

PROFILE OF AN ‘URBANIZED SOCIETY’?: SLUMS, GAUTHANS, AND ‘LIFESTYLE CITY’ IN KALYAN-DOMBIVLI, INDIA

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ABSTRACT: If urbanized society is a pseudonym for cosmopolitanism, then Kalyan-Dombivli qualifies as a city number wise but not spatially, socially, politically, or culturally. Spatially, it is a hodge-podge of forms: slums, *chawls*, *gauthans*, basic apartment blocks, and up-scale developments. Socially, caste, class, religion and place of residence do not seem to be giving away to some transcendent urban identity. Also, Quality of Life is seen less as a collective social-political project and more as something one earns and buys. Politically, the middle-class normally avoids local parties and politicians due to time constraints and disgust with corruption and looks to partner up with government officials or to use the court to handle their civic complaints. Poorer inhabitants often lack adequate knowledge about rights, government structures and their disposition is marked by fatalism or indifference when it comes to politics and development. This allows for clientelism to maintain its dominance and for splintering urban development to go largely undisciplined. Culturally, rural or traditional values regarding gender, family, and authority do not seem to be in decline and aesthetic differences abound between middle-class and elite residents and those from the city’s *gauthans* and slums.

KEYWORDS: India, urban society, inequality, difference, cosmopolitanism

1 INTRODUCTION

Urban governance in Kalyan-Dombivli (KD) is marked by differentiated administration with those with unorganized insecure low-wage employment tending to have informal insecure housing and thus informal or insecure relationships with the government. The techniques of governance-in practice vary as one goes from slum to *gauthan* to ‘Lifestyle City’ as do type and magnitude of entitlements and one’s political space. First we discuss the problems politics and inequalities pose for cosmopolitanism. Then after giving orienting details about KD we discuss how the environment does not seem fertile for cosmopolitan urbanized society by outlining dominant social forces, processes and political-spatial formations. We conclude with a discussion that actually existing urbanisms, like this one, also need to be accounted for as we strive to think past neo-liberalism while at the same time coming up with plans and models that fit the needs of the majority of the populations in Southern cities like KD. People who will *not* likely acquire the economic or cultural capital or disposition to acquire a flat in Lifestyle City need their “right to the city” to be honored as well.

1.1 Cosmopolitanism, Urban Governance and Uneven Development

Liberalism’s child cosmopolitanism whether more procedural like Held’s vision (1995), ethico-philosophical like Nussbaum’s (1997), or utopian like Amin’s (2006) represents the universal norm for governance in the hoped for post-political society. Its norms of: respect for human rights, rule of law, self-reliance, tolerance of diversity, avowal of free markets, free trade, and personal property regimes cozy up well with the norms of neoliberalism (de Sousa Santos 2006). It represents a society that has transcended parochial identity politics, cultural chauvinism, and presumably problematic inequalities.¹ This

¹ We consider inequalities in income, shelter, infrastructure and public services problematic when they result in unnecessary hardship and struggle. Furthermore, we consider inequalities in the above to be socially and morally problematic when they do not stem from a lack of resources, but rather a lack of rights and entitlements due to issues of exclusion, adverse incorporation and privilege. Poverty is defined as a particular severe form of social inequality where households do not have enough resources to meet their

society is evolved enough to decide governance issues rationally and consensually. Cosmopolitanism normally is projected onto the international scale. However, this presumes that governance systems like these already exist and the main issue at hand is extension. As (arguably) a cosmopolitan nation-state has yet to arise this assumption is problematic. We should start evaluating cities to see what forms of governance institutions are in the making to both gauge the possible social justice threshold of cities and to critique problematic contradictions of cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitanism also presumes that getting past politics is desirable and possible. It misses how today's institutions are naturalizations of past power arrangements and the vehicle through which today's social-spatial practices are carried out (Tilly 1999; Mouffe 2005). They are also the political spaces where people's entitlements and the rules of entitlement are determined, guaranteed, and contested (cf. Bastianensen et al, 2005). Institutions and social forms develop particular configurations of class power over time so that what gets expressed as the workings of the "market" or "individual freedoms" often conceals a more class-based impetus (Harvey 1996). The shift from "government to governance" and the accompanying shift in dominant governance logic from citizen wellbeing to producing a good business climate also have their roots in attempts to consolidate class power over the uses of public and private wealth in the city (Harvey 2008; Banerjee-Guha 2009). Cosmopolitanism omits three fundamental elements of the governance of cities from the outset: antagonism, hegemonic projects, and inequality.

Antagonism refers to conflicts regarding whose norms, values, and needs community, state, and market institutions are oriented towards. These can lead to contentiousness over issues of distribution and recognition. It is a foundational component because of situated knowledges and positionality. All knowledge is partial—shaped and limited by one's identities (such as caste, class, gender) and thus experiences in social life and situated in time and place specific material conditions (Sayer 2000, p.51-55). Differences in needs, wants, and experiences produce conflict regarding what social justice is, by what means it can be achieved, and who is entitled to what. Thus antagonism is always present in the form of we/they distinctions and socio-political configurations (Mouffe 2005) across governance scales that attempt to strategically incorporate different places and people differently (Jessop 2001) *and thereby create and perpetuate inequalities.*

Hegemonic projects refer to the dominant conceptualization(s) of social justice and social needs that steer governance of cities and construct social and spatial priorities.² A particular conceptualization of social justice and social needs—and the correlative means of achieving it—become hegemonic when the particularity of interests becomes universalized. Given the antagonistic ontology of human relations discussed above these processes never stop and often there is more than one particular group or constellation of groups vying for their interests to order and for their positions to be secured at different scales. Hegemonic projects (including cosmopolitanism) in stratified cities are by definition based on exclusions and strategic selectivities³ regarding which places' needs and which people's values, capitals⁴ and interests are most important for the 'good of the City.' These *selectivities* cause inequalities which accumulate over time into the uneven geographies of development that underpin antagonism and undermine cosmopolitanism. Like the economic strain of neoliberalism, cosmopolitanism is not essentially unjust, but unjust in its processes and outcomes. For most of us the world is not flat and the implied ahistorical deracinated, self-reliant market savvy subject does not match many lived realities (Chakrabarty 2000). The irony of cosmopolitanism is that we all presumably have to become the same to enjoy neoliberal human rights while at the same time this is not possible or necessarily desirable.

The omission of the political and imperial aside, Cheah (2006) argues that any cosmopolitan prototype needs to demonstrate a city both *interconnected* enough to produce cosmopolitan institutions with sufficient regulatory reach and *interconnected* enough to form political consciousness of solidarity—an inclusive conception of "our city." This rest of this paper looks at Kalyan-Dombivli as a case of what is happening in

basic needs and must adopt a lifestyle that is considered inadequate or shameful by their culture's standards.

² Ones which presently dominate can be divided into three meta-conceptualizations: market-based, redistributive, or recognition based conceptions of justice and needs. See Harvey, 1996; McNay, 2008, or Fraser, 2004 for more discussion.

³ Jessop's (2001) term referring to the explicit and implicit preferences of institutions or social structures.

⁴To be understood broadly as any tangible, intangible, or embodied objects of value in human relations economic and otherwise.

Indian cities within the gale winds of current social forces and processes and extends this case to discuss the how urbanism in India does not seem to be producing cosmopolitan cities but divided ones.

1.2 Kalyan-Dombivli

Kalyan-Dombivli (KD) is part of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). Changes in the Regional Plan in the 1980s saw the rapid development of KD from that of a peri-urban area to that of a metropolis. Rapid land price increases in the core city of Mumbai and environmental restrictions on polluting industries both by the State and the National Government quickly urbanized KD. Its proximity to Mumbai and the availability of water and cheap land made this city grow over the years from a population of 149,894 in 1961 to 1,047,297 in 2001. By 2020 conservative projections predict the city to reach 2,052,000. The built up area witnessed a tremendous growth from a mere 20.5 percent per annum between 1968-83 to almost 31 percent between 1983-87 to a further 48 percent in the post 2000 period. The KD Municipality (127 sq.km) was formed in 1983 and the seeds of many of its inequalities and turf conflicts were sown then. First three Municipal Councils with very different socio-economic areas were merged (Kalyan, Dombivli and Ambarnath). Ambarnath later won its battle to be a separate municipality. Officially KD is one city, but people self-identify as being from Dombivli or Kalyan. Kalyan has a long history of being an active port along with ferry building, agricultural and fishing industries. The Agris⁵ and Kolis castes dominated and there has always been a sizable Moslem minority. The Kolis (being fisherpeople) were never land owners and have not benefited from the urbanization of KD (like the landholding Agris) and their livelihood space and security continues to shrink. Also, from the late 1970s till present Kalyan attracts poor migrants from Utter Pradesh and Bihar. Dombivli is much newer and most of its inhabitants are middle-class Brahmins who sold their flats and moved from Mumbai when real estate values jumped there. Most of the landowners are still Agris, but most of the inhabitants of Dombivli are not. In order to secure their political power, many Agris encouraged other Agris from rural Maharashtra to settle (informally) in KD thereby giving them the votes they need to dominate the local council. Most of the employed in Dombivli commute to Mumbai whereas as a significant portion of Kalyan's population works locally in informal sectors. However, more middle and elite class residential and consumption areas are starting to come up in Kalyan in response to changes made to the development codes. Dombivli is spoken locally of as being the more modern, middle-classed, and cultured of the two. Also more than one city official said that "you won't find any Moslems or poor migrants from Bihar or Utter Pradesh in Dombivli." The City Development Plan (CDP) cites that 30 percent of the population is working-class—meaning employed in the formal economy and 43 percent are said to be living in slum-like conditions (KDMC 2007).

2 SOCIAL FORCES

2.1 Neoliberal Statecraft

Wacquant (2009) offers a useful sketch of the neoliberal state model that originated in the United States but has been taken up by elites across the globe including India's⁶ as a "political project aiming to remake the nexus of market, state and citizenship from above" (306). While this project has met differential reception and adaptation, four specific logics remain ubiquitous: (1) economic deregulation and the affirmation of market-mechanisms for organizing most social activities, (2) welfare state devolution, retraction and recomposition to expand the intensification of the reification of labor, land, and public goods, (3) articulation of individual responsibility in all livelihood spheres, and (4) expansive, intrusive, and proactive disciplinary measures to deal with those who resort to illicit activities or who are associated with blight or obsolescence (307). A look at development plans, present spatial restructuring ambitions and the focus and limits of poverty alleviation programs show that many (but not all) powerful actors are pushing for the neoliberalization of institutions and cities in India (see Banerjee-Guha 2009). In fact, the entire outward growth of Mumbai to its peripheries such as Thane, KD, Navi Mumbai and Ulhas Nagar were part of this neoliberal strategy of interest groups to capture prime land and convert it into urban areas – a process

⁵ Open Maharashtra agricultural caste

⁶ For how tenants of neoliberalism have been taken up and adapted in India see: Chopra 2003, Fernandez and Heller 2006.

that also affects the social engineering of these new urban areas.⁷

2.2 Entrepreneurial City Governance

Neoliberal statecraft encourages entrepreneurial local governance. This mode of governance gives primacy to creating a ‘good business climate’ as this is seen as eventually leading to citizen wellbeing. Cities view themselves as being in competition for capital and model (read middle-class) urbanites hence the interest KD has in becoming a “World-Class City.” The shift from government to governance has made it easier for elites to access formerly public assets (land especially) and gives business interests (developers in particular) a larger say in development plans and building/land regulations (see also Noor & Baud 2009). The CDP and discussions with top engineers and planners shows that KD has taken to heart that the city’s top priority is to render itself desirable to middle-class professionals and to draw hi-tech and education centric businesses.

2.3 Corporate Economy

The corporate economy in KD, like most of India⁸ is becoming more services and technology-dependent and capital intensive. This is important for two reasons. First, it creates more intervention in urban real estate markets and spatial organization as a mode of capital accumulation. Secondly, the possibility of integrating the majority of the urban population into this sector is nonsensical and we see transition narratives giving way to pragmatics of a dualizing city and thus stratified citizenship. Primitive accumulation and/or accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2006) have not been at all sufficiently mitigated by adequate & regular wages or government expenditures. Regardless, economic policies and city development plans continue to be dominated by a corporate logic and a desire to fashion “world-class” cities. For example, the only time the poor were directly mentioned in the development plan was to list them as a “cheap labor reserve” that would attract businesses or to speak of their settlements in terms of urban blight in need of renewal. Both the middle-class and elite desire to modernize cities and the government’s focus on hi-growth sectors and posh housing developments are in practice anti-poor when large sections of the population live in poverty and are non-skilled or low-skilled workers involved in tiny informal enterprises (Benjamin 2000). The physical planning and political dichotomy of superimposing a corporate economy and neoliberal society onto a city like KD shows up with the contradictory co-existence of village society and the modern consumerist society present at Lifestyle City and Metro Mall. Direct ways of integrating poorer groups/places into these processes are curiously missing, and it is difficult to ascertain how these developments would positively affect them *ipso facto*. The idea of an integrated inclusive city where everyone has the same economic and social rights holds no water within the current modes of capital accumulation and related urban redevelopment.

2.4 Informality Urbanization⁹

Informality is the norm rather than the exception in KD. Two kinds of informality prevail. One, spatial informality (rather, illegality as per the Plan), and, two economic informality (that is, more workers in unorganized sector). Almost all constructions violate one or more building laws or the master plan. This is because of the superimposition of new planning rules on existing villages that formed the city historically. Second, new poor migrants settle in low cost accommodation (slums) that draw low investment from landlords and the state. These spatial anomalies result in segregation and adverse incorporation within the polity. In terms of economic informality, recent studies put the percentage of people at work in the informal “unorganized” sector as high as 60 percent (KDMC 2007). These two aspects together mean that governance¹⁰ is largely informal. In practice the application of laws and codes is flexible and negotiable

⁷ Chatterjee (2004) describes this process as the *embourgeoisement* of Indian cities.

⁸ See Chatterjee 2009.

⁹ Roy’s (2009) term for the dominant mode of urbanization in India and other developing countries.

¹⁰ Defined broadly as the organizing of social, political, and economic relations—the classification of people and places and the determination of correlative entitlements, duties and modes of discipline. Discipline should be understood here in the Foucaudian ‘governmentality’ sense. It refers to how powerful agents create the types of places and people their interests and visions require.

depending on the capacity, legitimacy and interests of those attempting to govern economic and spatial development and those attempting to thwart these actions. Issues of land tenure, land use, and development (for the rich to the poor) are often decided quasi-legally in a particularistic and arbitrary manner by government actors in conjunction with vested interest groups. This opaque condition renders both plans to develop KD in lines with corporate and middle class requirements difficult and activities to make these processes less detrimental to the urban poor in a formal rules based manner difficult. Often changes to the status quo become bogged down in court battles and extra-judicial negotiations given the multiplicity and contradictions that exist within the various land tenure and land use arrangements that at one time those in power acquiesced to.

Informality becomes important when deciphering the selectivities of the government in KD. Formal government is rights-based and these rights are in practice tied to the legality of one's occupancy and economic activity. This translates into a mechanism of exclusion by relegating those who do not meet these requirements and their representatives to the margins of policy debates that are biased towards the formal-corporate economy and propertied citizens because their demands are seen as legitimate and modern rather than problematic and obsolete. Also the demands of the corporate economy and middle-class suit the government because these high-cost developments and industries generate larger-scale rent-seeking opportunities. The poor's advocates/representatives do take part in city-level governance practices but not when it comes to formal economic policy or master plans.¹¹ Those with direct access (and control) over poorer inhabitants are allowed in when it is deemed instrumental to the implementation of policies/programs aimed at disciplining poor (i.e. turning them into entrepreneurs, making them responsible for waste management, or eviction/demolition facilitation).

2.5 Civil Society and Citizenship

To avoid the erasure of stratified social life in KD concepts of civil society and citizen need to be divided in two; into civil and political society and citizens and populations (following Chatterjee 2004). Civil society is the domain of middle and elite classes who are more able to comply with private property laws, tax responsibilities, and participate in the professional economy—a situation where the links between civil society, the state, and the market are clear and reinforcing. In Indian cities (KD included) one often finds relatives of powerful state and market actors (or retired powerful state or private sector actors) heading the NGOs most likely to win government contracts. In this way many NGOs are also rent-seeking organizations.

The urban poor's citizenship status is tenuous at best given the illegality or quasi-legality of their work and occupancy. Therefore the government and powerful market actors do not regard them and their organizations as having the same rights or ability to participate in governance as civil society. Rather, the poor are *populations*—those who live and work in the City but do not have rights only claims. Populations and political society (their associations, patrons, local-level politicians and bureaucrats, and street level service providers) engage in constant negotiations over what different poorer groups and areas can claim from the city informally and as such these actors can be seen to constitute the sphere of informal governance (political society) responsible for dealing with those rendered obsolete and pathological to modernization processes and capitalism.¹² Stunted proletarianization and the present retreat of the social arm of the state in the context of intensified commoditization (especially of labor, land, and public goods) creates an ever increasing governance gap—between what the formal state and civil society is willing and able to do—which necessitates political society. It engages in constant negotiations over what different poorer groups and areas can claim and at what price. Since these claims come from those whose productive activities and means of place-making are objects of stigma and illegality and because the State cannot provide for all equally, these arrangements are often ad-hoc and off the record. This makes determining past legal precedents for future claims difficult and makes the poor vulnerable to exploitation. If one of the central tenants of cosmopolitan citizenship is the ability to legitimately call upon the state and civil society to tend to issues that negatively impact well-being, the apartheid the present breadth and

¹¹ See Benjamin 2000 for how this plays out in Bangalore.

¹² Today's political society is not a pre-modern social form that the neo-liberal State is trying stamp-out in to achieve orderly cities rendered valuable to capital investment and accumulation and aesthetically pleasing to modern urbanites (although this is undoubtedly how some planners and much of the urban middle and elite classes see it). It can be seen as an outcome of neo-liberal statecraft.

necessity of political society represents is a serious obstacle.

3 SOCIAL PROCESSES

3.1 Middle Class Hegemony

KD has one of the largest middle class populations of any Indian city and wants to keep it that way. Present large scale private township developments like Lifestyle City and Eco-City are public private partnerships targeting mainly middle-classes who want to get out of Mumbai and who can afford to purchase a high quality of life in KD. Like in other India cities (Baud & Nanain 2008; Fernandez & Heller 2006) the middle-class is becoming active in civil-society and activating their 'right to the city.' At the neighborhood level this usually takes the form of citizen or housing societies working with officials to enforce or create regulations to deal with urban blight in their residential areas and other public spaces they wish to enjoy more. At the higher levels this can take the form of filing public interest litigations to use the courts to pressure municipal public officials to enforce rules and regulations often resulting in punitive measures being taken against poorer urbanites.¹³ While being active in civil society they tend to opt out of dealing with local parties and politicians who they see as being corrupt and sustaining 'vote-bank politics.' They see household level quality of life as being mainly something one works hard to be able to afford and see family mobility as being mostly a product of their children's education and training. As they can afford to send their children to private English medium schools-thereby securing their ability to compete for professional jobs)-most are optimistic about their future. Given their parochial interests in civil society and avoidance and criticism of political society we can expect turf battles and competing claims and needs to increase in the future rather than a more cosmopolitan inclusive city emerging. The middle class depends on the labor of *populations* in maintaining their high quality of life but rarely seems to appreciate the poor's right to a higher-quality of life.

Neoliberal statecraft suits urban middle-classes and civil society oriented to the future, enamored with world-classing their cities, and who have the resources to compete in the professional job-market and live in a legitimate well-serviced flat. The ethos of self-responsibility and entrepreneurialism mixed with consumerism and faith in technology position them to represent the implied 'good' urban citizen in the CDP¹⁴ and large-scale urban renewal/development projects. These are the citizens that malls, business districts, and leisure facilities, promenades, and walkable sidewalks presumably will benefit. Essentially they are living examples of what liberties market-liberalization and individual responsibility can bring. They want the government to enforce its laws and codes and to do away with irrational ones that prohibit growth and modernity. However when it comes to issues of individual livelihood they don't see the state and politics as being central (Gooptu 2009). If the government "cleans up its act" they are happy about the market and individual effort doing the rest. They can problem-solve quite well and profitably within neoliberalism and their associations work directly with the government in the form of private-public partnerships for the purposes of tackling together issues of urban blight or to be granted space for self-regulation (private townships, housing societies, gated communities). While close scrutiny would often reveal informal aspects in their modes of occupancy and livelihood—their access to rights and markets managed through state capture and bribery—these practices are not the focus of public interest litigation or removal and their legitimacy is never seriously questioned. To be blunt, their response to neoliberal statecraft presently would likely be "give me more."

3.2 Populations

*Populations'*¹⁵ experiences of neoliberal statecraft has been more precarious and punitive. The withdrawal of the social arm of the state and the opening of markets has increased the economic insecurity of the urban poor and has made them targets of punitive measures targeting urban blight and obsolescence (see also Davis 2004). They feel that they can expect no real accountability from employers given past experience and the present economic climate. Some have changed tactics and shifted their attention to the

¹³ See Bham (2009) for Delhi case.

¹⁴ The CDPs are prepared by middle-class or elite consultants so they tend to mimic their ambitions and lifestyle preferences.

¹⁵ Again, Chatterjee's term for poorer urbanites with weak citizenship.

local government to demand “the right to live” not tied to property and formal labor.¹⁶ The acceptance of *scraps of citizenship* is symptomatic of the social processes of hyper-clientelism and neo-feudalism that have evolved in part because of the shift from developmentalism to neoliberalism. The poor have little reason to put their faith in party politics and patrons given that the extent their livelihood and occupancy in cities have become stigmatized, shifted around, and/or targeted for removal. However, the formal state and civil society offer them little more than the rhetoric of self-help, civic-sense and micro-credit. While they feel the state should provide basic needs including decent access to land, there is little trust that this will happen. Similarly while they feel that employers should be more accountable and offer more social wages, there is little trust that this will happen. Dispositions of indifference and fatalism have taken root in many underemployed or unemployed urban poor.

This begs the question why do *populations* continue to engage in vote-bank politics? Even with the retreat of the social arm of the state and with the emergence of civil society, the poor in KD continue to see political parties, elected officials and party workers as the main avenue to reasonable (in)security and vote in large numbers. The dependency on clientelism is best understood as the result of the persistent threat of developers and rent-seekers and increased material shortfalls (future uncertainty) which results in risk aversion, future discounting, a sense of immediacy, and little trust regarding the value of formal rights (see Wood 2001). This sort of disposition leads them to continue to participate as clients in order to secure present levels of resources rather than to risk opting out and demanding better (but more costly) resources and opportunities from formal citizen, employee, or consumer based transactions. Basically forms of hyper-clientelization and neo-feudalism dominate in political society that both appeases and exploits those without the resources and capacity to be self-reliant and self-disciplined neoliberal consumer citizens.

3.3 Urban Development

Urban renewal is being cast in terms of making a world-class city. Also there are signs that the protection offered by political society in KD is waning. Many landlords of informal settlements are looking to cash-in on the state’s recent offers of more FSI (Floor Space Index) and amendments to the urban land ceiling act (MHUPA 2009, Whitehead & Moore 2007) and are planning to push out families who have lived on their land as renters for generations. The idea of an integrated inclusive society where everyone has the same economic and social rights holds little water in this context. However, the formally democratic state (even one where the middle class enjoys a tentative hegemony) cannot write-off the majority of the population so it *tolerates* the informal economy, *exploits* its social capital, and *nurtures* the charitable/paternalistic aspects of civil society to prevent the marginalized or redundant from becoming a class for itself and effectively fighting the world-classing of KD.

4 THREE FACES OF KALYAN-DOMBIVLI

Slums are unauthorized settlements marked by self-help substandard housing, poor sanitation and insecure basic services provision. The attributes that seems to account most for the different administration of slums is whether it is on government or private land and second the strength of its local leaders. It is largely at the discretion of city administrators, street level bureaucrats and local politicians the extent populations on government land can negotiate access to services and occupancy. However, when the slum is on privately owned land then the owners must officially sign-off if services are to be provided beyond water and electricity and this rarely happens as it would require loss of some land and would also strengthen claims to tenure when the owners decide to develop their property. The strength of the local leaders—ward councilors, party workers, and other slum leaders impacts the quality of life in slums. Those inclined, who have adequate knowledge of government schemes and “enough money and muscle power” can draw welfare improvement. However, those who do not have these abilities or who are indifferent to the needs of slum dwellers do not. Many slum communities express their frustration with the job-market, the local-state, and patrons but in the same breath express their resignation, “what can we do...nothing but try to survive the best we can.” Also invariably the local ward councilor and top party workers are the only ones they can go to for help in managing their insecurity, trying to secure better services from the city, or to look for more work.

¹⁶ See also Chatterjee 2009 & Argawala 2008.

If their contacts in political society are not in the mood to help then they are out of luck.¹⁷ There is little perceived space for protest within political society given the central position ward councilors and political workers have in the stressed social networks of the urban poor. Some form of hyper-clientelism seems the only way to secure a low-level livelihood.

Gauthans (or urban villages) were once rural settlements that became surrounded by the city. Most of the land is designated as agricultural however most have tenements built on them. Spatially there is normally a few nice houses where the owner and his/her family live (usually *Agris*) surrounded by rows of *chawls* that are rented out (often in terms of 100 year leases) this is then encircled by small shops also leased out. As these settlements are considered organic rather than illegal (Risbud 2002) the landlords can rule over these villages as they like. They can be benevolent and allow the city and government schemes to cater to the welfare of their renters or they can keep them out. As land regulations shift to developer benefit and as real estate values rise, many of these families are looking to develop their land which will require removing many present renters. Even though some renters have been on their land for generations most seem to feel little responsibility towards them. We witnessed one head of a *gauthan* threaten a renter who was struggling against eviction. They were told, “get out by the end of the week or you know I know how to get you out.” Also for many who live in *gauthans* the ward councilor is often either their landlord or a relative of their land lord. Thus to mount any serious protest would result in violence (harassment and beating from strong-men) or worse being cast-out suffering what Agamben (1998) calls “homo sacer” or “bare life” a situation of being legally and politically dead. Lack of property and formal employment make relations with the state difficult to say the least. If they exhibit a lack of at least *feigned loyalty* and acquiescence to the status quo in the political society of the *gauthan* they risk being a citizen altogether. This leads to forms of neo-feudalism in the city. This neo-feudalism is also patronized by the planners as they are excluded from formal planning processes.

The private township Lifestyle City organized via a private-public partnership is nearing completion in KD. It will offer those who can afford it a private well-ordered and well-serviced city within a city. All the amenities and beautification of surrounding area will be managed by the developer and their contacts at the MMRDA and Municipality before owners take possession. Once enough flats in each high-rise are sold housing societies will be formed and management will be handed to them. Most heads of housing societies tend to be well versed regarding their rights and rules and regulations around service provision and can negotiate directly with providers. They often avoid political society and their economic, social and cultural capital enables them to fashion good relations with the state and the private sector. Sometimes state and private sector officials themselves are the beneficiaries of these private townships (a form of rent-seeking from within – see Sridharan 2003).

5 A COSMOPOLITAN HORIZON?

Strangely enough both the poor and the middle class urbanites have dispositions marked by pathological political cynicism. It results in the middle class lumping the urban poor in with the structures of politics and fearing that they are equally responsible for the blight and obsolescence in the city. They feel that both (poor and vote-bank politics) need to be disciplined and/or undermined. Since they are able to organize much of what they need within civil society and the market and because they have access to the formal state apparatus and to higher levels of political society, their political cynicism is more pathological for the poor than for them presently. The poor’s cynicism is pathological in regards to self-exploitation and the acceptance of scraps of citizenship.

Spending time on the middle class is important for historically they are critical in whether society moves towards universal provision or increasing inequality—meaning they are an important in determining the form and content of class compromises (Wood & Gouge 2004). Their apparent lack of social responsibility or empathy (beyond charity) for those rendered obsolete by economic and social forces poses problems for inclusivity. Also their efforts to control more and more urban space and to disempower political society without offering paths for reasonable integration for those for which it is the only buffer between “bare-life” are concerning.

¹⁷ Please see van Dijk (2009) for more discussion about ward councilors and party workers.

Another somewhat surprising finding is that slums in KD are more diversified socially, productively, and culturally than the more middle-class areas of the city. Also, while the middle and elites seem to stigmatize slum dwellers they rarely speak too negatively about them. On the contrary they connect some of the improvements (in terms of the city's general built environment and entertainment) to the influx of middle-classes from Mumbai. In these ways slums resemble a cosmopolitan city within a neoliberalizing city. However these aspects of slum life are rarely celebrated and they are in many ways exploited by the political regimes that govern the city.

Both citizens and *populations* structure urban politics and the built environment by their reaction to each other and by their reactions to larger forces of globalization, corporate economic growth, neoliberal statecraft, and informality urbanization. However neither seem to offer hope for the proper "revolutionary subject" (Zizek 2008), Marx's hoped for "historical agency" (Davis 2004), or the "change agents" (Marcuse 2009) necessary to subordinate the needs of capital and the state to the needs of a more just and sustainable society. Given the present dynamics and structures of governance, occupancy and work, KD will not meet Cheah's criteria for a properly cosmopolitan site anytime soon. The question is are we to accept polarizing cities and second class modes of citizen-state and worker-market relations as facets of contemporary urbanized society in India or do we want to work towards more creative and inclusive modes of urbanization?

At the end we observe that Cheah's interconnectedness in terms of cosmopolitan institutions and solidarity has yet to emerge in the case of KD. Spatial interconnectedness through administrative connection is marred by social and political divisions. Obstacles to interconnectedness are also reflected in the contradictory lifestyles of the haves and have-nots within Kalyan-Dombivili in the form of Slums, Guathans and the Lifestyle City. These different worlds within such close proximity necessitate the type of multifaceted illiberal (undemocratic) governance systems presently running Indian cities often shrouded in neoliberal clothes.

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