a foundational ideal, it faces significant challenges in practice due to the differential inclusion and treatment of individuals based on their marginalised status based on factors such as socio-economic background, race, gender, ethnicity, and migration status, which influence how different groups are accepted and integrated into urban environments. The 21st Century metropolis of the Global South is characterised by a transformation of urban structures that disrupt traditional neighbourhoods and community dynamics. This transformation often manifests in the form of gated communities that prioritise private leisure facilities under the pretext of enhanced security. Surrounding these enclaves are slums and informal settlements whose inhabitants are employed in service roles that sustain the gated communities. This phenomenon is a byproduct of the neoliberal economy, which, as David Harvey articulates, channels surplus capital into urban restructuring as part of the global political economy.[55] Various gated communities, be it residential or special economic zones, leisure parks, etc., symbolise a significant shift in urban planning and social dynamics. These enclaves create a stark divide between the affluent residents within the gates and the marginalised populations in the surrounding informal settlements. The privatisation of public spaces and services within these gated communities exacerbates social inequalities and limits the right to the city for those outside the gates.[56] The concept of security justifies the existence of gated communities

designed to protect wealth and privilege rather than address broader social safety concerns. As a result, the urban landscape becomes fragmented, with wealthier residents enjoying exclusive amenities while poorer populations remain confined to underdeveloped areas with limited access to essential services.[57]

Within a neoliberal economic framework, urban spaces are strategically restructured as surplus capital is allocated to redevelopment projects that align with broader global political and economic objectives. Such projects commonly emphasise the beautification and reorganisation of urban areas to attract investment and improve visual appeal. This often occurs at the cost of displacing existing communities.[58] Under neoliberal policies, urban restructuring primarily focuses on capital accumulation and market-oriented development resulting in the displacement of informal settlements and the marginalisation of their residents. Despite being relocated, these communities continue to play a crucial role in sustaining the urban economy, as the informal workforce underpins numerous service sectors that keep the city's economy operational.[59] Marginalisation plays a critical role in the process of securitisation. From a gendered perspective, women often emerge as marginalised groups facing compounded vulnerabilities throughout the migration process. Examining southern urbanisation from these perspectives reveals how women simultaneously navigate differing challenges while asserting agency within urban spaces.

Invisible Labour, Visible Divides: Gendered Perspectives on Urban Migration and Citizenship

With the advent of globalisation and rise in international trade and capital flows has significantly increased the pace of human mobility within and across borders. As cities expand to accommodate displaced populations, they not only reshape rural-urban migration patterns but also reveal distinct gendered dynamics in how and why individuals migrate. It is estimated that at least 210 million people are migrating globally, with approximately 105 million of them being women.[60] While urbanisation opens pathways for economic participation, the urban experience is profoundly shaped by gender, with female migrants navigating additional layers of vulnerability and opportunity in city spaces. Women's migration pattern is driven by a variety of factors, including economic opportunities, the feminisation of poverty, persistent gender inequality challenging the traditional notion that migration is predominantly a male endeavour. However, there are several factors influencing female migration, among those economic opportunities deserve special mention, where women migrate in search of better employment opportunities.[61] There is a common misconception thar men are primary migrants while women stay at home or migrate only for marriage. However, the reality is more complex. Women actively engage in labour migration, often becoming primary breadwinners for their families. This migration is frequently overlooked due to traditional andro-centric biases in migration studies.[62] The adaptation paradigm for

environmental migration has traditionally focused on male perspectives, often neglecting the experiences and strategies adopted by women. Women's migration for environmental reasons is shaped by their roles in households and communities, where they often manage resources and adapt to environmental changes differently from men. For example, traditionally, migration studies focusing on the Sundarbans delta have emphasised that men constitute the majority of migrants moving to Kolkata, driven by the search for better economic opportunities.[63] However, recent studies reveal a significant shift in the number of women migrating from the villages of Sundarbans to Kolkata. This emerging trend highlights the changing dynamics of migration and the growing role of women as active economic participants in urban settings.[64] Migration of women to urban areas represents more than just a demographic shift; it marks a significant transformation in social and gender norms.

The export-oriented economic model of the Global South, largely controlled by interests of the Global North, has reshaped the traditional structures of workplace. The shift towards export-oriented economies has given rise to a new urban imagination where traditional image of labourers has changed, along with new labour laws which are often relaxed to attract foreign investment. The export manufacturing garment industry in Bangladesh, the backbone of the country's economy, has become a significant workplace for a massive influx of women migrating from rural areas to seek employment in Dhaka's factories.[65] The labour force in these factories predominantly comprises women from rural Bangladesh, who live in informal settlements or slums on the city's periphery. The sight of large groups of women of various ages walking together has become quite common, earning them the moniker "garment women".[66] This public visibility challenges the traditional patriarchal structure of the country which strictly adheres to gendered roles of women outside the public view. However, this neoliberal urban restructuring has introduced new forms of exploitation and inequality. Women, now integral to the economy, are often forced to abandon their education early to join factories or receive only enough education to qualify for factory work. Female labourers are paid less than their male counterparts and face discrimination in promotions. Despite these challenges, women are banding together, forming labour unions to give their public visibility a legal form.[67] Therefore, it could be argued that the 21st Century urban imagination of the South has become more tolerant, shedding some archaic images and practices as long as it doesn't directly challenge the status quo. The neoliberal ideology underpinning this economic structure prioritises profit over human well-being. It often disregards the exploitative conditions these women endure such as low wages, poor working environments, and lack of job security. Despite the exploitation, these women are essential to the profitability of the garment industry and, by extension, the global economy.

The 21st Century urban landscape increasingly depends on a service-based economy, where citizens are viewed as consumers. This shift driven by global economic restructuring have made urban households' part of the white-collar workforce. Consequently, these households require professional domestic services to manage daily life efficiently creating a booming market for

domestic labour. Domestic work often deemed "low-skilled" is essential for the smooth functioning of the urban economy. However, it is frequently undervalued and lacks formal recognition. The informal nature of this sector means that domestic workers are excluded from labour laws and protections resulting in job insecurity, low wages, and exploitation. Despite these conditions, domestic labour is integral to urban society enabling white-collar professionals to perform their roles effectively. A notable demographic contribution to this sector in Kolkata includes women migrating from the villages of the Sundarbans delta, the borderlands and beyond. These women take up domestic work in the city, which, despite its informal structure, offers them economic opportunities. Despite the vital contributions of female migrants to urban economies, their needs are often overlooked in urban governance, perpetuating cycles of gendered inequality. The absence of legal protections and formal recognition leads to systemic issues such as wage discrimination and poor working conditions. However, the narrative of these female migrants shifts away from its victimisation perspectives.[68] These women demonstrate significant agency in their roles. They negotiate wages, working conditions and job responsibilities often leveraging their skills and experiences to improve their circumstances. This shift from viewing them solely as victims to recognising their negotiating prowess highlights their resilience and adaptability. Their ability to navigate the informal economy and carve out a space for themselves within the urban landscape is a testament to their strength and determination which ultimately earns them a *right to the city*. The experiences of female migrants underline the broader themes of resilience and exclusion in urban spaces. By understanding their struggles and contributions, we gain a nuanced view of how southern urbanization intersects with gender, migration, and environmental challenges—setting the stage for reimagining inclusive cities.

Conclusion

The politicisation of migration and the neoliberal restructuring of urban spaces reveal a complex, multi-layered dynamic in the India-Bangladesh border regions, particularly within the metropolitan hubs of Kolkata and Dhaka. The historical India-Bangladesh border, once a fluid zone of cultural and economic interchange, now embodies a contentious space where migration policies, security concerns, and economic imperatives intersect. The shift from mobility to restriction within the urban imagination reflects broader anxieties about national identity and sovereignty, reshaping the border into a marginalised periphery. In the context of neoliberal urban restructuring, cities of the Global South are strategically moulded to attract global capital through redevelopment and beautification projects. These transformations often displace the marginalised communities, intensifying socio-economic divides. Despite their marginalisation, displaced communities and migrants continue to support the urban economy, especially in sectors dependent on informal labour, thus highlighting the contradiction between the push for capital driven urban growth

and the reliance on a workforce that is often excluded from formal recognition and protections.

Within this paradigm, migration of women from environmentally vulnerable regions, such as the Sundarbans delta, underscores a critical but frequently overlooked dimension of migration studies. These women, driven by a combination of environmental and economic pressures, defy the traditional assumption of migration as a male-dominated phenomenon. As active participants in labour migration, they challenge andro-centric biases by becoming primary economic providers and adapting uniquely to environmental challenges. Far from being passive victims, these women exhibit remarkable resilience and agency, negotiating work conditions and creating livelihoods within the informal economy. Their capacity to assert agency and carve out space for themselves within the city represents not just a survival strategy but a sense of belonging and right to the city that is often denied to them within formalized frameworks. The export-oriented economic model in the Global South, driven largely by interests from the Global North, has reshaped traditional workplace structures and labour dynamics, especially in Bangladesh's garment industry. The transformation from rural life to urban factory work in Dhaka has created a new urban identity for female labourers, symbolised by the "garment women" who navigate the city in groups, publicly challenging longstanding patriarchal norms that traditionally relegated women to private spaces. Their visibility on the urban landscape not only signals a shift in gender roles but also highlights their critical role in sustaining the country's economy.

However, while this model has opened avenues for women's economic participation, it has also entrenched new forms of inequality and exploitation. Amendments in labour laws to attract foreign investment often fail to protect the rights of these women, who face unequal wages, limited advancement opportunities, and the need to enter the workforce at a young age with minimal education. These conditions underscore the complex duality of neoliberal policies in the Global South: while it empowers women to some extent by bringing them into the labour force, it simultaneously enforces structural inequities that limit their socio-economic mobility. In response, many of these women are organizing themselves into labour unions, transforming their public visibility into a collective voice for rights and recognition. By viewing southern urbanisation through a feminist lens, it becomes evident that gender plays a pivotal role in shaping the urban experience, particularly for environmentally displaced migrants. In recognising the agency and contributions of these marginalised populations, particularly female migrants, we gain a more nuanced understanding of urban spaces as sites of both opportunity and exclusion. Their stories illuminate the need for more inclusive urban policies that not only accommodate the complexities of environmental and economic migration but also affirm the rights of all residents to shape and inhabit the city. In doing so, we move closer to envisioning cities not as exclusive enclaves but as truly dynamic spaces where diverse voices and experiences collectively contribute to urban resilience and growth.

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Book Review

The Paradox of Belonging: Understanding Identity and Rejection in Modern France

By

Prajot P. Asolkar *

***Foreigners in Their Own Country: Identity and Rejection in France*, Lawrence M. Martin; New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2024; pp. 258; ₹16,972; ISBN: 978-1-80539-088-0 (Web PDF)**

In his compelling examination of identity and belonging in contemporary France, Lawrence M. Martin delves deep into the lives of individuals who, despite their French citizenship, find themselves perpetually marked as outsiders. *Foreigners in Their Own Country: Identity and Rejection in France* offers a delicate exploration of how individuals from Maghreb and Black immigrants navigate the complex terrain of French society—revealing the profound challenges they face in constructing their identities and seeking acceptance. Martin's work stands out for its intimate portrayal of cultural dissonance and its ripple-effects through every aspect of the lives of the people he stayed with or interviewed. Through carefully documented personal narratives, he shows how the struggle for belonging extends far beyond simple questions of citizenship, making forays into the realms of romantic relationships, family dynamics, and religious expression. Particularly noteworthy is his analysis of how individuals balance their cultural heritage with the pressures of conforming to dominant French social norms.

The book's strength lies in its multi-layered approach to understanding identity formation. Martin narrates how often these citizen-immigrants find themselves caught in a complex web of competing identities—cultural, religious, and national, while facing external pressure to

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choose between them. He examines how Muslim identity intersects with French secularism highlighting the additional layers of complexity that religious identity brings to the already challenging quest for social acceptance. His take on romantic relationships adds a particularly poignant dimension to the work. By exploring how cultural and racial identities influence intimate partnerships, Martin shows how personal relationships, become another arena where larger societal tensions play out. These stories powerfully illustrate how marginalisation can impact even the most private aspects of an individual's lives. The book is thoughtfully structured, moving from broad theoretical frameworks to intimate personal narratives. Martin organises his arguments thematically rather than chronologically, allowing readers to fully explore each aspect of identity formation and social rejection before moving to the next. This structure creates a natural flow that helps readers grasp the interconnected nature of these issues. The writing style strikes a delicate balance between academic rigor and accessibility, making it valuable for both scholars and general readers interested in immigration and identity politics. As one interviewee states: "It has given me pleasure to share my experiences. I hope you recount them. And if what you write helps people to be open-minded, that is the ultimate goal; to be open minded and avoid psychological barriers". This interview captures the book's fundamental purpose, i.e., to foster understanding and break down preconceptions through shared experiences.

For academics, this work provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding identity formation in multicultural societies, supported by rich empirical evidence. The book's methodological approach to gathering and analysing personal narratives offers valuable insights for researchers in Sociology, and other Social Science studies. For general readers, it offers a deep understanding of the lived experiences of marginalised communities in France, making social theories accessible through compelling personal stories. The book's greatest achievements lie in its presentation of in-depth personal narratives and its exploration of diverse perspectives. The incorporation of individual stories adds an emotional depth that transforms abstract concepts into tangible human experiences. The wide range of voices and experiences presented creates aninclusive picture of identity challenges in contemporary France. However, the work has its limitations. While Martin excels at documenting challenges, the book sometimes falls short in exploring potential solutions or way forward. Additionally, the emotional intensity of the narratives, while powerful, can occasionally overwhelm readers, potentially overshadowing the underlying message of resilience. The book makes a vital contribution to our understanding of identity politics in modern France. The work reveals how the promise of French Universalism often falters in practice, creating a population of citizens who remain perpetual outsiders in their own nation. For readers interested in immigration, identity politics, or contemporary French society, this book offers invaluable insights into the lived experiences of those navigating multiple cultural identities. It is an essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the complexities of belonging in today's increasingly multicultural societies.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles submitted for consideration of publication in REFUGEE WATCH should be around 5,500 -7,500 words. Book reviews can be around 1000 words and review articles can be around 2000 words. Articles will have endnotes and not footnotes. Endnotes should be restricted to the minimum. Please refer to www.mcrg.ac.in for a details style sheet. Round-tables can also be proposed for publication. Enquiries about possible submissions are welcome.

For submission of articles and all other matters, correspondence should be addressed to the Editor, Refugee Watch, Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, IA-48, Ground Floor, Sector-III, Salt Lake, Kolkata – 700 097 or editor@mcrg.ac.in. For book review and review-articles correspondence to be addressed to Samata Biswas, Review Editor, Refugee Watch, at the same address or at bsamata@gmail.com.

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REFUGEE WATCH

In this Issue

Ananya Chatterjee — Introduction: Teaching Migration: Responding to a Mobile Time

Essays

Mohamed Shafeeq Karinkurayil — Teaching Literature of Economic Migration

Indira Chakraborty Bhattacharya — 'Homing' and the Desire for 'Homing': Reading/Teaching Kamila Shamshie's *Kartography* Through a Migrant's Experience

Azeemah Saleem — Audio-Visual Resources in Teaching Migration to Students Enrolled in Professional Courses

Kuldeepsingh Rajput & Sakshi Rajput — Educating Children of Seasonal Migrant Workers: Missing Pedagogical Orientation and Praxis in Teacher Education

Sreetapa Chakrabarty — Rohingya Children and the Pedagogy of Forced Migration and Refugee Studies

Sanjay Barbora — High Ground: Reflections on Colonialism, Conflicts, and Environmental Justice in Northeast India

Ayse Caglar, Giorgio Grappi Lydia Potts, Saima Farhad, Sandro Mezzadra — Innovative Methods of Research

Samir Kumar Das — Syllabus on Migration Studies

Somali Bhattacharyya — Between Cities and Borders: Environmental Migration and Urban Mobility in the GBM Delta

Book Review

Prajot P. Asolkar — The Paradox of Belonging: Understanding Identity and Rejection in Modern France

64 & 65

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