Moving, Squatting, Settling: Motion and Marginality in the National Capital Territory of India

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In the National Capital Territory of India, urban development is marked by the reconfiguration of urban space through the varied movements of both capital and human beings. This thesis, based on documentary research and on fieldwork undertaken in the summer of 2009, focuses on the demolition of squatter settlements or *jhuggi-jhondpris* in Delhi and the resettlement of their residents to locations on the urban fringe. Residents of illegal, informal settlements, which constitute between 18 and 27 percent of the territory's population, are particularly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of local politics, shifts in the definitions of basic rights, and the ever-increasing demands of market expansion, and yet these citizens are an essential part of structures and processes that constitute both imagined and very real urban landscapes. Of particular concern are the concepts of formality, informality, and modernity, and the ways in which these concepts are materialized.

Mouvement, «Squatting», Règlement : Motion et exclusion dans le «National Capital Territory» de l'Inde

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Sur l'Inde, le développement urbain est marqué par la reconfiguration de l'espace urbain à travers les mouvements du capital et des citoyens. Cette thèse, basée sur la recherche documentaire et «fieldwork» à l'été de 2009, met l'accent sur la démolition des colonies de squatters ou «jhuggi-jhondpris» à Delhi et à la réinstallation de leurs habitants. Les résidents des établissements informels, qui constituent entre 18 et 27 pour cent de la population du territoire, sont particulièrement vulnérables aux vicissitudes de la politique locale, les changements dans les définitions des droits fondamentaux, et les demandes sans cesse de l'expansion du marché, et pourtant ces citoyens sont un élément essentiel des structures et des processus qui constituent à la fois imaginaire et réel des paysages urbains. est particulièrement préoccupé par les concepts de la formalité, l'informalité, et de la modernité, et la façon dont ces concepts sont matérialisés.

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Introduction

This thesis is a combination of a literature review and a short report on fieldwork, tied together by an analysis of the processes of migration, settlement, and displacement as animated by the idioms of *motion* and *exclusion*. Using court documents, media records, third-party interviews, and anthropological and sociological studies of the urban poor in Delhi, I will also place recent evictions within the broader historical context of the continual (re)configurations of space and citizenship in India. The chapters of this work are arranged in such a way as to place the particular problem of urban development within broader discourses, beginning with international ideas of economic growth and "the city", and moving inward towards an examination of how these themes interact with more localized ideas of society, autonomy, and authority within India, and the national capital region, producing the spaces of the city, with its squatter settlements and resettlement colonies[1] within.

The field site for this research was a resettlement colony known as Savda-Ghevra, located within India's National Capital Territory (the Union Territory of Delhi), itself subsumed within a larger "city-region" known as the National Capital Region. Within these distinctions, territories may be further broken down into subdivisions: the city of Delhi, or "old Delhi", "New Delhi", Edwin Lutyen's early 20th century city plan for the British colonial capital, the Delhi Cantonment, and numerous peripheral areas, some owned by local village authorities, and some by the Union Territory (NCT) government. Within these subdivisions, too, land may be owned by any number of public agencies – the DDA, the railways, the municipal corporations themselves – which often lend out their land to other state agencies, greatly complicating the

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[1] "Colony" is an uniquely South-Asian term for a planned settlement

process of arbitration in case of disputes, as we shall see. Throw in multiple mandates from the federal government to "deal with" the problem of urban poverty, development authorities' desire to clear ever-increasing amounts of space for new infrastructure projects, master plans developed at all manner of scales, and changing interpretations of the right to life (and specifically, to shelter) under India's constitution, and one is left with a bewildering thicket of regulations and discourses surrounding the notion of the place of the poor within an increasingly modern India.

I use the word "modern" here rather deliberately, as the organization of the NCT follows a logic that I very much would identify as one of top-down ordering, of an attempt to clean and beautify spaces and to make things *uniform;* while David Harvey (1990) has written on the rise of the "postmodern city", it is striking how little Delhi's Master Plan resembles Harvey's description of the future of the city. And yet Delhi aspires to be just that – "modern" - with the bewildering proliferation (and transformation) of the symbols of global capitalism immediately apparent throughout the city. Though Delhi has not yet ascended to the rank of "global city" in the way Mumbai has (Sassen 2008), it too aims to become a center of tertiary economic activity and a place where "flexible capital" may articulate. It is also an immensely important space within the national imagination, and a synecdoche for what India is and aspires to be. These conceptions of and aspirations to "modernity" and "development" are translated and utilized in local contexts by elites into metaphors such as "cleaning-up" which resonate across scales to discursively sanitize the messy processes which produce marginality and disenfranchisement. In Delhi, metaphors such as this (along with "slum clearance" and "voluntary relocation") work to legitimate evictions and attain funding and approval from organizations such as the UNDP

under the guise of "participatory poverty alleviation" (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:18), positioning the victims of such evictions as willing agents in their own demise.

My analysis concentrates on social and physical mobility, and on exclusion, all of which relate in their own way to ideas of "settlement" and rights in the city. Much of this ties in to the idea of "settlers" as migrants who are squatting, *encroaching* on public lands, who have no rights to be in the city; they have moved *into* the confines of Delhi, but in spite of an acknowledged role in a multitude of economic, social, and political activities within the city, are often still seen as uninvited obstacles to development. Indeed, in writing about the urban poor, one must be careful not to broadly paint them as obstacles to the "improvement" of the city, or as the victim *of* development, either through displacement or economic deprivation brought about by neoliberal reforms. Anthropologists (in particular scholars like Arjun Appadurai and Amita Baviskar) as well as some Indian activist-scholars (for example, Madhu Kishwar) working in local poor communities have repeatedly challenged the notion of the slumdweller as "sitting in the way", and attempted to underline the very real agency of those who live in the "marginal" spaces of the city. The poor may "always be with us", but this does not mean that we are confronted with the *same* poor at any given time; poverty and exclusion are the result of processes and are not in-born conditions. I seek to shed some light on the ways in which the agency of the urban poor in Delhi is exercised, and some of the ways in which it is restricted.

Overview

In the first chapter, I provide an overview of the ways in which urban life and urban poverty is understood globally, including a summary of demographic and economic trends relating to urbanization worldwide (and in India), as well as an exploration of some of the

concepts frequently used in the analysis of cities in the Global South. The second chapter has a narrower focus, and is concerned with Delhi's history, including the flows of migrants into the city and the demolition of squatter settlements. This provides a historical outline of settlement in the National Capital Region, with particular attention to the ways in which urban spaces have been both imagined and structured by the state from the colonial period through the last decade.

Following the broader account of migration and demolition in the second, the third chapter focuses on the legal history of the rights of squatters as citizens in Delhi, especially in relation to social exclusion and violence. In particular, I wish to examine the ways in which the right to housing has been interpreted and contested in the High Court of Delhi and the Supreme Court of India, specifically in the case of the demolition of the *basti* of Nangla Manchi and the subsequent resettlement at Savda-Ghevra, on the urban fringe. Slum removal also involves the surveillance and marking of residents as "eligible" or "ineligible", and here I focus on the ways in which residents' ability to provide documentation – and perhaps more importantly, the willingness of the state to accept it – figures in to exclusion and displacement without compensation.

Finally, the conclusion of this thesis briefly suggests a possible direction for future research. Here, I foreground more subtle types of exclusion and capability-reduction, in particular through the restrictions on and obstacles to the movement of citizens that is part of the resettlement process. Throughout this thesis, I wish to ask a number of questions, namely: how do we define core concepts like "informality"? In what ways do these concepts enable particular policy interventions? How might we better convey the ways in which urban poverty

and resettlement are *experienced*? And finally, how does resettlement structure and constrict human agency?

Fieldwork limitations, methodology, and ethics

My own fieldwork in Delhi – conducted in the summer of 2009 under funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through McGill University – was limited by a number of factors, including visa delays, language barriers, and a last-minute change in field site, and as a result there are precious few primary interviews included in this thesis. As a student of anthropology, however, I still feel it is important to give some voice to those directly implicated and affected by my research, both for ethical reasons and so as to give the reader a clearer view of the world as seen through another's eyes; this is why a large portion of this thesis is based on critical readings of third-party interviews and documentary accounts, conducted by members of Indian NGOs engaged in advocacy and development projects in the Delhi region, and compiled in publications and on the internet. I have attempted to place these in context throughout, both in order to situate them in terms of the politics of representation and to give proper credit to those fieldworkers whose tireless work resulted in this body of data.

Even with the inclusion of case studies and quotations, there is "no single way of grasping the complexity of a city like Delhi... [and] there is only a fine line to be drawn between the desire to create a totalizing image of the city and the confusion of that city with reality" (DuPont, Tarlo, and Vidal 2000:15), and this study is (as is arguably the case with all writing) a presentation of "partial knowledge", in James Clifford's (1986) classic sense of ethnography as

both incomplete and complicated by the experiences and perspectives brought to the field by the researcher. With this in mind, however, it is not my desire to engage in what has been derisively labelled self-reflexive "navel-gazing``: to say that a given account is imperfect and conditioned by the position of the author should not be to drain that account of value or relevance. Keeping in mind that this thesis is not conceived as "objective" social science, it is nevertheless my hope that the fragments and glimmers of Delhi provided here will give the reader some sense of the political situation and affective realities on the ground.

During my stay in Delhi, I was lucky enough to make the acquaintance of the staff at Ankur, an education, advocacy, and community-organizing NGO, who provided me with access to their community archive at Savda-Ghevra as well as invaluable discussions. These informal conversations appear primarily in the final chapter of this thesis, along with interview excerpts from meetings with members of other local NGOs. All of my subjects consented to the use and publication of their real names, and so I have not used pseudonyms except in very specific cases in which I deemed that an individual's statements might be viewed as detrimental to their standing within the community; these cases are noted explicitly in-text.

Conventions and the politics of language

Terms like "slum" and "slumdweller" carry with them particular connotations, and as Menon-Sen and Bhan note, the usage of such terms often serves to "strip the working poor of individual identities as voters, workers, parents, children, and individuals with rights" by subsuming these self-ascribed and performed identities within categories created from without and allowing for particular political and technical interventions into the lives of these individuals

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and communities (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:3). Nevertheless, it is impossible to approach the literature on demolition and resettlement without encountering the term "slum" or its Hindi equivalent, *jhuggi-jhompri*, and in my coverage of the history of these issues I have preserved the original terms wherever they occur both in direct quotes and in paraphrasing so as to reflect the particular orientations of original texts and policies; the reader should be aware, however, that these terms carry significant baggage and should be used as a starting point for critical analysis rather than as valid categories in and of themselves. Following Menon-Sen and Bhan, I use the less pejorative term *basti* (settlement) whenever possible. In cases where other terms are used, the reader is encouraged to be alert to the ways in which published sources use the terms "jhuggi" or "unauthorized colony" – the former applies exclusively to those settlements built and provisioned by the poor and disenfranchised, while the latter may also refer to those settlements built by the middle and upper classes and frequently regularized.

The term "informality", too, may conjure up images of corruption and of a casual, anarchic existence, an exception that forms the underbelly of the norm, and I also wish to disabuse the reader of any such notion here: in India, as in much of the developing world, the *vast majority* of economic activity takes place within the "informal sector", and far from being exceptional, the norms and codes which govern this activity are as much a part of everyday life for the majority of citizens as the officially regulated and recognized "formal" economy. Indeed, the practical distinction between acceptable and unacceptable business practices and building plans is tied to class membership, social capital, and *savoir-faire.* This is explored in more detail in chapter one.

Hindi and Urdu are both conventionally written using non-Latin scripts, and as such transliterations of various terms vary across translated sources. Foreign-language terms used in this thesis are transliterated in the most *common*, if not necessarily most *logical* ways; my goal has not been to follow an arbitrary standard for transliterating these scripts into English but simply to be consistent throughout. In quotations, original spellings have been preserved.

I. Cities, Migrants, and Margins

This chapter aims to summarize some of the prominent theoretical frameworks used to understand urban poverty and marginalization, and to offer an overview of the economic and demographic state of cities worldwide, providing a context for the chapters ahead. A city is a protean thing; as well as being an "economic and social system in space… a product of deep-seated and persistent processes which enable people to amass in large numbers in small areas" (Clark 2003:2), it is also the product of and theatre for "the organization of space, time, meaning and communication" (Rappaport 1977:8), a space which is imagined, materialized, and negotiated. As Vidal, Tarlo, and DuPont (2000) are quick to point out, neither the "purportedly objective realm of surveys and maps" nor the "intimate subjectivity" present in interviews sufficiently captures the realities and imaginaries of spaces like Delhi. Even in bringing such approaches together, one risks creating a totalizing vision all too easily confused with a fluid reality, due to the impossibility of examining "any single aspect of the city without it straightaway revealing other elements which defy all attempts [at reduction]" (Vidal et al. 2000:15). Even such incomplete visions and representations of the city, however, and of the relationships within it, are prime subjects for anthropological inquiry in their own right, and are essential to understanding both the ways in which cities and their citizens are made legible to power and the ways in which they confound legibility. If confronting the messy realities of the local is a Sisyphean endeavor, some insight may still be gained by taking stock of some of the ways urban spaces and urban dwellers are often perceived, and of the ways in which these conceptions of the city find political use; along the way, we may also bring to the fore those

aspects of reality which confound representations, and which provide possible sites of resistance.

By the Numbers: The Global Urban Situation

The human population is expected to reach 9.2 billion by 2050, with nearly 70% of that population (6.4 billion) dwelling in cities (UN 2007:3). The conventional wisdom is that urbanization is, by and large, a good thing, powering economic growth. Cities also figure in the "demographic transition" model, which posits that lowering total fertility rates is key to eliminating poverty, and urbanization does strongly correlate with lower TFRs (Sachs 2008; Chant and McIlwane 2009). Estimates for the years 2025-2050 predict that as urbanization reaches its apex and rural populations actually begin to shrink in less-developed countries, total population growth will have slowed to 0.65% per annum, one-third of the 1975-1987 annual growth rate of 1.87% (UN 2007:3). India's rural population is expected to shrink from a 2007 value of 808 million to 743 million in 2050, even as its urban population booms from 325 million to over 900; this nevertheless is projected to coincide with a decrease in India's total population growth rate (UN 2007). In India, much of this growth will be in "megacities" with populations greater than 10 million and middle-range cities of 1-5 million (Hashim 2009); the percentage of urbanites living in cities with less than 500,000 people will drop to less than 50% by 2025, with the percentage in cities over 10 million holding steady at around 15%. And yet in spite of the Western media fascination with India's urban spaces and its urban poverty (and here, I am thinking specifically of films like *City of Joy*, *Salaam Bombay*, *Slumdog Millionaire* and books like *White Tiger*, which won the 2009 Booker Prize), India has actually been quite slow to

urbanize. Indeed, the urban population in India has probably just now reached the 30% mark –

the global percentage is 50. In comparison, Brazil and China have much higher urban

populations (82% and 38%, respectively), and also much higher rates of urban growth, which in

India stands at an average of 3% per year (Hashim 2009). This may have tremendous

consequences for poverty, as poor urban residents – even those in informal slums – tend to be

"better off" in absolute terms (based on income) than many in rural areas.

While the shift to urban life may well aid in decreasing birth rates and concentrating

populations closer to public services, the direct effects of urbanization on national wealth, and

especially on inequality, are harder to discern. "Urban bias" and neglect of rural areas has been

seen as detrimental to raising national living standards – see, for example, Michael Lipton's

1977 *Why Poor People Stay Poor* – even as other scholars have framed urban development

projects and urban growth as an essential complement to rural development projects,

generating remittances that help resolve economic disparities between states as well boosting

economic growth more generally (Hashim 2009). A 2008 study headed by Harvard economist

and demographer David Bloom concluded that while the level of urbanization in a nation

certainly correlates with GDP per capita, with more urbanized countries generating more

wealth, a firm *causal* relation between increasing urban populations on and generating wealth

could not be established; the authors found little data to recommend either for or against

policies designed to increase the pace of urbanization (Bloom et al. 2008). In global perspective,

different regions have had strikingly divergent histories in terms of urbanization and growth,

with no correlation between increases in urban population and economic growth in Africa in

spite of significant correlation in Asia (Fay and Opal 1999). One thing that is certain is that

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
World											
Rural Population	1798.30	2035.63	2366.89	2710.92	3020.33	3270.21	3411.95	3457.42	3352.63	3114.68	2793.00
Urban Population	736.80	996.30	1331.78	1740.55	2274.55	2853.91	3494.61	4209.67	4965.08	5708.87	6398.29
Total Population	2535.09	3031.93	3698.68	4451.47	5294.88	6124.12	6906.56	7667.09	8317.71	8823.55	9191.29
Percent Urban	29.1	32.9	36	39.1	43	46.6	50.6	54.9	59.7	64.7	69.6
India											
Rural Population	308.48	366.04	440.77	529.53	640.44	756.80	853.32	906.64	894.34	832.81	743.38
Urban Population	63.37	79.94	108.55	159.05	219.76	289.44	366.86	472.56	611.41	763.91	914.89
Total Population	371.86	445.98	549.31	688.58	860.20	1046.24	1220.18	1379.20	1505.75	1596.72	1658.27
Percent Urban	17	17.9	19.8	23.1	25.5	27.7	30.1	34.3	40.6	47.8	55.2

Table: Historical and projected population, global and Indian. Population numbers in millions of people.

	1950-1955	1955-1960	1960-1965	1965-1970	1970-1975	1975-1980	1980-1985	1985-1990	1990-1995	1995-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	2030-2035	2035-2040	2040-2045	2045-2050
World																				
Rural	1.27	1.21	1.39	1.63	1.55	1.16	1.12	1.04	0.91	0.68	0.48	0.37	0.22	0.04	-0.18	-0.43	-0.65	-0.82	-1	-1.18
Urban	2.97	3.06	3.06	2.75	2.62	2.73	2.66	2.69	2.34	2.19	2.07	1.98	1.91	1.81	1.7	1.6	1.46	1.33	1.2	1.08
Total	1.78	1.8	1.95	2.02	1.94	1.76	1.74	1.73	1.54	1.37	1.24	1.17	1.09	0.99	0.88	0.75	0.64	0.54	0.45	0.36
India																				
Rural	1.6	1.82	1.83	1.89	1.82	1.85	1.94	1.87	1.79	1.55	1.33	1.07	0.77	0.44	0.06	-0.33	-0.61	-0.81	-1.02	-1.25
Urban	2.36	2.29	2.98	3.14	3.75	3.89	3.32	3.15	2.88	2.63	2.35	2.39	2.5	2.57	2.6	2.56	2.33	2.13	1.92	1.69
Total	1.73	1.9	2.04	2.13	2.22	2.3	2.26	2.19	2.08	1.84	1.62	1.46	1.31	1.14	0.97	0.79	0.63	0.54	0.44	0.32

Table: Annual population growth rate (%).

Source (both tables): United Nations *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision*

urban poverty is of a different *kind* than rural poverty - cities offer generally superior access to amenities like drinking water, education, and health care, but also expose migrants to the risk of eviction, the volatility of urban economies, and a sometimes hostile social environment; not only the economic statuses but also the capabilities of individuals are transformed. With urbanization rates continuing to increase, it is clear that most migrants are gambling on these trade-offs.

Informality, formality, and economy

Many of these poor migrants work and live in what the development literature has often characterized as the "informal sector." Contemporary conceptions of "informality" have their roots in the critical responses to Oscar Lewis' "culture of poverty" theory (Lewis 1959), which posited that the "marginal man" represented a sort of cultural type, based on certain traits such as "fatalism, rootlessness, unadaptability, traditionality, criminality... and so on" (Bayat 2004:83), and that the poor were trapped in their position not by the marginalizing forces of markets but rather by "political passivity" and an inability to engage with society as a whole due to a necessary preoccupation with making ends meet. Though Lewis himself had "empathy for the poor" (Bayat 2004:83), and while anthropology has moved far beyond the "culture as personality" ideas underpinning his theory, it continues to resurface in political discourse, often with the effect of placing the blame for marginality at the feet of the impoverished (cf Bourgois 2003).

In response, scholars such as Manuel Castells and Janice Perlman (1976) reframed what Lewis termed "marginality", moving from "cultural type" to a complex set of social and

economic relations shaped, constrained, and most importantly *fostered* by the formal, arguing

that far from being self-contained cultural units, the poor were in fact integrated into society

(AlSayyad 2004; Bayat 2004). Perlman in particular was concerned with what she termed the

"myth of marginality", arguing that the idea of marginality as defined by Lewis constituted an

"instrument for social control of the poor, and a mechanism of collective consumption that

determined the social order of the urban poor" (AlSayyed 2004:9), enabling continued

economic exploitation and political disenfranchisement.

Both dependency theorists and neoliberal economists reacted to these critiques,

though in markedly different ways (AlSayyad 2004; Gilber 2004). The "underground economy"

(or "black market") school, for example, characterized the informal as a product of inequality

within a global and regional capitalist system, permitted to exist by governments in the

interests of increased growth. In contrast, neoliberal economists such as Hernando de Soto

viewed the informal sector not as an unpleasant result of the naturally uneven functioning of

capitalism but rather as a response to state over-regulation of markets, and saw informal work

as creative and entrepreneurial; informals "served a beneficial purpose in the development of a

competitive capitalist economy, both by helping reduce imports and by supplying goods and

services" (AlSayyad 2004:13). This perspective has proved particularly popular with

development NGOS, from the past practices such as the World Bank's infamous Structural

Adjustment programs (which demolished regulatory frameworks and blurred the line between

the formal and informal) to the recent proliferation of microcredit schemes which aim to

extend the benefits of capitalism to the world's poorest. Certainly, so-called "informal"

industries respond to gaps left in the market by formal industries, especially those which fail to

offer products and services at prices affordable to lower- and middle-class citizens; in Latin

America (Gilbert 2004) as well as in India (Kundu and Sharma 2001) easing of restrictions on

markets has resulted in informal sector growth far outpacing that of the formal. In 2004, Delhi's

"unorganized" sector comprised some 85% of all labor (Govt. of NCT 2006:40) with major

activities including manufacturing (a 31% share of unorganized labor); trade, hotels, and

restaurants (a 26% share), and social and personal services (a 22% share), among other

activities (Govt. of NCT 2006:41), and in all,). In Karachi, Pakistan, some 72% of transport is

provided by individually owned minibuses, who often pay bribes to the traffic police for the

privilege of using the roads (Hasan 2004:69). Video halls, which provide entertainment and

socialization for laborers around the city's port and wholesale markets, "consider their trade a

'joint venture' between themselves, the police, and excise department officials" (Hasan

2004:74), and counterfeit consumer goods including designer knock-off clothing and pirated

DVDs are produced in the informal settlements for buyers across the class spectrum. But the

valorization of the "informal" merits scrutiny: as Roy (2004:305) cautions, "as the culture of

poverty allowed blame to be placed on the poor, so the culture of entrepreneurship allows the

Third World poor to bear responsibility for their own destinies."

Is the informal a discrete category, a contiguous sector of economic activities, either a

shadow or bastion of true capitalism? Certainly, sorting out certain types of work in this way

can serve an analytical purpose: Alan Gilbert (2004), while recognizing the difficulties and

arbitrariness of such an undertaking, measures processes of "formalization" and

"informalization" based on the number of hours per day workers spend in each sector,

differentiated by distinctions in the safety and benefits provided. Here, "the construction

worker at a formal building company will do freelance work in his spare time", economic

activities falling within two different sectors, with the benefit being that informality is not an

inherent quality of the *kind* of labor performed but rather its context (Gilbert 2004:37). But if

"informality" is structured not by the actual jobs performed or hours worked but by a set of

social relations, the picture becomes much messier and more complex; informality can also be

conceived of as an "organizing urban logic", with all the spatial and social implications inherent

in the phrase (Roy and AlSayyad2004:5). Here, however, it is important not to fall into the same

sort of trap as the "culture of poverty" theorists, and to avoid suggesting that the informal is

constituted by some sort of singular set of lifeways which contrast with the "formal", existing

outside the formal and structured solely by it. Indeed,

> "...the organizing divide is not so much that between formality and informality as the differentiation that exists within informality – that which marks off different types of informal accumulation and informal politics. The neoliberal state, of course, deepens such forms of differentiation, fostering some forms of informality and annihilating others." (Roy and AlSayyad 2004:5)

Even with this consideration in mind, informality rendered as modes of "accumulation"

remains somewhat sterile and free of human agency. To reinsert agency and examine the

"politics" of informality, I wish to explore another part of urban life: housing.

Informality and housing

A substantial share of urban migrants, especially those arriving from poor rural

communities and those without ties to kin or patrons in cities often end up in tenements or

self-built housing, erecting their own shelter or renting space in one of the many "slums" in the

cities of the developing world. In 2001, residents of these communities made up some 31.6% of

the urban population, over 923 million; 452 million of these were in South-Central Asia, or 58.8% of the region's population (UN-Habitat 2003:14-15). The word "slum" itself has a long history - Mike Davis writes that in the first published definition of 1812 "it [was] synonymous with 'racket' or 'criminal trade.' By the cholera years of the 1830s and 1840s, however, the poor were living in slums rather than practicing them.", the word having been transformed to mean a room in which criminal activity took place – and a large share of negative baggage attached, but the word and the category that it represents is inescapable in much of the development literature. The United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) report of 2003, entitled *The Challenge of Slums*, uses the term to denote " a wide range of low-income settlements and/or poor human living conditions" (UN-Habitat 2003: 8), moving through a dizzying array of alternative definitions before settling on an "operational definition" of a "slum":

> "An area that combines, to various extents, the following characteristics (restricted to the physical and legal characteristics of the settlement, and excluding the more difficult social dimensions: inadequate access to safe water; inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure; poor structure quality of housing; overcrowding; [and] insecure residential status" (UN-Habitat 2003:12)

These characteristics line up remarkably with the objectives and sub-objectives set out by the UN'S Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), and the explicit exclusion of "social dimensions" also falls in line with what James Ferguson (1990) has called the "technical" language of development discourse, which sets aside social and cultural concerns in favor of interventions such as infrastructure projects, the success of which can be more easily

measured[2]. The definition also does leave room for the panoply of urban forms which various states have classified as "slums" on their own, definitions which often – but not always – line up with distinctions between "formal" and "informal" property.

Housing arrangements exist as many different sets of social and material relations, governed by differing regulations. In many countries such as Turkey (Yonder 1998) and India, a substantial percentage of construction in urban areas is carried out without official authorization, not only by the poor but by middle and upper class businessmen and developers as well; of the 23 million people expected to occupy Delhi by 2021, only 5.4 million are expected to reside in planned colonies (Govt. of India 2009:93). The ways in which these properties are treated, both in terms of regularization and service provision, differs depending not only class as measured economically but also on location / underlying land value, political connections, and community perceptions of the prospective tenants. There are essentially four options afforded to governments and governing officials confronted with unsanctioned development: to ignore them or offer temporary-yet-unofficial protection (either due to lack of political will, law enforcement capability, or a desire to curry favor or votes); to upgrade them *in situ* (sometimes fully, but often partially to again attain votes by allowing for continued promises of further upgrades); to demolish the structures without provision of resettlement; and finally, to demolish the structures and resettle the tenants. Emphasizing both in-situ upgradation / the granting of land titles and resettlement through the development of better EWS ("Economically Weaker Sections") housing, the Government of India's 2010 initiative for

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[2] The process of framing development projects in technical terms is a complex one, involving a plethora of actors at various levels, and metrics are undoubtedly necessary for the maintenance of the representations which allow for well-intentioned actors on the ground to continue their work. For further discussion, see Ferguson 1990 as well as Mosse 2005.

"slum-free cities", the Rajiv Awas Yojana, sets among its goals "redressing the failures of the formal system that lie behind the creation of slums" and "tackling the shortages of urban land and housing that keep shelter out of reach of the urban poor and force them to resort to extra-legal solutions in a bid to retain their sources of livelihood and employment." (Govt. of India 2010:1), echoing both socialist sensibilities and the "legalist" position of de Soto.

The results of upgradation and regularization worldwide are mixed. De Soto's universal fix-all of "unleashing the power of capital" through tenure granting is not, bluntly, particularly sensitive to the peculiarities of local land and housing markets (Bromley 2004). Granting ownership does little to aid those who rent their dwellings and may even render tenants homeless. Indeed, the UN's *Challenge of Slums* report presents a general consensus that "It is now recognized that security of tenure is more important for many of the urban poor than home ownership as slum policies based on ownership and large scale granting of individual land titles have not always worked." (UN-Habitat 2003: xxvii) Here, "security of tenure" is used to indicate both freehold rights and leases of land / rooms from the government (as is the case in most of Delhi's newer resettlement colonies, including Savda-Ghevra). Examples of the failure of schemes based primarily on granting ownership rights abound. In post-liberalization Latin America, at the behest of development banks, settlements are generally regularized and integrated into the city proper through the granting of title deeds to property; in Peru, for example, some 500,000 titles were registered between 1996 and 1999 (Gilbert 2004:56). In spite of program goals, however, such policies have often served to bolster the informal / illegal property market by way of providing politicians with vote banks to use in election years, leading brokers to continue to sell and occupy land illegally (Azuela & Duhau 1999; Varley 1999; Tarlo

2000). In Karachi, where the vast majority of residents live in informal housing, developers often build structures on government land (with protection from bribed police and bureaucrats), and then "hire journalists to write about the 'terrible conditions' in their settlements, and engage lawyers to help regularize tenure" (Hasan 2004: 69).

What is clear in the Karachi example above as well as the examples of "entrepreneurship" in the preceding section is that the poor are far from passive, but are quite engaged in the production of national wealth as well as (both local and national) space. Building on James Scott's (1985) concept of "everyday practices of resistance", Asef Bayat has referred to informality as "the quiet encroachment of the everyday". Here, resistance is framed not as a defensive act, but an assertive one, which involves "advancing claims" through the construction of dwellings, the illegal tapping of electricity, and participation in informal labor in order to raise living individual standards (Bayat 2008:88-90). Bayat's definition is primarily an atomistic one rather than communal; while he recognizes the ability of community organizations and NGOs to aid in the assertion of claims, he is more concerned with "the silent, protracted, but pervasive advancement of ordinary people in relation to the propertied and powerful in order to survive and improve their lives… the lifelong struggles of floating social clusters – migrants, the unemployed, the underemployed, squatters…" (Bayat 2004:90-91). Certainly, poverty is itself multidimensional (cf. Sen 1993; Thorbecke 2007), and can be thought of as a lack of the capabilities of individuals to attain healthcare, employment, form social networks, etc. Bayat's conception of informality, which can be thought of as relating to the enhancement of capabilities, is an insightful one, centering as it does upon the individual – and the body – as a site of action, of exclusion, and of resistance. The ways in which individuals have created lives

and spaces in Delhi - and have both fallen under and sometimes fallen out of the gaze of the state – will be further examined in the following chapters.

Seeing the city: Slums, skyscrapers, and security

If "encroachment" as defined above seems empowering, or at the very least simply quotidian, the advance of the urban poor is still nothing less than a menace to those who plan cities, and often even terrifying for governments domestic and foreign. In the epilogue to *Planet of Slums*, Mike Davis notes that Geoffrey Demarest, a researcher with the U.S. Army at Fort Leavenworth, proposing a need to prepare for urban combat against "a strange cast of 'anti-state actors,' including 'psychopathic anarchists', criminals, cynical opportunists, lunatics, revolutionaries, labor leaders, ethnic nationals, and real-estate speculators… in the end [settling] on the 'dispossessed' in general and 'criminal syndicates' in particular", and states that "With coldblooded lucidity, they [the Pentagon] now assert that the 'failed, feral cities' of the Third World – especially their slum outskirts – will be the distinctive battlespace of the twenty-first century" (Davis 2006:205). This, writes Davis, "is thus the highest stage of Orientalism, the culmination of a long history of defining the West by opposition to a hallucinatory Eastern Other", pitting orderly Western cities in need of defense against the arcane and dangerous cities of the East, spawning grounds for malcontents and terrorists (Davis 2006: 206). But such fears are hardly confined to the first world; indeed, a similar sense of insecurity can also be found among more affluent residents of the global south, where the outward appearance of slums "lends them a peculiar air of mystery, and they are looked on by middle-class city dwellers as ominous and dangerous places full of danger and hidden vices" (Haider 2000:31).

Fears of chaos, disorder, and insecurity are not simply limited to public perceptions or

the mainstream press: theorists of urban development have also frequently conceived of cities'

ideal growth in progressive, linear terms, as seen in Edgar Pieterse's observation that at the

center of mainstream conceptions of third-world urbanization "is a topos that locates these

places on a continuum from nascent/informal to developed/post-industrial, with the latter

representing the apex of human achievement in city building."(Pieterse 2008:108) Such a

teleological model provides clear a policy goal, one of movement towards a more ordered, less

chaotic existence, planned according to a certain modernist rationality. Whether this order is

based on economic hierarchy or the principles of "environmentalism" (Sharan 2005), often

entails the idea that slums are an artifact of the past to be done away with. Here, in the

concepts of "progress" and "rational" planning, we must ask who defines which urban forms

and practices as acceptable / unacceptable and in which ways these plans shape and are

shaped by physical and social realities; the assumption of a "gleaming, skyscraper-filled city" as

an ultimate end goal matched with utopian ideas of development from above "reinforces and

legitimizes a form of governmentality – disciplinary control, and regulatory actions… that make

it acceptable to intervene recklessly in the lives of livelihoods of millions of poor people without

appreciating the delicate networks and strategies these denizens rely on to survive the city in

the domain of the informal" (Pieterse 208:109). Particular imaginings of this urban *topos* are

highly classed, and do not necessarily correspond as much to the "formal" and "informal", as to

the ostensibly "modern" and ``backward``, as is seen in the government`s toleration and

regularization of upper-class housing built without permission and against codes, and of the

construction of the Akshardham temple, located on the riverbed not far from the site of

thousands of homes and small business demolished in the infamous Yamuna Pushta "beautification" drives (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2).

The ideas of "formal" and "informal" are also reflected in the spatial metaphors we use to describe the city. The Netherlands Architectural Institute, for example, has recently published a collection of articles entitled "Networked Cultures: Parallel Architectures and the Politics of Space" (Mooshammer and Mortonbock 2008); on its cover, a light-rail train sits between an orderly neighborhood and crowded street bustling with foot traffic and vendors hawking their wares. While the text itself admirably discusses the ways in which social groups are intertwined in the modern city, this photograph / caption seems to imply a sort of physical and social distance, a representation that pays homage to rather than questions assumptions about orderly development. But if the concept of "parallel architectures" is unhelpful as a frame, "fragmentation" may be even worse, with chaotic, disconnected, and heterogeneous spaces substituting for separated but socially and spatially contiguous spaces. Delhi itself has often been characterized by historians as being marked by "heterogeneity and discontinuity", absent of spatial and historical continuity (Vidal, Tarlo, and DuPont 2000:16). While this view is ignorant of the ways in which so-called "fragments" of the city are actually parts of complex networks of (re)creation and negotiation, its persistence owes to the fact that it is nevertheless a politically *useful* frame. Krishna Menon (2000), for example, has written of the immense intervention of successive bureaucracies (both colonial and post-colonial) in creating novel spaces within the Delhi area through grandiose architecture, on a scale unparalleled in other Indian metropolises, and the website of today's Delhi Development Authority lists among its charges the "role as the 9th builder of the grand city of Delhi" (DDA website, n.d.). The

government of India's latest guidelines on slum-free city planning speak of "bringing existing slums within the formal system and enabling them to avail of the same level of basic amenities as the rest of the town" (Govt. of India 2010:1), a statement which hews closely to larger ideas of cities ordered, centrally planned and administered spaces structured by law rather than the "encroaching" will of illegal developers. In terms of both social and economic repercussions for targeted communities, in-situ upgrading is almost always preferable to demolition and removal (as seen in chapter 4 of this thesis), but the phrase "bringing within the formal system" nevertheless belies the same sort of formal / informal dichotomy that informs demolition.

Modernity, memory, history

Interventions such as construction megaprojects and the clearance of "slums" are supported by narratives which downplay the importance of pre-existing communities and emphasize the creation of the new; when researcher Emma Tarlo arrived at the Welcome resettlement colony on the east bank of the Yamuna in 1997 to research the history of the community, she was told that "there is no point in coming here if you are interested in history... Welcome has no history" (Tarlo 2000:50). On the contrary, however, as Tarlo's own block-by-block survey of Welcome reveals, both *bastis* and resettlement colonies are rich with histories, and many of these histories are closely guarded; this can also be seen in the following example, from my own work.

One day in early August of 2009, I arrived at Ankur's small office in Savda-Ghevra to begin my daily task of sifting through documents to find a grandfatherly man in a tidy white

salwar and topi[3] seated on couch deep in conversation with Wakeel, the Ankur worker in

charge of the NGO's office in the colony. This was not unusual; many colony residents,

especially older ones, liked to drop before mid-day to chat with Wakeel and the other NGO

workers, discussing politics, their children and grandchildren, their health, and major events in

the community, helping keep Ankur appraised as to the happenings in the far off blocks of the

resettlement colony. Today, however, our guest had come with something important: pictures.

I asked Wakeel if they were for Ankur's archive, which was full of piles of neatly-organized

photo binders documenting the colony's founding and major events in the community.

Wakeel's reply was that these particular photos would be saved, but that this would be done

not to add to the growing collection, but rather to preserve a particular set of memories for our

visitor. Spreading a small stack of photographs out on the low table, the elder began to tell the

story of the pictures in Urdu, Wakeel relaying the outline to me in English; these were records

of family celebrations, of grandchildren and weddings, and to my eye, fairly typical. But one

thing was hard to avoid: they were also damaged, many of them badly burned. As the man

recounted the story of the fire that damaged the pictures – the first in Savda Ghevra, in 2007 –

Wakeel gestured towards me, indicating that I might be helpful by scanning them in to the

office computer.

"Great! It'll only take about 15 minutes!", I exclaimed, eager to help out and to actually

engage with colony residents for a change, stymied as I had been by my mediocre Hindi and

sequestration in a room full of legal documents. "I can even touch up the burnt spots; you

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[3] A *salwar kameez* is a common South Asian outfit consisting of a long, loose top (*kameez;* compare to "camisole")
and light pants (*salwar*)secured by a cord, and often made of linen; *topi* is the Urdu word for a men's prayer cap,
known in Arabic as a *taqiyah* and often translated as "skullcap"

might not even notice on some of these. What do you think, Wakeel?" Dutifully – and, I suspect, mostly to humor me – Wakeel relayed my question in Urdu. The elder's response was animated enough to cross language barriers, a look of puzzlement followed by a rapidly emphatic response to the nugatory. "He says he wants to scan them as they are", Wakeel told me. "They want to remember the fire, too. This is important". The point of the man's visit was to use Ankur's scanner not to relive especially pleasant parts of the past through high-tech wizardry, but to save different moments in time, each essential parts of a family history. Much worse than seeing happy memories marred by the unpleasantness of the 2007 fire would be to have them lost completely in another blaze or eviction. This visit helped me frame Ankur's project in a new way: though the history recorded in the NGO's archives is an incomplete one, (and as with all representations, is a product of the politics of its managers and the circumstances of its collection), its value is in the fact that it never the less presents *a* set of histories, histories which might otherwise be imperilled by the inequities of demolition and the precarious nature of life in a resettlement colony; and in Walter Benjamin's words, "every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably" (1968:114).

"Modernity," writes David Harvey, "not only entails a ruthless break with any or all preceding historical conditions, but is characterized by a neverending process of internal ruptures and fragmentations within itself" (1990:12). To be modern, by this definition, is to participate in an endless cycle of destruction and recreation, but as Harvey notes, this is hardly destruction for the sake of chaos; it is oriented in the direction of "progress", towards more perfect, rational orders. Of course, as James Scott has observed (drawing on Jane Jacobs),

schemes to create rational cities both destroy history and attempt to create new orders that are anything but natural; they represent "urban taxidermy", the placement of a "static grid over [a] profusion of unknowable possibilities" (Scott 1998:139-40), though one might note that dead animals tend to stay dead, whereas urban plans must be continually readjusted and reasserted to match the changing nature of their subjects. When these plans are confounded by the citizens' own attempts to make spaces that fail to meet plan standards, the result is often violence and exclusion, with a staggering human toll worldwide. Some 1.7 million Chinese were estimated to be directly affected by games-related demolitions during the 7 years leading up to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing; 2 million were forcibly evicted in Nigeria between 2000 and 2007; and 750,000 Zimbabweans were forced from their homes in 2005 alone (UN-Habitat 2007: xxix). And these are only examples of what has been referred to as "forced evictions"; the UN reserves a separate category for "market-based" evictions caused by processes of gentrification, though such a distinction belies the fact that rising property values have also driven states to evict people from their homes in the hopes of attracting investment, as has been a factor in Delhi as well as closer to home in the redevelopment of Asbury Park, New Jersey (Coyne 2006). All of these cases are marked by violent breaks in personal histories. Using the National Capital Region as a focus, the next chapters demonstrate some of the ways in which India's ongoing "modernization" has been supported not only by a particular vision of modernity, but also by policies which work towards the annihilation of historical and social claims which might stand in the way of such a vision.

II. History, poverty, and politics: management of Delhi's poor since Independence

This chapter aims to summarize general trends in urban development and the removal of the poor in the National Capital Region of India, a region encompassing the cities of Delhi and New Delhi, as well as (in some definitions) satellite cities such as Noida and Gurgaon; in keeping with much of the existing literature, the term "Delhi" will be used to stand in for the region as a whole, except where noted. The term "Old Delhi" refers specifically to the walled city of Shahjahanabad. Control of planning in the region surrounding which includes the capital has at various times shifted between different government agencies; since 1985, the National Capital Region Planning Board (or NCRPB) coordinates planning between lower-level agencies in the Union Territory of Delhi and the states of Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh; in the Union Territory itself, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) is charged with the planning and implementation of urban planning, including slum demolition and the siting of relocation colonies within the Union Territory. As we shall see, relations between the DDA and the NCRPB – as well as the DDA and other governmental organizations within the Union Territory itself, such as the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) have not always been amicable, with tussles for power and surrounding confusion resulting in the expansion of unauthorized settlements.

That Delhi's *jhuggis* represented an obstacle to the "general progress of India" was avowed by no less than Jawaharlal Nehru himself, who in a preface to the 1958 survey *Slums of Old Delhi* wrote that:

"We have at last become conscious of slum areas. That is undoubtedly some gain though, by itself, it does not take us far. The consciousness of the problem has brought the realization of its urgency and, at the same time, of its magnitude. Looking at these slums, and the sub-human conditions in which men and women live there, we feel that immediate action must be taken to change all this. And then the vastness of the problem confronts us, and we feel a little overwhelmed […] The more one has looked at this problem of the slums, the more it becomes something far bigger than the mere building of new houses. It is intimately connected with occupations of work and the general economy of the place. It has to face ingrained habits and a lack of desire as well as a lack of training to use better accommodation. Indeed, unless there is that training and cooperation, the better accommodation tends to revert to a slum condition." (Bharat Sevak Samaj 1958:7)

Nehru was optimistic that the then-nascent Delhi Planning Authority would be able to overcome the many obstacles involved in the "slum problem" through a scheme combining improvements in slum conditions as well as new housing to entice the then-uplifted slum-dwellers to leave the old city. It is worth noting two key conceits of Nehru's analysis (as well as the DPA plan, which would later become the Delhi Master Plan) which may have provided the seeds of its failure. The first is the concept of providing housing to those who are already paying rent in slum areas by subsidizing their rent in new accommodations, which already excludes any portion of the population squatting on land through informal arrangements. The second, and perhaps still more important conceit, is that even as the DPA plan called for community involvement (Bharat Sevak Samaj 1958:216-218), it predicated itself on the idea that slum-dwellers desired to participate in their own "uplifting" through educational programs designed to overcome their perceived "lack of training" in using enhanced accommodations. In a different light, however, the "ingrained habits and lack of desire" noted by Nehru could be seen as expressions of agency linked to resistance against economic and social marginalization, strategies that have formed their own economic and social networks; and while one again must

be careful not to fall into the trap of the "culture of poverty", Tania Li's statement that

development lays "the claim to expertise in optimizing the lives of others is a claim to power,

one that merits careful scrutiny" (Li 2007:5) is also worth considering. The fear that

resettlement colonies would themselves become slum-like was well founded; where Nehru

noted, "…the problem is not merely of old slums but of the creation of new slums" (Bharat

Sevak Samaj 1958:8), Sabir Ali would find more than 30 years later that new squatter

settlements were being created *within* resettlement colonies (Ali 1990). Nehru could perhaps

not have anticipated the breathtaking growth of "unauthorized" settlements; according to the

DDAs own report of 1981, the number of "squatter families" increased tremendously since the

years following independence, with 12,749 families in 1951 and nearly 300,000 families by

1984; other sources, such as the 1984 report of the Ministry of Works and Housing, estimated

120,000 families, with at least 100,000 of those living in 500 recognized jhuggi clusters (both

numbers quoted in Ghose 1984; much of the confusion over the exact number of slum

residents and squatters comes from the fact the many government organizations implicated in

the planning of the Delhi region have failed to agree on a definition). By the last census (2001),

an estimated 429, 662 households were located in "slum clusters", according the government's

City Development Plan, submitted to the Federal Government's Jawaharlal Nehru Urban

Renewal Mission. Even here, the numbers may have been misestimated, as the Center for Civil

Society's critique of the CDP notes:

> Data sources for slums and poverty used in the CDP are old, confusing and not
> well triangulated. For e.g. Census data on urban poor is a reported 10.02% having
> declined from nearly 50% in 1973. Income data… suggests nearly 75% in slums to be
> poor. At 21.4lakh [2.14 million] slum population (Table 6.4, and assuming that this data

from MCD is accurate), an estimated 16lakh [1.6 million] people should be below the poverty line, or nearly 14% of the total Census population in 2001. MCD Slum Wing data puts the population in slums at 30lakhs [3 million] for 1998-99, which implies 25% people to be slum dwellers and a much higher poverty figure. (Center for Civil Society 2007)

Confusion over the definition of "slums" and the number of "slumdwellers" and "squatters" aside, what is certain is that the urban poor of Delhi often face remarkable violence. Some of this is violence is present in everyday life, in lack of adequate sanitation, schools, jobs, and health care, the result of majority institutions that neglect the poor through apathy or malice, what Paul Farmer refers to as "structural violence" (Farmer 2005). But occasionally, this animosity towards the poor bubbles up and becomes manifest in more overt ways – in wholesale demolitions of neighborhoods without the relocation of residents, and in the beatings of slum-dwellers at the hands of local authorities. These events are presented in this paper not as representations of the status quo – though they may well be more widespread than media reports indicate – but as *diagnostic events*, opportunities to examine the underlying power relations responsible for more day-to-day injustices. Here, I wish to argue that instead of being a "simple" problem of underdevelopment or corruption, the predicament of the poor in cities like Delhi is rather the result of a more deeply embedded ethic of authoritarian planning which has so far left little room for the participation of the socially marginalized. This ethic has taken many forms, and both pre-dates and has been shaped by the colonial encounter. What remains consistent, however, and provides a thread which can be seen to tie the development of the National Capital Region together, is a continuing pattern of assertions of control by governing bodies that seek to define the area as their own particular oeuvre, moves to reshape the landscape that are as much political as geographic or economic. These bodies have

deployed various discourses to accomplish their task – from religion to national pride, from care for heritage to vitalistic growth. The latest mark of modernity and development – that of environmentally friendly design and "sustainability" – can be seen as but the most recent trope deployed to promote the restructuring of Delhi, a restructuring with overt geographic consequences as well as more subtle social effects.

In examining the history of the Delhi region, particular attention should be paid to the ways in which its various rulers have left their mark on the landscape through architecture and planning, and the way in which these assertions have resulted in exclusion and marginalization. The area which now makes up the National Capital Region of India has been occupied since at least 600 BCE, according to archaeological evidence. Indraprasthra, the fabled Pandava capital of the Mahabharata, is reputed to have been built nearby, and while firm evidence of the ancient city is lacking, the importance of the *idea* of historical continuity stretching back to Vedic times is notable. In 1206 CE, Qutb-ud-din Aibak, the first Sultan to control north India, chose an area to the southwest of present-day New Delhi as his capital, demolishing nearby Hindu and Jain temples in order to build Delhi's first mosque, the Quwwat-ul-Islam[4]. The dynasties that followed – the Tughaluks, the Lodi, and the Mughals – all built their own walled cities, now encompassed by the greater Delhi area, but it was Shahjahanabad, established in 1638, that would form the core of "old Delhi", the walled city surrounding the *lal qila* (Red Fort). All of these were monuments to the commanding presence of the sovereign in everyday life, a presence the British would try to replicate using a very different set of techniques.

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[4] "Might of Islam". The mosque is part of a larger set of building known as the Qutb complex; this includes the Qutb Minar, the world's tallest brick minaret, which can be seen as a sort of *axis mundi*

Colonial Spaces

Arriving in the area in the 18th century, the British at first set up residences within the walled city. At this time, the old Mughal capital was dominated by a series of large estates that were "almost self-contained neighborhoods" (Hosagrahar 2005:16), *haveli* (palace) complexes built by the indigenous elite. These dwellings had their own spatial hierarchies, reflecting the social relationships between their residents: accountants, clerks, and servants lived within the haveli walls, often alongside merchants, traders and artisans who were patrons of the *amir*, or patrician. These orders were severely disrupted, however, by the Uprising of 1857[5], an event which would prove a pivotal juncture for Delhi and for all of India.

The mutiny had a profound effect on the organization of the walled city of Delhi. The British, fearing that allowing high concentrations of landed partisans to remain within the city might foment another rebellion and eager to punish those involved in the events of 1857, moved to dispossess those in the local elites who had furnished material or political support to the "mutineers" (Hosagrahar 2005). The result was the breakup of pre-colonial landholdings and the removal of many of the old city's residents to areas outside the walls of historic Shajahanabad. In a further shakeup, anxieties over the revolutionary atmosphere in Bengal prompted the colonial government decided to move its capital from Calcutta to the Delhi area, and to do so by establishing a new, planned city – New Delhi – designed by the Delhi Town Planning Committee under architect Edwin Lutyens after the "garden city" model popular in Europe, and also designed so as to provide for distinct physical separation from the old city,

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[5] Or "Mutiny of 1857", in many contemporary British sources, or "First War of Indian Independence", to some Indian nationalists

again accomplished through greenspace. Lutyen's city was designed to be a symbol of British

Imperial power, to "convey the idea of a peaceful domination and dignified rule over the

traditions of life in India by the British Raj" (Delhi Town Planning Committee, quoted in Legg

2007:28) The design featured three circular centers, at Connaught Place, the Viceroy's Palace[6],

and India Gate. Between India Gate and the Viceroy's residence lay the Rajpath, which served a

ceremonial and martial purpose. The city was also built on clear separations between citizens of

different ethnicities and classes, and Legg argues that the hierarchies present in the ordering of

the new city, which was separated from the "uncivilized" space of the old as well as partitioned

into blocks for Indian clerks and British clerks according to ascending ranks, presents a clear

example of Sovereign power expressed through spatialization, setting apart different zones for

different classes of citizens. Old Delhi, however, became "distanced and silenced… chained to a

binary that depicts it as subordinate, Old, and Other, against the powerful, New, colonial Self of

the capital" (Legg 2007:29). Here, the sovereign works to divide populations spatially: the

ordered (and itself divided, by class and rank) space of New Delhi, and the Old City, the site of

frequent interventions designed to control what was viewed a time-bomb waiting to go off.

Heavy policing was put in place to stave off communal violence and discipline the population by

keeping them under watch, with patrol routes ordered to protect the "keep" of New Delhi in

case the masses of the Old City were to spill out of its walls (Legg 2007). In spite of numerous

interventions designed to improve public health, as well as to "civilize" the population of the

old city, much of Shahjahanabad was officially defined as a slum by the 1940s, "property or

dwelling of households with a monthly income of Rs 30 or less, which does not conform for

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[6] now Rasthrapati Bhavan, the residence of the Indian President

Delhi Municipal bylaws or is in a worn out, decayed, insanitary, or dilapidated condition" (Priya 1993:826). Official recognition of the problem came in 1937 with the establishment of the Delhi Improvement Trust (DIT), which was charged with being an "agent of the government, in the interests of the city, and also of dealing with the problems of slum clearance, reaccomodation, and town planning" (Priya 1993:826), though the ad hoc nature of the DITs plans had little effect on the ever-growing, ever-sprawling *basti*s of migrants to the city.

Into Independence

Between 1941 and 1951, the period including partition, Delhi experienced its most explosive growth in history, jumping from 695,686 to 1.4 million(Census of India 1951). The partition of British colonial holdings in South Asia in 1947 created significant demographic changes in Delhi; the population of 900,000 was augmented by 470,000 Hindu and Sikh refugees while at the same time losing some 320,000 Muslims, who fled the capital for Pakistan. (DuPont 2008:94). Independent India's first official legislation tackling the "problem of slums" in the development of urban areas came in 1956, with parliament passing into law its first major act governing their clearance: the Slum Areas Improvement and Clearance Act. Notably, this act laid down a (rather subjective) definition of slum properties, as follows:

> Where the competent authority upon report from any of its officers or other information in its possession is satisfied as respects any area that the buildings in that area- (a) are in any respect unfit for human habitation; or (b) are by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement and design of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities, or any combination of these factors, are detrimental to safety, health or morals, it may, by notification in the Official Gazette, declare such area to be a slum area. […] In determining whether a building is unfit for human habitation for the purposes of this Act, regard shall be had to its condition in respect of the following matters, that is to say- (a) repair ; (b) stability; (c) freedom from damp; (d) natural light

and air; (e) water supply; (f) drainage and sanitary conveniences; (g) facilities for storage, preparation and cooking of food and for the disposal of waste water; and the building shall be deemed to be unfit as aforesaid if and only if it is so far defective in one or more of the said matters that it is not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition. (Parliament of India 1956)

In practice, the act created two classes of "slum" – one class of structures which were "declared" and afforded upgradation rather than demolition, including much of the old city; the other consists of ad hoc, often resident-constructed dwellings clustered together (*jhuggi-jhompri* clusters, *bastis*). These are also *illegal* occupations, untenured, and stand on land owned by various government and private interests, and within the interstices of city plans, along roadsides and in open parkland. (Dupont 2007). The DDA's approach in this period reflected most of the urban planning literature in India directly following Independence, clearly modeled after planning in the UK (DuPont 2008:97) and with an ignorance of models of "indigenous urbanisms" such as those described by Hosagrahar (2005). As a result, the older parts of cities were treated as exceptions (or even aberrations) rather than norms. When the Act of 1956 went into force, the nearly all of "old Delhi" within the walled city of Shahjahanabad was officially classified as a "slum", based on a definition which Dupont (2007) has noted clearly reflected British understandings of the term, as seen in SAICA's use of language such as "lack of ventilation or light" and "detrimental to safety, health, or morals" (Parliament of India 1956), without regard for the radically different histories, physical landscapes, and climates of India. Ironically, the congested and dilapidated environment within the old city was also tied to colonial management policies, such as the aforementioned breakup of traditional holdings and the reorganization of the city for the purposes of quelling unrest (Hosagrahar 2005; Legg 2007). The first master plan (MPD-I) proposed moving almost half the

population of the old city outside its walls, though this plan would be only partially successful. From the time of the plan's initial implementation until the end of the sixth five-year plan (1985), 200 (out of a scheduled 570) hectares of the walled city was cleared, and 20 hectares were utilized to house the displaced within the confines of Shahjahanabad, through 1500 buildings at ten sites; 14,500 structures were built outside the old city to hold the rest. DuPont (2007:97) estimates that, based on the base population of Old Delhi during the 1960s and 1970s, roughly 20% of all families were moved out of and then later *back into* the walled city. By the second master plan (1980), which set out guidelines for development projects through the year 2001, the old city had been designated a "special zone", and major construction projects within this zone were abandoned in favor of "surgical conservation" (DuPont 2007:98).

In those areas outside the old city as well as within its bounds, the new governing agency was the Delhi Development Authority, independent India's answer to the DIT, which was founded in 1957. Unlike the Delhi Improvement Trust, the DDA fell under the authority of the central government itself rather than municipal authorities, and therefore had powers which superseded those of the municipal subgroupings. The DDA produced the first Delhi Master Plan shortly thereafter; drafts appeared as early as 1956 and a final plan (MPD-I) was produced in 1961. MPD-I, like the plans that would follow was a zoning or land-management plan, demarcating the "urbanizable" areas of the city and projecting growth through 1981. Its primary means of dealing with squatter colonies were relocation and clearance, with new low-income settlements to be developed to form "an integral part of surrounding neighborhoods" (Ali 1990:75), clearly indicating that resettlement colonies should not be placed on the periphery of the city. In many ways, the plan was surprisingly progressive, with the draft even

suggesting that "colonizers [sic] and government departments engaged in building activities reserve 25 percent of new housing for the rehabilitation of squatters evicted during clearance" (Ali 1990:76). A major flaw in the scheme however, is that it anticipated that the majority of Delhi's growth would be in the middle and upper income groups, failing to anticipate the increase in rural-to-urban migration in the 1960s (Ali 1990). This migration would prove a key deficiency of the original Master Plan, which would have little effect on overall slum growth; a 1971 government review (quoted in Ali) found that "The 1961 housing deficit of 150,000 units was shown to have grown to 380,000 by 1970, little progress had been made in providing housing for low income groups, there was extensive unauthorized residential construction… Although 1/10th of the squatter population of a half million had been resettled, there were still 1.5 million estimated to be living in substandard housing and in slum areas. The plan for development of urban villages never really got underway."

Alongside the DDA's Delhi Master Plan, the Ministry of Home Affairs conceived of its own resettlement scheme, to be undertaken by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi. This scheme – the Jhuggi-Jhompri Removal Scheme, or JJRS, sought to relocate squatters on 80 square yard plots of subsidized land in areas where essential services such as roads, sanitation, water, and electricity were readily available (Ali 1990:77). Eligibility for these plots was defined by participation in a 1960 "special survey" of Jhuggi-Jhompri dwellers with non-participants barred from new housing and evicted without alternative arrangements. The original scheme gave squatters ownership of their new land, purchased in installments of Rs. 12 per month. It was discovered, however, the majority of squatters could not afford such a payment, and so the ownership plan was scrapped in favor of a rent scheme, charging each eligible allottee a

total of Rs. 5 per month, inclusive of ground rent, water, and conservancy charges (Ali 1990).

Unfortunately, the "eligible" and "ineligible" residents were intermixed, and in May of 1964 the

government authorized wholesale clearance of the Jhuggi clusters, resulting in fresh, wide-scale

squatting. The MCD administration of the JJRS scheme was withdrawn in 1965 and transferred

to the Delhi Development Authority, due to inadequate provisioning of new housing and slow

clearance (16,000 families relocated against 50,000 during the target period), which had

resulted in considerable squatting on the empty plots pre-designated for resettlement (Ali

1990:79). The DDA's modifications to the scheme included contracting the amount of land

given to each eligible squatter from 80 square yards to 25, and provisions for the large-scale

removal of all squatters from unallocated plots. These squatters were to be moved to the edges

of the city, where they would be placed in "camping sites to be laid out where absolute

minimum facilities were provided" (Ali 1990:79). The gap in services is striking: whereas hand

pumps for water were provided to eligible squatters at a rate of 1 for every 20 family, ineligibles

received 1 for 40; latrines, 1 for every 5 became 1 for every 10; and bathrooms, 1 for 6 to 1 for

12 (Ali 1990:80). Additionally, the scheme once again split communities into "eligible" and

"ineligible" categories and geographically removed a large segment of a pre-existing

population, disrupting community ties and social networks. Emma Tarlo's study of the Welcome

resettlement colony provides a window into the operations of state power during this period,

and merits an extended discussion.

Emergency Resettlement: Welcome

Welcome, like Savda-Ghevra, is a planned community, the product of governing rationalities. But Tarlo (2000) notes that while the plan remains largely intelligible in a bird's-eye, top-down view of the colony, it looks quite different in profile; residents, cramped for space, have built upwards (often on shaky foundations), even against specific regulations relating to building height. Behind the planned and ordered space, in the rear of Welcome is Janata Colony (People's Colony), a "slum within a slum" (Ali 1990), an area of unauthorized development. The spatial configuration of Welcome, with its tenement blocks situated towards the front of the colony, reflects changes in politics and shifts priorities among the developing agencies, and in itself tells a story. Where Savda-Ghevra is relatively young, in existence only from 2006 onward, the area near Welcome has been a focus of resettlement since 1962, when the first plots were allocated at nearby New Seelampur. One of the first colonies developed under the JJRS, the initial plan was to give out 80 square yard plots based on a simple household count of squatters at targeted sites, but the scheme ran into trouble as residents sold their plots and constructed new, unauthorized dwellings nearer to their places of work in the city center (Tarlo 2000). As a result 1962 saw the classification of squatters as eligible or ineligible based on their length of stay, with the first cutoff for those to be allotted land at the Welcome colony set at July 1960 (Tarlo 2000:55).The ineligible were dispersed in the hopes that they would leave the city, though many of them moved instead into plots adjacent to those allocated to the "eligible", something also seen in other colonies and at Savda-Ghevra; these were beginning of Ali's (1990) "slums within slums". Tenements, initially constructed as residences for those residents

with sufficient incomes as to pay rent, were abandoned in the second and third phases of the scheme, which also saw the size of plots decrease from 80 to 25 square yards.

This, again, is the colony at which a resident told Tarlo that "Welcome has no history"; here, it is worth again considering the ways in which the modernizing visions of various resettlement schemes erase communal histories by destroying or rendering unintelligible the places to which these histories are bound. Social scientists have long noted that histories are often quite place-specific, that they draw their power from a certain *materiality*; Tarlo's account of Welcome's history is a narrative tied to constructions themselves and their histories, block by block, building by building. Notably, many of the earliest structures at Welcome were built using bricks from former (demolished) residences, demonstrating a certain physical continuity (Tarlo 2000:54). This was the case for many of those moved from Jamuna Bazaar, whose residences occupy the "JB blocks" of Welcome Phase 3. Later structures, however, were largely constructed of materials purchased after demolition.

Jamuna Bazaar's demolition was part of a new push for slum clearance that began in 1967, enabled by the transfer of clearance operations from the Municipal Corporations to the Delhi Development Authority. Jagmohan, then director of the DDA, considered clearance of slums as a project of great significance to "national pride"; this period also saw in a redistribution of political power in Delhi from one scale to another, the balance "tipping" from *local* political leaders (who promised safety to squatters) to centrally-administered authorities such as the DDA, which were more concerned with the image of the state (Jagmohan 1978; Tarlo 2000). Nigam Bodh Ghat is a cremation ground, now surrounded by landscaped parkland,

By the numbers: Population Growth and Land Coverage (Delhi Urban Agglomeration)

Year	Population	Rate of decennial increase (%)	Land area, square kilometers	Rate of decennial increase (%)	Density, persons / hectare
1901	214,115		n.a.		
1911	237,944	11.3	43.3		55
1921	304,420	27.9	168.1	288.6	18
1931	447, 497[7]	47.0	169.4	0.8	26
1941	695, 686	55.5	174.3	2.9	40
1951	1,437,134	106.6	201.4	15.5	71
1961	2,359,408	64.2	326.6	62.1	72
1971	3,647,023	54.6	446.3	36.8	82
1981	5,729,283	57.1	540.8	21.2	106
1991	8,419,084	46.9	624.3	15.4	135
2001	12,791,458	51.9	791.9	26.9	162

Source: Veronique Dupont, *Du traitement des slums a Delhi* (2007). Figures based on data from the Census of India, Delhi, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, and 2001.

By the numbers: bastis recorded as "jhuggi clusters"

Year	No. of JJ clusters	No. of Jhuggi households	Area in HA	JJ Population
1951	199	12749	21.1	63745
1973	1373	98483	164.1	492415
1983	534	113000	188.3	565000
1990	929	259000	431.7	1295000
1997	1100	600000	902.1	3000000
2001	728	429662	650.2	2148310

Source: Delhi City Development Plan (for JNNURM), Table 6.4[8]

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[7] Here, there seems to have been a printing error in Dupont, as the population number was again listed at 304,420 for 1931. Lacking access to this particular table of census 1931, I have used her rates of increase and surrounding census data to extrapolate the 447,497 figure.

[8] Note caveat on page 3

which had been scheduled for clearance; Jagmohan wrote that his desire to clear the

surrounding area was inspired by a visit to the ghat by India's first president, Rajendra Prasad,

who reported the conditions there to be "India's shame." Old clearance drives were, to

Jagmohan, hamstrung by "slum politics" and in need of liberation from corrupt bureaucratic

inefficiencies. Jagmohan's tenure as DDA head recalls Haussmann's violent redesign of Paris,

and his disposition that of Haussman himself, "who gave himself the title of *artise démolisseur"*

(Benjamin 1999: 12) In his autobiography, he writes with pride of the efficiency of his

department:

> "In about 3 days the clearance and simultaneous resettlement [of Nigam Bodh Ghat]
> was completed… Horitculturalists, engineers, planners and administrators worked round
> the clock to translate a dream into a reality. A new missionary zeal had gripped the
> entire set-up" (Jagmohan 1978:33)

That this particular slum removal drive was so "successful" is a credit to Jagmohan's

political acumen and his use of existing political tools in novel ways to accomplish his goals,

such as using Section 144 of the Criminal Procedures Code to "give the police the right to fire on

anything resembling a crowd" (Tarlo 2000:58), illustrating that the treatment of squatters in

Delhi has been tied as much to changes in political *will* as to changes in policy. Jagmohan's pride

in translating the "dream" of bureaucrats into a "reality" demonstrates his faith in a rational,

modernist planning ethos, the governmentality of urban planning. But to make such dreams a

reality and to *implement* such plans, clearance must be framed as a matter of import to

national pride or national security, clearing the way for the extension of sovereign power and
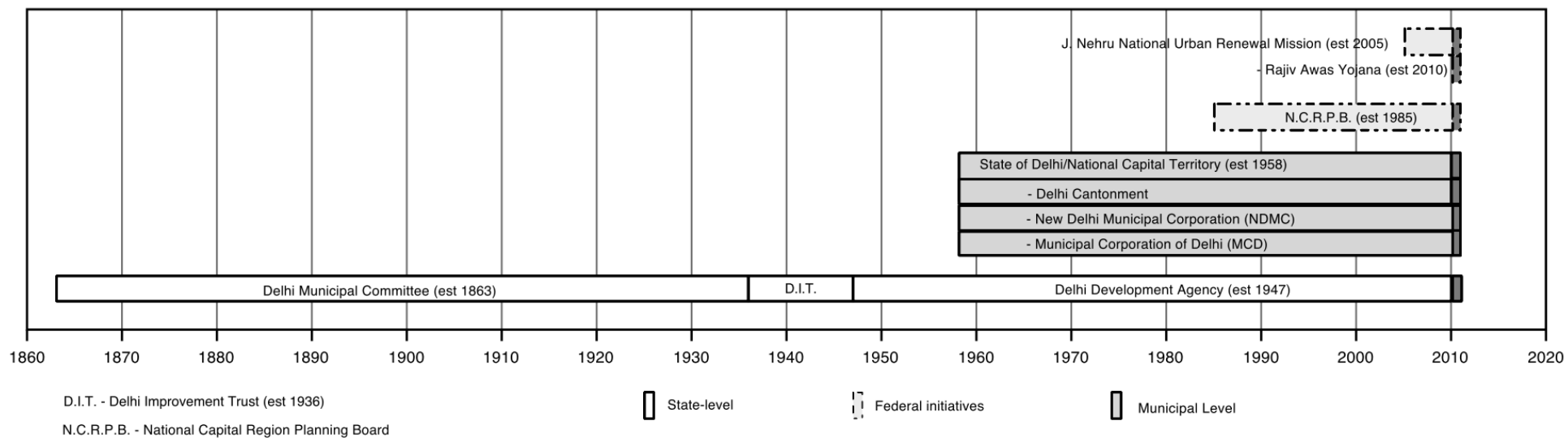
its attendant violence.

Figure: Urban governance in the National Capital Territory and federal initiatives.

This force would be magnified during the years of the Emergency – the period between

June of 1975 and March of 1977 in which President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed (under the advice of

then-PM Indira Gandhi) suspending a number of the Fundamental Rights guaranteed by the

Indian Constitution, and some of the most "productive" years in terms of slum clearance.

Indeed, in the two and a half year period between 1973 and the start of the emergency in June

of 1975, 1800 structures were demolished; from the start of the emergency to March 23, 1977

(when elections were held) , a staggering 150,105 buildings were razed under the direction of

Indira Gandhi's son Sanjay (DuPont 2007:106). The emergency was also the time of population-

control policy in India, and the clearance drives were part of a coercive apparatus designed to

sterilize the poor. Resettlement plots at colonies like Welcome were distributed only when

prospective residents could provide proof of sterilization or of being a "motivator" (individuals

who paid others to undergo sterilization at their expense), and so demolitions created a class of

homeless whose only choices were to submit their bodies to state control or to be rendered

ineligible (Tarlo 1995; 2000). These attempts at population control are a classic example of

governmental "biopower", and scholars of South Asia have paid this close attention (cf. Ram

2001, Buckingham 2006, and Rao 2010, among many others). Veena Soni (1983), however, has

noted that sterilization policies and even many of the methods used to achieve their ends have

a long history in Indian politics, and that what was especially special about drives during the

emergency were their scale and the considerable political will behind them. Thought of another

way, the heightened power of the central authority of the state made possible by the "official"

(as opposed to everyday) emergency of 1975-1977 allowed for the expansion of biopower into

the lives of more and more citizenry, with those refusing to submit excluded from the protection of the Sovereign.

As Gandhi's Congress-party-based emergency regime begin to lose its hold on power early in 1977, it also allowed and even informally sponsored the *establishment* of certain slums, such as the Janata ("People's") Colony in back of Welcome, its residents promised protection by Congress functionaries in the hopes that its residents would support the party in upcoming elections. When Congress was defeated by the short-lived Janata Party, it attempted several times to demolish this new, illegal settlement, even in spite of its own campaign rhetoric condemning Emergency-period clearance measures (Tarlo 2000:61). Like Jagmohan's sudden push for demolitions in the early 1960s, both the sterilization drives and the later sponsorship of vote-bank *juhggis* serve as a reminder of the need to study not only clearance policy, but also the ways in which this policy is used or even *ignored* to gain greater amounts of political capital: "slum removal" is not simply the result of cool, impersonal bureaucracy and by-the-numbers law and order, but is suffused with the human agency of politicians, the police, and the public.

Delhi after the Emergency

The original Delhi Master Plan (MPD-I) was designed to offer guidance through 1981. The second iteration of the plan (MPD-II), however, wasn't approved by the central government until August of 1990, an interval of almost 10 years, during which the Delhi area underwent significant "unbalanced urban expansion" (Nath 1995:2191). In particular, built-up areas appeared along the roads connecting Delhi proper with the satellite towns of Gurgaoin,

Faridabad, and Ghaziabad, and on the Aravali ridge, which MPD-I had designated as a nature

preserve. This period of expansion was in large part the result of a combination of larger-scale

economic shifts in the rest of North India (a "push factor") and the freezing of land by the Delhi

Development Authority, which produced large tracts of undeveloped, unowned land suitable

for squatting (a "pull factor"); one estimate by C. Noronha, secretary of the NCR Planning

Board, shows a greater than seven-fold increase in squatter households in the region since

1961, with the population of such households rising from 40,000 to 300,000 over the thirty year

period between the implementation of the first MPD and the second (Nath 1995:2191).

These *jhuggi* clusters consisted largely of migrants from neighboring Uttar Pradesh, but

also from Bihar, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh, the so-called "Bimaru[9]" states. In 1984, nearly

60 % of the squatter population belonged to scheduled castes of schedule tribes; most worked

as landless laborers or small farmers prior to immigration (Ghose: 1984:1566). 1984 would see

the passage in parliament of a set of key acts, the Delhi Anti-Encroachment Bills, which

ostensibly were purposed to "check the sudden spurt in the growth of unauthorized

construction in Delhi, with growth of unauthorized colonies, encroachment on public streets

(and public land and premises), and conversion of residential complexes into commercial ones"

(Ghose 1984:1564). Critics, however, such as the Jhuggi Jhonpri Nivasi Adhikar Samiti ("Jhuggi

Jhonpri Residents Rights Forum"), which organized a conference on the bills in August of the

same year, saw them as draconian attempts to extend the power of the state by criminalizing

what were previously civil offences. The bills allowed for arrest for "encroachment" by the

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[9] "BIMARU" is an acronym for Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, some of India's least economically developed states; it is also play on the Hindi word *bimar,* which means "sick"

police upon complaint by the MCD or DDA; allowed the DDA to seal any unauthorized construction without giving prior notice of its scheduled demolition; curtailed the rights of appeal, by changing the jurisdiction of hearings by moving them from the purvey of the District Court directly into courts appointed by the central government; and punishments significantly, substituting up to three years in prison for offences previously punishable by fines of Rs. 500 (in particular, "utilizing selling or otherwise dealing with any public land or laying out a public street"), all of which were viewed as disproportionately targeting the poor (Ghose 1984:1565). Such a claim is bolstered by the fact that a 1982 report, issued by the Committee on the Regularisation of Unauthorised Colonies on Government Land in Delhi, again created categories of eligible and ineligible, authorized and unauthorized constructions. In this particular case, 607 unauthorized colonies, significantly built up areas on government land, were regularized, and the illegal colonizers were conferred free-hold rights; the residents of the more 500 jhuggi-jhonpri clusters, however, were not regularized (Ghose 1984:1565). In simple terms, those with the capital at their disposal to significantly develop government-owned lands - and who did so without the consent of the government – were rewarded, while those without the resources to do so were further marginalized. Indeed, in September of 1984, Amiya Rao noted in an article in *Economic and Political Weekly* that

> "The proliferation of showy guest houses, restaurants, nursing homes, abortion centres, garment export ventures, and fancy children's schools – to mention just a few – all for commercial purposes has been going on unchecked in residential areas […] with the knowledge and connivance of the [Delhi Municipal] Corporation and DDA officials […] Interestingly, a large number of these colonies, where the well-to-do have constructed their houses, are being regularized in a hurry, before the bills come into action. It is rather significant that after pulling down a couple of illegally constructed houses in

Khanpur, all demolition work has stopped, and expensive houses – all unauthorized – have been going up every day." (Rao 1984:1563)

Indeed, wrote Rao, the acts were yet another step in the ongoing criminalization and marginalization of the poor by a "land hungry" DDA. This hunger was manifest in a set of demolitions in 1983 and 1984. On July 9 of 1983, 40 people were seriously injured by police and over 400 two-room tenement structures were demolished in Bhagwan Nagar, in an operation supervised by the then lieutenant governor of Delhi himself; the residents, who Rao notes had been paying regular taxes to the MCD, were thrown out without notice, their residences demolished to make room for government work constructing Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar (Rao 1984:1563). In February, "Hundreds of huts were demolished all over Delhi, and people were bundled into trucks and left in a so-called resettlement colony, where there was no shelter or water… families were separated in the process, and those who did not have ration cards were just left in the open." And finally, on May 6, 1984, a small child died in an incident in which over 250 jhuggis [10]were demolished and their residents beaten in pouring rain, prompting the first objection to the rules on record in Parliament (Rao 1984:1564).

The "land-hunger" of the DDA can be explained in a number of ways. One compelling argument, made by Rao, is that the new laws enabled the DDA to engage in increased speculation of property, with "plots deliberately released in small numbers at a time to fetch higher and still higher prices." (Rao 1984:1564). Whatever the ultimate motivations of the DDA, demolitions would continue through the following years. A 1986 article by Bharat Dogra on demolitions in Dairy Wala Bagh, in West Delhi, gives one example of the inefficiencies within

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[10] Here, the term "jhuggi" refers to one individual structure or hutment, part of a *basti* declared a "jhuggi-jhonpri cluster"

the "resettlement" process. *Parchi*s, or paper slips, were given out for resettlement, but only to 80 households out of 121 whose huts were demolished. When the residents arrived at Raghubir Nagar, another JJ cluster at which they were promised resettlement space, they found that the promised land – a mere 12.5 square yards each – was nowhere to be found. Nearly a month after the original demolition, nearly half of those displaced had moved back to the original site, and half had moved to space provided by the government at Khyala village, farther away, in makeshift dwellings of plastic sheeting placed over bricks, slim protection against the elements in the midst of monsoon season (Dogra 1986:1048-1049).

The second – and now third – iterations of the Delhi Master Plan made few changes to overall policy in terms of the management of the urban poor. In reviewing drafts of the Master Plan 2021 (MPD-III, finally passed by Parliament in 2007), Amitabh Kundu notes that "the hue and cry being made about the new plan is basically to create a policy environment which can allow the government, coming into power after the election, to smoothly sail through any legislation or policy that would further restrict entry of the poor… it has strengthened the lobby against the provision of *in situ* tenure for slum dwellers, and not allowing industries in residential areas within the city." (Kundu 2003:3530). A tonal shift is discernable in Kundu's writing on the third master plan, however, in that it addresses not only the effects of the proposed plan on slum-dwellers, but also the effects of the plan on the *physical environment* of the Delhi area. Notes Kundu: "The poor resent shifting to resettlement sites due to economic dislocation and unsatisfactory environmental conditions. The latter do not conform to *domestic and international standards* pertaining to 'right to adequate housing'. The physical conditions in many of the sites turn out to be extremely poor, despite court orders to provide a minimum

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level of amenities. These lead to law and order and health problems in many of the slums

almost on a day-to-day basis." (Kundu 2003: 3531; emphasis added); resettlement has actually

resulted in a drop in living standards.

Occupations and Environments

Environmental science, in combination with elite environmental sensibility, may be the

latest tool in the governing of Delhi and the exclusion of its poor. Emma Mawdsley notes that,

from the early 1990s on, the Indian middle-class has shown an increasing concern with

"pollution and urban squalor", that this concern has increasing effects on the formulation of

policy (Mawsdley 2004). Many of these policies have reflected an idea of the environment as

something diffuse, and owned communally – and indeed, as Awadhendra Sharan notes, "smog

is democratic, and the emerging challenge… of rapid environment changes affects rich and poor

alike" (Sharan 2002:35). Delhi's much-publicized switch of public transport vehicles from diesel

to compressed natural gas is one result of such a sensibility, with (by press accounts) mostly

positive results. But the flipside of a communally owned and managed environment is that the

specific localities where pollution occurs – and where people are most affected – are often lost.

To again quote Sharan, "In other words, there is little acknowledgement that 'the environment'

in the singular splits up into many 'environments' and following from there, spaces need to be

created for community actors to define and prioritize environmental risks for themselves."

(Sharan 2002:35)

A number of examples illustrate the effects which environmental policies may have on

the poor. In 1995, a Supreme Court order relating to pollution of the Ganges directed the

Central Pollution Control Board to issue notices to over 8,000 industries in Delhi which were "non-conforming" according to the MPD-II. The order was followed in 1996 by an order that maintained that "the most vital community need at present is to provide for 'lung spaces' …the totality of the land which is surrendered and dedicated to the community should be used for development of green belts and open spaces" (Delhi Janwadi Adhikar Manch 1996). The dirtiest industries often employed the poor, and with their closure, those residents were forced to move elsewhere, to new, jhuggi clusters elsewhere in the region, often squatting on unoccupied government land and risking further removal. As of 1998, a year and a half after the factory closure, "hardly any factory" paid compensation to their employees as required by the court. In the case of large factories which were shut down, the companies (such as Birla Textiles) stood to make huge gains selling their land to the government; jhuggi residents were not so lucky (EPW 1998:817). An Economic and Political Weekly article from 1998 surveyed the damage done through a series of interviews, which revealed the economic and social consequences of the close. In one case, a man who had worked for Shriram Foods and Fertilisers, a closed factory, for over 20 years at a salary of Rs. 2500 per month (found himself plying a rickshaw for Rs. 50 on "a good day", much less on others; his wife has taken up work hemming blouses for Rs 12-16 a day, a significant decrease in household income (EPW 1998:817). Indeed, the closings seem to have had an especially harsh effect on the women, as seen in this brief interview extract:

> "I do manage to get some bindi work[11]. I take two to four days to complete a gross, and then I get Rs. 2. Before this, I worked in a kothi[12] for Rs. 200. We women had to take up

[11] Literally "dot", bindi here refers to a distinctively South Asia forehead decoration worn by women; some are self-adhesive stickers made of foil or other flexible materials

some work or the other when the factory closed. It is very hard, with so much housework, children… but what can we do. My husband is unable to earn money, someone has to work. My husband does not know housework. If somebody could look after the house and children, I would be able to earn something." (EPW 1998:817)

With the decrease in income, workers of closed factories are pushed into less stable accommodations, often on public land. "In Amar Park", EPW reports, "we met families of contract workers who had been rendered homeless and were living in the open. They said they could not again construct jhuggis in the same place because whatever construction material they procure is forcibly removed by goons of the land mafia… This is yet another stretch of railway land where a petrol pump owner has removed the jhuggis for his own construction." (EPW 1998:818).

If one element of bourgeois environmental sensibility can be said to be its orientation towards environmental harm as diffuse, another might be its insistence that environment can be commoditized and tied to specific places. One trend, in India as in the rest of the world, is the creation of greenspace surrounding new developments. In crowded Delhi, however, parks are ideal locations for squatter communities, and the clash between desires for environmental purity and the desire to simply have a roof over ones head can have disastrous consequences, as one particularly tragic 1995 event reveals. 18 year old Dilip had travelled to Delhi for republic day celebrations, and was staying with relatives in Shaheed Sukhdev Nagarm, a basti adjoining the "well-to-do" colony of Ashok Vihar (Baviskar 2002). A local resident spotted him in the park adjoining the colony, using the space to relieve himself, and called over two constables of the

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[12] "bungalow" or large house, but also a storehouse

Delhi police force. What happened next was a violent eruption of class tensions: "Dilip was

beaten, kicked, and forced to run around and squat… he collapsed and died on the spot." (EPW

1995). When police refused to allow for the removal of the body, a riot erupted, with police fire

resulting in four additional deaths, all residents of the jhuggi cluster (EPW 1995:862). The

incident raises serious questions, not only about planning priorities, but also about anti-poor

bias in the application of force.

What is perhaps most tragic is that the factories in which the poor work – and which are

shut down to appease middle-class environmental concerns – are perhaps most dangerous to

their own workers, as studies such as Dunu Roy's (2000) have shown. Indeed, what may be the

most troubling element of both the factory closures and incidents like the 1995 beating is not

that pollution has been recognized as harmful element, but rather that it has been associated

as a trait *of* the poor rather than a force which acts *upon* them. If the Supreme Court is willing

to act by closing down polluting factories – and perhaps they should – they should do so with

the motives and livelihoods of all actors involved in mind, and should be prepared to provide

compensation to those who, far from polluters themselves, are most affected by dirty industry.

The fact that the products manufactured in these industries by the poor are rarely consumed by

them, and instead destined for the purposes of capital or the consumption of higher social

classes, only underscores this profound injustice. In Amita Baviskar's words, "The quarry

workers, metal workers, glass manufacturers, small-scale dyers and printers and others who

make possible the myriad steps of industrial processing are trapped in low wage, hazardous

work. Yet cleaning up these industries in many cases requires a move to more capital intensive

technologies that would render the poor jobless. How does one re-concile these conflicting

concerns? Environmentalists in India need to examine more closely the complicated, and often contradictory, connections between ecology and equity." (Baviskar 2002)

From Survey to Demolition in the Pushta

Demolitions continued through the 2000s, with the Yamuna Pushta demolitions being particularly notorious. The Pushta demolitions occurred at a time when a number of political interests converged: the desire of the Tourism Ministry of the Government of India to develop land on the banks of the Yamuna into a promenade suitable for tourists and the Government of the state of Delhi and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi's push to "clean up" the city. In the early 2000s, state and local governments in the national capital region found themselves on the losing end of a number of injunctions delivered by the Supreme Court, which had begun aggressively ruling against perceived threats to environment and heritage. The role of community groups must also be taken into account, as it was citizens' organizations which often lobbied the court for stricter controls; since market reforms began in the early 1990s, India's middle-class had emerged as a potent political force, and the rise of what Amita Baviskar refers to as 'bourgeois environmentalism' (Baviskar 2003; Mawdsley 2004) in India had led to the formation of various environmental interest groups from this new bourgeoisie, who had petitioned the Supreme Court to control the pollution of the Yamuna by removing slums and "dirty" industry. Ironically, these petitions utilized the same Public Interest Litigation techniques which during the 1980s were used to defend the rights of squatters to land and fight against forced eviction.

In 2004, when the redevelopment plan for the Western bank of the Yamuna was unveiled, the area was home to approximately 35,000 households (or 150,000 people), who occupied a string of informal settlements. The oldest residents were farmers engaged in vegetable growing on the river bed, though these were much fewer in number than more recent arrivals, who worked as daily wage laborers, working as "head loaders, rickshaw pullers, domestic workers, hand-cart pullers, and rag pickers", with a large number of workers in construction trades who had been brought to Delhi to aid in the construction of various projects relating to the 1982 Asian Games (Menon-Sen & Bhan 2008:2). Unlike other *bastis* in Delhi, the population of the Pushta was predominantly Muslim, about 70% (Menon-Sen & Bhan 2008:2). The period leading up to and including the demolitions was one in which the government of India as controlled by the Hindu Nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and 2004 was an election year; the BJP did its best to paint the Muslim residents of the Pushta as illegal Bangladeshi migrants and petty criminals (Menon-Sen & Bhan 2008:3), painting those opposing evictions as Congress-party affiliates defending a perceived threat to the nation itself. This was reminiscent of eviction drives in the 1990s, especially "Operation Pushback", in which previously-tolerated Bangladeshi migrants were evicted by Congress under political pressure from the *Sangh Parivar* (Hindu right), which campaigned for their removals using slogans such as "Infiltrators, Quit India!" to portray such migrants as a fifth-column within the state (Ramachandran 2003). Many of the residents were also portrayed as creating pollution due to "dirty" occupations like sweeping, rag-picking, and recycling, though paradoxically in the absence of a formal, extensive garbage collection

infrastructure throughout much of Delhi, these workers in fact provided services essential to keeping the surrounding area clean (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:3).

The evictions themselves took place in February and April of 2004, in several day-long operations following a legal battle between citizens groups, NGOs and the MCD. The demolition drive was overseen by Jagmohan, notorious for engineering Emergency-era demolitions, and then Minister for Culture and Tourism. Jagmohan was a staunch opponent of in-situ upgradation, which he saw as playing in to political interests who used bastis as a "vote block", and "a vocal advocate of resettlement, claiming that it gave people the chance for a decent life and access to facilities they would otherwise lack" (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:7). Under his command was a contingent of armed police – many of whom were not from Delhi but rather from neighbouring Uttar Pradesh - who made their presence felt in the Pushta not only by escorting the MCD teams but also by deploying themselves around the slums weeks before the demolition in a show of force that contributed to an "atmosphere of uncertainty and terror that pervaded Pushta in the final days before the demolition" (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:7). A master of Orwellian public relations, Jagmohan sought to portray the Pushta demolitions as performed with the consent of residents by referring to them in the press as part of a "voluntary relocation program"; the police worked to provide evidence supporting this claim by sending video teams along with officers as they informed residents of their impending eviction and recording these residents as they demolished their own homes and salvaged their belongings under tarpaulins. In a post-demolition interview, a number of residents reported that they were told by the *pradhan* (settlement leader) that the demolitions would not happen, as he had filed a case against the government, even going so far as to collect Rs 500

(approximately $12) from families to cover expenses. Some residents, unwilling to leave their homes, and convinced that the demolitions would not occur so long as protests continued, were caught completely unprepared when the bulldozers arrived and the *pradhan* returned to tell them he had "lost the case", with shocked residents rushing home from their jobs only to be beaten and chased away by the police (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:11). Five died during the course of the demolitions, including two by falling bricks as the deceased were dismantling their own homes; in the latter cases, the police obtained statements from the families of the deceased attesting that the deaths were "accidental and not due to police action" (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:9) The evictions also had a tremendous psychological impact, leading to at least two suicides, including that of 20 year old Raju, who "became silent and depressed when the notices for demolition were pasted on the walls of his jhuggi [and] hung himself from the roof while the rest of the family was sitting outside trying to decide what to do"; in a demonstration of the gendered effects of demolition, one unnamed woman killed herself when she discovered that demolition would leave her unable pay for her daughter's wedding celebrations, the responsibility of the bride's family (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:9). An interview of Pushta resident Jamaat Ali (whose family had been in the Pushta "since the time of Nehru") illustrates the chaos and confusion of the demolition itself:

> "He says that the *basti pradhan* [leader], accompanied by policemen, went through the *basti* asking people to leave. By then, the demolitions had already started and bulldozers were rolling in from both sides of their lane. His family could not save any of their possessions – they ran out with the children and just the clothes they were wearing and watched from the bridge as their house, with its indoor toilet and kitchen, was reduced to rubble. All their documents were lost." (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:11)

That Ali's documents were lost would prove especially unfortunate, as he was unable to attain a plot at the Bawana resettlement colony to which he was relocated; lacking proper shelter, his grand-daughter fell ill with dehydration and heat stroke and died (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:11). As would be the case of later resettlements (such as that of Savda-Ghevra), eligibility for a plot depended upon being able to present proper documents (ration cards[13] or voter identity cards) to the authorities which identified the resident as having held a plot of since before 1998. Complicating the picture was the fire-prone nature of jhuggi settlements and the nature of dating on ration cards, which was based on *date of issue,* effectively meaning that the date borne on any individual card reflected its most *recent* issue rather than issue of an original to a given cardholder; as a result, those who had lost cards since 1999 bore cards that showed them as ineligible for plots. The Delhi Development Authority's survey of the Pushta showed only 16,000 out of 35,000 housing as "genuine claimants", and the Hazards Center NGO (using figures from the Census and the DDA as well their own estimates) reported that only 6,000 out of an estimated 27,000, or under 25%, were resettled (Gautam and Bhan 2008). Though both numbers are evidence of remarkable exclusion, the gap between them is quite telling: the plots allocated to the resettled were not free, and at Rs 5,000-7,000 ($125-$175) each, many of those who were technically eligible for resettlement were nevertheless priced out of the scheme (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:12). Those who were ineligible would find themselves squatting yet again, as well as facing other consequences as a result of absent or "improper" documentation, as the next chapter explains.

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[13] Ration cards enable Indians to attain "essential commodities" such as grains, sugar, and kerosene at subsidized prices from fixed-rate "fair price" shops participating in the government's Public Distribution Scheme; those below the official poverty line are issued special "BPL" cards entitling them to larger subsidies. They are also essential identity proofs.

III. Legibility, Eligibility, and Exclusion

If the second chapter of this thesis presented an account of migrations in and resettlements around the city, and the ways in which populations are segregated by class, this chapter can be thought of as revisiting similar ground through a different lens. Rather than focusing on where people are placed and how they are managed (a theme to which we will return in the final chapter), I instead concentrate here on those people who are utterly *excluded* from development plans, whose lives and histories are pushed outside of the realm of the state's care. Here the disenfranchised struggle not to break free of power, but to be acknowledged by it, in a state where the fragmentation of governance under neoliberalism has "opened the seam between sovereignty and citizenship... generating successive degrees of insecurity for low-skilled citizens and migrants who will have to look beyond the state for the safeguarding of their rights" (Ong 2006:19), through the generation of what Aihwa Ong calls "graduated citizenship"; this process is visible by following the idea of the citizen through subsequent decisions of the Supreme Court of India.

Foundations of state responsibility: the "right to life" and "right to shelter"

The Indian government's attitude toward the urban poor from the 1980s (following the record demolitions of the emergency) is reflected in a set of court cases relating to nuisance laws, which articulated the responsibility of the state to maintain proper infrastructure to serve the poor, and laws relating to encroachment and housing, which stipulated resettlement requirements in cases of demolition (Ghertner 2008). The first type of case is exemplified by *Ratlam Municipal Corporation v. Vardicharan and Ors.,* in which the magistrate held that it was

the government, not the poor, which were responsible for providing basic services such as sanitation (in this particular case, drainage), and that criminal nuisance suits against the state might be used as a primary mechanism to ensure "that municipal bodies carry out their duty to provide clean and safe environments for city residents"(Ghertner 2008: 59), most particularly the poor.

Civil cases involving eviction and housing would, for a time, follow the contours of the nuisance rulings and place a greater burden on governments rather than citizens. In 1985, after a 4 year legal battle, the Supreme Court of India laid down a precedent for housing the poor that would shape resettlement policy for the next decade. The case, *Olga Tellis v Bombay Municipal Corporation*, was brought under new Public Interest Litigation (PIL) rules that allowed for the nation's poor to more easily access the courts, permitting advocacy groups who would otherwise not have had a direct interest in a case (*locus standi*) to bring petitions to the courts in the service of the larger society; these rules were instituted in large part as a reaction to the perceived excesses of the Emergency period. This particular case pit pavement dwellers and residents of *bastis* built on government land against the municipal government of Bombay, which was seeking to evict these residents for "encroaching" on streets and footpaths. Drawing on the language of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution which guaranteed a right to life, the court found that:

> "[the petitioners] do not contend that they have a right to live on the pavements. Their contention is that they have a right to live, *a right which cannot be exercised without the means of livelihood.* They have no option but to flock to big cities like Bombay, which provide the means of bare subsistence. They only choose a pavement or a slum which is nearest to their place of work. In a word, their plea is that the right to life is illusory without a right to the protection of the means by which alone life can be Lived. And, the right to life can only be taken away or abridged by a procedure established by law,

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which has to be fair and reasonable, not fanciful or arbitrary such as is prescribed by the Bombay Municipal Corporation Act or the Bombay Police Act." (Tellis v BMC; emphasis added)

Here, following a definition of "rights" that resembles Amartya Sen's (1985) "capabilities", the court ruled that with impoverished conditions in rural Indian are depriving citizens of the income and work, the "encroachers" of Mumbai were left with no other option but to migrate to cities. The court elaborated on the language of Article 21 ("No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law"), writing that

> "That which alone makes it possible to live, leave aside what makes life livable, must be deemed to be an integral component of the right to life. Deprive a person of his right to livelihood and you shall have deprived him of his life. Indeed, that explains the massive migration of the rural population to big cities. They migrate because they have no means of livelihood in the villages." (Tellis v BMC)

The court did *not* rule that pavement dwellers had a right to encroachment, however, as their primary concern was with the role of the government in providing basic services. In the conclusion of their judgment, the judges wrote "we hold that no person has the right to encroach, by erecting a structure or otherwise, on footpaths, pavements or any other place reserved or ear-marked for a public purpose" (Tellis v BMC); rather, they held that any individual *must* be granted alternative accommodation, and that any granted accommodation must not disrupt the right to livelihood of the aggrieved. Even here, however, the court held that households should allotted plots in separate classes according to whether or not they were censused and were carrying voter identity cards – legibility was a key requirement of eligibility.

Eight years later, in *Unni Krishnan and Others v. Andhra Pradesh* (1993)*,* a case which

affirmed the right to public education for all, the Supreme Court further elaborated on life and

livelihood, writing that:

> "[the] right to live with human dignity and all that goes along with it viz., the bare
> necessities of life such as adequate nutrition, clothing and shelter and facilities for
> reading, writing and expressing oneself in diverse forms, freely moving about and mixing
> and commingling with fellow human beings." (Unni Krishnan et al. v. AP)

Beyond this finding, *Unni Krishnan* was significant in that it found that the definition of

"essential rights" could be extended beyond those rights guaranteed in Section 3 of the

Constitution ("fundamental rights") to include those found in Section 4 ("Directive Principles"),

including Article 21. This would appear to strengthen any subsequent petitioners claim that the

right to livelihood is inalienable, further finding that

> "the magnitude and content of the components of this right would depend upon the
> extent of the economic development of the country, but it must, in any view of the
> matter, include the right to the basic necessities of life and also the right to carry on
> such functions and activities as constitute the bare minimum expression of the human-
> self" (Unni Krishnan v AP).

The precedents set by *Ratlam, Tellis,* and *Unni Krishnan* ensured that the government

shouldered the responsibility in matters involving the poor, even when middle-class interests

were at stake. Ghertner (2008) cites *K K Manchanda vs the Union of India* (1992) as a classic

example of the ways in which lawsuits against basti-dwellers were constrained. Here, the

residents of Ashok Vihar, in North Delhi, brought a case to the Delhi High Court time insisting

that the "unsanitary" actions of residents of a nearby basti were causing a nuisance to the

planned community. Using language similar to that which animated the complaints against the

Bombay Municipal Corporation in Tellis, the petitioners in *Manchandra* argued that the

"squalid conditions" of the nearby *jhuggis*

> "made the lives of the [colony] residents 'miserable' and 'transgressed their very right to living' because 'thousand of people easing themselves pose such uncultured scene, because no young girls can dare to come to their own balconies throughout the day [because] obnoxious odors pollute the atmosphere [,thus] the entire environment is unconducive to public health and morality (sic)" (Ghertner 2008: 60)

The petition clearly pits the residents of Ashok Vihar against the nearby *jhuggis*, though the

complaint is aimed not at the residents themselves, but at the Delhi Development Authority,

which was ordered to resolve the situation by building a community toilet and developing the

vacant land into a park, walled off from the hutments. (This is the very same Ashok Vihar

where, only three years later, basti resident Dilip was beaten to death by a mob following his

defecation in the newly-created park, as discussed in chapter 2).

From state charge to citizen responsibility

By the year 2000, however, a marked shift had occurred in the judiciary regarding the

placement of responsibility. In *Almitra Patel v Union of India,* a nuisance case centered on the

municipal waste generated in Delhi, the court chided the authorities not for failing to provide

sanitation services to basti residents, but rather for failing to stem the growth of slums, writing

that

> "the promise of free land, at the taxpayers cost, in place of a jhuggi, is a proposal which attracts more land grabbers. Rewarding an encroacher on public land with free alternate site is like giving a reward to a pickpocket. The department of slum clearance does not seem to have cleared any slum despite it's being in existence for decades. In fact more and more slums are coming into existence. Instead of 'Slum Clearance' there is 'Slum Creation' in Delhi. This in turn gives rise to domestic waste being strewn on open land in and around the slums. This can best be controlled at least, in the first instance, by preventing the growth of slums. The authorities must realise that there is a limit to which the population of a city can be increased, without enlarging it's size. In other words the density of population per square kilometer cannot be

allowed to increase beyond the sustainable limit. Creation of slums resulting in increase in density has to be prevented. " (Almitra Patel v Union of India)

Ghertner (2008) sees this judgment as a turning point, shifting blame to *jhuggi* residents themselves, though it is still the government which bears responsibility for their removal. But the case is also notable for a change in the conceptions of *scale* in the problem of "slum creation." *Olga Tellis v. Bombay* held that the ultimate source of slums was rural poverty and that it was the responsibility of the Indian government generally (and Bombay's government specifically) to care for the impoverished. *Patel* reveals an increased fragmentation of state duties, and rather than suggest that the DDA take on a pastoral duty to care for migrants from other states instead directs them to look after the welfare of those already *in* Delhi, and included in the Master Plan. On one hand, *Patel*'s judgment can be read as calling for disciplinary intervention to enable the implementation of master plans through the enforcement of norms by police action. The court writes, for example, that "Up til now no action has been taken against people who spread litter. Discipline amongst people in this behalf has to be inculcated and the guilty punished", with the costs of cleanup falling not on the state but on transgressing individuals themselves, to be recovered "on the spot" (Patel v Union of India). But by separating the duty of the DDA to develop the NCT from that of the Union of India's duty to guarantee life and livelihood, the decision also lays the groundwork for the exclusion of the poor by way of the suspension of constitutionally citizenship rights, previous guaranteed by Sovereign authority.

Following *Patel*, the Delhi High Court issued a series of judgments in the *Pitampura Sudhar Samiti* and *K K Manchandra* cases which provided further precedent for using nuisance laws to justify the demolition of informal settlements; in the *Pitampura* judgment, the court wrote that "No doubt, shelter for every citizen is an imperative of any good government, but there are

cleaner ways to achieve that goal than converting public property into slum lords' illegal

estates" (Ghertner 2008: 62), even as "cleanliness" continued to be ill-defined within case law.

The shift in the legal terrain was not simply one of judges becoming more "anti-poor", but of

the use of a new set of legal mechanisms – nuisance law – to bypass the constitutional

protections affirmed by early courts, redefining the relationship between those courts and the

poor. If the courts of the 1980s were concerned with making sure that cities understood their

responsibility towards the poor as a *national* problem in need of broad-based solutions, the

courts of the early 21st century have been much more concerned with directing municipalities

towards caring for the needs of their *own* citizens on a much smaller scale. One effect of this, as

I argue below, is that the Delhi government was able to exclude ever more citizens by

questioning their residence and their rights to justice within the city.

Nangla Manchi

"A cooling river and a pair of hissing serpents flank Nangla Maanchi. The river is the
Yamuna. The serpents are the two wide lanes of the Ring Road with their speeding
traffic. Even strangers clasp each others' hands to navigate the ring Road" – "The last
stanza of a poem", Trickster City (2010)

The *basti* of Nangla Manchi was situated at the crossroads of Delhi's Outer Ring Road, a

major artery, and the road to NOIDA[14], a planned city on the opposite side of the river Yamuna,

and was adjacent to a local power plant owned by the Indraprastha Gas Corporation Limited

(IPGCL). The land was allotted by the Delhi Development Authority to the utility for the

purposes of ash disposal in 1977, with the stipulation that no structures be built upon it and

that the ash be contained by a bundh (walled enclosure) to keep it from drifting about the area.

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[14] NOIDA (sometimes just "Noida") is an acronym for New Okhla Industrial Area

According to the *Hemraj* commission, the colony had been constructed over a period of some

20 years, beginning on land used for fly-ash disposal by the Delhi Electric Supply Utility (DESU),

which owned the plant prior to the IPGCL; early residents recollected that the land "was

ashen… it was infertile. There was nothing but ash all around. When we ate, ash would go into

our mouths." (Nagar 2010:146). The DDA's own records showed that notice was given to DESU

in 1990, reminding the utility of its "responsibility to ensure protection of and from

encroachment" and noting that several *jhuggis* had come up on the property. DESU was

advised to contact the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, which might provide suitable

resettlement sites. This action was taken four years later, when the Slum and JJ Department of

the MCD requested that the DDA pay "relocation charges of Rs. 32,77,000 for 113 eligible

jhuggi-dwellers"; the DDA redirected the MCD to bill DESU instead, having already advised the

utility that the DDA would not be responsible for any fees incurred due to the violation of the

terms of the original land agreement. But DESU refused to pay the fees, arguing that the vast

majority of encroachments had come up much more recently than claimed by residents,

initially taking place "consequent on clearance of certain jhuggies from Pragati Maidan area by

DDA in the year 1990 and of some jhuggis from the [New Delhi Municipal Corporation] area in

1993," and that the cost of clearing the site should therefore have been borne by those

agencies rather than DESU. The result of the protracted battle over costs was the proliferation

of more and more structures, as the table below shows:

Survey	*Jhuggis* reported
October 31, 1990, prepared by the Food and Supply Department	199
September 1993, prepared by MCD Slum and JJ Department / DESU	1058
March 31, 1994, prepared by MCD Slum and JJ Department	1160
July 2005, prepared by MCD Slum and JJ Department and IPGCL	2808

Source: Report of Commissioner of Slum and JJ Department (MCD), in *Hemraj v. Comm of Police*

After perusing the reports prepared by the MCD, DDA, and NDMC, the court in *Hemraj*

concluded that *regardless of responsibility for recovering costs*, the Commissioner of Police had

a duty to clear the land, which IPGCL was seeking to redevelop into a power plant. On April 5th,

the court ruled that "it is clear that these persons have no legal right to occupy the land in

question, they should be removed, and if they are entitled for any relocation, then that

entitlement will be seen by the authority concerned. However, **the removal will not wait for**

the relocation." (Hemraj v. Comm. of Police, emphasis added). The final order went out on April

5th, 2006; not a single resident had appeared before the court.

"Nobody forced you to come to Delhi"

Following the *Hemraj* decision, advocate Prashant Bhushan organized a PIL case against

demolition, *Rattan and Ors. v. Comm. of Police*. In his petition, Bhushan wrote:

> "That the Petitioners and also other similarly placed people of Nangla Machi do not have any
> other alternative place to live in Delhi as neither they own any land nor they can afford any
> rented accommodation in Delhi. All of them shifted to Delhi in search of their livelihood as there
> were no work opportunities in their respective native villages and now, the demolition of their
> jhuggis with no hope for any resettlement will leave them with no shelter. It is submitted that
> they have got the *constitutional right* and moreover, they are *fully covered under the
> resettlement policy of their very own government*. However, no authority is coming to the
> rescue of poor people of Nagla Machi as all of them are shirking responsibility of their relocation
> on another department." (Rattan and Ors. v. Comm of Police; emphasis added)

Bhushan's appeal cited *Tellis v Bombay* as precedent, as well as noting the government's

constitutional obligations under international human rights law. To support his claims of

constitutional protection, he referenced the poverty of the residents, claiming in language

remarkably similar to the conclusion of *Tellis* that

> "most of the residents of the said slum are mainly landless dalit laborers, who have come to
> Delhi from states like Bihar, U.P. in search of their livelihoods as neither they were having lands
> on which their family could survive nor there were any work opportunity in their respective
> villages. Now in Delhi, most of them are earning their livelihood as daily wage workers, rickshaw
> pullers, gardeners, street vendors etc. Thus, they are very poor, earning Rs. 2000-3000 per

month, and they have to run a family comprising, on an average, of five members on such meager income. Further, in these conditions, they just cannot afford any house or room on rent in a city like Delhi and have no option but to live in jhuggi clusters." (Rattan and Ors. v. Comm of Police)

The Supreme Court of 2006, however, was not the Supreme Court of 1985, and in a response dated May 10th stated of the petitioners that "Nobody forced you to come to Delhi. Is there a right to live in Delhi only? Stay where you can. If encroachments on public land are to be allowed, there will be anarchy" (Mahapatra 2006), and that desperation was no excuse for illegal encroachment. The court also failed to request a stay on account of the scorching heat of a Delhi summer, as requested by Bhushan, noting "in India, we have three weather conditions - heat, rain and winter. If we accept your argument, there will never be an appropriate time to demolish illegal structures standing on public land." (Mahapatra 2006). Upholding *Hemraj*, and in the face of over 400 residence proofs collected by the plaintiffs, the court ruled that those removed would be resettled when land became available for them – provided they had valid proof of pre-1998 residence - and that demolition would not wait.

Removals and exclusions

 "Our elders say that paper boats are flimsy, that they do not endure. But today, paper boats are all that one needs to sail across the stormiest seas; a paper boat is firm support. We are not recognized by our faces alone. We are asked to prove our identity at every step; we are frisked to ascertain who we are, at different turns in the city and at the different crossroads of our lives. If this search does not yield our documents, we are labeled 'unknown'. When our surroundings turn unstable it is for these carriers of certainty of recognition that we begin to search."
– Shamsher Ali, "Vanished in the smoke", in Trickster City (2010)

The demolitions took place over many months; by the fall of 2006, little remained of the once vibrant community. The residents were moved to Savda-Ghevra a new resettlement colony over 30km away on the far edges of the city. Ankur, which worked in Nangla Manchi for 10 years, gathering stories, running support groups, moved with them, assisting residents by

attempting to provision necessities as well as carrying community records. "The process and decision of demolition were equally harsh", one worker told me. "They didn't even provide any food for residents who were made to sit all day in the hot sun, because of bureaucratic apathy and lack of concern. At least a Gurudwara could have been contacted [by the authorities] to provide." The residents arrived at their new plots on buses packed with evictees and the precious few possessions they could carry, unloaded onto bare ground. Those who had proof of residency at Nangla Manchi and who had paid the applicable fees for a lease were given metal tokens listing a plot number; over time, using materials purchased by residents themselves, these meter plots would give rise to brick and clay houses. The size of the plots was determined by the length of residence at Nangla: for those who had been in the original basti since before 1990, 18 square meter plots were given; those who presented proof of residence dated between 1990 and 1998 were given plots measuring 12.5 meters square. The hardships and victories of these residents are the subject of the final chapter of this thesis. Here, however, I am concerned with a third class of residents, rendered invisible in the survey process: the so called "P-98s". Their residences are unmistakable on entry into Savda-Ghevra: makeshift structures of corrugated metal and wood, tarps hung over wood poles, doors and walls creatively fashioned out of any material available, standing in stark contrast to the sturdier homes of "eligible" residents; and even these improvised dwellings are in constant peril, built with no authorization on land earmarked for future construction at the colony.

The plotless are those left out of allocations based on the 2005 survey conducted by the Slum and JJ Wing of the MCD, which produced the figures on the following page:

Structure category	Number of units surveyed	Percentage of total
Identity and ration cards dated until 1990	37	1.32%
Identity card of 1990 and election card up until 1998	6	0.21%
Only identity card of 1990 or earlier	7	0.25%
Type A, 18 square meter plot eligible	**50**	**1.78%**
Election Identity and ration cards dated until Dec. 1998	874	31.13%
Type B, 12.5 square meter plot eligible	**874**	**31.13%**
No documents shown	805	28.67%
Ration card / election identity card post 1998	730	26.00%
Locked	211	7.51%
Probable residences, ineligible	**1746**	**62.18%**
Nobody residing / *jhuggis* with no gate or roof	21	0.75%
Ex. Commercial	103	3.67%
Other, incl. Masjid, Madrasa, Church, Dispensary, NGO office, bathroom, and dargah[15]	14	0.50%
Probable non-residence total	**138**	**4.91%**
Grand Total	**2808**	**100%**

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[15] *Masjid* is an Urdu word for "mosque"; Madrasas are religious schools, and a *dargah* is a shrine, often associated with Sufi saints

Even if one accepts that all the structures marked "commercial" are in fact not dual-use shops / residences, the number of residences marked as ineligible is remarkable, at 62%. The number of eligible residences of *both* categories is 924, lower than the 1994 survey result of 1160. Assuming even growth between the 1994 survey and the 2005 survey, one would expect to see approximately 183 residents added to the *basti* each year, bringing the 1998 total to around 1800 residents, almost twice that listed by the survey. Of course, even this growth estimate is very rough, and entirely speculative, as there is no data on actual trends in the 9 year span between surveys. However, the city-wide estimate I have cited on page 42 of this may provide some guidance here: between 1990 and 1997, the number of *jhuggi* households in the city proper actually more than double, going from 259,000 to 600,000, and while the resolution of this data is indeed still quite low, it does point to rapid settlement growth during that period, followed by a marked decline in the years 1997-2001; if the trends in the city proper are applicable to Nangla Manchi, one would indeed have expected even higher growth than 183 residents / year in the 1990-97 period.

One clue as to the source of the discrepancy comes from the categories utilized for *ineligible* citizens, and the way in which they relate to the conducting of surveys in Delhi. In a report prepared by the Center for Civil Society, researchers noted that

> "…at the Savda Ghevra resettlement colony, residents talked about the manner in which the MCD goes about conducting the survey to determine who is eligible for a plot at the time of resettlement: two or three weeks prior to eviction and demolition, the agency announces the date on which this survey is to be held. It is only conducted once. Residents of Savda Gevra talked about how many people missed this survey, and therefore, were not allotted a plot, even if they were eligible for a plot, having been a resident of the slum colony prior to December 1998." (Joseph and Goodman 2008:15)

With surveys conducted during the day, household heads may be absent, and, given such short notice, unable to secure proper documentation before survey time[16]. That the survey happens only *once* creates a "demolish first, reconcile later" policy, rendering many residents plotless. The "missing householders" theory does go some way in explaining *how* residents missed surveys. The why, however, is more complicated, and reflects the ways in which changing perceptions of the poor and the government's responsibility towards them influences "rational" means of governing, such as the survey.

Space, Power, and Citizenship

Surveys are but one technique in a larger set used by states in the creation of modern citizens-as-subjects, though they are an important one, an aspect of what Michel Foucault (2000) has called *governmentality*. To describe this concept, it is helpful to trace the history of Foucault`s thoughts on discourse, power, and the body. Moving through his early writings in *Discipline and Punish* (1995 [1975]) and on to his later lectures, one finds three conceptions of power: sovereign power, disciplinary power, and governmentality – not separate and exclusive, but rather functioning as interlocking components of specific, historically contingent regimes (Legg 2007; Hussain 2003). In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault discusses a shift from an emphasis on the power of the *sovereign* to a kind of *disciplinary* power. Here, the realm of the sovereign is the domain in which life, death, and living fall under the purview of a superlative entity, in which certain individuals are marked as entitled to the protection (and duties, such as taxation and compulsory service) of citizenship. An "intensely territorial concept", Sovereignty entails

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[16] In response to this, one of Ankur's undertakings in both *bastis* and resettlement colonies is to make photocopies of ration cards / i-cards and store them in a central location

borders and the separation of the citizen from the interloper (Legg 2007:4). In recent years,

Agamben (1998) and others have used the concept to analyze the ways in which victims of

state violence are marked as beyond this "protection", as "bare life", though Ong has point out

that exclusion by sovereign power is much more complex than any "protected citizen" / "bare

life" binary (2006:24-25). The second operation of power, or *Disciplinary* power, works through

the realm of surveillance and policing. In more subtle ways, it also refers to the way in which

individual conduct is regulated and norms are internalized, power which works through the

setting of timetables, the ordering of queues and seating-arrangements, through action and

repetition, conduct instilled through the intimation that the individual is within the "gaze" of

authority; Foucault's most famous example uses Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon as a metaphor

for the functioning of disciplinary power in everyday life, with the modern-citizen functioning

under the presumptive gaze of an (internalized) all-seeing eye, structuring behaviour (Foucault

1995). Disciplinary power also works alongside sovereign power, as the historical state "took up

mechanisms of discipline and used them in conjunction with the objectives of sovereign power"

(Legg 2007:8), so instilling particular types of behaviour representative of citizenship and using

policing and surveillance as a means to deter behaviour threatening to the legitimacy of the

state.

But it is a third conception of power – first appearing in Foucault's lectures on *Security,*

Territory, Population in 1978 – that is perhaps most visible in city plans and snapshots of urban

areas. This concept – "governmentality" – is the unique result of technologies of social

measurement and control developed during the 18th and 19th centuries, the culmination of

Enlightenment ideals of rational and scientific control of states. Governmentality can perhaps

be rephrased in other terms as "regulatory power", though the specific domain of regulation is that of *populations*; if the sovereign outlines the territory which the state controls and disciplinary power represents the way in which this control is impressed upon individual bodies, governmental power sits on a scale in between, assessing the spaces and individuals within the boundaries of the state (Foucault 2000; Legg 2007; Rao 2010). This is the realm of the census, the survey, the master plan, the proliferation of the many bureaucracies and agencies charged with measurement and planning. These two functions are interlinked: surveys help to establish baselines and highlight targets for intervention, and the implantation of plans and policies builds upon this data, attempting to "improve" populations (cf. Li 2007), to bring them more in line with the state ideas of "modern" citizenship. Indeed, governmentality can be seen as generating for the sovereign categories beyond "citizen" and "non-citizen", establishing *hierarchies* of citizenship, based on various characteristics including appearance, birth, skills, and capital, and the protection of individual subjects is negotiated amongst the plethora of bureaucracies that exist, within the multiple levels of "governance" - informing, for example, the ways in which squatters are marked as with or without rights to land and livelihood within the sometimes contradictory domains of national, regional, and local policy.

Where the disciplinary acts upon bodies by orienting specific individual dispositions towards behavior, regulatory power / governmentality directs *processes*, through such things as market controls, ownership restrictions, public health initiatives, and so on. The two are interrelated but sometimes come into contest with one another, as disciplinary schemes may prove expensive and interfere with growth, or the ravages of the free market may "cause social disruption" (Legg 2007:11). But most importantly for the purposes of this thesis, surveys

	Sovereignty	Governmentality	Discipline
In brief:	The traditional power of the King (in *Discipline and Punish*), which determines the boundaries of the domain of the state; ultimate source of legitimate use of violent force	Concerned with the management of *populations and processes*, with survey and measurement; bureaucratic, intent on discovering norms for optimal functioning of society. Works through macro-level processes such as public health, market controls, and urban planning. The *conduct of conduct,* in Foucault's own words.	"Micropolitics" and capillary power, working on and through *individuals*; instillation of norms through regulation of bodily practices,
Relation to citizenship	Ultimately confers the legal rights, responsibilities, and protections of the state.	Produces **legible** citizens; defines what individuals **must** do	Enforces / instills what individuals must **not** do
Spatialized / Materialized	Borders, hierarchies, divisions of space	Registries, maps, surveys, identity cards, deeds.	Patrol routes, zones of electronic surveillance, inculcation of bodily habits

Table: Power, after Foucault (cf. Foucault 1990, 1995 and 2000; Legg 2007; Rao 2010)

and plans make citizens *legible*, allowing them to be tracked and account for, through the

production of identification cards, the assignment of title deeds, the creation of voter registries,

and so forth.

The governmental furnishes the state with ability to intervene in the lives of individuals,

through public health, education, rationing of food, and political mobilization. While the

categories and measurement systems devised as tools of governance may be discursive,

records and ID cards have a profoundly material dimension as well (cf Hull 2008). As James

Scott observes, governmental power produces citizens who are legible not just to state violence, but also to a wide range of more benign interventions; remarking on mapmaking and censuses during occupation of the Netherlands by Nazi Germany, he remarks that "legibility… amplifies the capacity of the state for discriminating interventions – a capacity that in principle could as easily been deployed to feed the Jews as to deport them." (Scott 1998:78). In the case of India, the schemes that seek to move and concentrate squatters rely on the same sort of apparatuses and documentation used for social projects such as ration schemes. What is most troubling about resettlement in the National Capital Region is the way that some groups of people have their legibility (and legitimacy) *questioned* and rights denied on account of their being *illegible* (and thus ineligible), as was the case of the "P-98s" of Savda-Ghevra.

What seems to have occurred in the Delhi case is a reconfiguration of the categories used in surveys, and the assay methods used to fill those categories. Traditionally, governmental operations such as censuses have been thought of as producing legibility through careful accounting of recognizable characteristics that can be attributed to bodies or spaces, such as names, biometric data, addresses, and so on. But as Ghertner (2010) has noted, the survey process in the National Capital Territory seems to have oriented itself towards a quite different set of criteria, moving from the "numerical" to the "aesthetic". This, Ghertner argues, is the result of persistent challenges to surveys made throughout the 1990s and early 2000s by community organizations like the Dilli Shramik Sangathan (Delhi Labor Organization), who often did surveys of their own or stalked surveyors on the day of survey to ensure that all residents were accounted for, as well as the Supreme Court's endorsement of a "world city" vision for Delhi. Traces of the latter can be seen in the *Pitampura* judgment, with its ambiguous

endorsements of "cleanliness", absorbed into the survey process as an actual analytical

category without any quantification. Ghertner quotes one of the officers on a survey:

> "Today Delhi does not look how it used to. In ten years, it won't look like it does today. Delhi is developing. It is cleaning up. Only the best people will live in Delhi. Soon, there will be no slums here. All the deserving people will stay, but everyone else will have to go. The international [Commonwealth] Games are coming to Delhi and people from all over the world America, England, Japan will come here and see our city. We all want Delhi and India's name to grow. Look around; you see the Delhi Metro has come, all these malls have come. It is time for Delhi to rise. That is what we all want. Everyone must fit."(2010: 203)

The focus on cleanliness and on "Delhi rising" thus suffuse the survey process from the very

start, with "surveyors spend[ing] as much time narrating the physical traits of the slum as they

do producing the survey log" (Ghertner 2010: 204). Through the recognition of certain physical

traits in *bastis*, the category of "slum" is recreated not as one of intelligible *individuals* but

rather of the telltale signs of urban decay, in need of removal. The only options for "slums" are

improvement or removal, and for their residents relocation or erasure. In such an environment,

the discursive focus shifts from accounting for *citizens* to describing slum *areas*, with the effect

being that ever-more-expedient surveys produce a new type of result: not only eligible /

ineligible citizens, but also clean / unclean spaces. The burden of "making legible" thus falls not

on the state, but on individuals. With some 40-45% of households in JJ clusters are marked as

"ineligible for relocation", it is not an uncommon one (Govt. of Delhi 2006:6-13).

Bureaucratic competence and the excluded

In a 2006 Malinowski lecture at the London School of Economics David Graeber

reframed the idea of the relationship between governmentality and citizens by focusing – like

Gerthner – not on the results of surveys or on master plans, but on the bureaucratic processes

that create them. Here, Graeber examined the complications involved in simply filling out paperwork properly, confronting the Kafka-esque nightmare of accounting and healthcare. But rather than hew to the "bureaucracy as idiocy" line held by Michael Herzfeld and others, arguing instead that "it is not so much that bureaucratic procedures are inherently stupid, or even that they tend to produce behavior that they themselves define as stupid, but rather, that are invariably ways of managing social situations that are already stupid because they are founded on structural violence" (Graeber 2006:4-5). Rephrased, governmental schema insist that citizens conform to *them*, rather than the other way around, invested not with stupidity but violent indifference. "Within relations of domination, it is generally the subordinates who are effectively relegated the work of understanding how the relations in question actually work", writes Graeber, and the penalties for failing to comprehend these relations can be severe. "The police truncheon," he notes, "is precisely the point where the state's bureaucratic imperative for imposing simple administrative schema, and its monopoly of coercive force, come together. It only makes sense then that bureaucratic violence should consist first and foremost of attack on those who insist on alternative schemas or interpretations", on those who insist on stipulating their own terms for encounters with authority. The government "calls" upon subjects, who are then required to "answer" in a particular manner. In terms of Foucault's concepts of Sovereignty and Governmentality, the upshot of this is that those who fail to competently present themselves for governmental survey are placed outside the protection of citizenships; their illegibility precludes their protection and their rights. In Delhi, this is the failure of the *jhuggi* resident to provide proper proofs, or to even be home on survey day.

P-98s and the fight for legibility

Savda-Ghevra's "ineligible" population would not go plotless without a struggle. Aided

by non-profits including Ankur, which maintained binders stocked full of identity documents,

the P-98s sued for housing in the Supreme Court. The case, brought by advocate Arun

Aggarwal, was *Delhi Jhuggi Jhopri Kalyan Avam Vikas Sangh[17] v. Government of NCT of Delhi

and Ors.*, filed late in 2006, with attachments of hundreds of identity proofs. The court directed

the MCD to verify these documents through the ration agency and to provide plots in case of

earlier errors.

The agency, the Food Corporation of India, was not entirely forthcoming. By 2009, the

majority of cards had still not been verified, and in a complaint registered with the Delhi Police

and dated March 3rd of that year (provided for this research by Ankur), one Savda-Ghevra

resident complained that when he approached the supply office for verification of his

documents and the acquisition of a new ration card, the attendant

> "used offensive language and threatened me with dire consequences. [He] shouted that
> notwithstanding the orders of the Hon'ble High Court he shall not do the needful in the
> matter unless he was given illegal gratification. I along with other slum dwellers
> expressed our inability and pleaded mercy on account of our poor and deplorable
> condition, but of no avail."

This incident was not completely isolated. On the 27th of August 2009, in my final week at

Savda-Ghevra, I arrived at the colony in the midst of a considerable commotion along the main

thoroughfare. Citing rampant fraud, the Food Corporation of India office had refused to

distributed sugar to any residents who could not provide *renewed* ration cards, of the sort that

the court had ordered be verified; those unable to provide them were left unable to obtain

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[17] Roughly *Delhi Jhuggi-Jhonpri People's Welfare Association*

their subsidy and forced to pay higher prices elsewhere. In a perverse twist of bureaucratic

logic, these citizens had actually been punished for asking to have their identities verified. The

process of securing identity proofs was still ongoing when I left to write this thesis.

IV. The past and future of movement: Future directions for research

"When the city changes, the first to come to know of it is the house. A house appears to be a unit that keeps to itself. But there is much that it puts at stake as it strengthens itself internally to withstand the tempestuous waves of time; much that it snatches from the city to maintain its honour, to construct a world within itself, to demarcate itself from the *outside*. Yes, some seams come undone from time to time; but there is much that a house creates, nurtures, thick within it. And these seeds of the new, nurtured within a house, *burst out into the city*, sometimes before their time."

- Lakshmi Chand Kohli, "The house that remained the same", in Trickster City (2010)

To conclude this thesis, I return to some of the themes covered in chapter one, reconsidering them in light of the story of resettlement in Delhi. As chapters 2 and 3 show, there has been a marked preoccupation through the history of the National Capital Region (and indeed, India as a whole) with ideas of citizenship as belonging as tied to the length of stay within particular geographic scales. Implicit in the survey process leading up to demolitions is a particular notion of *settlement* itself as being linked to presence in a physical space within the city, one that can be documentarily attested to. Through resettlement, too, idioms of motion are ever-present: the forced movement of residents from one place to another, and the opposite of movement, sedentarization, in a place disconnected from the various networks in which residents are implicated. I argue, however, that where settlement represents the establishment of links to communities, markets, and identities, resettlement is marked instead by disjuncture, discontinuity, and separation. Resettlement restricts movement, and these restrictions affect resettled, economically and socially. This final chapter provides but a brief overview of a dimension of urban poverty that demands further study.

Savda-Ghevra and the fringe of the city

To travel from urban Delhi to the resettlement colony of Savda-Ghevra on its outskirts is a time-consuming affair. From my room in Kalyan Vihar, just north of Delhi University, the journey took between 2 ½ to three hours, covering a distance of about 30 kilometres, most of it in heavy traffic. When Savda-Ghevra was first established, no bus service was planned at all; it was only added after much NGO lobbying. In his office, Wakeel proudly showed me photographs of the first signs announcing bus timings, hand printed by community members alongside Ankur staff. And yet even with direct service in place, I was told of residents rising at 4 a.m. to catch buses to destinations tens of kilometres away, returning late in the evening. Delhi is unusual among Indian cities in terms of average trip length for its residents, with some 60% of trips being greater than 5 km; in contrast, 68% of trips in Mumbai are *under* 5 km (CURE 2005). For the poor, these trips are only made longer by resettlement policies that place them on the very fringe of the city, increasing the dumping ground for the city's undesirable (Soni 2000). Part of the issue is a lack of direct services between worksites – which often shift for casual laborers – and the colony. In Delhi, as in much of India, fares are paid based on the distance to be travelled on a per-bus basis, without transfers. My own travel costs from Delhi University to Savda were almost Rs 25, or a monthly total of Rs 750, well in excess of the total poverty line income. Residents below the poverty line[18] are eligible for discounts which significantly reduce bus fares, but still must pay private bus operators / rickshaw-walas for transport from key points. In a study comparing transportation costs before and after

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[18] This status is confirmed by the government based on ration card status, including those eligible for goods at BPL rates and those receiving further discounted goods under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana scheme, an issue when identity proofs are challenged

resettlement in both Delhi and Mumbai, the NGO CURE India "recorded a rise in transport costs of 30% for those resettled", cutting in to already meagre incomes (cf. Tiwari 2006). The overall economic picture presented by the same study was similarly bleak: after relocation, the share of the poor to the population has increased 5%, as opposed to a decrease of 33% in upgraded communities. The "core poor" – those earning less than half of the poverty rate – more than doubled for the resettled (CURE 2005).

Resettlement, kinship, and mobility

Gautam and Bhan's study of resettlement at the Bawana colony, on the outskirts of Delhi, provides some insight beyond the numbers and into the human dimensions of resettlement. One resident, Haleema, had moved to Delhi 25 years earlier, and now found herself having lost not only her home, but her livelihood and access to her family; the in her words, "Gareebon ko jangal mein phenk diya hai": the poor are thrown into the wilderness. (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:14). Her house in the Pushta, which had been constructed by her family over the course of 25 years and had grown into a three-room *pucca* dwelling, was demolished with only a day's notice. Unfortunately, Haleema's family was only able to provide a ration card from the period between 1990 and 1998, and they were therefore relegated to a 12.5sqm plot rather than the larger 18sqm plots given to pre-1990 residents.

Before relocation, Haleema had been working as a domestic laborer in Geeta Colony, on the East bank of the Yamuna and more than 50 kilometres from Bawana; this job provided her with Rs 2,000 ($50) per month. Unable to make the commute, Haleema found herself unemployed and completely dependent on her male relatives, including her son, who was

geographically split from the family by the resettlement process. He worked as a rickshaw driver, and would need to spend Rs 20 ($.50) every day to commute from Bawana to Delhi, where he can successfully ply his trade – as a result, he has taken up residence in a *jhuggi* in Delhi and has left his 6-year old daughter behind with Haleema. Here, an entire family was "settled" by relocation, in such a way that various members are spread across the urban landscape. Haleema's son sends Rs 200 ($5) a week back to Haleema and her husband (Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008:15).The decline in Haleema's economic situation is a classic example of the ways in which the resettlement process is truly one of not of "settlement" but rather of sedentarization and an expression of the creation of spatial hierarchies in which some citizens are granted greater mobility, socially, economically, and physically, than others.

Much has been written about the freedom to move as an essential component of social capital; see, for example, Kaufmann's idea of "motility" (2004). As Tore Sager (2006) notes, it is not *actual* movements which should be used as a measure of freedoms or capabilities, but rather *potential* ones. Slum residents like are marginalized not only because their movements are restricted – as in the case of Haleema and her husband - but because the movements which *are* allowed also place residents at a disadvantage, necessitating multiple transfers, payments, and early mornings in search of casual labor unavailable near resettlement sites. But beyond themselves moving about the city, however, it is the urban poor who also enable and shape the motions of others, as Madhu Kishwar, in her writings on cycle-rickshaws, has repeatedly noted (2006; 2009). My trip home from the Vishwavidyala (Delhi University) metro station to my home was routinely shortened by cycle rickshaw drivers, who could easily prize 20 rupees per 2 km journey out of a fair-skinned foreign passenger such as myself. The rickshaw drivers of

Savda-Ghevra, on the other hand, ran a much less lucrative route between the colony and nearby Ghevra village; this 2.4 kilometer trip cost 5 rupees, and I was advised by NGO workers that I was still paying more than the average in the depressed resettlement colony economy.

There is scarcely room in this thesis to truly explore the ways in which ideas of mobility and settlement inform resettlement policy, or even to fully account for the effects of these resettlements on displaced citizens. What I aim to suggest here – and hopefully to explore in future research – is that right to "live" in the city is not just about the right to build a home, but also about the right – or perhaps more accurately, capability – of citizens to circulate, to take place in the life of the city. Critiquing the notion of settlement on these grounds may seem far removed from practical solutions to the quotidian problems of the poor. Indeed, NGOs like Ankur have been, quite necessarily, concerned with using documentation to prove the length of residents stay in their former homes, and their eligibility for housing and benefits; they must challenge the state on its own terms. But just resettlement policies must link themselves to just transport policies, or they will simply exacerbate the problem of urban poverty.

Conclusion: Revisiting "the modern", "the city", and "the marginal"

Slum removal in Delhi has been driven by notions of slums as obstacles to the inevitable progress of urban development and economic growth, and by the notion of the poor's bastis as "unclean" or polluting spaces, conceptions grounded in particular conceptions of the modern city. Accompanying these conceptions of urban form are also particular conceptions of ideal governance and civic responsibility reflective of neoliberal conceptions of rights and responsibilities, as held by individual agents; and without vigorous intervention by states to enhance what Amrtya Sen (1999) has referred to as the *capabilities* of those granted such rights

across all sections of society, such Western-derived, individual-oriented rights regimes naturally reward the economically and socially positioned and penalize the disenfranchised. Bemoaning this unequal treatment, Menon-Sen and Bhan note that "the brutality and illegality of evictions and demolitions everywhere were being masked through the crude but effective strategy that had worked so well in Delhi – painting the working poor as criminals who were sneaking into the city, making it dirty and unsafe, keeping it from modernity and progress stealing scare resources, and worst of all, occupying land needed for 'public purposes'" (Menon-Sen & Bhan 2008:17); that is, by positioning the poor as atavistic, and parasitic as well.

The ideas of the "modern" at play here are difficult to detach from the project of European colonialism and imperialism, as Chakrabarty has asserted (Hosagrahar 2005:2), with the adjective seemingly acquiring a meaning that equates modernity with particular Western technological and institutional arrangements. Joyoti Hosagrahar (2005) has argued productively that particularly localized adaptations to the modern world system are no less modern, coining the phrase "indigenous modernities" to describe the ways in which contemporary Delhi was formed in a dialectic between European and subaltern styles and values. And yet in spite of this, successive iterations of Delhi's master plans seem stubbornly stuck in a very European, modernist paradigm, focusing on conceptions of order, sanitation, and transportation which show little regard for the "backwardness" of street vendors and cycle rickshaws. Whatever may be said of the execution and results of the various planning initiatives undertaken in the capital region, the state's vision seems to place it at odds with the daily realities of so many citizens, and the dissonance between the "indigenous modernities" that may exist in practice and those envisaged by the state results in violence structural, emotional, and physical.

Increasingly, this violent rearrangement of urban spaces occurs under the influence of

ideas of the modern and anti-modern articulated through discourses on the environment,

dominated by a disquieting emphasis on objectivity that silences the voices of local actors. As

Sharan notes:

> "…there has been a shift in the languages that frame the environmental issue, a
> shift on two levels. In formulaic terms we may express the first shift as being from the
> symbolic to the scientific. The local dignitary with the broom in hand promising to rid
> the city of its accumulated garbage is a thing of the past. They continue to be important
> for photo-ops, but the images look tired at best and their reception increasingly cynical.
> Instead, we find a new vocabulary on offer – pH levels, clean fuels, suspended
> particulate matter, common effluent treatment plants – these are the terms that
> increasingly saturate the media and public spaces around us, from billboards that
> provide information on SO2 levels, to weather reports that report on pollution across
> cities, to the legal discourse that relies on expert committees to guide them on technical
> matters." (Sharan 2002:34)

This, accompanied by a new focus on "aesthetic normativity" (Ghertner 2010), has

resulted in governmental regimes increasingly insensitive to actual citizens. To reclaim a "right

to the city" for Delhi's poor, we must continue to confront these normative visions and

depersonalizing discourses. Organizations like Ankur and the Center for the Study of Developing

Society – referenced extensively in this thesis – have already made great progress in bringing

the stories of the urban poor to public attention. The works of scholars like Awadhendra Sharan

and D. Asher Ghertner have also brought attention to the discourses and processes that result

in marginalization, and explore the complicated way in which these are produced across many

different scales. The ongoing project of creating and sustaining a conversation on urban justice -

hopefully leading to more just policy – is well underway, led by scholars from both groups, and

it is my hope that this thesis provides some humble contribution to that conversation.

List of Hindi terms and acronyms

APL / BPL – Above / Below Poverty Line

Basti (बस्ती) – settlement, township

BJP – Bharatiya Janata Party

Crore – 10,000,000

CSDS – Centre for the Study of Developing Studies

DIT – Delhi Improvement Trust

DJB – Delhi Jal Board (water utility)

DVB – Delhi Vidyut Board (electrical utility)

EWS – Economically Weaker Sections

FCI – Food Corporation of India

INC – Indian National Congress

IPGCL – Indraprastha Gas Company Limited

Jhuggi-jhondpri / JJ – "Slum"

Kuccha – Impermanent structure such as tarpaulin over poles (see *pucca*)

Lakh – 100,000

MCD – Municipal Corporation of Delhi

MPD – Master Plan for Delhi

NCR – National Capitol Region

NCT – National Capitol Territory

NDMC – New Delhi Municipal Corporation

OBC – Other Backwards Caste

PDS – Public Distribution System

PIL – Public interest litigation

Pucca – Durable construction, of brick, concrete, etc, with permanent roof

SAICA – Slum Areas Improvement and Clearance Act (1956)

SCI – Supreme Court of India

SC / ST – Schedule Caste / Schedule Tribe

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