London School of Economics and Political Science

HISTORIES OF DISPLACEMENT AND THE CREATION OF POLITICAL SPACE:
'STATELESSNESS' AND CITIZENSHIP IN BANGLADESH

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For Pappu

Declaration

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Abstract

In May 2008, at the High Court of Bangladesh, a 'community' that has been 'stateless' for over thirty five years were finally granted citizenship. Empirical research with this 'community' as it negotiates the lines drawn between legal status and statelessness captures an important historical moment. It represents a critical evaluation of the way 'political space' is contested at the local level and what this reveals about the nature and boundaries of citizenship. The thesis argues that in certain transition states the construction and contestation of citizenship is more complicated than often discussed. The 'crafting' of citizenship since the colonial period has left an indelible mark, and in the specificity of Bangladesh's historical imagination, access to, and understandings of, citizenship are socially and spatially produced. While much has changed since Partition, particular discursive registers have lost little of their value. Today, religious discourses of 'pollution' and 'purity' fold into colonial and post-colonial narratives of 'primitivity' and 'progress' and the camp draws a line in contemporary nationalist space. Unpicking Agamben's (1998; 2005) binary between 'political beings' and 'bare life', the thesis considers 'the camp' as a social form. The camps of Bangladesh do not function as bounded physical or conceptual spaces in which denationalized groups are altogether divorced from 'the polity'. Instead 'acts of citizenship' (Isin and Nielsen, 2008) occur at the level of everyday life, as the moments in which formal status is transgressed. Until now the space of citizenship has failed to recognise the 'non-citizens' who can, through complicated accommodations and creative alliances, occupy or negotiate that space. Using these insights, the thesis develops the concept of 'political space', an analysis of the way in which history has shaped spatial arrangements and political subjectivity. In doing so, it provides an analytic approach of relevance to wider problems of displacement, citizenship and ethnic relations.

Acknowledgements

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NAMES AND ACRONYMS:

AL – Awami League (ruling party)

Al Falah – Al Falah Bangladesh (Urdu-speaking NGO)

BNP – Bangladesh Nationalist Party (opposition party)

ICRC – International Committee for the Red Cross

Jamaat – Bangladesh Jamaat-i-Islami[1] (far right Islamic political party)

RMMRU – Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit

SPGRC – Stranded Pakistani General Repatriation Committee

UNHCR – United Nations High Commission for Refugees

USYRM - The Urdu-speaking Youth Rehabilitation Movement[2]

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[1] Formerly Jamaat-i-Islami Bangladesh, renamed in 2008
[2] Formerly the Stranded Pakistani Youth *Repatriation* Movement' (SPYRM), renamed in 2008

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

The years that followed the Partition of the Indian Subcontinent in 1947 generated what is now regarded as one of the largest involuntary migrations in modern history (Daiya, 2008). Altogether around eighteen million people left their homes in the first two decades after the creation of Pakistan (Partha Ghosh, 2004[3]), approximately seven hundred thousand of whom were Urdu-speaking Muslims who migrated to the region of East Bengal (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000; Samaddar, 1999).[4] Following the Liberation of the country in 1971 many of these 'Urdu-speakers', known locally as 'Biharis'[5], were displaced for the second time. Branded Pakistani collaborators for their involvement in the war, they were disenfranchised and socially ostracised. Many were dispossessed by the state and, fearful for their lives, found themselves in temporary camps established by the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC). Considered a 'stateless' population until 2008, around one hundred and sixty thousand are thought to remain in the camps today (Al Falah Bangladesh, 2006).

In May 2008, the High Court of Bangladesh passed a landmark judgment in which, after thirty six years, the entire 'Urdu-speaking population' was granted citizenship. While some sections of the Bengali population still openly regard them as 'betrayers' due to the events of the War, Bangladeshi society is clearly changing. Empirical research with a community as it negotiates the lines drawn between legal status and statelessness helps us to understand some of the everyday meaning such a transition involves. The material presented in this thesis was collected in two periods of fieldwork, before and after the dramatic 2008 ruling, and therefore captures a particularly interesting historical moment. As I will show, more than sixty years after the Partition of the subcontinent, 'Urdu-speakers' in Bangladesh continue to occupy a space of heightened interstitial instability.

The Indian subcontinent's experience of displacement and its longer term social and cultural consequences has been neglected in academic research. As Zamindar (2007, p.6)

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[3] Zamindar (2007) suggests twenty million in the subcontinent as a whole. Figures are all speculative but calculations situate Partition as one of the major displacements of the twentieth century.

[4] Estimates vary from five hundred thousand to one million as numbers of cross-border migrants to East Pakistan are particularly difficult to track down (Rahman and Van Schendel, 2004)

[5] The label 'Bihari' literally means a person originating from the Indian state of Bihar. In practice it is used in reference to all those Urdu-speaking migrants, from Uttar Pradesh (UP), Orissa, West Bengali, Bihar and elsewhere, who moved to East Pakistan between 1947 and 1971.

argues, this is not only because of its peripheral location to the post-war international order, but also because "in the region's nation-bound historiographies these refugees have been presumed to have seamlessly folded into new nations". Defining the relationship between refugees and the nation-state has actually been a fraught historical process. However, in this privileging the "so-called 'general' over the particular, the larger over the smaller, the 'mainstream' over the 'marginal'" (Pandey, 1992, p.50) the experiences of those displaced have been insufficiently explored. Much of the literature takes the perspective of the state and the nation, animated by concerns regarding numbers, national security and international relations. Ahmed et al (2004, p.10) suggest "this tells us little about dislocated people". However, I argue in this study that the perspective of the nation is fundamental to the experience of those displaced, as long as it is not at the expense of the individual. The one cannot be understood without the other.

In recent years with growing scholarly interest in transnational phenomena, population movements in and from South Asia have attracted more attention, but the emphasis in this field of research has been on those who migrated overseas, overlooking far greater movements of displaced within the South itself (Nakatani, 2004)[6]. Considering the numbers displaced by Partition, and the sustained and voluminous *historical* interest in the period, markedly little attention has been paid to what happened to the refugee communities it produced (Ansari, 2005). The absence of a 'fragmentary' (Pandey, 1992) point of view is particularly apparent in the case of East Bengal. Of the studies that have been carried out, many have focused on the Indian side of the border,[7] and in both Indian and Pakistani work the East Bengali voice is continually erased. As Rahman and Van Schendel (2004, p.210) argue this is in part due to the Pakistani state's own focus on refugees to the country's western wing[8], but more particularly because of "a disinterest in the refugee problematic in post 1971 Bangladesh". Lost in the shadow of 1947, *internal* movement on the scale of 1971 situates it as one of the great human migrations of the twentieth century, and one of the greatest war-related migrations ever known (Kamuluddin, 1985). Despite this historical significance, as Fieldman (1999, p.169)

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[6] Despite the explosion of interest in 'diaspora', the label remains associated with racial/ethnic minorities of the global West and North (Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk, 2005). The 'other' south-south diasporas have been, comparatively, ignored.

[7] As Rahman and Van Schendel (2004, p.210) argue, "there is almost a complete absence of writings on the large reverse flow of refugees into East Pakistan".

[8] As Ansari (2005) observes, work on Pakistan is scarce and Punjab-centred.

observes, "East Bengal serves as a metaphor for a place that…is constructed as other, invisible, different, and silenced in the real politics of the time."

However Bangladesh's own national story is an important one and, in examining the relationship between this story and the case of the 'Urdu-speaking population', the project presented here explores the way in which political space is contested at the local level, and what this can reveal about the nature and boundaries of citizenship. As this study shows, historical and political discourse informs the contestation and construction of the nation. Citizenship and 'statelessness' can only be understood within this frame. The project therefore engages with discourses of nationalism, and in doing so touches upon the changing nature of historical consciousness and cultural identification, the politics of 'integration', as well as the nature or meaning of the camp as a social form. It developed from field research conducted in Bangladesh between 2006 and 2009 and, given the formal transition from 'statelessness' to citizenship during the period, represents a unique opportunity to consider the dynamic aspects of an unfolding situation.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states, that 'all people have the right to nationality'. However millions of people across the globe lack the security and protection which citizenship can provide (UNHCR, 1992)[9]. Occupying an increasingly significant position in the context of national and international geopolitics, displaced and 'stateless' populations are likely to increase in line with global instability, growing regional inequality and international migration. This makes it particularly important to expand our understanding of the meaning of 'statelessness', and the particular forms of discrimination to which such groups are subject. The 'Urdu-speaking population' in Bangladesh, exemplify some of the key problems facing uprooted populations. Set in a site of camp and non-camp based displacement the analysis establishes a framework for apprehending and appreciating the lived spaces of 'statelessness' across the world.

It has been argued that migratory processes in general represent 'strategic research sites' in which processes of wider importance are manifested with unusual clarity (Menjivar, 2010). Indeed, the interstitial social location occupied by those displaced is particularly revealing. Against an order premised on "culture in neat and tidy national formations"

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[9] According to Refugees International (2008b) statelessness, or the lack of 'effective nationality', continues to affect eleven to twelve million people worldwide.

(Gilroy, 1990, p.268), refugees, the displaced, and 'uprooted' occupy dangerous, "vacant and fuzzy spaces" (Tambiah, 1985, p.4) challenging "time-honoured distinctions between nationals and foreigners" (Arendt, 1951, p.286). As Malkki (1995, p.6) observes:

> One of the most illuminating ways of getting at the categorical quality of the national order of things is to examine what happens when this order is challenged or subverted.

Exploring questions of citizenship from the experience of displacement, challenges existing theoretical assumptions, inviting us to radically rethink 'nationness' and 'statelessness'. Approaching these themes through a comparison between a camp and non-camp based displaced population advances this ambition, interrogating bounded conceptualisations of culture, society and 'community'. The experience of displacement enables us to identify the 'non-citizens', 'aliens' and 'outcasts' who make claims to political subjectivity, and it draws attention to understandings of citizenship that recognize the different perspectives it contains. It reveals narratives of the nation in which discourses of 'integration' are normatively produced, but in which the negotiations of culture and identity required are often unevenly felt. It illustrates therefore, where and how the terms of inclusion and exclusion, are drawn and defined.

While the Urdu-speaking 'Bihari' minority is often assumed to be entirely camp-based, my preliminary research discovered a section of the population living outside the camps, increasingly integrated with the Bengali majority. Not only are some still living in the settlements established in 1972 (whom I term for the purposes of this discussion, 'insiders'), while another group has more recently moved outside (those 'in between'), but a third group that are neither camp-dwelling nor previously camp-dwelling can be found occupying an entirely distinct social position ('outsiders'). As a result, social and economic divisions between the camp and non-camp based 'communities' are growing.

Until now, very little has been known about the lives and experiences of 'integrated' members of this 'community'. The research examines factors that have distinguished those outside from those in the camps, and asks whether or not discrimination towards either group has been affected by these distinctions. 'The camp' itself is something different when it contains those who did not leave, and as the more socially mobile 'camp-dwellers' continue to move outside, the camps have become the source of

increasing social stigma. In their negotiation of distinct settlement structures, 'Urdu-speakers' in Bengal provide a particularly unique opportunity to explore the tension between interlocking identity bases and senses of self. Has discrimination against the 'Urdu-speaking community' been a function of their 'statelessness' (the absence of rights), their ethno-linguistic identity, or the segregation and poverty that may reproduce both?

Outline of the thesis

Research has been built around a comparison of both the camp-based and non-camp-based communities through in-depth qualitative fieldwork in the form of semi-structured and narrative interviews alongside some participant observation. In probing the role played by space and the physical dynamics of settlement in the (re)production of rights, it represents a critical evaluation of the nature and boundaries of 'citizenship.' It is in equivocal articulation with the nation-state that 'the camp' and its residents remain today, highlighting our misunderstanding of these marginal spaces.

Chapter Two - Methodology

Chapter Three – Foregrounding the background: 'Urdu speakers' in East Bengal

The aim of my first substantive chapter is to set the 'Urdu-speaking community' in historical context. Drawing on personal stories of migration I outline the waves of migration that brought 'Urdu-speakers' to East Bengal as well as the struggles over language and identity that displaced many within it. I conclude with the formation of the camps, from where I sketch the population's demographic and geographic configuration today.

Chapter Four – Categories and claims: literature and conceptual framework

The case of the 'Urdu-speaking community' requires an understanding of language, ethnicity and identity, along with consideration of the relationships between states, nations and rights. The specific and located histories of colonialism, postcolonialism and nationalism have a particular important part to play, shaping the complexion of the 'community' in the present day. The case contributes to our understanding of 'diasporas' formed through South-South migration and, considered

alongside a very different literature on 'displacement' and 'the refugee', provides a distinctive analytic perspective. The chapter reviews the significant literature which has provided the theoretical orientation of the thesis, situating the study within a number of overlapping fields and discourses.

Chapter Five – Boundaries, intersections and the 'socio-spatial' contours of 'community'.

The chapter investigates the limits and boundaries of a highly contested identity, and considers how positionality impacts relationships to a shared identity or social collectivity. The significance of socio-economic status in dividing the 'community' is foregrounded through the identificational resonance of 'socio-spatial' settlement. Having been rejected by Pakistan due to their 'non-Pakistani origin', and rejected by India on the grounds of religion, 'Urdu-speakers' it was thought had been rejected by the Bangladeshi state for their ethno-linguistic identity. As the nation's contours have changed however, so has the nature of this rejection. Today ethno-linguistic discrimination has fused with that which is socio-economic, raising the possibility that in defining an 'ethnic core' (Samaddar, 1999), the process of nation-formation excludes only those in the camp.

Chapter Six – 'Acts of citizenship': authority, ambiguity and the politics of space

This chapter examines the relationship between processes of physical 'integration' and experiences of citizenship, exploring how citizenship status is affected by the spatial dynamics of settlement. The chapter begins by examining the discourses of blame/responsibility that have arisen to explain distinctions of 'insider' and 'outsider', and the intra-'community' fissures they represent. It considers how these distinctions have affected the ability to access particular rights of citizenship, including the markers of formal status. The final section investigates the ways in which this formal status is subverted, the moments of negotiation through which political subjects are formed. In scrutinizing the transgression of established borders it brings into focus a dynamic between individual agency and the structural constraints 'camp-dwellers' face.

Chapter Seven – The 'social field of citizenship': Identities, understandings and the language of rights

Developing the notion of citizenship as a relational, ultimately subjective concept, this chapter approaches the question of citizenship less from the perspective of

acquisition, than *understanding*. It moves further beyond commonly adopted abstract and legal perceptions of citizenship, by surveying 'Bihari' attitudes and imaginaries. What does 'access to citizenship' actually mean to individuals in the camps and outside? How much does it depend upon where that individual is positioned within society? Gender, generation and social status are considered key variables intersecting with legal status and shaping attitudes to citizenship. The chapter asks whether the 'language of rights' is in danger of obscuring the significance of structural inequalities and suggests that in the specificity of Bangladesh's historical and spatial imagination, the value of citizenship is contextually produced.

Chapter Eight – Discourses of 'integration': capital, movement and 'modernity'

The point at which physical 'integration' overlaps with 'economic', 'cultural' and 'social integration' is clearly significant. Bourdieu's social relations of capitals are used to explain why the acquisition of capital assets was frequently expressed in the language of 'integration'. In the use of terms such as 'mixing', 'hiding' and 'passing' informants referred to, aspired and evoked 'integration' as the solution to social exclusion. The role of social status again proves important, and the chapter looks in particular at the interface between integration, 'respectability' and discourses of 'development' or 'progress'. The colonial and postcolonial bifurcation between the irrational, passionate, traditional 'masses' and the proper 'society' of the 'educated sections' has been an enduring construction (Blom Hansen, 1999). I argue that the narratives of informants speak to these discourses, and while spatial boundaries have separated those included from those excluded, 'space' conceals something more troubling.

Conclusion

The conclusion synthesizes the thesis' key conceptual contributions, with a focus on the intervention made into debates on nationalism, citizenship and 'the camp' as a social form. It also looks to the future to consider whether global economic realities could support the political imaginaries to which the research speaks. Finally, it returns to the concept of 'political space' to argue that, contra Bourdieu, the 'Urdu-speakers' of this study are *positioned* by history, but contra Agamben, they are certainly not *passive* within it.

CHAPTER TWO - METHODOLOGY

In comparison to the indigenous population of Bangladesh, about which there is now a sustained and growing debate, the Urdu-speaking population remain very much on the fringes of the Bangladeshi national consciousness. In a country of 150 million people, an estimated two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand (camp and non-camp based) 'Urdu-speakers' are easily dismissed (RMMRU, 2007). They are rarely discussed in policy contexts and only occasionally appear in the national press.[10] Very little research (Governmental or non-Governmental) has ever been conducted and demographic data is therefore limited. Equally difficult to access is documentation regarding the state's position in relation to this 'community'. Apart from occasional reference to the 'repatriation process' made during the 1970s and 1980s, successive Governments have remained virtually silent on the issue.

I first became aware of the camp-based population while working as a research assistant under the auspices of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) in 2006. At this time I was put in touch with two Urdu-speaking civil society organisations - Al Falah Bangladesh in Dhaka, and the Shamshul Huque Foundation in Saidpur – both of whom were to become valuable research partners. Over a period of six months in which I was based at RMMRU I conducted preliminary research which was deepened by the second phase of fieldwork in 2008. During this second phase, when I returned to Dhaka in September 2008, I began collating the documentary and demographic data that did exist in order to re-acquaint myself with the context, and plan field sites and sampling. Thanks to these local contacts, I already had access to the camps and began formulating my research strategy. As I was to discover, these were relationships that generated vital research discoveries as well as significant methodological dilemmas.

1. Field sites, population and sampling

Research was conducted in two regions of Bangladesh: Dhaka, and Saidpur in the Northern Rajshahi District. Although 'Urdu-speaking settlements' or 'camps' can be found in four of the five national divisions, an estimated 133,126 of the approximately

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[10] In 2003 the first notable publication of their story was released (Ilias, 2003).

151,368 camp-based 'Urdu-speakers' are settled in the divisions of Dhaka and Rajshahi combined (see Appendix 7). In Dhaka I resolved to concentrate on camps in Mirpur and Mohammadpur, as not only do they represent the largest concentrations of 'Urdu-speakers' in the capital (camp and non-camp based), but they represent very different socio-economic spaces. Mirpur is more deprived economically, further out of town, with less local employment and a concentration of jobs in declining sectors (such as handiwork). Mohammadpur on the other hand is in a prime central location, containing the country's most populous camp (Geneva Camp) which borders one of the city's busiest markets and eating areas. My third field site was Saidpur in Rajshahi, a particularly unique site as the only town in the country with a similar proportion of 'Urdu-speakers' and Bengalis[11]. The majority of 'Urdu-speakers' were not dispossessed in 1971 and continue to live and work outside the camps today, many as successful professionals, entrepreneurs and even as local councillors. The initial rationale proposed dividing the eight months between Saidpur and Dhaka, providing me with some perspective on differences constituted by more or less extreme minority positions, while offering very different local histories and experiences. Having spent a total of six months trying to secure a visa before departure however, I soon realised that teaching English at a university in Dhaka would be my only entry route, a task that would firmly tie me to the capital. I succeeded in negotiating week long field trips to Saidpur on a monthly basis which, considering the size of the town and the much greater ease with which things can be done, was in the end more than sufficient[12].

Non camp-based 'Urdu-speakers' are scattered nationwide in highly variegated mixed ethnicity communities, often physically well integrated with Bengalis. However, they are most likely to be found in areas with a high concentration of camps (such as Mohammadpur or Mirpur in Dhaka), in rented accommodation on the fringes of those settlements. Some have retained greater ties with the 'Urdu-speaking community' than others, and live near the camps so they can come and go daily. Others are significantly more integrated with Bengalis, in cultural, linguistic, social and economic terms and, despite close proximity to the camp, some (in Dhaka but not Saidpur) have few if any Urdu-speaking acquaintances. I interviewed outside the camps in all three sites,

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[11] Of a total population of around 400,000 approximately forty percent are thought to be 'Urdu-speaking' (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2008.).
[12] Almost 18,000 camp-dwellers are thought to live in Saidpur's approximately twenty-two camps. This is the same figure as are thought to be housed in Geneva Camp alone (see Appendix 7) which gives some idea of the differences in scale between the two towns.

concentrating in Dhaka on Mohammadpur as it represents a particularly diverse socio-economic population and therefore an interesting cross-section of 'Urdu-speakers.'[13] As the most economically productive of my field sites it also presented the best chance of capturing some sense of movement between the camps and outside.

I soon realised that conducting a demographic survey (from which to draw a stratified random sample) was going to be enormously problematic in a context with such low-rates of literacy and where borders and boundaries are nebulous, and suspicions are easily roused. Some of the camps are much more diffuse than others. They have developed over time from the bamboo structures of 1972 into an amorphous collection of concrete, brick and corrugated metal residences. I had planned to fall back on a snowball sample if a survey could not be conducted, as although I would not be able to claim an entirely representative 'spread' (Beardsworth and Keil, 1992) it has been observed that snowballing can be a useful technique when working with groups for whom it is difficult or even impossible to 'map' the population from which a random sample might be taken (Bryman, 2004).

Like any other ethnic group 'Urdu-speakers' do not represent an internally coherent, 'thick' solidarity (Alexander et al, 2006). The contours and intersections among and between them are contingent and infused with power relations. Although internal heterogeneity is absent from policy and press reports, it soon became clear that 'the community' is far more diverse and discordant than it initially appears.[14] I was aware that this would create problems of sampling since, although accounting for age, gender and geographic location would be possible, attempting to represent further layers of stratification would not be so easy while at the same time keeping my interview schedule practical. I decided to begin by aiming for 60 semi-structured interviews, 30 in Dhaka (Mohammadpur and Mirpur) and 30 in Saidpur, 50% male and 50% female (or as close to that figure as possible[15]) with 12 outside the camp in each location and 18 inside. I divided participants into three age categories (18-24/ 25-49/ 50+), representative of vastly differing socio-political experience. Those 65 and over would have memories of

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[13] Bordering one of the capital's most expensive areas (Dhanmondi), some of the 'community's' more prominent members live beside some of the largest camps.

[14] It is therefore particularly important to problematise the holistic notion of 'community' (Alleyne 2002; Alexander et al, 2006; Chatterjee, 1993; 2004), further explored in Chapter Five.

[15] Of the seventy-five interviews conducted with 'Urdu-speakers' (semi-structured and narrative), fifty-two percent were female and forty-eight percent male. A further fifteen were conducted with Urdu-speaking and Bengali 'civil society' but for obvious reasons the gender-ratio was less evenly balanced.

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Partition as well as Liberation, but with life expectancy in Bangladesh at 63 in 2006 (WHO, 2008), not a great many of this age remain. Those forty and over would not be old enough to remember the Pakistani period whereas those over 50 spent their childhoods and received schooling in Pakistan, a significant distinction. Having assumed that individuals in the 25-49 age range would be the hardest to access, I actually experienced greater difficulty interviewing younger participants who were often occupied with full time work *and* study. Fifteen interviews were conducted with participants of this age-group, thirty-seven with 25-49 year-olds and twenty-one with those over fifty. Older interviewees were the most likely to be busy with religious commitments or reluctant to be interviewed due to suspicion, fear, or the distressing nature of the stories they had to tell. In addition to these semi-structured interviews I also conducted fifteen further narrative interviews with individuals from three families whose histories reflected particularly interesting examples of movement or generational change. Due to the traditional focus within refugee studies on problems which are amenable to policy interventions it is often difficult to get a sense of displacement as a process in time, which unfolds in the life course of individuals (Ahmed et al, 2004). My hope was that in interviewing the different generations of particular families I might gain an understanding of the way in which such processes are woven into the identities of communities over many years.

I also wanted to be able to capture temporal change during a uniquely tumultuous time in the population's experience. With the acquisition of formal citizenship just four months earlier, and in the run up to the long-awaited 2009 elections,[16] I was interviewing during a significant time in the nation's history (the possibility of a return to democratic rule since the military intervened two years earlier) let alone that of the Urdu-speaking population. The majority of those interviewed in the camps would be voting either for the first time, or for the first time since 1970/1.[17] I therefore decided to conduct half the camp-based interviews before the election in December, and half after, to see how the experience played out in emerging narratives. One of the ways in which the election experience altered behaviour was with regards to fear and suspicion among interviewees. Their confirmed status as voting citizens worked, paradoxically, to heighten anxiety. Mirpur

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[16] Originally scheduled for January 2007 they were continually postponed by the Caretaker Government, finally taking place in an atmosphere of great drama almost two years later.
[17] The polls in East Pakistan were originally scheduled for October 1970 but delayed until December and in some cases January 1971, due to severe flooding.

proved particularly sensitive post-election due to some unexpected voting behaviour. The 'Urdu-speaking Youth Rehabilitation Movement' (USYRM), based in Mirpur,[18] voted for the Bangladeshi Nationalist Party (the BNP) while the 'Stranded Pakistani General Repatriation Committee' (SPGRC)[19], on which there will be more later, voted for the Awami League. Not only was this a surprising shift in political affiliation[20] but with the Awami League winning a landslide victory, many in the camps in Mirpur who had supported the BNP became fearful of their position. Fewer interviewees were happy to be recorded as a result. Once I had finished the primary interviews I decided not to conduct any narrative interviews here, resolving to make the most of better connections and a less highly charged atmosphere by conducting ten in Mohammadpur (two of the three families).

Interviews with Urdu-speakers were supplemented by fifteen further semi-structured interviews with members of Urdu-speaking and Bengali 'civil society'.[21] As Ahmed et al (2004) observe, members of civil society provide a critical role welcoming or rejecting displaced people in contexts in which state support is on an ad hoc basis. Paying attention to these actors therefore helps us understand the relationship between refugees and the refugee receiving nation. Al Falah in Dhaka put me in contact with leading Urdu-speaking poets, journalists, academics, lawyers, NGO workers and the representatives of relevant international organisations such as the ICRC and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The Shamshul Huque Foundation, in Saidpur, was able to set up interviews with Urdu-speaking local councillors, as well as activists and influential entrepreneurs in the town.

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[18] Originally the youth wing of the 'Stranded Pakistani General Repatriation Committee' (SPGRC) but re-fashioned in 2008 as a pro-citizenship youth organisation.

[19] The label 'Stranded Pakistani' was coined shortly after the war and has been commonly used in press and official documents since this time although elements of 'Urdu-speaking society' consider the term outdated, misleading and derogatory. The SPGRC was established at a similar time, primarily to forward the 'repatriation' agenda. It is generally seen as pro-Pakistani and has traditionally opposed (Bangladeshi) citizenship.

[20] The AL is headed by Sheikh Hasina Wajed, the daughter of Bangladesh's founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Mujib). It is therefore "still seen as the 'Liberation War Party' and leads a campaign to ban 'collaborators' from the 1971 conflict (largley Jamaat-i-Islami supporters, including some influential 'Biharis') from standing in Parliament. This is popular with many voters, including BNP supporters" (International Crisis Group, 2008, p.25). The BNP on other hand is led by Khaleda Zia, the widow of General Ziaur Rahman who ruled Bangladesh after the military coup in which Sheikh Mujib was assassinated in 1975, before he was assassinated himself in 1981. These two main parties have alternated in power since 1991, maintaining a highly conflictive relationship which has failed to institutionalise a parliamentary form of government, leading to regular periods of instability (Lewis, 2007).

[21] 'Civil society' is multi-formed but has been used here to refer to individuals involved in certain voluntary, civic and social institutions of relevance to my case.

The political situation in the country deteriorated dramatically at the end of February 2009. A mutiny by the Bangladeshi Rifles (a paramilitary border patrol force) against their army superiors resulted in an estimated one hundred and forty deaths and destabilised the newly installed democratic Government, raising concerns of a possible military coup. The mutiny began on the 25th February and in the weeks that followed media reports threatening nationwide curfews changed on an hourly basis. Foreigners were advised not to leave the Gulshan/Banani area of town (the diplomatic zone in the capital's north) which made it very difficult to conduct any research, particularly due to the proximity of my two research sites to army cantonments.[22] It was not until the 7th March that it felt safe enough to attempt a very brief wrap up trip to Saidpur. In light of these developments I decided to leave the country at the beginning of April and use the upgrade process to determine whether a short return trip to tie up ends would be necessary. As Lewis (1991) has noted, the time pressures generated by conducting fieldwork abroad can sometimes mean that compromises have to be made.[23] However it certainly provided a helpful momentum, and as it turned out I achieved enough in those final weeks to feel satisfied that a return trip would not be necessary.

2. Interviews and participant observation

Due to the recursive and interdependent nature of some of the issues to be examined, the construction of interviews was clearly very important. Although there were various 'exmanent' questions that I had in mind before fieldwork began (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000), these were neither fixed nor clearly focussed. I was keen to develop these further once in situ, responding to the 'immanent' issues that arose from the field-site.

2.1 Semi-structured interviews

As the research involved a comparative case study (Dhaka/Saidpur, inside and outside the camps), developing some common parameters for the interviews was useful in generating cross-comparability (Bryman et al, 1996). I was able to make sure that certain key research areas were covered in relation to settlement histories, access to facilities,

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[22] Mohammadpur in particular is very close to where the fighting broke out, and remained heavily patrolled for a number of days.
[23] A long-awaited interview with the recently elected Mohammadpur MP, who had been working with the camp community since the election in January, had to be cancelled due to his involvement in the mutiny investigation, for example.

language use, and cultural or religious practices, and so on. However, I was not looking to reconstruct 'facts' as much to understand 'experience' and I therefore wanted to be able to react to participants' own understandings, descriptions and conceptualisations, rather than simply imposing my own. Too much structure would have severely curtailed their freedom of thought and expression and I was keen to remain open to the material generated, revising questions or focus as information came to light. As Oakley (1981) notes, overly structured interviews can also exacerbate hierarchical relationships, particularly problematic in the context I was working in. In the question-response mode the interviewer is imposing structure in a number of ways: by selecting the theme and topics, by ordering the questions, as well as by wording the questions in his or her language. The latter was of particular concern to me. I was aware from the start that in any question-response situation, it would be difficult for me to avoid using a conceptual language (of 'citizenship' and 'rights') that would not necessarily translate. In order to understand my informants' experience or understanding of these concepts I needed to ensure I wasn't simply imposing my own language onto them. Limiting the structure of the interview has been considered a means of resolving these dilemmas, particularly when researching groups in subordinate positions of power, allowing voices that are typically marginalized to come through (Samuel, 1976). Building on a foundation of sixty interviews in the camps and outside, I therefore decided to supplement semi-structured interviews with the employment of some narrative techniques.

2.2 Narrative Interviews

As Bryman (2004) observes, together with participant observation, narrative analysis is thought to enhance the opportunity for gaining access to people's world views. In putting emphasis on how the interviewee (rather than the interviewer) frames issues and events, it preserves perspectives in a more genuine form (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). People tell stories with words and meanings that are specific to their experience and way of life and, in doing so, tell us something about their perspective on the world. I was hoping to get a greater sense of this 'perspective' by engaging with their stories. Equally, as Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) add, narratives are thought to be particularly appropriate for projects where different 'voices' are at stake. As I discovered, the way in which they differ, as much as what they share, was crucial to apprehending the full dynamics of the case.

In deciding what is to be told, and what is not, and what should be told first, the story-teller gives a chronological sequence of events coherance and meaning. In this sense, narratives live beyond the sentences and events that form them (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). Narrative analysis therefore not only increases flexibility but, in its capacity to link events in time and meaning, it also injects a sense of process (Lofland and Lofland, 1995; Burman et al, 2001; O.Lewis, 1961). It helps elucidate complex historical trajectories, allowing us to see "the connections in people's accounts of past, present and future events", as well as their sense of "place within those events and states of affairs" (Bryman, 2004, p. 412). Narrative is therefore useful in projects where personal experience is situated in larger societal and historical contexts - war, political exile and persecution are classical in this regard (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000) - and in a study of 'Urdu-speakers' in Bangladesh narrative is therefore an obvious choice. These interviews were not without structure, but that structure was generated in the story-teller's own spontaneous language, and I was able to minimize my influence as much as possible. Through these interviews I was able to take seriously the idea that language, as a medium of exchange, constitutes a particular worldview (Farr, 1982).

2.3 The interview context

The interviews themselves were the most rewarding aspect of the fieldwork experience. I encountered a level of warmth and hospitality that I was quite unprepared for, and developed friendships that I hope to keep. Complete strangers let me into their homes, offered me food and told me their stories. Stories that were sometimes very difficult and often very moving were told with a level of honesty with which I was continually amazed. In a politically charged environment like the camps this was even more surprising. As Ong (1999) suggests, the truth claims of 'speaking subjects' are articulated in webs of power, and in the camps this was immediately apparent. For some interviewees these webs of power naturally generated a certain amount of suspicion. As it turned out, learning how to let go and give people the space and time to say what was meaningful to them was an important adaptation to make. On occasion, removing structure in the context of a 'semi-structured interview' proved a vital way of putting uncomfortable interviewees at ease, along with extended pauses, non-verbal signals of attentive listening and gestures of encouragement. It was therefore not always easy to

delineate the boundaries between the 'semi-structured' and 'narrative' form. The iteration of narration and questioning frequently blurred the two and I found myself conducting semi-structured interviews enriched by narratives (Hermanns in Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). In many ways what I ended up with resembled Flick's (1998) 'episodic' technique.

In light of the High Court Ruling and in the run up to the 2009 elections, 'camp dwellers' were confused. They were worried about eviction and, in the beginning, suspicious of my presence. Although I explained my intentions, my purpose and a little about the project at the start of each interview, rumours as to my purpose were quickly generated. Ramachandran (2004) has argued that marginal groups like 'camp-based Urdu-speakers' in Bangladesh encounter a wide range of dangers and difficulties that force them to monitor the activities of researchers closely. It was claimed at one point that I was a spy for the Government, at another that I was recording interviews to use for bribery, and a couple of informants later revealed that they had initially thought I was a journalist collecting stories and photographs to sell overseas. In the background was the unshiftable assumption that I was an aid worker who was there to improve their situation. Beyond my overriding concern to reassure informants that they were not mere 'objects' of investigation ('mines of information', England, 1994, p.82), and I was not there to make money from their stories, it was important to make it clear that I was not there to improve the condition of the camps either. All the while I remained alive to the fact that their understanding of *me* affected their expectations of interviews. As Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) observe, every participant will make hypotheses about what the interviewer wants to hear and what they probably already know and it is important therefore that interviews are interpreted in light of the interview situation.

Given that a complex political context was certainly at stake, it was even more remarkable to me that when given the space to say what was important to them, and the time to do so at their own pace, people were as open and unguarded as they often were. Informants were, on the whole, very keen to talk about their lives. They told me about neighbours, treatment, gossip, values, beliefs, opinions, arguments, fights, and politics - everything that pertained to their present situation. However they were much less keen to talk about the past. This was true not only of all those individuals who had experienced Liberation or Partition or both, but also of their children, who had been told very little of that history themselves. In this sense there was much more forgetting than remembering

in the camp – less cultural memory than cultural amnesia. As Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000, p.8) argue, the absence of narratives can be as significant as their presence:

> People who have experienced trauma may not be in a position to verbalize these experiences. As much as a narration can heal, it can also produce a renewal of the pain and anxiety associated with the experience it narrates.

The degree to which this was the case appeared to intensify over time, and by 2008 reluctance to discuss the past was marked. Whether this was indicative of the passing of time, and expressed a diminishing energy to deal with the weight of this past, or whether it had something to do with the fact that informants could finally see the possibility of change before them, and consequently desired to wipe the slate clean, I will never know. It is certainly true that trauma silences the story-teller (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000) and in one way or another, this trauma has to have made an impact on the stories and silences spoken.

2.4 Participant Observation

The insecurity and confusion felt by 'camp-dwellers' also constrained participant observation. As noted above, access was already hampered to some degree by political agendas, and overcoming the suspicion I aroused as an English speaking Westerner required considerable negotiating. I was not able to live in the camp because of lack of spare accommodation (and as a woman on my own it would have been severely frowned upon) and I couldn't easily 'hang out' without generating suspicion. If I had been able to merely be present, observing and listening, I might have asked many more questions. To overcome this limitation I often met, chatted and passed the time, with 'camp-dwellers' and 'non-camp dwellers', in the shop of a contact located on the edge of Geneva Camp. It was somewhere a number of 'Urdu-speakers' spent their free time, and represented a conveniently positioned site of friendly conversation as well as heated debate. I was also invited to a number of weddings and religious celebrations in the camps and outside, which provided fertile ground for data collection, and attended numerous poetry recitals and cultural festivals outside the camp. Many of the cultural events I attended were organised by the 'Urdu-Bangla Cultural Forum' of which my research assistant (Syed) was a founding member. The 'Urdu-Bangla Cultural Forum' is a group of prominent Bengali and Urdu-speaking poets, journalists and critics, along with Urdu-speaking

community activists, working to bridge the gap between the two linguistic worlds. Although I had other contacts who were connected to this network, Syed's involvement gave me a much more immediate link, and provided me with daily updates regarding meetings and events (Urdu and Bengali poetry recitals, seminars, as well as more informal gatherings).

I spoke conversational Bengali before the fieldwork began, and attended weekly classes at SOAS during my first year.[24] However it was not practicable to learn Urdu before leaving for the field as many 'Urdu-speakers' in Bangladesh speak a very specific localised dialect which I would only have been able to learn *in situ*. During fieldwork I switched between this dialect and Bengali as much as possible when interacting in the camp, where the language spoken is a highly specific fusion of both, but my Urdu attempts never failed to amuse camp residents. I realised therefore that I would have to work with an assistant who spoke the local dialect as well as fluent Bengali. As it turned out I was lucky enough to find an assistant who spoke increasingly fluent English too, which I had not expected. As Lewis (1991) observes, the addition of an assistant was a compromise that generated a whole range of new biases and mediations, but it offered significant advantages as well. For alerting me to the nuances and subtleties of speech Syed's language skills were essential. He was able to pick up on casual remarks, asides and (perhaps most importantly) humour in a way that I could not. He was also able to switch between Bengali and Urdu in both standard and colloquial forms, which was essential for research within such a heterogeneous 'community'.[25]

3. Working with local contacts

Social scientists have regularly reported hostility and distrust of researchers (Zinn, 1979) but the help of Syed, and in particular his 'insider' status, proved invaluable in overcoming this distrust. His location within the 'community' was not straightforward but underscored the impact of positionality on the research process itself.

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[24] I also worked as part of an interdisciplinary postgraduate discussion group critically reflecting on issues of language difference and translation in the social sciences.

[25] A mixture of Bhujpuri (an Urdu-based regional dialect of Bihar), Bengali and Hindi is spoken in the camps, locally nicknamed 'hodgepodge' ('kichree') and explored in greater detail in Chapters Five and Eight. My lacking specific knowledge of the camp dialect did not appear to hinder access. Surprisingly perhaps, people were always appreciative of my ability to speak Bengali even if that language had marginalised them for thirty-eight years, a response that underscored the subordinating effect of English (symbolic as it is of both contemporary Western imperialism and present day socio-economic stratification in Bangladesh.)

3.1 The role of research assistants

Within the space of the camp my research assistant was an 'insider' in both senses of the term. His parents are 'Urdu-speakers' from Bihar, who moved into Geneva camp in 1972, before he was born. He grew up in the camp, but during the fieldwork was living in rented accommodation outside ('in between'). Having lived outside for four or five years he decided he could no longer sustain this financially and has recently moved back. He could therefore be described as both an 'insider' and as someone 'in between' the camps and outside, demonstrating the uncertain boundary between these literal and conceptual spaces. A well-known and well-liked individual, his presence provided highly advantageous access and certainly improved relationship building. Treated as an 'insider' in the camps, he is however also treated as one with the authority generated by a certain degree of social mobility. His careful explanations before interviews therefore visibly improved trust. As a result, Syed proved to be a fascinating informant and was an interviewee (on numerous occasions) in his own right.

The nuances of language, status and power within this 'community', however, highlight the caution required when discussing 'insider' and 'outsider' status. First, as Maykovich (in Zinn, 1979, p.216) observes, the problems between the two "are different in kind, but by no means different in severity". Some have suggested 'insiders' lack objectivity and this will lead to bias in data collection as well as diminished interpretive ability (Zinn, 1979). These contentions cannot be ignored and Syed and I regularly discussed them, particularly in relation to sampling. The suggestion that an 'outsider' is intrinsically objective, however, is equally problematic. I too was *positioned* in a way that influenced data collection and interpretation. I certainly believe as an 'outsider' I brought the advantage of the 'marginal position' Hammersley and Atkinson (1996, p.110-112) describe; avoiding the 'over-rapport' that blinds one to that which is taken for granted.[26] However, the particular field of vision through which Syed operated, and the space in which he was located, also allowed him to ask questions and gather information that I could not (Zinn, 1979). In the words of one participant, "we are both 'Urdu-speakers', you are my brother, so I will talk to you honestly" (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka).

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[26] Syed often laughed at my response to news, information or conversations that he considered "the boring bits of life!" (Syed, 'in between', 30, Dhaka).

Second, Syed's position within the 'community' demonstrates that the 'insider-outsider' boundary is not only highly unstable but subject to the dynamism of positionalities in time and space (Mullings, 1999). As a founding member of the 'Urdu-Bangla Cultural Forum' he has mixed with influential Bengali and Urdu-speaking cultural activists for some time, navigating the socio-economic spectrum of the 'community' with apparent ease. Nonetheless, among the 'Urdu-speaking elite' he was very much outside. As Song and Parker (1995, p.24) explain "where two people may claim commonality on one dimension, they may fall apart on another", and the multi-layered and contingent positionalities of 'insider' and 'outsider' (O' Conner, 2004) became very clear. In moving between the camps and outside, between a highly marginalised population and a local elite, the significance of commonality and difference was categorically contingent on time and space (Sanghera and Thaper-Bjorkert, 2008), highlighting the conditionality of positionality in a hetrogenous field-site (O'Connor, 2004). Syed's personal charisma and charm were enormously valuable in helping him to negotiate the subtleties of these dynamics.

I also believe his being male in a patriarchal society aided the research process to some degree, providing us with a degree of authority that I would not have had with a female assistant (Mandel, 2003).[27] As it would not have been considered appropriate for me to spend time in the camps alone, and certainly not to ask questions or conduct interviews, Syed was in many ways also a 'gate-keeper' to the field site. Consequently, although he was initially employed as a translator, his involvement in the project soon became much more significant. He knew when it would be good for us to spend time in the camps and when it would not[28], when people would be more receptive and when suspicions would be aroused. He also knew whenever an interesting interview was around the corner (whether someone was visiting from abroad, had recently formed a political group, was about to marry a Bengali, about to leave the camp, or about to go to court to fight eviction, for example). Shortly after fieldwork began, I realised I hadn't simply employed a translator, or a 'gate-keeper', but a 'key informant', fascinating interviewee, and the best 'research assistant' around.

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[27] Camp-based 'Urdu-speakers' are described (by Bengalis and 'Urdu-speakers' alike) as particularly conservative, an issue discussed in greater detail in Chapters Five and Eight.
[28] As Sanghera and Thaper-Bjorkert (2008) observe, in research sites with controversial political histories, a climate of fear and suspicion is often temporal and ebbs and flows in significance.

3.2 Al Falah Bangladesh

Syed had previously worked for my lead contact, Al Falah Bangladesh a non-governmental, welfare organisation, established to improve the lives of camp-based 'Urdu-speakers'. Along with The Shamshul Huque Foundation (Saidpur) it is an organisation run by 'Urdu-speakers' from inside and outside the camps, and as such represented a valuable route into the research. Al Falah was not only instrumental in introducing me to Syed but provided support throughout that helped supply the essential cultural and contextual knowledge required to engender as smooth an introduction into the camps as possible. I was wary that any understanding of these contacts as *representatives* of a 'community' or culture would have been highly problematic (Fernando in Temple, 2002) and would have blinded me to the complexities of the social world in which they were located. Nonetheless, they remained on hand to answer questions, discuss problems, negotiate meetings and involve me in a range of 'community' activities and events.

The dynamic of dependence however generated complications, particularly in the politically agitated setting of the camps where opposing interest groups represent diverse socio-political agendas. One of these interest groups, the Stranded Pakistani General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC), has occupied a particularly pivotal role since the early 1970s. The SPGRC originated as a campaign group to expedite and advance 'repatriation' of the camp-based population to Pakistan. In the absence of alternative leadership it quickly became a powerful force in the camps, overseeing relations (however limited) with the state, controlling camp rations and even collecting a small charge or tax from residents for its services. In recent years their role has diminished as hopes of 'repatriation' have faded (and in particular since the death of the group's founder Naseem Khan). They no longer administer rations (which were suspended in 2004), nor do they collect a tax, and in light of the 2008 High Court Ruling they have had to completely re-think their position, but they do still represent the views of a small section of the camp population, particularly among the older generation, a perspective I did not wish to ignore.

Having a resolutely pro-Pakistani political orientation, they are violently opposed to the activities of Al Falah. They have been opposed to the acquisition of Bangladeshi

citizenship within the camps and therefore also the acquisition of ID cards, and voter registration. Al Falah, in contrast, is a pro-Bangladeshi, pro-citizenship, pro-integration organisation, which has for many years considered the 'repatriation' agenda a futile aspiration. They have campaigned for 'effective' citizenship for camp-dwellers since their establishment in 1980, and in the run up to the 2008 elections worked in the camps to encourage voter registration and inform residents of the importance of ID cards. With a research assistant who had in the past worked for Al Falah, I knew the SPGRC would be wary of my presence. To complicate matters further, Syed was himself one of the ten camp-dwellers who had already been granted citizenship in the 'Abid Khan vs. Government of Bangladesh' case of 2003. As he explained in 2008, relations with the SPGRC had been difficult ever since, and he had been personally threatened by them in the past. A number of other people had been assaulted, harassed or had their electricity cut off and I was obviously unwilling to put Syed or his family in any danger. If I wanted to interview the SPGRC I would need to find a temporary translator who spoke sufficient Urdu to conduct the work, and that would have been extremely difficult. Everyone inside the camps and outside discouraged me because they thought it would stir up tensions within the camp and create problems further down the line. I needed to find a way to involve the group, without jeopardizing the fieldwork altogether, and decided to wait until I was better established with the 'community' before pursuing the issue again.

In the meantime I remained concerned that the location of my contacts within the 'community' could influence the direction of the research. The relationship I had developed with Al Falah, specifically my gratitude towards them, initially prevented me from responding to them as research *subjects* themselves. I gradually became aware of the narrative they wanted me to present however, a particular version of the 'community's' story that has been gaining authority among 'Urdu-speakers' in recent years. Over time, as I gained access to a broader range of perspectives, developed my own research skills and grew in confidence, I was able to more clearly map the location of this perspective within the 'community'. At the same time a personal tension developed from my own fear that analysis *of* them could constitute a betrayal of their trust in some way. Anxious that this should not restrict my freedom, I resolved to suspend such concerns while I was conducting fieldwork. I also determined to be as open with them as possible about the precise nature of my research and through both of these strategies was able to

temporarily achieve some critical disengagement, without losing my admiration for their commitment, generosity, and support.

I was in the end unable to interview the SPGRC, as I was unable to find an alternative, suitable interpreter and ultimately felt too uncomfortable about the possible repercussions. This raises issues of bias to which I must pay attention, but which I cannot regret. Working with Syed and Al Falah was fundamental to the productivity of the fieldwork process. Syed's engagement in the topic, the 'data' that we stumbled upon together, and my ability to discuss every interview, conversation, observation or incident with him throughout, was an enormously positive force. In retrospect, the entire fieldwork experience was a dialogical process in which the research was structured by us both (Sanghera and Thapar-Bjorkert, 2008). His involvement was invaluable and he could never have been replaced.

4. Ethical issues

Working with a marginal community without being able to provide substantive assistance raised a personal ethical dilemma. The only way to overcome this was to be as clear to those involved as possible. Syed began each interview by informing participants that incentives would not be offered, while telling them a little bit more about me and the objectives of the study. As mentioned above, his position within the 'community' and his personal charm, were essential in putting participants inside (and outside) the camps at ease. I had planned to conduct interviews only with participants willing and capable of providing written consent and produced forms in Urdu and Bengali for interviewees to sign. I soon realised that this practice was naïve and unfeasible. Due to the atmosphere of the camp, and the disquiet my presence generated, to do so would have prevented any interviews from being conducted at all. Verbal consent remained essential[29], however, and participants were informed that they might withdraw at any time.

4.1 Reciprocity and dissemination

The generosity I encountered in Bangladesh was often overwhelming, and compelled me to question my role as researcher/collector of stories, absorbing the experiences of

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[29] Before all interviews were conducted Syed and I discussed any possible implications with candidates to ensure that no one participated who might be put at risk by doing so.

others for my own instrumental purposes.[30] Ultimately I was aware that I was researching this population for my own interest in the material and, despite being motivated also by a deeper commitment to the issues involved, I realised I could not hope to approach it with the activism my contacts would have wished. The enthusiasm of some of my participants towards the project was therefore humbling and at times unnerved me. As members of a 'community' that has been almost ignored, many assumed my presence would automatically improve their situation, and I had to make it clear that this was not the case. I do hope that as a record of their situation this study will be of some value to 'Urdu-speakers' themselves and, notwithstanding initial concerns regarding the ability to maintain 'objectivity', I am keen to make my findings available to them. Disseminating findings among a largely illiterate camp-based population needs to be carried out thoughtfully, however, and I plan to produce a report to accompany the thesis that is easier to distribute among participants. In light of the fractured and heterogeneous 'communities of interest' assembled around the study (Venuti, 2004, p.491), I will also send relevant journal articles to my contacts at Al Falah to disseminate as they see fit.

I was frequently struck by how much people gave (particularly of their time) and how little I could return, and coming to terms with this relationship was an important part of the process. In the absence of financial assistance, my continued communication with members of the 'community' has become significant, and a sensitive and pragmatic dissemination of findings is clearly necessary. To ensure anonymity, interviewees have been given a pseudonym in the following chapters, as they will be in any reports, papers and written material produced in connection with the research.

4.2 Power and position

> We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context', positioned (Hall, 1990 p.1).

My 'position' as a white, middle-class, British, female researcher, and the assumptions of wealth, status and motive that came with it, clearly had an enormous impact on the nature of interactions in the field. As an important aspect of my relationship with Bangladeshis, it was necessary to pay attention to its impact on the 'data' collected and its

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[30] "The relationship between social researchers and the people they study has been unequal at best and exploitative at worst: researchers take information and eventually receive professional advancement" (Zinn, 1979, p.209).

impact therefore on the information that became coded as 'knowledge' (Rose, 1997, p.308; Lewis, 1991). While these characteristics may not have *determined* the kind of data I collected (Temple, 2002), they situated me as someone with privileged access to both the material resources of the West, and "the power inherent in the production of knowledges about 'others'" (Rose, 1997, p.307). Power is almost uniformly invested in the researcher when he/she interprets and writes up the research (Mullings, 1999) and a concern to depict, acknowledge and *reflect* the voices of informants without reinforcing the power relations in which we were positioned, preoccupied my fieldwork experience. Clearly it would have been impossible to escape these power relations, but understanding their implications took time.

As Moss (1995) argues, however, the researcher may move around this landscape of power, and in my experience, an initially cool greeting often gave way to a warm and highly personal narrative. This was partly the result of some of the strategies noted above, and certainly the presence of Syed, but surprisingly it also appeared to be in part due to my own position as an 'outsider'. While my foreignness enabled me to frame the questions, name the categories and control the agenda (Staeheli and Lawson, 1995), I believe it also generated some degree of empathy. As a foreign woman on my own I was considered vulnerable. Interviewees were keen to know where I was living, who was looking after me and how I would stay safe. I was to some degree infantilized by the perception of exposure and weakness. This combined with my naivety (both real and supposed) helped me, paradoxically, to create a more relaxed, informal environment in interviews and made it easier for people to share their stories openly with me. In certain contexts therefore, my foreignness actually re-configured the power dynamics it created. I was in *their* houses, eating *their* food, wearing *their* clothes, and to some degree at least *they* were clearly in charge.[31]

How the mutual constitution of my 'race', class, nationality and my gender affected the production of knowledge is however murky terrain. As a woman travelling alone, my presence in Bangladesh (or more specifically the absence of my husband) incited considerable suspicion. Although my partner and I were not actually married, in order to

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[31] It is also worth noting that as Kobayashi (1994) observes, the contours of this landscape of power may change. Above I discuss my experience among 'camp-dwellers', although naturally the impact of my 'position', and the configurations of power in which I was operating, were markedly different when I was conducting interviews with different sections of the population, for example members of the social elite.

discourage the difficult conversations that were arising I experimented with wearing a fake wedding band. The reassurance this generated, in both male and female interviewees, was visible, and enabled us to move beyond my marital status as a topic of conversation. While Shaffir (in Mullings, 1999) has observed that mildly deceptive practices of representation are as inherent in field research as they are in daily life, whether or not such deceptions are ethical has been the subject of some debate (Katz, 1994; Mullings, 1999). I knew any interaction would prove difficult if I removed the band but I became concerned that selectivity in the disclosure of aspects of my identity betrayed the trust and confidence of everyone who was willing to talk to me. I was not only ignoring the politico-ethical considerations implicit in knowledge production, and with which I had been so preoccupied, but the 'data' produced was being constructed in part through my social identity as seen by informants (Cicourel, 1964). After a while, therefore, I concluded that I was manipulating the context within which information was provided and resolved to take the wedding band off. I discussed the situation with Syed and, from that point on, explained that my partner was in London but we were not yet married. As Mullings (1999) argues, recognizing those uncertain moments when the search for shared positional space produces dialogue which may not be entirely honest is important even if no entirely satisfactory resolution is found. For the rest of the fieldwork I navigated difficult conversations as best I could.

In many ways the conscious creation of this 'researcher-self' highlighted the centrality of processes of identity construction to any research process. As Coffey argues, often 'self' and 'identity' are partitioned off, giving "little space to an analytical discussion of how identities are constructed, reproduced, established, mediated, changed or challenged over the fieldwork process" (Coffey, 1999, p.4). As she explains, fieldwork *is* identity work. The relationship between narrative and self and the ways in which we come to understand 'who we are' through the language we use was apparent as much in my own performance of 'self', as in the life stories of my interviewees. There remained much uncertainty regarding the influence that this performance of self imposed upon the findings (Mullings, 1999), but it was clear that language use was central to processes of data collection and identity construction throughout the research space.

4.3 Language and translation

As I have mentioned, I was keen to conduct the interviews in Urdu and was anxious to find a native 'Urdu-speaker' to help me with this. I had considered relying on my own Bengali in interviews but having worked with a Bengali interpreter when conducting research for RMMRU in 2006 I had been uncomfortable with the power dynamics the use of Bengali generated. As Temple and Edwards (2002, p.6) observe, the use of a particular language or form of language can be an important element of identity construction, defining difference or commonality, exclusion or inclusion. Indeed, "the interaction between languages is part of the establishment and maintenance of hierarchical positions". I knew my own presence would be unsettling, and I was reluctant to force informants to speak the language through which nearly forty years of subordination has been expressed. In more practical terms I also did not want participants, particularly the older participants, to be in any way restricted by their own language skills.[32]

How these decisions affected the power dynamics between interviewees and I remained complicated, however, and my experience only confirmed that the role of interpreters in the production of borders between cultures and identities is highly significant (Temple and Edwards, 2002). Cronin (1996) has argued that "the aim of the translator is to give a different existence rather than a new life to the work", but this is clearly not a straightforward process. How much is lost, who creates content and, fundamentally, what gives the material legitimacy required reflexivity. As my own Bengali frequently revealed to me, translation is not just choosing words but making decisions of equivalence (Simon, 1996; Venuti, 1995) as "meaning is made rather than directly found in language" (Temple et al, 2006, p.8; Derrida and Kamuf, 1991; Baker, 2007).[33] It is now widely acknowledged that translators are not transmitters of neutral messages and that concepts do not move unproblematically across cultures (Temple, 2002).

Spivak (1993) observes the importance of understanding text (/speech) as a rhetorical device and translation therefore as more than simply a question of making logical connections between words. Translators translate *from their own perspective*; their lives and experiences inform their translations (Temple, 2002). Insights gleaned from discussions

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[32] Many females over fifty in the camps are not at all fluent in Bengali and if they were unable to use their mother tongue it could vastly constrain their accounts or deter them from participating altogether.
[33] "We cannot know our world outside our ability to name it" and therefore "the language we use can both obscure and expose that which we subsequently 'see' theoretically, empirically and politically" (Staeheli and Lawson, 1995, p. 323/325).

of position and perspective in research generally, as discussed above, need to be linked to corresponding work on translation, to appreciate the position of translators in the research process. Some interviewees used more Bengali than others, but members of the younger generation in particular were often keen to speak only in Bengali. These interactions enabled me to reflect on the choices my translator was making and question those choices with him, issues that could only be reconciled by open negotiation with Syed throughout.

I was particularly keen to explore the specific location of my interpreter within the research in order to make his presence as visible as possible. As we have seen, the gender, age, sexuality or ethnicity of any researcher, whether a translator or not, will influence the data produced. The lens through which people understand other people's voices is always located and these lives and experiences will therefore also inform translations (Temple, 2002). Positioning a translator within a discourse is not straightforward, however. In order to do so I discussed research aims, interview tools, ethical practice and differences across languages with Syed on a daily basis, while addressing his own perspective on his location throughout the research process (Edwards, 1995, 1998; Temple and Edwards, 2002; Temple et al, 2006).[34] This dialogue generated some hugely rewarding and insightful conversations, thanks to the enthusiasm of his intellectual engagement with it. Not only did it help us to better understand the act of translation, but it helped me to better understand the fieldwork context in general. As Baker (2007) observes, though problems of 'authority' in translation can be raised, there is potential to harness hybridity through the agency of a translator.[35] The 'distortions', 'new meanings', and 'in between' forms of understanding may themselves generate an exchange of ideas that is illuminating. Smith argues that it is such uncertainties that should be written into research, in order to reject the pretence of transparent lucidity (Smith in Baker, 2007).

Within this general methodological framework and the constraints of access, position, language and ethics outlined above, the empirical research was orientated around the following specific research questions.

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[34] Including his social position and history, his schooling and professional background, his religious position, personal affiliations, attitude towards the 'community' and broader reflections on the content and process of my project.
[35] These are issues I will return to in Chapter Seven as I seek to address 'understandings' of citizenship.

5. Specific research questions

1) What are the limits/boundaries of this community? Who belongs and who doesn't?

2) What is the changing legal and social context in which these processes are taking place?

3) What is the relationship between social processes of 'integration' and experiences of citizenship among 'Urdu-speakers' in Bangladesh?

4) How does this case inform our understanding of nationhood and citizenship in Bangladesh?

6. Analysis

It has been argued that it is important to begin analysis while collecting data in the field (Bryman, 2004). In order to do so I started by writing a daily field diary in which I discussed my observations, interpretations and concerns, jotted down under particular thematic titles as they emerged. These were then condensed and collated to form the basis of monthly field reports, and from here broad themes and issues gradually developed into more comprehensive codes and categories. The second phase involved the transcription process, which similarly began at a relatively early stage in order that transcriptions could be discussed before I left the field. The majority of these were typed up by Syed from recordings, before I (having taken extensive, almost verbatim, notes during interviews) went through them all to check for inconsistencies, gaps, confusions etc.[36] Around 15% of interviewees did not want to be recorded and these (along with any conducted in English of course), I transcribed myself.

The third phase of the analysis consisted of reading a hard copy of each transcription slowly, before reading the transcription again, but this time marking it with any rough categories or themes that became apparent. I decided not to use a software programme like Nvivo or Atlas Ti at this stage due to concerns that such a programme might impede the intimacy of the process. Initial categories were loose and open-ended to begin with,

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[36] Any queries I had regarding the use of particular words, or variations between the two versions produced (my notes and his transcription) could then be discussed in order to make as appropriate as possible our 'decisions of equivalence'.

as in my field reports, but as issues re-emerged in interview after interview, categories became more resolute. At this stage I adopted an almost 'line by line coding' technique. Throughout this coding process I continued to review my codes, removing repetitions and defining connections. Maintaining a close an engagement with the material while keeping coding in perspective and attempting to *theorize* in relation to it wasn't always easy. This involved, as Bryman (2004) observes, considering properties and interconnections between codes and reflecting on the issues surfacing in relation to my research questions and the existing literature. The aim was that it should emerge both deductively, from my research questions and initial concerns, and inductively, from the data itself, a process Seale has termed 'qualitative thematic analysis' (Seale, 2004, p.314). In order to stay as close to the data as possible throughout the writing process, I have relied heavily on the direct quotations of participants involved. It is my hope that this strategy engages more directly with voices; revealing transparently how interpretations and analyses were formed.

From this gradual process of analysis a broader understanding of the thesis as a whole began to come together. The themes upon which the data develops can only be understood in the context of the population's rich and complex history. My first challenge is to detail this history before I turn to the conceptual framework with which it will be approached.

CHAPTER THREE - FOREGROUNDING THE BACKGROUND: 'URDU-SPEAKERS' IN EAST BENGAL

> Of the many minority communities in South Asia who continue to be victims of the adverse circumstances imposed by Partition, the plight of the Biharis in Bangladesh is perhaps the most tragic and deplorable (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000, p. 240).

The 'Urdu-speaking community' of East Pakistan in many ways represent the ultimate paradox of Partition, having fallen victim to two divergent streams of nationalism in under thirty years (Papiya Ghosh, 1998). As Samaddar (1999) argues, both Pakistani nationalism and secular Bengali (or, later, less secular Bangladeshi) nationalism established the ethnic suppression brought about by forced migration as tolerable to the principles of a nation. Relations between 'majority' and 'minority' cultures have been challenged ever since (Khubchandani, 1995)[37].

Throughout the research process, the centrality of this history in the constitution of contemporary social space was highlighted, and foregrounding the background is therefore an important place to begin enquiry. Using an analysis of secondary documentation, complemented by personal accounts of migration collected during fieldwork, the following chapter illustrates some of the journeys made by 'Urdu-speakers' through the dramatic events of Partition, to Liberation and the present day. It examines the formation of the camps in Bangladesh in 1972 and outlines the population's demographic and geographic configuration today. In contemporary Bangladesh it is the Independence struggle of 1971 that represents the nation's moral and historical compass. Consequently it is in relation to this part of the story that the voices of informants really begin to emerge. Oral narratives from informants help bring to life a powerful story. They uncover motives and movements that varied enormously; revealing a diversity of experience that situates the kernel of present-day divisions.

These narratives also revealed that Urdu-speaking migrants in East Bengal had neither migrated from the same geographic region nor entered at the same time. Many indeed came from the North Indian state of Bihar, but many others travelled from districts as

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[37] As Ansari (1994) argues, one of the long-term legacies of 1947 has been the creation of circumstances in which ethnic tension has been the hallmark of the relationship between the region and all newcomers.

far and wide as Utter Pradesh, Punjab, Orissa and West Bengal[38]. While the majority of 'Urdu-speakers' in the region are descended from families who migrated after 1946/7, as we will see others moved many years earlier.

1. **The British Period**

It was not until the mid-nineteenth century, when tea began to be grown in Bengal and Assam to satisfy rising popularity in Britain, that the region of East Bengal gained imperial significance (Chatterji, 2010). As it developed into the empire's most successful business, it was soon clear that labour was vastly insufficient to meet demand and by the peak of the plantations from 1911-1921, workers were being brought to areas such as Sylhet from as far as Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh (Kosinski and Maudood, 1985). At the turn of the twentieth century when the railways were built in Eastern Bengal and Assam primarily to transport coal to the teagardens and tea from there to Calcutta and Chittagong, men were recruited from North India to run these railways[39]. Large townships of these railmen and their families, predominantly from Bihar, sprang up around huge workshops in places such as Saidpur (Chatterji, 2010) as a Professor at the Asiatic Society in Dhaka explained:

> There was small skilled labour needed in the railway and almost all came from Bihar….If you go to Saidpur whole colonies are 'Bihari' and they came during (the) railway period (Professor Sirajul Islam, Dhaka).

Workers were soon brought in to augment other public services such as the police, judiciary and other civil departments (Ilias, 2003), and particular specialist branches such as engineering, medical, educational, and the postal services were all manned at lower levels entirely by Indians (Chatterji, 2010). These migrants have been part of the landscape of East Bengal for hundreds of years but as Professor Islam notes, theirs was a presence "enhanced radically by the partition effect". During the first half of the twentieth century most of the labourers from Bihar, Orissa and UP in Dhaka (around 35,000 of them) were Hindus. But in 1946/7 the migration of Hindus came to a visible halt, as Muslims began to pour in (Papiya Ghosh, 2007).

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[38] Acccording to Wright (1974) they came from more than twenty-two provinces in India.
[39] They were also invited by the British Government to work for the shipping communication and at the ports (Chatterji, 2010).

2. Partition and the Creation of Pakistan

In the years of Partition, and the devastating communal violence it left in its wake, many more North Indians came. As Zamindar (2007, p.3) argues:

> In the midst of incomprehensible violence, two postcolonial states, comprehended, intervened and shaped the colossal displacements of Partition.

2.1 Making the 'Muslim refugee'

Large-scale displacement was not just a feature of the Partition, but lay at the foundation of both new states. The refugee became a crucial symbol of their respective nationalist projects and displacement had established itself as a "tool of statecraft" (Ahmed et al, 2004, p.6/7). As Samaddar (1999) argues, violence was a chief characteristic of all movements, and the occupation of Muslim houses in India, and Hindu properties in Pakistan, in a cycle of forced dispossession, was an important element of that violence (Zamindar, 2007)[40]. Before 1947 Dhaka had been a majority Hindu city but in the 1950s and 60s Hindus were displaced and dispossessed of their assets. The majority of Hindu 'abandoned' properties were either requisitioned by the Government to provide housing for the Government officials who converged on the capital, or were forcibly occupied by *incoming* Indian Muslims (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000). As Zamindar (2007) argues, even for those who were not formally displaced, the power of the modern state to produce bounded nations and draw margins within them, exerted incalculable pressure, complicating distinctions between forced and unforced migration[41]. Muslim evacuees in Pakistan became (first) the 'Muslim refugee', a category (like 'non-Muslim refugees' in India) constructed by the state that shaped the rest of their lives and had an enduring impact of the region's history.

According to the 1951 census there were 699,079 'mohajirs' (religious migrants)[42] living in East Pakistan four years after the Partition (see Appendix 1). Although possibly

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[40] Almost 44,000 Muslim houses were occupied in Old Delhi alone (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000).

[41] Within such a history of state controls on movement and property, the notion of unforced migration or the use of the term 'migration' at all is laden with ambiguities.

[42] The term has been translated variously as 'religious migrant' or 'religious refugee' although a direct translation into English is not possible. 'Mohajir' does not imply the same notion of involuntary flight as the term 'refugee' and the concept can only be understood in the context of religious flight ('hijra'), central to Islam. The term was originally used to describe the followers of Mohammad who had converted to Islam and faced religious persecution in Medina. It has been used ever since in reference to Muslims who

underenumerated[43], these records reveal that such 'mohajirs' had neither migrated from the same geographic region nor entered at the same time (Kamaluddin, 1985). It is estimated that about thirteen million people migrated immediately following the country's division, while a further 5.5 million followed during the 50s and 60s. Thus, altogether, around eighteen million people left their homes during the first two decades after the creation of Pakistan (Partha Ghosh, 2004). It is thought that of that number between six and seven million Muslims from the 'minority provinces' migrated to Pakistan (Hasan, 1997); of which between two and three million migrated to the country's eastern wing (Chatterji, 2010). This process of displacement occurred in three large waves, in 1946/7, 1950 and in 1964 when widespread communal violence (such as the Bihar riots) led to flight across the border. In more peaceful conditions between these waves, migration continued at a slower pace (Chatterji, 2010)[44] and the process was not completed until 1965-66 (Kosinski and Maudood, 1985). An estimated 1.3 million of those who migrated to both Eastern and Western wings were thought to be Urdu-speaking (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000), but as we will see their provenance varied widely.

At that time Muslims in Bihar numbered around four million in a total population of 30 million. The emigration began in November-December 1946 in response to rioting in Saran, Patna, Gaya and elsewhere (Hasan, 1997). Thousands died during these conflicts and the later riots[45], forcing some 'Biharis' into West Bengal, before the riot of 1954 in Calcutta produced further migrations to the East. Riots in Jamshedpur (Jharkhand), Rourkela (Orissa) and additional riots in Calcutta in 1964 (Rahman, 2003) increased the influxes. As a result between five hundred thousand and one million 'Urdu-speakers' from these North Eastern Indian states, are thought to have migrated to East Pakistan (Partha Ghosh, 2004; Samaddar, 1999).

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have migrated to preserve religious freedom. It is a term that commands pride and respect (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000) and the Quran itself encourages such movement. As Samaddar (1999) argues however, the memory of violence embedded in the history of Partition's 'mohajirs' is today at the heart of a term that does not simply mean 'refugee' but 'violent refugee'.

[43] The Government did not even start collecting figures until April 1950 at which point political pressures may have distorted accuracy (Rahman and Van Schendel, 2004).

[44] Precise figures are notoriously problematic but are based here on the decennial census' of India and Pakistan 1931-1981 (Chatterji, 2010).

[45] According to 'The Statesman' of Calcutta (27th December 1946), the riots of October 1946 had in one month created a refugee problem involving over one hundred thousand people. By the end of november four hundred thousand Muslims were daily crossing into Bengal. Emigration was also stimulated after August 1947 for economic reasons, due to acute food shortage in Northern Bihar (Hasan, 1997).

It has been noted that the Muslim League played some role in encouraging this movement, both logistically in the organisation of transport and emotionally through claims to peace and security (Ahmed et al, 2004). These 'Muslim refugees' formed part of the Pakistani Government's rehabilitation scheme[46] and under the newly formed 'Ministry of Evacuation Organisation' refugees were carried to camps in Pakistan by train, under military security. Camps were built in Rangpur, Dinajpur, Parbatipur and Saidpur to house those displaced (as well as Karachi, Punjab and Sindh in the West) (Rahman, 2003). One interviewee describes the journey:

> I came to Saidpur from Murshidabad (West Bengal) in 1947…I had lived in a rented house in Murshidabad, a house owned by a Hindu. This Hindu saved us and gave us some security to come to East Pakistan…He was a nice man. (Every five fingers are not the same, some are good and some are bad)...He saved us and sent us to a safe place…If it wasn't for him we would all have been killed…I came by train, then got the boat at Rajshahi. At that time my aunt lived in Saidpur. The police rescued us and gave us security coming from India to Rajshahi. I remember the blood on the floor of the train (Asma, 'outsider', aged 70, Saidpur).

Not only were journeys themselves dangerous and difficult but as refugees poured in from all over India life was not easy once they arrived. As another informant recalled:

> We moved from Muzzafarpur (Bihar) to Phulbagan (Calcutta) and then to East Pakistan. Firstly we came to Phool Baria railway station (Dhaka) along with lots of refugees…At that time life was difficult here…we didn't have livelihood, (there was) no food at that time. This place (Mirpur, Dhaka) was surrounded by jungles…There was no space to live. It was horrible for us. My mother died without having food for three days…My father was doing anything for food...(He) started doing tailoring work, he made shirts and he got about 50 Paisa (pennies) a day (Yusuf, Dhaka, 'insider', around 70).

By the beginning of 1971 there were an estimated 1.5 million non-Bengalis living in the region (Abrar, 2000)[47]; with the inclusion of West Bengali immigrants who spoke Urdu the number of 'Urdu-speakers' at that time may well have been higher. As Rahman and Van Schendel (2004) warn it is hazardous to generalize about such 'riot refugees'. Examining a sample of those who fled India in 1950 they found that while some were 'Urdu-speakers' from Calcutta, others were Urdu and Bhujpuri-speakers from Bihar and Utter Pradesh (See Appendix 3). Some were 'Nawabi' families from Murshidabad (West

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[46] The Refugee and Rehabilitation Department was formed in October 1947 and due the overwhelming numbers in East Bengal the East Bengal Refugee Council was established in 1950 (Rahman, 2003).
[47] The 1951 Census records two thirds of the migration to the East as having originated in West Bengal and Assam, while the remainder, were from Bihar and the UP (Talbot, 1996).

Bengal) and others were 'Khotai', also from West Bengal, who spoke a Hindi/Urdu dialect along with Bengali. Some therefore spoke Urdu, some Hindi, and some Bhujpuri but state classification collapsed diverse linguistic and regional groups (Rahman and Van Schendel, 2004). When not classified as 'Muslim refugees', they were all regarded as 'Urdu-speakers' whom the West Pakistani administration identified as 'mohajirs'. As Rahman (2003, p.71) explains, "gradually the term 'mohajir' came to be applied to the Urdu-speaking migrants, to the exclusion of others who were similarly uprooted." Over time internal differences between migrants became more important as those who were Bengali-speaking folded into the nation, while others did not (Rahman and Van Schendel, 2004). As examined in Chapters Four and Seven, the identity of 'Urdu-speakers' was henceforth tied to their religion in a way that is still apparent today.

2.2 Employment, destination and social position

At the time of Partition employees of the colonial government were asked to choose which country to serve (Ilias, 2003), and these 'optees' as they are known formed much of the first wave of migration. Most government servants who were Muslims opted for Pakistan, while many of those initially reluctant were 'encouraged' by threats from Hindu vigilantes, or more subtle persuasion on the part of the Indian state (Chatterjee, 2004). With gaps created in the administration through the vacation of Hindu officials moving to India, the East Pakistani government was keen to encourage literate Muslims to fill the posts. Many took advantage of the opportunity to advance themselves professionally and moved with their families to Dhaka, Chittagong, and the satellite townships around, contributing to substantial urban growth in the region (see Appendix 2; Kosinski and Maudood, 1985). Others slightly lower down the pecking order often moved to the district towns and divisional headquarters nearest to them and, as Chatterji (2010) notes, the railways were a key nexus along which they travelled (see Appendix 4). Many of those from Bihar chose the railway towns of the North (Rangpur, Saidpur, Parbatipur, Dinajpur, Bogra and Rajshahi) all close to the border with India (Rahman, 2003). Often this group of migrants came from lower-middle class backgrounds, as clerical employees in the government and the railways, although they also included policemen and non-commissioned officers in the Indian army (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000). As Chatterji (2010) notes, all those that tended to self-select to the cities and urban centres, shared not only

high literacy and government employment but also a history of political engagement. Many were concerned that they would be held back in an India that was not for them:

> My father was highly educated and had big desires, but he thought that in Bihar he couldn't fulfil his potential. And people were moving at the time, (so) the Partition forced him to… (Jabuddin, 'outsider', around 30, Dhaka).

They came with a strong sense of entitlement to the goods of the new nation, and hope and optimism about their place within it.

Further down the social spectrum, skilled and white-collar workers also moved in their thousands to the towns and cities of East Pakistan. After Partition, and particularly under General Ayub Khan's regime (1958-1969), the Pakistani state began to invest in industry, infrastructure and housing and many with these skills were among the early waves of migration to the new country (see Appendix 4; Chatterji, 2010). These migrants came from artisan communities or the better-off working classes before Partition and possessed many of the skills in demand in the new 'national' industries. Along with railway workers this included skilled weavers who worked as mill hands in the jute factories, as well as masons, plumbers and carpenters (Chatterji, 2010). Despite the infrastructural development undertaken by the British, at this time Dhaka was still a comparatively quiet provincial town but the demographic picture of Bengal changed drastically with the influx of Muslims to these largely urban centres.

2.3 The role of property and technologies of state

Refugee rehabilitation figured prominently in the attempt of both new states to establish legitimacy. Development plans projected the figure of the refugee as their central subject, who "through the discursive and institutional regimes of rehabilitation, was made into a citizen of the nation" (Zamindar, 2007, p.9). As a result the Indian Government adopted the policy that no 'non-Muslim' refugee could be evicted for illegal occupation without being provided alternative accommodation. This 'Evacuee Property Act' of 1950 prevented those Muslims who had taken shelter in camps from returning to their homes even after the riots had stopped. As Zamindar (2007, p.134) argues, these processes cemented the role of property in the construction of postcolonial citizenship for many years to come. The process of defining citizens as 'evacuees' and ensuring that they

secured the available property "functioned like an internal border, pushing marked groups into the margins within the nation".

In Pakistan similar processes were at work. The 'Refugee and Rehabilitation Finance Corporation' was set up by the Pakistani Government in 1948 to provide economic rehabilitation in the form of loans for cottage industry and for the re-development of abandoned factories at nominal interest rates (Rahman, 2003). Money was always disproportionately allocated to the West (see Appendix 5 and 6) but housing colonies were built to home 'Muslim refugees' in Mohammadpur and Mirpur in Dhaka as well as Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi district (Rahman, 2003). Through such processes, the ownership of property made and marked the citizens of this new state. Peasant 'mohajirs' in both wings of the country were allotted small plots of land and in 1947/8 each peasant was given an allowance of a maximum of 35 Rupees per months (Rahman, 2003)[48]. From 1951 to 1971 the Government of Pakistan imposed a 'Refugee tax' to pay for this rehabilitation; later declared a 'contribution' for the assistance of 'mohajirs' rather than a tax, it was considered the duty of every Pakistani citizen (Rahman, 2003)[49]. This did not improve the popularity of the newcomers, neither did the increasing competition for employment such influxes generated. According to Tan and Kudaisya (2000), economic dislocations accompanied by an 'over-urbanization' in many cases produced an excess of labour in the cities.

On the surface nationality had been organized along religious lines. However, beneath the privileges and the pride attached to the 'mohajir' title it is clear that the Pakistan Government's enthusiasm was not entirely unequivocal. The truth that many of Partition's historians neglect to mention is that beneath the ideology of a Muslim homeland, the national status of the 'Muslim refugee' was never entirely certain. Those from outside the Punjab were considered an economic liability and, paradoxically, the logic of planned refugee rehabilitation as critical for economic development provided the political justification for the drafting of limits to the nation (Zamindar, 2007).

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[48] In the First Five Year Plan of Pakistan, 3.50 crore (35,000,000) Rupees were reserved solely for 'mohajirs', out of a 8.61 crore (86,100,000) housing budget (Rahman, 2003).

[49] The tax was collected from plane, train, steamer, and cinema tickets. The 'Provincial Governors Relief Fund' was also formed in East Pakistan and it was declared the duty of every Muslim to help in the rehabiliation of 'mohajirs' (Rahman, 2003).

Passports, permits and evacuee property legislation were the technologies used to draft such limits (Zamindar, 2007). The permit system was introduced by the Indian Government to stem the return of 'Muslim refugees' back to India and, despite the fact that excluding 'Muslim refugees' from Pakistan ideologically compromised that state's very premise, passports were introduced (in 1952) at Pakistan's insistence to stem the 'illegal' flow of 'Muslim refugees' into Pakistan (Papiya Ghosh, 2007). Apparently neutral, bureaucratic techniques that sought to secure uncertain relationships, these tools were designed to control the movement of 'Muslims', underscoring the contested nature of attempts at making and *unmaking* the citizens of two nations (Zamindar, 2007)[50]. While the passport transformed 'Muslim refugees' into Pakistani nationals in official Indian discourse - it did not smooth out the shifting identities of Partition altogether. The Pakistani High Commission was reluctant to issue passports to all those presumed to be Pakistani nationals by the Indian state, and some still claimed them to be nothing more than travel documentation. Classifications of nationhood therefore produced numerous 'undefined' people "caught in the limit of the new national borders" (Zamindar, 2007, p.12). For many, lengthy bureaucratic wrangling was necessary to claim citizenship of the new state, although the majority were eventually able to do so. Having never crossed a border therefore, some 'Urdu-speakers' in the region have had their citizenship status contested more than once.[51] As Zamindar notes, the present is still shadowed by internal margins through which "Indians on one side and 'mohajirs' on the other side have been subjected to violence and suspicion for their cross-border ties" (2007, p.14). Proving loyalty to the state quickly became an important prerequisite for citizenship, and as Chapter Six reveals this has remained the case ever since.

As Chatterji (2007) observes, every single pre-partition plan was based on the idea that populations would not move, that population ratios would remain the same. In the end, however, Partition created diasporas of whole communities, and restructured the sources of conflict around borders, minorities and refugees (Papiya Ghosh, 2007). The displacement produced contested notions of the nation and in a landscape of shifting

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[50] The complicated geography of the Bengal delta made it harder to control and easier to cross however, and as a result the Eastern frontier remained a route for those who wanted to move to Pakistan (Zamindar, 2007).

[51] Muslim refugees were formally accorded with citizenship under the citizenship act of 1951, although this itself was not entirely uncontested. The act only officially included those who had migrated before the 1st Jan 1952. As migration continued for many years after, in 1969 it was argued that those who had migrated before the 15th October 1969 should also be included in the voter list. The major political party of East Pakistan at the time (Awami League) supported this and the election commission accepted the demand (Rahman, 2003).

identities citizenship was aligned with relationships of status. The unprecedented scale of evacuation situated property at the heart of the struggle (Zamindar, 2007) but language too was to take an ever present role.

3. Language struggles 1947-1971

Clearly, the elegant simplicity of conventional categorisation in the form of terms such as 'Muslim refugee' or 'mohajir' obscured an identity that was both internally divided and blurred around the edges (Rahman and Van Schendel, 2004). These migrants came from a variety of backgrounds and brought with them vastly different mixes of social, cultural and economic capital. They held strongly felt regional affiliations and spoke different languages but, in pre-1971 Pakistan, ethnic and regional differences were underplayed to emphasize the unity and brotherhood of the new nation (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000). All those who spoke Urdu (thought to be around 10% of the population) assumed the terms of cultural difference. The scale of their migration to Pakistan had influenced the politics of the state from the outset and the impact of these migrants was significant. As Partha Ghosh (2004, p.65) observes:

> The circumstances around which Pakistan was created had earned for them a
> unique status and purpose which is otherwise denied to any immigrant community.

In East Pakistan these incomers were generally better educated than the local Muslim Bengalis[52], and consequently comprised members of the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Army, noted businessmen, as well as academics, educationalists, poets, writers and critics, who made important intellectual contributions (Partha Ghosh, 2004). Urdu was constructed, in part by the Muslim League, as the language of Islam and some saw themselves as the custodians of a finer Islamic culture, flaunting their superiority over the Muslims of Bengal (Hayat, 1966). It has been suggested that they made up around three quarters of the 'twenty-two families' which once controlled West and East Pakistan's combined economy and, including members of the Muslim League, they "constituted a political force to be reckoned with" (Partha Ghosh, 2004, p.66). As we have seen, the Government initially felt some duty to take care of these non-Bengalis and many were

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[52] Lower class Muslim Bengalis, if educated at all, were often taught only to read the Quran. Hayat (1966) argues that as a result they had little choice but to accept the leadership of incomers from UP and elsewhere. He suggests that while the vast population of Bengal mainly belonged to the poorer classes, upper class Bengalis often showed greater affinity to the Muslim immigrants than their poor Bengali brothers.

given assistance not available to the locals. However, while initially welcomed by fellow Muslims, they were to experience severe linguistic and cultural difficulties in adapting to their new surroundings.

3.1 Social and cultural integration

Unlike some areas of Punjab where there was a swift but bloody exchange of people, displacement in East Pakistan "was a wrenching process that stretched over decades" (Ahmed et al, 2004. p.3). To make matters more complicated, migrants from North and Eastern India (unlike those from West Bengal) came from a cultural region with few similarities to that in which they found themselves (Talbot, 1996)[53]. Many of the refugees from Bihar and UP had fled communal violence, and as Talbot argues, this amplified an "attachment to North Indian culture (that) led to increasing conflict with the indigenous Bengali elite" (1996, p.165). The imposition of Urdu as the national language of Pakistan was, at that time, complicating the question of the country's integration, an issue that soon began to exacerbate tension (Partha Ghosh, 2004). Many concentrated together for group solidarity, and the only social contact they had with the Bengali-speaking locals was through common prayer in the mosques. Their reluctance to integrate spontaneously has consequently been blamed for the lack of trust afforded them by their Bengali neighbours (Kamaluddin, 1985).

Some of the same difficulties were experienced by Urdu-speakers who migrated to Sindh in West Pakistan. Professionals, government servants and businessmen, many chose to settle in populous urban areas, such as Karachi (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000)[54]; generally better educated than local Sindhis, they also felt a sense of superiority.[55] As 'Urdu-speakers' came to dominate the West just as they dominated the East (between 1947 and 1951) local Sindhis soon felt threatened. A cleavage had been instituted as a feature of

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[53] Unlike migrants from East Punjab who settled in West Punjab and were fairly easily assimilated into their new environment, and rapidly abandoned the 'mohajir' label (Talbot, 1996).
[54] As in Bengal however, migration had occurred slowly but constantly (unlike the swift influx of migrants into Punjab) and therefore remained a continual source of Sindhi anxiety (Partha Ghosh, 2004).
[55] Muslim Sindhis, much like Muslim Bengalis, had lagged behind the former Hindu population of the region. Many of the top leaders in the West were 'mohajirs' themselves and the more they dominated Karachi, the more animosity grew (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000).

Pakistani politics that continues to represent a challenge to nation-building today (Verkaaik, 2001).[56]

Ironically, and to the deep resentment of 'mohajirs', Sindhis and Bengalis alike, it was these local tensions, in the East and the West, that helped consolidate the *Punjabi* dominance of the country (Partha Ghosh, 2004). Power had been appropriated and monopolised by the West Pakistani Punjabi elite since the country's inception and although Bengalis outnumbered the totality living in the West, Punjabis dominated politically and economically throughout the period (Kabir, 1995; Low, 1991). East Pakistan's Bengali population were growing increasingly conscious of exploitation at the hands of their privileged sister[57]. But with greater linguistic and cultural similarities to the Punjabi elite, as well as the levels of education noted above, the social and cultural influence of 'mohajirs' only grew. They were used as tools in the perpetuation of Punjabi domination and their relationship with local Bengalis became increasingly fraught. In advocating a strong federal Pakistan Government they isolated themselves further from the indigenous population of East Pakistan, coming to be "known as conduits of the West Pakistani 'colonialists', who were not to be trusted" (Partha Ghosh, 2004. p.40).

3.2 Bengali nationalism

The reaction to the replacement of Bengali with Urdu in a number of political and educational institutions deepened feelings of resentment towards the new arrivals. Prior to 1947 few Urdu medium schools existed in East Pakistan but, between 1947 and 1970, the Pakistani Government encouraged 'mohajirs' to establish schools and colleges in the region (Ilias, 2003). This was despite the fact that Urdu was only spoken by 3.6% of the entire population (Gupta, 1974). The 'language movement' of 1952 was initially sparked by students who saw the imposition of another language as a threat to their economic potential, and it marked a growing determination to protect what they saw as attempts to undermine the region's cultural identity. Militant Bengali nationalism encouraged appeals

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[56] In the 1950s the influence of the community in the West began to decline, but feelings of estrangement found increasing political expression in the 1960s and 70s and relations between 'mohajirs' and Sindhis have been violent ever since (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000). They are still known locally as 'mohajirs' (while, as we will see in Chapter Five, this is not commonly the case in Bangladesh), as an ethnic divide is daily reproduced through the language of Partition. (For more on the Mohajir-Sindhi relations up until the present see Talbot, 1996, Partha Ghosh, 2004, Verkaaik, 2001).
[57] As the Hindustan Times reported on the 19th September 1947, most Bengalis believed that the Punjabis had "stepped into the shoes of the outgoing masters".

to a common linguistic identity to unite Bengalis against their rulers. Bangla history, literature and culture were called upon by certain political parties to strengthen their political cause. The 'mohajir' population had played a significant part in the social and cultural activities that contributed to the language's renaissance (Ilias, 2003). Their on-going commitment to the Urdu language, in the face of growing nationalist feeling, further angered Bengalis.

Although 'mohajirs' had influenced the growth of Islamic politics in Pakistan[58] the language-based Bengali cultural nationalism of the 1950s and 60s began to displace Islamic solidarity (Partha Ghosh, 2004). In 1954 the United Front of political parties opposed to the Muslim League appeared in East Pakistan demanding provincial autonomy and economic equality for the region. Many 'mohajirs' continued to support the Muslim League based in Karachi, neglecting the local population's political aspirations, and further exacerbating divisions. As a result, from this point they began to be (derogatively) known as 'Biharis' among the local population (a term adopted by the Bangladeshi Government after the War in 1971) (Rahman and Van Schendel, 2004). That same year, the United Front won a landslide victory in East Pakistan, and Suhrawardi, a prominent East Pakistani politician, became Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Muslim League and the forces of Pakistani (Punjabi) Muslim nationalism were politically overwhelmed and language had emerged as the central unifying factor (Kabir, 1995). It had taken time for the dangers of political and economic polarisation to come to a head but the 1970 elections were the battleground in which they were to be fought. The 'Urdu-speaking population' of the East voted largely for conservative pro-Pakistan parties (Muslim League/Jamaat-i-Islami) against the regional forces of Bengal (Low, 1991). The Awami League won a clean sweep nonetheless, and the scene was set for the crisis of the following year.

3.3 The build up to war

As Hashmi (1998) observes, it may be difficult to understand why these migrants, who had no other home than Bangladesh, put their sole reliance in West Pakistan. However, having left their homes in search of a better future in Pakistan, some argue they had naturally a larger stake in the viability of the state, which explains, "their insistence on

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[58] At the core of which was anti-Indianess (just as Hindu refugees in India contributed to Hindu nationalism) (Partha Ghosh, 2004).

strengthening the forces that were supposed to help build Pakistan's unity, namely, Urdu, Islam, and a strong central government" (Partha Ghosh, 2004, p.66). Not only had they been stigmatised as exploitative agents of Punjabi domination since their arrival, but they were now not sure of getting equal citizenship rights in the event of the emergence of Bangladesh. With increasing rumours about mass killings of Bengalis they had been hailed as conspirators of the Pakistan military 'junta.' Some clearly were, but by the end of the 1960s cultural and linguistic tensions had reached such a height that non-conformist 'Urdu-speakers' were also failing to express solidarity with Bengal.

In 1971 when the Pakistani ruler Yahya Khan reneged on his promise to convene the National Assembly (which in light of their electoral success, would have been dominated by East Pakistani members), 'Biharis' were attacked in the East as 'stooges' of Pakistani domination (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000). There were clashes on the street following the event, with deaths on both sides. Even before the Pakistani military crackdown on the 25th March 1971 there were cases of mob frenzy against the 'Bihari' Muslims and several thousands were reportedly killed in attacks by alleged supporters of the Awami League (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000)[59]. It is quite likely that these incidents came in direct response to the arming of the 'Biharis' by the Pakistani authorities. They were organized into the infamous paramilitary 'Peace Committees' and 'Razakars'[60], who are thought to have been responsible for numerous massacres of Bengali Freedom Fighters[61]. Unsurprisingly reprisals against them escalated, and when the Awami League was outlawed and Sheikh Mujibur was arrested attacks increased (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000). 'Urdu-speakers' in East Pakistan were now in a precarious situation. As suspicion mounted, the words of Major Ziaur Rahman, the future president of Bangladesh, sealed the community's fate: "Those who speak Urdu are also our enemies because they support the Pakistan army; we will crush them". Allegedly when his troops brought 'Bihari' prisoners before him on the 28th March of that year, he was heard saying, "Take the men out and shoot them" and with women, "you can do what you like" (Hashmi, 1998, p.13/14). Cultural, linguistic, economic and political tensions culminated in the Liberation War of 1971.

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[59] "Under the leadership of those Bengalis who had an eye on 'Bihari' property, Bengali peasants (and) soldiers…let loose a reign of terror" (Hashmi, 1998 p.402).
[60] Associated with many of the most brutal atrocities committed by the Pakistani forces during the War. Although literally meaning 'volunteer', the term 'razakar' carries the meanings 'traitor'/'collaborator' in everyday parlance and is therefore used as a term of abuse in reference to 'Urdu-speakers' in general.
[61] 'Bihari ghettos' are said to have formed the base for the operations of pro-Pakistani fundamentalist groups such as those that carried out the massacres of Bengali intellectuals in 1971. As Khan (1999, p.111) observes, "By attacking this group, the Biharis were in fact attacking the idea of a secular state and the architects of a modern democracy".

4. The Liberation of Bangladesh

As Tan and Kudaisya (2000) observe, religion had failed to provide the unity promised in 1947. The war lasted for nine months, but without Indian intervention it could have continued for much longer. By this stage, casualties were already unprecedentedly high. The population of Dhaka city was reduced by one third as troops and armoured vehicles entered firing shots at civilians, and continued to do so until the end of the War (Kamuluddin, 1985). It has been suggested that between March and December of 1971 the Pakistani army killed around three million Bengalis, although figures remain highly contested. In addition, over one third of East Pakistan's seventy five million people are thought to have been displaced. Nearly ten million people took refuge in India during the nine months of fighting and the UN estimate sixteen million people were displaced *within* the country's borders (Kamuluddin, 1985; Kosinski and Maudood, 1985). In 1972 some returned to their homes, although the precise number is unknown.

Twenty four years after religious nationalism liberated the Indian state from British colonial rule a re-imagined cultural nation emerged in East Bengal. Despite the deaths, and the displacement, Liberation nonetheless signified the success of a sub-national narrative over the received 'national' wisdom of Pakistan (Tan and Kudaisya, 2000). The secular and democratic constitution of the new state, adopted after Liberation, was hailed as the final 'homecoming' of Bengali Muslims.[62] As Partha Ghosh (2004) emphasizes, however, the creation of Bangladesh did not solve the problem of nation-building in the region. In the beginning it was thought that Bangladeshi nationalism, built on pillars of democracy, nationalism, secularism and socialism, would be progressive enough to accommodate the interests and identities of all ethnic and religious groups, but that was to severely underestimate the deeply felt post-war resentment. Memories of the brutal and unprecedented repression from the Pakistani military forces and the thousands of Bengalis killed or forced to abandon their homes would not disappear overnight.

4.1 Trouble in Dhaka

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[62] Although, according to Roy (2001), with the assissination of the 'father of the nation' (Sheikh Mujib) euphoric believers in the secular 'Bengali' identity were stunned into silence, and the restoration of political Islam began.

Alongside the extraordinary Bengali casualties, tens of thousands of 'Biharis' also lost

their lives in the period leading up to the conflict, and more in the years that followed

(Paulsen, 2006). After the war the entire 'Urdu-speaking community' were branded

enemy collaborators and socially ostracised. Every Bengali family had suffered its losses

and 'Biharis' were the natural target of revenge. Thousands were arrested or executed,

while others, having been dispossessed by the state[63], were forced to flee (Paulsen, 2006).

As one interviewee explained, the trouble began on the very day that Liberation was

declared:

> On the 16th December 1971 the trouble started in areas where Urdu-speakers were
> a minority, areas like Dhaka city, old Dhaka...Those Hindu Bengalis that (had) left
> after Partition came back at that time...and got their houses, there was no
> resistance...And then seeing this happen, many local people from Old Dhaka who
> were Bengali started militarising, and taking houses from the Urdu-speaking
> people... (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

He explains how the violence against Urdu-speakers and the displacement it brought

with it, spread to other areas of the city:

> In a short period the Urdu-speaking dominated locality became Bengali
> dominated...in and around Mohammadpur area which was 80% Urdu-speaking at
> the time (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

Some, like Mr Islam, were able to find shelter in the house of a friend; others had fewer

connections to rely on, or connections with less to offer. These people made their way to

the areas of the city considered the safest (in part due to their proximity to army

cantonments and in part due to the numbers of 'Urdu-speakers' living there) where the

temporary shelters were growing in size. As one 'Urdu-speaker' from Dhaka explained,

he was unable to reach his relatives because of the danger involved in making the

journey, the nearest refugee settlement was his only choice:

> During 1971 there were many horrible situations. Mukti Juddhas (Freedom
> Fighters) were our enemy, they killed many of us. Not only Lal kuthi (Dhaka) but
> in surrounding areas like Amin bazaar (just outside Dhaka) where many Biharis

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[63] The Vested Property Act of the early years of Pakistan (reinforced in the promulgation of Enemy
Property Custody and Registration Order of 1965) was also not withdrawn with the creation of
Bangladesh, but given a new lease of life. Properties belonging to 'Biharis' were occupied by the state using
legal mechanisms designed to dispose of abandoned property, largely through the 'Bangladesh Abandoned
Property Order' of 1972 (Paulsen, 2006). As Partha Ghosh (2004) argues, not only did this seriously
disadvantage minority communities but it did nothing to help to ease old wounds.

were living in those days. Three trucks of Mukti Juddhas captured the whole place and they started the killings. At last we moved from there. Some army personnel came and saved us and they told us to move to Mirpur section 12 (an 'Urdu-dominated' area), we followed the instruction and came here. There was no food, no security...No one rescued their house in my locality because it was completely overrun...we had no other choice…we had relatives outside but...Urdu-speakers couldn't move freely, there were check-posts of the Mukti Bahini (Freedom Fighters)[64] everywhere (Yusuf, 'insider', around 70, Dhaka).

The army personnel he refers to were possibly Indian, although they may have been representatives of the ICRC who had been providing refuge for several thousands of people within neutralised zones of the city from the 9th December. Another interviewee, caught on the wrong side of Dhaka explains:

I couldn't leave the house…I remember the bombing…At that time there was no place for 'Urdu-speakers' in Bangladesh. The Freedom Fighters took us all to Mirpur 1 to kill us, me and the rest of my family, but we managed to escape with the help of some Englishmen. The Englishmen came and helped to rescue us, and took us to my mother-in-law's house…but after 6/7 years this house was occupied as well. At that time we moved to the camp. And the Englishmen helped us a lot (Sharin Khatun, 'insider', around 60, Dhaka).

Sharin's story is unusual in that her mother-in-law's house was occupied so late, but the conclusion is the same as that told by others. Many like her moved several times as money for rent dried up, or friends or relatives could no longer support them. Other respondents, particularly in the areas around Mirpur, spoke of the ICRC (the 'Englishmen') as having saved their lives. As 'Urdu-speakers' were displaced, or Urdu-dominated areas became unliveable, the 'Englishmen' and the emerging refugee settlements were all they had left:

They cut down the water supply and did not allow any food into Mohammadpur...most of us moved into the camp. That was a better place for the Biharis (Parvez, 'outsider', around 60, Dhaka).

4.2 Dispossession in Dhaka

As I gradually became aware, the camps were not a 'better place' for all the 'Biharis'. Why some sections of the 'community' were dispossessed while others were not soon became apparent:

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[64] 'Mukti Bahini' literally means 'Liberation Fighter' while 'Mukti Juddhas' means 'Liberation Warrior' ('Mukhti Juddha' means 'Liberation War'). Both terms reference the same group.

Noor ('outsider', 19, Dhaka): Our family never lived in the camps, our grandfather owned this house.
VR: How were you able to keep it during the War?
Noor: We had two houses before the War, one house was lost but my grandfather was a contractor in the Pakistani army and he had lots of Bengali friends so we were able to save this house.

Unsurprisingly 'Bengali friends' in good positions were immensely valuable in the aftermath of War:

I went to India during the War and returned in 1971. I was confined for one year in my house. (But) we had some Bengali friends who were in a good position in the Government so they saved us…When the Pakistani army came I helped some Bengalis, that's why they helped me during the War. Only four people in this street retained their houses, it used to be 100% Urdu-speaking... (Ali Reza, 'outsider', 44, Dhaka).

Mohammad Ali relates a similar tale, but in a good deal more detail. Again, social and economic capital feature heavily, but here as the source of vulnerability as well as ultimate protection:

Md.Ali ('outsider', 50+, Dhaka): My father was a businessperson, we had a ration business - we had shops in Mohammadpur and Mirpur. When the War was over our four warehouses were looted and burnt by the miscreants. We lost the equivalent of 1.5 crore taka (15 million taka – around £140,000). My father also had a transport business. We had four public buses and two trucks and all the properties were looted. After that a Bengali friend of my father came forward and was supposed to save our house. He said he would protect the building and occupied the first storey. My father believed him and allowed him to live there, but after some days he occupied the house....although my father said he had to leave the house after some days or pay rent, he refused. He kidnapped me saying I was a 'razakar'. He kept me for 17 or 18 days and told me to write letters to my father. I wrote letters to my father several times and my father gave him money all the time. When my father did not have any money left he told the kidnapper to kill me because he could not give more to him.
VR: How were you able to survive?
Md. Ali: My father was well known; we were a well-known family. On the 18th day of the kidnapping I was spotted by a Bengali well-wisher who knew my father, he came forward and saved me from the kidnappers. He freed me, which was courageous, and took me home.
VR: What happened to the house?
Md. Ali: In 1973, again my father told them to vacate the house, they did not respond again, and not only that, they also filed a fake case in the judge court. In the case he wrote that he had given money in advance to buy the house but we had not handed it over. My father appealed...We won the case in the judge court, and

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from the high court, and in the year 1999 we got the house back. Nowadays the value of the house is about one billion taka.

Clearly, as the above extract demonstrates, these kinds of connections were something not all 'Urdu-speakers' could claim. Social status and particular forms of social capital were evidently linked:

> (My relatives) who live outside the camp have always lived outside…My uncle was a journalist who married a Bengali woman, the daughter of a famous poet…They didn't face any problems keeping their house because they had lots of Bengali friends at the time and they were practising Bangla a lot (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

As Shamim suggests, it was not just status but a degree of socio-cultural integration that formulated the requisite connections. Those with enough money or the 'right friends' left Bangladesh altogether, for safety overseas:

> Those who were educated people, solvent people, they left Bangladesh and those who could not go, they didn't have the certain amount of money to go, simply they stayed. I personally met a few people in Germany, Urdu-speaking people, recently (Mr Amal, Bengali poet and Freedom Fighter, Dhaka).

Others with connections used them to rent a property or find a relative or friend with whom they could stay as an alternative:

> I had a lot of Bengali friends in 1971 and I walked around with them with no problem because we saved each other...I was able to rent a house after the war because the landlord was a (Bengali) friend of mine. I was a local community figure at the time, so everyone knew me; this made it easier (Osama, 'outsider', 53, Dhaka).

Even those with friends who could help remained vulnerable, and difficult financial decisions had to be made:

> I was a tenant so when the landlord sold the building and went to Pakistan, I had to leave and preferred at that time to live with a friend. But then he (the friend) went to Pakistan so I was once again forced to pay rent. I insisted I didn't want to go to the camps as I wasn't sure it would allow me to come out and survive (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

Renting was an option for those with sufficient resources. As Mr Islam explains, those who were rich and those who were poor were both vulnerable to dispossession; it was simply the options available to them if that occurred that differed:

> It was those areas (of Dhaka) that were economically poor areas that were first attacked by the village people in 1971. These people were pushed out, and left their houses there and took shelter in schools and empty places, and then the ICRC came and built the camps...Many people came from outside Dhaka and they had two options, they either found shelter in the house of a relative or if they had no relatives here or their relatives could not take any more refugees, first they went to the mosque, then to the graveyard etc, then to Townhall camp or Market camp...Those living in their houses in Iqbal road etc (the best areas of Mohammadpur) were asked to give up their property or be killed. Those who were rich, who owned their houses...But these people didn't go to the camp they went to Pakistan or India. The brokers were looking for people with money, not poor people. Property helped them at that time to escape (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

For some, a hasty sale was possible. Many of the people I spoke to sold their houses at a half, a quarter, a tenth of their value, and used that money to avoid the degradation of the camps.

> They were paying very little for the houses at the time, becuase money was in such short supply, people were so desperate. If the house cost 1 lakh taka (100,000 tk) they were giving 1000 taka for it, and the owner had to accept it because they needed the money so much. Urdu-speakers couldn't get to their businesses at that time, or their offices, so they needed money to live off (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

Some were luckier. As this quotation demonstrates, serious social capital represented a route to safety:

> ...One example is the Morning News Editor who was Urdu-speaking but had a link with Sheikh Mujib because he was the editor of an English daily. He had no child, just a wife, and he had a big house. It was Mujibur who managed to sell his house, so he could get a good amount of money for it, and then he was able to go to Pakistan (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

All over the country the story was the same, 'social capital' and connections saved 'Urdu-speakers' from the camps. Saidpur however was an interesting exception.

4.3 Trouble in Saidpur

The worst attacks on 'Urdu-speakers' took place in the north-western region of Rajshahi where the greatest number of 'Urdu-speakers' outside Dhaka had settled. Towns such as Parbatipur, Dinajpur and Shantahar are famous for the horrific massacres they witnessed. In fact, in Dec 1971 the preferential treatment 'mohajirs' had received with regards to railway employment may have come back to haunt them:

> Indian hands were involved in the massacre of 'Biharis'. They wanted to cripple the communication system...they thought they could better establish a link with North Bengal if the 'Urdu-speakers' were not there because all the railway drivers etc were Urdu-speaking and they thought the 'Urdu-speakers' would be pro-Pakistani. So it was very important to India to destroy the Pakistani army's communication system and that was why the killing was done. Zia Rahman was aware of this (however) and he wanted to keep Bangladesh away from the domination of Indian railways or (the) politics of Indian blood so he thought the 'Biharis' should not be disturbed and he allowed them to stay in Saidpur (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

Whether the explanation is accurate or not, it is true that of Rajshahi's railway towns Saidpur was the only one that remained relatively safe throughout the war. Close to an army cantonment and allegedly protected for that reason, Saidpur was also a majority Urdu-speaking area. Sheer strength in numbers saved many people's lives. As one informant explained, "as they were the majority it was not possible to wipe them out" (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka). Consequently, when the killing started in the surrounding areas, refugees flooded to the sanctuary it provided:

> We were scared for our lives. We were Pakistani supporters and had helped the Pakistani army. We wanted to save Pakistan. That's why we left Parbatipur. We were under threat (Naim, 'insider', around 60, Saidpur).

As families were forced to walk the distance to safety, some relatives were left behind; others were lost along the way:

> Tamana ('insider', around 80, Saidpur): There was so much bombing and fighter planes moved around us. Suddenly at night people started shouting to move from that place. We followed them and escaped from there. After that what happened in Parbatipur I don't know.
> VR: Did you leave any relatives there at the time?
> Tamana: We left so many relatives who were killed…my aunties and uncles were killed. Two brothers-in-law who worked for the railway were killed at that time. One was killed in Shantahar and the other one in Siarajganj.
> VR: How many of you travelled from Parbatipur to Saidpur?

> Tamana: Me and my four children...I lost my husband there. My father was with us. My husband was afraid about the situation. He was in tension, how he would rescue the whole family, because it was a problem all over Parbatipur. He told me to keep the children in a safe place. One night he was telling us big trouble is on our doorstep, a very bad thing is going to happen with us. So, be careful....Before we left Parbatipur he died there, from the stress.
> VR: Did your children and father make it safely?
> Tamana: Yes, we made it safely. I lost two of my children when we arrived.

Lives were lost, and entire livelihoods were abandoned, in the desperate scramble to escape:

> Ayub Khan gave us some lands in Phulbari to cultivate and (for) living but it was occupied by the Bengalis after 1971…we left that place having nothing except the clothes we had on our bodies, nothing except our shirts and our lunghis. At that time our situation was most awful. We left the place with a fear to be killed. We ran away…We didn't have any problems there. We had lots of good friends, they told us not to leave the place. They said don't leave we will rescue you. But we couldn't, we had too much fear for our lives, we had to leave...We left our place with so many cows and lots of growing crops….I lost my father, uncle and cousin (there) (Hussein, 'insider', 65, Saidpur).

Under the Pakistani dictator Ayub Khan, land, loans and preferential treatment in employment had helped incoming migrants establish themselves after 1947 (Sen, 1999). But their status as agents of the oligarchical West cast them in a very different light in the Independent Bangladesh. They were dependent entirely on the help of neighbours and in Saidpur, as in Dhaka, those with homes took in those without:

> I remember everything...One day I went out from my house and found there was an announcement to go back to your home, within a moment bombing will happen here. After some time bombing was started and the first bomb was dropped in the airport, in the airport 150 people were killed though they stayed in a bunker. We had a bunker too in our house. In Saidpur, by the grace of Allah there were no big problems but we had lots of people from different parts of the country they moved here to save themselves...we shared our bed and food with them. Suddenly we found that we didn't have any food left for ourselves because we had given it to outsiders. That period lasted about six months, after that the ICRC arrived here and started distributing relief for the victims of War (Delwar, 'insider', aged 45-50, Saidpur).

4.4. Dispossession in Saidpur

The ICRC gradually established the camps in Saidpur to house the incomers and as a number of residents explain, "the segregation started at that time" (Mr Islam,

'outsider', 50+, Dhaka). A distinction between the 'Urdu-speakers' already living there and the incomers who joined them is made visible by the camps today:

> Look here we have two categories of people. One who were originally Saidpur dwellers their number was just 100,000. And the other is migrants from different parts of Bangladesh who came here to save their lives. During the war of liberation people ran to save their lives and took shelter in Saidpur. The ICRC made these camps for protecting people (Naim, 'insider', around 60, Saidpur).[65]

Significantly, however, most Saidpur *locals* retained their houses, as one explains,

> The majority of Urdu-speakers in Saidpur have always lived outside the camps. They have kept the homes they had when they moved here in 1947. There are about 19,000 (Urdu-speaking) people in 22 camps in Saidpur and about 60,000 ('Urdu-speakers') living outside....some of those that kept their homes were also tortured, looted and killed but managed to keep their houses (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', around 50, Saidpur).

Once the hospitality of these locals ran out, incoming refugees found vacant properties to occupy. And if all else failed they moved into the emerging camps:

> We used to live at Alam Press, an abandoned property. It was a damaged house… a vacant place (but) we had to pay rent….we couldn't afford it anymore so we moved into the camp (Hussein, 65 'insider', Saidpur).

From here they began to pick up the pieces of their lives. As one interviewee who was around ten years old at the time explains below, with everything lost there was no time for education. Any petty work that could be found took its place:

> Slowly everything settled down. A new time had arisen. Young girls were in trouble. They were being taken away from their parents.[66] We had lots of difficulties...We had three ration shops here which were looted by the locals. We had cows that were stolen too. I ended my education and started different jobs for survival (Delwar, 'insider', around 50, Saidpur).

Delwar and his family retained their property immediately after the war, but as his mother explains:

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[65] Unlike in Dhaka where many camp-dwellers were displaced from the city itself, those that remain in the camps in Saidpur are (largely) descended from those displaced elsewhere.

[66] Girls raped during the war were sent away so as not to further shame the family. Such issues are still not easily discussed today and interviewees rarely said more.

> We had our own properties in Bengali Pur in Saidpur. My Uncle sold our
> properties after the war. He went to Pakistan. He left us alone here. We asked
> people what we should do and they said come here (Farhana, 70-80 years old,
> 'insider', Saidpur).

In an uncertain time decisions were made, very often by men, that didn't always take other family members into consideration. Women were particularly vulnerable and Farhana was abandoned by her family. With no relatives left to turn to, the camps were the only option. But having made it to the camps, people continued to struggle. They had been displaced for the second time, but this time within the land that had become their home. It was "the migration of borders over people, and not simply…of people over borders" (Brubaker, 2005 p.3) that constituted their displacement. In 1972, 735,180 were recorded as housed in 66 temporary camps around the country (Sen, 1999).

5. The formation of the camps and 'repatriation'

Thirty five years later, in 2007, a local NGO recorded 116 'Urdu-speaker settlements' in Bangladesh, housing 151,368 residents in total (Al Falah, 2007). Thirty-eight of these (with a population of 89,899) were located in Dhaka Division, fifty-three (with a population of 43,227) in the north-western Rajshahi Division, seventeen in Chittagong Division (16,050), and seven in Khulna Division (3,291).[67] The 100,000 or so 'Urdu-speakers' who live outside the camps are predominantly located in areas close to these camps in towns such as Dhaka, Saidpur and Chittagong. These 'camps' however took many years to develop into the form in which they are found today.

5.1 The ad hoc search for shelter

Built as 'temporary shelters', on land left vacant, these spaces have names that allude to their origins. In fact, in Dhaka only one camp, Geneva Camp was formally built by the ICRC, as one interviewee explained:

> The others are not camps, just empty places that were settled, like schools,
> markets, town-halls etc…Market Camp came about because at the time the market

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[67] The fifth 'Division' is Sylhet where no settlements are located. Rajshahi Division borders India's north-eastern states and, as mentioned, a great many migrants from these states in particular established themselves there around the time of Partition.

was under construction, so they had just built the foundation, which was occupied informally by the refugees, before they started splitting it all up into sections (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

'Cinema Hall Camp', 'Godown (warehouse) Camp', 'Football Ground Camp', 'Madrasah Camp' are names that attest to the desperate ad hoc search for shelter. In what is today known as 'Muslim camp' in Dhaka one interviewee described how such spaces were claimed:

> My elder brother broke the lock of this school and we got shelter here. He formed this camp; it used to be a Muslim school (Md. Ali, 'insider', aged 44, Dhaka).

Mohammad Ali above gives just one example, but as the Chief of Mission at the ICRC explains, the camps emerged in a number of different ways:

> People very often sort of voted on their feet…and they gathered at another place, maybe not the most ideal place but this is where they are and you then do what has to be done so they can have the facilities in these temporary quarters. The ICRC worked very very hard and also the authorities to help build temporary facilities, bamboo huts, latrines, and other things, for the temporary settlement of these persons, that they had sufficient facilities to be able to function in sanitary conditions (Ralph Finder, CoM ICRC, Dhaka).

Mr Finder emphasizes the temporary nature of the original settlements, but thirty-eight years later the camps remain. The emergency conditions under which sites were chosen, and the impermanence of the original structures, have generated problems ever since. They developed on land belonging to 'Urdu-speakers' as well as land set aside by the Government, and the ownership of such spaces remains very much contested:

> It's very difficult to see today what these camps actually are…some of them…were houses or areas owned by the 'Bihari community', and then you gathered around and it became bigger and bigger. The government put at disposal a number of (plots of) Government land, under railway authority…(but) in a sense you have two systems, for instance in Dhaka the 'kilo camp' (was) where the Bangladeshi armed forces set up a camp in a former barracks of the Pakistani armed forces. You have Mirpur camps which were basically a tract of land owned by the Biharis, Bihari businessmen…(or as) many of the Biharis worked with the railway authorities, the Pakistani railway authorities…there were big sort of housing areas, housing camps, barracks… (Ralph Finder, CoM ICRC, Dhaka).

On these different plots of land the temporary shelters he describes slowly developed into more permanent settlements. Bamboo structures built by the ICRC became concrete rooms with tin roofs, and in more affluent camps, such as Geneva Camp and Staff Quarters Camp in Dhaka, some are four stories tall today. Sitting in a cramped room, in a three story concrete house, with a narrow winding staircase to connect them, and a small balcony overlooking a bustling street below, one interviewee observed:

> I was born in this house, in Geneva Camp. We built (it) ourselves; it was just a bamboo construction before that (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

Over almost forty years these simple bamboo structures have developed into situated local economies of enormous variety. And with high birth rates and growing populations, for many 'Urdu-speakers' like Shamim life in the camps is all they have known.

5.2 'Repatriation' to Pakistan

Immediately after the war, the camps were considered temporary stop gaps until a decision could be made about whether people should be 'repatriated' to Pakistan or settled somewhere in Bangladesh. Until this point escape to the security of ('West') Pakistan was only an option for those with the kind of social and economic capital discussed earlier. It is no wonder therefore that it became so significant in the minds of those without. In 1972 the Provisional Government stepped in, and with the help of the ICRC, residents were asked to choose between Bangladesh and so-called 'repatriation' to Pakistan. At that time attacks on 'Biharis' were widespread and the Government intended to minimize killings (Partha Ghosh, 2004), while relieving themselves of an inconvenient burden. As the Chief of Mission of the ICRC explained, during this period pressure on the 'Bihari community' was high:

> We set up a very very large delegation operation in Bangladesh...the first part of the operation was the traditional ICRC mandate of prisoners of war, and there we are talking something like 90,000. The second thing...was this group of people the Biharis that were then residing in what was to become Bangladesh... So the ICRC in traditional sense started registration of Biharis (and of Bengali people in Pakistan) and with the agreement of different authorities....repatriation of these populations took place....In the aftermath of the ceasefire...there was quite a lot of pressure on the Bihari community residing in Bangladesh. And there was a need for them to be registered and provided with different types of protection...(the)

> ICRC (had) closed down our delegation (in 1976)…It is very clear that in the whole period (1971-1976) the Bihari community in Bangladesh was subjected to a lot of harassment and intimidation, and outright violence in the immediate aftermath of the first years of war so we were working overtime to register, to intervene with the authorities to protect people and so on (Ralph Finder, CoM ICRC, Dhaka).

At this time sixty percent of these individuals applied for 'repatriation' to Pakistan through the ICRC and Sheikh Mujib accepted their plea. Pakistan's Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto however accepted some but not all and over the years 'repatriation' was never more than modest (Partha Ghosh, 2004)[68]. At the end of the war West Pakistan retrieved its prisoners of War, leaving behind the remaining 'Biharis'. They were neither needed nor wanted by Pakistan. As the World Times reported in August 1979:

> Pakistan is falling over itself to avoid taking responsibility for the fate of the 200,000, many of whom feel understandably and predictably uncomfortable in the land whose creation they fought to frustrate…the successive Governments of Pakistan…have begun ingenious campaigns of genealogical nit-picking. They argue that 200,000 Urdu-speaking non-Bengalis are not Pakistanis, even honorarily, since they did not migrate to Bangladesh from Pakistan but from India (Kamaluddin, 1985, p.229).

The Indian Government meanwhile maintained that as they migrated on religious grounds alone their repatriation must be reached through negotiation between Bangladesh and Pakistan (Kamaluddin, 1985). Unwanted in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, they were condemned to live in a 'stateless' limbo. For more than two decades the 'Bihari' diaspora in the UK and the US attempted to intervene to get the 'Biharis' 'repatriated' to Pakistan, and by 1994 it was thought that a total of one hundred and sixty three thousand had left through formal channels. Samaddar (1999) has suggested that as many as five hundred thousand migrated illegally to West Bengal, from where many have settled in India, some travelling on to Pakistan themselves. However a further two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand (camp and non-camp based) have remained in Bangladesh ever since and, with severe overcrowding and poor sanitation, they currently live in dismal conditions and suffer from extreme forms of social discrimination (Ilias, 2003).

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[68] 83,000 under the Agreement of 1973, 108,000 under the Delhi Agreement of 9th Apirl 1974, around 6,000 again in 1984 and 2,500 when Nawaz Sharif came to power in Pakistan in 1990 (Partha Ghosh, 2004).

6. The legal status of 'Urdu-speakers' 1972-today

It has been argued that the 'mohajir' formations of East and West Pakistan had their beginnings in the killings of Muslims in Bihar in 1946. For those who fled to East Bengal, 1971 interrupted the homecoming Partition represented and "mapped out huge numbers...into the statelessness of 66 refugee camps" (Papiya Ghosh, 2007, p.xxxvi). From 1972-2008 very little changed for those in the camps. Disenfranchised, isolated, lacking leadership, their legal status remained undetermined. They became known as 'Stranded Pakistanis' and were left in limbo.

In the aftermath of 1971 they were not officially recognised as refugees by UNHCR. Not having migrated to Bengal 'for fear of persecution' (a position many would challenge), they effectively *became* refugees in the country in which many had resided for 60 years or more (Sen, 2000).[69] As internally displaced people, however, the community's rights were equally opaque. The definition of IDPs is in itself descriptive rather than legal (as opposed to the term 'refugee') and a special legal status for IDPs has been denied on the basis that they are entitled to the same rights as citizens or permanent residents of the state in which they have been displaced (Mooney, 2005). But, as the situation in Bengal reveals, very often this is patently not the case. UNHCR's Guiding Principles state that IDPs should not be discriminated against "in the enjoyment of rights and freedoms on the ground that they are displaced" (Brun, 2003). As we will see in Chapter Six however, for thirty-six years their very residence in the camps was used to deny their eligibility to citizenship.

As my fieldwork revealed, not all those 'Urdu-speakers' in East Bengal actually ended up in the camps in 1972. Not only did a section of the population retain their houses but many of these 'outsiders' were found to have been accessing citizenship *throughout the period*. As has already been noted and to which the drop in numbers above attests a further proportion of 'camp-dwellers' have been able to move outside the camps in recent years (those 'in between'). How the distinctions of 'insider' 'outsider' and those 'in between' are articulated by 'Urdu-speakers' themselves, and what this represents in terms

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[69] It has been noted that the definition of a refugee laid down by the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees is not suited to the contemporary global context (Lewis and Neal, 2005). As Sen (2000) observes, the creation of Bangladesh denationalised 'Biharis' and therefore raised questions regarding their status as 'de facto stateless refugees'.

of a coherent 'Urdu' or 'Bihari' collective identity, will be examined in Chapter Five. Through the forced cycle of dispossession that 1947 began, the discursive production of those displaced in the creation of the nation drew internal margins that made and unmade citizens within. Such processes have had a lasting impact; cementing the role of property in constructions of citizenship in the region and dividing 'communities' along civil lines. Although the 2008 High Court ruling has since granted citizenship to the entire 'Urdu-speaking community', the camp, as the visible expression of those pushed to the periphery, remains a space of contradiction and complexity. After almost forty years of segregation, for these individuals it is unclear yet what this newfound legal status might mean. The following chapter reviews the broad and diverse literature associated, with a view to locating the case within a number of overlapping fields and discourses.

CHAPTER FOUR - CATEGORIES AND CLAIMS: LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The case of the Urdu-speaking community not only requires us to examine the relationships between states, nations and rights but also to consider language, memory and identity, as well as contemporary debates on the nature of 'diaspora', displacement and belonging. The bodies of literature which have shaped this project are outlined below and I draw on them to develop the conceptual framework for the thesis, including the concept of 'political space'. Much of the literature on rights, integration and citizenship among minority/migrant communities presumes a Euro-American context.[70] Equally, literature on the postcolonial state and cultural pluralism in South Asia often derives from India. Considering the specificity of Bangladeshi nationalism, state formation and identities, this is similarly problematic.[71] Given the relative paucity of work on these questions from Bangladesh however (and I might add Pakistan), and while bearing in mind the vast differences between these two contexts, I will use theoretical tools from the Indian literary tradition to develop some insights into postcolonial South Asian state formation and political identities. Likewise, in examining European theoretical approaches *alongside* subaltern and postcolonial perspectives, I hope to overcome some of the limitations of each, challenging established tensions that keep them apart and exploring the issues in broader terms.

1. The State, the Nation, and its Citizens

Over the past two centuries our conception of society, and our notion of citizenship, has been nationally bound and territorially fixed (Urry, 2000 p.189; Mann, 1993).[72] The basis of the common bond between citizens has been assumed to be the nation-state, a restricted and delimited political community with a shared history and prospective future (Nash, 2009). As such the state remains central to our understanding of society, as the source of order and stability. It occupies a (more or less discrete) space held loosely together by that which has been described as 'the logic of the state' (Blom Hansen, 2001;

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[70] As does migration and refugee studies more generally (Partha Ghosh, 2004), although, as Samaddar (1999) notes, concerns regarding nationhood in South Asia are forcing a change.

[71] As Rahman and Van Schendel (2004) have observed, there has been a partition of academic communities between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and discourses have differed considerably between them.

[72] For 'post-national' perspectives and 'global citizenship' see Soysal, 1994, Habermas, 1998, Urry 2000, Mann, 1993, Sassen, 1996, Held and McGrew, 2001, 2003, Hardt and Negri, 2000 among others.

Goldberg, 2002)[73] and increasing interest has been directed towards the reproduction of such 'stateness' (Blom Hansen, 2001).[74] As Goldberg (2002) has argued the state does not acquire power, it is constructed through power, and crucial to this power is the capacity to categorize differently and hierarchically, to set aside by setting apart, and to exclude from state protection. In the words of Blom Hansen and Stepputat:

> The production of sovereignty through the nation and the state...presuppose and produce large numbers of poor, marginalised and ethnic others as outsiders, people who are not yet ready to become citizens or be included in the true political-cultural community (2005, p.36).

Samaddar (1999) argues that it is the border itself that creates the spatial imagery to fix the 'state' as if it were the spatial container of society, highlighting the contingency of the state's authority and control over the spatial domain. Naturalized in the 'production of the natural' on which statecraft depends, the border's instability ensures the contingency of internal boundaries, and the 'alien' problem becomes a problem of the interior. For many marginalized populations that fall outside those internal boundaries, "the slogan of universality is often a mask to cover the perpetuation of real inequalities" (Chatterjee, 2004, p.22; May, 2002). Some argue therefore that the pedagogical inclusiveness bound into the abstract notion of citizenship, cannot inherently deal with diversity, as behind the universal set of cultural values lies the representation of the dominant social group (Lowe, 1996)[75]. Premised on the idea of equality for all, exclusions are nonetheless sewn into the social fabric (Goldberg, 2002), and accepting as citizens those who float along the margins blurs the national understanding of society, of itself.

1.1 Rights and citizenship

Despite the fact that discussions of citizenship have been back in vogue for the last 15 years (Held, 1991; Soysal, 1994; Kymlicka, 1996; Habermas, 1998), the concept still escapes easy definition (Miller, 2000). In British Social Science, the broad and general definition of citizenship as 'membership in a socio-political community' remains popular,

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[73] In which the state contributes to our imagination of social cohesion both as an ideological concept as well as an organizing one (Goldberg, 2002).

[74] 'The performance of state', described as the attempt to make society worship itself and its own social order (Durkheim in Blom Hansen, 2001; Anderson, 1983; Gunew, 2004).

[75] In ignoring differences and similarities outside the narrow public sphere it is responsible for reinforcing the position of the privileged in society (Young in Dauvergne, 2000). Described as particularism masquerading as the universal (Taylor in May, 2002) it is attentive to particularism only in attempts to exclude (through migration law etc).

assuming as it does a given collectivity with pre-defined boundaries (Marshall, 1950; Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). Marshall described three categories of citizenship - civil, political and social – and debates concerning the citizenship of ethnic, racial or linguistic minorities such as the 'Urdu-speaking community' have developed in relation to all three.

Two dominant models are evident in the citizenship literature; one which emphasizes a 'formal' and legally coded status and another that articulates more 'substantive' dimensions of socio-political engagement – the social, cultural, political, or symbolic 'acts' that legal status make possible.[76] Although liberal theory still conceptualises citizenship in abstract and formalistic ways associated with the first, the liberal-communitarian philosophical debates of the 1970s and 80s brought wider attention to issues of 'identity' and 'participation' (Delanty, 2000; Bloemraad, 2000).[77] Kymlicka builds on liberalism's foundations to contend that it is impossible for minority communities to assert their individual rights if their cultural community is not protected. However, like other liberals he navigates the problem of protection through a commitment to 'tolerance' (Delanty, 2000) while the dominance of majority culture remains unquestioned. Communitarian theorists have gone further in defending cultural 'particularism' against liberalism's moral universalism, inciting criticism instead for reifying group boundaries and ghettoizing minorities from the 'mainstream' (Bloemraad, 2000, p.24; Taylor, 1994). In recent years civic republicanism has replaced the focus on identity, with a focus on participation (Miller, 2000), reversing the 'formal'/ 'substantive' dualism through discourses of 'active' or 'earned' citizenship (in which 'substantive' participation can become a means to access 'formal' legality). Such discourses are profoundly Euro-centric and, when considered in relation to the millions of 'non-status' individuals in countries such as Bangladesh, the scope of their applicability is severely challenged. A further strand, feminist citizenship, challenges all of these positions, and is of particular interest in contexts of disputed status. While liberals, communitarians and civic republicans all articulate citizenship as the expression of already autonomous citizens, constructed on the ideal of a homogenous society, here group difference is the starting point, and boundaries are not fixed or static but contested (Delanty, 2000).

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[76] "The latter is seen as a condition of possibility of the former" (Isin and Nielsen, 2008, p. 2).
[77] Kymlicka and Norman (1994) suggest that one reason for the explosive interest in citizenship during the 1990s was its relationship to both sides of the liberal-communitarian philosophical debates. It is intimately linked to individual entitlement (rights), while at the same time embodying attachment to particular community (identity) (Bloemraad, 2000, p.21).

The boundaries of citizenship are indeed constructed according to various, shifting, inclusionary and exclusionary criteria, which as Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992) show, relate not only to ethnic and racial divisions but also to those of class and gender, and construct citizenship in ideological, racialised, gendered forms that block access to some and allow it to others. Not only does the ability to cross borders vary according to class, nationality, religion, 'race' and gender (Yuval-Davis et al, 2005) but once in the country specific combinations of nationality laws may prevent certain immigrants from achieving full political rights, or leave them deprived of certain social rights (unable to claim welfare benefits from the state, for example). The requirement to prove wealth or financial status can also be used in place of national and racial quotas, revealing ways in which class differences may override ethnic and racial difference (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). As will be discussed in Chapter Six, other rules, (relating for example to the possession of property or an 'appropriate' address) may replace the requirement to demonstrate wealth, while continuing to function in ways that exclude on the grounds of class or status. Equally, concerns over rights to bring male spouses, receive child benefit, or confer citizenship on children highlight gendered limitations. These limitations, which underscore why the state cannot be regarded as a neutral universalistic institution, are considered further in Chapter Seven.[78] Representations, through the state (and the media), of 'the immigrant', 'refugee' (or 'stateless camp-dweller') as the homogenous subject/'problem', evacuated of subjectivity (Gail Lewis, 2005; Malkki, 1992) rarely address such nuances.

The legal institution's centrality in the enforcement of rights and obligations positions it as the battleground where efforts to redefine citizenship are played out (Sieder, 2001; Starr and Collier, 1989; Gearty, 2006), but no single legal framework exists to provide or deny access to the entitlements and responsibilities of membership of the polity. Citizenship law, migration law, social security law and labour law all overlap in highly complicated ways. Conceptual reification has concealed these complexities, abstracting, essentialising and masking the role of the state in citizenship's construction (Billig, 2003). As Ong (2006a, p.15) suggests, these naturalized understandings of citizenship have been rooted in a binary opposition between those who have it and those who don't; between

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[78] Kymlicka (in Bloemraad, 2000) suggests that the difference between 'ethnic' and 'civic' conceptions of citizenship is not culture versus contract but closed culture that excludes versus open culture or national identity that allows 'integration'. In the context of the arguments outlined above this is clearly an awkward position, assuming as it does a value-neutral, empty space called 'civic citizenship' to which everyone has access.

the rights of citizenship rooted in a national territory and a stateless condition outside the nation-state. However such binary oppositions are not useful in thinking about emergent spaces and situated variables (Ong, 2006b). Castles and Davidson (2000) discuss the importance of understandings of citizenship that recognise the real ambiguity of citizenship status. "Citizenship is not an either/or situation", it is characterised by blurred boundaries, discontinuities and fluidity (Castles and Davidson, 2000, p.103). The case in question exemplifies these inconsistencies and underscores the concept's limitations. As Sieder (2001, p.203) explains:

> Citizenship is often conceived of as a fixed and non-negotiable set of rights and obligations, such as those embodied in a written constitution. However it is in fact best understood as a dynamic process rather than a static juridical construct.

This is where the 'effectivity' of citizenship, as a status which is 'substantial' rather than merely 'formal', is distinctly drawn. As we will see, in Chapters Six and Seven, citizenship as a 'formal' status position is not always sufficient to guarantee 'effective' entitlement (Turner, 2001). As Ong (2006a) contends, formal citizenship by itself seldom guarantees that one will be able to participate in political life or receive equal treatment under the law. Talking of citizenship as if it were a concrete and bounded construct risks ignoring not only the *legal* barriers outside the narrow framework of citizenship law (Dauvergne, 2000) but also, I would contend, the *social* barriers that exclude in subtle but often highly institutionalised ways. As the final chapter confirms, ideas of belonging and sameness can be integral to the ability to claim the legal status one holds and consequently "citizenship will take on two different shapes, the formal and the real" (Chatterjee, 2004, p.4). Insufficient attempts have been made to examine the complex processes through which each play out.

Ong (2006a) argues that this complex process is further challenged by contemporary economic forces and technologies of state. She suggests that, in a 'neoliberal age', market-driven calculations are being introduced in the management of populations and the administration of special spaces. Defining 'the exception'[79] as an extraordinary departure in policy that can be used to include as well as exclude, she argues that the 'neoliberal exception' is at work in sites of transformation all over the world. Neoliberal

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[79] Carl Schmitt famously defined the 'political exception' as an extraordinary decision to depart from generalized political normativity to intervene in the logics of ruling and being ruled (Ong, 2006a). The term was also used by Georgio Agamben in work which will be examined in more detail later.

governmentality, she contends, results from the infiltration of market-driven truths and calculations into the domain of politics. In the age of neoliberalism, therefore, the elements we think of as creating citizenship – rights, duties, territoriality, nation – are becoming disarticulated and rearticulated with forces set into motion by the market. In this new landscape therefore, mobile individuals who possess human capital or expertise may be highly valued and able to exercise citizenship-like claims in diverse locations, while citizens judged to be without such 'tradable competence' become devalued and vulnerable to exclusion. 'The exception' therefore represents the

> Interplay between technologies of governing and disciplining, of inclusion and
> exclusion, of giving value or denying value to human conduct (Ong, 2006a, p.5).

At the turn of the 21st century, citizenship became a major new area of debate (Delanty, 2000). Economic and cultural globalisation, the growth of sub-state nationalisms and new forms of identity politics have, however, considerably altered its complexion (Blom Hansen and Stepputat, 2001). In such a context it has been argued that the nation-state has been eroded and nationality is no longer a defensible principle around which to organise. The academic community, policy-makers and governments have been forced to re-think notions of nationhood and belonging. In light of these developments, arguments for 'postnational' citizenship (Soysal, 1994) have emerged.[80] While some scholars argue that processes of globalization, migration and settlement have produced forms of citizenship law, status, rights and identity that are altered to meet new times (Nash, 2009)[81], others suggest that these very concepts are now becoming irrelevant. It has been suggested, by scholars of both the right and the left, that traditional citizenship ideals focusing on the nation-state are being undermined (Bloemraad, 2000; Delanty, 2000; Habermas, 1998; Urry, 2000; Held and McGrew, 2001; Sassen, 1996; Mann, 1993, Lefebvre, 1991 etc).[82]

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[80] Soysal (1994) has argued that supranational regimes and human rights discourses have impeded the ability of states to allocate rights on the basis of national belonging and that the link between rights and national citizenship has been severely challenged.

[81] Nash (2009) argues that globalization, and in particular the legalization of international human rights that Soysal refers to, has resulted in the cosmoplitanization of citizenship law (especially in Europe). Rather than resulting in greater equality she suggests that this is in fact characterised by a proliferation of status groups and new forms of inequality.

[82] Urry criticises a traditional "vernacular nationalism that articulates the identities of each society through its mundane differences from the other", arguing that today we live only in a "single power network" (2000, p.189/190). Lefebvre (1991) has called this the 'deterritorialisation' of society', and Partha Ghosh (2004) the 'de-territorialisation of communities'.

The issues raised in this study question such claims. Brubaker argues, that those who herald the emerging postnational age are too hasty in abandoning the nation-state, since citizenship continues to be "a powerful instrument of social closure" (1992, p.x). National belonging carries real material consequences and consequently 'statelessness' represents a source of severe human insecurity, which ultimately can only be effectively addressed by states themselves (Sokoloff, 2005). The case in question reminds us that the key structure within which the socio-political community relates *remains* the nation-state - inclusion or exclusion from which proceeds to lay the foundations for opportunities and expectations. The perfect overlap between state and nation may no longer exist, but this ideal is still salient in public imagination and political discourse and, as I will show, the pressure of this public imaginary is profound.

1.2 Nation, History and Language

Between the 'formal' and the 'real' face of citizenship, notions of the 'nation' intercede, framing historical consciousness in modern society but nonetheless remaining highly contested phenomena (Duara, 1995). While the 'state' is a political entity, a collection of institutions organised around the intentionality of control (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992), the 'nation' (assuming somewhat different meanings in different discourses) is most often used to designate a category of people *presumed to share a common culture* (Brah, 1996, p.159).[83] Although the 'death of the nation' has long been prophesied, it could still be argued that nation-ness remains "the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time" (Anderson, 1983, p.3). The strength of the connection between culture, identity, and the nation-state has been manipulated throughout history, and the region of Bengal is no exception. The boundaries of citizenship, are, in part, rationalised through a national history and state memory that preserves these connections (Norval, 2001; Buur, 2001). As Samaddar argues, "requisitioning total history is a fact of nationalist life" (2002, p.3),[84] and, as Gillis contests, national history often has particular difficulties incorporating difference (1994 in Norval, 2001). As we saw in the previous chapter, unity and continuity are emphasized to cover the fragility of new nations in the interests of

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[83] "A system of cultural signification" (Bhabha, 1990, p.1), variously combined with notions of 'common origin', 'common destiny' and 'common solidarity'. It is therefore important to understand 'nations' and 'nation-states' as independent political constructs.

[84] The construction of a national past is the construction of a history of a particular kind (Malkki, 1995). Some have argued that history is not a response to the past but a response to the requirements of the present (Eriksen, 2002) or, as Pereilli (in Norval, 2001) contends, the resignification of the past is not just an explanation of the present but a struggle for control of the future.

producing a picture of a coherent populace in the face of potentially divisive heterogeneity (Samaddar, 2002). As Nandy and others argue, the state, as the political embodiment of the nation, is thus "the institutionalisation of homogeneity" (Goldberg, 2002, p.30), and it is through the nation-state (where the nation becomes the cultural reproduction of state control) that this institutionalisation is particularly acute. It cannot be forgotten that "histories are normally written by the winners" (Keith, 2005a, p.255) and in the institutionalization of homogeneity therefore, the voices of those dispossessed are consigned to the margins.

It has been widely contended therefore "that the idea of ethnicity is central to discourses of nation" (Brah, 1996 p.162).[85] The assumption of overlap between the two has been described as an "expression of the naturalizing effect of the hegemony of one collectivity and its access to the ideological apparatuses of both state and civil society" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992, p.21).[86] Modern nation-states have articulated themselves throughout history in relation to a homogeneity that has never existed, and developments in theorizing principles of social order have since assumed that a homogenous group identity is something to be reinforced (Goldberg, 2002). Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989) argue that it is the differential access of different collectivities to the state which dictates the nature of a society's hegemonic national ethos. In Bangladesh, the Bengali population's access to the ideological apparatus of the state is indisputable. As Zamindar (2007) argues, the categorical order of the nation, and its hegemonic ethos, produces the 'stateless', and renders invisible other forms of belonging in the modern world.

These arguments apply not just to 'cultural' or 'ethnic' groups but to those of gender, sexuality, age, life-stage, and others. It is only in more recent years that women's role, for example, in the reproduction of national collectivities has begun to be recognised. Their assumption of particular feminised subject positions, their relationship to the upbringing of children, and their involvement in religious/ritualistic practices all contribute to the construction of particular notions of tradition (Brah, 1996). As both symbol and social

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[85] Although the precise relationship has been much contested (A.Smith, 1987; 1991; Gellner, 1982; Anderson, 1983). Anthony Smith notably expanded Kohn's early 'civic' and 'ethnic' binary, proposing a 'civic' *Western* model of nations and nationalism in contrast to an 'ethnic' *non-Western* one, enciting widespread criticism (see for example Brah, 1996).
[86] This establishes minorities as deviants from the 'normal', excluding them from the resources of power (Lewis and Neal, 2005).

actor women can be seen to inscribe the boundaries of national collectivity through a myriad of practices:

> By dressing and behaving 'properly', and by giving birth to children within legitimate marriages, they both signify and reproduce the symbolic and legal boundaries of the collectivity (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992 p.28).

As Gail Lewis (2005) adds, women are often trapped in the conjunction of racialised and familial discourse that is central to constructions of the nation. They are thus very often central to state practices of nationhood and become a focus of specific attention. As the embodiment of the nation itself, as well as the male honour it contains and represents, women fall victim to sexual atrocities during times of war, and their defence becomes a rallying slogan of those on the front line (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). The role of women in the inscription of national identities is linked to their association with the ethnic or cultural 'markers' that identify people as members of particular groups;[87] "the cultural resources which are used in the struggles for hegemony…not only between collectivities but also within them" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992, p.33).

The juxtaposition of these cultural resources with the apparatus of the nation-state renders one primitive and particularist, the other modern and universal. At the same time this dichotomy conceals the link between ethnicity and nationalism that works to represent the culture and history of the dominant ethnic group as that of the nation state (May, 2001). As the example of Bengali nationalism (to follow) illustrates, national identity frequently forms the focus around which other culturally specific identities orbit. Constructed in this way it implicitly inscribes traditions of 'us' and 'them', 'nation' and 'foreigner' that attempt to arrest the proliferation of *difference* that cultural plurality produces (Lewis and Neal, 2005). In the European context discourses of 'integration' have been accused of promoting old forms of 'assimilation' (Lewis and Neal, 2005), and the implicit suggestion that progress away from ethnic labelling and discrimination lies in 'going mainstream' is addressed by my final chapter.

Language is often at the centre of such debates. Considered "a major defining characteristic of ethnicity" (Phillipson in Fishman, 1999, p.94) it is a cultural marker, or symbolic 'border guard' (Armstrong, 1982) that may work to construct boundaries

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[87] Cultural codes such as styles of dress, types of food, literary, artistic or ritualistic acts and so on.

around minorities such as 'Urdu-speakers'. While "in theory (language) may well just be one of many markers of identity, in practice it is often much more than that" (May, 2001, p.10). As Spivak argues, language is not everything, "it is only a vital clue to where the self loses its boundaries" (1992, p.178). Language can help groups share collective activities and in fact define them as a group, regardless of their origins (Stewart, 1997), but the connection between language and national identity is often personal/individual or ambiguous (Safran, 1999). A central requirement of the modern nation-state is the institutionalisation of a chosen national language:[88] "This language comes to be associated with modernity and progress, while the remaining minority languages become associated with tradition and obsolescence" (May, 2001, p.6). As Alexander et al (2006, p.5) add:

> To acquire language…is to acquire culture…(and) the culturing of language is especially problematic when it is mapped onto a vision of national identity, with its concomitant ideas of citizenship and belonging, insiders and outsiders and the implementation of different rights and obligations.

Norval (2001), and others have argued that we have reached a 'Postnational' era of memory that attempts to 'de-sacralise' the nation-state and recognize a multiplicity of people and pasts. However, much recent scholarship suggests that the longevity of symbolic struggles for the nation cannot be underestimated (Gail Lewis, 2005). These symbolic struggles may be particularly acute in contexts that are still coming to terms with violent histories of occupation, control and colonial subjugation.

2. Nationalism, Citizenship and the *Postcolonial* State[89]

It has been argued that, under conditions of colonial rule, the standardized concept of the nation-state ('borrowed' from Europe and applied uncritically by a modernist elite) concerned processes of boundary maintenance that were self-consciously fashioned, and that ethnic identities were consequently acutely felt (O'Brien, 1986; Worsley, 1984; Abner Cohen, 1969). In colonial India, as elsewhere, 'communities' needed to be enumerated if the state was to fashion the conceptual instruments of control (Chatterjee, 1993). This

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[88] Ernest Gellner argued not only that nationalism is primarily a principle which holds that the political and national units should be congruent, but also that the national unit is most commonly defined in terms of language (Gellner, 1983).

[89] I am using the term 'postcolonial' here to denote a (transitory and multiplicitous) "period in global time-space" (Rattansi, 1997, p.481), rather than in the sense of the term as a distinctive form of theorization and intellectual inquiry.

involved a codification of society that enabled the British to reinforce economic, religious and caste categories which then became the basis on which they distributed differential patronage. As Blom Hansen (1999, p.35) argues:

> This process of codification tended to 'freeze' Indian society by turning negotiable boundaries of caste and community into timeless, cultural features of a pre-colonial past.

Consequently, it has been suggested that it was in production of the colonial sovereign that the modern state's racist underside was revealed (Chatterjee, 1993; Stoler, 2002). The formalization of ethnic identities through the coercive and classificatory policies of the colonial state contributed to the creation of an ethnically imagined and hierarchized polity (Desai, 2009). Populations were amalgamated into a limited number of distinctly defined groups, and internal differences under-communicated in the act of delineating boundaries towards the demonized 'Other' (Eriksen, 2002, p. 160). Racialised power was configured into hierarchies not simply between the dominant and subordinate, but *among* subaltern populations too, producing 'differential racialisation', lubricated through the economic and political imperatives of the regime (Brah, 1996). Produced as ever more coherent, labels accorded to communities under these conditions have lived on in postcolonial states. As Eriksen (2002) argues, the 'naming' of large categories of people may have a conceptually, but also socially reifying effect as members begin to use them in their own self-identification. With them, in many circumstances, the connotations of 'race', 'status', 'character' and so on have also lived on, forming the basis of future ethnopolitics (Grillo, 1998).[90] Some contend therefore that the colonial nation-state not only divided the populace along these lines, but also contributed to ethnic violence in the subcontinent (Nagaraj, 1998). These are the legacies of pre-independence state practices that are not merely transitional, but endure into the post-independence period (Beissinger and Young in Desai, 2009).

2.1 Colonial and postcolonial citizenship

While it was in the Enlightenment's assertion of free will and individual conscience that Western liberal notions of citizenship were born, Chapters Six and Seven reveal that the

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[90] Post-colonial subjects were, in Hall's words, not only "constructed as different and 'other' within the categories of knowledge of the West" but through these categories of knowledge, "they had the power to make us see and experience *ourselves* as 'Other'" (Hall, 1990, p.3).

diverse ways in which the concept is thought about and practiced in different times and places is critically bound up with prevailing material realities and associated ideas about personhood (Kabeer, 2002). In post-colonial contexts in particular, it has been argued that attempts to formulate citizenship rights are complicated by the strategic manoeuvrings of colonial powers noted above, inflating some differences and containing others. Customary law and traditional authority were invoked to support the hierarchical ordering of society, and by giving differences (of property, religion and caste and so on) greater significance than they might have warranted, British authorities sought to pre-empt the possibility of a unified resistance to their rule (Kabeer, 2002). Because the paramount concern of India's colonial regime was the (limited) representation of 'communities' through elite representatives, the discourse of rights was applied almost entirely to collectivities (Blom Hansen, 1999). As a result, Kabeer (2002) argues, colonised populations achieved national independence organised as religious, ethnic and tribal communities with *collective* rights, rather than as individual and free citizens[91].

This does not mean citizenship in India can be written, as Mamdani (1996, p.9) observes, as distorted or 'incomplete' rehearsals of the Western story. It should instead be understood as the results of specific historicities of political discourse and procedure (Blom Hansen, 1999). A unique and located 'history of citizenship' was produced in the region, in which rights of citizenship have been enjoyed with varying degrees of certainty among the population. To this day such rights often serve to reproduce, rather than disrupt, the socially ascribed statuses of kinship, religion, ethnicity, 'race' and gender (Kabeer, 2002).

2.2 Modernity and the 'masses'

While a range of differentiated categories became the basis on which political claims were made and recognised, Blom Hansen (1999) argues that colonial rule was organized in particular around a decisive 'double discourse' that positioned the mass of ordinary people - uneducated, irrational, traditional and therefore in need of firm governance - against the educated, propertied, middle classes who were amenable to reasoned

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[91] When the British conceded representation by Indians to local legislative councils, the basis of representation was that of 'group', rather than 'individual' interests, initially of the landlord classes and later of religious and caste communities (Kabeer, 2002)

negotiation (Blom Hansen, 1999)[92]. Inscribed in the law, the economy and in (the absence of) rights was the division between an educated respectable "people-nation" and the uneducated masses, excluded and subordinated (Blom Hansen and Stepputat, 2005 p.30). As Blom Hansen (2005, p.177) observes:

> Except for relatively small section with western education who were believed to be able to behave like responsible quasi-citizens, ordinary Indians were not seen as individuals, or single subjects.

India's multifarious and legally incompatible 'communities' were seen as governable only through encapsulation and control of their irrational religious passions (Blom Hansen, 1999). Until they were sufficiently educated it was important that they remain under the paternalistic tutelage of the state, and under the 'responsible' leadership of the 'educated sections'. Conviction, among many 'educated Indians' in 'the people's' fundamental insensibility, instilled them with 'civilisational' responsibility. Entrusted with local administration they were accorded certain rights of political representation that 'ordinary Indians' were not. Concerned to lift 'the people' out of their 'pre-modern' condition, for these 'educated sections' the 'mission of modernity' was a serious task (Blom Hansen, 1999).

The juxtapostion of these two groups resonates profoundly with discourses of the 'Urdu-speaking community' today. Despite vast differences between the Indian and Bangladeshi contexts therefore I will draw on the theoretical work of Blom Hansen, Chatterjee and others, to develop some insights into the case examined here. Similar work from Bangladesh is scarce but, as Blom Hansen argues, a 'flexible bifurcation' between proper 'society' and the world of 'the masses' has been an enduring post-colonial construction throughout the subcontinent (Blom Hansen, 1999).

Most of the technologies of governance lived on into the post-Independence period and the upper ranks of the socio-economic hierarchy continued to function as the bureaucratic machinery. Neither India nor Pakistan were entirely new states in 1947, and for decades educated 'society' was *managed* through law and rational procedure while popular 'communities' were *controlled*. To this day the 'masses' are locked in the social imaginaries of 'community'. Some versions of Indian historiography go as far as to talk

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[92] In addition, as Kabeer (2002) notes, the privatisation of land through the Permanent Settlement Act helped constitute a propertied class that were loyal to British interests.

of the two (the 'state' and the 'community') as examples of either 'elite' or 'subaltern' politics. While this ignores the degree to which one shapes the emergent form of the other (Chatterjee, 1993), it tells us something about how the space of the political has been configured in contemporary postcolonial debate.

Although the colonial constitution granted equal citizenship to all, the assumption of differences between the educated and uneducated classes has consequently persisted (Blom Hansen, 2005). Those postcolonial subjects not yet fully able to be incorporated as citizens in the life of the state remain today governed by forms of community life radically different from the state and civil society (Chatterjee, 2005). The distinction between, "the bounded, parochial and therefore innocent masses, and the essentially mobile, knowledgeable, modern and supposedly responsible national elite", has remained fundamental to dominant social imaginaries of the postcolonial world (Blom Hansen, 1999, p.39). Chatterjee has explored the manifestation of these processes in present-day Bengal, observing that the majority of Indian 'citizenry' "are only tenuously, and even then ambiguously and contextually, rights-bearing citizens in the sense imagined by the constitution" (Chatterjee, 2005, p.83). They are neither outside the reach of the state (they are still looked after and controlled by various government agencies) nor in an active and effective reciprocal relationship with it. Instead they have a particular 'political relationship' which he describes as 'political society;' a relationship that does not always conform to its constitutional depiction (Chatterjee, 2005). As we will see throughout the following chapters, it is through the domain of 'property' that we can best observe "a struggle over the real, rather than merely formal, distribution of rights among citizens" (Chatterjee, 2004, p.74). Refugees, landless people, day labourers; here there is no equal and uniform exercise of citizenship (Chatterjee, 2004; Blom Hansen, 2001).

2.3 Nationalist discourse and nationalist domains

It has been suggested that the historical experience of nationalism in the West supplied for all subsequent nationalisms a set of modular forms which nationalist elites adopted (Anderson, 1983) but Chatterjee disputes this claim. In such a reading, "the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity", and the true subjects of history (in Europe and the Americas)

Have thought out on our behalf, not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anticolonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized (Chatterjee, 1993, p.5).

He argues that in actual fact the most powerful results of the nationalist imagination in South Asia are posited on a *difference* with the 'modular' forms of national social order propagated by the West. In this interpretation, anticolonial nationalism creates its own domain of sovereignty *within* colonial society, well before battle begins with the colonial state. It does this by dividing society into two domains - the material and the spiritual - the domains of 'outside' and 'in'. The material, as the domain of the 'outside', is the domain of the economy, statecraft, science and technology while the spiritual, or 'inner' domain, bears all the 'essential' marks of cultural identity. As he explains:

The greater one's success in imitating Western skills in the material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one's spiritual culture (Chatterjee, 1993, p.6).

As a result, Indian nationalist discourse has, since the beginning, been marked by an ambiguous relation with the epitomes of the West (Blom Hansen, 1999). In the wake of Partition, nationalism's task was first to overcome the subordination of the colonized middle class. Unable to do this within the institutions of bourgeois civil society, the national elites created a very different domain upon which to declare sovereignty. It was here in the domain of 'culture' that national identities were constructed. That does not mean that the sovereign domain of 'culture' was itself unchanged. As Chatterjee (1993, p.6) argues, here in fact nationalism launched its "most powerful, creative and historically significant project: to fashion a 'modern' national culture that (was) nevertheless not Western". As Blom Hansen (1999, p.29) suggests:

The 'nation' was the abstract sign that would enable the emerging *native* forms of *modernity* to become both *truly modern* and, at the same time, deeply *authentic and unique* (my emphasis).

Order, reason, science *and* cultural self-assertion were all at the heart of this desired imagined community, and the nation was an effective 'empty signifier' precisely because it was marked by ambiguity and multiple valences (Blom Hansen, 1999). While the dynamics of this historical project is completely missed in many accounts of the region, in 1947 the domains of the material and the cultural were fundamental to both Indian

and Pakistani national imaginaries. In both of the newly formed states this cultural self-assertion in which 'Urdu-speaking Muslims' were positioned was of a narrow and contingent kind.

2.4 The nation-state and its 'others'

While 'Unity in Diversity' was once Indian nationalism's rallying cry, the drive to homogenize, 'normalize' and eliminate difference soon became its primary aim. In Pakistan, a similar stridency contributed to the events of 1971 and in Bangladesh the drive to eliminate difference was brutally played out in the first years after the war. Throughout the subcontinent today, the rhetoric of nationalism has a vociferous tone. Consequently,

> All that belongs to any minority – all that is challenging, singular, local – not to say all difference – appears threatening, intrusive, even 'foreign' to this nationalism (Pandey, 1992, p.28).

Nandy has argued that nationalist discourses in India sanctioned this concept of a 'mainstream national culture,' promoting the belief that the modern state could only be maintained if all fundamental differences within the polity were eliminated (Nandy et al, 1995). The nation-state as the 'agent of modernism' and island of rationality (Blom Hansen and Stepputat, 2001) strove to assume a primordial homogeneity, the goals of which would always be ethnocide (Nagaraj, 1998; Nandy, 1983; Guha, 1997).[93] In East Bengal formal independence from British colonial rule unleashed West Pakistan's imperial regime and in the 1950s, 60s and 70s struggles over 'community', nation, identity and belonging were deeply contested. Liberation in 1971 represented the second 'colonial' resistance in little over twenty years,[94] and the nation-state was elevated to the end of all history (Pandey, 1992). The 'fragments' of society (those "which might be said to represent 'minority' cultures and practices", Pandey, 1992, p.28), were expected to fall in line with the 'mainstream' national culture. As the external is racially conceived, the

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[93] As Bose (2001) argues there was actually wider awareness of the dangers of worshipping the nation-state than some writers have acknowledged.

[94] The traditional imperial/subaltern binary is disturbed somewhat by a context in which the colonizer and the colonized both represented a position of 'peripherality' to the West. Alongside the old imperial master (Britain), West Pakistan continued to symbolize 'the Rest' (Hall, 1992), while at the same time, controlling and dominating the newfound state. It should be acknowledged that in this context 'postcolonialsm' - as a form of analysis (as opposed to 'postcoloniality', as a set of historical epochs (Rattansi, 1997)) - may look somewhat different to the more celebratory (notably Euro-American) contributions.

internal becomes racially defined too, creating 'internal others' to be policed, controlled, but kept apart (Goldberg, 2002). In Bangladesh since the 1970s 'smaller' interests have been sacrificed for the 'larger' interest of the nation, the bi-products of which are 'minorities', 'aliens' (Samaddar, 1999). 'Urdu-speakers' are produced as a disquieting 'internal other'. But as the following chapter will show just as the nation is created through historicising, so is ethnicity a product of historical circumstances and political projects.

2.5 State-formation and Nationalism in Bangladesh

The creation of Bangladesh in 1971, in the name of cultural Bengali nationalism, is said to have signalled the departure of religious nationalism from the national scene (Hashmi, 2004). The secularism Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1972-1975) promoted "did not mean the absence of religion"[95] but it is certainly true that during his government, religion remained a "ghost of the past one did not know how to deal with" (Ahmed, 2002, p.302). It was replaced instead with the founding principles of nationalism, secularism, socialism and democracy, and a cultural (Bengali) identity was embedded at the very heart of the state. A Bengali nation had been constructed as the ethical political community and, as state formation developed, appeals to this "ethicality of nation-making" increased. Chatterjee's 'inner' domain of 'culture' was still only part of the picture however. The 'outer' domain - of the economy, statecraft, science and technology – was fundamental to nation-building processes following 1971. Infused with the universalistic discourse of modernity, it constructed science, law and bureaucracy at the very centre of the state (Samaddar, 2002). As in India thirty years earlier, transforming the nation into its 'modernised' form involved transforming the domain of culture too. Post-Liberation nationalist discourse continued to embrace the regionalistic identity on which the state was founded, but formed it into its 'modern', national, and distinctively non-Western shape. As a result, Independence continued the programme of 'passive revolution' through which nation making legitimised state formation (Samaddar, 2002, p.19). Kohn's (1946) civic and ethnic nations were, in a sense, combined.

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[95] As Kabir (1987) observes, Mujib himself re-introduced Islamic greetings in the government broadcasting network immediately after his assumption of power. He also started to use religious symbols and expressions in his speeches, notably absent in the pre-liberation period.

By embedding an ethno-regionalistic identity at the heart of the state, Bengali nationalism used particularistic ethnic loyalties as a tool to exclude the 'ethnic other.' The state in Bangladesh had not been *captured* by ethnic groups (as popularly imagined in Pakistan today, Verkaaik, 2001)[96] but *constructed* by one; cementing the association between a Bengali identity and the institutions and mechanisms of modernity. The nation could not comprehend the possibility of multiple identities, but had to be defined in terms of a (fictive) "ethnic identity" (Samaddar, 2002). As Menon and Bhasin discovered documenting Partition experiences in Punjab and Bengal, "the Bengal part of the story began to recede, because it turned out that for Bangladesh, the defining moment was 1971…1947 almost didn't exist" (1998, p.120). It was no longer Partition that represented the nation's moral and historical compass, but the Independence struggle of 1971.

'Urdu-speakers' were implicated at the very heart of the language struggles preceding Liberation, and their association with the War itself was not entirely unfounded. Some 'collaborated' with the Pakistani forces, others did not, but it is important to understand their marginalisation as embedded in this context. A collective unease still surrounds the knowledge that Liberation's war criminals were never formally challenged; a discomfort that for some time interleaved an 'ethnic identity' further into the structuring principles of the state. Naturalised depictions of Bengali ethnicity employed in the rhetoric of Liberation's 'freedom fighters' have been ingrained in the country's historical imagination and references to a 'national' culture and identity have been visibly promoted by Bangladeshi Governments ever since. The strength of the link forged between language and nation is apparent for example in the institutionalization of 'Bangla' within the civic framework of the state. In pursuing the agenda of ethno-linguistic nationalism, all other identities were minimized (Samaddar, 2002) and it could be argued that the 'Urdu-speaker' was established as the exemplary (linguistic, racial and) *national* 'other.' While much nationalist scholarship has been polarised around 'ethno-symbolist' and 'modernist' schools of thought (Hutchinson, 1987, 2007; Anderson, 1983; Smith, 1987; Wimmer, 2007), the history of Bangladesh reveals that it is often at the *interface* of 'culture' and politics that the national question is situated (Samaddar, 2002).

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[96] Pakistani nationalism (of which the Urdu language was an important part) linked the authority of the state to a modernist interpretation of Islam that disavowed ethnic/regional solidarity seen as endangering Muslim unity. The popular imagination of the state today is still built on a-political, a-ethnic modernist notions of Islamic nationalism (Verkaaik, 2001).

The emergence of Bangladesh saw an explosion of literature from every conceivable angle, and it was in constructing the history of Muslim Bengal that output was particularly prolific (Roy, 2001). The torrent of history writing that followed the country's Liberation represented a search for the national soul so complete that a 'de-sacralisation' of the nation-state has, until recently, proved impossible. Through the writing of this cultural history the 'national soul' became more *ethnically* charged than ever and a critique of 1971 was silenced (Samaddar, 2002).[97] It has been argued that citizenship concerns one's claim to represent the social heritage of a nation-state (Goldberg, 2002); positioned against this social heritage, inclusion of the 'Urdu-speaking community' had been rendered inconceivable. In contexts such as this, where the closure and maintenance of the boundaries of national identity is everywhere asserted, assimilation into the 'majority' may be difficult to resist.

Bangladesh has however been described as a 'nationalizing state': not yet sufficiently a nation, but continually 'nationalizing' in the name of legitimacy (Samaddar, 1999). Following the religious nationalism of the Pakistani period and the ethno-linguistic movements of the 1950s and 60s, the assassination of Sheikh Mujib by a military coup d'état in August 1975 heralded the search for a nationalism that could combine the two. The overthrow of Mujib's government signalled the turn to a resolute 'Bangladeshi nationalism' under General Ziaur Rahman (Zia), a shift of emphasis between the country's 'secular Bengali identity' and its 'Muslim consciousness' (Osmany, 1992). In 1977 Zia amended the constitution, substituting secularism for 'absolute trust and faith in Almighty Allah' and pursued an actively pro-Islamic foreign policy (Kabir, 1987). Not long after the emergence of the nation-state therefore, Islam-orientated state ideology returned to the political field (Hashmi, 2004). Some argue that the reappearance of Islamic sentiments was caused by the fear of Indian domination as well as the failure of the Awami League government to respond to the economic grievances of the population (Kabir, 1987). Others suggest that 'political Islam' was adopted to contain more militant versions promoted by Jamaat-i-islami and others (Hashmi, 2004). Around ninety percent of the population of Bangladesh is thought to be Muslim and 'Bangladeshi nationalism' was considered more inclusive of different non-Bengali minorities such as 'Urdu-speakers'. It excluded instead the country's Hindus (thought to represent around nine

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[97] As Renan (in Bhabha, 1990) has observed, forgetting is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation.

percent of the population), and differentiated Muslim majority Bengalis from their Hindu counterparts in India. Hashmi (2004) suggests that Mujib's successors realized the importance of state-sponsored Islam in the legitimation of their rule and various groups of nationalists, representing both political and non-political organisations, and even members of the armed forces, began to champion the cause of Islam for political purposes (Hashmi, 2004).[98] Consequently, the role of Islam at the centre of politics and culture has grown. In 1988 Islam was made the state religion, creating contradictions between religious practice and secular legislation that have continued (Lewis, 1993).

Since the events of Partition, the country has clearly witnessed substantial shifts in 'identity bases' (Kabir, 1995). In recent years, a resurgent 'Muslim consciousness' combined with the growing dominance of human rights discourses have challenged the Bengali ethnic state to such a degree that a space has been created in which to examine the 'Bihari issue.' Political instability has also contributed as, in 2007, widespread corruption and deeply rooted failures of 'governance' pushed the country to 'the brink of social and political collapse' (Devine in Lewis, 2008). The establishment of a 'state of emergency' in January of that year altered relationships with the 'myth of the state' further. The Caretaker Government (CTG) put in place after the army's intervention remained in power until the elections of January 2009 and, although it had a mixed record of achievements, it is only against this political background that the High Court Ruling of May 2008 can be fully understood. The ruling granted the entire 'Urdu-speaking population' citizenship and optimism among Urdu-speaking civil society has been high since the verdict. Nonetheless, issues of citizenship are still highly contentious, and as the High Court and the Ministry of Law continue to consider cases they reveal that the belonging of 'Urdu-speakers' is not yet uniformly produced.

Where understandings of racial categorisation, culture and ethnicity serve as structuring principles for national discourses, materialization of those rights is very often dependent on ideas of 'sameness' to which these discourses speak (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). Since the British period, questions of who belongs and who does not have been woven into the fabric of the national consciousness in East Bengal, and still today ethnicity,

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[98] Ziaur Rahman consolodated growing religious sentiments to secure and expand his support base and after 1975 governments continued to do so for the sake of sustained growth and legitimacy (Kabir, 1987; Hashmi, 2004).

identity, 'sameness' and difference, constitute powerful metaphors for political manipulation.

3. Ethnicity, identity and 'community'

Notions of 'culture', 'race', ethnicity and identity have long been mapped onto understandings of nation, citizenship and belonging. The mass movement of those considered 'ethnically other', in the twentieth century, may have disrupted such processes, but it has by no means displaced them. The previous section examines how the 'cultural other' has been positioned within social hierarchies; how individuals are externally framed. It is necessary here therefore to explore how individuals position *themselves* within those frameworks. Understandings of ethnicity or, more particularly, ethnic identity are at the centre of such debates.

3.1 Ethnic identity, self and subject

Despite little agreement as to the precise nature of 'ethnic phenomena', its "ubiquitous presence" (Ronald Cohen, 1978, p.379), has long been recognised. As Jenkins has argued:

> Although (ethnicity) is imagined…it is not imaginary...Somewhere between irresistible emotion and utter cynicism, neither blindly primordial or completely manipulable, ethnicity and its allotropes are principles of collective identification and social organisation in terms of culture and history, similarity and difference that show little sign of withering away (1997, p.169).

Regarded as a component of a wider social identity and sense of self, 'ethnic identity', distinguishable from 'ethnicity,'[99] has likewise undergone a discursive explosion. Approaches were traditionally thought to fall largely into one of two camps, those that emphasized the primordial, intrinsic and essentialised elements of the concept (M.G.Smith, 1965), and those that focused on situational, fluid and contingent characteristics (Hall, 1990, 1996a, 1996b; Brah, 1996; Gilroy, 1997). In the last twenty years approaches from the second camp, influenced by discourses of feminism and cultural criticism, have dominated the fields of anthropology, sociology, and cultural

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[99] Ethnicity is more than a question of ethnic identity, it involves partaking of the social conditions of a group, within a context of difference to other groups, and always involves a political dimension (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992).

studies in particular. In an attempt to situate racial meanings and identity, by unpacking the fixity of older understandings, they emphasize ambiguity, fluidity, process and relationality (Alexander, 2010).[100] In this reading, identities are not singular or discrete forms accepted or discarded as occasion demands, but messy, multiple, overlapping and intersecting. Boundaries blur as individuals negotiate complex social landscapes, accepting and rejecting elements of competing cultural worlds in response to individual, contextual, historical and political factors.

Foucault's so-called 'archaeological work' (Foucault, 1967; 1972), in which the subject is produced 'as an effect' through and within discourse, has been influential in analyses of ethnic identity. In arguing that all identities operate through difference and exclusion, through the constitution of a constitutive 'outside', Butler too emphasizes the external and effective power of discourse (Butler, 1993, p.22). The constitution of identity therefore produces abjected, marginalized subjects, since it can only affirm itself by repressing that which threatens it, establishing a hierarchy between two resultant poles - man/woman, white/black, for example– in which the second term is reduced to an accident, an offshoot, of the essential first (Laclau in Hall, 1996a).[101] Hall (1996a) however has criticised approaches that under-theorise the *relationship* between subjects and the discursive practices they adopt. Describing identities as the "points of temporary attachment to the subject-positions which discursive practices construct for us" (1996a, p.5), Hall demonstrates the nature of the articulation *between* the social and subjective. Brah's formulation of the subject as constituted at the interstices of the articulation of 'difference' speaks to a similar dynamic, envisioning agency in the absence of voluntarist connotations.[102]

The concept of 'social identity' (the features and characteristics attributed to individuals by society as a means of categorizing people) foregrounds the *social* over the *subjective* but, in considering its relation to stigma, Goffman (1968) considers the impact of one on the other. He produces a rather limited typography in which three different types of stigma are discernable: abominations of the body, blemishes of character, and "the tribal stigma

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[100] Even the word 'ethnic' is relational, as is the criteria that determine whether or not it will be used. For example how 'descent' is defined is socially constructed and differs significantly between groups (Baumann, 1996).

[101] As such, identities "are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity" (Hall, 1996a, p. 4/5).

[102] Understanding identity as process she describes a field of overlapping discourses, matrices of meaning and narratives of self and other which once in circulation provide a basis for identification (Brah, 1996).

of 'race', nation and religion" (p.14). In doing so he discusses the ways in which a particular ethnic, racial or religious identity may be considered 'defiling' to possess. Not only are the elements of stigma on which Goffman reflects less easily disarticulated from each other than such a typology would suggest, but he fails to consider the way in which the stigma of racial, ethnic or religious identity may be experienced through intersectional identities such as age, class and gender.

3.2 Intersections of age, class and gender

As Avtah Brah's 'The Politics of Intersectionality' (1996) revealed, the conditions of reproduction and transformation of ethnic identity are critically linked to a range of interconnected social divisions and distinctions. Processes of racialisation occur under varying circumstances, and on the basis of different signifiers of 'difference', and wherever we are from we experience our gender, class and sexuality *through* 'race' (Brah, 1996, p.105). As a result people regard themselves as members of several communities at once, "communities within communities" (Baumann, 1996, p.10), cultures within cultures and identities within identities. As Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk argue:

> The fact that we prioritise one over the other at any one time is to do with the socio-political circumstances of the enunciation (2005, p.5).

For some time studies of the intersection between ethnicity and gender dominated the discussion. This reflected a bias posited on the notion of women as central to processes of ethnic or cultural reproduction, not only as biological reproducers of the members of the group, or central in the transmission of its cultural artefacts, but also as markers of the boundaries of collectivities (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). However, as Chapters Five and Seven discuss, ethnic identification functions alongside a range of social positions, as just a part of the many different ways in which we understand, position and define ourselves (Kurien, 1999). The 'Urdu-speaking community's internal heterogeneity, represents a case in point, revealing that as a result of such assumptions we often fail to recognise the social relations of power in which all individuals operate. Despite apparent awareness of the necessity to de-essentialise unitary ethnic boundaries, ethnicity is still all too frequently studied as a singular unit of analysis, reinforcing a presentation of homogenous social units at the expense of intra-group differences (Warikoo, 2005; Baumann, 1996). As many scholars have noted, ethnicity is merely an aspect of

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relationship, not the cultural property of a group, and ethnic and cultural groups should not be seen as coterminous (Eriksen, 2002).[103] Brah however has criticised the 'ethnicism' inherent in depictions of racialised groups primarily in *culturalist* terms:

> Cultural needs are defined largely as independent of other social experiences centred around class, gender or sexuality. This means that a group identified as culturally different is assumed to be internally homogenous, when this is patently not the case (Brah, 1996, p.100).

At what point holistic notions of culture and ethnicity overlap with concepts of 'minority' and 'community' is at the essence of such debates.

3.3 'Community'

It has been argued that unreflexive notions of 'community' form part of current discourses about nationhood, citizenship and integration, and that 'collective' identity is formulated in part through these abstract 'imagined' narratives (Alexander et al, 2006). As we will see later in this chapter, the spatial and the social are frequently overlaid as, notions of 'community' enfold groups along class, ethnic or cultural lines (Tonkiss, 2005). The language of 'community' then provides an idiom either for the gathering together of identity *or* for the marking of difference. 'Communities' are not just built, imagined, and performed but very often *fought for* in struggles against the state (Keith, 2005a). In such struggles, they are used to depict 'the other' of the state; locked in opposition to the 'modern' and the 'rational', calling for images of localization, boundedness, parochiality and immobility (Blom Hansen and Stepputat, 2001). They are depicted as the natural, pre-political, primordial stage that must be superseded for freedom and progress to begin (Chatterjee, 1993), and it is therefore at the level of 'community', that the over-cultivation of 'ethnicity' (Alleyne, 2002) has been considered particularly problematic[104].

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[103] Despite the fact that "culture can also function like nature" (Balibar, 1991, p.22) fixing people in native places and pure points of origin (Malkki, 1995), culture too is of couse not a closed or sealed entity, singular, regular or fixed but rather a multi-sited discursive zone of contestation and meaning (Gail Lewis, 2005).

[104] The use of both of these terms only in reference to minority groups, is an example of the way in the which they have been confounded in the context of debate and policy. As Fishman (1999) observes, the term 'ethnic' can actually be found in the Oxford English Dictionary as far back as 1470, defined as 'heathen, pagan, uncouth, neither Christian nor Jewish', and although its meaning has clearly changed, the use of 'ethnicity' only for 'minority groups' belies certain pejorative associations.

This juxtaposition between the nation and 'community' was decisively produced in Colonial India, and in the subcontinent today it remains pronounced. Fundamental to the colonial conception of India as 'different' was the belief that its numerous distinct 'communities' were so inward-looking and assorted they were incapable of being brought into a broader political identity (Chatterjee, 1993). The nationalist project arose out of a position of subordination to this regime, and the subjugation of all alternative forms of 'community' to the domain of the modern nation-state was woven into its inception (Chatterjee, 1993). To this day the former is afforded legitimacy only in the guise of the latter, and

> Other solidarities that could potentially come into conflict with the political community of the nation are subject to a great deal of suspicion (Chatterjee, 2004, p.74/5).

Minorities such as 'Urdu-speakers' are thereby constructed as pre-modern versions of 'community', marked by a supposed internal homogeneity and holistic cultural identity that is deeply distrusted (Alexander et al, 2006). As Chatterjee (1993, p.11) has argued:

> If the nation is an imagined community, and if nations must also take the form of states, then our theoretical language must allow us to talk about community and state at the same time. I do not think our present theoretical language allows us to do this.

During the 1990s a concept considered capable of resolving some of these tensions began to gain ground. Containing diverse and competing identity bases the language of 'diaspora' was thought by some to work alongside (as opposed to against) the language of the nation-state.

4. 'Diaspora' and displacement

In response to the debates outlined above, and embedded in notions not only of identity and ethnicity, but also nation, state and citizen, new discourses of migration emerged. In these new discourses, fragmented, 'hybrid' and 'cosmopolitan' identities transcending (rather than competing with) the 'nation-state', were thought to provide a better understanding of contemporary migratory space.[105] Postmodern approaches heralded the

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[105] Transnationalist scholarship's contribution to analysis of the 'single social experience' (Basch et al in Toyota, 2003) of identity construction has proved important.

term 'hybridity',[106] entailing cultural mixing and the emergence of 'impure', ambiguous identities which unsettle boundaries and contest categorisation (Bhabha, 1990; Hall, 1992; 1996a). In the representation of a social field that encompasses not just home and host but a range of networks and relationships in between, the term 'diaspora'[107] was thought to confront bounded conceptualisations of 'community'. The semantic expansion of the term has however incited criticism (Alexander, 2010; Brubaker, 2005). Proposing itself "as a master trope of migration" (Robin Cohen, 2008, p.3) it is now used in reference to broad and diverse 'constructions of collective membership'.[108]

4.1 Claims-staking, instability and difference

Early on two currents emerged. One, as Brubaker notes, was "firmly rooted in the conceptual 'homeland'" (Brubaker, 2005, p.2). Whether this was real or imagined it was understood as an authoritative source of value, identity and loyalty. This strand, which places emphasis on an ancestral past, is often articulated through organicist metaphors of cultural reproduction, naturalized images of blood and nation, assuming congruence of people, state and territory (Tololyan, 1996). As such it has received criticism for contributing to the territorialisation of culture, championing a diasporic identity associated with conservatism, and the reinscription of a 'shared culture' or past. By deploying a notion of ethnicity which privileges the point of origin in constructing identity (Anthias, 1998) the models of Safran (1991) and others have been accused of what Clifford (1994) calls a teleology of 'return'. As such, 'diaspora' functions to reinforce the essentialism it proposed to contest, simultaneously re-ascribing the nation/territory it proposed to subvert (Alexander, 2010). As the case of 'Urdu-speakers' in Bengal confirms, there is tremendous variety in the nature of connections with a homeland and this focus on (another) place can displace attention from the material relations between the state and 'diaspora' groups (Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk, 2005). The assumption of a natural, 'organic' transnational community of people without division or difference dedicated to the same cultural and political projects is clearly naïve (Anthias,

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[106] A concept that has since met its own discontents (see Gilroy in Anthias, 1998). It is worth noting that although the two terms ('diaspora' and hybridity) are often aligned, and some theorisations have stressed overlap (Brah's, 1996 'diaspora space' or Bhabha's, 1990 'third space' for example), they are not interchangeable (Alexander, 2010).

[107] Originally used in reference to "the threat of dispersion facing the Hebrews" (Dufoix, 2008, p.4), in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

[108] The numerous categorisations, 'typologies' and 'frameworks' since produced have resulted not only in the suggestion that 'real' diasporas exist alongside 'fakes' (or Clifford's 'semi-diasporas') but in the creation of 'entities' that emphasize coherence and objectivist measurement (Alexander, 2010).

1998). Just like unreflexive notions of 'community', it leaves no space for intersectional positionalities or internal power conflicts, and assumes fixed, immutable, ahistorical boundaries. In particular, the naturalised gender-neutral diaspora has provoked widespread criticism in recent years for failing to accept that diasporic encounters are necessarily composite; embarked upon through multiple modalities of gender, 'race', class, religion, language and generation (Clifford, 1994; Brah, 1996; Anthias, 1998). Chapters Five and Seven will analyse these intersections in relation to the constituents of identity and citizenship respectively. Implicated in the very structural, political and cultural processes of domination that it claims also to disrupt (Alexander, 2010) it has been suggested that this 'ethnicised' version of 'diaspora', defined primarily in relation to another place to which they must at all cost return, is "the old, the imperialising, the hegemonising, form of 'ethnicity'" (Hall, 1990, p.8).

In response to this critique, an alternate 'diaspora space' (to use Brah's, 1996, term) began to emerge that questioned such bounded conceptualisations of culture, society and community. Framed by a position of liminality, it was posited as a mode of engagement rather than an assertion of separateness (Alexander, 2010). Stuart Hall's influential contribution recognised that

> As well as the many points of similarity (to our 'cultural origins'), there are also critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather – since history has intervened - 'what we have become' (Hall, 1990, p.3).

'Difference' here is that which is relational, contingent and variable and in this reading, 'diaspora' belongs as much to the future as to the past. It is in constant transformation, "subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power" to which there is "the lack of any final resolution" (Hall, 1990, p.3-5). The 'origins' debated have been transformed by displacement, dismemberment and the continual repositioning of time[109]. Just as Hall's 'Africa' has become an Africa of history, so too has the 'Bihar' of the East Bengali imagination. Appropriated by the State, the media and civil society, this 'Bihar' has been frozen "into some timeless zone of the primitive, unchanging past"; it has acquired a figurative, symbolic value which can be felt, but to which we cannot literally return (Hall, 1990, p.7).

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[109] If belonging is about both roots and routes (Gilroy, 1993) it cannot be a simple question of affiliation to a single idea of ethnicity or nationalism (Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk, 2005, p.29).

Used by minority communities as forms of claims-staking and place-making, it is in its second incarnation that 'diaspora' is thought to contain the imaginative possibilities of settlement, "in which the past is imagined and narrated as a way of positioning the present and addressing the future" (Alexander, 2010, p.4). It is used to create forms of community consciousness and solidarity that enable individuals to, in Clifford's (1997) words, live inside, with difference. Difference that is marked, active and contested challenges the reification of nation, ethnicity and citizenship. In this form it could be seen as a useful concept with which to *re-cast* the abstract and uncritical theorisations of citizenship already reviewed, suggestive as it is of negotiated instability. 'Diaspora' as 'difference' helps us to understand not just borders and boundaries, but processes of border/boundary crossing, and the inherent dynamism provides a useful antidote to citizenship's reified forms. Criticised for having become substitutes for the confrontation of racial inequality, 'diaspora' and 'hybridity' may thus emerge again as useful modes of engagement for progressive struggle (Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk, 2005).

4.2 Foundation-myths, memory and belonging

It has been argued that 'belonging' is a 'thicker' concept than citizenship. It is not just about membership, rights and duties, but the emotional investment such membership provokes (Crowley, 1999).[110] As Yuval-Davis et al (2005) observe, the concept of belonging is generated as much by processes of exclusion as inclusion and is therefore situated at the interface between a sociology of emotions and a sociology of power. It has also been suggested that when migrant or diasporic groups write their own histories they are often written with a view to achieving such membership in the community. 'Foundation myths' are sometimes constructed that seek to unify, sanitise and simplify complex and multifaceted histories while inserting 'community history' into the 'national history' of the host. As Chatterji (2010) asserts in relation to the 'Urdu-speaking community' in Bangladesh, an emphasis on homeland and past may, paradoxically, be used as a strategy of assimilation into the host and the present. Here 'Urdu-speakers' are not alone; the search for 'lost origins' is infinite:

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[110] Language policy is crucial here, as what may be seen as a way of increasing belonging (i.e. indictments to integrate through language) effectively act to exclude from belonging those whose native language is not that of the state. Mother-tongues (to which memories, relationships and socialisations are often tied) may be disallowed in the name of belonging as the border-guards of culture define the boundary of the nation (Yuval-Davis et al, 2005).

(It) can neither be fulfilled, nor requited, and hence is the beginning of the symbolic, of representation, the infinitely renewable source of desire, memory, myth (Hall, 1990, p.9).

Motive, manner and experience of movement will, however, clearly affect the nature of myth or memory produced. Challenging the more comfortable, even celebratory Euro-Atlantic 'diaspora' debates, the refugee' and 'the displaced' occupy a position of heightened interstitial instability. It is with purpose that I use the term 'displacement' rather than 'migration' in relation to the 'camp-based Urdu-speaking community' in Bangladesh. This is not only to avoid the voluntaristic connotations of the latter, or the suggestion of movement with the intention of permanent relocation. As Zamindar (2007) argues, in the history of South Asia equally problematic has been the bureaucratic and juridical acquisition of the term 'migration' in attempts to control and fix these displacements within the bounded limits of emerging nation-states.

4.3. Displacement and 'the Refugee'

Drawing on the work of Mary Douglas (1966), 'Malkki notes that, 'uprootedness' or 'refugeeness' "is itself an aberration of categories, a zone of pollution" (1995, p.4), precisely because of the *absence* of home (the absence of belonging). As Turner explains:

> Transitional beings are particularly polluting, since they are neither one thing nor another, but may be both…and are at the very least 'betwixt and between' all the recognised fixed points in the space-time of cultural classification (1967, p.97).[111]

Samaddar (1999) describes displaced people as 'flows' that create 'decentred space', and argues that current theories of displacement inadequately understand its juxtaposition against the fixity of the nation-state. Set against 'the national order of things', refugees and the displaced are a problem, *externalized*, and kept apart. Their interstitial social location confronts the territorialisation of national identity, challenging our understanding of people, place and nation (Malkki, 1992; 1995).

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[111] The anthropology of rites of passage and classification (Douglas, 1966; Turner, 1967; Tambiah, 1985) is particularly illuminating here, highlighting possible reasons for the invisibility of displaced and 'stateless' peoples in the literature on nationalism (Malkki, 1995) as well as (in the case of Bangladesh) in national discourse or collective imagination.

Unlike migrants and diasporic groups, having crossed a border refugees and the displaced are apparently stripped of the specificity of culture, place and history. Reduced to "naked unaccommodated man" (Turner, 1967, p.98), they are seen as human in the most basic, elementary sense (Malkki, 1995, p.12). In discerning a link with the concentration camps of Nazi Germany, the contribution of Arendt (1951) retains particular resonance here. She asserted most notably that the refugee loses more than culture and identity; the refugee also loses rights. The figure that should embody the 'rights of man' par excellence highlighted instead the concept's crisis:

> The conception of human rights based upon the assumed existence of a human being as such, broke down…when those who professed to believe in it were for the first time confronted with people (refugees) who had indeed lost all other qualities…except that they were still human (Arendt, 1951, p.299).

She argued that human rights and citizenship rights had been conflated;[112] a conflation that may indeed have diverted attention away from the specific problems of statelessness in contemporary society. Giorgio Agamben's later work resumes the debate. He argued that so-called sacred and inalienable rights lack all reality when they no longer belong to citizens of a state:

> Rights are attributed to man (or originate in him) solely to the extent that man is…citizen." The refugee represents "nothing less than a limit concept that radically calls into question the fundamental categories of the nation-state (Agamben, 1998, p.128-133).

Agamben investigates the relationship between sovereign power and 'states of exception', the spaces in which the juridical order is suspended. In doing so he raises a number of questions regarding the meaning of citizenship, and the relationship between (wo)man and citizen. According to his analysis, the ambiguous, uncertain borderline fringe at the intersection of the legal and the political situates those it contains "in a limit zone between life and death, inside and outside, in which (he/she) is no longer anything but bare life" (Agamben, 1998, p.159; 2005).

In many ways, the 'diaspora' debate is powerfully contrasted with that of the disempowered subaltern refugee. 'Urdu-speakers' in Bangladesh have been understood to

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[112] A contention that has been reconfigured in the contemporary moment (see Soysal, 1994; Delanty, 2000).

occupy both social locations, and interrogate them in equal measure. Those that remain in Bangladesh have not exceeded national boundaries but, as IDPs, those in 'the camp' have haemorrhaged national space. Segregated from the rest of society in Agamben's 'state of exception', it could be argued they are produced and made meaningful by the categorical order (the 'nation-state') that excludes them (Malkki, 1995).

4.4 'The camp'

The work of Agamben has been adopted within critical migration and refugee studies to map the ways in which programmes of immigration control in the West, and the regimes of citizenship that underpin them, ensnare 'irregular migrants' in the indeterminate space of 'the camp' (Walters, 2008; Diken, 2004; Diken and Lautsen, 2002; Diken and Lautsen, 2006; Ek, 2006). Agamben argues that 'the camp' materializes wherever there is a 'materialization of the state of exception' and the creation therefore of 'a space for naked life' (2005, p.41). As discussed earlier, the Schmittian concept of the 'political exception' has been employed by other scholars since in slightly different ways (Ong, 2006), but Agamben's notion of the camp as 'exception incarnated' (Diken and Lautsen, 2006) has been particularly influential. It is a body of work which draws our attention to the ambiguous grey zone or 'zone of indistinction' neither inside nor fully outside the social and legal order, and as such always and inevitably both:

> The camp names a space that is formally outside the juridical and political order, but, because it captures its subjects outside, is never a condition of pure externality (Agamben, 2005, p.40).[113]

It has therefore been considered a concept that offers critical theorists a paradigm of the complex and ambiguous location unwanted and unauthorized migrants occupy today, and Agamben has been described as the pre-eminent theorist of the interstitial (Walters, 2008). In this study I question such a claim. Replacing 'the city' as the fundamental biopolitical paradigm of the West, 'the camp' emerges in the demarcation or distinction between 'inside' and 'outside' (Diken and Lautsen, 2006), but whether or not a paradigm which rests fundamentally on the dual order of in/exclusion can ever truly do justice to the indeterminacy of the 'in between' is a question I wish to explore. The representation of 'stateless' populations, and Agamben's analysis in particular, have been criticised

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[113] The 'state of exception' is presided over by that which is inside, and is therefore never fully 'outside' (Walters, 2008).

elsewhere for offering little scope for social and political agency, engendering forms of 'naked life' which render a rather flattened conception of migrant subjects (Walters, 2008). In examining movement between 'the camp' and the world outside, I will question the boundaries and dynamism of what may be a narrow simplification. 'Bihari' camps certainly attest to the existence of 'abject spaces' (Isin and Rygiel, 2007, p.185), but is all such abject space reducible to 'the camp'? As much of the scholarship in this field comes from the West, I will consider whether different global settings challenge some of the physical and conceptual frames of Agamben's well-established depiction.

In recent years this field of study has proposed the logic of the camp as the logic of contemporary society. Here, the production of 'bare life' is extended beyond the walls of the camp as the exception is made the norm. The camp is no longer a historical anomaly but the nomos of contemporary social space. Such a proposition signals an instability in which it is impossible to distinguish between the camp as exception and the exception as the rule (Diken and Lautsen, 2006), and therefore the distinction between inside and outside is in many ways dissolved. In the attempt to 'encamp' populations, to control them through spatial means, the fence, the wall and the border may indeed be stretched, but I suggest that the mechanics of such dissolution or subversion are yet to be fully investigated. Within the spatial ordering of society that 'the camp' confirms, the *crossing* of a boundary (between barbarism and civilisation, friend and enemy, political being and bare life) remains to be explored.

4.5 'The Ghetto'

However the border is conceived, Agamben's concept of 'the camp' relates sociality to the geographical ordering of space (Diken and Lautsen, 2006). The relationship between spatial and social forms has been studied since the Chicago School and continues to be reflected in approaches to urban problems and policies today. In early urban sociology, the typical model community was based on the immigrant area, and the study of 'The Ghetto' (Wirth, 1928) was an important forerunner to the study of 'the camp'. In Wirth's study of the Jewish communities in the US, 'the ghetto' was conceived as an enclosed space of community formed around traditions, values and language which functioned as a real place of origin, refuge and familiarity, as well as a space of belonging (Tonkiss, 2005). At the same time it was formed through a long history of persecution, and

highlighted the way in which access to public space is organised through forms of regulation and exclusion (Tonkiss, 2005). Wirth argued that these ethnic enclaves enclose forms of identity at the same time as they redraw lines of difference, and these identities are reproduced insofar as differences are marked and localized. Studies that have followed have, however, been accused of reducing the ghetto to a container of the exoticised 'others' of social research, while linking urban poverty and inequality to themes of social disorganisation and the cultural pathologies of ghetto residents (Keith, 2005b). The latter in particular has been a recurring theme (Tonkiss, 2005).

In critique of much of this scholarship, Wacquant's (2000) depiction of the ghetto as 'a relation of ethnoracial control and closure' based on stigma, constraint and institutional encasement resonates with the camps of this study. However, as Keith (2005b) observes, his argument that the analytical ordering of the spaces of the city should (and can) be separated from the folk concepts of the powerful and the powerless is perhaps simplistic. It fails to recognise the interplay between the representation of the ghetto and its invocation by both its residents and its oppressors. Consequently, it is important "to consider carefully both the vocabularly and the lens through which the spatial is made visible" (Keith, 2005b, p.62).

The ghetto and the 'ethnic enclave' configure an important duality. Potentially, they represent both a source of social capital and networking and a testament to institutionally racist exclusion (Keith, 2005a). In other words, the interplay betwen space and identity politics has the capacity to generate both sociality and social control (although literature on 'the camp' tends to favour the latter).[114] As Tonkiss explains:

> For Wirth, the communal life of the American Jew is imagined in deeply spatial terms around the real and figurative ghetto, as a social site in itself and a place of segregation from others (2005, p.16).

Here she draws our attention to the real and the figurative ghetto, the ghetto as metaphor and reality, fiction and fact, and as such the potential conflation of the abstract and analytical (Keith, 2005b). As Keith (2005b, p.69) has argued, places such as ghettos are moments of arbitrary closure:

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[114] While this is an issue which fell beyond the scope of the thesis, the paradoxical and agonistic intersection of sociality and social control produced by the camp itself generated interesting data. I am currently working on an article which discusses this further.

> Representations may be material, but are never reducible to the material; signification rarely guarantees its own reception. In this way social differentiation is played out across terrains that are ever shifting...the landscape is simultaneously duplicitous and cogent, metric and dramaturgical, real and imagined.

Where the real ends and the imagined begins is not always clear, but in the imagination of 'the ghetto' processes of marking and holding space are clearly important, and the role of the symbolic is germane (Tonkiss, 2005). In similar ways, 'the camp', as the symbolic separation of social groups (as much as the material), is marked in often imperceptible ways.

5. Natural, social and political 'space'

The concept of spatiality is central to much of the work which both 'the camp' and 'the ghetto' has spawned. This may have something to do with the fact that, in the field of sociology, Gans (2002) suggests that the concepts of place and space are re-emerging after a long hibernation.

5.1 Space and place

As de Certeau (1984) explained, space is what place is when the unique gathering of things, meanings and values are sucked out. Or conversley, as Gieryn (2000) has observed, place is what space is when invested with people, practices, objects and representations[115]. Natural space is therefore a *presocial* notion, which becomes a social phenomenon, or social space, once people begin to use it, boundaries are put on it, and meaning and value (including ownership, price, and so on) are attached. If natural space becomes a social phenomenon, it then becomes someone's *place* (Gans, 2002). Consequently not only does dis*place*ment clearly depend on a prior notion of cultures embedded in place (Massey and Jess, 1995) but, as Gupta and Ferguson (1992, p.10) argue:

> As actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, ideas of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps more salient.

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[115] Definitions abound, but Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) has been particularly influential, following whom we can speak of both the spatial qualities of place and the locational qualities of space.

The urban mosaic is subjected not only to the reproduction of segregation - as migrant minorities are locked into patterns of settlement, labour and power – but also the institutional logics of the melting pot (Keith, 2005a). Within specific regimes of governance therefore, minorities are variously accommodated, assimilated or stigmatized, and racialised patterns are given spatial form. In this way, as the camps powerfully demonstrate, configurations of life chances relate directly to the historical patterning of space (Keith, 2005a).

Places are not just culturally and ethnically distinct, but 'sexed', 'gendered', 'aged' and 'classed' too. As Tonkiss (2005) argues, considering the *embodied* nature of space directs our attention to the material ways in which space both conducts us as bodies and shapes us as selves. In the context of my research, the salience of gender altered in relation to different issues and concerns but it did so against a background in which the symbolic organisation of gendered spaces (and in particular the separation between public and private space) is distinct. Bangladesh is a country in which women, largely excluded from formal labour markets, have until more recently been conspicuous by their absence from public space, as strong norms of purdah, or female seclusion, have traditionally confined women to the precincts of the home (Kabeer, 2000). 'Purdah' norms reflect a notion of female sexuality which requires control, without which it is assumed that there will be a destructive effect on the social order. In Bangladesh, as Lewis (1993, p.31) observes, "a clear distinction is therefore maintained between male and female space". This said, the appearance of Bengali women in the public domain is thought to have been shifting somewhat since the early 1980s (Kabeer, 2000). Female migration has grown, particularly in relation to the extensive large-scale export garment sector, a development which has contributed towards an overall improvement in women's economic and social position. As Lewis and Abdul (2008, p.16) suggests, such change has "fundamentally altered the nature of previously male-dominated urban public space through women's visible presence". There is much diversity, however, and these changes have not affected all women equally (Lewis, 2008). As I discovered, in the spatial segregation of the camps, generation profoundly influences the gendering of movement in space. Gendered and

generational restrictions influence the possibility of movement outside as well as the nature of movement within.[116]

In one sense "everything we study is emplaced" (Gieryn, 2000, p.466), and as a result sociologists risk simply reconceptualising the obvious (Gans, 2002). However, for my purposes it is not just place which is important but the social relations which particular places construct. Issues of rights, citizenship, history and identity are contextualised by the camps at the same time as they invest the camps with meaning. Social relations are structured through the meaning with which the camps are invested. I am interested in the concept of 'social space' as more than just a "portion of geographical space occupied by a person or thing" (Yi-Fu Tuan, 1977, p.23). I am interested instead in a space of social positions defined in relation to one another. As a result, I will refer not to the 'place' of my informants but their 'socio-spatial' location. This is in order to emphasize that I am not just talking about *their place* but the social position that place configures. As Tonkiss (2005) argues, where the spatial and the social are overlaid, social arrangements in space are seen to be expressive of the cultural capital of different groups. The way in which social relations are reinforced by spatial organisation as spatial borders reproduce economic, social and cultural division, is at the very core of this study. As I hope to show however, places are dynamic contexts of social interaction and in this sense the camps are not essences but processes. An understanding of the camps as formulated through the sedimented spatial politics of history recognises not only that in some sense their evolution *is* their meaning, but also that this meaning is constituted through power relations. In examining differences in access to and understandings of citizenship produced by different 'socio-spatial locations', I am therefore not just interested in place but the way in which place impacts upon the social space of its people.

5.2 'Social space'

In organising the research around differences produced by the camp (differences of 'insider', 'outsider' and those 'in between') I have been able to consider the way in which social positions of ethnicity, gender, and class are produced and made

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[116] It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine how these complex dynamics have been further affected by the "creeping Islamicisation" (Kabeer in Lewis, 1993, p.29) already described, but no doubt the re-positioning of Islam within society is forcing the re-negotiation of gender-relations among 'Urdu-speakers' and Bengalis alike. The gendering of movement within (and more particularly outside) the camp is something I will consider further.

meaningful in their 'socio-spatial' surroundings. Bourdieu's theory of capitals (1979; 1986; 1989a; 1989b) has therefore proved useful, enabling me to move beyond the categorical limitations of 'ethnicity' and 'class', to explore the intersections that run between. According to Bourdieu, economic, cultural and social capitals are distributed differently throughout society, through struggles over assets and space, and people are distributed in social space according to the volume and composition of the capital they possess. The social positions we occupy (as a result of the ethnicity, class, gender that we are born into) determine access to, or limitation on, which capitals are available. It is not until such capitals are perceived and recognised as legitimate that they can be converted into power, the form of capital Bourdieu terms 'symbolic'. Understanding the 'social relations of capitals' therefore not only helps us to understand how social positions intersect and interact in subjective production but, as Skeggs (1997) argues, how access to, and legitimation of, cultural formations reinforce inequalities which are reproduced and lived as power relations.

5.3 'Political space'

Using Bourdieu's analysis of social space in a context of claims for political being, I have developed an approach to the creation of 'political space' – an analysis of the way in which history and space have shaped identities and political subjectivity. For Bourdieu history is the "taken for granted, axiomatic necessity of objective reality. (It is the foundation of habitas)" (Jenkins, 1992, p.80), but in his conception of social space it remains in the background, 'taken for granted' and conspicuously absent as a result. My aim is to show what social space is actually an outcome of; to re-historicise this social space, revealing it directly as the sedimented outcome of historical and political processes. As Keith (2005a, p.267) observes, the space of the city "invariably testifies to the presence of the past within its contemporary form" and it is to the spatial politics of history that the camps of Bangladesh speak. 'Political space' plays on Chatterjee's (2004; 2005) notion of 'political society', addressing relations of power and citizenship in South Asia. It references the "specific discursive modalities...and stratagems of the (political) field" (Blom Hansen, 1999, p.13) in which 'Urdu-speakers' are embedded. I argue that the success of certain groups over others in present day Bangladesh is articulated through some of the historical and political discourses of the Indian colonial state. It lies in the ability of some, over others, to draw on discursive registers of enduring value.

Simultaneously, however, it is traced in space, and the concept of 'political space' incorporates the delineations of space and place which were consistent themes in the narratives of informants. It enables me to conceive of the configuration of space through which these discourses resound, and through which, in certain conditions, social status and political representation are produced. The perspectival prism 'political space' implies foregrounds the structurally organised social positions that facilitate or restrict access to capital assets and therefore movement within the space. As I will show, movement in the space is not impossible. The 'Urdu-speakers' of this study are historically situated but they are nonetheless active social agents, making strategic calculations in difficult circumstances.

Resembling the slum dwellers Chatterjee examines, the ethno-linguistic minorities Nandy and others investigate, as well as the 'diasporic spaces' of Hall, Gilroy, Brah and Bhabha, 'Urdu-speakers' stand at the interface of some of the theoretical frames I have outlined. They are also an example of the 'other' diaspora, the diasporas formed through South-South migration that have until now been excluded from a conversation centrally located in the West. They have occupied Agamben's 'no man's land' between public law and political fact, juridical order and socio-political life, and they may be governed today by a 'neoliberal exception' that protects certain categories of subjects and not others (Ong, 2006b). Despite the 2008 judgement, experiences of citizenship are unevenly produced, drawing attention to the gaps in much associated theorisation and highlighting our misunderstanding of these marginal spaces. The implications of this historical legacy, this 'long duree' of displacement, and the kinds of identification that have resulted are profound. Today relationships to a shared identity or social collectivity of 'Urdu-speakers' are heavily determined by 'socio-spatial' locations. As the following chapter contends, once the blurred edges are uncovered, the contours of an identity that is highly contested are revealed.

CHAPTER FIVE - BOUNDARIES, INTERSECTIONS AND THE 'SOCIO-SPATIAL' CONTOURS OF 'COMMUNITY'.

It has long been suggested that the search for a collective Bengali Muslim identity has historically been caught between the two opposite pulls of an 'Islamic' identity with its extra territorial implications, and that of a long and entrenched *local* 'Bengali' social and cultural tradition (Roy, 2001). Since 1947, the salience of these different 'identity bases' has altered in relation to shifting economic and political contexts, and been manipulated by competing elites to mobilize 'the masses' (Kabir, 1995; Osmany, 1992). Following the religious nationalism of the Pakistani period, and the ethno-linguistic movements of the 1950s and 60s, the country soon found itself in search of a nationalism that could combine the two.

As Chapters Three and Four revealed, in the aftermath of Liberation it was the latter that gained ascendancy; the emergence of Bangladesh was widely seen as the final triumph of local Bengali cultural identity over the ideology of Pakistan (Roy, 2001). In the aftermath of an 'ethno-linguistic' conflict in which millions died, ethnic identity, language and culture had taken on new meaning. However in the mid-1970s, Islam re-emerged as an important factor, both socially and politically (Hashmi, 2004), and 'Bangladeshi nationalism' evolved as an attempt to accommodate a collective 'Muslim consciousness' alongside ethnic sentiments (Kabir, 1995). While it is not my aim to investigate the mechanics of these developments here - to ascertain how or why religion re-entered the political field - I contend instead that as the Bangladeshi national imagination has shifted, the position of the 'Urdu-speaking population' has shifted too. With religion re-emerging within the architecture of nation-state, and the political landscape altered, it has been assumed that a space has opened up as part of a Muslim nation. This chapter will investigate such claims, considering the limits, boundaries and intersections of an Urdu-speaking collective identity, formed and re-formed through the fluctuating ideological frames of over sixty years of political transition.

The first part of the chapter considers understandings of the 'community's' distinctiveness in the everyday formulations of those involved; the racial, cultural and linguistic 'border guards' (Armstrong, 1982) that situate 'us' against 'them'. As we have seen, the language of 'community' is itself defined in relation to an apparently coherent

ethnic identity, and intra-ethnic divisions and difference are very often left unexamined. In exploring this experience however, research revealed a greater diversity of social positions than expected, and as many lines drawn *within* the 'community' as without. These internal divisions are particularly apparent in relation to the section of the population that have always lived outside the camps, many of whom command considerable social respect. This group of 'Urdu-speaking *outsiders*' were found to have been accessing certain rights of citizenship throughout the period, a status many claimed formally and materially (in the form of passports) at some point in the mid-1970s. While Chapter Six examines the 'socio-spatial' contours of the granting of rights in greater detail, the aim here is simply to understand how the differences between 'insiders', 'outsiders' and the Bengali majority have been articulated among Urdu-speakers themselves, and what this represents in terms of a coherent 'community' identity.

The second part of the chapter considers the impact of positionality on responses to these collective categorisations, analysed through the language of labelling.[117] In one sense an 'Urdu' or 'Bihari' collective identity has been constructed and appropriated by other people for their own ideological reasons (the SPGRC, the state, the Bengali media); in another sense it is an unexamined lived experience, in which self and other ascription fuse and overlap in complicated ways. In light of some of my findings, the imperative to explore much neglected 'intra-ethnic' issues of difference and diversity (Anthias, 1998) is reinforced. While a dominant public discourse continues to construct the 'community' as a unit of collective membership, my research suggests that thirty eight years since the War of Liberation it is divided along cultural, linguistic, gendered and generational, socio-economic, spatial and civil lines. As we will see, these intersectional positionalities impact both the ways in which these labels are ascribed by others and also synchronically, "that which is narrated in one's own self" (Hall, 2000, p.146).

In the final section, the significance of socio-economic status in dividing the 'community' is foregrounded through the identificational resonance of settlement and segregation. Having been rejected by Pakistan due to their 'non-Pakistani origin' and by India on the

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[117] The system through which we grapple with the subjectivities of contemporary social life (James in Fishman, 1999). While the academic community no longer subscribes to notions of fixed, inward-looking, static identities, it is these ideas of 'cultural difference' that are taken up and performed within 'communities' themselves, and form the foundation of popular understandings (Alexander et al, 2006). In attempting to turn the abstract concept of identity into an empirical, locally meaningful, category it was consequently the language of labelling that was found most useful.

grounds of religion, 'Urdu-speakers' were rejected by the Bangladeshi state for their ethno-linguistic identity and involvement in the war. As the nation's contours have changed however, so has the nature of this rejection. Here I will draw upon the Indian colonial state literature because while I am aware of the historical chasm that has emerged between the countries since their partition, the pre-Partition period left a profound and enduring mark. Blom Hansen (2001) suggests that during the colonial period, 'community' in India was authorized as the natural oriental form, and the chapter argues that this 'pre-political' and 'primordial' language of 'community' is discursively produced in the present-day. Here, ethno-linguistic discrimination has fused with that which is socio-economic and today it is only those in the camp that nation formation excludes.

Although I will use the term 'Urdu-speakers' when referring to those inside and outside the camp inclusively (as this is the term most commonly used in reference to both) the research shows that all such labels conceal far more than they reveal. As I will show, the racialisation of 'Urdu-speakers' is increasingly addressed along this camp/non-camp divide, and as such a more nuanced understanding of minority 'communities' within their specific social and spatial setting is found crucial to furthering the debate.

1. The boundaries of 'community': 'race', culture, language

From 'Muslim refugee' and 'mohajir' to 'Bihari', 'Stranded Pakistani' and 'Maowra'[118] the language used to describe the population, and the boundaries it reflects, have changed over the years as their position and that of others has shifted. Today the terms 'Bihari' and 'Urdu-speaker' dominate public discourse, but who does that discourse consider authentic or legitimate, and where or how are boundaries composed? As Hasan (1997, p.13) suggests:

> Boundaries are multiple, and at no time is one boundary the sole definer of an identity. Yet at different times and for different reasons there is a 'relevant boundary' that gains prominence and defines the 'us'/'them' divide.

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[118] The term 'Maowra' originates from Chandragupta Maurya who conquered Bihar (then 'Magadh') and founded the Maurya Dynasty between 321 and 297BC (Ilias, 2003). Today it is a term of abuse largely only used in reference to 'camp-dwellers'.

In this particular instance the 'relevant boundary' has evolved. As we saw in Chapter Three, those 'Urdu-speakers' who arrived in East Bengal at the time of Partition became (first) the 'Muslim refugee', defined in opposition to the Hindus they had left behind and identified by the Pakistani state as 'mohajirs' (See Appendix 1 and 2). This classification folded diverse linguistic and regional groups together until these 'mohajirs' became singularly 'Urdu-speaking' (whether or not they spoke any non-Bengali dialectical form). By the 1950s they also began to be (derogatively) known as 'Biharis' among the local population (See Appendix 3), a term that was quickly adopted by the Bangladeshi and Pakistani Governments after the War in 1971.[119] Initially used in reference to all 'Urdu-speakers' in the region it is still very much alive in the media and everyday parlance today,[120] but it has become increasingly, if not categorically, tied to the camp. Along with this term, the establishment of the 'SPGRC' in the early 1970s introduced the label 'Stranded Pakistani' in reference solely to 'camp-dwellers'. Both 'Bihari' and 'Stranded Pakistani' in different ways, emphasize a particular dislocation with the territory of East Bengal. From this point on, defined by the absence of nationality, the camp itself figured prominently in constructions of difference.[121] As informants in Dhaka and Saidpur explained:

> The camp is a different identity; it means you are a Bihari, a Stranded Pakistani...If you left the place your identity would change (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

> Some of us brought land outside, and made lives outside, and if we got some money we would do this too and the label 'Stranded Pakistani' would be lost (Md. Khalid, 'insider', 72, Saidpur).

While an important distinction must be made between self-ascription and that of others (Gingrich, 2004) as these voices illustrate, the two overlap in complicated ways. The label 'Stranded Pakistani' for example was first claimed from within the camps, by the

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[119] The first Bangladesh census however was conducted in 1974 and includes no separate category for 'Urdu-speakers' (nor do those conducted since).

[120] See for example – 'UNHCR for citizenship of Biharis' (11th March 2007, The Daily Star); 'Biharis Kept Waiting For Passport' (26th January 2009, The Daily Star); 'Rehabilitation of Camp-dwelling Biharis Demanded' (27th May 2010, New Age).

[121] Stranded Pakistani was the most common term used in policy and press throughout the 1980s and 90s and still appears today. In a letter dated 14.06.07 from the Chief Election Commissioner to the then Chief Advisor the term 'Stranded Pakistani' is used alternately in reference to those in the camp and those 'Urdu-speakers' who 'had sworn their allegiance to Pakistan', conflating the two, as is common in popular discourse of the camps. The contents of the letter are debated in Md. Sadaqat Khan (Fakku) and Others v. Chief Election Commissioner, Bangladesh Election Commission, Writ Petition No. 10129 of 2007, Bangladesh: Supreme Court, 18 May 2008, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a7c0c352.html [accessed 13 August 2010].

SPGRC, but it was the media's enthusiastic evocation of the term, as well as its adoption by the Bangladeshi state, that instituted it within law, policy and public discourse. And while in some sense constructed (or imposed) from the outside it is often assumed by those within, framing the articulation of 'inside'/'outside' difference.

In recent years the marginally more inclusive, if (as we will see) equally inappropriate label 'Urdu-speaker', has been encouraged by some sections of 'the community', and now appears in law, policy and in the media[122]. Increasing institutionalization of the term might suggest that language today forms a central constituent of 'community identity' but exactly where language corresponds to notions of shared 'culture', 'ethnicity' or 'history' is complicated by the heterogeneity described in Chapter Three. When asked what defines 'the community' in relation to the Bengali majority, 'Urdu-speakers' themselves disagree. Some invoke a linguistic heritage: "I think it's about our language…There is only one fact, language" (Yusuf, 'insider', 90, Dhaka). Others stress the shared experience of migration, a shared history: "We migrated from India; that is what makes us different" (Emran, 'in between', 37, Dhaka). While for some 'collective identity' is composed of inherited culture, 'ethno-racial' characteristics, or a combination of all these things: "The main things are language, culture and height" (Afsar, 'outsider', 26, Dhaka). In part these differences of opinion reflect growing distance within the 'community' that almost forty years of displacement has fostered.

1.1 Constructing 'racial difference'

As Hall argued, the structure of identification is always constructed through ambivalence, through the difference between that which one is and that which is the other (Hall, 2000). The dominance of the physical and the biological in such constructions of difference has long been contested within social science debate. In exploring the defining terms of 'community identity' among 'Urdu-speakers' themselves, I found that the necessity of the other to the self was communicated profoundly through the mapping of bodily traits; articulations of biological and

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[122] See Md. Sadaqat Khan (Fakku) and Others v. Chief Election Commissioner (as above) and Abid Khan and Others v. Government of Bangladesh and Others, Writ Petition No. 3831 of 2001, Bangladesh: Supreme Court, 5 March 2003, available at:
http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a54bbcf0.html [accessed 13 August 2010]. Also, 'EC Moves to Make Voters 1.6 Lakh Urdu-Speakers' (24th July 2008, The Daily Star); 'EC to photograph Urdu-speakers from Monday' (24th August 2008, BdNews24.com).

physical difference that serve to construct the group in racial terms (Brah, 1996). The reference to 'height' in the above quotation is part of the production of heavily elaborated ideal types that form powerful classificatory tools (Malkki, 1995). As we will see, however, the boundaries between 'that which one is and that which is the other' are intricately woven and this is a subtext of innate difference which draws a racialised boundary not only between 'Urdu-speakers' and Bengalis but *within* the 'community' of 'Urdu-speakers' itself.

When 'Urdu-speakers' are discussed in relation to Bengalis, we find that they are very often constructed as taller and fairer. But when we look more closely, 'Urdu-speakers' from Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, the Punjab or (West) Pakistan are not only constructed as taller and fairer than Bengalis but taller and fairer than 'Urdu-speakers' from 'Bihar'. Shorter, darker-skinned 'Urdu-speakers' from Bihar are instead often depicted in their *similarity* to Bengalis, and articulations of racial difference are in fact most striking when 'Urdu-speakers' are *internally* compared:

> Those from Bihar look like Bengalis physically too, but those from Punjab look different, taller, fairer, with a beard (Afsar, 'outsider', 26, Dhaka).

This distinction rests on assumptions of 'ethnic origin' in which racialised identities and biologically inherited characteristics are embedded:

> VR: How can you tell if someone is 'Bihari', or Punjabi, or another 'Urdu-speaker'?
> Shakil: It's very easy to recognise a Bihari from their face
> VR: What about their face?
> Shakil: They look different (Shakil, 'outsider', 20, Saidpur).

Skin colour plays an important part in these constructions of difference, and due to the assumption of a darker complexion 'Urdu-speakers' from Bihar are constructed as ethnically inferior to fairer-skinned Punjabis. As Malkki (1995, p.79) observes, the markers of *racial* difference are immediately coded with understandings of *social* difference; "one might say a curious caste difference was being inscribed on the body". Bihar as a (largely imagined) place plays an important role in this production of categorical difference. It is discursively produced in the Bangladeshi imagination as a symbol of communal conflict, famine and poverty and occupies a highly charged space in the rhetoric of identity and belonging. As Horowitz argues (in Chatterji,

2010), used in particular contexts the very word 'Bihar' conveys all the horrors of the deadly ethnic riot. As a conversation during one of my interviews acknowledged:

> Amal (Bengali, 50+, Dhaka): Bihar means 'moitree', that is friendship, it doesn't mean violence, but it's famous for Hindu/Muslim communal riots.
> Syed ('in between', 30, Dhaka): Yes that's the major identity of Bihar!

As the joke related below reveals, historical associations of famine and conflict have situated the state in geo-political terms:

> The Prime Minister of India and Pervez Musharaff were holding a meeting to sort out what to do about Kashmir. The meeting went on for two days, and at the end there was no progress. They both wanted to keep it, and were unwilling to budge. At the end of the third day however, a Bihari man approached Musharaff and took him to one side. When Musharaff came back he agreed to give Kashmir over to India. No one could believe it, how did the man convince him? The man explained that he had told Musharaff that if he keeps Kashmir he can have Bihar too! (Mr Abbas, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

The prospect of gaining Bihar had put Musharaff off Kashmir altogether. Clearly it was not an origin to be proud of. As a result it was suggested that certain 'Urdu-speakers' concealed their 'Bihari' origins in order to claim racially superior UP or Punjabi heritage; only to be given away by the colour of their skin:

> I asked Mr Abbas why he wasn't going to India with his friends and he said it was because Bihar was a dirty place and he didn't really like it. He told me that he was from Uttar Pradesh anyway, not Bihar. Syed didn't seem convinced. "Many other people just say they are, like Mr Abbas, I don't think he is really. He doesn't look Aryan at all, he looks just like me, he looks too Bihari!" He laughed. He often refers to himself as short and dark and 'very Bihari' (Field note, 11th November 2008).

> Afsan ('insider', 30, Dhaka): I talked to (the Bengalis) in fluent ('thik') Hindi and they were so surprised, 'where are you from?' they asked, they were really impressed. I told them I was from UP.
> VR: Are you?
> Afsan: Yes, my mother is from UP, and you can see by the way I look. But other people just say they are.

It is true that at the time of Partition migrants from Bihar made up the majority of Urdu-speaking incomers. It is not mere coincidence that when tensions grew this seemingly innocuous regional reference became the choice nomenclature for all Urdu-speaking migrants in the region. The label remains commonly used today with all its derogatory

ethno-racial connotations; it is most often used in reference to those who live in the camps.

The desirability of a West Pakistani (Punjabi, UP or Patan[123]) complexion goes back a long way and such complexions certainly carried associations of ethnic purity prior to 1971. However, unsurprisingly, this same physical ideal type (fair skin, strong features, height etc) was also hugely problematic in the years immediately after the war. Attacks continued against any remaining enemy elements in the country, and those who fitted this physical stereotype inevitably suffered the brunt of attacks. One of my interviewees who (like many others) described himself as of 'Patan' origin, found himself in this position after the war. Tall, pale, with striking features, he explained the problems his appearance caused in the early 1970s and the painful "barrier" formed between the camp and the outside world:

> Everyone could tell I was not Bengali by the way I look. It was difficult for me to move around the city at that time so I had to stay in the camp. The camp was my only place of security, and it created barrier with the world outside (Zafar, 'insider', around 70, Dhaka).

In almost forty years, as a new country has been born and balances of power have fundamentally changed, 'looking Pakistani' no longer holds the danger it once did. The desire for fair skin has overridden certain political concerns and within a 'community' of 'Urdu-speakers' 'looking Pakistani' is concurrent once more with notions of 'racial purity'. 'Urdu-speakers' as a 'community' are therefore depicted as both particularly fair-skinned (if they happen to be of Punjabi, north-west Indian or Pakistani/Patan origin) and particularly dark-skinned (if they happen to be from Bihar). 'Ethnic origin' is mapped onto the body in the establishment of indissoluble categorical difference (Malkki, 1995) within a 'community' dominantly (or publically) portrayed as ethnically holistic. To obfuscate matters further the corresponding assumption of physical *similarity* between 'Urdu-speakers' from Bihar and Bengalis has further implications. While 'Urdu-speakers' from Bihar are constructed as ethnically inferior to 'Urdu-speakers' from other regions of India and Pakistan, they are at the same time able to gain particular social advantages as a result of their ability to 'pass' as Bengali. My research assistant Syed would joke that his dark skin and 'Bihari looks' concerned his mother (and he was

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[123] A large Eastern Iranian ethno-linguistic group primarily located in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

regularly told off for "spending too much time in the sun"). In enabling him to 'pass as Bengali', however, these same characteristics also made it easier for him to get a job, buy land, or rent a flat outside the camps.

1.2 Constructing 'cultural difference'

'Passing' as Bengali is a complex process explored at greater depth in Chapter Eight, but it is clearly about a lot more than skin colour and height. As the quotation below demonstrates, notions not just of biology but also of 'culture' play into depictions of sameness and difference:

> Urdu-speakers used to wear punjabis and wear salwar kameezs (although), now the camp-dwellers all wear saris and lungis and trousers etc like Bengalis (Mohammad, 'insider', 30, Dhaka).

Mohammad refers specifically to 'camp-dwellers' here as it was they who were thought to have held on to certain cultural markers longer than those physically integrated with Bengalis outside. Cultural differences are invoked as resolutely as physical and inherited dispositions or capacities:

> (School teachers) can recognise you are a 'Bihari' from your face, your appearance and your dress (Shakil, 'outsider', 20, Saidpur).

Along with distinctions of dress, the assumption of shared attitudes, perspective, or behaviour is another way in which cultural difference is constructed, as one Bengali interviewee explained:

> These people are very laborious, hardworking, they are not like other Bangladeshi citizens, they are innovative, they are hardworking, they want to live, they want to survive, extremely hard working (repeated) (Mr Siddiqui, Bengali lawyer, Dhaka).

Mr Siddiqui reveals a commonly held assumption; such 'doxic' stereotyping (Bourdieu, 1977) is so deeply ingrained it has become part of the self-identification of many 'Urdu-speakers'. As we can see below, it has fed into the construction of a population with certain specialised technical expertise, involving representations or stereotypes internalised by 'insiders' and 'outsiders' alike:

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> Bengalis know that Biharis are good at certain technical things – if a Bengali barber gets staff he usually employs Biharis, he knows they are good at these things…everyone in Bangladesh knows that 'Urdu-speakers' are quality tailors and they are very popular regardless (of their ethno-linguistic identity) because of their skill (Syed, 'in between', 30, Dhaka).

It relates to another 'doxic' stereotype: religiosity (sometimes reflected through cultural signifiers such as styles of dress or as observed earlier in the reference to 'beards'). Chapter Three revealed that this is in part a legacy of Partition, as state classification collapsed diverse linguistic and regional groups together (Rahman and Van Schendel, 2004). In Pakistan, all 'Muslim refugees' were 'Mohajirs' and all 'Mohajirs' were 'Urdu-speakers'. The identity of these newcomers was henceforth associated with the reason for their migration: their faith. At the time of Partition a certain religious morality was considered part of a 'shared community identity' pertaining to all Urdu-speaking migrants from India:

> Those 'Urdu-speaking Muslims'…who recognised Urdu as (the) identity of their *religion*…migrated from India and took shelter in Pakistan…(while) those who were influenced by the *secular character* of Urdu, they preferred to remain in secular India (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

Still today the almost fanatical religious conservatism of these migrants is discursively and essentially produced, increasingly however in association only with the space of the camps:

> You never find an 'Urdu-speaker' working in a garments factory, it's seen by the community as like sex-work. Biharis, I mean camp-dwellers, are very religious and conservative so they're more reluctant to let their daughters work there (Khalid, 'in between', 28, Dhaka).

As is often the case Khalid collapses the 'Urdu-speaking community' into a 'community' of 'camp-dwellers'. It is 'insiders' or 'Biharis' that are 'religious' and 'conservative'; suddenly those outside the camp do not exist at all. In the eyes of those outside, this is an inhibiting cultural conservatism through which the purity of religion is less supported than polluted. Contaminated by 'home', 'tradition' and history, this cultural difference within 'the community' takes on some significant weight.

1.3a Regional difference – labour markets and local economies

When they arrived in East Bengal Urdu-speaking migrants were concentrated in a number of specialised sectors – namely agriculture, manufacturing, trade, transport (especially the railways) and Government services (see Appendix 4). As we will see, for some elite 'Urdu-speakers' Government services, manufacturing and transport still represent sources of employment, but for some of those in the camp much has changed. Many lost land which had once been farmed and, concentrated today in urban settlements, have become associated with the same kind of informal labour as unskilled Bengalis (rickshaw-pulling, manual day-labouring and petty trade). In other areas, however, traditional skills are still employed. The production of handicrafts is one area in which 'camp-dwellers' still work, especially in Dhaka, and throughout the country they continue to be associated with the particular skills of barbering and butchering. This technical expertise and the strong work ethic noted above was frequently referenced by Bengali informants. As Jabuddin observes below, however, it does little to improve broader social discrimination associated with the camps themselves:

> As individuals people respect Biharis because they're good craftsmen etc but they think the camps are dirty (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

Despite particular skills therefore, discrimination impedes opportunities, and difficulty in accessing employment was considered the greatest problem faced by informants 'inside'. Naturally this varies a little between cities, and even between camps within cities, as labour markets are often highly localised. Geneva camp for example is situated on the edge of a busy marketplace in central Dhaka and many 'camp-dwellers' are employed as stall owners or assistants. Mirpur on the other hand, also in Dhaka, has been the centre of local Benarasi (Varanasi) sari production since well before the war[124] so while the fashion for these saris is declining many residents of camps in Mirpur continue to work in the trade. As I also discovered the employment structure of each camp is influenced not only by the local economy but in relation to the nature of the site on which the camp was built. Staff Quarters Camp in Dhaka, for example, was appropriated from the quarters of Urdu-speaking Government employees in 1971/2. It is traditionally associated with white collar work and greater levels of formal employment than other camps in the capital. While formal employment among residents is no longer common, it

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[124] Mirpur is a suburb of Dhaka that developed in large part as a result of the settlement of Indian émigrés around the time Partition.

remains a wealthier camp than many others. An internal camp hierarchy is produced as a result of very specific historical experience:

> Every camp is different. We are living in multi storied buildings in this (Staff Quarter) camp. There is also one toilet per house whereas in Geneva Camp there is one per row, which means there are four in total! So our status is higher. Many of the Geneva Camp dwellers come around to get a rented house in Staff Quarter Camp. They think we are rich here. A person from Staff Quarter thinks that they are superior to those from Geneva Camp or Market Camp. They tease each other; it's a kind of identity. Also people do different things in different camps: most people in Staff Quarter Camp are service workers (drivers, clerks etc.) whereas most people in Geneva camp are businessmen (market traders). This indicates the status of the camps. They were distributed randomly in 1972; it was just luck where you ended up (Sajid, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

An internal camp hierarchy was less distinct in Saidpur, possibly due to the size of the town and, in relative terms, the unusually high number of camps it contains. With a population of around 400,000 it contains twenty two camps[125], many of which are not only much smaller than in the capital, but also more evenly dispersed (in Dhaka the majority of the camps developed in just two areas of the city). Located in the poorest district of north-western Bangladesh (Rajshahi), close to the border with India, there is less economic activity in general and formal employment in particular is more limited than in the capital. The vast majority of male 'camp-dwellers' work as rickshaw-pullers or agricultural day labourers, with very little stability from one day to the next.

Another significant difference between Saidpur and Dhaka is in the nature of the displacement that occurred in 1971, described in Chapter Three. Few if any 'Urdu-speakers' living in Saidpur were displaced from their houses, and those who have lived outside therefore represent a broader cross-section of social positions. Some outside the camps live in settlements that are not physically dissimilar to camps (but they happen to pay rent) and the camp/non-camp distinction is consequently more opaque. A difference of stigma or status between the camps and outside is observed in both locations, but in Saidpur these boundaries are less distinctly drawn. Here there is also sometimes little to distinguish their employment from that of Bengalis. I interviewed doctors, teachers, politicians, and successful entrepeneurs, alongside day

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[125] In 2008 the greater metropolitan population of Dhaka was over twelve million (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2008) and it contained thirty camps. It is therefore around thirty times larger than Saidpur but houses only eight additional camps.

labourers and rickshaw-pullers, all living 'outside' in the town. In Dhaka where the majority of 'Urdu-speakers' *were* displaced during the war, however, 'outsiders' represent a distinct social elite. Although there is no statistical information on the employment or livelihood opportunities of 'outsiders' anywhere in the country (as previous research has exclusively examined 'camp-dwellers' - with the existence of a population living outside the camps either unknown or ignored), my own empirical observation revealed circumstances to be much less varied in the capital. Outside the camps in Dhaka I met prominent 'Urdu-speaking' journalists, lawyers, entrepreneurs and activists, as well as a number of lower middle class families where children were working as accountants, teachers and shopkeepers. Dhaka 'outsiders' therefore appeared to occupy similar sectors and positions as middle class Bengalis.

1.3b Regional difference – managing minoritarianism

As observed above, in Dhaka difference and distance within the 'Urdu-speaking community' (discourses of 'inside'/'outside' difference) is more pronounced. Additionally, amongst a Bengali population of over twelve million, 'Urdu-speakers' collectively represent a comparatively invisible minority. In Saidpur however where '*intra*-community' fissures are blurred, '*inter*-community' boundaries appear to be reinforced. This is the only Bangladeshi town in which 'Urdu-speakers' are numerically significant and informants suggested that the tension between 'Urdu-speakers' *and Bengalis* was in fact more distinct:

> Sabbu ('in between', 47, Saidpur): There is no problem between camp-dwellers and non-camp-dwellers here. The main problem whether you live in the camp or not is with Bengalis.
> Sittari (his wife, 35, 'in between', Saidpur): Yes, Bengalis, the Bengalis who live here tease/abuse us. With 'Urdu-speakers' there is no problem. They (Bengalis) say we have to move from here and go to Pakistan as this place is for Bengalis not Biharis. We get called 'Bihari, Bihari, Maowra, Maowra…'

'Urdu-speakers' are not only more visible in Saidpur, but more influential too, they therefore represent potential competition to Bengalis in the town. As an influential community activist explained "we are powerful here" (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', 50, Saidpur), not only in economic and social terms but as a 'vote bank' of political consequence:

As many as 30,000 'Biharis' in Saidpur have been enlisted in the voter roll since 1974. This is because all the 'Biharis' who lived outside the camps were able to enlist themselves on the voter roll. So our vote bank is the main issue why Saidpur is so different politically from Dhaka. It enabled us to 'manage' the political parties! (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', around 50, Saidpur).

The greater concentration of 'Urdu-speakers' in Saidpur promotes access to political power, while in Dhaka some people are not even aware that an 'Urdu-speaking population' exists. Here, to some degree, assimilatory success "renders invisible presence itself" (Keith, 2005a, p.267).

The nature and salience of 'ethnic' boundaries as opposed to social and spatial ones are evidently local, contextual and historical. Nevertheless, there is one 'border guard' that one might assume unifies more than any other.

1.4a Linguistic difference *without*

The relationship between ethnic identities and language is often intimate. As Fishman has argued (1999, p.447/8), "from an emphasis on culture, history, purported kinship, patrimony and uniqueness it is but a short leap to language". As a cultural resource at the centre of struggles for hegemony, language constructs boundaries around minorities such as 'Urdu-speakers' (Spivak, 1992). As Brubaker et al (2006) suggest, beyond constructions of innate biological/physical difference or 'cultural markers' such as styles of dress, ethnic difference is first and foremost 'enacted' through language. While the label 'Urdu-speaker' has over the years assumed associations of origin, history and ethnic identity, it is primarily descriptive of 'linguistic difference'. When discussing the parameters of an 'Urdu-speaking' identity it is not surprising therefore that language was the 'difference' most often cited:

We are talking in Urdu. Therefore we think we are 'Urdu-speakers'. The difference with Bengalis it is only language (Mr Akhtar, 'insider' around 45, Dhaka).

Given the history of the region, the power of language in constructing 'community identity' is not unexpected. As Kabir (1987) has observed, the gradual reappearance of religion in Bangladeshi society and politics does not mean that the strong attachment to the language and culture has suffered significant loss of appeal. However, the term 'Urdu-speaker' is in fact severely misleading, and in a number of ways, language itself

forms a barrier between and within an apparently 'linguistic community'. The existence

of the so-called 'Dhakay'[126] population of Old Dhaka highlights the complexities of any

collective 'linguistic identity'. The 'Dhakay community' are also 'Urdu-speakers', but

unlike the 'Urdu-speakers' of Partition, they are thought to have migrated much earlier.

Often referred to as 'the descendants of the Mughal rulers' (but more accurately the

descendants of those who migrated during the Mughal period), they have lived in East

Bengal for hundreds of years. As a Professor of the Asiatic Society explained, many have

occupied a prominent position within society ever since:

> ('Urdu-speakers') in Bengal do not make a new feature, it's a historical feature.
> Dhaka was the capital of the Eastern Mughal Province, many of the old aristocratic
> families of Dhaka came from Egypt, Kashmir or Kabul etc...The biggest family of
> Dhaka, the biggest aristocratic family, they are from Kashmir actually and they
> speak Urdu. There are some other Mughal families (who) also speak Urdu, even
> now. With us they will speak affected Bangla but among themselves they speak
> Urdu, it is a bilingual city... (Professor Chowdhury, Asiatic Society, Dhaka -
> interview in English).

There is therefore another 'Urdu-speaking community', *not considered part of* the 'Indian

Urdu-speaking community'. These early migrants to the region are represented as an

entirely separate 'community', thought to have, by and large, merged into the Bengali

majority. Crucially they are unconnected to the stigma of Pakistan and the trauma of the

war (or to the labels 'Bihari', 'Stranded Pakistani' or 'Moawra'). Their social status today

varies widely - with hugely successful entrepreneurial families, politicians and academics

among them, they are also found working as shopkeepers, sweepers and domestic

workers. In cultural terms both Urdu-speaking groups are often difficult to

differentiate[127], but in terms of the respect they are able to claim, the distinction is clear.

Consequently it is commonly observed that at times 'Bihari Urdu-speakers', and in

particular 'camp-dwellers', alter their accent slightly, 'passing' as 'Dhakay' in order to

avoid discrimination. One 'Bihari Urdu-speaker' who had grown up in Old Dhaka and

picked up a 'Dhakay' accent living there, explained how she was treated on moving into

the camps:

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[126] Simply meaning 'from' or 'of Dhaka'
[127] The food associated with 'Biharis', such as biryani, bread and kebabs, are also associated with 'Dhakay'
communities for example. 'Biharis' from the camp regularly visit the Old Town to eat in 'Dhakay'
establishments.

> Before, when I went to the water point (in the camps), women called me Dhakaini. They were calling my children Bengali. Outside the camp people can point out easily that we are Dhakaiya and they don't tease us because we still don't have (the) camp accent ('lehza') (Afsana, 'in between', 45, Dhaka).

Despite the fact that Afsana was born in Bihar, due to her accent "people can easily point out that *we are Dhakaiya*". Language (or accent) is here heavily implicated in the formation of an ethnic or cultural identity. Afsana also demonstrates the different treatment such accents provoke. As an Urdu professor of Dhaka University - herself a member of the 'Dhakay' community - suggested, the history of this population was a history of which one was expected to be proud:

> I am descended of the Mughals…I don't (know) when we actually came here, I think in the rule of Shah Shoja…I was born in Dhaka but my mother tongue is Urdu...I grew up in Old Dhaka. They speak Urdu there but…nowadays in Old Dhaka we don't have that much quality Urdu. We used to have very good quality Urdu in that part of the city…There are differences between Dhakay Urdu and Bihari Urdu also. Biharis are using a local dialect from Bihar with Urdu…(In Old Dhaka) people are speaking…a mixture of Hindi, Farsi and Arabic Urdu. Those in Old Dhaka are all in some way connected to the Mughals….Some are directly descended from the Mughals themselves and some from their employees" (Dr Yusuf, Urdu Department, Dhaka University).

Urdu in Dhaka is thus spoken in many forms, inflected with Farsi and Arabic in Old Dhaka, and a 'Bihari dialect' in the camps of Mohammadpur. Indian/Bihari Urdu-speakers' and 'Urdu-speaking Dhakay' share the roots of a mother-tongue, but as all my interviews revealed, they do not share a 'collective identity':

> Afsana: We used to live...in the old part of Dhaka. The house was rented and it was difficult to manage rent for us...so we came to the camp.
> VR: Were there many 'Urdu-speakers' living in the place where you lived?
> Afsana: Yes, but most of them are Dhakay, some came from Bihar. The place was a *mixed* community (Afsana, 'in between', 45, Dhaka).

What is clear is that some sense of a specific migration experience, origin, or history plays into collective identities too, complicating linguistic boundaries. For 'Bihari Urdu-speakers' this history of migration stretches beyond both the British and Pakistan periods, but is concentrated between the years 1946 and 1964. And geographically 'India' or 'Bihar' as an 'origin' (if not exactly a 'home') lies somewhere in the background, as the exchange below demonstrates:

The defining feature of the community is the fact we migrated from India. We moved to East Pakistan and thought we were superior. This was why we didn't create links with Bengalis and this is what we are trying to do now (Emran, 'in between', 37, Dhaka).

Partition, India, Pakistan *and* Urdu clearly all play into a fragmented and multi-layered identity. 'Bihari' is not only a cultural category but a historical and political category too. It is because of this history that most of my informants are not 'Dhakay', and those who are 'Dhakay' are not 'Bihari'. While Urdu represents a 'relevant boundary' for some of Partition's 'Urdu-speakers', this is far from uncontested.

1.4b Linguistic difference *within*

To complicate matters further, not only does language (or more specifically accent) produce boundaries around 'the community' in this way, but it is through language (or accent) that further boundaries are drawn within. The socio-economic fragmentation of 'Bihari Urdu-speakers' since 1971 has been reproduced in widening disparities of language use. Not only do those living outside the camps speak better Bengali than those inside (in some sense both cause and effect of settlement), but in Dhaka these 'Urdu-speakers' also have a very different relationship to the one thing that is meant to connect them - Urdu. Those who are wealthy, well-educated and live outside the camps speak, to varying degrees of 'purity', a fairly standardized Urdu (along with fluent Bengali). The language of the camp, however, is best described as a language variety which "unlike the Urdu that evolved in Delhi and UP was overwhelmingly plain and simple" (Ilias, 2003, p.20)[128]. It is a mixture of Urdu-based regional dialects such as Bhujpuri, Magadhi, Magahi and Maithili (Ilias, 2003) fused together by the sudden cohabitation of migrants from all over India:

In our childhood we used to speak slightly differently. But here people came from all over India, that's why the language became a kind of mixed language. Before that we used to speak Bhujpuri, but learnt Arabic and pure Urdu ('accha Urdu') also...But no one speaks pure Urdu here, we speak a kind of 'Indian language'. We have created an attachment with this language, it's now our language. But I love to hear the accent of pure/perfect Urdu. It is very special (Lakiya, 'insider', 50+, Dhaka).

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[128] Some informants described the camp form as an accent but it would more accurately be described as a dialect or variety since differences occur at the level of lexis, grammar *and* pronunciation (Trudgill, 2009).

Today this 'Indian language' is infused not only with Bengali but also Hindi:

> VR: What kind of language are you practicing in the camp?
> Delwar: It's a local dialect and it's mixed with several languages, including Bangla and Hindi (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur).

This is in part because, in their spoken forms, there is little to tell Urdu and Hindi apart – it is the script that defines the difference[129]. Many of those in the camps considered themselves Urdu/Hindi-speakers as a result:

> We are commonly known as 'Urdu-speakers' but we are talking in a Hindi dialect (Mr Gulzar, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur).

> VR: What type of Urdu do you speak?
> Shakil: It's a Hindi, people in Pakistan speak proper ('pukka') Urdu...they know that we're from India so we speak Hindi. I like the Pakistani Urdu better (Shakil, 'outsider', 20, Saidpur).

The continuing significance of regional dialects such as Bhujpuri within the camp variety suggests some degree of congruence with pre-1971 social dialectical forms. Standard Urdu, like any other standardized form, is associated with those of a higher socio-economic status (explaining in part the reverence it is given by 'camp-dwellers' like Lakiya and Shakil above). It is associated with those of a higher socio-economic status because it reflects access to certain social experiences and in particular certain forms of education and schooling (Trudgill, 2009). As we will see in the following chapter, in Dhaka it was those without networks, connections or social and financial capital, those without these social experiences, who moved into the camps after the war. When they were first established, the camps clearly housed a broader assortment of social positions than today but once those who had been educated left or died, schooling came to a virtual standstill:

> VR: Do you know people in the camp who can speak and understand 'pure' Urdu?
> Mohammad Ali: Nowadays we don't have any. Before we had old men, they spoke in pure Urdu but they died. We now speak a kind of Indian Urdu, Hindustani Urdu (Mohammad Ali, 'insider', 44, Dhaka).

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[129] As the Hindustani language was spoken by Hindus and Muslims alike, it has been argued that the British, who worried it might bring them together, laid the foundations of another language, which it called Hindi. Some (such as Ghandi) were in favour of retaining Hindustani to be written in the Arabic (Urdu) script *and* the Nagri (Hindi) script, but others, advocating that it only be written in the Nagri (Hindi) script, eventually won (Hayat,1966).

In Saidpur many of those who fled violence and ended up in the camps came from rural districts and would also not have been as well educated as those in the town. Pure Urdu speakers are therefore uncommon:

> I don't read or write Urdu. There are few people who read and write Urdu in the camps now. Some of those who can read/write Urdu died or went to Pakistan (Md. Manjur Alam, 'insider', 41, Saidpur).

The 'non-standard variant' produced through this segregation has diverged powerfully from standardized forms. It is referred to by those in the camps as 'Urdu', although in Dhaka, where 'Urdu-speakers' outside the camps speak a much more standard Urdu variant, "The language of the camp is a language of its own" (Mr Shamim, 'outsider', 53, Dhaka). Purity and value are highly contested:

> Pappu: They don't speak Urdu in the camps anyway. Or not proper Urdu ('acchi Urdu'). They speak some kind of South Indian dialect I think...
> Shayester: No, something from Bihar…a kind of Bhujpuri thing? ('Outsiders', 19 and 24, Dhaka).

Schiffman (in Fishman, 1999) argues that Indic linguistic cultures are so old that puristic traditions and diglossia (language hierarchy) are deeply rooted. The younger generation of elite 'Urdu-speakers' in the capital who have always lived outside refer particularly condescendingly to this strange "bastardised" form:

> VR: So how often do you speak Urdu?
> Jalal: Only to my mother and my aunty but I speak it fluently. It's not like they speak in the camps though [laughs]. If you heard me speak you would notice the difference. They speak a kind of mixture of other things. [He looks at his younger cousin and says something I don't understand and they laugh.]
> VR: Why are you laughing?
> Jalal: Because it's funny. Have you heard the way they speak? It's like the difference between Cockney and English. It's funny (Jalal, 'outsider', 29, Dhaka – interview conducted in English).

The above quotation makes an interesting comparison. Both Cockney and Standard English are well recognised language varieties of English with some similarities to Standard Urdu and its nonstandard variants. Nonstandard dialects of English "are generally simultaneously both geographical and social dialects which combine to form both geographical and social dialect continua" (Trudgill, 2009, p.7). However Standard English and Standard Urdu are purely social dialects. The camp dialect differs from most

nonstandard language variants in the specifics of its geographical configuration as unlike most nonstandard dialects it has no geographical base; it is spoken in much the same form in every camp nationwide. As we will see in Chapter Eight, it is also spoken *outside* the camps in Saidpur, but this is a very unique context. Excluding Saidpur, the language may have no geographical base but it does have distinct spatial organisation in that it is only to be found where camps are situated. Like other nonstandard variants, the dialect's social base is clearly strong. It instantly identifies socio-economic status and, consequently, may be the source of ridicule. Some informants in the camps, or 'in between', speak equally disparagingly of their own mother-tongue:

> No, no we are not practicing Urdu. It's a kind of hodgepodge (kichree) of languages (Tuni, 'in between', 27, Dhaka).

> I know a few people who speak pure Urdu, but I would describe the kind of Urdu I speak as mixed ('milawat'), muddied/no longer pure ('bejhal') (Mohammad, 'insider', 30, Dhaka).

> I don't know anyone who speaks pure Urdu. I think I speak a 'Bihari Urdu'. It's not similar to Pakistani Urdu which is the pure ('khas') one. Pakistani Urdu is a very beautiful language. Pakistanis come here and they think this is a very bad language so sometimes I feel shame to speak with them. They say, 'what is this you're speaking, it's not Urdu?' (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka)

As demonstrated above, the standards of wider society equip stigmatized individuals to be intimately alive to what others see as their failing. As Goffman (1968, p.18) argues "shame becomes a central possibility, arising from the individual's perception of one of his own attributes as being a defiling thing to possess":

> In the camps we are speaking the Urdu which is valueless. It is Urdu 'dust', 'rubbish' ('dhula')…they (those outside) can't understand us...and they say my Urdu is valueless (Salma, 'insider', 18, Dhaka).

Goffman (1968) defines 'acceptance' as the respect and regard the 'uncontaminated' receive. As he explains, when 'acceptance' is denied, the stigmatized individual echoes this denial by finding that some of his/her own attributes warrant it. As Salma reveals, valuelessness is internalized. In Dhaka, 'broken Urdu' ('tuta futa Urdu') is not spoken outside the camps, and as already mentioned the camp itself as a space of difference or distinction is much more pronounced. People often talk of the effect on their language that movement between these spaces has produced:

> My language was better before I moved into the camp, after moving here it was mixed and damaged ('jaban kharab ho gaya hai') (Salima, 'insider', 70, Dhaka).

In the capital in fact, some 'outsiders' don't speak Urdu at all:

> I can't speak Urdu. I speak a bit but I'm not fluent ('thik se'). If someone asks where I'm from I always tell people that I'm a Bihari Patan from India. I say 'I am Bihari' but people don't think I'm Bihari because my Bangla is so fluent...My mother was Bengali but...my father was 'Bihari' so my blood is completely 'Bihari' (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

Jabuddin speaks Bangla because he grew up and was educated outside the camps, and his mother is Bengali. He self-identifies as 'Bihari' as a result of his (father's) 'Bihari blood'. The label 'Bihari', normally associated with 'camp-dwellers' is here imbued with an ethno-racial quality that overrides both 'culture' (language) and socio-economic location (the camp). The following section will explore the complex process of self-identification in more detail, revealing that Jabuddin's ability to self-ascribe as 'Bihari' or 'Urdu-speaking' is in fact more heavily related to the intersections of 'culture' and socio-economic location than it would first appear. Racial and cultural identification is bound to social and spatial locations and here the distance between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' is at its most succinct.

2. The intersections of identity: positionality and power

As we will see, divisions are not just of origin, culture or language, but of civil status too, one symptom of which has been increasing socio-economic disparity. Fundamental inequality of rights has reinforced previously existing stratification, enhancing divisions along socio-economic lines.

2.1 Class, capital and social stratification

The differences between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are articulated as much in relation to ideas of education, and notions of 'society', as they are in relation to poverty. Wealth or economic capital alone are therefore not sufficient in defining dissimilarity. The concept of class is not entirely helpful either. This is in part because there is no single unambiguous criterion of class (Calvert, 1982) and its use is contested as much within

South Asia as elsewhere.[130] It is also because it suggests a fixity, a lack of room for movement, that could indeed be misleading. Bourdieu's 'social relations of capitals' (1979; 1986; 1989) is a conceptual frame better suited to the dynamics I am describing here precisely because of the composite criterion it invokes. For Bourdieu it is 'capital' movements through social space that structure the power and consequently profit conferred on the holder, and understanding the 'social relations of capitals' helps us to understand how social positions intersect and interact in subjective production. Here wealth, education, culture and 'society' all have an impact in the production of power.

As Goffman (1959) observes, a 'sense of one's place' in society must always be a sense of the place of others. This 'sense of place' has been understood by Bourdieu (1989b) as an *adjustment* that is made to the dispositions acquired as a result of positioning in social space; a process through which social distance is inscribed in bodies. As Muntaz and Shayester explain below, within 'the Urdu-speaking community' this is an embodied distance that firmly keeps the two groups apart:

> As a camp-dweller I never meet people who live outside because they are from 'good society' ('bhalo obosthan'). They are not the same social status. I feel nervous to meet people who don't have a similar status (Muntaz, 'insider', 18, Saidpur).

In Dhaka in particular, the gulf is especially stark. As one interviewee explained, "(in Dhaka) there is a huge difference between inside camps and those outside" (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka). Unlike Saidpur, those who were able to avoid moving into the camps in Dhaka were a small, well-educated elite, and today regardless of ethno-linguistic identity many occupy positions of significant social status. Here, therefore, spatial segregation also represents social stratification. The rich have become richer, educating their children in universities overseas, or migrating again themselves, and the 'camp-dwellers', without access to education and discriminated against in terms of employment, have become poorer. Many 'outsiders' here feel as detached from the camp community as they do from poor Bengali society:

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[130] As Calvert (1982) argues, some emphasize the external condition of material possessions (Dahrendorf), while others consider access to the means of production (Marx), 'life chances' in the opportunities for gaining income (Weber) or a more complex variable which includes some indicator of 'status' (Warner).

> I do not have friends in the camp, because we are wealthy and have 'good society' ('bhalo obosthan'). I know some of them who are very poor...some of them cannot even speak Bangla (Shabana, 'outsider', 26, Dhaka).

Even in Saidpur, where it is normally suggested that the cultural and linguistic difference inside and outside the camps is significantly less marked, those in the camps occupy a privileged site of social atrophy. As a result, some 'outsiders' considered distancing themselves from the camp an important task:

> I don't know anything about the camps, I have never been there....(silence)...But I think their life is very tragic. The people that live outside don't have any relation with the camps (Attari, 'outsider', 32, Saidpur).

> I don't have any relatives in the camp, or know any of the camp population. Some of my employees live there, but I have never visited...I don't know much about the camp (Sairun, 'outsider', 38, Saidpur).

As informants revealed, this embodied distance had widened within 'the community' to such an extent that many 'Urdu-speaking outsiders' were thought to treat those in the camps with as much disrespect as any Bengali:

> V.R: Have you ever been to the camps?
> Jalal: Of course not, why would I? [laughs] I don't have any time for those people. They're called Maowra you know. [pause] I'm sorry... I'm not a humanitarian. I look after myself, that's how we do things here.
> V.R: Have you ever called any of them Maowra?
> Jalal: I'm ashamed to admit it, but yeh, I have. One time I had some of them fixing my car and I knew it was the brake, but they kept saying no it was the exhaust, and I knew, I know a lot about these things, and I was getting annoyed so I shouted the same thing in Urdu. And then they listened, and decided it was the brake! They gave me a cheap deal and the job was done. So I said to them 'right, so you fucking Maowra you'll listen to another Maowra but no one else.'
> V.R: So you'd call yourself a Maowra too?
> Jalal: No, I'm not a Maowra; I mean no one would call me that.
> V.R: Why?
> Jalal: Because I have too much power (Jalal, 'outsider', 29, Dhaka - interview conducted in English).

As the quotation reveals, 'Urdu-speakers' of a particular social status are not branded with the pejorative labels of those in the camps. While here Jalal calls *himself* 'Maowra', he would not be called this by anyone else. The label 'Maowra' has ethno-racial connotations, but is also associated specifically with the camps and therefore with poverty. Those outside have the power to either avoid or appropriate such terms. As

Jabuddin earlier explained, thanks to his status as a relatively prosperous, well-integrated 'outsider', he might not be called 'Maowra' or 'Bihari' by others, but it is easier for him to self-ascribe to a minority ethnic identity that is more problematic for those 'inside':

> There's no need for me to hide my identity. The main problem is the camp address – if you are Bihari but live outside you can say you're Bihari and have no problem. The only reason people look down on you is camp address. Those people living outside...are proud to say they're Urdu-speakers, because they're good businessmen and respected. Sometimes the Bengalis also try to speak with you in Urdu when they find out because they know Urdu is the elite language – they have more respect for you when they know you're an Urdu-speaker....I've never faced any problems. If you're in a well-established Bengali family, and elite and rich, people pay extra respect to you if you're Bihari because you're Bengali AND Bihari - people find you interesting and you're speaking in fluent Bengali too! (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

Here Jabuddin's fluent Bengali is, in the end, decisive. Instantly he is located as someone who is well-educated, well integrated - 'one of them'. As Nasima below concurs, it is indicative of his social status:

> I like to introduce myself as Bihari as *I am a person who is not dependent ('khane wala') on others.* I often say to my Bengali friends that they are the farmers and we are the prince! (She laughs)...(but) I am exceptional. Trust me (Nasima, 'outsider', around 48, Dhaka).

As she observes, not everyone is in her position. But for those with a certain socio-economic independence, education and some connection with Bengalis, pride in an Urdu heritage is possible. As my research assistant - one of a small group of socially mobile young 'Urdu-speakers' from the camp - explained, identifying as 'Bihari' is acceptable for him also, because he has risen above the social status of his peers:

> Its ok for me (to say I am 'Bihari') because I know stuff, I know people, like Mr Islam and Professor Abbas; I have confidence (Syed, 'in between', 30, Dhaka).

Paradoxically therefore, due to the realities of power and position, it is easier for 'Urdu-speakers' who live outside the camps to ethnically identify with a label normally located within. The conditions of reproduction and transformation of ethnic identity are here critically linked to a range of interconnected social divisions (Brah, 1996).

2.2 Generation

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Age, life stage and generation similarly influence one's access to the resources of power, and impact the construction of identity. It has long been suggested that within migrant or displaced populations ethnic or cultural identification will decline among those who have spent a greater proportion of their lives in a new country (Phinney, 1990) and in the case of camp-based 'Urdu-speakers' a generational divide is in many ways unsurprising. Some 'Urdu-speakers' alive today bore witness to the events of both Partition and Liberation, but many more have never seen India or Pakistan; growing up in Bangladesh they have experiences and perspectives that may be different. The 'silencing of trauma' is well-researched (Levi, 1989) and after years of communal violence, a brutal war and a double displacement many youngsters in the camps don't even know where their parents came from. The "ethnic myth of common origin, historical experience and…geographic place" (Vertovec, 1999 p.3) so often noted, has slowly been erased as those who have grown up in the camp have spent their lives trying to be Bangladeshi. As a result, the younger generation were more likely to dismiss the labels 'Bihari' or 'Stranded Pakistani', considering them 'out-dated', 'inaccurate' or 'inappropriate', while much of the older generation considered them unproblematic.[131] This is in part because of the way labels have changed in meaning as the position of the population within a dynamic national imaginary has altered. However, it has also been argued that adolescence is itself an important site of self-identificational change (Goffman, 1968). Many of the younger interviewees not only specified that they were born in Bangladesh, but several were also keen to clarify that their parents had no connection with the state of Bihar. One young woman explained:

> They use (the term 'Bihari') to differentiate us because of our language but many people are not from Bihar. We were born here, educated here and many of us were born after 1971 so we are Bangladeshi just like them (Ruby, 'insider', 20, Dhaka).

Years of disenfranchisement and the silencing of trauma have cut them off from their geographical roots, but roots have formed nonetheless. For this generation a 'home' as well as a 'homeland[132]' is in the camps of Bangladesh:

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[131] Whether this reflects processes of generation, age, experience, life stage or length of residence in Bangladesh is unclear, however we can assume that socio-historical circumstances and personal history have contributed.

[132] The two are frequently confused in the academic literature but a distinction between 'current residence' and 'sites of real/imagined origin of emotional/metaphysical connection' is significant.

> My grandparents were from Bihar, so they were Bihari but I was born here so I'm Bangladeshi. My mother used to tell me that we were Bihari but in my mind I never accepted the label Bihari, I have always called myself Bangladeshi (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka).

This reflected a process of generational change that many members of Bengali society and 'Urdu-speaking civil society' were keen to emphasize, presumably to rid the 'community' of its historical association with Pakistan. As one local human rights specialist explained:

> A very strong part of the community, especially those born after 1971, they have no emotional attachment to Pakistan. I understand the feelings of the older generation, because they were in India, they fought for Pakistan; Pakistan was an idea for them. And so obviously when you see before your own eyes that your dream and your ideal state is being demolished, so obviously there is sense of loss and this sense of loss is so huge that I understand that you still want Pakistan to be there, that it must not be destroyed....But for this new generation who were born after 1971 they have no emotional attachment except that some of their parents might be talking about Pakistan, a distant place...And so this group of young Biharis they very strongly feel that they are the citizens of Bangladesh, but they strongly feel that they have been deprived of the rights of citizenship of this country... (Professor Chatterji, Bengali Human Rights Specialist, Dhaka - interview conducted in English).

Confirming Professor Chatterji's observation, younger interviewees repeatedly rejected an assumed attachment to Pakistan:

> We are not Pakistani and moving to Pakistan is impossible (Pakistan jana mumkeen nahi hey). We haven't seen Pakistan and we are not familiar with the country. We were born and brought up here, this is our country (yehi humara mulk hey) and we must establish ourselves here, it is better for our future (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', 30-40, Dhaka).

In rejecting an attachment to Pakistan, much of this younger generation, but in particular young men, explained that terms such as 'Stranded Pakistani' and 'Bihari' were initially very much 'other-ascribed':

> The 'Stranded Pakistani' label was given by the politician. It's not our label (Shakil, 'outsider', 20, Saidpur).

The politician Shakil refers to is presumably Naseem Khan, founder of the 'Stranded Pakistani General Repatriation Committee' (SPGRC). As we have seen, this term and the

term 'Bihari' were adopted by the Government and the Bengali media and soon became common in everyday parlance:

> The Bengalis called us Stranded Pakistanis and 'Biharis'...labels are given by the Bengalis and I don't want to associate with any of those labels (Sabbu, 'in between', 47, Saidpur).

One young male informant explained that others called them 'Bihari' just because they lived in the camp, without knowing where the name came from, and added that, "before the Liberation War we would both have been Pakistanis anyway" (Javid, 'insider', 25, Dhaka). This ethnicised ascription, it appears, only becomes significant in the absence of nationality. When they lost the citizenship of Pakistan (through the Liberation of Bangladesh), they became 'Biharis' in absolute terms:

> After 1971 we got so many labels. When time changes our label also changes. But we are commonly known as 'Bihari'. After 1971 'Stranded Pakistani' was a useful name for us, we were willing to say that because we were trying to go to Pakistan. As situation change, I change also. And I will change again. I will be a Bangladeshi, if situation changes also (laughs)!" (Md. Khalid, 'insider', 72, Saidpur)

Not only does Mohammad Khalid illustrate the way in which labels (such as 'Stranded Pakistani' here) may be both self and other-ascribed in complex and contradictory ways, but he also demonstrates the degree to which categories and positions have changed over time as 'the community' has been re-valued. His narrative shift from ethnicised identities of exclusion to "modern 'ethnically cleansed' national identities" (Zamindar, 2007, p.12) in which one is replaced by the other, is indicative of a sense in which the two do not co-exist.

2.3 Gender

As we will see in the chapters to come, the salience of gender shifted throughout the fieldwork. In discussions of self-ascribed identities, however, its influence was very much apparent, and worked on a number of levels. As I discovered, association with terms such as 'Bihari' or 'Stranded Pakistani' was significantly more common among women than men. When asked if the label 'Bihari' insulted her, a middle-aged woman in Saidpur replied "we are 'Bihari', why would we feel insulted?" (Rana, 'insider', 35, Saidpur). However the vast majority of men I spoke to considered the term not only inappropriate

(as many were not born in Bihar) but also deeply offensive (as it had become a term of abuse). Nonetheless, women of all ages explained that they adopted the label simply "because I am Bihari."

Women have often been understood as central to processes of ethnic or cultural reproduction. However problematic this assumption may be, numerous studies have considered why women might maintain a stronger connection with an ethnic, cultural, or family identity than men. Tighter social control is one (Warikoo, 2005) and in Bangladesh, a country where strong norms of purdah have always exerted a powerful influence, certain social constraints cannot be ignored. It is therefore worth noting that, in both Dhaka and Saidpur, 'purdah' was thought to be observed more strictly among 'Urdu-speakers' than Bengalis, and most strictly of all in the camps themselves. Broader social norms have been shifting in Bangladesh for some time, and under conditions of extreme poverty the social constraints on women's work have become less binding (Lewis, 1993). However, these social shifts do not appear to have occurred to any great extent in the camps. I encountered very few women who had ever worked outside and a great many who very rarely left. Freedom of movement varied between households, but girls were often discouraged from leaving to go to school. One young female explained:

> Many in the camp prevent their children, especially girls, going to school because they think they might be abused or start having affairs (Aksha, 'insider', 18, Dhaka).

Female informants regularly complained that women were defined in more rigid terms in the camps than they were outside, and many women, particularly in Dhaka, considered movement outside a liberating possibility. Naila Kabeer's (2000) research into Bangladeshi garment workers in Dhaka and London found a surprising disjuncture. While the migrant women in Dhaka were participating in public forms of employment in a way that went against the grain of norms associated with Bangladeshi society, the women who had migrated to East London, a context where public mobility among women is widely acceptable, appeared to be upholding the norms of a society they had left behind. She concluded that in migrating to East London, the women found themselves as members of a 'community' which had in many ways constituted itself as a version of the tight-knit rural community they had left behind. Processes of migration, displacement or spatial segregation may, in a similar way, have constituted the camps as

especially tight-knit social communities. As I discovered, the environment of the camp was not simply the backdrop to my informants' lives but woven into their very seems. Its networks were critical as a source of support, employment and sociality and its norms profoundly influenced practice (Kabeer, 2000). In addition, the geographical concentration of 'community', combined with the institutionalised discrimination of Bengali society, worked to discourage movement outside the camps among women. Middle-aged and older women in particular frequently explained that they had hardly ever been outside. They spoke limited Bengali and had limited knowledge of Bengali society[133]. Men on the other hand explained that as a result of their work they interacted with Bengalis, *in* Bengali, outside the camp for most of the day:

> It's natural to mix with Bengalis. Nowadays we're doing business – as rickshaw pullers etc – some whole days pass just speaking Bengali (Md. Khalid, 'insider', 72, Saidpur).

It has been argued that levels of 'linguistic acculturation' may also impact self-ascribed identities (Rumbaut, 1994) and as male 'camp-dwellers' were commonly more fluent in their use of Bengali than females, language use may be a contributing factor. Male 'camp-dwellers' often referred to their Bengali fluency when explaining why they considered themselves Bangladeshi, and therefore *not* 'Bihari'. As we will see in Chapter Seven the differences between male and female 'camp-dwellers' in their attitudes to citizenship may too have a bearing on their self-identification as they often *experienced* citizenship in very different ways.

Outside the camps however such conspicuous disparities were not observed. The majority of female 'outsiders' considered themselves Bangladeshi, without hesitation:

> I am Bangladeshi, of course Bangladeshi! (Najmal, 'outsider', 30ish, Saidpur).

> I think I was born in Bangladesh that's why I am Bangladeshi since my childhood…I think I am Bangladeshi, I think that always (Mahmooda, 'outsider', 23, Saidpur).

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[133] As Goffman (1968) observes, in the context of stigmatized identities it is not suprising that, unless completely necessary, anxious unanchored contact with the world outside might be kept to a minimum.

The only female 'outsiders' who did not self-identify as Bangladeshi were those of the highest social status. This may be because, as we saw earlier, it is sometimes easier for those with power to identify with a term inflected with its absence.

Once again, in a number of cases the appropriation of a 'national' identity appeared to override the necessity for an 'ethnic' one. The label 'Bihari' and its association with the camp confirmed informants' lack of nationality and, therefore, some believed, stripped them of an identity altogether. One young man explained that on account of being called 'Bihari' by others, "I am nowhere, have no identity...not Bangladeshi, nothing" (Aadil, 'insider', 25, Saidpur). On other occasions, ethnic identification was superseded and *replaced* by nationality; the two constructed as oppositional. The juxtaposition imposed between the 'cultural resources' of 'community' and the apparatus of the nation-state (May, 2001) institutes a dichotomy that is influential here.

2.4 Dialogue and discourse

Despite the significance of the High Court ruling, in 2008/9 processes of 'ethnic' or 'cultural identification' were still clearly influenced by association with a highly ambiguous legal status. Other ascribed identities were not about to change overnight and respondents revealed that the dialogic nature of identity construction was consequently direct:

> Muntaz: I am a 'Stranded Pakistani'
> VR: Why do you call yourself that?
> Muntaz: We are known through the signboard[134] outside as Stranded Pakistanis,
> that is enough (Muntaz, 'insider', 18, Saidpur).

How 'camp-dwellers' are labelled and how they label themselves, is reproduced like a hall of mirrors. As we saw in the previous section, the label 'Bihari' is most often appropriated by women or older respondents, with the same dialogic explanations:

> In this place everyone is calling themselves Bihari. So I am not an exceptional one
> (Tamana, 'insider', around 65, Saidpur).

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[134] A signboard stands at the entrance of the vast majority of camps, reading 'Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee'. Such signs were not only a form of publicity for the SPGRC's political agenda they also functioned to stake a claim over the space and its inhabitants. Although many were put up twenty or thirty years ago, most remain.

> VR: Why would you call yourself Bihari?
> Sultana: Why wouldn't we? Everyone in the camp understands that we're Bihari so I am part of this (Sultana, 'insider', 20, Saidpur).

Many women described the label 'Bihari' as 'correct' simply because they had been 'referred to as 'Bihari' since childhood'. As Skeggs (1997) observes, recognition of how one is positioned is central to the processes of subjective construction; self-ascription is powerfully influenced by that of others. The discrimination associated with terms such as 'Bihari' may constrain the desire to self-identify in this way, but, as Hajera below makes plain, self-identifying as 'Bihari' is not always a matter of choice:

> We don't mind the labels people are using for us, because we are 'Biharis' and poor here and not from 'good society' (bhalo obosthan) so *we don't have a right to choose our names*. We have so many names; our names just depend on where you are telling us (Hajera, 'insider', 60-70, Saidpur).

As she explains, they are already positioned within discourse. The tale tells the teller, the myth the myth-maker (Hall, 2000). As Bourdieu (1987, p.14) argued:

> The performative power of 'naming', which almost always comes with a power of 'representation', brings into existence in an instituted form…(that which) previously existed only as a serial collection of juxtaposed individuals.

As he continued, under certain conditions these social classifications can not only organise the perception of the social world, but in doing so, organise the world itself. The power to produce and impose the 'vision of legitimate divisions', to make groups and manipulate the objective structure of society is, he explained, the power of 'world-making'. Within that vision, however, it remains an empirical question when and why identities become most relevant. Power, position and the dialogic nature of identity construction determine which identities predominate, as the 'social facts of everyday life' are accepted, incorporated and embodied.

3. The socio-spatial structure

In this political economy of identification, the most influential social position was the socio-economic distinction drawn by the camp itself. The social identities these spaces reflect are necessarily influenced by the civil identities they define. The labels 'Bihari',

'Maowra' and 'Stranded Pakistani' are situated here, framing the group as 'non-national' in a way that the term 'Urdu-speaker' does not. They were often articulated as incompatible with national identification, just as camp-residence has been incompatible with civil status. In light of the 2008 High Court ruling this may begin to change, but for the time being, somewhat strikingly, individuals express their own identities in these spatial terms. While living in the camp they are an 'ethno-linguistic' minority; when they move outside they become Bangladeshi:

> Before I moved outside the camp I had many names, Bihari, Stranded Pakistani, Maowra. Now to other people I'm just Bangladeshi (Emran, 'in between', 37, Dhaka).

> I am Bangladeshi. When I was living in the camp every one named us Stranded Pakistanis. However, I do not think the label is appropriate for me. Now I am just Bangladeshi (Tuni, 'in between', 27, Dhaka).

Moving outside enables those 'in between' to abandon their ethno-linguistic identity, and offers the opportunity of being treated with respect:

> The people who are living in the camp are treating me differently now I have a good place to live. When I was in the camp, the Bengalis used to call us 'Bihari'. However here no one can say that...I think the label Bangladeshi is more comfortable for me (now)…When I was in the camp I was (also) a Stranded Pakistani (Chanda, 'in between', 25, Dhaka).

Here it is a 'good place to live' that distinguishes a 'Bihari' from a 'Bangladeshi', and whether the identity to be abandoned is strictly 'ethnic' or social is something I will continue to explore. But the 'good place' Chanda refers to is very clearly a place outside the camps:

> VR: What label would you give yourself?
> Afsar: Bangladeshi. People who live outside the camps are very much Bangladeshi (Afsar, 'outsider', 26, Dhaka).

The significance of these spatial divisions is highlighted by those individuals who we might not describe as ethnically Urdu-speaking but who understand themselves as 'Bihari' due to the context of their social community. Salima's story highlights the identificational resonance of place, and the way in which it intersects with language and local community. She is a middle-aged Bengali woman who grew up in a 'slum' ('basti')

outside the camps, and moved into the camps after marriage. On moving into the camps she was teased for her inability to speak Urdu, as she explains herself:

> When I came here before my marriage I was totally Bengali. I couldn't speak a word of Urdu and since coming here I have completely switched! (She laughs) Now it's difficult to understand Bangla rather than Urdu. Now I'm more fluent in Urdu! (Laughs again). When I first came to the camp I was teased for not speaking Urdu. They said things in Urdu but I didn't understand. The one word I understood was 'Bangali'. They were calling me 'Bangali, Bangali'…At that time I didn't feel like an 'Urdu-speaker' I felt like a Bengali but as I came here and was teased so much, I struggled so much to learn Urdu. And after two or three years hard work I got Urdu and the teasing stopped. And now I feel like a 'Bihari'' (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka).

Once Salima had gained acceptance in the camps, once she was considered a 'Bihari' in the terms of those around her, she began to understand herself as such. Shabanaj relates a similar tale:

> Over the years people are treating me differently, when you are new in a society it will take time to mix with people. Gradually relations will develop and after some time you find you are yourself with them. When I was new (in the camp), I was a stranger - I didn't understand their language, I felt this place was not for me. I spent days with my mother outside the camp, but slowly things changed...However day by day I listened and tried to understand the language. I was a silent spectator. I used to like to be in the home and to not move outside…After spending a long time with this community...now I can give answer in Urdu...and they became my brothers and sisters...I think I am part of this society...If there's a problem in this community it's a problem for me, if there's happiness in this community it's good for me. Even I plan to marry my children to Biharis because I am living here now (Shabanaj, 'insider', 36-37, Dhaka).

Shabanaj finally learnt Urdu, and as she did, the 'place that was not for me' became the place of her brothers and sisters. As for Salima, language and local environment are central to her narrative of identification, but so is the gaze of the world outside. Identified as one of them, she is dependent for her happiness on the treatment of 'the community' by those outside, the position of 'the community' in broader terms. Her story and Salima's are not unlike Afsana's who lived in Old Dhaka before moving to the camps. Surrounded by the 'Dhakay' community and speaking Urdu with a 'Dhakay' accent, she was considered 'Dhakaiya' by others at that time, despite her Indian origins. Just like Salima and Shabanaj, as she moved into the camp and her accent changed, she began to describe herself as 'Bihari'. Again the inscription of

identity in the look of the world outside, the necessity of the 'other' to the self (Hall, 2000) is always apparent:

> (When I moved into the camp) some people from my old neighbourhoods they told me that my accent ('lehza') is going to be worse. That I had a better accent before...We used to live in a 'better society' (acchi mahol), we had a better accent...And people look down on us now...Where I think that it's not safe to tell them I'm Bihari I don't do that (Afsana, 'in between', 45, Dhaka).

Afsana gradually adopts the accent of the camp and as she does she is re-valued by those outside. The social location of spatial settlement is therefore heavily implicated in the construction of identification. Cultural, ethnic and linguistic boundaries are, especially in Dhaka, constituted in *'socio-spatial'* terms:

> What unites the (camp) community isn't language, India, history…it's the camp. A camp identity is stronger than anything else. It is this identity that is labelled Bihari, that's why it's become a term of abuse – and within the camp it is also how 90% of people define themselves (Syed, 'in between', 30, Dhaka).

> We are residents of the camp; we are camp people (Faizur, 'insider', 35, Saidpur).

3.1 A discourse of 'community'

Through sixty years of political transition, an 'Urdu-speaking identity' is formed and re-formed, and identification within that 'community' is consequently complexly composed. As we have seen, social and spatial divisions are deeply felt, and in Dhaka in particular, alliances are more likely to be made inter-ethnically than between 'Urdu-speakers' in the camps and those outside:

> In my family we have some cross marriages with Bengalis. It's good to merge with the locals. Better than Bihari people who are uneducated and illiterate (Parvez, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

As one 'camp-dweller' explained, they are divisions that profoundly interfere with family relationships:

> I don't feel bad that (my relatives outside) are in a better position...The only thing that makes me feel bad is when I think about how backward we are in comparison. We are very backward in comparison to them. Several times we faced many problems...(and) we aren't having education to improve our capacity here...They

have fear to introduce us to their society. One of my cousin's daughters got married in a good family. My cousin didn't invite me in the wedding because we are living in the camp. If once the bridegroom's side came to know that, they would have refused the marriage. It's happening with us always. They have fear for that. But he did say sorry to us and explain us why he didn't invite us. We said that it's ok, we don't mind, but it hits our emotion. We felt alas if we were wealthy this wouldn't happen. Just because of living in the camp my blood relation refuses me (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur).

If avoiding discrimination is about avoiding association with the camps, discrimination would appear to be driven socially rather than ethno-linguistically after all. Delwar uses the term 'backward' to describe the distinction between him, as an 'insider', and those in a 'better position'. His 'backward condition' positions him against the 'educated respectability' of 'Urdu-speakers' outside. Here, the 'double discourse' of Bengal's colonial past resonates still. As Blom Hansen (1999) argues, colonial governmentality in India had authorized 'community' as the natural oriental form, the limited representation of which was governed through elite educated national representatives. 'Community' in this context was used to depict the 'other' of the state, externalised, and opposed to transformation (Nugent, 1994). While recognizing the specificity of the East Bengali context, and the vast differences that have developed throughout the subcontinent since Partition, I argue that this 'narrative of community' is discursively produced in Bangladesh today. The narrative of this 'natural', 'pre-political' and 'primordial' form is today a narrative of the camp.

From the birth of the language movement it has been assumed that all 'Urdu-speakers' in the region were constructed in opposition to the state. For some time, however, those who have lived outside the camps have been accepted into the nation. The Bangladeshi national project is young and not yet finished, and in such a context displaced populations remain problematic. As Samaddar (1999) argues, the protection of minorities has become a catchword for the liberal agenda in South Asia, but its complexities are ignored. Such protection is impossible in the context of 'nationalizing states' – those which are not yet sufficiently nations, but must develop into nations to gain legitimacy - which go on producing minorities and majorities of necessity. Such states "can survive only on the basis of a continuing and permanent agenda of building an 'ethnic core' and thereby marginalizing others" (1999, p.41). In present-day Bangladesh the marginalized 'minority', the cultural collectivity of the 'other', are defined by their displacement. While the political landscape continues to change, this

is a national transition that has situated 'insiders' outside the nation, but 'outsiders' within.

4. Conclusion

The language of 'community' is written with internal homogeneity, and coded with a holistic cultural identity that it is important to unpick. As this chapter shows 'Urdu-speakers' are an example of a heterogeneous people from all over India positioned in highly contextualised ways. Discourses of racial, cultural, linguistic and social 'difference' have revealed that boundaries are not only drawn *around* 'a community' of 'Urdu-speakers', but deeply inscribed *within*. As Rahman and Van Schendal (2004) warn, identities have transformed under difficult circumstances and today the use of the labels 'Bihari' and 'Bengali' as antonyms in the study of Bangladeshi society have become an obstacle to understanding their experience. The reality is much more complex. While the ability of transnational communities to share more than physical ones has been well recognised, the "limits of those transtate communities" (Dufoix, 2008, p.57) has not.

As the second part of the chapter argued, the terms 'Bihari', 'Urdu-speaker' or 'Stranded Pakistani' reflect discursive practices, contextually articulated by individuals whose different existential locations in society critically impact the production of identification (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). The necessity to examine intra-group difference in ethnic identity formation is reinforced and, as I argue, more nuanced understandings of 'community' or 'collective identity' are critical in understanding how identities and inequalities are conditioned and expressed.

The power of the modern state to limit and produce bounded nations and the margins within them has exerted incalculable pressure (Zamindar, 2007), and with religion re-emerging within the architecture of nation-state, and the political landscape altered, it has been assumed that a space has opened up for the 'Urdu-speaking community' as part of a Muslim nation. In other words, the focus has shifted as the 'Bihari issue' has become less a product of 1971 than "the way in which this history has been narrated within the (dynamic and evolving) ideological frames of nation" (Zamindar, 2007, p. 238). However, as the final part of this chapter argues, a re-positioning of 'Urdu-speakers' within the frames of the nation-state has itself drawn further lines. In defining its terms,

the contours of the camp have become a powerful variable of opposition. In fact, the nation has not abandoned its "permanent agenda of building an 'ethnic core'" (Samaddar, 1999, p.41); the core has merely been modified. As Blom Hansen (1999) contests, the structures of colonial domination in India defined 'community' as an ignorant uneducated mass to be dignified and elevated through development and nationhood. While much has changed in the East Bengali imagination since Partition and Independence, the central tenets of this discursive structure have however remained. The 'primordial zone of the natural' (Chatterjee, 1993) which this narrative claims, is not a narrative of an 'Urdu-speaking identity' at all. Today it is to the camp that the narrative of 'community' speaks.

As we consider where 'community' ends and 'society' or 'people-nation' begins it is necessary to consider the role of civil status. In the negotiations of daily lives the line drawn between 'statelessness' and 'stateness' is often conceived in legal terms, but can the boundaries of the nation really ever be so distinctly drawn? As the following chapter argues, this line may indeed be configured in space, but if so it is therefore a line that can be crossed. The boundaries of the nation are mutable and messy and, as we begin to see, 'camp-dwellers' may in fact be neither citizens nor non-citizens in any tangible sense, gaining access and being denied access in different contingent and contextual moments. They are not simply inside or outside citizenship but float on the concept's borderlines (Chatterjee, 2004) in a complicated and contested relationship with the nation-state.

CHAPTER SIX – 'ACTS OF CITIZENSHIP': AUTHORITY, AMBIGUITY AND THE POLITICS OF SPACE

By approaching citizenship substantively, not just as an analytical concept (see Bloemraad, 2000), this chapter will explore how 'Urdu-speakers' access rights and in what form, analysing the dynamic between individual agency and structural constraints. In light of contemporary configurations of 'community' and the significance of settlement and segregation in processes of identity construction, I will examine the ways in which experiences of citizenship are affected by the spatial dynamics of settlement.[135]

I will begin by considering the discourses of blame and responsibility that have arisen to explain the distinctions of 'insider' and 'outsider' that 1972 produced, and the intra-'community' fissures they represent. I will then examine how, prior to 2008, these distinctions affected the ability to access particular rights of citizenship. In considering 'rights' most commonly indicated by interviewees themselves I include both the markers of 'formal status' and examples of 'substantive practice', encountered in Chapter Four. The final section, however, questions this well-rehearsed duality to argue that the citizenship experienced by those considered 'stateless' complicates such neat and tidy binary poles. Through a focus on those 'acts' when "subjects constitute themselves as citizens, or better still, as those to whom the rights to have rights is due" (Isin and Nielsen, 2008, p. 2) I investigate the ways in which 'formal status' is subverted, the moments of negotiation through which claims to political being are made. As Walters contends, what is needed is greater sensitivity to the diverse and often relatively minor ways in which 'non-status' individuals are constituted, and constitute themselves, "not just as subjects capable of acting, but as political subjects" (2008, p.191). In asking how and when a 'stateless' population is able to 'access' citizenship, through which processes, and by what means, I hope to unsettle some established debates.

As I will show, in the space of the camp, political being has been enacted at a number of levels. Since 1972, as a space of 'statelessness', the camp affirmed the existence of the nation-state, but the boundaries between citizenship and statelessness have always been permeable and messy. For thirty six years, 'camp-dwellers', rendered stateless by the exclusionary project of Liberation, crossed the boundaries between acceptance and

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[135] Broader social processes of social and cultural 'integration' will be investigated at greater length in the final chapter.

rejection daily. In doing so they ask us to question whether the 'naked life' engendered through deportation, displacement or disenfranchisement is so naked after all? The tension, ambiguity and conceptual limitations of 'statelessness' and citizenship unearth a reality of partial, shifting and deceptively permeable terrain.

The significance of intersectional identities such as gender, generation and social status emerged in important ways, but their influence will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Seven. First it is necessary to consider how the legal and social context in which these processes are taking place is changing, detailing the established narratives before they can be unpicked.

1. The Constitution and constructions of citizenship

The horrors of the War, and the trauma it left behind, cut through the Bengali imagination and remain deeply embedded in the cultural memory of the nation. The ethno-linguistic nationalism produced cemented a Bengali identity at the nation's heart. This national identity has evolved, and in recent years the Bengali ethnic state has been re-framed, but the salience of identity and language has not altogether disappeared.

1.1 The Constitution of Bangladesh

The Constitution of Bangladesh came into operation in December 1972, based upon the four State Principles of Nationalism, Secularism, Socialism and Democracy (Farooqui, 2008). Article Twenty five recognizes respect for international law and the principles of the UN Charter, while Article Eleven declares that the Republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights, freedoms and respect for the dignity and worth of human beings shall be guaranteed. However, as Article Nine reveals, many of these noble principles were in the end confounded by the ethno-linguistic nationalism that lay beneath:

> Article Nine - The unity and solidarity of the Bangalee nation, which, deriving its identity from its language and culture, attained sovereign and independent Bangladesh through a united and determined struggle in the war of independence, *shall be the basis of Bangalee nationalism* (my emphasis).

Despite the fact that protection for linguistic rights, observed in the Universal
Declaration of Human Rights, is made binding through Bangladesh's recognition of the
UN Charter, the Constitution remained notably silent on the issue:

> Article Twenty eight (1) – The state shall not discriminate against any citizens on
> grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

The Liberation War had fought against brutal exploitation, marginalisation and
impoverishment at the hands of West Pakistan, and the issues of language and identity
galvanized public support in a unique and compelling way. It is no wonder therefore that
it was to become so central to the nationalist campaign. On the Constitution's
declaration in 1972, Sheikh Mujib, the leader of the liberation movement and first
President of Bangladesh is believed to have said, "From today there are no tribal sub-
groups in Bangladesh; *every one is a Bengali*" (Farooqui, 2008, p.21). Unsurprisingly
indigenous groups nationwide were angered by the remark, and Article Nine of the
Constitution was later repealed (1977). However, no amendment was made to the
Constitution to accommodate international law and the covenants acceded to in relation
to language rights. Somewhat paradoxically therefore, the heritage of the Language
Movement influenced the adoption of a constitution that expressly neglected language
rights. "The very base of the secularism and democracy was laid with discrimination"
(Farooqui, 2008, p.22).

The Bengali people had come to embody Liberation; its creators and its survivors. In the
process, the homogeneity of the Bengali nation was established as a vital part of the
national story. While Samaddar (2002) argues that all those who fell outside the moral
reference point of 1971 posed a problem to the stability and logic of its founding history,
the previous chapter suggests that today it is simply the 'camp-dwelling Urdu-speaking'
population that are considered troubling. Alongside the indigenous 'communities' in the
Chittagong Hill Tracts and the devastated Hindu minority, they are still symbolic of
alterity, and as such they have been effectively disappeared from politics, policy or public

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life[136]. In reinforcing the story of homogeneity, their social and political marginalisation has been enacted less through the 'language of the state' than its silence.[137]

National acceptance has been something much of 'the community' have fought for, for many years, and the younger generation in particular have been instrumental in effecting change. Academic institutions, NGOs and International Organisations (both Bengali and Urdu-speaking) have long claimed that the majority of 'Urdu-speakers' have always been citizens under the constitution. As the UNHCR Bangladesh Representative Pia Prytz Phiri observed in March 2007:

> Urdu-speaking Biharis are the citizens of Bangladesh as per its constitution...and the 2003 High Court verdict which was not challenged (Daily Star, March 11th 2007).

And as the New Age Extra reported in July 2008,

> By the constitution of Bangladesh, they are already citizens. There can be no statelessness in this land. They have been living here ever since East Pakistan gained autonomy and their children have been born and brought up here. By law, that is sufficient enough to grant them citizenship (Ahmed Ilias, New Age Extra, July 25th 2008).

In the aftermath of 1971 they simply lost the Government recognition that made those rights effective, but 'constitutionally' those rights remained. The Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954[138] identifies a 'stateless person' as one "who is not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law".[139] This limited definition omits those described as 'de facto' stateless, those people who for whatever reason have been unable to establish the nationality they may constitutionally hold and who are consequently unable to enjoy the rights that are associated with citizenship (Rahman, 2003). The Government of Bangladesh was able to effectively denationalize

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[136] Not to mention the small Buddhist and Christian communities (thought together to represent about 1% of the population), or other non-Bengali communities like the Khasis, Garos and Khajons of Mymensingh and Sylhet.

[137] As Rahman (2003, p.17) argues, "the issue of the Biharis was pushed to the sideline, resurfacing after long intervals at times of visits by heads of state…treated as a political problem without a human content".

[138] Of which Bangladesh is not a signatory. The country is not a signatory to any of the major International agreements on displaced people – for example the 1951 Refugee Convention and its additional protocol of 1967 or the 1961 Convention of the Reduction of Statelessness. It has not formulated domestic legislation for the protection of displaced people or even regional definitions of the 'refugee'. As a result there is often a conflict between ad hoc laws and practice (Ahmed et al, 2004; Refugees International, 2008b).

[139] Article One of the convention which was adopted on September 28th, 1954 under Economic and Social Council Resolution 526A (xviii) of 26th April 1954.

some sections of the population without doing very much at all. Other than the abstruse Amendment Ordinance of 1978, examined below, the constitution remained unaltered, and the erstwhile citizenship (of East Pakistan) of the 'Urdu-speakers' was never formally revoked. As a Senior Protection Officer for UNHCR Bangladesh explained:

> You may be a 'de jure citizen' but 'de facto stateless', as many people are, prevented from accessing the 'rights' of citizenship because (you've) never had the opportunities for thirty seven years for doing so, because (your) skill sets are limited because of that exclusion, (because of) livelihood opportunities, but also living conditions…They've always had citizenship it was just never recognised. It's true the formal access to the vote etc. has (now) been clarified…You could say that it's a deferred status... the law clearly says that these people are citizens, it clearly says that, but if everyone in the Government says they're not citizens it is by virtue of that non recognition equal, the impact is equal in fact (Jarjun Bain, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR, Dhaka - interview conducted in English).

A paragraph from the recent 2008 High Court Ruling, regarding the civil status of 'Urdu-speakers', hints at some of these problems:

> By keeping the question of citizenship *unresolved on wrong assumption* over the decades, this nation has not gained anything, rather was deprived of the contribution they could have made in the nation building. The sooner the Urdu-speaking people are brought to the mainstream of the nation is the better (2008 High Court Ruling).[140]

Use of the word 'mainstream' is illustrative of the way in which the case has been framed in the imaginary of the nation; a nation in which 'the majority' is also 'the mainstream', representative of the institutions and mechanisms of modernity (Samaddar, 2002). This is not only a political context in which the rhetoric of nationalism is of central importance, but a political context in which "this 'mainstream'…has indeed been flaunted as *the* national culture" (Pandey, 1992, p.28).

Although, the national imaginary remains dynamic, and competing 'identity bases' have continually been reclaimed, the country's foundation story retains resonance nonetheless. This is a story within which *all* 'Urdu-speakers' were denounced and, consequently, references in the media and even in legal statements serially refer to the entire 'Urdu-speaking community' as 'stateless'. The research revealed, however, that the reality has

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[140] 'Md. Sadaqat Khan (Fakku) and Others v. Chief Election Commissioner, Bangladesh Election Commission', Writ Petition No. 10129 of 2007, Bangladesh: Supreme Court, 18 May 2008, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a7c0c352.html [accessed 10 July 2009].

always been much more nuanced. On 14th June 2007 a letter was written by the Chief Election Commissioner to the Chief Adviser of the Caretaker Government which explained some of these complexities.[141] According to the Daily Star Newspaper (the largest English language daily) the letter stated that the Election Commission had never faced any problems registering 'Urdu-speakers' living outside the camps in the voter roll: "They have been listed in the electoral roll following the criteria set for the purpose." It added, however, that difficulties occurred "in registering those living inside the camps due to complications regarding their Bangladeshi citizenship" (July 24th 2008, Daily Star Newspaper). As research confirmed, laws of 'ius solis' or 'ius sanguinis' (both of which have recognised legal value under the Citizenship Act of 1951 and Citizenship Order of 1972) were undermined by a civil status effectively constituted on 'socio-spatial' grounds.

1.2 A colonial and postcolonial public imaginary

It is important to recognise that practices and experiences of citizenship are always embedded in understandings of politics and public culture that are neither fixed nor ahistorically produced. One example of this is the specific and located 'histories of citizenship' which emerged in colonial societies (Kabeer, 2002), and citizenship in Bangladesh can only be understood within this frame.

Once again the Indian colonial state literature is useful here in highlighting the way in which constructions of citizenship in the region were influenced by a regime which reified and legally authorized a particular interpretation of society. While the mass of ordinary people were regarded as uneducated, 'irrational ' and traditional and therefore in need of firm governance, the educated, propertied, middle classes were considered to be amenable to reasoned negotiation (Blom Hansen, 1999). The bifurcated social order this produced made the issue of legal subjects in India deeply ambiguous. In one sense an individual was a person with property rights, an entitlement to due process, liable to conviction or prosecution and so on. In another sense an individual was a member of a collective, imbued with certain customs and emotional passions that evaded the logic of modern jurisprudence (Blom Hansen, 1999). A propertied, educated member of the

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[141] This letter is referenced in the 2008 Judgement. See 'Md. Sadaqat Khan (Fakku) and Others v. Chief Election Commissioner, Bangladesh Election Commission', Writ Petition No. 10129 of 2007, Bangladesh: Supreme Court, 18 May 2008, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a7c0c352.html [accessed 10 July 2009].

urban middle class would be identified (and expected to identify with) the former and would be expected to be capable of rational calculation. The poor and uneducated 'masses' were seen as living almost entirely within the latter more 'traditional' concept of legality (Blom Hansen, 1999). Within the realm of legal institutions this has been an enduring distinction to which the postcolonial states of India and Pakistan were certainly heir. I would argue that the inhabitation of the 'identity slots' produced by these processes is still going on in Bangladesh today.

In addition to practices and discourses of British colonial rule, contemporary constructions of citizenship and nationhood in Bengal cannot be appreciated without an understanding of the legacy of 1947 (Daiya, 2008; Ahmed et al, 2004). The 'crafting' of citizenship in the aftermath of Partition was a process that left an indelible mark on those who remained. As Zamindar (2007) explains, with state formation taking place alongside large-scale displacement, definitions of citizenship were shaken to the core. In a whirlwind of people on the move, nebulous relationships between citizens and state, nation and territory slowly had to be smoothed. For many years it remained difficult to define citizenship in terms of religious, community or territorial location and it was not until five years after decolonization, with the introduction of passports and visas in 1952, that efforts were made to pin down people's citizenship unequivocally. As Ahmed et al (2004, p.3) argue it was a complicated evolutionary process and "to this day citizenship continues to be negotiable to an unusual degree in this region". The investigations of this chapter and the next suggest that in light of the uprecedented scale of evacuation, the ownership of property remains central to much of the 'negotiability' that continues today.

Legal provisions mask this reality. Whatever the 'real' face of citizenship may be, the law continues to be constructed as the battleground where efforts to redefine its 'formal' face are played out (Sieder, 2001).

1.3 A changing legal context: 1971- 2008

The Bangladeshi Citizenship Order of 1972 states that:

> every person whose father or grandfather was born in the territories now
> comprised in Bangladesh and who was a permanent resident of such territories on

the 25th day of March 1971 and continues to be so resident; or who was a
permanent resident of such territories on the 25th day of March 1971 and continues
to be so resident and is not otherwise disqualified for being a citizen by or under
any law for the time being in force

shall be deemed a citizen of Bangladesh.[142] Under this provision 'Urdu-speakers' born in

the region as well as those who migrated would qualify, as long as they had not been

disqualified under law. Residence in the camps, however, became just those grounds for

disqualification. Under the Citizenship Act of 1951, the Bangladeshi Citizenship Order of

1972 and an Amendment Ordinance of 1978 (relating to the Order of 1972), eligibility to

citizenship is denied to any subject who expresses 'allegiance to a foreign state'. In 1972

camp residents across the country were surveyed by the ICRC and asked to choose

between settlement in Bangladesh or so-called 'repatriation' to (West) Pakistan, a country

most had never seen. Such allegiance was apparently expressed by 60% of 'camp-

dwellers' in opting for settlement in Pakistan resulting in the disqualification of the entire

'camp–community'. 'Repatriation' requests made by little over half of a homeless

population became the legal loophole necessary. The Chief of Mission, ICRC,

Bangladesh, explained:

> There was an agreement between the Pakistani Government and the Bangladesh
> Government and the Indian Government which called for repatriation of a
> number of Biharis...the agreement that was settled in New Delhi between the
> parties determined four categories of persons (eligible to leave), and in connection
> with this, ICRC then organised in all the camps the possibility to register. These
> applications for repatriation to Pakistan were then given or handed over for
> treatment of the Pakistani authorities and the answers then came back, the green
> light or the red light or whatever (Ralph Finder, CoM, ICRC Bangladesh -
> interview conducted in English).

The agreement is known as the Tripartite Agreement and was signed in New Delhi on

the 9th April 1974, reviewing processes initiated by the Indo-Pak Agreement of the 28th

August 1973. Together they put the wheels of Government-sponsored 'repatriation' in

process.

From this point on, mere residence in the camps was regarded as an expression of

'allegiance (to Pakistan) by conduct'. An 'internal border' had been drawn, producing

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[142] Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) Order, 1972 [Bangladesh], 149 of 1972, 26th March
1971, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b51f10.html. See also Pakistan Citizenship
Act, 1951 (Bangladesh) [Bangladesh], II of 1951, 13 April 1951, available at:
http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b52a8.html [accessed 10 July 2009].

questions of loyalty and legitimacy to distinguish suspect/disloyal citizens from putatively natural ones (Balibar in Zamindar, 2007). A number of rulings, however, disputed such claims and held them to be citizens under the Act of 1951 and Order of 1972 (Ilias, 2003). One such case was the 2003 'Abid Khan and others v. Bangladesh' case, heard by the Supreme Court, High Court Division. The court divided the petitioners into two groups, and in relation to the first, those born before Liberation in East Pakistan and now resident in Geneva camp, it held that:

> The so-called Geneva camp has (not) attained any special status so as to be excluded from the operation of the laws of the land including the said President Order, the Electoral Rolls Ordinance 1982 or the Citizenship Act 1951. So mere, residence of the first group of the petitioners at the Geneva camp cannot be termed allegiance to another state by conduct. Therefore residents of Geneva camp should not be excluded from the laws of the country, from Electoral Rolls or from the Citizenship Act of 1951 (Abid Khan and others v. Bangladesh, 5th March, 2003).[143]

In relation to the second group of petitioners, those born after the Independence of Bangladesh, the Court observed that:

> Their case appears to be simple in view of section four of the Citizenship Act, 1951…(stating that) every person born in Bangladesh after commencement of this Act shall be a citizen of Bangladesh by birth…We have already decided the status of Geneva Camp earlier…So, we find the second group of petitioners are also Bangladeshi citizens by birth (Abid Khan and others v. Bangladesh, 5th March, 2003).

When the verdict was announced a significant precedent had been set; the 'camp community's' constitutional rights appeared to have been upheld in law. Older residents who were not born in the territory did not fall under the precedent set by such a ruling, but in a number of separate cases (for example 'Mukhtar Ahmed v. Government of Bangladesh, 34 DLR 29' and 'Abdul Khaleque v. Court of Settlement and others, 44 DLR 273') the Supreme Court has held them also citizens by operation of the law (Ilias, 2003).[144]

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[143] Abid Khan and others v. Government of Bangladesh and others, Writ Petition No. 3831 of 2001, Bangladesh: Supreme Court, 5 March 2003, available at:
http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a54bbcf0.html [accessed 24 June 2011].
[144] Equally, Mukhtar Ahmed's case dispelled the claim that registration for 'repatriation' to Pakistan (with the ICRC in 1972) represented grounds for disqualification. In this case the Court held that "the mere fact that he filed an application for going over to Pakistan cannot take away his citizenship. The Bangladeshi Citizenship Order, P.O. 149 of 1972 has enumerated different situations in which a person shall be deemed to be a citizen of this country. So, the petitioner is on the same footing as any other citizen. His citizenship,

Despite such a precedent, however, only the petitioners themselves were granted citizenship; the status of the 'camp-dwellers' as a whole remained unclear. One of those involved in the case, my research assistant Syed, revealed that although the Government did not appeal against the decision the limited nature of the ruling created problems in the realisation of such citizenship. As the verdict had not pertained to the whole 'community', the Election Commission did not alter the voter list appropriately, and as a result his voting status remained unchanged. He received his identity card four years later in 2007, and explained, "Before that I was a citizen but I could not prove I was, without an identity card etc. I was a citizen only in name. I was very much a half kind of citizen" (Syed, 'in between', 30, Dhaka).

Legal status is often regarded as the most objective dimension of citizenship, and with that, the most significant, but clearly it is not always sufficient to access the rights and benefits attached. Some attempt was made by international organisations to illuminate the irony, in the hope of achieving a more comprehensive ruling:

> We (the ICRC) intervened with the Bangladeshi Government, and could clearly illustrate to them that...the registration as belonging to a particular group (the applications for repatriation made in 1972) does not, shall we say, determine statehood (Ralph Finder, CoM ICRC Bangladesh - interview conducted in English).

Notably, some of those who live outside the camps had also made registration attempts, but in their case, 'allegiance to a foreign state' was never an issue. A well-respected 'community' leader explained:

> I even opted for Pakistan. I was earning a livelihood filling forms out for the ICRC. I noticed that people were giving false names so they could be sent to Pakistan, people who I knew were saying they were from Sindh, had relatives there etc…I was honest so my application was rejected (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

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therefore, clings to him...The petitioner having not acquired the citizenship of any other country, his citizenship of Bangladesh which he acquired long before cannot evaporate and he continues to be a citizen of this country" (Mukhtar Ahmed vs. Bangladesh, 34 DLR 29). 'Prof. Ghulam Azam v. Bangladesh, 46 DLR (AD) 192' went further, resolving the assumption that collaboration with enemy forces could deprive an individual of citizenship. The Court held that, "A point of law cannot be matched by alleging political misdemeanour. That is sheer perversity" (Prof. Ghulam Azam vs. Bangladesh, 46 DLR (AD) 192').

It has also been noted that thousands of Bangladeshis have, at different times, applied for foreign visas, indicating their intention to migrate to and receive citizenship of a foreign country, but these applications have not been considered expressions of allegiance by conduct (Rahman, 2003). Legal ambiguity continued to impede the process for 'camp-dwellers', however, and enabled successive Governments to remain silent. Although occasional overtures were made by individual parties (particularly the Bangladeshi Nationalist Party, the BNP), they were never heavily publicized and never fully followed up. While not appearing to openly stand in the way of proceedings, a judiciary that is notoriously vulnerable to influence clearly caused problems (Refugees International, 2008a). The political value of this continued stalemate to both of the main parties (who were scared to intervene in such a potentially problematic issue) was well understood by Urdu and Bengali speaking civil society at the time.

1.4 The 2008 High Court Ruling

In spite of these obstacles, legal success eventually came about through a confluence of factors. In the context of a growing pro-democracy movement in Bangladesh[145], a Caretaker Government was installed when the country descended into political turmoil in 2006. With it came the opportunity to look at the case afresh. As one interviewee observed:

> The Caretaker Government took initiative to provide us ID card…I don't think that political Government would have helped us in this regard (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur).

In addition to the earlier precedent-setting judgements, the elections planned for December 2008 (and the introduction of the National ID system) galvanized the Election Commission towards a clarification of their status. Advocates had also encouraged interest among political and social elites which was beginning to bear fruit. In the final instance

> The Government commendably did not appeal the decision, either because the law was overwhelmingly clear or it tacitly recognized that the issue had lingered too long (Refugees International, 2008a).

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[145] Spearheaded by groups such as Ain-o-Shalish Kendra (ASK) and supported by sections of the Academy (Chatterji, 2010).

In May 2008, the Supreme Court observed that as per the 1951 Act "every person born in Bangladesh after commencement of this act shall be a citizen by birth" and in accordance with the Bangladeshi Citizenship Order of 1972 all those who have been in the country since 1971 are also eligible. The Court added:

> In the acquisition of such citizenship, the laws have made no discrimination in any way on the ground of ethnicity, language, sex etc. Members of the Urdu-speaking people wherever they live in Bangladesh if they answer the above qualifications shall become citizen of Bangladesh and in view of the above provisions have already acquired the citizenship of Bangladesh by operation of law and no intervention of the Government is necessary. Such people have accordingly become eligible with the attainment of majority for enlistment as voters under Article one hundred and twenty two (2) of the Constitution and the Election Commission is under constitutional obligation to enrol them in the electoral rolls as voters. No functionary of the Republic can deny such rights of the Urdu-speaking people who want to be enrolled as voters.[146]

As the court confirmed, after thirty-six years citizenship rights had been reinstated to "*all* members of the Urdu-speaking people wherever they live in Bangladesh". The decision represents a significant shift in attitudes, and has since been considered "a major success in the campaign to end statelessness around the world" (Refugees International, 2008b). The ambiguity that preceded the decision is however less readily acknowledged. Still today popular discourse assumes that 'Urdu-speakers' were disenfranchised as a result of their ethno-linguistic identity and involvement in the War. However, as the Chief Election Commissioner's letter made clear, those who were not dispossessed have been registered on the voter roll for a number of years. Deep divisions have grown within 'the community' ever since and discourses of blame and responsibility have developed to justify divergent fates and fortunes.

2. Agency, Choice and Blame

When asked to choose between settlement in Bangladesh or so-called 'repatriation' to Pakistan in 1972 the majority of 'camp-dwellers' opted for 'repatriation.' Some left under the agreements of 1973 and 1974, as well as in fits and bursts for some years after (an estimated 199,500 in total by 1990) but as the Pakistani Government's enthusiasm for these incomers waned, the process gradually petered out (Partha Ghosh, 2004). While the

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[146] 'Md. Sadaqat Khan (Fakku) and Others v. Chief Election Commissioner, Bangladesh Election Commission', Writ Petition No. 10129 of 2007, Bangladesh: Supreme Court, 18 May 2008, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a7c0c352.html [accessed 10 July 2009].

cultural and linguistic association of the 'Urdu-speakers' with Pakistan was always problematic, it was apparently this expressed desire to be taken to Pakistan that ultimately disenfranchised those in the camp. As Hussein recalls:

> We cast our vote before 1971. It was taken away because people were trying to repatriate themselves to Pakistan...when we moved to the camp everything changed (Hussein, 'insider', 65, Saidpur).

The marking of inclusion and exclusion is fundamental to the making of citizenship and, as Zamindar (2007, p.11) argues "without any representable limit with which to construct this national difference" it is always an ambiguous process. As the Government defined the boundaries of the nation, however, it said very little, for fear of disturbing a sensitive political issue, and as a result of wide-ranging vested interests within both of the major political parties. In its absence, a small but powerful political group formed within the camp – the SPGRC – pursuing a 'repatriation' agenda. Ever since, those inside the camps have been understood as of a collective political voice that is 'Pro-Pakistani', despite internal political divisions, and until 2008 the label 'Stranded Pakistani' confirmed their part in the process. Consequently, a story of *self*-segregation is common among Bengalis, 'insiders' and 'outsiders' alike:

> Before the High Court Ruling, the local people didn't like us (the camp-dwellers), they treated us as 'Stranded Pakistanis' and thought *we wanted* to be 'Stranded Pakistanis', and this created a barrier ('bandh') (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', 45, Dhaka - my emphasis).

As a number of prominent members of Bengali civil society explained,

> Their…mistake was their support to Pakistan which made them really alienated by Bengali society. Many who have left the camp have been settled in the community fine (Professor Chowdhury, Bengali, 50+, Dhaka - interview conducted in English).

Goffman (1968) argues that stigma theories are constructed in part to explain the inferiority of a particular group and in part to account for the danger they represent. Such theories enable society to understand his/her 'defect' as just retribution for something previously done, and consequently a justification for the way we treat them; those who suffer stigma sometimes also suffer blame. As Professor Chowdhury above explains, the 'camp-dwellers' 'mistake' (their pro-Pakistani sentiment) was their undoing,

the reason why they are stigmatized today. Which came first in the camps, however, social ostracism or pro-Pakistani sentiment? This is difficult to determine, as is whether those who live outside have succeeded in doing so because of their willingness to accept Bangladesh, or Bangladeshi society's willingness to accept them. Most 'Urdu-speakers' who live outside (along with some inside) suggest that a stronger identification with Bangladesh among 'outsiders' has to some extent conditioned their access to rights; just as the historical and emotional identification of the 'camp-dwellers' with Pakistan has hindered theirs. However, this is a narrative that ignores existing power relations, and masks the role of the state in the production of national belonging.

2.1 'Outsiders'

After the war, the SPGRC gradually became a powerful force in the camps. They controlled camp rations and began collecting a tax from residents for their services. Many interviewees suggested that not to have conformed to a pro-Pakistani posture would have made life in these spaces difficult at the time:

> There were those who wanted to go to Pakistan in Dhaka and elsewhere, who formed the SPGRC and the SPGRC were so strong they convinced the (camp) community that they were Pakistani and not entitled to anything here (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', around 50, Saidpur).

Another strand of this narrative, outside the camps, implies that as a result of their lack of education the 'camp-dwellers' were easily manipulated:

> Those in the camps didn't have citizenship because they were misguided by some community leaders who made them Stranded Pakistanis...As camp-dwellers they were not well-informed and didn't know anything else...Some of them are illiterate. Because of that they were not able to understand the situation....Those that lived outside weren't connected to this group, and couldn't be misguided by them, so they didn't have any of the problems (Shahid, 'outsider', 40, Saidpur).

While a few people in the camps still support the SPGRC (a following that has slowly evaporated), interviews outside the camps repeatedly lay the blame at their door:

> People who live inside the camps moulded them the wrong way and labelled them 'Stranded Pakistani'...From my point of view (their disenfranchisement) was created by the leaders of Bihari (the SPGRC). They (the camp-dwellers) were political victims, they didn't have much awareness and they suffered a lot. You

know if a physician makes a mistake a patient will die. But if a politician makes a mistake it can make the whole community backward ('zahil') (Shakil, 'outsider', 20, Saidpur).

Expressions such as this are common, and hint at the narrative of 'community' discussed in the previous chapter. Those families whose social capital enabled them to remain outside the camps, who were educated and made the 'right' decisions, remained unconnected to the SPGRC and the aspiration of Pakistan. Here, in many ways, the discourse of 'blame' extends from the leadership, to the camp-population themselves. 'Us' and 'them' are everywhere invoked:

> If since the beginning Urdu-speakers had claimed themselves Bangladeshi not Pakistani it would all have been very friendly. But why would anyone help them if they consider themselves Pakistani? That's Pakistan's problem (Afsar, 'outsider', 26, Dhaka).

As Shakil added, "…camp-dwellers think that they are Pakistanis, (so) how can they get facilities?" (Shakil, 'outsider', 20, Saidpur). 'Thinking' yourself Pakistani, or 'thinking' yourself Bangladeshi is, it seems, at the centre of the debate:

> People who are living in the camp think that they are Pakistani…that's why they were disenfranchised and distinguished from the others. People who are living outside the camps always think that they are Bangladeshi (Mr Gulzar, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur).

As another 'outsider' agreed:

> People in the camps are pro-Pakistani and see themselves as Stranded Pakistanis while those outside see themselves as Bangladeshi – so discrimination is to do with this (Afsar, 'outsider', 26, Dhaka).

According to Mr Gulzar and Afsar, 'Urdu-speakers' who retained their houses adopted a Bangladeshi identity and this protected them from disenfranchisement. However, as Ali Reza explains, security required more than just believing in Bangladesh; it required cultural and linguistic 'integration' (and the socio-economic background to facilitate it) as well:

> Camp-dwellers are very innocent. They have no connection to Pakistan, they came from India. Their fault is still some believe 'we are Pakistani'. We have explained many times that 'we are from India, the country who liberated this land, so I can

claim a partnership after this Independence'. The fault was that they were speaking Urdu and Pakistanis speak Urdu, so this created a false link (Ali Reza, 'outsider', 44, Dhaka).

In the above quotation, 'camp-dwellers' speak Urdu, but those outside it seems do not. Many of those outside the camps have been conducting their lives in 'Bangla' for almost forty years. While this is something I will explore in greater detail in Chapter Eight, Ali Reza's comments point to the degree to which linguistic 'integration' is implicated in processes of national acceptance. Disparities of economic and social capital and the opportunities for 'integration' it confers are, however, rarely part of the story.

2.2 'Insiders'

As Goffman (1968) argues, stigma theories are easily internalized. Notions of blame and responsibility were common among 'insiders' too, particularly the younger generations:

> If I didn't identify myself as Stranded Pakistani, then nobody would call me that, the label would disappear. I am an Urdu-speaking Bangladeshi (Sajid, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

Standards incorporated from wider society equip stigmatized individuals to be intimately alive to what others see as their failing. This inevitably causes some 'camp-dwellers' to agree that identifying with Pakistan has been the cause of their undoing. Some people certainly moved into the camps because they believed that from there they would be sent to Pakistan, and some in the camps therefore blame older members of the 'community' for decisions made at that time. For the older generation, emotional ties to the idea of Pakistan were undoubtedly strong, as was the sense of loss as those dreams fell apart. While the notion of 'allegiance to a foreign state' on the part of the entire 'camp community' may be somewhat of a legal leap, some clearly had 'collaborated'. Consequently, in the public imagination, a desire to be sent to Pakistan was enough to raise questions regarding loyalty. Disentangling Pakistani sympathy from a desperate search for safety and the absence of alternatives is, however, clearly complicated:

> Yusuf: There was no food, no security; we came to this camp to repatriate to Pakistan.
> VR: Did you come only to repatriate to Pakistan?
> Yusuf: I didn't have anything I could do. Even I couldn't give proper food to my kids...We had no other choice at that time. If you had somewhere else to stay do

you think you would have moved into the camp? If you knew any Bengalis or relatives, if they helped you at that time then you never moved here (Yusuf, 'insider', around 75, Dhaka).

Agency, choice and blame overlap in murky ways. But for the majority of those who ended up in the camps once their houses were occupied there were few alternatives. As a prominent local figure who has remained inside the camps explained:

> It is not prestigious to live in the camp. See we had our own house, we were not living in the camp before the War; we all had our own houses in Mirpur. After the battle, international organisations put us in various camps for our security. Our home was occupied as was every little thing we had. After then we started camp life, sufferings began, we had nothing in these camps just after the battle. We made this a place for living with our own resources. 98% of the camp-dwellers are poor, they are not able to move outside…They can't either build their own house or get a rented house (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', around 40, Dhaka).

Obviously, any pro-Pakistani sentiment that may have existed before the war thrived under such conditions. Registration for Pakistan therefore represented **both** a desperate search for safety and the desire for belonging:

> Of course those who ended up in the camps wanted to go to Pakistan, they had lost everything....That is the reason these people are exploited...People were scared to go out of their houses because there was news each day that someone went to his office and was killed. This was another reason for registration to Pakistan (Mr Islam, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

Pakistan and safety were in this sense one and the same thing. Some people left their houses for the protection of the camps assuming they would return once it was safe. But as a new country emerged from the ashes of the War, laws were quickly promulgated that reflected the Bengali nationalism on which the state was founded. Through the 'Abandoned Property Law'[147], the dispossession of properties was legalised, and many people, having moved to the camps for temporary safety, never returned home. As one interviewee observed, "my parents left their house during the war for their safety but were unable to get it back when they returned" (Shabnab, 'insider', 20, Dhaka). For some, decisions made then have divided families ever since:

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[147] The Bangladesh Abandoned Property (Control, Management and Disposal) Order 1972 (President's Order No. 16 of 1972) – See Farooqui, 2000.

> We have relatives outside the camp too. They are in a good financial position so they don't communicate with us. They are not in touch with us. They always lived outside. They managed to keep their house safe as they told people during the war that they are Bengali. Both brothers (the interviewee's father and uncle) were in the same financial position. We had properties before liberation as well but my father was so hot-minded....In the year 71 he had beaten a freedom fighter. After that he left that place and never went back. He moved in the camp then for his safety, freedom fighters searched for him so many times to kill him. He had no particular interest to move to Pakistan, he always wanted to live in Bangladesh (Sajid, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

Money, options and circumstances combine with the possibility of Pakistan in tenebrous ways, resulting in choices that split families down the middle:

> My relatives (who live outside) were in a better financial position than my parents before the war, and they were aware about the situation. When my parents left their house they left their documents in the house so they couldn't claim the house back. Those that moved into the camp did so because the occupiers were powerful, and they saw it as a good chance to get to Pakistan…Those who carried on living outside were largely better educated, more aware, so they made better decisions (Shabnab, 'insider', 20, Dhaka).

As far as Shabnab is concerned money represented education and knowledge, and this was fundamental to the decisions made. But it was also fundamental to the choices available to people. She tells us that people moved into the camps because they had little choice ('the occupiers were powerful'), and yet at the same time she clearly believes a lack of education or knowledge resulted in poor decisions. Education and political orientation (Pakistan/Bangladesh) are fused together in a narrative which above all privileges the innocence of illiterate 'camp-dwellers' in the making of their subsequent marginalization. It forms part of a much broader social discourse which combines 'isolationism' with 'illiteracy' and resulted in their failure to access education:

> They ('camp-dwellers') have facilities such as schools but parents haven't been very interested in sending their children to school, they are interested to send them for work instead. They try to prevent their children from going to school because they think it is not needed for them (Najmal, 'outsider', 30ish, Saidpur).

According to this interpretation, the result has been dependence on the state ever since. As Najmal continues:

> They aren't very much interested to move outside. They are waiting for relief in the camps. For a long time they have had lots of facilities for free and they have just got used to this (Najmal, 'outsider', 30ish, Saidpur).

The discourse of 'dependency' confirms responsibility:

> If you want to change yourself you can. If you do not want to no one will come and change you. The camp-dwellers do not want to change themselves (Shabana, 26, outsider, Dhaka).

And as Mr Malik argues, this 'dependency', this inability to change, is the cause of their discrimination:

> Camp is no life, camp is no life. And I am still telling them, you come out of the camps then you will survive. Camp is not the answer. One must suffer and one must struggle for a better life. They must come out of the camp and struggle…camp you see is a separate society, this is not a healthy society. And this is also the cause of discrimination (Mr Malik, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

Why a narrative of 'blame' and 'responsibility' has become a 'standard version' (Malkki, 1995) through which the present situation of the camp-dwellers has been incorporated into the past (and the past has been inserted into the present) is of some significance here. It works not only to explain their inferiority or account for the danger they represent, but also to conceal the role of the state. In this way, as some informants argued, it functioned as part of a greater political ambition - to eliminate those in the camps altogether. According to Mr Bholo below, 'illiteracy' and 'dependency' were cause *and* effect of state policies of exclusion and social deprivation:

> They say that those in the camps are responsible for their situation because they haven't moved out of the camps, because they rely on Government hand-outs and because they haven't got education. But this is why they deprive them of all social facilities. This has been a strategy of the Bengali Government, to deprive camp people of education so that they would be no threat in the future, they would eventually die out (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur).

As Blom Hansen (1999) argues, fear of the *illiterate* masses was always crucial to the political imaginaries of the postcolonial world. Popular discourse has continued to feed off these imaginaries in the manufacturing of demonic 'others', which for 'Urdu-speaking outsiders' draw lines between 'us' and 'them'. Without the state saying very much at all,

structures of discrimination are legitimized, and according to Mr Bholo, the problem is eventually removed.

3. Space, settlement and substantive access

Universality of the rights of the citizen may be the hallmark of the modern nation state, but discrimination plays heavily in the creation of political subjectivity (Stepputat, 2001). For some groups the crossing of certain linguistic and cultural boundaries is necessary for the achievement of such subjectivity, as Stepputat shows among Indians in Guatemala where "recognition as citizens still depends on their neighbours" (Stepputat, 2001 p.310). Movements between cultural, linguistic and social space will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Eight. Such movement is also dependent, however, on the crossing of *physical* boundaries. Living outside the camp is the preliminary condition for access to political space and it is through the spatially differentiated representation of citizenship that I will begin to examine the complex social processes through which political subjects are formed. Many 'camp-dwellers' tell the same story as Sajid above, of relatives 'outside' who retained a civil status while they became a 'de facto stateless' population. However, it is important to establish which particular rights individuals have or have not been able to access, under what circumstances and by what means, in order to understand how differences manifest in 'space' relate to broader processes of social and cultural 'integration'. In doing so, the 'Bihari' camps in Bangladesh reveal the opacity of ('formal') legal status, disrupting much conventional rhetoric.

The concept of citizenship is often understood as involving connections between rights, responsibilities, identity and participation (Delanty, 2000; Bloemraad, 2000). Debate raged in the 1970s and 1980s between liberal and communitarian notions of citizenship, but liberalism's preoccupation with rights and responsibilities, and the field of rights in particular, has assumed the most attention.[148] A formal and legally coded status is presumed to provide the opportunity for access to those 'substantive' rights (Isin and Nielsen, 2008).[149] In investigating some of these processes as they are experienced by 'Urdu-speakers', the rights I have chosen to concentrate on represent those most

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[148] Within both right wing and left wing versions of liberalism, citizenship is often reducible to rights (of the market, or of social welfare systems) (Delanty, 2000).

[149] It is worth referring here to the growing discourse of 'earned citizenship' within Europe and the US, in which symbolic 'acts' are not only that which legal status make possible, but vice versa. Active participation becomes a way to access legal status.

commonly articulated by interviewees themselves. When asked which rights ('odikhar'/'huquq') they felt they lacked and why, or the advantages ('subidha'/'shahulat') and disadvantages ('osubidha') of citizenship ('nagorikotto')[150] for them, voting rights, education rights, and employment rights were by far the most consistently indicated.[151]

3.1 'Outsiders'

All the 'Urdu-speaking outsiders' I encountered considered themselves in possession of citizenship many years before the recent High Court Ruling. The majority in fact, like Parvez below, believed themselves never to have lost their civil status:

> I never asked for my rights from anyone. The Government gave them to me automatically. I have always had a passport and have travelled to Bangkok, Malaysia, India, Pakistan and Singapore....I have always been living outside that is why I got the facilities of a citizen (Parvez, 'outsider', around 50, Dhaka).

As one individual who had recently moved outside the camps explained, "many of the Urdu-speakers who have their own properties they have always been registered (as voters)..." (Shamama, 'in between', 38, Dhaka). As it appears, they were accepted into the nation in all substantive respects. In possession of the dominant 'markers' of such rights (passports) they have also had access to the right commonly understood as the most directly tied to 'formal' citizenship, and the most difficult to acquire - voter registration (Brubaker in Delanty, 2000; Soysal, 1994)[152] :

> People who live outside of the camp have been voters since the war but those who live inside have not been...Those who live outside they were getting every single facility...In 1974 lots of Urdu-speakers who lived outside got voting rights (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', around 40, Dhaka).

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[150] Words listed here are all Bengali, other than 'huquq' and 'shahulat' which are Urdu.

[151] The latter two are often regarded as 'social rights' which are sometimes criticised as policies or aspirations rather than 'rights' per se, and not considered justiciable. The state's duty in regard to 'social rights' is also seen as particularly ambiguous although this argument has itself been fiercely rejected (Barak-Erez and Gross, 2008). The reality of 'social rights' is that they are very often the rights on which life and livelihoods depend, and it is therefore not surprising that they were so frequently indicated.

[152] The right to vote is different from others, such as the right to a passport, as it represents both a 'right' and in some sense an 'obligation'. Marshall argued in 1964 (see Bloemraad, 2000) that a linear progression from civil rights (equality before the law) to political rights (universal suffrage) finally resulted in the granting of social rights (through employment). Many authors argue that the order has reversed and that today some basic civil rights and social rights are enjoyed by the majority of entrants to a country, and that the final rights granted are political because these are those enjoyed only by citizens.

Mr Akhtar above held the year 1974 as significant, and he was not alone. A number of 'outsiders' suggested in fact that the mid 1970s represented a change in the context of broader attitudes and acceptance. For some of those living outside, life improved noticeably around this time:

> I have been a citizen since Liberation…I cast my vote in 1973[153]. We even organized a Moshaira (Urdu poetry recital) in the year 1974. We did it publicly. No one complained against it...I had no bad reaction from Bengalis – slowly they joined in…Then, after 1975 it was different (Parvez, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

The change of behaviour Parvez describes, the 'difference' after 1975, coincides conspicuously with the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in August of that year. Ali Reza recounts something similar:

> Gradually things became easier, three or four years after Liberation. Then I was able to start a business. Now I help the Bengali poor as well as the 'Biharis' (Ali Reza, 'outsider', 44, Dhaka).

With passports and voting rights reclaimed, linguistic discrimination decreasing, and new businesses suddenly considered viable, doors it appears were opening for 'Urdu-speaking outsiders'. Some have suggested these developments reflect a period of change in the country marked by Mujib's death. Considered a defining moment in the history of Bangladesh, his assassination in 1975 is thought to have heralded the re-emergence of 'political Islam' under civilianised military patriarchs such as General Ziaur Rahman (Roy, 2001). Some suggest that the failure of 'Mujibism' to alleviate poverty and restore law and order in the aftermath of war, floods and the famine of 1974, led to a gradual 'Islamization of the polity' (Hashmi, 2004)[154]. This was a process which paved the way for the rise of various Islamic groups – most notably Jamaat-i-Islami[155]. Some suggest that since this time the major 'liberal democratic' parties of Bangladesh have been

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[153] March 1973 was the date of the first Presidential election, in which his citizenship would have been formally expressed.

[154] According to this account, hyperinflation, corruption, the failure of the welfare state and the non-availability of essentials soon turned the average Bangladeshi into an anti-Indian/anti-Awami Leaguer. This forced a large section of the poor to cling to Islam, "either as a means to escape the harsh reality or to ahieve their cherished Golden Bengal through piety, Islamic justice and egalitarianism" (Hashmi, 2004, p.45).

[155] Founded in Lahore in 1940, the Jamaat strongly opposed an independent Bangladesh and was consequently banned after the war, at which point most of its leaders fled to (West) Pakistan. After the overthrow of the Mujib Government in the latter part of 1975 however, Jamaat emerged as a legitimate organisation in Bangladesh, and by 1991 was the third largest party. It has been argued that through the 1980s and 1990s Islamism emerged as a new political order and the rise of Jamaat is an important example (Hashmi, 2004).

competing to prove their Islamic credentials.[156] One example of this is the BNP decision to include Jamaat in its Four Party Alliance which won the elections of 2001 and formed a coalition government which held power until 2006. Considering the connections between Jamaat and the 'Urdu-speaking community' before the war, a re-positioning of the organisation after Mujib's death would likely be reflected in a re-positioning of 'Urdu-speakers' too. As the informants above suggest, this broader national transition may have had an effect that was directly felt at the time. In other words, specific and dynamic conditions of possibility in the political field (Blom Hansen, 1999, p.134) made possible a *re-positioning* of 'Urdu-speakers' within the ideological frames of the nation-state. The absence of similar data in conversations with 'insiders' is equally telling. The mid-1970s did not, it appears, signal the same advances for those in the camp.

Despite these developments, 'outsiders' believed there was one area in which the discrimination they had experienced in the immediate post-war period continued unabated. Employment was no longer as difficult to access but, since the war, sought-after *Government* positions have not it seems been easy to acquire:

> My job is an NGO job, not a Government job, so I had no problems getting it. But it would be impossible for me to get a Government job, just too difficult...Some of my family tried but failed. Government jobs are the only problem though (Sairun, 'outsider', 38, Saidpur).

Although I did come across a number of 'outsiders' (particularly in Saidpur) who had been able to retain government positions acquired before the War, I did not hear of anyone who had been able to obtain one since. And even for those already in post the difficulties involved were apparent. Mr Gulzar for example held a government position until his retirement in 2005 (although his father like many other 'Urdu-speakers' lost his job after the war). As he explained:

> I was continued by the Government...I had sympathy from people I worked with. I was a very skilled member of staff also, that's why the government didn't want to lose me. I got personal sympathy from my Bengali friends (Mr Gulzar, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur).

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[156] For example, in the formal replacement of the Persian 'Khuda Hafiz' (God bless you) with the Arabic 'Allah Hafiz' by the BNP-led coalition in 2001 (Hashmi, 2004).

The explanation itself suggests that such good fortune was not necessarily typical. Others who lost their jobs, or had a harder time, explained some of the difficulties experienced:

> I was able to keep my Government job at the time of war – it was very difficult to keep jobs then – the administration was always chasing us, trying to move us to other places to get rid of us. After 1971 the railway employees faced great difficulties. Some became day labourers, rickshaw-pullers. It was very difficult to keep Government jobs after the war. I was a mason before 1971 and after I continued to do similar things (Md.Khalid, 'insider', 72, Saidpur).

As Chapter Three revealed, Bengali friends, connections and social status were fundamental in attempts to avoid dispossession. This social capital was often equally important in retaining employment (governmental or not). One 'outsider' explained:

> After the war (my father) worked at the Daily Bangladesh and Daily Millat, renowned newspapers, as Chief Photographer in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Also he worked for the Daily Observer. He got married with my mother who is Bengali and settled here...People who were better off at that time didn't choose the camp life. They settled in different localities. My father had better links at that time so he could move here...He had worked with Sheikh Mujib during the War and after, so there were no problems for him. The house in front used to belong to Mujib's family so they always had links with the family. My aunty was the childhood friend of (Sheikh) Hasina... (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

3.2 'Insiders'

For those in the camps, Government jobs have been even more of a chimera. They were not even registered on voter lists until the 2009 election, as Zulekha explains:

> I voted twice when I was in a rented house. When I moved into the camps I didn't have the right to cast my vote anymore, but now I have an ID card I can cast my vote for the first time again (Zulekha, 'insider', 48, Saidpur).

Others agree that prior to the ruling, 'citizenship rights' such as the right to vote were denied regardless of their previous status:

> We were informed that the Government suspended our citizenship rights in the camp…Before (the 2008 Ruling) there were big differences between those that lived in the camps and those that didn't. Those outside had all the rights of citizenship and those in the camp had none (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', around 40, Dhaka).

A range of further economic and social rights have also been difficult to access. In the words of the 2008 High Court Ruling, "they are constantly denied the constitutional rights to job, education, accommodation, health and a decent life like other citizens of the country."[157]

Access to education and employment are thought by many to have represented the most compelling challenge, progress towards which has differed considerably. When I was conducting research in 2006/7, the inability to access education 'because of a camp address' was the issue most often articulated by camp-dwellers. Many people were denied admission into Government schools as, although no formal public statement had been made in this regard, by excluding them from the voter roll the Government's position had been made clear (a position that was no doubt internally communicated, if not publically released). Despite some inconsistency nationwide therefore the Education Ministry largely treated those in the camps as non-citizens.[158] The reality of 'social rights' such as education (and health) but also employment, is that they are very often shaped by administrative rather than constitutional law. As such even when citizenship is granted in the courts, as in the 2008 High Court ruling, 'social rights' can be curtailed by administrative and bureaucratic measures, and it is often this area that reflects the lack of real equality (Barak-Erez and Gross, 2008).

In the absence of a Government alternative, the fees charged by non-Government schools would normally be too high. The only options available to 'camp-dwellers' therefore were the limited number of NGO schools that had been set up to fill the gap. According to Refugees International (2008b), there are only ten of these schools in the 116 camps (and in the largest, Geneva camp, this leaves just one school to cater for a population of approximately 18,000). Imteaz below was interviewed in 2008 but, as a twenty-three year-old, his story is ten to fifteen years old:

> Living outside the camp is a good opportunity for getting education and a better
> place to live...it's like giving your address on applications, it (the camp) creates a

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[157] 'Md. Sadaqat Khan (Fakku) and Others v. Chief Election Commissioner, Bangladesh Election Commission', Writ Petition No. 10129 of 2007, Bangladesh: Supreme Court, 18 May 2008, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a7c0c352.html [accessed 10 July 2009].

[158] The inconsistency appears to have been in part due to inadequate regulation and in part as local politics has interfered. Some claimed for example that in Saidpur children from the camps had been allowed into schools since 2001 when the BNP Government came to power. This was, however, not confirmed by interviews in the camps of Saidpur in 2006/7.

barrier ('bandh') there. Once I went to a Government school and told the principal
I was from the camp and he told me I couldn't get into the school...so I went to an
NGO school funded by Save the Children (Imteaz, 'insider', 23, Dhaka).

The relationship has always been complex, however, and for a number of years many
'camp-dwellers' were not interested in accessing education. Initially those committed to
'repatriation' believed that a Bangladeshi education would be worthless on arrival in their
new home. Once that dream diminished, poverty took over, constituting education as a
luxury few could afford. Governmental refusal further instituted apathy, as Sumon
explains:

> When I was in school, children of my age weren't interested in going to school.
> There were few schools that would let them in at the time so lots of people didn't
> get education. Some of my friends applied for Government school but they
> weren't allowed, why this happened I don't know however I heard that Biharis
> weren't allowed in Government school (Sumon, 'insider', 18, Saidpur).

As Refugees International adds, bullying within school may be another disincentive, as
many are too scared to report incidences when they occur (Refugees International,
2008b). In interviews, such discrimination was a common theme:

> Some of the Government schools have people from the camp but if they have
> something to distribute like aid they give it to the locals not our children (Md.
> Khalid, 'insider', 72, Saidpur).

In other cases the education provided is not considered worth the sacrifice: "teachers go
unpaid, children study in shifts and requests to the Minister of Education for new books
are turned down" (Refugees International, 2008b, p.10). It is only in recent years, with
the possibility of acceptance in Bangladesh, that interest has grown. As one would
expect, interest and access have self-reinforced. Almost everyone I spoke to on my
return to Dhaka in September 2008 agreed that access to education, including
Government education, had improved for those in the camps. This represented a
significant development, and one in which the ID card is by no means immaterial. By
2009 all schools require ID cards for the admittance of Bengalis and 'Urdu-speakers'
alike. By this time, thanks to the High Court ruling, all camp-dwellers should have access
to an ID card. This quotation represents a familiar narrative:

> I got my ID card 3/4 months ago. It will give me passport facilities, help in admitting in school, help with birth registration process etc. It's very important for admitting children in school; you must show your ID card. In the past it was difficult but now it's much easier, we show our card and it's easy - for both Government and non-Government schools. Before it was a problem to admit children in Government schools but we went yesterday, they asked for my ID card and birth registration (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka).

Access to employment appears to be a different story, however, slower to respond to the ruling, with informal discrimination that remains pervasive. Unsurprisingly, this is particularly the case in relation to Government jobs: "The problem is arising at the time of getting a Government job, if you disclosed you were Bihari you would still not be allowed to get the job" (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', around 50, Saidpur). As a result of these difficulties, a quota for Government jobs was seen by many as the only way of redressing deeply rooted, systemic inequality:

> It is still very difficult to get a Government job. Before the High Court Ruling it was labelled that we are Bihari and not citizens ('shahri nahi hai') of Bangladesh...if Government thinks positively for us then things can change. Then we can get quota in the Government job. We will have a separate ministry for our affairs like the Chakma have (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur).

Whether these problems are the result of institutionalised discrimination or educational disadvantage remains a little opaque, although a combination of both is likely. Salima's remarks are representative of the ambiguity:

> I don't know anyone with a Government job…In general to have a job you have to be educated. If you're educated it's no problem...but you also have to show your (National ID) card. Before, just because they were living in the camp, if they were identified as from the camp, they wouldn't be able to get a job in a private firm either (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka).

Education, legal status, and settlement are interlinked and overlaid in a confusing narrative. It is not entirely clear from her words whether or not such problems refer to the past or the present (the interview was conducted in 2009), but the final sentence implies that the camp address still represents a 'barrier' regardless of an individual's personal qualifications or attributes. Many agreed that it was in relation to Government jobs that the greatest problem was experienced but it is clear that in the camps these problems are not limited to Government employment alone:

> You can't get Government jobs living in the camp and some public[159] jobs too – they ask so many questions and if you say you're from the camp you can't get the job (Md. Khalid, 'insider', 72, Saidpur).

The majority of 'camp-dwellers' are, consequently, forced to work in the informal economy but even this isn't easy. One interviewee noted, "It's very difficult for the Biharis to get petty jobs" (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur). And another explained, "my children have problems getting jobs…it's very difficult because we are camp-dwellers, people look down on you" (Amna, 'insider', 40, Saidpur). As the interviewee below added, problems may not be limited to finding jobs but surviving discrimination within them:

> We are getting paid less money because we are living in the camp. This happens all the time, because we are valueless. If they want to give us a job they can, otherwise they say 'no, no, we don't have jobs for camp-dwellers'. People who live here they will earn hardly 100 taka (less than £1) for the whole day. We are working for them like a cow (Samida, 'insider', 40, Saidpur).

UNHCR's 'Guiding Principles state that displaced people should not be discriminated against "in the enjoyment of rights and freedoms *on the ground that they are displaced*" (Brun, 2003; Muggah, 2003)[160] however for thirty six years residence in the camps effectively denied 'camp-dwellers' important rights of citizenship. With money, status and connections 'Urdu-speakers' outside the camps were able to physically and culturally integrate into Bengali society, through which they achieved the formal recognition of civil status. As someone 'in between' the two positions, with experience of both, concludes:

> When you are in the camp you have no opportunity citizens have…(you) can't get into school, or get a Commissioners Certificate[161] for a job. But outside the camp you always get these facilities (Shamama, 'in between', 38, Dhaka).

4. Claiming political subjectivity

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[159] The sentence assumes that what Md.Khalid means here is in fact non-Government jobs.
[160] UNHCR Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1998/53/Add2(1998), available at
http://www.unhcr.org/cgibin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=47949b212&query=guiding%20principles%20IDPs [accessed 8 November 2007].
[161] Commissioners are local representatives and a 'commissioner's certificate' attests to your decent, law-abiding conduct and therefore your eligibility for employment.

According to critics, while one can today be an environmental, sexual, cosmopolitan or consumer citizen, the absence of legal status, "makes these ostensibly new ways of being or becoming citizens flimsy, if not ineffective" (Isin and Nielsen, 2008, p.1). Legal status is considered the tangible, concrete, relationship between subjects that make it possible to mediate social relations through law; that which makes possible the articulation of needs as claims, and wrongs as injustices (Donald, 1996). However, this neat and tidy picture may be representative of the conceptual reification that has been accused of de-politicising or naturalising citizenship (Billig, 2003; Sieder, 2001). It certainly does little to relate the reality of indeterminate, messy and mutable boundaries between legality and illegality presented here.

Since the roll-out of the National ID cards, and their distribution among 'camp-dwellers' in 2008, there has been on-going disagreement as to the perceived benefits. This debate will be explored at greater depth in the following chapter, but one of the things that surprised me most when I arrived in 2008 was the number of people who had ID cards and even passports long before the ruling. I was unaware in 2006 that the proportion of those in the camps, who were able to get hold of ID cards, and even passports in some cases, was so high. Prior to the ruling, camp residents simply used an outside address (normally that of a relative), and in relation to ID cards the process is apparently very straightforward. Passports have only been obtained by the more socially mobile camp residents, but the majority of interviewees, male in particular, had an ID card long before they were officially granted citizenship:

> Yes I will vote in the upcoming election. I voted in the previous election, with a fake address. It's very easy to hide your address and cast your vote… I have also had a passport for 11 years with which I have visited India 10/12 times…The Police Special Branch investigate every application, whether or not the address is correct. I used the address of my relatives outside the camp so it was real and I didn't have a problem, but if they had said no I would have had to bribe them 750taka. That was 11 years ago, now I would have to pay around 3,000 taka, and if it's urgent you have to bribe them 6,000 taka! (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka)

Eleven years ago, 750 taka would have been something few could afford. The number of individuals who have gone to great lengths to obtain one illustrates its perceived value, not only in facilitating movement, or as documentary proof of status, but also in reinforcing a sense of belonging. As became evident, it was not just ID cards and passports that were obtained surreptitiously:

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(Before the ID cards) If we used a fake address we could get a bank account...but now we can do business legally, we can do everything more legally now (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', around 40, Dhaka).

One man I spoke to in Saidpur revealed that he was even able to get himself on the voter roll, simply by keeping the term 'camp' from his address:

I voted in the election. Before that I cast my vote in 1990...I went to the Thiano's office (the local commissioner) and the Thiano said if you are a resident of Saidpur show me your school certificate. In the school certificate it said 'Niamodpur, Chamra Godam', that's what the area is called, so on the certificate it doesn't say the word 'camp' (he lives in Chamra Godam camp). At that time I couldn't have got into school with a camp address. I felt very happy when I first voted. I felt proud. I felt I was a citizen of Bangladesh (Md.Majid, 'insider', 30, Saidpur).

In addition, as the interviewee below explains, with a bit of money broader discrimination can be circumvented:

I have had (a passport) for ten years. I applied for a passport at the Passport Office. The authority investigated my address, verified that and gave me the passport. I wrote my camp address on the form for the passport. Many people are getting passport…*but we have to manage the Police*, we gave them money (a bribe) for giving us a passport. Not only that six or seven people got Government jobs living in the camps, with the support of the Police, but *obviously we have to manage Police and local administration* (Naim, 'insider', 60, Saidpur).

To my surprise, people who already had an ID card using a fake address have in some cases continued to use these rather than obtaining a 'real' one since the ruling:

Before the High Court ruling I had an ID card made anyway, with a fake address. I kept this one (rather than getting an official one after the ruling)...it seemed better (Mala, 'insider', around 34, Dhaka).

Why it was better was difficult to discern from this interviewee, but as others explained in areas such as employment a 'real' ID card, obtained using their actual (camp) address, could be more of a burden than a benefit:

VR: Why do you not have the camp address on your card?
Shamim: It's a friend's address. I think Geneva camp address would cause problems. If you went to get a passport, people would try not to give you the

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passport. Outside address is a valuable address, it's good for me to get jobs etc.
(Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

I applied for a couple of jobs but I haven't received an interview card yet. On our
ID cards we have the camp address which makes it difficult to get jobs. Even the
birth certificate by the city corporation (Dhaka City Corporation) they do not allow
us to get with a camp address. I was working to register births in the camp at the
commissioner's office but the commissioner refused to register them because they
were camp-dwellers. This was one or two months ago (i.e. after the High Court
Ruling) (Sajid, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

A range of reports spread quickly through the camps about the advantages and
disadvantages of the cards and opinions differed widely. Some emphasized the range of
services that would soon be inaccessible without one, while others documented the
discrimination that would occur if they were produced. Unsurprisingly, most camp-
dwellers were confused.

Isin and Nielsen argue that citizenship needs to be investigated in a way that is
irreducible to either (legal) status or (substantive) practice. Rather, it requires a focus on
those 'acts' when "subjects constitute themselves as citizens, or better still, as those to
whom the rights to have rights is due" (2008, p. 2). Movement outside the camps, or the
decision to acquire a 'fake' ID card, could both be seen as 'acts of citizenship' in the
sense that they are about claiming rights, enacting oneself as a citizen. By re-articulating
'political space' in this way, individuals are making declarations generative of political
subjectivity that challenges our understanding of political community. As Peter Nyers
argues:

(The) identity conferred on (non-status migrants and refugees) is one that
historically has been excluded from the political domain. Non-status people not
only lack the full range of citizenship rights, but they are also denied the
opportunity to express themselves as political beings...the problem is as much
conceptual as it is legal: it turns on the fact that historically citizenship has been the
identity through which claims to political being are enacted (2008, p.162).

Here in the camps, without formal recognition, political being has been enacted at a
number of levels. Movement between physical spaces is one such example and the
position of those 'in between', straddling relationships and influences, inside and out, is
therefore particularly illuminating. Having moved into the camps at the time of war
(some later, as money ran out), they have worked and saved to leave; clearly 'integration',

in all its forms, is valued. Consequently, those 'in between' have employed a range of strategies to subvert their status, to become something else, and to be accepted by society.

As they navigate a complicated social world it is not surprising that attempts to distance themselves from the camps form a natural part of that process, or that this is at times expressed through the discourse of blame encountered earlier. Not only does this function to explain their superiority but it also forms part of a much larger social discourse which works to re-inforce the danger 'camp-dwellers' represent. It highlights an 'us' and 'them' and as such reinforces the declarations of political subjectivity movement represents. As the quotation below suggests, for those 'in between' movement outside the camps is about claiming more than just citizenship:

> We moved from the camp 4 years ago...we get many advantages living outside, like voter ID, and an address that I can give freely to people…We got self-respect from others living outside (Tuni, 'in between', 27, Dhaka).

The relationship between the two - rights and respect - is murky terrain. Once that physical boundary is crossed, and status transgressed, a range of opportunities and relationships become available. In this example 'physical integration' represents a route to rights and recognition, although it is not the only form of 'integration' generative of political inclusion:

> (My husband) got his voter card in 1990. He was working in a market dominated by Bengalis and he registered himself as a voter with a fake address. It was through the connection with Bengalis that he was able to get the voter registration. He also campaigned on behalf of different political parties; he was quite involved in politics (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka).

The search for some form of 'integration' is at the heart of both examples, although Mala articulates a process which is much more fluid. In her story social interaction with Bengalis, and relationship building, is a way of gaining the capital necessary to enact oneself as a political being; forms of capital generation that are largely the preserve of men. The quotation below demonstrates a further form of political negotiation, to which women again have limited access. Circumvention, rather than 'integration', constitutes the 'black way':

> In 1976 there was a repatriation from Chittagong. Government employees were taken to Pakistan. I accompanied them in a vessel. I took their stuff on my shoulders like a labourer and hid in the vessel's toilet for about twelve hours. I reached Pakistan and lived there for about forty days…I went to Pakistan several times through 'black way' without passport in 1980, 1984 and 1988…once through the border at Jallo and once through the border at Kashmir. At that time it was easy to cross the border if you pretended to be a farmer – with a knife and crops and in your hand…I went to India, Pakistan and Nepal without passport (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur).

Positioned at the interface, the experience of 'Urdu-speakers' requires us to ask how rights are taken and borders are crossed, and in doing so disturb some established rhetoric. The strategies people use to cross these boundaries are assorted and interlinked. They occur in all areas of daily life, as negotiations are made and statuses subverted:

> Acts of citizenship may be cultivated by, or may transgress, practices and formal entitlement, as they emerge from the paradox between universal inclusion in the language of rights…and inevitable exclusion in the language of community and particularity on the other (Isin and Nielsen, 2008, p.11).

Such 'acts of citizenship' deconstruct the duality of socio-political engagement, and emphasize the fluid and slippery reality of access.

5. Conclusion

Since 1972 the national project has not been static. The turn to a resolute 'Bangladeshi nationalism' in the mid-1970s represented shifts of emphasis between the country's 'secular Bengali identity' and a re-emerging 'Muslim consciousness' (Osmany, 1992). Some have suggested that these developments reflect a period of change in the country marked in particular by Sheikh Mujib's death in 1975; indeed, as my data suggests, when the national project moved to assert a unified religious identity once again, life began to improve for those 'Urdu-speakers' *living outside*. As the ethnicised secular project of Liberation was confronted increasingly by the politics of religious unity, and the country's understanding of itself altered, it appears the boundaries of the nation altered too. With money, status and connections 'Urdu-speakers' outside the camps were able to physically and culturally integrate into Bengali society, through which they achieved the formal recognition of civil status. For thirty-six years residence in the camps effectively denied 'camp-dwellers' similar treatment. For them, excluded and subordinated, rights of citizenship remained 'officially' outside.

As I discovered, however, 'formal status' and official access were only part of the picture. The difference between having and not having citizenship is blurred (Ong, 2006b) and traditional abstract theorisations of citizenship leave little room for these paradoxes. While it is true that the law will remain "an important site for the on-going contestation of the imaginaries and boundaries of the nation-state" (Sieder, 2001, p.218) citizenship is about more than citizenship law. My research shows that talking of citizenship as if it were a concrete and bounded construct, risks ignoring the much neglected social processes that include and exclude in subtle but often highly institutionalised ways. The fluidity of the relationship between processes of physical integration and access to rights of citizenship represents a bleeding together of social and legal frameworks which challenges our understanding of citizenship. Chatterjee (2004) has argued that, in the duality of a 'formal' and a 'real' space of citizenship, the negotiated instability the 'real' represents may be exaggerated in postcolonial space. The experiences of citizenship examined here are indicative of historical processes and political discourses that continue to resonate today. Along with the colonial bifurcation of society which made the issue of legal status in India deeply ambiguous (Blom Hansen, 1999), the 'crafting' of citizenship was then a process that Partition and Liberation confirmed. In Bangladesh today, citizenship continues to be negotiated to an unusual degree.

The work of Agamben has been adopted within critical migration and refugee studies to map the ways in which regimes of citizenship and immigration control in the West ensnare irregular migrants. It is a body of work which draws our attention to the ambiguous grey zone or 'zone of indistinction' neither inside nor outside the social and legal order, and consequently always and inevitably both (Agamben, 2005). 'Bihari' 'camps' certainly attest to the existence of such 'abject' spaces (Walters, 2008). However, different global settings challenge some of the physical and conceptual frames of their depiction. The "pure, absolute and impassable biopolitical space" (Agamben, 1998, p.123) his paradigm paints does little justice to the dynamic and contested quality of citizenship illustrated here. As Ong (2006a) has argued, the space of citizenship is not one of singularity nor dichotomous opposition, but a shifting and flexible ensemble of heterogeneous calculations, choices and exceptions. In our desire to find definite breaks between the stable and the unstable we sometimes overlook the complicated accommodations, creative alliances and human tensions involved (Ong, 1999). Irregular

migrants seek by and large to be regularized, and 'Urdu-speakers' are no exception. In doing so, they provide an insight into the meaning of citizenship and 'statelessness' and illuminate the "decentred and diffuse dynamics" (Stepputat, 2001, p.310) that characterise the creation of 'political space'.

It has been argued that membership in the state grants one the status of a citizen, and membership in the 'nation' makes one a national. The ideals of the nation-state, however, confound the two (Bloemraad, 2000). The traditional 'unitary' model of citizenship assumes that the political and cultural spheres of membership are aligned so that every citizen is also part of the nation. As such, the individual's membership in a political community is dissolved into a collective 'cultural' identity, which for some still limits real access (Yuval-Davis et al, 2005). In light of the High Court Ruling, the 'community' of the camp may now be considered to fall within the state and yet, as the following chapter examines, still not be accepted within the domain of the nation. For those 'camp-dwellers' given citizenship in 2003, a ruling in the courts was not sufficient to guarantee 'substantive' access. How this will change in light of the 2008 ruling only time will tell. Examining gender, generation and social status, the chapter situates 'camp-dwellers' as diverse and heterogeneous 'agents' in social space. In doing so it moves beyond notions of citizenship in its *acquisition*, to uncover the more informal *attitudes*, *imaginaries* and emotional *understandings*, lying beneath. In probing the subjectivity of citizenship, I will be asking how much one's position within society influences the nature of the debate.

CHAPTER SEVEN - THE 'SOCIAL FIELD' OF CITIZENSHIP: IDENTITIES, UNDERSTANDINGS AND THE LANGUAGE OF RIGHTS

No account of citizenship can evade the fact that it was originally constituted in order to exclude and subordinate (Delanty, 2000). However, as the previous chapter revealed, the case is never simply one of exclusion or inclusion; people cross the boundaries between acceptance and rejection daily. While little discussed in the citizenship literature, this uneven field of experience significantly impacts upon attitudes and understandings of the concept. This chapter, in contrast to the previous one, will investigate experiences of citizenship less in terms of its acquisition than its *subjectivity*. Conversations with informants revealed enormous diversity of perspective in this respect. I will therefore adopt the perspectival approach employed by Bourdieu, who raised the concept of the 'social field', as a way to examine this diversity in greater detail. As Jenkins explains (1992, p.84), social fields are defined by the goods which are at stake in that particular field, or "the stakes which are at stake", and by the struggles or manoeuvres that take place over access to those stakes. I argue that in the 'social field of citizenship' those positioned at the bottom are afforded less access to the goods at stake in the field, and their attitudes and understandings of the field are influenced accordingly. Through appeals to this perspectival partiality, the chapter asks whether the 'language of rights' is in danger of obscuring the significance of structural inequalities in the field of citizenship, revealing an incompatibility between these lives and the terms in which they are being imagined.

The 'subjectivity of citizenship' is an area of empirical and theoretical work that has only recently begun to be appreciated. Its neglect, as Bloemraad argues, can be put down in part to an overwhelming emphasis in the literature on the activities of the state:

> To the extent that the socio-political community determines the rules of entry into the collective (legal status) and the benefits associated with membership (rights), states have been a central focus within the citizenship literature (2000, p.10).

The paradigm of Western liberal political logic has exerted a powerful influence, and many scholars either continue to stress the juridical link between the individual and the state or reduce the concept to a set of rights state-membership bestows (Martiniello, 2002). However, as I will argue, discourses of individual liberty and formal equality are

not adequate when dealing with the complexities of postcolonial societies[162]. As in Chapter Six, my aim in surveying positions and perspectives is to reveal what the rigid binary oppositions of liberal discourse have left unsaid. Along with a growing interest in participatory dimensions of citizenship, recent approaches to the concept have begun to consider an 'identity dimension' (Bloemraad, 2000), which understands citizenship as an "instituted subject position" (Isin, 2009, p.370) 'in flux' (Isin, 2008) and always contested. The situation of camp-based 'Urdu-speakers' emphatically illustrates these contestations, and helps us to develop these conceptual frames. As Bloemraad has argued:

> There is a need for a sustained, in-depth conversation between those who theorize the identity dimension of citizenship and those who have engaged in empirical research regarding immigrants' own views and feelings…Surprisingly the extent to which these philosophical discussions reflect immigrants' own perceived identities has been much less a subject of scholarly research (2000, p.24).

The empirical examination conducted here revealed for example that views and feelings did not always match up to a 'formal status' held or occupied. As the previous chapter demonstrates, in 2006 'camp-dwellers' were seen to claim rights through everyday transactions that re-worked and re-negotiated their sense of political subjectivity; consequently, many considered themselves citizens before the status was officially granted. Conversely, when I returned in 2008, some 'camp-dwellers' (now in the possession of 'formal legal status') continued to consider themselves 'stateless'. The apparent contradiction forces us to consider how one's identity as a member of a socio-political community is formed, and whether participation in its structures and activities therein constitutes one as a citizen without formal recognition of status.

While responses in 2006 reveal that in some cases 'identities of citizenship' may extend to those who lack both property and 'formal status', the contradiction of 2008 suggests that in other cases both remain a critical dividing line. A 'history of citizenship' that is specific and located (Kabeer, 2002) is once again an important part of this story and in the second section I will return to the spatialisation of citizenship through analysis of the distinctive relationship between property and citizenship that emerged during the colonial period. While the use of property as a state technology of ethno-nationalism has been both global and historical, its continuing influence in the camps of Dhaka and

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[162] In Western nations too injustices of inequality and social exclusion continue to be perpetuated in their name (Hall, 2000).

Saidpur is apparent today. 'Formal' civil exclusion as a result of camp residence is one part of this story, but the continuing possibility of eviction from these spaces is another, revealing the paradox in which 'camp-dwellers' are currently located. During fieldwork in 2006, the right to protection from eviction was thought dependent on the security of a formal civil status that 'camp-dwellers' lacked. Consequently, the threat of eviction was keenly felt. In 2008 and 2009, now in possession of such status, some considered that very legality to pose such a threat; the protection of their camp properties, some argued, was compatible only with the 'special status' of 'statelessness'. Citizens or not, therefore, informal settlement may deny them rights either way.

As a result of these real ambiguities, the third section will ask what the *access* to citizenship explored in the previous chapter actually means to individuals in the camps and how much this depends upon where that individual is positioned within the social hierarchy. The very concept of citizenship stresses principles of sameness that strip subjects of their multiple identifications (Brun, 2003) but I will challenge the idea of the internally homogenous 'community' further, considering gender, generation, social status/class and geographic location as key variables intersecting with legal status and shaping attitudes to citizenship. With this in mind, the final section takes a tentative look to the future. Rights of citizenship cannot be achieved overnight, but if some 'camp-dwellers' continue to consider themselves 'stateless', progress made in the acquisition of rights *since* the High Court ruling needs to be considered. I conclude by arguing that a range of intersectional identifications impact the degree to which 'formal status' can be realised as an 'effective' claim upon the rights to which it refers. Consequently, they impact the value 'formal status' is accorded and the degree to which an 'identity of citizenship' is assumed. The requirement here is not to dismiss the real benefits which 'formal' citizenship can bestow, but once again to question a duality in which 'substantive practice' is necessarily produced. As I will demonstrate, the impact of formal status, the value it is accorded and the subjective understandings of belonging that come with it are, in important ways, contextually produced.

1. 'Identities of citizenship'

As we have seen, actors in the 'field of citizenship' are not limited to those who hold its legal status; citizenship is a subject position that can be performed or enacted by those

outside its formal frame. Isin (2009) argues, however, that we still only dimly understand how, through this performance, the 'unsettling figure of the citizen' develops identifications and subjectivities. While we can assume perhaps that processes of identity construction and belonging will be intensified in the context of a highly ambiguous legal status, "citizenship as a relational, ultimately subjective concept is one that requires much more debate" (Sanchez, 2008, p.4).

1.1 Formal status and identification

When I was conducting fieldwork in 2006, before the High Court Ruling, I was struck by the number of people who, when asked to define their identity, described themselves as Bangladeshi. Such ascriptions were particularly common among younger interviewees, many of whom, when asked if they *believed* themselves to currently hold the citizenship they desired, were the most likely to answer positively. Through which means this 'identity of citizenship' was formed appeared to be highly variable, but 'ius solis' and the national constitution were frequently cited:

> I was born in Bangladesh and as a result I am automatically Bangladeshi, so I have felt this since the beginning (Javid, 'insider', 25, Dhaka - 2006).

At this stage the need for a ruling in the courts, or more commonly a 'Government announcement' to confirm their constitutional rights, was hotly debated:

> We are citizens by law, by the constitution, but we need a court judgement or Government announcement so that we can prove this to people (Ruby, 'insider', 20, Saidpur -2006).

The older generation were much less likely to have any knowledge of the constitution, and much more likely to believe that they were 'stateless' as a result. They were waiting for a Government announcement too, but not to confirm a position already held. As one informant explained in the absence of a Government announcement, he was "without country" in political limbo ('insider', about 68, Dhaka – 2006). This diversity of understanding reflected the ambiguity of their legal position – it was not clear whether such a 'government announcement' would alter the community's status, or simply officially authorise a state of being constitutionally held. When interviewees were asked whether their *identity* as 'Bangladeshi' depended on some kind of formal recognition of

citizenship such as this, many explained that it did and they therefore felt 'without identity' as a result:

> We don't have any nationality: we're not Indian, not Bangladeshi, not Pakistani, so we don't have an identity (Rashed, 'insider', 42, Dhaka- 2006).

Many others, however, explained that their understanding of themselves as citizens did not require Governmental recognition although their status and access to rights within that citizenship did. Few were able to articulate the conflict between these two positions better than one man who simply explained, "I am a Bangladeshi citizen who just doesn't have any rights" (Habib, 'insider', Saidpur, 50+ - 2006). As the final section will reveal, four years later, in the presence of Governmental recognition, the same contention would, and is, being made.

1.2 'Markers', documents and identification

In 2008 with a juridical pronouncement on their side I was interested to understand how the acquisition of 'civil status', denied one day, granted the next, was experienced by those in the camps. My naivety was marked by the range of unexpected responses these questions incited; as I discovered, the subjective significance of the news was expressed in very different ways:

> Salima ('insider', aged 40, Dhaka - 2008): Some days ago we were Bihari and now we're Bengali!
> VR: Is this really how you feel? Do you really mean days?
> Salima: Well, since five months ago. Now after getting the card and the High Court Ruling I think I am Bangladeshi. I would describe myself as Bangladeshi...I felt confident after getting the card (she smiles). I think I am an original/perfect ('pukka') Bangladeshi now.

Naturally, the significance of civil status (or the 'markers' of that status) was often powerfully felt:

> Mohammad ('insider', 30, Dhaka - 2008): Now I am Bangladeshi but before that I was Pakistani. This year my identity changed.
> VR: When did it change?
> Mohammad: After getting the ID card. The ID card made the difference, because we hope it will change our life...I first considered myself a Bangladeshi citizen after getting the ID card.

For some the ID card was significant, for others it was voting rights, and for some a
combination of both confirmed their identity as an 'original Bangladeshi':

> I first felt like I became a citizen after getting the ID card. I got the ID card which
> is an identification, but I became a Bangladeshi in practical terms after voting. Now
> I am even more confident with my card, no one can say I am not Bangladeshi
> (Imteaz, 'insider', 23, Dhaka - 2008).

> I cast my vote for the first time this election and it felt great. When I cast my vote
> at that time I felt Bangladeshi. I felt like a citizen. As I have an ID card now in my
> pocket and can show it I feel much more Bangladeshi anyway, but I felt even more
> so after casting my vote because Bengalis have been doing this for years and now I
> am part of it! (Sabir, 'insider', 30, Dhaka - 2008)

> Sajia ('insider', 20, Dhaka - 2008): I voted in the election [huge smile]
> VR: How did it make you feel?
> Sajia: Really, um, very interesting [spoken in English]. A new experience in my life
> [Bengali again]. [She laughs]. It's the first time I feel that I am a citizen of
> Bangladesh...After getting the ID card I felt that I am a perfect ('pukka')
> Bangladeshi, and even more so after casting my vote.

For some interviewees, this altered or developing 'identity of citizenship' conditioned
a greater sense of 'value':

> VR: Did you cast your vote in the election? How did it make you feel?
> Bebi ('insider', 20, Saidpur -2008): Yes, I cast my vote [she smiles]. After casting
> my vote I think I am now valuable ('hum logon ka dam ho gaya hai').

> Hussein ('insider', 65, Saidpur - 2008): In 1971 we cast our vote but when we
> moved in this camp everything changed. It was a society of non-voters and so I
> also was a non-voter.
> VR: How did it make you feel being in a society of non-voters?
> Hussein: Like people of nowhere ('hum log kono khet ka mui nahi hay'), valueless
> people in society ('hum log ka kio dam nehi hay'). After moving into this camp we
> were valueless but now times have changed and we will get value from the local
> politicians...The ID card is my identity...I don't know what the advantages will be
> but the Government gave us this card and it's their responsibility to give us the
> facilities.

For others it not only changed the way they felt about themselves but about the country
they live in:

> Shamim ('insider', 28, Dhaka - 2008): Since I got my passport (11 years ago, using
> the address of a relative) I have been a citizen of this country

VR: How did that feel?
Shamim: I was so excited that day...I had done something unusual among Urdu-speakers and I was taking a risk to do this.
VR: In what way were you taking a risk?
Shamim: The Police Special Branch investigates every application....Before the passport I considered myself a Stranded Pakistani, but in a few moments my identity changed. I became a Bangladeshi citizen. Immediately I applied for a driving license.
VR: Was it really in that moment that your sense of yourself as 'Bangladeshi' changed?
Shamim: In that one instant my identity changed. It changed the way I feel about this country, now it feels like my motherland.

It is worth noting too that for some informants, other significant moments in their lives, unrelated to the High Court Ruling or 'formal makers of status', conditioned their national identification:

When I got married I registered my marriage in Bangladeshi format. I wrote 'Bangladeshi' on the certificate. When my son went to school and registered himself in the SSC examination he wrote that he was Bangladeshi. So we were Bangladeshi whether we had citizenship or not. The marriage registration was the big thing for me. I have felt like a citizen of this country since then (Mohammad Ali, 'insider', Dhaka - 2008).

Mohammad Ali describes his marriage registration and his son's registration for his exam as 'acts of citizenship', which change one's sense of self. Agamben (1998) has argued that only the erasure of the division between People (political body) and people (excluded body) can restore humanity to the globally excluded who have been denied citizenship. As we have seen, however, his strict division is unhelpful. The previous chapter argues that prior to the High Court Ruling the 'excluded body' are seen 'actualizing their humanity', claiming rights of citizenship, through independent, subtle and subversive means. This section further reveals that in the absence of formal status, these independent 'acts' can alter ones sense of self, of nationhood, and of belonging. 'Identities of citizenship' are, it appears, in part constructed through participation in the structures of that socio-political community, and this may not always require the formal recognition of status.

On the other hand, when I returned to Bangladesh in 2008, some 'camp-dwellers' now in the possession of 'formal citizenship' continued to consider themselves 'stateless'. Here the relationship between property and citizenship emerged once more. The number of

'camp-dwellers' who associated the concept of citizenship with land ownership was testament to a historical legacy of resounding significance. In a context in which citizenship had been denied on the basis of camp residence, it is not surprising that civil status should be identified with property ownership in this way. Females were more likely than males to make this assumption, and age also increased likelihood, but the connection being made was not an inconsequential one. As Chatterjee (2004) argues, it is often through the domain of 'property' that we can best observe a struggle over the real distribution of rights among citizens.

2. Property and citizenship in Bangladesh: past and present

Amid the subjective complexity examined above, the salience of a relationship between the individual and the state does not disappear. In fact, the last two hundred years have defined a relationship between property and citizenship in East Bengal in which the state has played a very important role.

2.1 Property and citizenship in postcolonial perspective

During the colonial period, strategic manoeuvrings on the part of imperial powers to erect the colonial edifice on pre-existing arrangements, institutions and identities constructed models of citizenship that were uniquely situated in specific colonial settings. In colonial Bengal, differences of class, status, religion and caste were emphasized in order to pre-empt the possibility of unified resistance. As Kabeer argues (2002), throughout the subcontinent these differentiated categories became the basis on which political claims were made and recognized. It was relationally defined statuses therefore that were cast as constitutive of state-citizen relations, and which became critical in defining the *version* of citizenship granted and experienced. When the British conceded representation by Indians to local legislative councils, the basis of representation was that of 'group' interests, initially of the landlord classes and later of religious and caste communities (Kabeer, 2002).

Although liberalism failed to develop into a permanent stream in Indian nationalist politics, and an expanded rhetoric of individual rights was never established, it has been argued that the status of property ownership became instrumental in organizing society

as battle with the British began (Blom Hansen, 1999). While a range of differentiated categories became the basis on which political claims were made and recognised, the ownership of property had already been instituted as an identity of substance. Colonial society was divided socially and legally between the propertied, national elites and the landless, irrational 'masses' (Blom Hansen, 1999) and in East Bengal these relationships were re-enforced in the post-Independence period. The process of Partition cemented the role of property in constructing citizens of the new nation-state.

Daiya (2008) argues that the role of property in defining citizenship through the events of 1947 has been much neglected. She shows how India's Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act of 1954, reconfigured displacement as the process by which one was divested of managerial control over private property. The displacement of those Muslims who migrated to Pakistan was articulated with property ownership in such a way that belonging was disconnected from the sense of inhabiting a territorialized space as home; the loss of private property literally became about 'losing one's place'. She goes on to show how, in the eyes of both the Indian and Pakistani Governments, Partition's migrants were constructed both as citizens of the state in which they were found, and simultaneously aliens in their original homes. As such, the property and assets of the departed were appropriated by the state, in the form of refugee rehabilitation (for those who had arrived). Abandoned properties were requisitioned by the government as 'evacuee property' as early as February 1948 and The Administration of Evacuee Property Act was formally passed two years later. The citizenship of Muslims in Pakistan was dependent therefore on the displacement of others (Daiya, 2008), and property ownership had become a tool in the elimination and realization of belonging.

East Bengal suffered further woes, however, as, in the aftermath of 1971, the use of property as a state technology of ethno-nationalism re-appeared. Through the 'Bangladesh Abandoned Property Order' of 1972,[163] designed to dispose of 'enemy property', the appropriation of properties was legalised, legitimizing the displacement of thousands in the newly formed Bangladesh. The 'Urdu-speakers' deprived of property after the War were not only deprived of the citizenship of Bangladesh, but granted citizenship nowhere else, and there was no 'refugee rehabilitation' for which they

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[163] The Bangladesh Abandoned Property (Control, Management and Disposal) Order 1972 (President's Order No. 16 of 1972). See also Farooqui, 2000.

qualified. Much like in 1947, some people left their homes for the protection of the camps assuming they would return once it was safe but, as we saw in the previous chapter, many people having moved to the camps for temporary protection never returned home. Definitions of citizenship in Bangladesh can only be understood in the context of this colonial and postcolonial legacy. In East Bengal today, the domain of property has been cast as constitutive of entitlements and obligations.

2.2 The contemporary condition: law, fact, land and eviction

> VR: Do you think people who are living outside are treated better than you?
> Laila ('insider', 37, Saidpur - 2008): Yes they are treated better because they live in their own house, some own their own land. We are living in the camp and we are not treated well. If someone tells us to vacate this land then what can we do? We are valueless ('hum logon ka koi dam nahi hey').

Throughout my time in the camps, concerns of eviction dominated debate. At certain times these very real fears were livened by political events, but in their absence they never completely went away. The impending possibility of a 'third displacement' was locked into the discursive ether, not simply as a conversational fascination but, as I began to believe, in part through the constitution of moral order this story evoked (Malkki, 1995). I began to notice the way in which the story of eviction, concerned as it was with an ordering of social categories, the defining of self in distinction to other, was used to give meaning to their situation. The central concern of eviction stories was a framework of good and evil, powerful and weak, which confirmed the stories' inevitability - 'We are weak in social terms' informants in the camps would explain, 'but they are not, they have power'; 'what choice do we have but to accept these things', 'the life of a Bihari is a life of suffering'. The 'other' this discourse invoked was rarely articulated, but it was not just the Government, and not just the Bengali majority. The other against which the 'camp-dwellers' were positioned included all those 'outsiders' in possession of more symbolic capital than them; the other was the rest of social space.

This narrative of inevitable displacement was mythical in the anthropological sense, but not in the sense of being false. While much debate was built on conjecture or opinion, concerns were certainly not without cause. The vast majority of the temporary settlements that developed in the aftermath of war were constructed on an

ad hoc basis, on land that was not set aside by the Government for such a purpose. Some were built in areas that were 'Bihari' owned, some Bengali, but few of these spaces were formally handed over to those displaced. Many of the camps were built on land owned by Housing Associations and, in the thirty-eight years since, attempts to reclaim the land have only increased. Geneva Camp, like most of the camps in Dhaka, is surrounded on all sides by Bengali houses. Before 1971 the land was owned by a Bengali Housing Association and, not surprisingly, over the years attempts have been made by members of the association to get the land, or parts of it, back. Many cases have been filed, and while none have yet been successful, enormous anxiety has been generated. An even more precarious situation exists in Mirpur where, according to a variety of sources, the land on which all forty camps were built was actually sold by the Government's Housing and Settlement Authority to Government employees in 1995 and 1996. Those who bought the land have not yet been given their plots and they are, naturally, upset. In 2007, on the eve of the High Court Ruling, the new owners of the land filed a case against the 'camp-dwellers'. Parts of Mirpur were actually evicted and camp properties demolished. As the leader of the Urdu-speaking Youth Rehabilitation Movement (USYRM), himself a Mirpur camp 'insider', explained:

> They (the Government) didn't hand the plots over. Now they (the Government employees who bought the land) are angry not to have the plots. Therefore, they started to disturb us…ADC Relief camp is a camp in Mirpur 11 where 123 families live and their houses were all demolished (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', about 45, Dhaka - 2008).

In light of the High Court Ruling, we might believe that those in the camps have new found rights to assert. However, the acquisition of formal citizenship has in fact reinvigorated the debate. It has actually enabled those who bought the land to raise their voices once more, arguing that the 'special treatment' accorded to 'camp-dwellers' is incompatible with the formal civil status they now possess. Without the protection of international law that '*refugee* status' would provide, 'camp-dwellers' have achieved a sort of reduced form of protection. This includes free housing, electricity and water but no longer subsidized food (a ration of rice was suspended in 2004).[164] Some suggest that,

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[164] There is some NGO involvement in the camps but this is increasingly limited to micro-finance initiatives as the big internationals (such as the ICRC and Concern) have left.

through the acquisition of citizenship, those in the camps have lost the 'special status'

that 'statelessness' provided:

> If the majority wish of the Bihari community is to see themselves as a natural
> integrated part of Bangladesh that may be carrying another language and another
> culture maybe in places, but integrated, they will slowly have to let go of their
> special status even though it is not an enviable one…If you are now a Bangladeshi
> citizen so you go and vote in the elections, you cannot argue that you are at other
> times not therefore you need subsidies (Ralph Finder, Chief of Mission ICRC -
> 2008).

For some this is the cause of considerable concern:

> They have problems. Now they have got citizenship the Government will
> definitely say please vacate this place, if I offer you this then why not river erosion
> people? So they are a bit alarmed about these things, because they're the worst
> sufferers, the worst sufferers (Mr Amal, Bengali poet and cultural activist - 2008).

Unsurprisingly, this has had an impact on the attitudes of 'camp-dwellers' towards the

acquisition of citizenship itself:

> When the high court ruled we were citizens the plot owners filed another case that
> we should be evicted...Generally members (of the camp community) have a
> positive opinion (of the ID card and the acquisition of citizenship) but they are
> fearful of being evicted before a proper rehabilitation. All the plots are already
> sold, there is tension with plot owners and insecurity (Mr Akhtar, 'insider', around
> 45, Dhaka -2008).

As the informants above predicted, in response to the plot owners most recent case, the

Government moved quickly. Mr Akhtar continues:

> Bulldozers were on the doorstep of the camp. I came with the stay order[165] and
> showed it to the magistrate then he removed his equipment (Mr Akhtar, 'insider',
> around 45, Dhaka - 2008).

The hearing is still awaited and in the meantime no one can be sure of the status of the

camps. Clearly the fears of the 'camp-dwellers' are not unfounded. Mr Siddiqui, the

(Bengali) lawyer who fought on the 'camp-dwellers' behalf in the critical 2008 case,

highlights the legal ambiguity:

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[165] Members of the 'Urdu-speaking community' had filed a writ petition against the Settlement and
Housing Department of the Government in 2002 ('Writ Petition 702/2002') to which the High Court had
issued a stay order affirming that nothing could be done until the hearing could be held.

After the final hearing they will be asked, this is not your land? You do not have title of this land? …so what will happen? There are two views. One view is they think since we have now got the citizenship we will be asked to leave this land, forced to leave this land, but my view is no, citizenship or no citizenship will not make any difference. They are *human being*; they are living there for so many years, they cannot be thrown in the ocean. They must be given some place to live (Mr Siddiqui, Bengali lawyer, Dhaka - my emphasis).

<u>2.3 The abstract and the real: the rights of '(wo)man' and 'citizen'</u>

Mr Siddiqui here raises an important point, the protection of property as a human right and the 'community's' rights as human beings. However, as a number of scholars have argued, the inherent tension between human rights and citizenship rights lie in the fundamental dependence of one on the other. The inalienable rights of '(wo)man' are in this instance illusory, equivalent instead to the rights of a people under the protection of a government (Parekh, 2004). As Arendt argued in 1951, citizenship rights and human rights had been conflated; the loss of one, representing the loss of the other. The rights of '(wo)man', she argued, had been built on the very exclusion of those who need them most – refugees and stateless people. If as Daiya (2008) contends, the discursive deployment of the terms 'displaced person' and 'refugee' elide the contemporary condition in which 'statelessness' represents a loss of human rights, we would expect this to be a condition that 'stateness' can solve. The words of Mr Siddiqui above nevertheless ring hollow and the particular paradox in which 'camp-dwellers' are situated today is underscored. Before they acquired citizenship they could in effect be evicted at any time, having been denied their humanity in the denial of 'formal' status. With the acquisition of citizenship, however, they can still be evicted at any time, as they are no longer able to claim the humanity that granted them a 'special status' and its subsidies. The case continues in the courts, and land disputes between 'camp-dwellers' and housing associations, individuals or Government departments, will continue for many years. The on-going nature of this process and the confusion among civil society revealed above has done nothing to comfort 'camp-dwellers' themselves:

A part of us believe this (citizenship) is a very positive thing, and a part of us is confused about where to go…some of us are very hopeful that everything will be positive but yes intellectuals telling that it will be threat for eviction, people just don't know (Syed, 'outsider', 30, Dhaka - 2008).

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As a result of these debates, those in the camps remain deeply divided. Ong (2006a) suggests that citizenship represents the interplay between giving value and denying value to human conduct. As the rest of the chapter argues, the result of this interplay is a 'social field' in which not all citizens are constituted with the same humanity. Depending on their position within the picture, it is either the gains or the losses that are the focus of its composition.

3. Gains and losses

Concerns such as those expressed above were capitalised upon by the anti-citizenship organisation the SPGRC for many years prior to the ruling. As Government recognition became a growing possibility after the Abid Khan vs. Bangladesh case of 2003, the SPGRC intensified an anti-citizenship publicity drive that polarized camp populations around the country. In 2006 when I began interviewing in Dhaka and Saidpur, the SPGRC continued to wield power and influence in the camps. As a result individuals aligned to the pro-citizenship Al Falah NGO were harassed and intimidated. Some had their electricity cut off, others were physically assaulted. Those 'insiders' awarded citizenship in the 2003 case felt the brunt of the abuse, and as my research assistant was one of the infamous ten, it was with fears for his safety that he first moved out of the camp:

> The ten who were given citizenship faced trouble from the SPGRC. They considered us 'land mafia', and said we would sell all the property of the camp-dwellers because we are the citizens now, and collaborators with the Bangladeshi Government, and we wanted to evict all the camp-dwellers from there. They (the SPGRC) thought that they were special at that time because as 'Stranded Pakistanis' and not 'Bangladeshis' they were getting all the facilities for free. If they were citizens they believed all the facilities would be withdrawn by the Government. They believed we are all 'Stranded Pakistanis'...so *our* citizenship was a challenge to their whole agenda. If people can get citizenship then the SPGRC no longer have their own political issue, the issue of 'Stranded Pakistani' becomes dead (Syed, 'in between', 30, Dhaka – talking in 2008 about the period between 2003-2006).

By the time I returned to the camps in September 2008 citizenship had been won. The Bangladeshi Election Commission had begun to register 'camp-dwellers' on the voter roll in preparation for the upcoming elections (scheduled for later in the year but eventually postponed until January 2009) and preparations for inclusion of camp residents in the

new nationwide ID card scheme were under way[166]. The power of the SPGRC had vastly
deteriorated. However these developments were not met with the unequivocal delight
some had expected and unrest in the camps continued. Although the SPGRC was
smaller and less powerful, it was still assumed that the organisation would create
problems for those wishing to register on the voting roll, for ID cards and for birth
certificates, deterring 'camp-dwellers' from claiming their newfound status:

> There were some problems, the SPGRC came round the camps and said that if we
> cast our vote we'd be evicted...Lots of people didn't register due to this fear of
> eviction (Ishwar, 'insider', 32, Dhaka - 2008).

> In the camp people were in confusion that if they got birth registration they would
> be evicted from here...I had discussions with them and told them how important
> this (ID) card is in order to get your children into education and to get married etc
> and shared with them about the advantages of the card (Delwar, 'insider', 50,
> Saidpur -2008).

As Delwar suggests, in response to the circulating concerns, pro-citizenship groups
launched a counter-attack, outlining the twenty-two services facilitated by the ID card
(such as bank accounts, trade licenses and even mobile phone sim cards), which would
not be available without it. This kind of publicity, the fading power of the SPGRC, and
the changing mood of the camps in general, appeared to have an impact. The US State
Department Human Rights Report 2009 for Bangladesh, released on 11 March 2010,
observed that approximately 80 percent of all adult Biharis, or 184,000 persons, were
registered as voters following voter registration drives ahead of the elections.
Accordingly, the process was considered an 'unexpected success' (Refugees International,
2008a).

My research however reveals that such success was more uneven than these sources
suggest. As Brun (2003) argues, forced movement of people challenges the relationship
between people and the state, but that relationship will not be experienced or understood
by all actors similarly. As Susan Moller Okin reminds us, "when liberal arguments are
made for the rights of a group, then special care must be taken to look at within-group
inequalities" (1999, p.11).

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[166] In August of that year Election Commission 'enumerators' had begun taking forms door to door and
once a person was registered for voting, they were told how and where to report for national ID
registration.

3.1 Gender and generation

Until recently, citizenship studies paid scant attention to gender. As Martiniello (2002)
observes, "citizenship was a gendered notion that did not take into account the various
forms of discrimination and inequalities faced by women". An appreciation of gender
has begun to emerge in the field and my research confirms the value of such
developments. Considering the number of women I spoke to who had neither voted in
the election nor registered for an ID card the figure of 80% appears optimistic. Voter
and ID card registration have been far less common among women than men and this is
especially true of women over the age of around 35. Almost all of the men I met in
Dhaka and most of the men I met in Saidpur had registered to vote and applied for an
ID card, and in both locations young men were usually the most enthusiastic. Working
and interacting outside the camps each day, young and middle aged men commonly
articulated the advantages of citizenship in the form of access to formal employment.
Alongside employment, however, the opportunity to vote was understood as a tool with
which to fight for social equality. One middle-aged man in Dhaka explained:

> As voters we will live as equals...political parties will be able to offer to solve our
> problems in exchange for their vote. How will we get opportunity from politicians
> if we have no voting rights? (Mohammad, 'insider', 30, Dhaka - 2008)

To many of these men the right to vote had not just practical value but important
symbolic value too, representative of broader equality and the possibility of increased
respect. Consequently a much higher proportion of young and middle aged men referred
to the importance of 'proving' their 'stateness' through tangible and material markers in
the form of documentation:

> Now we are voter and the national of Bangladesh, the camp is not a bar. They used
> to say we are Pakistani but now we have the card and can *prove* we're Bangladeshi
> we have some power in our hands now (Muntaz, 'insider', 18, Saidpur - 2008).

It was also among these young and middle aged men that the acquisition of passports
was most common (whether acquired before or after the ruling):

> Roki ('insider', 17, Dhaka - 2008): I have a passport, and my father has a passport.
> I have an uncle living outside the camp and we used his address.
> VR: Does your mother have one?

Roki: No.
VR: Does your sister have one?
Roki: No.

As the previous chapter revealed, the act of 'claiming' citizenship before the High Court Ruling, whether it involved moving outside or faking an ID card, was largely the preserve of men. As a visible symbol of citizenship, women over the age of around 35 were the most likely to be fearful that these markers of status represented not just gains, but losses too. These women articulated concern regarding the loss of a 'special status' that had until now provided free shelter, water and electricity. In particular, they were significantly more likely to discuss the threat of eviction as a serious concern. Samida, in Saidpur explained:

> We have card now but we don't know what it will mean. We are in fear that after casting vote we will not get facilities like now. The authority claim electric bills and other utility bills from us (now). They may even evict us from here (Samida, 'insider', 40, Saidpur – 2008).

It has been argued that the most important economic issue effecting women in South Asia is the gender gap in command of property (Agarwal, 1994), and the concerns of eviction articulated by women must be considered in this light.[167] Women's access to resources is dependent on the men in their lives, and the possibility of being cast into a world that is alien and threatening, a world without the security of this 'special status', may be more threatening as a result. Despite the ambiguous nature of the 'special status' 'camp-dwellers' had acquired, it nevertheless provided fundamental material benefits to people with very little. The gendered nature of attitudes to citizenship, and its relationship to *access*, was here distinctly drawn. Women were more likely to question the benefits of citizenship once achieved, explaining either that voting 'would not put food on the table' or that the camp and all that comes with it was not something they could afford to lose. They were more likely to focus on 'facilities' or 'services' than the 'proof', respect or symbolic value often articulated by men:

> I'm not interested in getting an ID card. The rest of my family have one but I don't think it's useful for me. I know about the High Court ruling, the camp-dwellers

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[167] Under Islamic rules of inheritance women can only inherit half as much land from their fathers as each of their brothers receives, and only one eighth of their husband's property if they have children. These rules serve the purpose of keeping them tied to their children and for practical reasons their rights of inheritance are rarely exercised (Begum in Lewis, 1993).

getting their cards, but nothing will change. They get the card and put it in their drawer, nothing else! I have heard some people are getting housing facilities ('shahulat') now though; that some camps are being demolished and people are getting land? (Sharin Khatun, 'insider', 50+, Dhaka - 2008).

As Sharin suggests, housing facilities are the basis of real and 'effective' citizenship. In 2006 similar ideas were expressed and (middle aged and older) women frequently tied citizenship to the acquisition of land. Some of those who did not consider the relationship automatic did explain that discrimination would not reduce unless 'rehabilitation' outside the camps was a parallel condition. In the course of such explanations, women frequently referred to a range of concerns regarding privacy in the camp, security, health facilities, hygiene and sanitation - local, social and environmental concerns that were rarely articulated by men.

Naturally some of these women explained also that they did not understand the vocabulary of 'rights' (huquq/huque/odikhar[168]) and in negotiating questions and responses the language of 'facilities' or 'advantages' (shahulat/subidha)[169] was much more common:

> I don't know anything about the High Court ruling but I do know I have an ID card. I am hopeful of more *facilities* ('shahulat') as a result. Before I was treated as a 'Bihari' but since the ID card I am a Bangladesh citizen and I will get all the *facilities* ('shahulat') Bengalis do. I don't know what these might be (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka - 2008).

Like Mala, other women explained that their understanding of rights was limited, and some considered themselves unable to answer questions about citizenship as a result. Some explained that these political concerns were simply 'not their domain', while others described themselves as 'not very aware of my rights ('huquq')'. Older women commonly explained that they did not know what rights they should be getting because they did not leave the camp often enough to know what rights those outside had access to[170]:

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[168] 'Huquq' (Urdu) and 'odikhar' (Bengali) were both quite common in the camps. 'Huque' is considered 'standard Urdu' and was only used outside the camps. 'Odihar' was used both outside the camps and among the better educated 'camp-dwellers'.

[169] 'Shahulat' in Urdu or 'subidha' in Bengali

[170] This was found to be less of a problem among younger women who left the camps more often (in some cases to attend schools, colleges and so on).

> As we don't move much outside we don't know much about the rights ('huquq') of Bengalis so I can't compare, but my children will tell me if there are any rights Bengalis have that I still don't (Shahana Begum, 'insider', 40 - 2008).

Few women in the camps over the age of thirty were formally educated. As Lister (1997) argues, too much of the mainstream debate on citizenship ignores inequalities between groups such as this. It has been premised instead on the assumption that all citizens are equally able to express their interests in the public domain. But many groups in society do not have access to the avenues of communication necessary for them to participate in society. A greater degree of daily integration with Bengali society among men (and young men in particular) may have impacted their desire for civil participation. Women explained that without information about the world outside the camp they could not make these decisions for themselves:

> We need information about rights ('odikhar'), what rights we have and how we can access these things (Rana, 'insider', 35, Dhaka - 2008).

As Kabeer (2002) argues, the various different means, formal and informal, recognized and invisible, by which excluded groups acquire knowledge and information about their status and rights constitute a common starting point in attempts to challenge exclusion. Historical evidence tells us that when the rights of groups are routinely overlooked, and they are devalued by the society in which they live, the denial of recognition can help to reinforce a lack of agency on their part (Kabeer, 2002). In other words, to claim one's rights, there has to be a prior belief in one's right to have rights (Isin & Wood, 1999).[171] Individual attitudes and understandings of citizenship and one's identity in relation to it are essential in the ability to exercise this agency. At the centre of these debates was the uncertainty that Mala articulates below - if citizenship can bring rights, but can also take 'facilities' away, only time will tell whether it helps or hinders:

> It's a lengthy process (citizenship). We have got the ID card but we haven't got the *facilities* ('subudha') yet, but let's see, give it time...I have to be a citizen of Bangladesh to get better education for my children (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka - 2008).

The position of women in Bangladesh may be slowly changing but its patriarchal structures have not disappeared. It is not surprising that women were more likely to

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[171] As Lister (1997, p.38) points out, "to act as a citizen requires first a sense of agency, the belief that one can act".

concentrate on the ways in which access to citizenship might impact the social condition of the family than power in the voting booth or the symbolic significance of formal equality. Their 'political voice' is yet to be conferred the same social value. As a result, some of these more abstract 'goods' at stake in the field of citizenship were both not accessible to women in the same way and not desirable as a result:

> Those who are living outside the camp don't have any advantages ('subidha') because they're earning their own and spending their own. But there are lots of advantages ('subidha') in the camps, free electricity, free water, free housing…I have heard of the High Court Ruling. We didn't have water points in the camp before and we are supposed to get gas too. I haven't noticed any other changes but this is more than enough for us (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka - 2008).

Unlike the women who feared citizenship might take facilities away, Salima believed it was currently improving facilities in the camps. Her enthusiasm was, it should be noted, not very common, but whether considering the possibility of eviction, or the possibility of improved 'camp facilities', the immediate needs of the home dominated female concerns. As a result of their position within the 'field of citizenship' it was to the losses, rather than the gains, which middle aged and older women, were often drawn.

3.2 Geographies of inequality

Regional disparity further impacted attitudes and understandings of citizenship. Empirical observation in the two field sites suggests that voter and ID card registration was significantly less common in Saidpur than it was in Dhaka. This might not seem surprising considering the location of pro-citizenship organisations like Al Falah in Dhaka, and the capital's position at the centre of politics. However, in some ways it appears to reveal a contradiction. The majoritarian status of 'Urdu-speakers' in Saidpur is in itself of enormous political significance, not only in the construction of a collective identity or the ability to raise a collective voice but, as a number of informants suggested, in terms of a local engagement with 'community politics'. As a result of the greater visibility and power of 'Urdu-speakers' in the Rajshahi town they are in fact thought to be more politicised rather than less:

> On our way back from the interview with Mr Bholo we talked about some of the differences between Dhaka and Saidpur. Afsan believes that 'Urdu-speakers' are a lot more politically aware up here (in Saidpur), and Syed agrees that they have a lot

more information about what is going on and they raise their voices more. Two local papers are produced in Saidpur every week, and they always contain lots of news about 'Urdu-speakers', so from this they can get quite a lot of information about what is going on in the community. Afsan said, "'Urdu-speakers' are just much more significant up here than they are in Dhaka. In the Dhaka media they are rarely mentioned. People in the camps in Dhaka are comfortable now, those with two or three sons are looking to make more money, and buy land of their own, but few people know much about the political situation. They don't care that much. Here they are poor, they need things to change, and there are more of them so they are better informed about the community's situation" (Field note, Saidpur, 11th November 2008).

As a result of these differences, participants in Saidpur were often better informed about emerging political developments. At the same time, however, fewer interviewees in Saidpur actually decided to register for citizenship, which suggests that fewer had decided registering for citizenship would be of benefit to them. This apparent contradiction may not be a contradiction at all. The different socio-economic profiles of the two towns, and related educational and occupational opportunities, are likely to have had an impact. Formal employment is much more limited in Saidpur and here poverty was a more significant feature of conversations in the camps. With immediate subsistence concerns high on the agenda, the value of citizenship is buried beneath the weight of day-to-day survival. Socio-economic location structures the 'field of citizenship' in fundamental ways.

3.3 Socio-economic location

The perception of gains or losses often revealed a great deal about where families were positioned in the socio-economic hierarchy of the camps. Poorer residents were much more likely to be wary of citizenship, because as an abstract legal concept it meant less to them than free electricity, water and housing. Like the women discussed above, it provided those at the bottom of the socio-economic spectrum with fewer of the 'goods' at stake in the field. For individuals whose primary concern was daily survival through low-paid low-skilled employment, 'goods' such as improved access to educational opportunities and formal employment were simply less relevant. As one informant explained, "there are no advantages outside (the camps), just advantages inside – we have free electricity, we have free water" (Mohammad, 'insider', 30, Dhaka - 2008). Education is both expensive and prevents children from earning a living, while formal employment is only available to those who are educated.

In November 2008 I visited a 'rehabilitation project' in Saidpur, set up in 2004 under a BNP administration, to re-house 'Urdu-speaking' squatters living on railway tracks. Due to the complaints raised by local Bengalis the project was re-designed to include 30% Bengali squatters, and provided housing for approximately 1000 people in total. As my field notes explain, interviews with Urdu-speaking families living here, many of whom had previous experience of living inside and outside the camps (in formal housing where rent was paid as well as in slums), were particularly interesting:

> I was struck by the interviews in the 'rehabilitation project'. A woman who had lived in the camps, before moving outside to live in 'railway quarters'[172], before squatting, and then being moved into the project, talked about the difficulties of each. She emphasised initially how much harder it was when they moved outside the camps (having to pay rent, not having good water facilities etc), how much more they struggled. She said they did get more respect, they had more privacy, but all in all she preferred the camp. "In the camp we were happy because we had good water facilities etc". Yes outside they had the vote, she said, and their children could get into schools, but she told me that this wasn't important in the camp anyway because they weren't sending their children to school (Field note, 27th November 2008).

For this group of 'camp-dwellers' the right to vote was a small substitute for the free facilities that currently kept them alive:

> VR: Did you get an ID card?
> Farhana: (70-80, 'insider', Saidpur - 2008): Yes, but we don't see anything from the card. Card is only for vote, nothing else. What will be happening with us I don't know? There is no specific announcement of what we will get - what *facilities*.
> VR: Do you feel like a citizen of this country?
> Farhana: How can I say I feel like a citizen? So far we are only casting vote; I didn't get any *facilities* yet.

The more socially mobile camp residents were, the more they had to gain. In 'the social field of citizenship' it is not just rights and benefits that are the resources at stake, but the social position those rights and benefits provide access to. Those who were poised on the edge of the world outside, wanted to be able to prove they were Bangladeshi in order to access education, formal employment and respect. But, as a prominent 'insider' and political activist (who also achieved citizenship in the 2003 Abid Khan case) explained:

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[172] This may have originally been government housing for railway employees.

Voter registration doesn't really mean very much for the poorer members of the community in practical terms. Yes the fact they can vote is good symbolically, and may enable the community to push its agenda forward, may help make politicians listen, but it doesn't actually provide opportunities in itself. What are the direct benefits? It's a nominal concern for poorer members of the community (Afsan Iqbal, 'insider', around 30, Dhaka – interview conducted in English).

Bourdieu (1990) argued that the existence of a field presupposed, and in its functioning created, a belief on the part of participants in the legitimacy and value of the capital which is at stake in the field. I argue however that for those positioned on the margins, afforded access to the field only in the most rudimentary sense and rarely afforded participation in the capital at stake, the field itself is delegitimized. As Lila Abu Lugod (2009) has argued, we need to be more attentive to social inequalities when dealing with 'rights' work. The incommensurability between everyday lives and the social imagination of rights forces us to question whether any legalistic framework of rights can do justice to the complexity of people's lives. In light of the growing hegemony of rights discourses we need at least to be vigilant about the limits of its language.

It was T.M.Marshall (1950) who recognised that equality in law and politics could be compatible with real social inequality. As Martiniello (2002) explains, the poor and the excluded are very often formal members, but they are either denied some rights, or unable to exercise them; a situation that certainly challenges the universalist and inclusive ideals of citizenship. As Iris Young (1989, p.257) explains, "this will tend to exclude or to put at a disadvantage some groups, even when they have formally equal citizenship status". Alongside those 'camp-dwellers' who considered themselves citizens *before* the High Court ruling are those 'camp-dwellers' who continued to consider themselves 'stateless' after. Now that they are in possession of 'formal' legal status accorded through the courts, are we to assume that those in the camps will be any more included? As much of the data presented here attests, we must be wary of the 'enchanted' view of citizenship that still prevails (Walters, 2008). The 'complicated accommodations and creative alliances' examined in Chapter Six remain necessary in the presence of legal status as long as 'effective' citizenship remains elusive.

4. A look to the future

In the aftermath of the High Court Ruling, the President of the SPGRC publically revised the organisation's anti-citizenship position:

> We do not mind staying here if we are allowed to live with dignity and respect. We must be given all the rights of a citizen of Bangladesh, not only the right to vote (Jabbar Khan, President of the SPGRC, 1st July 2008, IRIN news).

However, this may not yet be the case:

> I got an ID card a couple of months ago. I thought I can get facilities from the card, and rights but...once when the birth certification was going on I went to the City Corporation to enlist my name but they didn't allow me. They asked where I was from, I said the camp and they wouldn't give me the birth registration. This was three months ago, it was since the ruling...The ID card hasn't changed anything so far. It has been the same since my childhood. I haven't seen anything special since the card (Salma, 'insider', 18, Dhaka).

As Sajid explains, for those too poor to pay for decent education, the benefits of citizenship remain opaque:

> Sajid ('insider', 28, Dhaka): Still even after the High Court ruling they (Bengalis) call us Maowra and try to evict us.
> VR: Has the ID card made no difference?
> Sajid: The ID card is not effective for us because to get into a good school etc we still have to pay a donation, so it's not any easier now. Still when we are applying for a job we do not get a response. I have applied for a couple of jobs but I haven't received an interview card so far. On our ID cards we have camp address which makes it difficult to get jobs. Even the birth certificate by the City Corporation they still do not allow us to get with camp address. I was working to register births in the camp at the Commissioner's office but the Commissioner refused to register them because they were camp-dwellers. This was only one or two months ago, it was many months after the ruling.

Optimism has been high since the verdict in 2008 but as Goldberg (2002) has warned, a commitment to formal equality of rights often neglects the lived experiences that render materialization of those rights possible. Another informant explained:

> I think of myself as a Bangladeshi citizen but if I say that I am a citizen but I can't get any citizenship facilities what kind of citizenship is that? I have not been able to get any facilities so far. We need a quota for job opportunities and shelter. These are the main things we need to change our position. Citizenship rights to me are independency, job opportunities, education. We would like to get all the facilities Bengalis have (Sajid, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

As Mathew Craven (2008) has asked, if we are saying 'you are entitled to these rights, you just aren't entitled to access them' are we providing a palliative to the dispossessed? Instituting the very model of exclusion identified by Arendt? Legal rights and the enforcement of those rights surely need to go together. Others agree:

> It makes no moral sense to provide people with purely formal legal rights under conditions that make it impossible for them to exercise those rights effectively" (Carens, 2008, p.170).

Hall (2000) observes that the gap between ideal and practice has haunted citizenship from its inception. The liberal ideal of personal liberty and formal equality while no less historically significant, looks less *universal* by the minute. If formally recognised rights cannot be satisfactorily exercised by all social groups (Martiniello, 2002) whether on account of gender, generation, ethnicity or social status, perhaps we need to stop talking about 'rights'?

5. Conclusion

If we cannot articulate what citizenship *is* (in its fluid, dynamic and historically grounded from), we must at least better understand what is *called* citizenship (Isin, 2009). As this and the previous chapter demonstrate, it is not just a legal status but also a performative act and a subjective identity, each of which may be experienced independent of the rest. Prior to 2008, the status of the camp was built on an intersection with property ownership that rehearsed a powerful division, a colonial bifurcation between the individual and 'community': those with property rights and entitlement to due process on the one hand, and members of collectives imbued with 'customs' and emotional passions on the other (Blom Hansen, 1999). In 2006 this line could be crossed, but since 2008 it can still be reinforced. Today, in the presence of 'formal legal status', such socio-spatial division has not entirely disappeared. Regardless of legal equality therefore, the 'social field of citizenship' contains both 'political beings' and 'bare life', and Agamben's simple binary is ever more blurred.

Liberal, communitarian and civic republican positions all continue to understand citizenship to be constructed on the ideal of a homogenous society and insufficient research has been conducted into the multiple cleavages that complicate relationships to

citizenship. In reality the 'social field of citizenship' is a structured system of social positions, organised internally by power relations, the nature of which defines the situation of their occupants. As Martiniello (2002) explains, citizenship is paradoxical. On the one hand it organises the formal equality of all citizens in the face of the law and is thus a form a social incorporation; a necessary condition for social integration. On the other hand persistent social and economic inequalities hinder the exercise of citizenship for those located at the lower end of the structure. Economic, social and cultural capital are all at stake in the field of citizenship but access to these resources depends crucially on positions within it. In the universalizing discourse of citizenship the High Court Ruling can only be a good thing for the people in the camps, but the 'social field of citizenship' unearths a terrain in which, as Iris Young (1989) explains, there can be no unitary community. Through appeals to diverse perspectives, and the lens of the 'social field', we can see that the 'language of rights' is in danger of obscuring the significance of structural inequalities. The differentiated and heterogeneous spaces (Brah, 1996) implicated in the construction of an 'Urdu-speaking community' appear once again. As the following chapter reveals, in a field of diverse positions it is very often on ideas of 'sameness' that equality depends.

CHAPTER EIGHT - DISCOURSES OF 'INTEGRATION': CAPITAL, MOVEMENT AND 'MODERNITY'

In exploring the 'social field of citizenship', ethnicity, gender, generation, space and socio-economic status interlock in opaque and often impenetrable ways. Bourdieu's theory of capitals (1979; 1986; 1989) has proved valuable; enabling me to move beyond the categorical limitations of these social positions to consider the interactional dynamics that occur between them. For Bourdieu it is 'capital' movements through social space that structure the power and consequently profit conferred on the holder, and understanding the 'social relations of capitals' helps us to understand how social positions intersect and interact in subjective production. Wacquant (1989) observed that the structure of the field of power is highly contextual; what is valued within some social groups, at some times, will not be valued in others. In the narratives of informants, however, the value placed on 'integration' was striking in it consistency. Access to social, cultural, economic and 'symbolic capital' was continually expressed in its terms. While it is important to recognise that there is a gap between abstract interpretive categories and on-the-ground discourse, the language of 'integration' was nonetheless powerfully produced. In the use of words such as 'mixing', 'hiding' and 'passing', informants referred to, aspired and evoked ideas of 'integration' and 'assimilation' as the solution to social exclusion.

The terms 'integration', 'acculturation' and 'assimilation' are commonly used in discussions of migration - their meanings often unspecified and their differences ill-defined (Vertovec and Cohen, 1999). This is in part because the concepts overlap in messy and ambiguous ways. As Mandel (2008, p.317) argues; "integration euphemizes assimilation, entailing in part a loss of self". The point, that no absolute distinction is possible, is important, as both concepts involve part of the same process. The difference has been defined as one of degree and while, 'assimilation' is generally understood as a total and irreversible dissolution of minority group identity, 'integration' suggests participation in the institutions of majority society, *alongside* the reproduction of group identity (Eriksen, 2002). As Remennick (2003) has argued, the vast majority of research on the 'integration' of minorities comes from the West[173]. While much early work was widely rebuked for its one dimensional, normatively prescriptive application of

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[173] In South Asia for example interest in minorities is often associated with work on ethnic pluralism or communal violence and less often discussed through a discourse of 'integration'.

'acculturation' and 'assimilation' theories, the concept of 'integration' continues to appear, value-laden, in both academic and policy contexts. The 'return to assimilation' that Brubaker (2005) observes may be of a more multidimensional variety, but it is important to problematise simple application of either term and recognise that there are very often ideals and principles attached. It is also important to recognise that the Euro-Atlantic remains the privileged site of any renewed interest in discourses of either, a situation I hope to remedy, bringing the discussion to a regional context in which these concepts have been little applied.

Experiences of citizenship among the 'Urdu-speaking population' are clearly highly situated; both the acquisition of rights and the understandings of the concept associated are critically influenced by social and spatial positioning. This chapter argues, however, that not only is physical 'integration' (and the economic capital that facilitates it) important in producing citizenship as 'effective' but so are the broader processes of social and cultural 'integration' that accompany such movement. As a 'Muslim consciousness' (Kabir, 1995) has gradually returned to the political scene, discrimination towards 'Urdu-speaking outsiders' appears to have shifted. However, the long-term impact of ethno-linguistic exclusion has been such social degradation in the camps that, though the mechanics of discrimination may have changed, they have not yet gone away. Today the crude antonyms that ethnicity and language construct, condition acceptance or rejection through poverty and social space. Here the 'double discourse' of a colonial past is once again marked, as it is through the acquisition of economic, social and cultural capital (and the processes of 'integration' that produce them) that 'acceptance' is achieved. As the national project develops, the equally crude antonyms of 'camp' and 'non-camp', 'primitivity' and 'progress' have become today's dividing lines.

I will begin by examining where economic capital plays into discourses of physical 'integration', revealing a language of 'respectability' and shame which functions at the intersection of gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status. I will then examine where cultural capital is found, arguing that, constituted through processes of 'cultural integration', it is concomitant with notions of 'improvement', 'modernity' and 'progress' on which social imaginaries of the postcolonial world rely. I then consider how social capital is acquired, this time through the processes of 'social integration' that 'mixing' and marrying outside the camp afford. Once again, and as the grand narrative of history

would suggest, 'learning', 'improving' and 'progressing' were the discursive registers to which 'social integration' spoke.

Pandey has argued that the totalizing standpoint of seamless subcontinental nationalism privileges "the so-called 'general' over the particular, the larger over the smaller, the 'mainstream' over the 'marginal'" (Pandey, 1992, p. 50). As a result the 'fragments' of society have gradually been forced in line. The final part of the chapter considers the applicability of his assertion to the Bangladeshi context, asking if, where the material benefits of inclusion are high, the loss of language and culture is considered a price worth paying. Here as elsewhere, as the chapter concludes, the 'mainstream' represents the route to rights and recognition. In light of the advantages that a 'Bengali identity' is understood to generate, the desire for cultural and linguistic 'integration' through which a stigmatising Urdu ancestry can be masked is, it appears, often compelling. The aim of complete 'assimilation' is therefore very little challenged and the violence of the process becomes apparent. For those powerless individuals stigmatised by the space of the camp, 'difference', tradition and history are 'dis-identified' (Skeggs, 1997) in the name of social acceptance, and the line between 'integration' and 'assimilation' is inevitably blurred.

1. Economic capital

1.1 The stigma of poverty

Some access to economic capital is necessary for movement outside the camp to take place (if nothing else, sufficient money to rent a flat is required). However, if movement outside is not accompanied by the social mobility it is assumed to represent, all it provides is an address, therefore the only discrimination it can truly attend to is that which is formally manifest. Although, the impact of addresses is far from insignificant, an address alone will not put an end to the informal discrimination encountered here. Only if you are no longer identified by poverty can anything really change.

In Hutu refugee camps of Burundi, Malkki discovered that poverty was seen as a source of stigma, to which "the appropriate remedy was not a protestation of injustice, but an overcoming of poverty" (Malkki, 1995, p.158). In the camps of Dhaka and Saidpur the shame attached to poverty was similarly naturalised, and here

too it was one's position that should change, not such attitudes. Quite unlike Burundi however, in the camps of Bangladesh the overcoming of poverty was always articulated through 'movement outside'.[174] Residence in the camps limited access to rights such as education and employment, limiting therefore the possibility of 'capital movements' through social space:

> Here in the camp social status can't change...everyone knows everyone's background...but when you move outside your social status changes, yes it's natural; you are living in a good place. You measure yourself as elite from living outside the camp and so do others (Tanvir, 'in between', around 30, Dhaka).

If economic capital is acquired and movement outside achieved, your ethnic identity assumes a different meaning:

> I am very keen to move outside the camps. If I get the opportunity, start earning enough, I will move...those that live outside the camps are treated better by Bengalis. *A person who lives outside if he is a Bengali or an Urdu-speaker it doesn't matter, they are treated as equal.* If you have relatives outside the camp they don't want to associate with you because it indicates who you are, *your status* (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka – my emphasis).

The camp 'indicates who you are', and movement outside provides, in Malkki's (1995, p.164) words "security and freedom...derived precisely from the possibility of...being *socially unmarked*" (my emphasis). In this context, *social* marking codes *ethnic* marking, and it is only in its absence therefore that 'Urdu-speakers' are treated as equal. Goffman's (1968, p.13) definition of stigma as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" resonates powerfully with the 'social marking' produced by the camp. However, in recognising stigma as the product of a complicated intersection between 'attributes' that camp residence implies (ethnicity, socio-economic status, the lack of rights), the gaps in Goffman's analysis are immediately apparent. While he suggests that there are three types of stigma (of the body, of the character, or of one's 'race', nation, religion and so on) he does not consider where stigma is in fact a product of their conjunction. 'Camp-dwellers' are stigmatized through the dirt of poverty (Goffman's 'abomination of the body'), their deviant behaviour[175] (his 'blemishes of character') *and* their ethno-linguistic identity (described by Goffman as 'the tribal stigma of 'race', nation or religion'). The ethno-

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[174] Malkki (1995) encountered precisely the opposite: the 'integration' of Hutu refugees living outside the camps was regarded by those in the camps with suspicion and disapproval.

[175] The camps are often described (by Bengalis, 'outsiders' and 'insiders' alike) as 'bad social environments' with high levels of drug abuse, dangerous and politicised camp gangs and widespread prostitution. There is insufficient space to discuss this in more detail here but the data produced will be explored further in a forthcoming article.

linguistic identity of an 'Urdu-speaker' may only be stigmatizing when it is combined with poverty or perceived deviance in this way.[176]

Goffman (1968) has argued that stigma is the product of a discrepancy between one's 'virtual social identity' (the attributes expected of you as a member of a particular *category*), and one's 'actual social identity' (the attributes one can be proved to possess) – an "undesired differentness from what we had expected" (Goffman, 1968, p.15). He therefore suggests that as long as one is thought to possess the attributes considered normal and ordinary for members of one's *category* (class, occupation, nationality, gender and so on) stigma will not be encountered. The stigma of poverty does not sit well in such an analysis. Poverty may be expected of your 'class' or socio-economic category, but reduce you "from a whole and usual person to a tainted and discounted one" (Goffman, 1968, p.12) nonetheless. A poor Bengali will experience the stigma of poverty *differently* from a poor 'Urdu-speaker' but they both experience its 'discrediting' power.

The acquisition of economic capital is intrinsically connected to the acquisition of social and cultural capital, through which 'acceptance', or the respect and regard the 'un-contaminated' receive (Goffman, 1968), is gained. As the camps reveal, there is never a simple one-to-one relationship between ethnicity and socio-economic status but a certain *contagious* effect of one on the other (Eriksen, 2002; Worsely, 1984). The social position defined by the camps is always a position of 'ethnicity' *and* poverty, and it is in this very specific social location that stigma is produced. As Goffman (1968, p.15) continues, "By definition, of course, we believe that the person with a stigma is not quite human". As we will see, the camp is a social location that not only stigmatizes, but racialises, those it contains.

1.2 The respectability of home

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[176] Goffman does observe that stigma theories are sometimes constructed to rationalize an animosity that is based on other differences, such as social class. However in this context it is not that the 'tribal stigma of ethnicity' (Goffman, 1968) is used to rationalize an animosity that is in fact defined by poverty but that poverty and ethnicity are woven together as two parts of the same coin. They combine, rather than compete, in the stigmatizing identity of the camp, and both are required for stigma to be produced.

With poverty as a naturalised source of stigma, the camp itself has conditioned an identity of alterity borne together from the stigma of their past *and* the stigma of socio-economic status:

> I have relatives outside the camp but we do not have good relations with them. They look down on us because we are poor and they are rich (Amna, 'insider', 40, Saidpur).

> Yes we have relatives outside but we don't have good relations with them. People who are poor like us nobody is interested to mix with (Laila, 'insider', 37, Saidpur).

As Amna demonstrates, the absence of economic capital would not be their concern if it was not seen to be the property of 'others', those who are valued and legitimated, while they are classified as dangerous, polluting, threatening and pathological (Skeggs, 1997). Those 'others' live 'outside the camp' and here we see that the shame and stigma of poverty are lived profoundly through the 'respectability' of home (Skeggs, 1997):

> I have Bengali friends; I made them when I moved for a job. I visit them but I haven't invited them to my house. I don't have a good environment; I have a tiny place to live. My living place and economical condition is the factor, it's shameful for me (Mohammad, 'insider', 30, Dhaka).

> I have lots of friends who are Bengali...basically we meet outside the camp...I feel bad (when they come to my house) because I don't have sufficient place to give them a seat, I can't entertain them properly. I have borrowed chairs from my neighbours and offer them to sit down but they are really nice...that's why they often visit us (Mohammad Ali, 'insider', 44, Dhaka).

Mohammad and Mohammad Ali articulate the desire for a 'respectability'[177] that could only be found 'outside'. Movement outside the camps is symbolic of an improved 'economic condition' through which attitudes can be reconfigured:

> (When I was living in the camp) I would only have invited those who accepted the camp conditions (to my home). This has changed a lot since we moved outside. Now I am able to invite people to my house, the barrier has gone. The people who are rich and have a car can come to mine, they have a sofa which I have also, they have a fridge which I have also (Emran, 'in between', around 40, Dhaka).

The presence or absence of economic capital therefore operated in a dialogic manner for 'camp-dwellers' and those 'in between'. Designated 'others', outside the camp,

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[177] A desire that, as Skeggs (1997) observes, is usually the concern of those who do not have it.

were constructed as the standard to which they must be measured. They also demonstrate that the 'better environment' in which these 'others' were deemed to be living, was often expressed through the presence or absence of 'space'. As we will see the absence of space was de-legitimating in part because of the absence of privacy it permitted. Professor Chatterji read to me a quotation taken from a woman he had himself met in Belarus camp, Saidpur; a woman who at eighty years old was living in an eight foot by eight foot room with her son, four of her daughters as well as their husbands (not in itself uncommon). While making a desperate effort to insure conjugal privacy by making partitions with saris, she considered her presence such a painful intrusion into her daughters' private lives that she asked God to take her life:

> Why doesn't God take me? God has taken so many people but why not me? Because how can I live in that room with my daughters and their husbands and continue the normal way of life? It's not possible. What sin did I commit in my life that I am being punished like this every moment of my existence? (Roshanara Bibi, 80, Saidpur - recorded by Professor Chatterji)

As one young girl explained, for women in particular, the absence or presence of privacy could have a distinct impact on treatment:

> I live outside but my parents are living in the camp...people who are living inside face many social problems. Often I visit my parents here and when I do I have problems with the toilets etc, there's no privacy here. Near the toilet boys stand and tease young girls in the camp. People treat me differently though because *outside is a good place to live*, we have space and the camp is dirty ('gunda') (Mahmooda, 'outsider', 23, Saidpur).

Mahmooda and Sittari below hint at further significance. As the products of economic capital, social value is attached to space and privacy, and an individual's own 'respectability' is influenced by their acquisition:

> (When I) moved outside after marriage, I got a better living place. Living outside the camp brought us *dignity*...When we moved out we had rooms and privacy so everyone could tell I was a *gentlewoman* ('bhodro mohila') (Sittari, 'in between', 35, Saidpur).

Gentility and dignity are also the products of education, a signifier of 'respectability' the world over, and equally difficult to obtain in the limited space of the camp:

> I have lots of Bengali friends....they come here and I go to their houses...sometimes I feel embarrassed...I don't invite wealthy friends directly because we don't have enough space. I sometimes take them to a friend's house that is bigger and pretend it's mine (Ishwar, 'insider', 32, Dhaka).

> Before we had lots of *space* in our house, but here we can't live properly, what can we do here? People who live outside they have *space* to study. That's why they are more educated than us. How can we provide education for our future generation? (Tamana, 'insider', 65-75, Saidpur).

Tamana suggests that due to a lack of economic capital and therefore a lack of space, they cannot acquire the *cultural* capital of education. Already we see that capital assets are inter-dependently acquired. However, it is not just the size of one's home that is suggestive of the social shifts to which one might aspire; bodies too signify socio-economic status in a number of ways.

1.3 The shame of 'body'

Economic capital is also encoded through the body, and clothing in particular enables identification of and with the 'other' (Skeggs, 1997). As informants explained, outside the camp one has access to the clothes of 'respectability':

> Look these children go to a Government school, but in the school the Biharis are treated badly. (They) aren't passed in the exam just because they're Bihari...Today my younger daughter was beaten in school. They (the children) don't have good clothes; that's why they (the teachers) aren't treating our children well in the school. Because they don't have good dresses they know we are from the camp, if we had good dresses they wouldn't (Samida, 'insider', 40, Saidpur).

As Samida explains, the discrimination 'camp-dwellers' experience as a result of insufficient economic capital hinders equal treatment at school. Once again economic capital influences access to cultural capital too. The body is the most ubiquitous signifier of wealth and the surface of their bodies is the site upon which distinctions can be drawn (Skeggs, 1997). As Md. Shahid reveals below, the dirty (disrespectable) body not only classifies them as poor, it also classifies 'camp-dwellers' as 'Bihari'.

> VR: Are there any visible differences between a camp-dweller and an outsider?
> Md. Shahid: It is clean clothes that identify you as an 'outsider'...they think *Biharis* are dirty (Md. Shahid, 'insider', 37, Dhaka).

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The body of 'respectability' is clean. Outside the camp, in 'good clothes', they are treated as equal but inside they are like 'slum-dwellers', dirty:

> People treat Urdu-speakers who live inside and outside the camp very differently. They think camp-dwellers are not well cultured, not well mannered and dirty…They think they ('outsiders') are very high status (Shabana Begum, 'insider', 70, Dhaka).

> Some of them outside ('outsiders') look down on us; they think people living in the camp are living in a slum ('basti'). Bengalis too see us differently because those that live outside have a good place to live and are getting education, but we are slum dwellers, *dirty* ('gunda') (Saad, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

They are discriminated against therefore in part as a result of their likeness to Bengali slum-dwellers (their poverty, lack of education, dirt), but also in a way that Bengali slum-dwellers are not.

> If you're from the camp when you try to get admitted into hospital they don't treat you well, but when you live outside and have *better society* they treat you better. I saw often in the hospital people saying, 'they're Bihari, they are very *dirty* ('gunda'), leave them alone (don't treat them)'. We are human beings also! (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka)

In this way, socio-economic *and* ethnic discrimination are brought together in the camp.

1.4 The racialisation of social space

We saw in Chapter Five that ethnic identities, constructed in opposition to national ones, were situated in the camp, and that articulations of biological or physical difference served to construct this space in specifically racial terms. As Keith (2005a, p.262) observes, "the spaces themselves therefore become constitutive features of the manner in which racial identity is defined". Marked by 'race', ethnic identities are not only articulated through the perception of biological difference such as skin colour and height, but the physical expression of poverty too. Being a 'Bihari' is encoded on the body, as dirt is described in almost biological terms. Goldberg (2002) warns that the term 'racialisation' is too often used without attempts to specify its meaning, but here the context in which it was used by Fanon (1967) is vividly pronounced. Fanon contrasted 'to racialise' with 'to humanize' and, as Mala suggests above, the dirt and disrespectability attributed to 'camp-dwellers' is an actively 'de-humanizing' force.

The use of labels such as 'Maowra' and 'Bihari', in reference solely to 'camp-dwellers', is part of this 'de-humanizing' process. The label 'Urdu-speaker', considered the least pejorative term, is in practice most commonly used in reference to those 'outside'. While Malkki (1995, p.79) observes that in camps in Burundi the markers of *racial* difference are immediately coded with understandings of *social* difference, here we might also postulate the reverse. It is an example of "those instances where social relations between people have been structured by the signification of human biological characteristics in such a way as to define and construct differentiated social collectivities" (Miles, 1989, p.75). In the space of the camp, a racialised identity is written on the body through the social location that camp residence assumes. The concept appeals here to a set of analytical perspectives that emphasize the *contingent* construction and deployment of ideologies of racial difference (Keith, 2005a). It is with purpose that a dividing line is drawn, and the poor "robbed of all humanity" are constructed as "a race wholly apart" (Engels, 1844 [1958], p.361).[178]

The salience of historicity and spatiality in making sense of processes of racialization (Keith, 2005a) are immediately apparent in the space of the camp. The notion of racialization is useful in understanding the experience of 'camp-dwellers' but only contingently so. As he observes, in the absence of context and description there is a danger that the term suggests a much greater sense of certainty than reality delivers. The stress on notions of becoming rather than being that the concept implies is therefore imperative (Keith, 2005a). In the social, spatial and historical specificity of the camp, movements through social space are not impossible, and as informants revealed this racialised identity was one that could be reconfigured. With economic capital (reflected in 'a good place to live', clean clothes and so on) the mutability of racial subjects within the times and spaces in which such identities are staged (Keith, 2005a) is made very clear. As the following section reveals, economic capital alone is not sufficient; the signs of increased prosperity need to be accompanied by associated social and cultural capital for treatment to really change. Beyond homes and bodies,

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[178] As Skeggs (1997) observes, categorizations of 'race' have been interlocked with those of socio-economic status in other contexts through the generic definition of 'dangerous classes'. Domestic servants in England for instance were often depicted through the racialised iconography of degradation – of contagion, promiscuity, immorality and savagery. See also Wray (2006).

the *accent* of 'camp-dwellers' is infused with social position; heard through the language of poverty it too becomes a stigmatising force:

> They know straight away we're Bihari because our accent ('bolne ka tarika'). I don't know perfect Bangla so it's very difficult for me. Those that live outside have a better accent than us though, so they don't have problems...They are wealthy and have a better education so they don't have the same problems (Imteaz, 'insider', 23, Dhaka).

Inequality of access to rights such as employment, education and healthcare are some of the problems to which Imteaz refers. However, difference and discrimination are not only fixed in the homes, bodies and poverty of the camp, but also the language forms acquired within.

2. Cultural capital - language

Within each contextual space capital has to be regarded as legitimate before it can be capitalized upon (Bourdieu, 1990), and here in Bangladesh 'pure Bangla' is the language form accorded most legitimacy. While fluency provides cultural capital that enables access to economic capital and makes possible movement outside, it is often only through this movement that fluency can be acquired:

> We moved from the camp four years ago...(and) my Bangla is getting better and better (Tuni, 'in between', 27, Dhaka).

2.1 Bilingualism

The bilingualism Tuni aspires to is not only social and spatial but drawn along gendered and generational lines too. Among the older generation of 'outsiders' in Dhaka, Urdu and Bangla are both spoken fluently, and on the whole in fairly 'standard' forms. As a tiny minority of the city's population[179] they not only speak Bangla when outside the house but often when at home:

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[179] In 2008 'camp-dwelling Urdu-speakers' in Dhaka Division represented around 89,899 of an estimated greater metropolitan population of over 12 million (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2008). Obviously including 'outsiders' the figure would be higher but, in relative terms, is still very small.

I speak both Bangla and Urdu in my house. When I speak with my wife I do it in Urdu, when I speak with my daughter, I do it in Bangla (Parvez, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

As Parvez suggests, among the younger generation of 'outsiders' in Dhaka the cultural capital of Bangla is so attractive that (with no education in Urdu) their linguistic heritage is almost forgotten:

After our aged generation pass away Urdu will be lost. The young generation are interested in learning Bangla and English for their livelihoods (Parvez, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

In the camps the generational divide is different, but equally stark. While all generations speak the 'mixed' ('milawat'), 'muddied' ('bejhal'), 'hodgepodge' ('kichree') camp language that we saw in Chapter Five, much of the younger generation also speak Bangla. As Mr Gulzar explains below, for many years after the war this was not the case:

Previously our ancestors didn't like the Bangla language because this was the language of the Hindus. After the war the level of hatred gradually increased. In the camps their leader Naseem Khan (the leader of the SPGRC) told them that every educated person is the enemy of the community. So every camp-dweller followed him and decided that they weren't interested to learn Bangla or any other language. Its effect was that lots of schools have been shut down. People who are living outside were always getting hold of education and they are still more educated than camp-dwellers (Mr Gulzar, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur).

Mr Gulzar's description of the isolationism and resistance to education of 'camp-dwellers' is part of the discourse of blame that we have already encountered. In recent years, however, as some children in the camps access education or work outside, many more are learning Bangla in school, and mixing with Bengali society. The social positions of gender and generation intersect with language to determine the availability of a cultural capital such as Bangla. While linguistic integration has traditionally been more common among men than women[180], among the younger generation this is slowly changing:

I am comfortable in Urdu and Bangla...when a customer comes (to my shop) who is Bengali I have to speak Bangla, and vice versa to an Urdu-speaking customer.

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[180] As we saw in Chapter Five this is in part due to levels of physical integration outside the camps, and therefore applies to middle-aged and older females in particular.

> Everyone speaks both. My mother knows less Bangla but my sisters and brothers are the same as me (Shamama, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

Today, as many of the men and some of the children leave the camps daily for work (or school) the influence of Bangla is growing. The purity of language was however a recurring theme and (as with Urdu) the form (or fluency) of Bangla spoken influenced understandings of social status. Through the physical movement that economic capital can provide, the cultural capital of fluent Bangla is an important marker of 'sameness' or 'difference':

> All my family members speak both (Urdu and Bangla)...I have nephews who are totally Bengali though and their accent of Bangla is different (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka).

Consequently, many 'outsiders' were keen to emphasize that the Bangla they spoke was not like the Bangla of those 'inside':

> As we have better link with Bengalis, Bengali professors etc, in my family we speak 'pure Bangla' (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

As 'outsiders' like Jabuddin reveal, through language a distance is drawn between themselves and those 'inside'. While 'pure Urdu' reveals a certain level of wealth and education (producing a certain level of economic and cultural capital), 'pure Bangla' is a more powerful symbol of status. It represents wealth and education, with the social and cultural capital of 'integration' combined. As we saw in Chapter Six the discourse of 'blame' resonates still and those in the camps are seen by many of those outside as having blindly followed an anti-integrationist agenda, and in doing so conditioned a fate of poverty and 'backwardness'. Consequently, informants in the camps were also often at pains to show me, through their adoption of the Bangla language, that this wasn't the attitude held today:

> I feel more comfortable in Calcutta-based Indian Urdu. I also try to speak in Bangla with the children and when I'm outside with rickshaw pullers, or at the market…If you are living in Bangladesh you have to speak Bangla (Shabana Begum, 'insider', 70, Dhaka).

Accordingly, many of those who moved outside (like Tuni earlier) took great pride in their newfound language skills:

My Bangla is good now. No one can understand that I'm from the camp or an Urdu-speaker as I don't mention it...If I tell people they say 'wow, I wouldn't tell', they appreciate it always (Khalid, 'in between', 28, Dhaka).

(Since I moved outside) Now I can speak good Bangla, I used to speak not clearly. It has affected the way people treat me...If you speak Bangla you are treated better...I got so many words, which make my Bangla fluent ('thik') (Tuni, 'in between', 27, Dhaka).

As Khalid and Tuni suggest, Bangla is increasingly spoken because of the impact this has on the treatment received from others:

I was born in a Bengali dominated place and since my childhood I have had lots of Bengali friends, so they are friendly with me here...since my childhood I have always been very good/fluent ('thik') in Bangla so I've never been teased for being either in the camp or outside...I am also trying to speak Bangla with my children, because I'm very familiar with it...and Bangla is very important if you live in Bangladesh, speaking Bangla will make it better for the future (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka).

Whether the Bengali individuals that Mala refers to ever knew she was 'Urdu-speaking' (as a result of her bilingualism) is unclear. But what is clear is the importance attached to such linguistic integration. Speaking Bangla 'will make it better for the future'. As Horowitz has argued, "language is a symbol of domination...the quintessential entitlement issue" (1985, p.219/224). Today, Bangla is the language more capable of providing benefit to its members:

In our school we learnt Urdu and English, but some of us learnt Bangla as additional. This is reflected in our career after the War of Liberation. We are in a good position now; we suffered less after the war. Who got jobs from my school? People who learned Bangla...Our Member of Parliament always told us not to forget our language and culture, but what does he know. You have to learn Bangla and speak Bangla if you are living in Bangladesh...Why do we adopt Bengali language and culture? Because it's necessary to survive in this country. Why don't I have any problem with Bengalis or Biharis? Just because I adopted their language and culture. Would I have got my job (he is a Government employee) if I had not? Phff! If someone opposes this I think he/she is illiterate or innocent. They do not know the history and background of this community (Mr Gulzar, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur).

As Mr Gulzar suggests, the cultural capital provided by language and the economic capital provided by employment cannot be seen as independent of each other:

> Those Biharis who can speak Bangla and can give bribe, they manage a job. But not the rest of us (Farhana, 'insider', 70-80, Saidpur).[181]

In Farhana's opinion, without fluent Bangla, the economic capital provided by employment is difficult to obtain. Many 'camp-dwellers', unable to get jobs in the formal sector, work as rickshaw-pullers, day labourers and tradesmen. Even for these jobs, though, fluent Bangla is essential. The cycle is vicious: without the economic capital to move outside, fluent Bangla is often difficult to acquire but without fluent Bangla moving outside is heavily restricted:

> It was difficult to get this flat. When I asked for this flat earlier I did not get it. My Bangla wasn't good enough; he knew I was not Bengali (Shamama, 'in between', 38, Dhaka).

> It is very difficult to get a flat as a camp dweller...The Bengali flat owners recognise you and they ask directly 'are you bihari', they know because when you speak in Bangla with an Urdu accent they can tell. Landlords don't like the fact that Biharis have so many children and visitors etc. Also some of them occupied Bihari houses in Mohammadpur during the war and they worry that these biharis will occupy theirs. You need fluent ('thik') Bangla to convince them (Isa, 'insider', 32, Dhaka).

It is not just in employment, education, healthcare or the rental market that discrimination is manifest; other rights of citizenship are denied on the basis of language skills too. As one 'in-betweener' explained, the right to vote itself might be denied to those whose Bengali was not considered fluent. In 2006 Sarbary, a woman in her late sixties, told me that when the Election Commission came to her house (outside the camp) registering names for the voter roll, she found her son to answer the Commission's questions. Her accent, she explained would have 'given them away'. Physical integration (economic capital) created the opportunity for voter registration - at this time those in the camps were not being registered - but linguistic integration (cultural capital) was essential for that to be achieved. As becomes clear, not only are physical 'integration' and the economic capital that facilitates it vital constituents of the social acceptance that produces citizenship as 'effective' but so are the broader processes of social and cultural 'integration' that accompany such movement.

2.2 Linguistic hybridity

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[181] Money is necessary not only in order to pay a bribe, as here, but Bengali is gained through education, something most camp-dwellers cannot afford.

The fear of 'giving themselves away' was articulated by many informants in Dhaka where, due to their relatively small number, the sound of Urdu was a strange and curious thing:

> It's difficult to speak Urdu freely outside the camp. People can't understand our language and they think we are strange. They often ask us what language we are speaking. While I was in school my Bengali friends used to tease me; they shouted at me saying 'Bihari Bihari'....but I can speak in Bangla now...I often speak with my Bihari friends in Bangla (Salma, 'insider', 18, Dhaka).

The relief Salma feels on learning Bangla is palpable because the fear of abuse is never far away:

> In this family we all speak Bangla well. Language depends on where you are. In the camp we'll speak the camp dialect but outside we can't speak that freely. I have fear ('khatra') when I use the camp dialect outside the camp. We speak Bangla instead (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

Male and female, Salma and Shamim both feel afraid to use the camp dialect outside the camps. As they demonstrate, at certain points the salience of social positions such as age and gender seemed to be overshadowed by divisions produced in other areas, such as language. In fact, once again, age and gender intersected with language use, shaping attitudes to practice. Salma and Shamim feel fear outside the camp, and speak Bengali as a result, because they leave the camp on a regular basis. As young people increasingly spend more time outside the camps, the influence of Bangla *within* the camps has grown. Nonstandard Urdu and nonstandard Bangla are, in these spaces, increasingly fused together:

> I feel very comfortable speaking Urdu and Bangla....Sometimes I speak Urdu and add some Bangla words for fun (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka).

In Saidpur the situation is even more complex. Due to the far greater number of 'Urdu-speakers' living outside the camps, and their majority status, Urdu is openly spoken all over town:

> In Saidpur almost eighty percent of people outside the camps speak Urdu. There are signs in Urdu etc. The election campaign is in Urdu (Osama, 'outsider', 53, Dhaka).

As a result I was always struck by the sound as I entered the town; suddenly it was the combination of Bangla and Urdu that rang around me:

> In Saidpur Bengalis are trying to speak Urdu...to build good relations...making friends and having chat in business. Even Bengalis have to speak Urdu here (Naim, 'insider', around 60, Saidpur).

Here 'Urdu-speakers' practice their language without the same fear:

> We used to live in Khulna. In Khulna the family were not speaking Urdu at all...not speaking a single word of Urdu. In my school we were two or three 'Urdu-speakers' but we didn't speak in Urdu with each other. In Khulna the majority were Bengali so I also followed them...We don't face those problems here (Najmal, 'outsider', 30ish, Saidpur).

However, because the social status of 'outsiders' varies much more in Saidpur than it does in Dhaka, so does linguistic purity. Consequently, in Saidpur, the 'hodgepodge' Hindi, Bhujpuri melting-pot mix of the camps is spoken by poor 'Urdu-speakers' who live *outside the camps* too. It was noted that in the camps in Dhaka the influence of Bangla within this language is growing and, accordingly, in Saidpur this is also occurring *outside the camps*. The language spoken all over the town has been hybridised to such a degree that it is locally nicknamed 'Urbang'. It is not just the Hindi or Bhujpuri influence that is considered striking but increasingly the influence of Bangla, as non-standard 'Urdu' (Hindi/Bhujpuri) and non-standard Bangla are fused:

> Urdu, Bangla, Bhujpuri and English are all mixed together – we call it Urbang. Bengali people are also speaking in Urdu and vice versa now. Urbang is a recent development; slowly it's changing as we're mixing more (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', around 50, Saidpur).

> The younger generation all speak 'Urbang'! Even my children no longer speak Urdu properly (Mr Gulzar, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur).

Hall (1990) describes this process, occurring across a whole range of cultural forms, as 'creolisation'; a process in which a syncretic dynamic appropriates elements from the master-codes of the dominant culture and 'creolises' them. In doing so it unsettles, decentres or disrupts the nation language and master form. As he argues, linguistic hybridity is concerned not only with fusion and adaptation, but with struggle, conflict

and contestation, although this broader context is often overlooked (Alexander, 2010). In the social space of the camps, and among 'Urbang-speaking outsiders' in Saidpur, it is impossible to ignore the relations of power in which linguistic mixing takes place. Embedded in a historical, social and political context of marginalisation, such processes could be understood as politicised, contestatory and dialogic (R.Young, 1995). Bakhtin, whose work has been highly influential, makes an important distinction, however, between that which is intentional and that which is organic (Bakhtin in Alexander, 2010). And while such an 'encounter', to use his own word, necessarily unsettles, disrupts, and decentres the nation language, the degree to which it is deliberate, conscious, contradictory and divisive (Papastergiadis, 2000) is much less clear. I would argue that, among 'Urdu-speakers' in Bengal, linguistic mixing is an organic process, rooted in the struggle for social acceptance certainly, but less contestatory than Hall suggests. It speaks from a position of powerlessness and insecurity and is, in consequence, a process in which creativity and intolerance "can be seen as simultaneously realized rather than juxtaposed" (Keith, 2005a, p.269). It does not involve the ironic mimicry that other struggles have produced (Bhabha, 1994) because it wants to be taken seriously. It reflects a desire for the capital movement through social space that is generative of social acceptance.

3. Cultural capital – foods, festivals, religion

Language and culture are heavily co-defined. Alongside language skills, broader access to 'Bengali culture' affords cultural capital of its own. Like linguistic culture, this relates directly to economic capital in the physical integration it provides:

> (Living outside) we get more information about Bengali culture which helps me to make plans about my future (Shamama, 'in between', 38, Dhaka).

Consequently inside/outside difference widens:

> There are many differences between my relatives inside and outside (the camps): economic, educational, environmental. We have cultural differences also, different foods and clothes. The festivals are celebrated differently...Not only Moharram[182], in every sort of festivals we have different views...During a wedding we are not practising similar customs (Sumon, 'insider', 18, Saidpur).

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[182] An Islamic festival in honour of the grandson of Mohammad.

The most notable difference between the wedding of a 'camp-dweller' and a typical Bengali wedding (or for that matter, the wedding of an 'Urdu-speaking outsider') is the procession of trumpets and drums that leads the groom and the guests through the camp to the reception venue. During one such celebration I noticed that at the edge of the camp the noise immediately stopped. "Did you see what happened when he got to the streets?" my research assistant asked me afterwards. "They stopped playing". Apparently this is so Bengali neighbours don't complain and because otherwise "they would give themselves away"; they would reveal themselves as 'camp-dwellers' (Syed, 'in between', 30, Dhaka). In fear of 'giving oneself away', certain cultural activities were only possible within the boundaries of the camp, and understandings of 'cultural difference' inside and outside the camps were a polarizing force.

When questioned further about the 'Bengali culture' that was adopted by 'outsiders', food and clothes were often symbolic. My research assistant regularly joked, for example, about the copious amount of fish that was eaten by Bengalis, or (as 'wet land people') their unrelenting appetite for rice over bread. It was also assumed that while both 'insiders' and 'outsiders' had largely adopted traditional Bengali dress (saris, and lunghis as opposed to salwar kameez and punjabis), there were differences in how these were worn. Women in the camps were believed to still wear the traditional blouse underneath the sari (for modesty) which lower class, rural Bengalis were assumed to have generally discarded. 'Camp-dwellers' can in fact be seen with and without the blouse, but what is significant is that this is believed to be the case, and attributed to the camps conservative culture. Clothing is complicated further, however, by the fact that the salwar kameez has become popular among urban Bengali women and consequently 'Urdu-speaking *outsiders*' have re-appropriated the item. Interviewees explained that this was because they were following contemporary urban Bengal culture, the form of culture with capital attached[183].

Beyond food and clothes, holidays and festivals were significant 'border-guards' (Armstrong, 1982) of culture too. Participation in *Bangladeshi* national celebrations provided the focus of such conversations - where 'Bengali culture' became a visible

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[183] It is difficult to say whether the adoption of the salwar-kameez is part of a broader Islamic revival occurring in Bangladesh, but it is worth noting that the punjabi is still thought to have complicated connotations.

expression of 'national culture' and participation suggestive of inclusion or exclusion. When discussing their participation in 'Pohila Boishakh' (Bengali New Year)[184], 'Liberation Day' (16th December) and 'Mother Language Day' (21st February)[185], unsurprisingly the impact of generation was once again considerable. Liberation Day and Mother-Language Day remain particularly problematic for many older 'Urdu-speakers':

> I don't celebrate Bengali days, why would I? These are not my days. We were celebrating the 14th August – the national day of Pakistan (Md. Khalid, 'insider', 72, Saidpur).

> Some of my older relatives don't want to celebrate these days, like 16th December, 21st February etc. During these days they swear a lot, they say 'this is the programme of our enemies!' (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka)

Emotional responses are complicated and personal and many of those who can barely remember the war or were born in its aftermath remain divided:

> We are celebrating Bengali festivals but some of the events are sad for us. I celebrate 21st February and 16th December but we feel bad because they brought happiness to Bengalis and sadness to us. But we are celebrating (Sabbu, 'in between', 47, Saidpur).

Sabbu is celebrating anyway, despite the sadness it brings, because, as those who are ten or so years younger explain, it is felt there is something to be gained:

> I celebrate 16th December, 21st February, Pohila Boishakh, we enjoy those festivals, basically the young generation. I started celebrating them after I was in class 10. I learnt that these were the Bengali festivals so I decided I *should start celebrating them*. Now we can celebrate these festivals in the camps but 5/6 years ago it was difficult to celebrate these things in the camps (Shabnab, 'insider', 20, Dhaka).

Like 'linguistic integration' access to broader 'cultural integration' is more limited for women than it is for men, as Sajid explains:

> 21st February (Mother Language Day), 16th December (Liberation Day) is commonly celebrated by the boys because we (camp-dwellers) are very conservative and girls aren't allowed to move around outside (Sajid, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

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[184] A traditional Bengali festival of harvest celebrated in April.
[185] Mother Language Day recognises the students killed in Dhaka on the 21st February 1952 in protest against the institutionalisation of the Urdu language. It is a day therefore that celebrates the *replacement* of Urdu with Bengali and its institution as the language of state.

In the last few years, however, 'things are changing' and for everyone there is cultural capital attached:

> We celebrate Bengali festivals as well, 21st February, Pohila Boishakh etc... Those that suffered during the war used not to celebrate these things but now things are changing. It changed after I was a child; I saw that kind of behaviour then. Those that used to not think that they were Bangladeshi are all celebrating these things now (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka).

3.1 'Improvement' and belonging

The adoption of these practices (like the adoption of language) is integrally related to the desire for belonging. Participation in national festivals could be understood as another example of the 'acts of citizenship' explored in Chapter Six - expressions of legitimate belonging:

> We believe in these festivals – 21st February and 16th December etc. Yes they were a sad day for Biharis but we have to celebrate this *as a Bangladeshi*. It was a happy day for the Bengalis and we are living in Bangladesh so you have to celebrate these things (Hussein, 'insider', 65, Saidpur).

As Hussein explains these decisions are not passively made; they are part of a process in which his understanding of himself 'as a Bangladeshi' is formed. His comment was made post High Court Ruling, once he was in possession of legal status, but this cultural (/national) participation was occurring long before. Ishwar below explains that for much of the younger generation the decision to participate has always been an easier one. He was born in the aftermath of war, but he has always celebrated these festivals because he believes 'he will benefit':

> We celebrate 16th December, Pohila Boishakh, 21st February. I have celebrated these since my teenage, since I got information about them I was interested to celebrate them...It's a new decade, different from our parents, the need of this decade is to mix with Bengalis, *it's good for us* (Ishwar, 'insider', 32, Dhaka).

In Saidpur, where many 'Urdu-speaking outsiders' are successful entrepreneurs, belonging is communicated in other ways too. A desire to be included, to be accepted, is understood as achieved not only through physical participation but financial participation too:

> Eighty percent of the financial aid given in order to celebrate national days such as 21st February and 16th December is given by the 'Urdu-speaking community'. Because *people want to show that they want to live here* (Md. Hussein, 'outsider', around 40, Saidpur).

The acquisition of cultural capital such participation affords represents the possibility of 'improvement' (Skeggs, 1997). Among Hutu refugees in Burundi, Malkki (1995) encountered refugees who forcefully condemned fellow-refugees living outside the camps for integrating into the 'host' society. For these individuals it became important instead to emphasize signs of true and legitimate refugeeness – for which they could claim the assumed protection of international law. The difference in the camps of Dhaka and Saidpur is notable. In the absence of such a legally protected refugee status (amongst other things), the adoption of Bengali culture was something to be desired and encouraged. 'Improvement' is a means by which cultural capital can be traded in a wider context (Skeggs, 1997), and 'learning from Bengalis' was an important part of the process:

> Integration with Bengalis is an exchange of language and culture. We are *learning many things from them*...We need this because we are living in Bangladesh (Mahmooda, 'outsider', 23, Saidpur).

The rewards of 'improving' and 'learning from Bengalis' were tangibly felt:

> I have been teased in the past…but not very much. My family are very familiar with Bengali culture so it's not a big problem for me (Sairun, 'outsider', 38, Saidpur).

Participation in secular Bangladeshi festivals is not only an expression of the 'familiarity with Bengali culture' to which Sairun refers, but an important way of staking a claim in the nation. With discourses of Islamic unity and religious nationalism re-emerging, participation in non-secular celebration is also given greater meaning and bound intrinsically to ideas of belonging. In the practice of religion, capitals profoundly overlap, and in the moral discourses of 'modernity' and 'progress' attached, an important area of contestation among 'Urdu-speakers' is revealed.

3.2 'Primitivity' and progressivity

When they first arrived in the region religion was the very thing 'Urdu-speakers' shared with their Bengali hosts:

> Look, we have separate languages but we have the same blood running throughout our bodies. Every Muslim has the same blood (Laila, 'insider', 37, Saidpur).

Both communities are Muslim, both predominantly Sunni, but certain religious festivals relevant to both are practiced differently in line with the cultural heritage of each. Clearly followers of Islam are "not a religious collectivity, homogenous and structured, but a disparate, differentiated and stratified segment of society" (Hasan, 1997, p.21). Socio-economic divisions are compounded by doctrinal and sectarian schisms and as the festival of Moharram reveals, Sunni Islam is itself deeply fissured.

Moharram is a festival in honour of the death (sacrifice) of Hazrat Hussain, the grandson of Mohammad. Although it is observed by some Bengali Muslims (through private prayer) it is considered a more minor event within the religious calendar and there is no public component. Among Urdu-speaking Muslims in Bengal, however, the festival is of much greater importance. In and around the camps vast public celebrations are held for three days of the festival. It is the most visible expression of Urdu 'difference' within the year, and for many Bengalis in Dhaka this is the only time they are 'publicly' confronted with the 'Urdu' presence. Having brought them together in East Bengal therefore religion has also become a dividing force:

> Imteaz: Moharram is our festival, we have to celebrate it
> VR: What was it like this year?
> Imteaz: This year we celebrated with a huge festival, but we were worried because every year we have a fight with Bengalis (Imteaz, 'insider', 23, Dhaka).

As 'socio-spatial' divisions among 'Urdu-speakers' have grown, the festival of Moharram, and in particular the intersection of culture and religion it represents, has become a dividing force among 'Urdu-speakers' as well. In Dhaka, where the distance between those in the camps and those outside is particularly marked, 'insiders' and 'outsiders' celebrate the festival quite differently. Those in the camps follow the 'traditional Bihari celebrations', including the public procession of a 'tajia', the dressing of boys as

'paikis'[186], the waving of flags, and the banging of drums. They play ritual games which include fireplay (jumping through fire hoops and blowing fire), the 'bana' (where a stick is moved around the body while impromptu poetic questions are recited), and the 'jharra' (the beating of brooms to a rhythm, alongside the singing of certain specific Moharram songs). Those living outside the camps on the other hand celebrate Moharram largely as Bengalis do, either as a small private festival observed at home through prayer or not at all:

> My brothers who live outside the camp only celebrate the two Eids, but I celebrate all the Bihari festivals…in the place where my brothers live now they don't even know what Moharram is! (Salima, 'insider', 40, Dhaka)

> The camp-dwellers celebrate Moharram more, in public, because those outside are integrating with the *mainstream* (English word). Bengalis do not know about Moharram (Chanda, 'in between', 25, Dhaka).

As I discovered, some 'Urdu-speakers' who live outside had so thoroughly merged into this 'mainstream' that they did not realise that Moharram was practiced by Sunnis at all:

> VR: Do you celebrate Moharram?
> Afsar: We are Sunni so we are not celebrating the Moharram festival. Shias are celebrating Moharram (Afsar, 'outsider', 26, Dhaka).[187]

As we have seen, people in the camps and outside regularly explain that 'Urdu-speakers' in the region are particularly religious. The entire 'Urdu-speaking community' have traditionally been associated with Jamaat-i-Islami, with which the SPGRC in particular do indeed have historical links. A connection among the broader 'Urdu-speaking population' is significantly diminished[188] but the public perception of a connection remains strong. This is of course why the changing place of religion within politics, particularly since the death of Sheikh Mujib in 1975, is thought by many of the 'outsiders' to have impacted their treatment. However, the 'religiosity' of 'camp-dwellers' is specific in its construction and, in its specificity, it once again divides those inside from those outside. The camps are thought to harbour 'traditional' and 'conservative' religious

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[186] During Moharram young Urdu-speaking boys are dressed as Hazrat Hussain. For three days of the festival they run through the city in his honour, redeeming their parents vows.

[187] The relationship between culture and religion is complicated further by the fact that Moharram is also a very important Shia festival.

[188] As discussions regarding voting preferences in the 2009 election revealed: I encountered very few Jamaat supporters and the Awami League is thought by many to have done better among 'Urdu-speakers' than the BNP (with whom they have also been traditionally linked).

sentiment and many of the 'Bengalised' 'Urdu-speakers' who have moved outside consider the public celebrations of Moharram an example of the fanatical or exaggerated religious passions located within. These public celebrations are described by 'insiders' and 'outsiders' alike as the '*cultural* program', the specifically 'Bihari' aspects of this religious festival. To 'outsiders' (and many of those 'in between'), however, the 'cultural program' is an aberration of pan-Islamic practice; a corrupted distorted syncretic religious form. As we will see, in the degree to which such activities become markers of camp residence, many 'insiders' criticise them too. By blurring the boundaries between religion and culture, 'ill-educated' 'camp-dwellers' are thought to be contaminating the purity of religious devotion, practicing religion in the 'wrong' way:

> Those who are living outside they do not want to show that they are Urdu-speakers. That is why they celebrate the *cultural* program less...(However in the camps) the uneducated new generation are adopting the *cultural* programme from their ancestors …they are celebrating Moharram in the wrong manner. They are beating drums and that is very wrong (Chanda, 'in between', 25, Dhaka).

The drumming, singing and 'playing' associated with 'traditional Bihari culture' are considered by 'outsiders' to be particularly problematic:

> We are celebrating Moharram in a different way to the camp dwellers, we are praying to the Almighty. In the camp they beat drums, sing songs, make a 'tajia'. In our religion we are directed to pray to the almighty but the camp dwellers are less educated and they cannot understand the religious customs (Md. Ali, 'outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

As Sarbary suggests, in an explicit reference to dirt and purity, the dirt associated with the camps is disruptive of worship. Dirt *and culture* it seems contaminate the moral order contained within (Douglas, 1966):

> (Since moving from the camp) I can pray more now, because I have *clean space to pray*. We used to celebrate all the Urdu *cultural* practices like Moharram, but now less, just the *religious* ones...The camp dwellers do not follow the religious rule, they do not know about religious customs so they are not practicing properly. They celebrate the *cultural programme* because they are uneducated they do not know *they are not part of religion* (Sarbary, 'in between', 50+, Dhaka – my emphasis).

In observation of Moharram, the 'right' and the 'wrong' was a passionately fought debate, and 'culture' here - traditional and syncretic – has become a polluting force. Hashmi (2004) argues that increasingly in Bangladesh the so-called 'little traditions' of

Islam have been juxtaposed against urban elite forms, considered the custodian of religion in the country. For those outside, observing Moharram as Bengalis do was part of the process of 'improvement' to which cultural capital was attached. As one 'in-betweener' explained:

> We are following urban, middle class, Bengali culture, we are modern people. We do not follow Bihar's conservative cultural practices (Emran, 'in between', 37, Dhaka).

Emran has access to the cultural capital that economic capital provides. In Bangladeshi society this is 'urban, middle class, Bengali culture'. As my field notes also makes plain, this is a culture of education:

> During a conversation with Emran, Mr Faizur and Syed, the religious significance of particular elements of the celebration were clearly distinguished from certain 'cultural practices'. Emran, Mr Faizur and Syed were laughing about the fact that Bengalis who are less educated give more respect to 'tagias' than is due - kissing them, holding onto their legs, as if they were religious objects: "They think it's religious, they're respecting it too much" (Emran). Mr Faizur explained that 10/12 years ago, "people like us used to kiss the 'tagia' too because we weren't mature about religion, now we are studying and we know it's not a part of religion." Emran began telling stories which mocked the public celebration of Moharram in more general terms. The first was about a Bengali man from a village who came to the festival a couple of years ago as a guest of theirs: "They were distributing 'Sherbat' (a special Moharram drink made with milk and sugar) during the festival and the Bengali man didn't know anything about the cultural rituals so we told him he had to drink as much as possible because it was holy and it would look bad if he didn't – so he drank nearly 50 glasses and eventually disappeared without saying goodbye!" As he continued, "This year a Bengali woman came and was kissing the tagia. I told her she had to kiss every tagia, so she did!" The three of them fell about laughing (Field note, Dhaka, 11th January 2009).

Goffman suggests that stigmatized individuals may exhibit what he terms 'identity ambivalence' when they witness their 'own kind' behaving in a stereotyped way or "pitifully acting out the negative attributes" imputed to them. If the individual supports the norms of wider society but his/her social identification holds him to the group, repulsion may be transformed into shame (Goffman, 1968, p.131). It could be argued then that it is shame that is manifest in Emran's ridicule. It is certainly another example of the concerted effort made by many 'outsiders' to distinguish themselves from those in the camp; constructing a narrative of irrationality and ignorance alongside one of blame.

'Bihar's conservative cultural practices', their 'heritage' and 'tradition', were repeatedly positioned against the 'modernity' of the world outside. As my field notes continue:

> Once they had recovered, Emran explained, "about 50/60% of the community now understand that this festival is not religious…but they still enjoy the programme because they believe it's part of our heritage, our culture…When I left the camp I started to see it as a bad thing. I still enjoy it now but I don't respect it in the same way". I asked if he thought this was common, for people to alter their perception of these 'cultural practices' when they moved outside, and his response was definitive: "People do leave the camps, start integrating and start to see the cultural programme as a bad thing, definitely." The other two agreed. "When we used to live in the camp we celebrated every segment of the programme. We made special food; one of my brothers was a 'paiki'. But our involvement has decreased day by day, now we just prepare the 'kichura' (biryani). In the Quran it says you must prepare good foods, that's why we still do the 'kichura'" (Mr Faizur) (Field notes, 11th January, 2009).

A notion of religion uncorrupted by culture is here woven into discourses of 'integration'. As a result, the Quran and Hadiz situate a seemingly significant distinction. Clearly the role of religion in understandings of national belonging highlights the specificity of the Bangladeshi context in relation to the rest of the subcontinent (India has of course at least officially upheld a secular state concept). Colonial and postcolonial discourses complicate and build upon each other, however, and certain assumptions regarding 'communities' steeped in culture, in contrast with the 'educated sections', untainted and fit for responsible citizenship (Blom Hansen, 1999), are vividly produced through both. A historically specific moral ordering of the world is manifested through the layering of these discursive forms, firm in its construction of good with bad and wrong with right (Malkki, 1995):

> VR: What do you think about the public (camp) celebrations of Moharram?
> Sabir: There are so many rules for this festival, and if we are following the rules it's good for us but if not it's bad.
> VR: Can you give me some examples?
> Sabir: Well, the beating of the drum isn't a rule so it's not good. Some things are good and some things are bad...There are lots of people who think *it's not a good festival* and don't celebrate and we don't mind.
> VR: Why do they think it's bad?
> Sabir: The beating of the drum is a problem for prayer so that is why they say it's not a good festival (Sabir, 'insider', 30, Dhaka).

The language of religious purity is the language through which the problems of culture and tradition, syncretistic and irrational, are evoked. Sabir explains that lots of people

think 'it's not a good festival' and 'we don't mind', but as other informants revealed, such discussions often incite an emotive response. For those who cannot acquire the economic capital to leave the camp, 'improvement' and 'progress' is not on offer. Such discourses therefore generate considerable anxiety. They represent an implicit critique, a distance that is being drawn (Skeggs, 1997), and tensions are stirred:

> I am not in favour of the 'tajia' and the procession. These things are not from the Quran and the Hadiz. These are bad things. If you go and say to camp-dwellers that these things are not good then *they will start beating you*...Some of the religious leaders explained that these festivals are against the religion but no one responded to them (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur).

It has been noted that conspicuous forms of boundary maintenance become important when boundaries are under pressure (Eriksen, 2002), and it may therefore not be surprising that public celebrations of 'traditional Bihari culture' are strongly associated with the camps themselves. For those outside the camps, however, this is simply 'cultural conservatism', and it marks the 'camp-dwellers'' lack of education. Among 'outsiders' religious practices have begun to be conducted as they are by the Bengali majority, and as individuals leave the camps they begin to celebrate the festival of Moharram privately or not at all. An extra-Bengal 'Islamist' position is associated with Bengalisation and modernity, and consequently fêted. As Emran explains, this is the position of 'progress':

> Those who are living outside the camp they are educated and they have a different social status. People who are living in the camp are following Bihar's conservative cultural practices. They do not want to move out from their own cultural barrier. The level of education has not increased among the camp-dwellers. Those who move out are the more progressive people (Emran, 'in between', 37, Dhaka).

The camp-dwelling 'Urdu-speaking' community are a site of order uncontrolled. As Emran explains, it is education that produces 'progressivity' and, in providing access to education, economic capital is constitutive of the cultural capital that broader Bengalisation ('progress') affords. Moharram is not the only site of this division. One of the more successful and well-educated 'insiders' I encountered told me about a trip he made to visit his female cousins in Bihar. As soon as he arrived he was shocked by their conservative behaviour. This not only related to the fact that they were always fully covered, but the elevated respect with which they treated him. He laughed as he explained how diligently they washed his feet when he arrived (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka). Understandings of 'Bihar's conservative cultural practices', and consequently

those of the camps, were often articulated in relation to the actions and activities of women[189]. In the battle between the 'conservative' and the 'progressive', female bodies are the site of contested meaning.

The fact of women's greater autonomy outside the camps (among 'outsiders' and Bengalis) and greater restriction *inside* was articulated by almost every woman I spoke to. Informants like Shamim suggested that while 'progressivity' - in terms specifically of gender relations – was found among 'outsiders' and Bengalis, rigid notions of 'respectability' were associated with Bihar. In considering the different interpretations of 'acceptable' behaviour apparently expressed by migrant women in London as opposed to migrant women in Dhaka, and the relative freedom of the latter, Kabeer (2000) concludes that differences in regional origins may have contributed. The majority of Bangladeshi women in London had migrated from one of the most religious districts in Bangladesh (Sylhet) with lower rates of female labour-force participation, and they may therefore have been more conservative in their evaluations of 'respectability'. Similarly, according to the logic of my informants, men and women originally from Bihar were naturally more conservative when it came to the compatibility of 'purdah' with certain forms of dress, interaction and employment. In her analysis of migrant women in Dhaka, Kabeer's study is also interesting. She concluded that the anonymity of Dhaka city was another explanation for the apparent ease with which, in this new environment, some women had abandoned old social norms. Migration to the city tended to be characterised by the dissolution of the face-to-face enforcement of norms of the village. The context of more liberal social norms experienced by Urdu-speaking women outside the camps may relate something similar. The urban community of Dhaka is fragmented, dispersed and impersonalised and not in a position to enforce such norms effectively:

> In Dhaka, the weight of community opinion counted for less because the community itself was a less effective presence in their lives as a bearer of resources or a source of sanctions (Kabeer, 2000, p.324).

According to many observers, however, an Islamic resurgence in the country has brought a resurgence of gender hierarchies too, all of which might be thought to affect norms of 'purdah' *outside* the camps. It highlights the ambiguity surrounding notions of 'acceptable behaviour' which are clearly not as definitive as many of my informants suggest. In a

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[189] In particular their clothes or their ability to move freely outside. This is an issue about which more could be said but I do not have space to elaborate here.

similar way, to suggest that the constitution of cultural norms reflected in the camps can be read as the straightforward 'inertia' of a 'tradition-bound' community would be a gross simplification. Displaced, disenfranchised and reconstituting their lives in a hostile environment they cannot be perceived as simply submitting to habit, routine or tradition. Many 'Urdu-speakers' left Bihar twenty-four years before they ended up in the camps. The need to build a local economy in the face of discrimination has involved as much effort, agency and active assertion of identity as the passive conformity to tradition some 'outsiders' suggest.

Despite these ambiguities, dichotomous oppositions of 'tradition' and 'modernity', 'pollution' and 'purity' were produced with rhetorical force. It was not only at the intersection between economic capital and cultural capital that narratives of 'progress' were located. These movements were constituted by, and constitutive of, the acquisition of social capital too. As we will see 'learning', 'improving' and 'progressing' were sought in a number of ways.

4. Social Capital

Economic capital enables physical integration and those 'in between' who have moved into rented accommodation outside, have felt an important social shift first hand:

> Camp-dwellers are treating us differently (since we moved outside); they think Shamama is rich now. Bengalis (also) think that 'if Shamama managed his rented house he has wealth', so it will increase your value. 'He has dignity now because he lives outside. His landlord knows he *must have some money that is why he is ok with it'*…It's a big problem to get a flat in Dhaka…If we say we are from the camp they do not allow us to rent their flats…It's about (camp-dwellers) society, they are *not able to mix with Bengali educated society.* They cannot maintain their status with the locals. But 1971 is totally forgotten…some think 'if they have lived in the camps *they won't know about hygiene* etc, they might not look after the house' (Shamama, 'in between', 38, Dhaka).

Money, 'society', dirt and hygiene fuse together in subtle ways that reveal the symbolic capital of 'outsiders' as a product of the social capital that economic capital can provide. As Shamama observes, social integration with 'Bengali educated society' is more complicated than simply a question of physical possibility. It requires the social and cultural capital that economic capital engenders; with a 'good place to live', and the

education and employment that this allows, one's social status can improve. In Mr

Kardar's terms below, 'integration' in all its forms is generative of 'development':

> The camp is a factor, it creates separation; you have to move out. When you move out you leave your social status behind and that makes it easier for *relationships with people outside*…moving out of the camp is useful for *development*. The camp creates a bar to social status (Mr Kardar, ward commissioner, Saidpur - my emphasis).

For those able to move outside, therefore, the acquisition of social capital that

'mixing' provides signifies the possibility of 'development'. 'Integration' once again

opens the door to 'improvement', 'modernity' and 'progress'.

4.1 'Mixing'

Bengali friends and connections were influential not only at the time of war; there is

still significant social value attached to such acquaintances today. Many people,

particularly in Dhaka, explained the importance of this 'mixing' on the basis of the

'community's' size and minority status:

> We are surrounded by the Bengalis in this camp. We are 3000 people in this ward[190] but we have to make friends with Bengalis because we are surrounded by 50,000! I have to make friends with Bengalis (Mohammad Ali, 'insider', 44, Dhaka).

However, the social capital such 'mixing' implies is about more than just the (in/)

security of numbers; it is linked to the cultural capital of education:

> It is good to mix with the *mainstream*. If I think I live in Bangladesh then I should do it. I think that mixing with more and more Bengalis and adopting their culture is *very good for us*. That is why integration is good, you can *learn from Bengalis* (Chanda, 'in between', 25, Dhaka - my emphasis).

> If the community become educated that will give them better opportunities. Gradually camp people will mix with Bengalis and then situation will improve...Everyone knows that culture will change after integration with the *high society* ('unchi log'). Once they get *education* and mix with Bengalis they will mix with *high society* and learn pure Urdu and pure Bengali (Md.Ali, outsider', 50+, Dhaka).

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[190] A ward is an administrative area smaller than a district or upazila but bigger than a mahalla or village. Dhaka division for example is divided into 549 wards, each with an elected Ward Commissioner.

Social integration and the social capital of 'high society' are therefore linked to cultural integration and the cultural capital of education, language skills and 'improvement'. We have seen how gender can prohibit access to the cultural capital of language and the social capital of mixing outside the camps, and we have seen that in a number of areas (education, employment and so on) women in the camp often have limited capital to trade. The marriage market, however, is one area in which they may have particular resources (such as femininity and appearance) of value (Skeggs, 1997).

4.2 Marriage

For many of those with daughters, 'inter-marriage' with Bengalis was another means by which it was thought that they might 'improve' their lives. Just as understandings of citizenship were frequently related to the possession of property, so narratives of 'inter-marriage' were sometimes related to the acquisition of land:

> My sister got married with a Bengali living outside and they have their *own land*...they have their *own property*, they have their *own house*. They are respectable ('ijjat') now (Sultana, 'insider', 25, Saidpur).

Or to the notions of belonging it might represent:

> Integration, mixing, is a good thing. Now we are friendly. Bengalis are accepting us as family members. *We are part of this country* so it's good to mix. Intermarriages happen, all this is good (Saad, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

I asked one informant whether he felt the recent High Court Ruling would have an impact on his life. He laughed as he replied:

> I have already married an Urdu-speaking girl...but if we had still not got citizenship I may have married a Bengali one! (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka)

'Inter-marriage' could offer protection against the insecurity that 'statelessness' represents. As Delwar suggests, without this 'relationship building' even in the acquisition of 'stateness', security is incomplete:

> Delwar: I like to get my children married to Bengalis.
> VR: Why with Bengalis?

> Delwar: It's for *adjustment and security*. If we have better connection with Bengalis, that's very helpful for us to integrate with Bengalis.
> VR: What real advantage does this bring?
> Delwar: If you're married to Bengalis you are *powerful*. You need this power in society. We have a bad brand name, 'Bihari'. When we do cross-marriage, the next generation wouldn't have any special name like 'Bihari'. As we are living here as a minority and every minority community needs majority's support. Having better relations with Bengalis helps us to get this *security* (Delwar, 'insider', 50, Saidpur).

The social and cultural capital provided by 'inter-marriage' is generative of the 'symbolic capital' security requires, and as many 'insiders' and 'outsiders' explained these marriages were within their reach:

> VR: Is it difficult to marry a Bengali if you live in the camp?
> Laila: It depends on your luck. If you're lucky you can get a bride or bride groom that is Bengali. It's not difficult (Laila, 'insider', 37, Saidpur).

As a result, some suggest that as many as twenty-five percent of camp residents in Dhaka are ethnically Bengali.[191] In a society in which social structures are strongly influenced by vertical patron-client relations (Lewis, 2007), it is marriage above one's social status that is more difficult to achieve:

> Urdu-speakers who live outside also treat the camp-dwellers differently...it's very difficult to have good relations with Urdu-speakers who live outside the camp. 'Urdu-speakers' outside the camp don't want to marry those inside (Mala, 'insider', 34, Dhaka).

> Between those outside the camps and inside...is like between poor and rich men. Poor and rich men don't mix much but rich and rich men do. For example a Bengali better off family don't want to mix with lower people whether they belong to the same community. That's normal...the main fact is that socio-economic condition allows you to mix with your peer in the society (Md. Shahid, 'insider', 37, Dhaka).

As Mohammad Shahid observes 'inter-*ethnic* marriage' is not a problem, as long as it occurs within one *social* status, a fact confirmed by the number of Bengali women, all of a low socio-economic status, now living in the camps.

4.3 Gender and power

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[191] Until 2008, Bengalis living in the camps had been denied citizenship just as Urdu-speaking camp residents had.

Residence is traditionally patrilocal, which is why it is Bengali *women* rather than Bengali *men* who tend to marry-into the camp (and 'Bihari' women rather 'Bihari' men that may be able to marry-out). Narratives of 'improvement' therefore related not only to the economic, social and cultural capital of marriage to a Bengali but the impossibility of marriage to an 'Urdu-speaking outsider' too:

> For those living in the camp it's difficult to get married to those living outside. It's about your status. People who are living in the camp are trying to get married to people who live outside the camp because it will improve your condition (Mahmooda, 'outsider', 23, Saidpur).

Marriage to an 'outsider' may have more tangible benefits for a 'camp-dweller' than marriage to a Bengali of the same social class. The one 'insider' I encountered who had achieved both of these things, in that she had married a Bengali of a higher social status, talked candidly about her decision:

> Nurjahan: I had a very painful life in the camp since my childhood...I never had any attraction to that place, I always thought about my wedding outside. If you get married with an outsider that means society ('poribesh') will be better. This was the main reason to marry Jabuddin.
> Jabuddin: [laughing] Oh that's the reason behind the wedding!
> Nurjahan: Yes of course, but I liked you very much also, that's all (Nurjahan, 'in between', around 30, Dhaka).

As Nurjahan explains, 'society will be better', the capital attached to such a marriage has enormous social value. This was a situation well understood by her husband, and the acquisition of power played into his decision-making too:

> I married a girl from Geneva camp (Nurjahan); I gave support to her and brought her back to a better place. And she had to adapt to a different life – being a Bengali, being a Bengali wife. And she was willing to, so there was agreement on her part too...One advantage is that I can dominate her. If I married a Bengali I couldn't. I married her without a dowry which shows that I am rich and is an advantage for her family, and her parents respect me and I dominate the family. If I married a Bengali there is a fear not to be able to dominate her...I dominate my wife just because they're from the camp and they're poor and I'm rich (Jabuddin, 'outsider', 30-40, Dhaka).

In an already patriarchal relationship, Jabuddin's power is enhanced by marriage to a woman of a lower social status. The nonchalant manner in which he explained his motivations and more strikingly the complete lack of a reaction expressed by

Nurjahan (she was in the room at the time) illustrated the naturalised nature of such sentiments. The asymmetry of power produced by such a match was illustrated by others:

> I got one of my daughters married to a Bengali and if they have any problem with her they tell her 'son of the Biharis, son of the enemy, you will never be part of us because you are our enemy' (Samida, 'insider', 40, Saidpur).

The social capital attached must indeed be great if these women were willing to cope with the exaggerated asymmetry of power it produced. As Nurjahan reveals, narratives of 'improvement' that are significant between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', were amplified where social *and* ethnic boundaries could be crossed. Jabuddin was himself half Bengali, and the capital this provided was of further social worth:

> People in the camp treat me better now...everyone respects me more, just because of him, my relatives treat me better...I was excited the day I moved, my dream came true (Nurjahan, 'in between', around 30, Dhaka).

The risk of the abuse Samida relates is for many a risk worth taking if the alternative is marriage to a 'camp-dweller'. A common topic of conversation among women in the camps was the difficulty in finding marriage partners outside due to the stigma of a camp identity:

> My elder sister got married with a Bengali better-off family. Living in a camp this is not possible. You don't get any good offer of relationship living in the camp (Khaniz, 'in between', 20, Dhaka).

> The major problem is to marry our daughters outside. It's very difficult to do this. People who live outside they are not interested in getting married to us because they're not from the same economical status….The camp is very difficult ('dikkat'), everyone from the camp is valueless ('dam nahi hey') (Zulekha, 'insider', 48, Saidpur).

As a Bengali camp-dweller who had moved into the camps on marriage explained, the racialisation of poverty was at the centre of such debates. Due to the stigma of the camp sometimes deception was involved:

> Shabanaj ('insider', 36-37, Dhaka): In the beginning of our relationship I was not aware that my husband was a Bihari camp dweller. After we married we came to

> know that he was a Bihari. But my family accepted him as a relative...My sisters often visit my house.
> VR: What is that like? Is it comfortable for both of you?
> Shabanaj: Not always. In the beginning I faced so many problems, like we didn't have proper toilets etc, and when my sisters visit us they had many complaints. They always asked me to move outside. They were always saying 'this is not a place people can live. This is a place for animals'. I feel bad...When you have to arrange your daughter's wedding it would be easier to live outside... Many of us arranged marriages from a temporary rented house outside. When the wedding is over we came back here (Shabanaj, 'insider', 36-37, Dhaka).

Her sister considers the camp an 'inhuman' place, not a place for people but for animals. Consequently, without hesitation, or irony, she performs the same deception on her prospective son-in-law that she experienced herself. Marriage outside the camps was often impossible without access to the capital movement itself affords, which is why people regularly moved outside to get their daughters married, and then return:

> Four or five years ago we moved out of the camp to marry off two daughters – it was difficult to get a good husband living in the camp. We got both our daughters married and moved back (Lakiya, 'insider', 50, Dhaka).

It was not simply addresses that had to be concealed, however. As Sharin explains, very often it was something much more comprehensive:

> I sometimes hide my identity. Recently for example there was a 'wedding inspection'. My aunty told me to say I was not Bihari but Bengali and had lived outside the camp always, because the boy's side were Bengali. There was fear that if the boy's side knew we were from the camp and Urdu-speaking, they wouldn't want to make a relationship with us (Sharin, 'insider', 21, Dhaka).

Sometimes, mixing, marriage and relationship-building required the ability to 'pass as Bengali' as well.

5. 'Passing as Bengali'

Where 'hiding an address' was really 'hiding an (ethno-linguistic) identity' was sometimes difficult to unpick. For those in the camps, socio-spatial relations structure the signification of racialised ascriptions and the two are therefore inevitably intertwined:

> Lots of Bengalis look down on us just because we're from the camps. I hide my identity as a result, I can't show I'm a camp-dweller, and I have to hide my language also. If they know I'm Urdu-speaking they start teasing 'Maowra', 'Bihari'...Only one or two of my Bengali friends know I'm a camp-dweller. I would feel shy if the others knew, they would start to tease me, look down on me and I think I would lose their respect. They also don't know I'm an 'Urdu-speaker'. I am hiding my address and my language, both (Sajia, 'insider', 20, Dhaka).

As Sajia confirms, it's the combination of both the camp and language that identifies you as a 'Maowra', a 'Bihari', and therefore dis-identification is required with both. Their attempts to pass were not a form of insubordination; rather as Skeggs (1997) observes, they are dissimulations, performances of a desire not to be shamed but to be legitimated.

5.1 'Hiding an identity'

Hiding an address was considered fairly straightforward, but acquiring the linguistic skills to hide ones ethno-linguistic identity required capital assets not everyone could claim:

> I have never hidden my identity. My accent ('bolne ka tarika') is very different, that's why I've never tried (Imteaz, 'insider', 23, Dhaka).[192]

For those who were able, however, and for whom it was still considered necessary (those 'insiders' and 'in-betweeners' on the edge of social acceptance), adoptive Bengali identities functioned as "cloaks of protective coloration" that lent their bearers' security in complex social arenas (Malkki, 1995, p.169):

> I often pretend to be Bengali...some people don't like Biharis. If I said I was from Geneva camp people would look down on me. So I say I'm from a certain village. I only started saying this since I moved out because before people would have recognised my accent. Some days ago we went to a party of freedom fighters and they asked me where I was from and I said Faridpur to get acceptance. They would have looked down on me otherwise...it depends on the society you mix with. It's a need for me, that's all (Khalid, 'in between', 28, Dhaka).

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[192] For those with insufficient social and cultural capital to 'pass as Bengali', 'passing as Dhakay' (or a Hindi-speaking Indian from somewhere other than Bihar) was sometimes an option. This strategy involved presenting the signs of their stigmatization as signs of another attribute, one that is less significantly a stigma (Goffman, 1968).

It is a 'need' for Khalid to 'pass as Bengali' now that he lives outside, but it is also possible precisely because he does. For Chanda too, economic, social and cultural capital were related in this way:

> I live in Bangladesh that is why I like Bangla. I am living here and when I walk through the street people think I am Bengali (Chanda, 'in between', 25, Dhaka).

Chanda may have more freedom to interact with Bengalis now that she lives outside; as a result she speaks Bengali fluently and can pass with ease. While some elite 'outsiders' may transcend the stigma of ethnic labelling altogether, 'in betweeners' like Chanda rarely have sufficient 'symbolic capital' on which to rely. For her, social networks and Bengali fluency are essential because the opportunities that 'passing' could provide were clear:

> When I go to a health clinic I never say I'm from the camp...I always say that I am Bengali when I am outside. Bengalis who live outside don't like Biharis (Shabanaj, 'insider', 36-37, Dhaka).

As with health facilities, 'passing' was often considered necessary in order to rent a flat:

> I would have to *hide my identity* to find a house to rent, 'why would I give a flat to this Maowra' they would say, 'they are very dirty' (Shabana Begum, 'insider', 70, Dhaka - my emphasis).

In order to visit friends or avoid abuse:

> I have lots of Bengali friends but their parents don't know I live in a camp. Sometimes they come to my house but can't tell their parents...One of my friends is the daughter of a Freedom Fighter, she lives in a Freedom Fighter's colony[193]. I often visit her. She told her parents that I am Bengali (Shabnab, 'insider', 20, Dhaka).

Or in order to find a job:

> Shabana: I have faced lots of discrimination as a result of the language. You can only reveal you are Urdu-speaking with good friends. When I apply for jobs I still hide the fact that I'm Urdu-speaking. We have to hide our language in our workplace. We have a limited ability to express ourselves in the Urdu language; we

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[193] After the war some of those who fought against the Pakistani army were given Government housing in the form of 'barracks' or 'colonies'.

can talk with some friends but not with colleagues...With colleagues of mine I maintain our relationship outside (of the house) and have socialized with them at the office or outside somewhere. Some of my colleagues are very eager to visit my home. With less enthusiasm I invite them to my place. However on those occasions we are very careful about our language, we don't speak in Urdu in front of them...I worry that my family will speak Urdu
VR: Do you have Bengali friends?
Shabana: Yes, lots. I do not have any Urdu-speaking friends. I know some of them that I think are Urdu-speakers but they hide it. The number of people hiding their language is high...Sometimes I might work with someone for two years and not know they are Urdu-speaking because society doesn't let us...People are afraid of being the minority (Shabana, 'in between', 26, Dhaka).

Shabana suggests that their minority status is significant here, and it is certainly true that the possibility of 'passing as Bengali' was less often discussed in Saidpur. The large numbers of 'Urdu-speakers' living outside in the town, their entrepreneurial success, and the vote bank they have long represented have given them more power here than elsewhere:

In Saidpur no one hides their identity. But we are weak in social and cultural terms, so outside Saidpur we often have to hide our identity to achieve anything (Mr Bholo, 'outsider', around 50, Saidpur).

As Mr Bholo explains Saidpur is atypical and 'hiding an identity' becomes important as soon as they leave. Goffman (1968, p.95) suggests that as a result of the "great rewards of being considered 'normal'", almost all individuals who are in a position to pass will do so on some occasion by intent. While the rewards of 'passing' are high, some stigmatized individuals it seems go further. Having internalized a sense of shame in relation to their perceived 'defect', some will attempt to correct what they see as the objective basis of their failing (Goffman, 1968).

5.2 'Violent assimilation'

Since my early childhood, always, in every step of this life, I have been teased by Bengalis. Still today they call me 'Maowra', and it still hurts. It depends on your position though. Those 'Urdu-speakers' who live outside the camps are very mainstream (English word), so they're not called 'Maowra'. I have some relatives who live in Tangail who have their own house and mix with Bengalis - they are not teased. It depends on you, if want to hide your identity you can but if you want to be an Urdu-speaker, you will be (Shamim, 'insider', 28, Dhaka).

As before, use of the English word 'mainstream' was striking. Shamim's relatives not only have their own land or property, which as we have seen is significant in constructions of citizenship/belonging, they have also 'Bengalised'. In doing so they have become 'normal', average, ordinary, and are therefore accepted:

> Language is the basis of hatred…The Urdu speaking people must stand up on their feet....*They are now melting into the mainstream.* This will save them from social apathy and disregard" (Ilias, 2003, p.195 - my emphasis).

Here Ahmed Ilias, a prominent figure within Dhaka's Urdu-speaking elite, openly promotes strategies of 'assimilation', articulated as a way for 'Urdu-speakers' to 'stand up on their feet'. Merging into the 'mainstream' is the route to rights and recognition and, as another prominent 'Urdu-speaker' reveals, it therefore goes completely unchallenged:

> Organisations like Al-Falah or Shamshul Huque Foundation are working with a development method *to integrate this community into the mainstream* (Mr Gulzar, 'outsider', around 60, Saidpur - my emphasis).

As Khaniz below reveals, 'integrating the community into the mainstream' can be achieved in a number of ways:

> Many places in society Biharis are ignored. It's a good thing to be a Bengali. Specifically by marrying them it could be possible, but also in your family you could practice Bangla language. If whole family speaks in Bangla then *it will be easy to merge soon*...we faced many problems being a Bihari in society. I don't want to see that my next generation will suffer from that (Khaniz, 'in between', 20, Dhaka – my emphasis).

As it appears, everything is to be gained, and nothing to be lost, other than their stigmatized identities that is. However, when the language of the majority is adopted, mother-tongues (and the cultures, memories and histories attached) will surely suffer:

> I think integrating with Bengalis causes 'Urdu-speakers' to lose their language and culture but I believe the contemporary situation forces us to do this (Mohammad, 'insider', 30, Dhaka).

Formal legal definitions of citizenship may not be conditional on cultural assimilation but 'effective' citizenship often is nonetheless. The retention of Urdu cultural

practices was a concern expressed by many of the wealthier 'outsiders', but it was rarely a concern of those in the camps. As Mohammad explained, 'the situation forces us to do this'; cultural capital was desperately sought:

> VR: Do you think there is a danger that Urdu will be lost?
> Shamama: Yes, I think so....But I one hundred percent support Bangla culture and integration – it's helpful to you. We should speak in Bangla – for our business and our job. If you want to live here you have to do it. The Government should help people to integrate. It is good to adopt the Bangla language and culture. I can also get advantages if I practice Bangla more. We are speaking Bangla the whole day (Shamama, 'in between', 38, Dhaka).

As explained above, the enthusiasm expressed here has to be seen in light of a discourse of 'blame' in which the reluctance of 'camp-dwellers' to 'integrate', as well as their failure to access education and their dependence on the state, has conditioned responsibility for their fate. The Urdu language and associated culture may be lost in the region, but as many 'insiders' and 'in betweeners' confirmed, 'this is not the matter':

> We have to mix with the Bengali culture whether our culture will be lost, *that is not the matter*. Mixing more and more with Bengalis I think our culture will be lost. I cannot even write my name in Urdu. When a person leaves the camp, he leaves his culture there. When we move out we have to practice Bengali culture *or we will be excluded* (Emran, 'in between', around 40, Dhaka - my emphasis).

> If you want to live in Bangladesh you have to forget your language and culture. We *should* forget this. When we are getting education in Bangla, and living in Bangladesh we have to do this (Najmal, 'outsider', 30ish, Saidpur - my emphasis).

Time is not only a powerful healer but also, as Roki explains a digger of graves:

> People who are older keep their culture with them. When they die, this dies. The younger generation is adopting Bengali now so Urdu culture will be lost, but this is good (Roki, 'insider', 17, Dhaka).

Among many of those 'inside' and 'in between', particularly in Dhaka, access to economic, social and cultural capital is achieved through linguistic and cultural 'assimilation'. For these 'Urdu-speakers' inclusion is dependent in part "on a loss of self" (Mandel, 2008, p.317). Assimilation rests on the appeal of the homogenizing force of the nation-state (Keith, 2005a) and for 'Urdu-speakers' with limited 'symbolic capital, this

appeal is often acute. Pandey's (1992) 'fragmentary' point of view, resisting the drive to shallow homogenization, can it seems, resist no more.

6. Conclusion

As this chapter argues, Bourdieu's 'social relations of capitals' help us to understand how social positions intersect and interact in subjective production, revealing the complicated conjunction between poverty and ethnicity that particular social spaces construct. Invoking discourses of 'shame' and 'respectability', 'improvement' and 'belonging', 'primitivity' and 'progress', the voices of informants illustrated the way in which certain social spaces are associated with particular cultural practices, and socio-economic position is given physical and biological form. In such a context the social space itself becomes the source of stigma, and I argue that, as a result, access to economic, cultural, social and 'symbolic capital' was consistently expressed through the language of 'integration'. The movement between physical spaces was intimately related to the movement between cultural and social ones, all of which was driven by a discourse of 'integration' that was normatively produced.

For those in the camps, access to, and legitimation of, cultural formations *reinforce* inequalities which are reproduced and lived as power relations (Skeggs ,1997). In processes of 'integration' therefore access to capital assets are heavily intertwined. They are mapped onto material inequalities through the further access to capital they function to provide or deny. The cycle is vicious and the self-reinforcing nature of 'capital movements' through social space is clear. Social and cultural capital are *productive* of the economic capital that *produces* them, and it is only through a combination of all these assets that 'symbolic capital' is ever achieved. Situated at the site of this convergence the camp therefore becomes a uniquely degraded, 'disrespectable' and 'de-humanized' space. In 'moving outside', better conditions, a better education, a 'better accent' and 'better society' fuse together in a complicated social brew through which 'acceptance' in the national life of Bangladesh can be claimed. While spatial boundaries have separated those included from those excluded, therefore, I argue that space conceals something more troubling. Those ('outsiders') considered capable of inclusion in the nation are those who have been able to 'integrate' with the Bengali majority. They are those better able to hide their Urdu ancestry, in public if not in private; those less problematic to the project of a

'nationalizing state' which still depends on the marginalization of 'others' (Samaddar, 1999, p.41).

The camp structures a fundamental division within 'Urdu-speaking society', between members of the nation and constituents of 'community'. By moving outside, citizen-subjects are born. As the nationalist project continually shifts, discursive modalities continue to evolve. Today, religious discourses of 'pollution' and 'purity' fold into existing narratives of 'primitivity' and 'progress'. Colonial and postcolonial registers, of the material and spiritual, transect and overlap, disseminating modes of reasoning that structure everyday life. Both divide "the essentially mobile, knowledgeable, modern and supposedly responsible" elite from "the bounded, parochial and therefore innocent" 'masses' (Blom Hansen, 1999, p.39), reflecting dominant social imaginaries of East Bengal today. Positioned as 'purity' and 'progress' against the 'particularity' of the camp, the former have become the subjects of 'modernity' and it is here that nationhood lies.

Pandy (1992) argued that the state-centred drive to homogenize and normalize must be foregrounded within the territory of nationalism in the subcontinent today. However, it could be argued that his binary of the state as centre versus minorities on the margins is a little too neat and deserving of critique. Postcolonial states may attempt to prescribe and homogenize but surely their success is far more varied than his analysis suggests. My research reveals that there is clearly negotiation and give-and-take of 'marginal' identities within what are shifting nationalist projects. Moreover, the case is never simply one of exclusion or inclusion, as people cross the boundaries between acceptance and rejection daily. Nonetheless, this negotiation is necessary as long as the drive to homogenize exerts such force. For 'Urdu-speakers' with limited symbolic capital, 'assimilation' is the only way to escape the institutionalised discrimination to which they are subject. When the material benefits of inclusion are so high, the loss of language and culture is a price worth paying and the violence of the process becomes apparent.

CONCLUSION

Little over twenty years after the devastating events of Partition, many of those who had fled to the security of East Bengal were displaced for the second time. The forced cycle of dispossession that began in 1947, confirmed the role of displacement in the creation of the nation, drawing internal margins that made and unmade the citizens within. In the aftermath of 1971, unity and continuity were emphasized to conceal the fragility of the new nation, and all other identities were minimized. As in 1947, nation-making legitimised state formation, the bi-products of which were 'minorities' and 'aliens' (Samaddar, 2002; 1999). Such processes have had a lasting impact in Bangladesh, dividing the 'Urdu-speaking community' in 'socio-spatial' and civil terms. The 2008 High Court judgement was an apparent landmark which it was believed would help bring such divisions to an end. Empirical research with a 'community' as it negotiates the lines drawn between legal status and statelessness, however, helps us to understand some of the everyday meaning such movement involves. As this thesis reveals, the camp, as the visible expression of those pushed to the periphery, remains a site of contradiction and complexity today.

The case had originally been intended as a unique site for the exploration of broader questions about citizenship, displacement and space in south Asia; however, tension emerged as the centrality of certain theoretical concerns developed. It became apparent that the research was evolving into a more theoretical piece of work. In the examination of the relationship between south Asian state formation and political identities in the region, colonial and post-colonial discourses of nation-making came increasingly to the fore. This is not to suggest that all of my analysis is specific to post-colonial contexts, a point that is particularly important given the relative newness of the Bangladeshi state which has not inherited the same colonial apparatus as India. The notion of 'the camp' certainly, as both a literal and conceptual space, has wider relevance, but the distinctive historicity of this particular case has always been clear. While certain theoretical tools have provided insight, the importance of context has repeatedly brought me back to the specificity with which I began. I argue that the camps' material and symbolic dimensions have generalizability, but the terms in which 'the camp' is imagined are everywhere unique.

In the camps of Bangladesh the research uncovered 'negotiability' that the (largely Euro-centric) literature fails to capture. The 'crafting' of citizenship during the colonial period and in the aftermath of Partition and Liberation was a process that left an indelible mark on those who remained. Using Bangladesh as a case study, therefore, the thesis argues that in certain transition states the construction and contestation of citizenship is more complicated than often discussed. 'Legal status' is often conceived of as an unambiguous 'good', but in the specificity of Bangladesh's historical imagination the value of citizenship is socially and spatially produced. The thesis develops the concept of 'political space', an analysis of the way history has shaped spatial arrangements and political subjectivity. In doing so, it provides an analytic approach of relevance to wider problems of displacement, citizenship and ethnic relations.

1. Nationalist discourse and the 'crafting of citizenship'

I have argued that the position of the 'Urdu-speaking community' in Bangladesh today is embedded in the historical and political discourses that we have encountered. Through the fluctuating ideological frames of over sixty years of political transition, a Bengali Muslim identity has formed and reformed once again, and with it the status of the 'Urdu-speaking community' has altered too. While much has changed in East Bengal since Partition, I contend that certain discursive registers have lost little of their value. The struggles of 'Urdu-speaking informants', and in particular the success of some over others, was spoken of in a language of 'modernity' and 'progress'; the central tenets of which pit 'reason' and 'rationality' against 'tradition' and 'community', as a teleological narrative of civilisation plays powerfully still.

In addition to practices and discourses of colonial rule, contemporary constructions of citizenship and nationhood in East Bengal cannot be appreciated without an understanding of the legacies of 1947 and 1971. State formation took place alongside large-scale displacement and definitions of citizenship were shaken to the core (Zamindar, 2007). The role of property as a state technology of ethno-nationalism legitimized the displacement of thousands and, in East Bengal today, the domain of property has been cast as constitutive of entitlements and obligations. Definitions of citizenship in Bangladesh, and the political subjectivity of 'Urdu-speakers', can only be understood in the context of this legacy.

In Bangladesh today the 'inner' 'cultural' domain of the nation is increasingly articulated through calls to Islamic unity, and it has been assumed that in appeals to a 'Muslim brotherhood' a space has thus emerged for 'Urdu-speaking Muslims' too. Contrary to expectations, however, 'modern pan-Islamic religious culture' is only a culture that 'Urdu-speaking *outsiders*' can claim. As the national project develops therefore, these 'educated sections' of 'Urdu-speaking *society*' are accepted into the nation while the 'syncretic traditions' and 'pre-modern religious passions' of the camp continue to be seen as a polluting force. Religious discourses of 'pollution' and 'purity' fold into existing narratives of 'primitivity' and 'progress' and the camp draws a line in contemporary nationalist space. The 'social relations of capitals' into which 'Urdu-speakers' are born and move have given those outside the camps discursive modalities on which to draw. Within these discursive structures 'camp-dwellers' continue to function as "moments in that stream that we variously call 'the past' or 'history'" (Elias, 1994 [1939], p.515). Constructed as parochial, primitive and fanatic they remain the pre-political, primordial stage of 'community' that must be superseded for 'freedom' and 'progress' to begin.

The re-emergence of religion in Bangladesh does not mean that attachment to the Bengali language and culture has diminished. Today, religion and a Bengali cultural tradition operate side-by-side as the two broad foci of identity in Bangladeshi nationalist space. The construction of those in the camp as motivated by syncretic cultural traditions, fluent only in a hybrid or pigeon linguistic form, and their juxtaposition against 'educated sections' with a mastery of Bengali linguistic and religious culture (as well as western conceptual languages), shows however that today their marginalization is rooted in both. In the state-centred drive to homogenize and normalize, majority culture *is* the national culture too (Pandey, 1992). While my data attests to the negotiation of 'marginal' identities within evolving nationalist projects, this negotiation remains necessary as long as the drive to homogenize exerts such unqualified force. For 'Urdu-speakers' with limited symbolic capital, 'assimilation' is the only way to escape the institutionalised discrimination to which they are subject. 'Difference', tradition and history are 'dis-identified' (Skeggs, 1997) in the name of social acceptance, and rights of citizenship must be claimed in subtle and subversive ways.

2. The creation of political space

Agamben (1998) has argued that only the erasure of the division between People (political body) and people (excluded body) can restore humanity to the globally excluded who have been denied citizenship. As we have seen, however, his strict division is unhelpful. In Chapter Six, the 'excluded body' are seen 'actualizing their humanity', claiming rights of citizenship in active and independent ways. In Chapter Seven, that same 'excluded body' are seen identifying as citizens through participation in the structures, institutions or activities of the socio-political community in which they live. By re-articulating 'political space' in this way, individuals are making declarations generative of political subjectivity that challenge our understanding of political community. While the state-led pressures towards homogenization, state-prescribed identities, and state-led nationalism observed above may seem to contradict data which considers informal strategies of citizenship, both these processes exist in dialogue. As Samaddar (1999, p.41) has explained, such 'nationalizing' states "can survive only on the basis of a continuing and permanent agenda of building an 'ethnic core' and thereby marginalizing others" (Samaddar, 1999, p.41). The complicated accommodations and creative alliances which the research uncovered are demanded therefore by a process which continues, of necessity, to produce minorities and majorities.

Liberal theory's vision of the law as society's text (its "rational mind" Goldberg, 2002 p.6) has masked the role of the state in its construction (Sieder, 2001), but is has also removed its subjects. In different ways Chapters Six, Seven and Eight demonstrate what the rigid binary oppositions of liberal discourse have left unsaid. As we see here, citizens' rights will be contested not only in the courts, but in the actions and activities of those the state excludes. The 'acts of citizenship' we see 'Urdu-speakers' performing, help us to

> Better understand the occasions when those captured outside a given socio-political order have managed to invent or appropriate forms of political subjectivity for themselves, and sometimes to interrupt that order (Walters, 2008, p.185).

`Acts of citizenship' occur at the level of everyday life, as the moments, gestures, or *acts* in which formal status is transgressed. Here non-citizens, aliens and outsiders are no longer simply helpless pawns. They demand a radical shift in focus. The object of attention becomes those constitutive moments, enactments and events "when a new identity, substance or relationship of citizenship is brought into existence" (Walters,

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2008, p.192). It allows us therefore to understand the space of citizenship, and how those lacking formal rights occupy or negotiate that space.

I would argue, however, that use of the term 'acts' requires further consideration. As Isin (2008) explains, use of the term 'acts' (as opposed to 'practices' or 'habits') is constitutive and deliberate. It is expressive of the singular moments when individuals accomplish a 'rupture in the given' (Isin, 2008). A 'rupture in the given' is not, of course, how my informants expressed these processes of change. They are not articulated as singular, discrete moments of acceptance, but as indistinct, complex negotiations through daily life. Terms such as 'practices', 'moments', 'claims' and 'contests' would better reflect the multi-layered terrain of social in/exclusion, and therefore the on-going and continual, process of assent and denial. The language of idioms, stances and stands, used in relation to theories of diaspora (Brubaker, 2005), could be valuable here. Re-articulating the concept as a claim helps us to explore how this contest is fought, how we are *constituted* as citizens. The course is not from exclusion to recognition, from discrimination to acceptance, from non-citizen status to fully complete and effective citizenship.

Before the 2008 High Court verdict, 'camp-dwellers' occupied a particularly equivocal space between constitutional citizenship and Government recognition of that status. With recently achieved Government assent in line with the 2008 ruling there is the possibility of change but, once in possession of 'formal' legal status accorded through the courts, are we actually to assume that those in the camps will be any less excluded? Moreover, how can the nation guarantee the rights of those in the camps if it is the on-going process of nation-formation that has produced their exclusion? For individuals who understand the uncertainties of their position, it is not surprising that formal recognition sometimes means very little. As much of the data presented here attests, we must be wary of abstractions of cultural and political theory which ignore the times and spaces in which identities are staged (Keith, 2005a). My data makes the insertion of historicity and spatiality into understandings of citizenship essential. It is through a complex combination of situated variables that formal citizenship plays out.

3. Agents or abjects? The camp as a social form

In the space of the camp, economic deprivation redoubles ethno-linguistic discrimination. Stigma works through discourses of dirt, pollution, poverty and difference to influence the way in which ethnicity, 'race', language and culture, are read and understood. The space of the camp, in turn, becomes a constitutive feature of the manner in which such identities are defined (Keith, 2005a). But the camp is not a static space of 'tradition' and 'immobility'. It is a space in which new forms of culture and new identities are made. Tradition is 'invented', languages fuse and agents make strategic calculations even in the most difficult circumstances (Andrijasevic, 2003). It is an example of the way in which, "'new ethnicities' emerge that are articulated through the spatialisation of culture within the city" (Keith, 2005a, p.266).

In this way, my research emphasizes a fluidity within these marginal spaces that Agamben fails to capture. The zone of indistinction he depicts is indeterminate in the sense that it represents a legal transgression, but not in the sense that its border is unclear. The logic of the camp, as he describes it, is dependent on the distinction between inside and outside; the wall, the fence, the boundary is an essential element. I argue that the indeterminacy this logic creates does not necessarily produce statelessness as the de-humanized, passive, space his paradigm depicts. The camp itself, as a space of 'statelessness', affirms the existence of the nation-state, but the "pure, absolute and impassable biopolitical space" (Agamben, 1998, p.123) is overly deterministic. The camps of Mohammadpur, while in one sense most certainly 'states of exception', do not function as a bounded physical or conceptual space in which denationalized groups are altogether divorced from 'the polity'. Camp-dwelling 'Urdu-speakers' may be neither citizens nor non-citizens in any tangible sense, gaining access and being denied access in different contingent and contextual moments. Traumatized by horrendous experiences though they may be, they are active social agents, developing strategies to cope and fighting for their interests (Ahmed et al, 2004). Statelessness is not a stable identity, and while my research is not sufficiently celebratory to vitiate the 'gloomy' image of the camp Agamben describes (Walters, 2008), I believe it provides some critical provocation.

It is necessary, therefore, to attest to the variability of 'abject spaces' (Walters, 2008). As Tonkiss (2005) notes, Wirth's argument that all ghettos are in some basic sense founded on similar structures of division and inclusion is clearly problematic, and the same could be said of 'the camp'. However the power of the camp in figurative or

symbolic form has wider generalizability and the notion of 'the camp' as the symbolic separation of social groups (as much as the material) is germane. The camps I encountered in Bangladesh represented in many ways a psychic fissure – inside and outside - with material and symbolic dimensions. They were divisions drawn in the sand that organized social meaning. While imagined boundaries give shape to experiences which are real, lines drawn in sand are shifting. The figurative hardens into objective fact but, as the creation of social space as much as the reality of it, separation is always prefigured by the danger of connection (Tonkiss, 2005). 'The camp' is therefore many things but it is not determined. It may represent both the most intense forms of intolerance and demonstrate the most intimate forms of cultural dialogue (Keith, 2005a). It may be abject and alienated, but it is not inert. The 'camp-dwellers' of this study are seen staking a claim and narrating themselves into the nation, and the camp, consequently, will always be a site of contested meaning.

4. Globalizing forces and emergent spaces

A battle against 'dependency', couched in the language of 'modernity' through which political identities were performed, struck at the heart of informal strategies of citizenship. Discourses of blame and responsibility echoed in the ears of 'camp-dwellers', the remedy for which lay in notions of 'development' through which 'independence' could be achieved. According to this narrative, a failure to 'develop' has been the source of their exclusion:

> I know a bit about those in the camps. I think they're not interested to develop themselves. Here we've so many developments in this country, but they are trying to live in the camps to get relief. They excluded themselves from the mainstream…their level of improvement is lower as a result…People who are integrating with the locals have better opportunities in education, job etc. Outside they get every facility, but camp-dwellers do not want to move outside. A person who wants to develop himself can get anything, but those in the camps don't want to develop themselves, this is why they have been disenfranchised, nothing else (Najmal, 'outsider', 30ish, Saidpur).

The civilizing mission of modernity looks to the future and, in a twenty-first century capitalist space, nationalist discourses may have historical roots but they do not always sit in the past. In a globalizing economic order does this language of 'dependency' gain invigorated strength? Ong (2006a, p.3) argues that today a new moral order is

reconfiguring relationships between the governed and the governing, an order that may yet play into discourses of 'modernity' to which informants speak. She suggests that 'neoliberal calculation' is being variously invoked in Asian settings as a governing technology that unevenly articulates the management of populations. It is a mode of citizenship that organizes people - and distributes rights - according to their marketable skills rather than according to their membership within nation-states. Within this global and historical model, economic realities and transformations give value to the calculative practices of 'self-governing subjects' (Ong, 2006a, p.16). Human capital and economic performance are increasingly aligned. The possession of human capital, therefore, and the performance of market skills intensify social and moral inequalities while blurring political distinctions between the nation and it's 'others'. East Bengal has long been a site of uneven economic and political terrain, but what might this mean for those who negotiate contemporary nationalist space?

At present, Urdu-speaking 'outsiders' are the 'worthy subjects', the 'preferred citizens' (Ong, 2006a, p.7/16), of this neoliberal land. Judged in possession of 'tradable competence' and 'marketable talents' they have human capital to sell. However these articulations have engendered a range of contingent and ambiguous outcomes, and it is not yet clear who might lose and who might gain. This thesis does not aim to investigate the highly situated economic landscape of Bangladesh. It considers a context in which the rhetoric of nationalism is of central importance; my data resonates with the language of 'modernity' and 'progress' central to this rhetoric. However, these discourses are set within a wider frame and there are global economic forces that may support or contest the political imaginaries to which my research speaks. Will the limited language of nationalism be bolstered by current world trends in the economic and political practice of states (Pandey, 1992)? Or do these trends herald a post-national global order after all? As Ong (2006a) makes clear, neoliberalism is merely the most recent development in technologies that govern human life. However, "in the politics of subjection and subject-making that continually places in question the political existence of modern human beings", it is a governing technology taken up in different ways across the globe (Ong, 2006a, p.13). How might the historical interplay between political discourses and economic forces influence the (in)/exclusionary processes at work in Bangladesh today? Only time will tell whether it will strengthen discursive registers of the national imagination, or redefine the terms of the debate. The further policy relevance of the

material presented in this thesis will be developed in my future work. I would suggest that the longer term social and cultural consequences, and the management of 'states of exception', lend themselves to significant policy analysis.

One thing is clear: in such emergent spaces, the crude binary oppositions of citizenship and statelessness, 'legality' and 'illegality', 'status' and 'non-status' are more redundant by the minute. Ethnicity and identity are re-imagined within the histories and spatialities that frame them and within the fabric of the discourses time and space construct. In the 'social field of citizenship' not everyone is constituted with the same humanity, but the limits of political space are not set in stone. The 'Urdu-speakers' of this study are positioned by history, but they are certainly not passive within it.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 'East Pakistan Mohajir population by area and division, 1951'

Number	Area	Number of Mohajirs
	Chittagong Division	Total: 41,935
1	Chittagong	19,375
2	Chittagong Hill Tracts	1,146
3	Noakhali	1,279
4	Sylhet	14,219
5	Tripura	5,821
	Dhaka Division	Total: 162,855
6	Dhaka	91,425
7	Bakhergonj	2,418
8	Faridpur	5,317
9	Mymensingh	63,695
	Rajshahi Division	Total: 494,289
10	Bogra	18,035
11	Dinajpur	74,379
12	Jessore	34,077
13	Khulna	26,059
14	Kushtia	137,321
15	Pabna	19,933
16	Rajshahi	75,900
17	Ranjpur	99,985

Source: Census of Pakistan 1951, Vol. 3, p.39, in Rahman (2003)

Appendix 2 'East Pakistan Mohajir population by district, 1951'

Number	District	Number of Mohajirs
1	Chittagong	19,714
2	Dhaka	89,448
3	Mymensingh	31,641
4	Dinajpur	47,872
5	Bogra	22,382
6	Jessore	5,305
7	Kushtia	5,504
8	Pabna	10,541
9	Rajshahi	13,271
10	Rangpur	82,755

Source: Census of Pakistan 1951, Vol. 3, p.114, in Rahman (2003)

Appendix 3 'Mohajir settlement and origin in East Pakistan, 1951'

District of East Pakistan	Uttar Pradesh	Bihar	Punjab/Delhi	Total
Chittagong	2,626	6,313	331	9,270
Dhaka	6,986	27,530	1,193	32,706
Mymensingh	752	2,624	42	3,418
Dinajpur	2,519	22,914	302	25,735

Bogra	332	4,285	12	4,629
Hessire	571	3,022	50	3,643
Kushtia	644	1,396	6	2,046
Pabna	650	3,078	2	3,730
Rajshahi	620	4,302	29	4,951
Rangpur	3,119	24,885	46	28,050
Total	18,819	97,349	2,002	118,170

Source: Kamaluddin (1985)

Appendix 4 'Self-supporting Biharis main economic divisions, East Pakistan, 1951'

Main economic divisions	Dhaka	Chittagong	Rajshahi	Total
Cultivation	17,326	4,572	80,032	101,930
Animal husbandry	9	33	758	770
Other agriculture	11	206	69	286
Forestry	92	68	111	271
Fishery	92	111	909	1,173
Mining	11	11	33	55
Manufacturing	5,968	1,010	10,433	17,411
Building and construction	1,404	178	6,006	7,588
Electricity, water, gas etc.	66	0	35	101
Trade and commerce	11,019	1,736	12,289	25,044
Transport, shipping and port services	3,817	2,726	13,971	19,614
Post and telecommunications	210	49	297	556
Education	525	93	736	1,354
Medical services	316	89	697	1,102
Government, municipal service	5,152	1,147	4,476	10,775
Domestic and personal service	3,245	692	4,847	8,784
Religious, art, public information etc.	256	128	290	674
Other and unclassified	3,676	359	733	4,768
Unemployed in non-agricultural occupations	649	911	88	1,648
Unemployed in agriculture	2,209	89	4,102	6,400
Total of all divisions	53,256	13,178	135,822	202,256

Source: Census of Pakistan 1951, Vol. 3, p.153, in Rahman (2003)

Appendix 5 'Allotment for the Mohajirs in Different Areas 1951-52'

Number	Name of units/areas	Reserved money (crore rupee)
1	East Bengal	1.25
2	Punjab	3.00
3	Karachi	3.00
4	Sind	1.00
5	North-West Frontier	0.10
6	Baluchistan	0.10
7	Bhawalpur	0.20
8	Refugees of Kashmir	1.00
	Total	9.65

Source: Five Years of Pakistan 1947-52, p.146, in Rahman (2003).

Appendix 6 'Allotment of Advanced Loan 1951-52'

Number	Provinces	Allotted money (crore rupee)
1	Punjab	1.50
2	East Bengal	1.00
3	Sind	0.50

Source: Five Years of Pakistan 1947-1952, p.146, in Rahman (2003).

Appendix 7 'Urdu-speaker Settlements (and Population) in Bangladesh, 2006'

Dhaka Division

No	Name of settlement	Location/ Address	Population	Area of the Settlement	No. of Bathrooms	No.of Latrines	Number of Schools
1	Geneva Camp	Ward # 45, Babar Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka	18000	235000 sqf	38	76	1
2	Shah Jahan Road Camp (CRO)	Ward # 44, 14/27, Shah Jahan Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka	385	8400 sqf	1	4	nil
3	Market Camp	Ward # 42, Taj Mahal Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka	3680	42000 sqf	3	2	nil
4	Community Centre Camp	Ward # 42, Taj Mahal Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka	1484	22000 sqf	2	2	nil
5	Staff Quarter Camp	Ward # 42, # 30, 31 & 32, Staff Quarter, Zohori Mohalla, Mohammadpur, Dhaka	1100	19000 sqf	nil	1	nil
6	Town Hall Relief Camp	Ward # 44, Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur, Dhaka	3115	38000 sqf	2	2	1
7	Talab Camp	Ward # 3, Section # 10, Mirpur, Dhaka	500	42000 sqf	Individual	1	nil
8	Tejgaon Relief Camp	Ward # 3, WAPDA Building, Section # 10, Mirpur, Dhaka	3250	57000 sqf	individual	1	nil
9	Shaheed Millat Camp	Road # 6, 7 & 8, Block A, Section # 10, Mirpur, Dhaka	950	18000 sqf	individual	3	nil
10	Madrasah Camp	Ward # 3, Block A, Section # 10, Mirpur, Dhaka	500	10000 sqf	individual	Nil	nil
11	Muslim Camp	Ward # 3, Block A, Section # 10, Mirpur, Dhaka	2500	45000 sqf	Individual	4	nil
12	Non-Local Relief Camp	Ward # 3, Road # 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17, Block C, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	800	15000 sqf	Individual	20	nil

13	MCC Camp	Ward # 3, Avenue 5, Block C, Section 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	2250	40000 sqf	individual	2	nil
14	Mirpur Shaheen School Camp	Ward # 3, Road # 13, Avenue 5, Block C, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	1750	33000 sqf	individual	2	nil
15	Al-Falah Relief Camp	Ward # 3, Avenue 5, Block C, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	600	8000 sqf	individual	10	Nil
16	Irani Camp	Ward # 3, Road # 16, Avenue 3, Block B, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	750	16000 sqf	individual	1	nil
17	Millat School Camp	Ward # 3, Block B, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	3000	55000 sqf	individual	2	1
18	Football Ground Camp	Ward # 3, Road # 10, Block C, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	2250	41000 sqf	individual	1	Nil
19	Heed Society Camp	Avenue 1, Section 11, Mirpur	2250	40000 sqf	Individual	1	Nil
20.	Post Office Camp	Ward # 3, Road # 10, Block C, Mirpur Bazar, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	625	15000 sqf	individual	1	Nil
21.	Millat Camp	Ward # 3, Main Road, Block D, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	1500	29000 sqf	individual	nil	nil
22.	Talab Camp	Ward # 3, Block B, Near Jame Masjid, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	1250	25000 sqf	individual	2	nil
23.	CONCERN/ WAPDA Building Camp	Ward # 3, Kalshi Road, Block B, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	3250	57000 sqf	individual	400	1
24.	Rahmat Camp	Ward # 3, Road # 7, Block B, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	3250	57000 sqf	individual	40	nil
25.	Mirpur BC (ADC Camp)	Ward # 3, Avenue 1 & 3, Block A, Section # 11, Mirpur, Dhaka	615	21000 sqf	2	2	nil
26.	Kurmitola Relief Camp	Ward # 8, Block E, Section # 12, Mirpur, Dhaka	8000	133000 sqf	individual	4	1
27.	Irani Relief Camp # 2	Ward # 8, Block E, Near Kalshi Road, Section # 12, Mirpur, Dhaka	500	10000 sqf	Individual	2	nil

28.	Medical Camp	Ward # 8, Block C, Section # 12, Mirpur, Dhaka	1000	20000 sqf	individual	nil	1
29.	School Camp	Ward # 8, Block D, Kala Pani, Near Eid Gah Maidan, Section # 12, Mirpur, Dhaka	1250	25000 sqf	Individual	3	nil
30.	Maura Para Camp	Road # 5, Block C, D & E, Near Kalshi Road, Section # 12, Mirpur, Dhaka	2250	40000 sqf	Individual	2	nil
31.	Adamjee Nagar Camp	Adamjee New EPZ, PS Siddherganj, Narayanganj	6500	114000 sqf	individual	9	nil
32.	Rally Bagan Camp	Rally Bagan, Kumodini Trust, Narayanganj	315	6500 sqf	Individual	1	nil
33.	David Bagan Camp	Kumodini Trust, Narayanganj	325	7000 sqf	Individual	1	nil
34.	Dewan Ganj Railway Colony Camp	Dewan Ganj Railway Colony, Dewan Ganj Bazar, Dist. Jamalpur	1000	20500 sqf	individual	individual	nil
35.	Jamalpur Bihari Camp	Dhakaya Patti Bazar, Bokoltola, Jamalpur	250	30000 sqf	individual	individual	nil
36.	Patgodam Camp	Ward # 10, Kalibari Road, Mymensingh	7500	17000 sqf	2	3	nil
37.	TIPA Khola Gowal Chamat Camp	TIPA Khola Gowal Chamat, Faridpur	675	80000 sqf	individual	individual	nil
38.	Kalipatti New Colony Camp	New Colony, College Road, Rajbari	730	88000 sqf	individual	individual	nil

Khulna Division

No	Name of settlement	Location/ Address	Population	Area of the Settlement	Number of Bathrooms	Number of Latrines	Number of School
39.	Matom Danga Colony Camp # 2	Jahanabad, Matom Danga, Colony # 2, PS Khan Jahan Ali, Khulna	1036	24309 sq m	10	10	1
40.	Camp # 8	Ward # 10, New Colony, Khalispur, Khulna	109	1512 sq m	4	nil	Nil
41.	Baitul Falah Camp	Ward # 12, Old Colony, Khalispur, Khulna	197	1829 sq m	4	4	Nil
42.	Camp # 7	Ward # 12, Old Colony, Khalispur, Khulna	617	12272 sq m	10	10	Nil
43.	Camp # 3	Ward # 12, Old Colony, Khalispur, Khulna	664	3894 sq m	12	12	Nil

| 44. | Camp # 1 | Ward # 12, Old Colony, Khalispur, Khulna | 494 | 8469 sq m | 16 | 16 | Nil |
| 45. | West Banandi Para, Kathaltola Camp | Ward # 1, Colony # 2, West Banandi Para, Kathaltola, Jessore | 174 | 912 sq m | 8 | 8 | Nil |

Chittagong Division

No	Name of settlement	Location/ Address	Population	Area of settlement	Number of Bathrooms	Number of Latrines	Number of School
46.	Sardar Bahadur School Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	2598	62400 sqf	1	20	1
47.	Segun Bagan Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	1155	48604 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
48.	Diesel Colony Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	236	5026 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
49.	New Jhawtala Colony Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	105	2604 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
50.	Jhawtala Colony Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	997	21684 sqf	individual	7	Nil
51.	TPP Colony Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	105	5443 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
52.	Wireless Colony Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	3134	117672 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
53.	XEN Colony Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	116	3260 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
54.	Islamia School Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	577	12264 sqf	Individual	12	Nil
55.	Sardar Bahadur Nagar Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	472	16272 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
56.	Khulshi Colony Camp	Ward # 13, Pahartali, PO & PS Khulshi, Chittagong	787	187450 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil

No	Name of settlement	Location/ Address	Population	Area of settlement	Number of Bathroom	Number of Latrines	Number of School
57.	Hali Shahar Non-Local Camp	Ward # 26, PO & PS Hali Shahar, Chittagong	997	111900 sqf	3	6	1
58.	Sher Shah Non-Local Camp	Ward # 7, PO Amin Jute Mills, PS Bayazid Bostami, Chittagong	265	52500 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
59.	Raufabad Non-Local Camp	Ward # 7, PO Amin Jute Mills, PS Bayazid Bostami, Chittagong	1837	448500 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
60.	Feroz Shah Non-Local Camp	Ward # 9, West Feroz Shah, PS Khulshi, Chittagong	1077	247500 sqf	2	4	Nil
61.	Hamzarbagh Non-Local Camp	Ward # 7, West Shola Shahar, PO Amin Jute Mills, PS Panchsila, Chittagong	315	45000 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
62.	Shuluk Bahar Non-Local Camp	Ward # 8, Shuluk Bahar, PO Chawk Bazar, PS Panchsalia, Chittagong	178	2880 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil

Rajshahi Division

No	Name of settlement	Location/ Address	Population	Area of settlement	Number of Bathroom	Number of Latrines	Number of School
63.	Khair Bari Camp	Ward # 11, Khair Bari, Rangpur	760	13500 sqf			Nil
64.	Babu Para Camp	Ward # 12, Babu Para, Rangpur	760	13500 sqf			Nil
65.	Muslim Para Railway Camp	Ward # 11, Muslim Para, Rangpur	1050	18000 sqf			Nil
66.	Ispahani Camp # 3	Ward # 11, Robsonganj, Alam Nagar, Rangpur	2620	46960 sqf	3	20	1
67.	Ispahani Camp # 2	RDCC Tajhat Road, Alam Nagar, Rangpur	1400	25350 sqf	6	20	Nil
68.	New Relief Camp	Ward # 11, Robsonganj, Rangpur	780	13500 sqf	4	12	Nil
69.	Sulphate Camp	Ward # 11, Muslim Para, Rangpur	750	13500 sqf	3	12	Nil
70.	Kalam Godown	Ward # 11, Station Road, Rangpur	175	3150 sqf	Individual	4	Nil
71.	Alam Nagar Colony Camp (Colony A)	Ward # 12, Alam Nagar Colony, Rangpur	210	3260 sqf		8	Nil
72.	Alam Nagar Colony Camp	Ward # 12, Alam Nagar Colony, Rangpur	210	3280 sqf	1	8	Nil

	(Colony B)						
73.	Alam Nagar Colony Camp (Colony C)	Ward # 12, Alam Nagar Colony, Rangpur	210	3250 sqf	1	8	Nil
74.	Murgi Farm Camp	Ward # 11, Murgi Farm, Rangpur	263	4850 sqf	4		Nil
75.	Railway Farm Camp	Ward # 11, Railway Colony, Rangpur	847	9500 sqf	105	105	Nil
76.	Machhua Patti Camp	Ward # 11, Machhua Patti, Rangpur	165	2000 sqf	22	22	Nil
77.	Latif Pur Colony Camp (Zone A)	Ward # 11, Latif Pur Colony, Bogra	550	8800 sqf	22	22	Nil
78.	Latif Pur Colony Camp (Zone B)	Ward # 12, Latif Pur Colony, Chawk Farid, Bogra	850	13600 sqf	2	4	Nil
79.	Chawk Lokman Malti Nagar Camp (Zone C)	Ward # 13, Chawk Lokman Malti Nagar, Bogra	1450	24600 sqf	250	250	Nil
80.	Latif Pur Colony (Zone D)	Ward # 11, Latif Pur Colony, Bogra	880	13800 sqf	110	6	Nil
81.	Latif Pur Colony (Zone E)	Ward # 12, Latif Pur Colony, Bogra	560	9200 sqf	92	92	Nil
82.	Latif Pur Colony (Zone F)	Ward # 12, Latif Pur Colony, Bogra	490	6500 sqf	66		Nil
83.	Sherpur Shantahar	Sherpur Shantahar, Bogra	160	2600 sqf	26	26	Nil
84.	Fateh Mohammadpur School Camp (Zone A)	Ward # 5, Railway Colony, Ishwardi, Pabna	850	14000 sqf	160	160	Nil
85.	Fateh Mohammadpur School Camp (Zone B)	Ward # 5, Railway Colony, Ishwardi, Pabna	650	12000 sqf	135	135	Nil
86.	Fateh Mohammadpur School Camp (Zone C)	Ward # 5, Loco Colony, Ishwardi, Pabna	1960	26000 sqf	300	300	Nil
87.	Fateh Mohammadpur School Camp (Zone D)	Ward # 5, Loco Colony, Ishwardi, Pabna	1550	22500 sqf	265	265	Nil
88.	Siroil Colony Camp (Railway area)	Ward # 19, Station Road, Near Railway Station, Ishwardi, Pabna	2700	42000 sqf	500	500	Nil

89.	Sagor Para Camp (Old town area)	Shah Makhdoom Road, Rajshahi	1600	900 decimal	280	280	Nil
90.	Munshi Para Camp	Ward # 11, Munshi Para, Gaibandha	520	85000 sqf	4	4	Nil
91.	David Cong Para Camp	Ward # 11, Munshi Para, Gaibandha	250	45000 sqf	5		Nil
92.	Railway Colony	Ward # 11, Railway Colony, Gaibandha	220	4000 sqf	40	40	Nil
93.	Bridge Road Colony Camp	Ward # 11, Bridge Road, Gaibandha	135	13500 sqf	26	26	Nil
94.	Mohri Para Camp	Ward # 11, Mohri Para, Gaibandha	260	4400 sqf	44		Nil
95.	Cinema Hall Camp	Ward # 2, Golahat, Syedpur, Nilphamari	915	8056 sqf	6	30	Nil
96.	Golahat Camp	Ward # 2, Golahat, Syedpur, Nilphamari	2750	23634 sqf	7	12	Nil
97.	Islam Bag Camp	Ward # 3, Islam Bag, Syedpur, Nilphamari	200	1620 sqf	individual	3	Nil
98.	Burma Shell Camp	Ward # 3, Atiar Colony, Syedpur, Nilphamari	285	2909 sqf	3	4	Nil
99.	Rasul Pur Camp	Ward # 3, Rasul Pur, Syedpur, Nilphamari	330	6810 sqf	2	3	Nil
100.	Balu Race Camp	Ward # 4, Near Thana, Atiar Colony, Syedpur, Nilphamari	430	6262 sqf	3	12	Nil
101.	Godown Camp # 5	Ward # 6, Rangpur Road, Syedpur, Nilphamari	260	1417 sqf	1	2	Nil
102.	Chamra Godown Camp	Ward # 6, Rangpur Road, Syedpur, Nilphamari	2400	42558 sqf	3	17	Nil
103.	Mustafa Godown Camp	Ward # 6, Rangpur Road, Syedpur, Nilphamari	160	800 sqf	2	2	Nil
104.	Godown Camp # 7	Ward # 6, Rangpur Road, Syedpur, Nilphamari	230	1499 sqf	1	10	Nil
105.	Muslim Para Camp	Ward # 6, Muslim Para, Syedpur, Nilphamari	564	2963 sqf	2	29	Nil
106.	Bangali Nijpara Camp	Ward # 7, Bangali Para (Azad Khan Godown), Syedpur, Nilphamari	184	2400 sqf	individual	26	Nil
107.	Out House Camp	Ward # 7, Officers Colony, Syedpur, Nilphamari	1060	4521 sqf	individual	individual	Nil
108.	Hati Khana Camp	Ward # 8, Cantonment Road, Syedpur,	3100	28800 sqf	3	18	Nil

		Nilphamari					
109.	Railway Mess Camp	Ward # 9, Cantonment Road, Syedpur, Nilphamari	270	1250 sqf	2	2	Nil
110.	Dharmsala Camp	Ward # 11, Naya Bazar, Syedpur, Nilphamari	340	3617 sqf	individual	4	Nil
111.	Durga Mill Camp	Ward # 11, Bichali Hat Road, Syedpur, Nilphamari	1200	14602 sqf	3	16	Nil
112.	Kuli Para Camp	Ward # 11, New Babu Para, Syedpur, Nilphamari	435	4480 sqf	Individual	Individual	Nil
113.	Shaheed Ajmal Camp	Ward # 12, Zahurul Haque Road, Syedpur, Nilphamari	380	17748 sqf	2	2	Nil
114.	Bansbari Camp	Ward # 13 & 14, Bansbari, Syedpur, Nilphamari	1080	21960 sqf	4	10	Nil
115.	Mistry Para Camp	Ward # 15, Mistry Para, Syedpur, Nilphamari	384	4096 sqf	1	12	Nil
116.	American Camp	Ward # 15, Mistry Para, Syedpur, Nilphamari	435	4480 sqf	individual	Individual	Nil

Source: Al-Falah Bangladesh (2006)

Approximate population: 151,368
Total number of settlements: 116

This map ['Map 1: Geographical distribution of camp areas in Bangladesh'[194]] has been removed as the copyright is owned by another organisation.

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[194] For the purpose of comprehensiveness, the maps included here oversimplify the complexities of camp location.

This map ['Map 2: Location of field sites in Dhaka (Mohammadpur and Mirpur)'] has been removed as the copyright is owned by another organisation

This map ['Map 3: Geographical distribution of camps in Mirpur'] has been removed as the copyright is owned by another organisation

This map ['Map 4: Geographical distribution of camps in Mohammadpur'] has been removed as the copyright is owned by another organisation