GENDERED CITYSCAPE: NEOLIBERAL URBAN RESTRUCTURING AND THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF STREET BASED WORKERS IN BANGALORE, INDIA

By

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Abstract

In this thesis, I study the transformation of Bangalore, India through the everyday experiences of certain street based workers – sex workers, street vendors and pourakarmikas. Using interviews and participant observation methods, I learn and make known the meanings that the respondents, a majority of whom are women, make, of their changing experiences in a city which is increasingly becoming a space of exclusion and dispossession through processes of 'development' and neoliberalization. By using gender as an analytical category, I argue that a process of feminization is being deliberately devised against these communities who perform reproductive labour for the city. I show how it is on this purposeful devalorization of the communities' performing reproductive labour, that the so called productive economy builds its edifice. Violence emerges as another means of devaluing not only their work but also their intersecting identities embodied by belonging to a certain class, caste and gender. I argue that certain civil society groups working together with state apparatuses use violence to "other" these communities thereby working to exclude and marginalize them. However, the need for violence against these communities is also suggestive of the contestation and defiance demonstrated by those who are dominated, against the systems and structures that work in marginalizing them. By highlighting the constructedness of seemingly natural hierarchies, this thesis hopes to contribute to feminist scholarship and praxis by unraveling the connections which keep functional, structures of exploitation in neoliberal cities. This analysis can contribute to feminist urban studies literature and can be utilized by activist groups in the city and outside, not only in working towards achieving more equitable cities but also in becoming more aware of the pervasiveness of gender relations in our everyday lives at multiple levels.

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To the people who added life to my study – to all my respondents who gave me their time and trusted me enough to speak at length about their lives over eating mangoes, palm-reading and drinking tea - I owe this thesis to them.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Me: I don't know what to study for my thesis. I need to come up with a topic in a week's time!
Friend: Relax. Tell me why you chose to study this course.
Me: Huh? Seriously!
Friend: Yes. Tell me why you chose to study this course
Me: Hmm.. because I'm curious to know how gender plays out in our lives...in yours, in mine, in the bus conductor's, the vegetable vendor's.. how we negotiate and wrestle with it every single day..
Friend: There you go. That looks like a thesis topic to me

It was like that, over a conversation on WhatsApp, that the seeds of this thesis started to germinate. It was a curiosity, which started to take an academic-feminist turn after coming to CEU, which made me zero in on a study that would involve speaking to certain people and understand the workings of gender through their experiences. Through these experiences, I wanted to trace the connections between global politics and the everyday lives of people living in the city of Bangalore;[1] the everyday lives of people who work to service/reproduce the city, and occupy spaces that are most visible in it – its streets. Concisely, this study focuses on the gendered impacts of urban restructuring in Bangalore as understood by the everyday experiences of certain street based workers in the city – street vendors, sex workers and pourakarmikas.[2]

In *The Urban Question*, Manuel Castells (1977) speaks of the city as a place that reflects the historical workings of capitalism through its contestations, compromises, successes and failures. Specifically, city streets are a space that reflect power struggles and, therefore, have become an important site to understand competing claims to the city. Similarly, Bayat (2010) speaking about

[1] The city's name changed from Bangalore to Bengaluru on Nov 1st, 2014. However, I refer to the city as Bangalore in this thesis because the name change had largely been at the insistence of a famous Kannada (the official language of the state of Karnataka, of which Bangalore is the capital city) literary figure and thinker, in a moment of Kannada "chauvinism" (Jayaram, 2014). Since I'm more comfortable referring to the city as Bangalore and because this usage communicates more linguistic inclusiveness, I will refer to the city as Bangalore.

[2] Pourakarmikas are people who are employed to do cleaning work in cities, towns, villages of Karnataka. Sweeping the streets, solid waste disposal are the main responsibilities of pourakarmikas. This work is majorly done by the Madiga community, an "untouchable" dalit caste, which has been historically made to remove filth (people's excreta and dead animals) as a caste based occupation. The term pourakarmika became effective from 1973 in the state of Karnataka to address the discrimination faced by them while being referred by derogatory names such as "bhangi" and "jaadamaali". This also coincided with a committee being formed in that period by the Government of Karnataka, to look into the living conditions of this community (email communication with Prof.Y.J.Rajendra).

non-Western cities, in particular about certain cities in the Middle-East, argues that for scores of "informal people" who are structurally denied institutional power of dissent, streets are key political spaces – spaces that allow for public display of dissent; spaces that allow for bonds to be developed among strangers, and, spaces which become crucial for the disadvantaged and dispossessed in cities to earn a livelihood (p.11). Additionally, streets and the people who have spent most of their lives on it, earning a livelihood, are firsthand witnesses to the city's continual transformation. These are reasons why I chose streets as a site of study. In this thesis, I ask what the everyday experiences of street based workers reveal about the gendered impacts of neoliberal urban restructuring in the city of Bangalore.

To answer this question, this thesis draws from several academic disciplines such as feminist global political economy, critical urban theory and gender studies to complement the knowledge gathered from the field. The broad theoretical frame that guides this study is the use of gender as an analytical category (Scott, 1986; Harding 1988; Peterson 2005). By using gender as an analytical category, I focus upon the differential value attached to those activities, subjectivities and ideologies that are considered masculine (and hence more valued) and those that are devalued because of its association with femininity. This lens is crucial to critically interrogate (gendered) dichotomies such as masculine/feminine, public/private, productive/reproductive and subject these categories to constant re-evaluation to expose its non-universal, non-natural, extremely political characteristics. I use the concept *feminized others* in order to show how certain communities (not restricted to women) doing reproductive labour for Bangalore are finding their labour devalued in a city guided by neoliberal goals (Peterson, 2005)[3]. At the same time, I dislocate the concept of reproductive labour from its traditional connotation of *non*-productive, by revealing the dependence of productive economies on reproductive

[3] Reproductive labour refers to labour that is considered as less valuable because of its lack of/marginal "productive" or profit earning capacity (Waring, 1988). Here I use it to refer to people occupied in doing what is typically done by women at homes, but in the public, and as paid reproductive labour essential for the city's regeneration. In this study it is work performed by the pourakarmikas who clean the city, street vendors who sell fresh flowers, produce food and women who do sex work).

economies *and* its devaluation (Mies, 1986; Waring, 1988). I use the concept of *violence* (Galtung, 1969, 1990) and its typologies - direct, structural and cultural – to demonstrate how a deliberate process of "othering" is employed by certain sections of society along with the state, in order to discipline these "deviants", thereby working to *feminize* these communities further.[4] I also use the concepts of *civil society* and *political society* to refer to the contestations between those with structural advantages and the communities without, in asserting their presence in the city and realizing their conflicting visions for it.

By using these concepts, this thesis shows how the labour of communities involved in doing reproductive work for the city, is devalued due to the structural and systematic workings of a vision of urban restructuring that follows neoliberal ideologies. I argue that the experiences of my respondents are testimonies to the entrenchment of unequal caste (therefore class) and gender power relations and that access to city space is controlled and regulated for the feminized others (Peterson, 2005). This study exposes the non-naturalness of the experiences of marginalization, devaluation and violence felt by my respondents by linking their local everyday experiences with political-economic transitions across various scales (city, state, national, international).

This study contributes to feminist scholarship, firstly, by applying a gender perspective to an area of study (critical urban theory) that has largely ignored a gender analysis of neoliberal urbanization. Secondly, by not assuming the naturalness of hierarchies but by highlighting their constructedness, this thesis further strengthens the feminist stance that stresses on the need to critically re/evaluate categories of difference that are believed to be natural. This thesis, with its focus on everyday experiences, also contributes to feminist praxis, which can

[4] I borrow the concept of the "other" from its application in feminist and post-colonial theory. The "other", crucial to the construction of the "self", is projected on to identities with which the self does not wish to be associated with, but whose expulsion at the same time works to maintain the superiority of the "self". Eg: In order to create a superior heterosexual self, it is important that homosexuality be "othered"; in order to assert one's masculinity, feminized "others" becomes crucial (Runyan &Peterson, 2014)

perhaps trigger a concerted political contestation to the neoliberal visions of city making, in Bangalore and outside, that is currently dominating urban planning discourses.

The following section provides a brief contextual background of Bangalore in order to understand the transitions the city has been going through and to have some knowledge about the contours of the city while reading the following chapters[5].

1.1 Bangalore: Past-Present connections

Nair (2005) calls the history of Bangalore as the history of two cities – one, the walled city on the western part invaded by the feudal warrior Kempegowda in 1537 (henceforth referred to as the walled city) and a more recent part owing to British colonization dating to the nineteenth century (1807) on the eastern side - the Cantonment, referred to as Bangalore. The walled city was known for its tanks, large temple complexes and Brahmin *agraharas* which were built by the grants given by the warrior elite to the "legitimizing authority" of the Brahmins to ensure that they could continue their control over agricultural resources (Nair, 2005, p.30).[6] The Cantonment area became home for "European squatters and Indian camp followers" and in order to service them, many groups, most importantly, "lower caste menials" came from the Madras Presidency for employment (Nair, 2015, p.42). The colonial, casteist history of the pourakarmikas in the city, who are part of this study, perhaps goes back to this period, with the community still continuing to service the city by cleaning its garbage.

The planning of the two areas was very distinct from each other. While the walled city was home to numerous wholesale and retail trades with close proximity to residences, the Cantonment area was monitored by strict zoning laws which demarcated residential spaces from work and social spaces. In the walled city, streets were what was left after building houses and

[5] Most of the information about Bangalore is borrowed from the book *The Promise of a Metropolis* (2005) written by historian Janaki Nair in which she has traced the history of Bangalore from the sixteenth century to the beginning of the millennium.

[6] Brahmins form the top most rung in the social ordering of people as per the *varna* system, more commonly referred to as the caste structure. *Agraharas* are brahmin settlements. Land for agraharas was usually granted to this community by kings or nobles for their religious "learning" (Chitnis, 2003, p.199).

were mainly constructed for pedestrian use and also as a space for people to interact. By contrast, the Cantonment area defined a new use of streets mainly for wheeled vehicles. It was common to see soldiers marching, people going on walks in the promenade, cycling etc., but this did not stretch to the areas which housed the labouring castes in the Cantonment areas, with these areas resembling the walled city. These disparities continue until today, with well planned areas being inhabited by the upper caste, upper class persons while the urban poor, especially living in slums and having have little access to basic and civic amenities.

The planned spatial segregation of the city as per caste calculations date back to more than a century ago when city planning reinforced caste hierarchies. This character is important to note here, as one will see in the following chapters how caste hierarchies find newer ways of establishing itself in the twenty first century. It was usually for the Brahmins that the biggest plots were allotted, and allocations for the poor, even if planned to be made in separate sections, were vehemently opposed. When the erstwhile municipality with more progressive values proposed the allocating housing plots to non-Brahmins in 1915, oppositions were raised by the Brahmins to not allow "non-vegetarians" to spoil the "sanctity of the area."[7] (Nair, 2005, p.53)

The trajectory of Bangalore's economy is important, contextually and culturally, to understand the interplay of national, regional and global factors that have shaped the city through the years. A textile manufacturing economy largely dominated the walled city up until the first half of the twentieth century. From the 1940s until the late 1970s, Bangalore was known for its public sector led economy with a large middle class population in unionized jobs employed in large scale factories for Aeronautics, Electronics, Machine Tools and several other state industries. In the 1980s, several private units also started to set up industries making Bangalore a city famous for its factories and industries, largely public but also gradually opening

[7] Brahmins, considered superior than the other caste groups, are known to be vegetarians (the caste system is explained in more detail on p.16-17). As opposed to the municipality a century ago that demonstrated the political will to mix caste groups in residential layouts, the current city corporation seems intent on keeping segregation based on caste and class intact. The case of street vendor evictions that took place overnight after affluent residents complained of "non-vegetarian food smells" will be discussed in more detail in the fourth chapter.

up to private firms. These manufacturing firms employed a large number of formal and informal labour.

The transition to private sectors in the 1980s gained more momentum after the 1990s, with the country undergoing economic restructuring and Bangalore becoming the favoured place for garments industries and the Information Technology industry. This period is said to be marked with an increasing private sector and informal labour sector presence. With the change in the economic pattern from public to private sector, from formal to informal, from manufacturing to services, the tastes of the city dwellers began undergoing changes. This was most visible in the housing patterns - the city once famous for its low storey, individual houses built on plots planned by state authorities, soon gave rise to private real estate developers and attractive models of high rise apartments complexes and gated communities (Nair, 2005). How globalization has affected consumption patterns, desires and imaginations of people and its effects on the street based communities will be elaborated in chapter three.

At the turn of the millennium, the focus began to shift more to the "image" of Bangalore, as the city was gaining international attention for its software industry. Aspirations to make Bangalore like Singapore, with the help of elite corporate members who could bring in their corporate skills to plan for the city and its administration, took the shape of the erstwhile Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF), set up in 1999, and Agenda for Bangalore Infrastructure Development (ABIDe) set up in 2008 (Sami, 2013). Through such initiatives, the city has been witnessing an emergence of "civil society" (Chatterjee, 2004), which along with the state is shaping the city more and more after its desires of making the city "world class". As I write this thesis, a Vision Group has been formed for Bangalore, consisting of more or less the same group of elite members in the older task forces. This Vision Group is led by the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Mr.Siddaramaiah, whose presence would be advantageous for the priorities of this group to receive committed action. The disposition of these elite members towards elected representatives, democratic people's participation and legislative processes is largely one of

disdain with these task force members readily bypassing legislative procedures to achieve their goals (as will be demonstrated later in chapter three with the Tender SURE case). The political trajectory of Bangalore and the state of Karnataka spans key milestones - from its neighborhood committees for workers struggles, pedagogical (largely male, Brahmin based) groups with its allegiance to liberal ideology, the eruption of vibrant dalit cultural activism in most parts of the state of Karnataka in the seventies, the emergence of Kannada nationalism and language politics dotting the decade of the eighties and early nineties, to the emergence of middle class resident welfare associations, citizens groups and task forces post the nineties. The last category of asserting citizenship is particularly reflective of the sudden focus on *urban governance* and *stakeholder participation* that was gaining much currency in urban planning discourses at the international scale, especially as per the guidelines set by IFIs (Nair, 2005; Coelho, Kamath and Vijaybhaskar, 2011).

Today, with a population of more than ten million people, Bangalore is the third largest city in India and one of the world's fastest growing cities (UN World Urbanization Prospects, 2014). Mainstream media reports speak highly about the city's steadily increasing "scores" along parameters connected with capitalistic growth, in its competition with other cities (The Economic Times, 2015, May 20). It is at this juncture of urban restructuring with the emphasis on making cities "world class", that it is important to understand what such a paradigm of urban development means to large populations of people who neither participate in such planning nor whose needs are considered. What are the effects of such undemocratic, non-redistributive, hegemonic forms of building a city on the communities whose lives and livelihoods are rendered devalued in the process? What opportunities exist for these communities to come together and make claims on the city? It is to answer these questions that this thesis aims. Below, I explain the methods used and methodology which guided me in this endeavour.

1.2 Methodology and Method

One of the concerns about this study from the time of its conception was my position as an English educated, middle class woman belonging to a dominant caste, wanting to base my study on street based worker communities - street vendors, sex workers, and pourakarmikas - whose social, economic, cultural backgrounds were very different from my own. I decided that this project should narrate the everyday experiences of street based communities who were witnessing urban restructuring in very close proximity with a gender perspective. This emerged from past experience working with some of the communities mentioned above, where I noticed that a stronger, more comprehensive engagement with gender as a frame could help articulate better, the impacts of restructuring that certain communities in the city have been enduring. As one can notice, the research question was not evolved in consultation with my respondents due to time and space constraints and was led by own observations and curiosities.

Throughout the research process, being conscious about a feminist methodology to be practiced, I began to pay attention to power relations and ethical considerations and drew from scholars who have discussed feminist methodological concerns and epistemologies at length – Harding (1986), Haraway (1988), Scott (1992), Wylie (2003), Harding and Nordberg (2005), Ackerly and True (2008). As mentioned before, this thesis goes beyond disciplinary confines and follows a standpoint epistemology that focuses on the *everyday,* intra-acting with the global, in order to listen to experiences and theories that emerge from the streets.[8] This motivation was largely due to political factors which stemmed from observing a lack of knowledge production by the communities who bore the brunt of urban restructuring; of academic work that mostly preferred a top-down approach to critical urban theory, and, more specifically, to contest the almost complete absence of certain extremely exploited communities such as the pourakarmikas in academia. I am under no illusion that what I have presented here is "objective", but instead

[8] I borrow the term intra-action from Karen Barad (2003). The concept of intra-action does not assume that there are independent agents that pre-exist their acting upon one another. Instead, the agents get their meaning from co-participating with each other, within a specific context.

admit that my subjectivity informed by my own social background, my previous work with mobilizing urban deprived communities in Bangalore, as a student of Gender Studies, has affected my research question and the decision to base this study on the three communities chosen for this study. This certainly interacted with the subjectivity of my respondents, with their own experiences of being part of the city and its transformation, which impacted the nature of responses during the course of fieldwork (Abrams, 2010).

Fieldwork for the thesis was carried out in the month of April, 2016, over two and a half weeks mainly in 5 areas (K.R.Market - Central, Avenue Road - Central, Malleshwaram - East, R.T.Nagar - North and Kengeri – South West) of Bangalore. A combination of methods was used to gather qualitative material for the study. While semi-structured interviews in Kannada covered certain important topics such as their current working conditions, processes of urban restructuring and its impacts on their livelihoods if any, their relationship with certain institutions in the city and evolution of spaces for resistance, the data collection method was not restricted to interviews alone. I also used participant observation method to record certain aspects of their work, their engagement with authorities in order to record what was not said. I accompanied the pourakarmika women in their work and met more women to speak about their collective challenges and aspirations. The manner in which the respondents were chosen followed a random sampling method (except for the sex workers with whom I have worked in the past). I would walk around market places and/or residential areas to find street vendors and pourakarmikas. Since the sex workers were all women and the pourakarmikas too were mostly women, the responses are more reflective of women's experiences, but are not restricted to it. Of my respondents (30), I spoke to a total of 6 men - three men doing street vending, one pourakarmika supervisor and 2 police personnel. The age of my respondents ranged from 12 to late seventies. Most interviews were recorded after an oral consent from my respondents but not all conversations could be recorded. Since my method resembled an ethnographic study, there would be times when I would walk around, spot something out of curiosity or interest and strike

a conversation with the people nearby. In such circumstances it was very difficult to fish out my recorder, turn it on and hold it in front of the person, which would have been awkward for me to do and would perhaps affect the spontaneity and informality of our conversation. I was able to record interviews with 16 respondents, perform unrecorded interviews with 8 respondents, and have shorter unrecorded conversations with a further 6 respondents. Of my 30 respondents 26 of them belonged to the Dalit community and 4 persons belonged to "Other backward classes" (OBCs).[9] This is telling about the persistence of the caste-occupation hierarchy, with Dalits and OBCs working in some of the most vulnerable and exploited occupations in the city.

Most of my respondents were accepting towards me wanting to speak with them once I told them I was a student wanting to study the impact of Bangalore's growth on their lives. My gender and my knowledge of the local language were very advantageous in people, especially women sharing some very personal details with me. In a few cases they even expressed thanks because finally "someone had sat down and listened to them". Adding to the discomfort experienced during these expressions, they were also instances when my power position as a privileged researcher stood out starkly.

Being aware of my power position also made me vigilant that my respondents wanted to share experiences that did not always remain with my research questions. Some of my respondents shared that they were not affected by urban restructuring at the spatial level (which was my initial focus), but by other developments, by consumption patterns among the city dwellers, tied to the transforming nature of the city's culture. This made me broaden the scope of urban restructuring to not only physical changes and the neoliberal processes that enable it, but also changes in the culture of the city driven by global-local influences. I also decided to

[9] Dalits are people belonging to the bottom most rung, in the hierarchy of the caste structure in India. They are considered even lower than the *sudras* who occupy the lowest rung in the *varna* system and have historically performed menial jobs for the people belonging to the four varnas (explained in more detail in the following chapter, p.16-17). The category of "Other Backward classes" is a category created by the state consisting of all those castes which are not as structurally disadvantaged as the dalits (who come under the "Scheduled Castes"), but who are educationally and socially disadvantaged. Most of the sudra castes belong to the OBC categories while the dalits are people who were considered "outcastes" or "untouchables" and formed the fifth category, outside the four *varnas* as per ancient hindu scriptures.

meet with the police after some of my respondents urged me to do so and I myself having seen them harass the vendors.

What was very interesting during fieldwork was the varied responses and subject-positions of my respondents that continually worked to destabilize seemingly fixed identities of a sex worker, the police, street vendors, femininity, masculinity etc. If technology was being used to the disadvantage in the experiences of the sex workers who complained of being monitored by CCTV cameras and their work being adversely effected due to online communication applications, a street vending woman was fascinated that her son could take her anywhere by relying on his phone, without losing his way in the city. If all the women with alcoholic husbands complained that the men were spoiling their lives with alcohol, there was one who said that she liked her partner more when he was inebriated as he was more affectionate towards her and does not suspect her fidelity as he did when sober. For all the police who chased women and street vendors, there were those who were unhappy what certain pressures made them do, admitting that they go through nothing less of an ordeal deciding between their personal values and professional compulsions. Being a sex worker was not all about social stigma and violence on the streets, and for the members of Sadana, it was about challenging patriarchal mindsets, carving one's identity as an actor, as an artist and dreaming of going to "foreign" places to perform and receive standing ovations.

Following Scott (1992), I have attempted as much as possible to not just represent experiences, or historical accounts, but to go a step beyond in understanding from my respondents the way they make meaning of those experiences and to unravel the discourses that construct certain experiences and subject positions. The attempt in this study has been to unravel the constructedness of identities that seem naturalized, much like gender identities. From the interviews, I have been attentive to common themes that emerged and the three analytical chapters that follow the literature review explain these themes with relevant theoretical concepts. As a feminist researcher adopting a gender lens to analyze the responses, I have been mindful to

not usurp the experiences of my respondents and overshadow their voice with my position as an academic researcher, and have, to a large extent only developed on what my respondents spoke about during the interviews.

1.3 Structure

The structure of the thesis is as follows: in the following chapter, I review literature from various disciplines of study and through this exercise borrow key theoretical concepts that I can use for this study and show how this thesis is important to fill in existing gaps. In chapter three, I argue that it is on the backs of people employed in reproductive labour on the streets of the city that productive economies are thriving, and in rendering it as natural and apolitical, structural inequalities of caste and gender are being entrenched. Here, I mainly use Peterson's (2003) concept of *feminized labour* in neoliberal political economies and Appadurai's (1990) concept of *scapes* to explain the transition in consumption patterns and its impact on street based workers, mainly the vendors and sex workers. In chapter four, I take forward the concept of devaluation to demonstrate how my respondents' access to certain spaces is monitored and restricted due to their nature of work. I show how different kinds of violence (Galtung, 1969, 1990) is used as a means to further feminize these communities by "othering" them. In chapter five, I discuss the various collective and individual means of resistance to violence, assertion to conflicting claims on space, that the *political society* has been involved in to contest the exclusions inflicted upon them by the state and *civil society*, showing their silent *and* vocal claims over the city's resources. The thesis ends with a conclusion that not only brings together the most important aspects of the study, but which also dwells on the implications and limitations of the study.

1.4 A beginning

By listening to the experiences of people working on the streets, this thesis aims to contribute to knowledge production by those communities whose voices have been largely ignored by mainstream academia with its own biases of caste, race, class, gender, to name a few. Politically,

what this study could contribute with its use of a gender analysis is to understand the deliberate mechanisms by which the seemingly natural marginalization of certain communities is constructed, perhaps making it possible to begin the almost absent articulation of gender in movements around the urban deprived, claiming access to spaces, resources in the city and outside. This study aims to make connections between the everyday, local experiences and transitions in the global political economy so that we (those who believe that *there are alternatives* to neoliberalism) become more conscious of our everyday experiences, to attempt in collectively changing it.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

In studying what the everyday experiences of people doing reproductive labour in the city can reveal about the gendered nature and impact of recent urban restructuring programs, this thesis is at the intersection of several academic disciplines. This thesis draws mainly from scholarship on critical urban theory, feminist global political economy studies and gender studies to theorize the marginalization faced by communities doing street based work in a city that is increasingly following a neoliberal logic of urban restructuring. The synthesis of these disciplines is necessary because it allows for the application of a gender lens to the everyday experiences of street based workers in Bangalore, while making connections to global political-economic factors which influence these experiences. In scholarly work done so far, the interconnections of the aspects of valuing street based labour, urban restructuring, neoliberalization and the gendering entailed in these processes have not been sufficiently addressed. It is in filling this gap that this thesis becomes important. Below, I review literature from the aforementioned disciplines and identify some of its major gaps, while at the same time, identifying certain important concepts/theories that I can apply for my own study.

2.1 Feminist Global Political Economy (GPE)

Feminist GPE scholars make for one of the most vocal critiques of the exploitative and uneven repercussions of globalization. Peterson (2003) speaks about the interconnectedness of politics and economics while referring to the process of globalization, mainstream analysis of which usually isolate the two. Building on this basic interconnectedness, feminist scholars have pointed to the ways in which gender has been systematically ignored from the analysis of globalization even by critical GPE scholars who place more emphasis on the workings of class as the basis of inequality than on the gendered processes of globalization and its impacts (Waylen, 2006).

It is the increasing portrayal of the normalization of the neoliberal ideology and its gendered nature – both in its workings and impacts - that scholars have been drawing attention

to in their critiques against it. David Harvey (2005), one of the most vociferous voices against neoliberalism defines it as follows:

> Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices (p.2)

Neoliberalism depends on the logic of open markets and trans-national trade which are made possible by newer forms of communication technologies. On the one hand this freeing up of markets has brought with it a global gendered division of labour where certain processes of production or sectors of the economy increasingly source labour from countries/regions where labour is cheap and plentiful. Most often, this is made up of women, migrants and other marginalized communities (Sassen, 1998; Waylen, 2006). On the other, increasing unemployment in traditional sectors producing for the national economy, decreasing state expenditure on welfare, dismantling/ineffective labour regulations, commodification of basic necessities, to name a few, adversely impact marginalized communities. In such a situation, hegemonic gender roles make it women's responsibility to find ways of keeping the household running. It is then that women who are already disadvantaged due to gender, class, caste, race, look towards low paying, exploitative "informal work, migration, prostitution as survival options" (Sassen, 2000, p.511). Sassen calls these alternate circuits of capital and its impact as the "feminization of survival" (p.506) because she argues that it is on the backs of these women that households, corporations and governments rely upon to survive. Further, following the neoliberal logic that emphasizes individual freedoms and responsibility, it is on women that the burden to be entrepreneurial and "productive" is put on, in order to endure the effects of neoliberalization, all in the name of empowerment and gender equality (Wilson, 2011; Kunz, 2011; Roberts & Soderberg, 2012).

Works of feminist scholars have not only revealed that neoliberal capitalism is dependent upon this gendered division of labour for global production but also found that this division has

deepened with women's reproductive labour being increasingly commodified. The traditional understanding of reproductive labour as non-waged, unaccounted for labour performed by women in the household in order to sustain the productive and therefore more profitable ventures of men have come to be severely criticized (Waring, 1988; Mies 1986). Recent feminist scholarship is pointing to the increasing commercialization of intimate, reproductive labour – be it domestic work, cooking services, child-keeping services – that is raced, sexed and classed as a result of global re-structuring (Chang & Ling, 2010; Beneria, Berik & Floro, 2015). Building on the concept of the reproductive economy, Peterson (2003, 2005) argues that global economic re-structuring and division of labour has resulted in certain kinds of labour being feminized – by way of invisibilization and devalorization – which form part of the informal, flexible labour needed to sustain the productive economy. Feminization here refers not only to women but to marginalized groups such as migrant workers, the urban poor and all those disadvantaged due to gender, race, class performing work that is devalued in the global polarization of skills, jobs, wages etc. Peterson explains:

> Capital takes advantage of existing structural hierarchies - and the ideologies and identities that reproduce them – by presupposing the reproductive labor of women, channeling feminized workers into insecure, low-paying services and labor-intensive employment, and promoting informalization and flexibilization (which are enabled by state complicity in deregulation) (2003, p.11)

I find Peterson's framework especially useful in analysing the devaluation of work experienced by all my respondents in the city of Bangalore. However, an added category to the groupings of feminized communities, in the case of India, I believe has to incorporate the category of caste. The *varna* system is social stratification based on ancient Hindu scriptures which believes that the "birth of the human society proceeded from sacrificial of the primordial man. (From) his mouth [signifying knowledge] came the Brahmin/the warrior [Kshtriya] was the product of his arms/his thighs were artisan [Vaishya] /from his feet were born the servant [Sudra]" (Jaffrelot, 2005, p.34). These gradations worked to fix class and those in turn worked to fix occupations. This is the origin of the *varna* system. Apart from the four gradations, with the "servant" Sudras forming the

lowest category, there exists a category lower than them, those of "untouchables", referred to as Dalits, who were made to perform occupations such as cleaning people's wastes, removing dead carcasses of animals and tanning and who were excluded from all conceivable domains, down to even their shadow being considered as polluting. Within each of the *varnas* are subdivisions of *jatis* or castes, which form an internal hierarchy of their own. This system is described by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, perhaps one of the greatest thinkers ever and the guiding force behind Dalit activism, as "an official gradation laid down, fixed and permanent, with an ascending scale of reverence and descending scale of contempt" (Jafferlot, 2005, p.35). The scriptures and reality mirror each other, as the population engaged in the most labour intensive, devalued jobs form part of the sudras and the dalits. The caste representation of my respondents stands testimony to this. All my respondents are employed in what can be considered reproductive labour, in that they provide services to the city which are crucial for the city to function.[10]

At this point, it is very important to mention the central lens through which my entire thesis can be understood from. From scholarship in Gender Studies (more and more employed in feminist GPE scholarship) I borrow gender's use as an analytical category. Such use departs from the common misconception that feminists have been long trying to expose, a (mis) conception which equates gender with women. Gender, when used as an analytical category, moves away from the biological determinism inherent in the male/female categorization and instead becomes a way of signifying power relations between all those behaviours, expectations constructed as masculine (and therefore valued more) and feminine (therefore devalued) and allows for these dichotomies to be subject to constant scrutiny and critique (Scott, 1986; Harding, 1986). I use this framework to show the un-natural binaries of reproductive/productive; public/private; men/women; powerful/powerless. More importantly, gender as an analytical category allows for an intersectional analysis taking into consideration

[10] I use the term reproductive labour mainly as a concept that needs interrogation and dismantling. Further in the thesis I demonstrate the shaky grounds on which this concept stands and to reveal the capitalist, neoliberal gains made in categorizing work as reproductive and the consequent devaluation of such work.

how the various dimensions of differences – such as caste, class, race, age, sexual identity, religion etc. intersect, resulting in non-universal, ever dynamic categories whose position in context to power may vary according to varying contexts (Scott, 1986).

Despite the invaluable insights provided by Feminist GPE scholars about the gendered nature of the political economy of neoliberalism, their attention towards how these dynamics effects spatial access, especially in nodes of financial and informational activities, i.e. in cities, has been limited. It is for that reason that I now turn to Critical Urban Theory to take from this body of literature, critical insights on the neoliberalization of urbanization and its consequent impacts on previously discussed feminized communities.

2.2 Critical Urban Theory

With neoliberal capitalism gaining firmer ground in the last three decades of the twentieth century, capital, in its search for newer places to invest and multiply, has been seeking certain areas as key sites for investing its surpluses (Harvey 2005). Urbanization, as we know it today is a global phenomenon with cities becoming these key spatial sites of surplus investment made possible by the concentration of financial, technological, administrative institutions (Harvey, 2005; Sassen, 2001; Castells 2002). Critical Urban Theory as an area of study, emerged in the period post 1968, departing from the mainstream study of urbanization that understood urban theory from a technocratic policy frame. This body of work and academics/activists saw the "politically and ideologically mediated" character of urban space that reflected the "social production" of spatial forms (Brenner 2009, p.198; Castells, 2002, p.31). Here, I find it necessary to mention Massey's (1998) work on Gender and Space since it lays out the dynamic quality of space and argues against the fixity of categories/divisions with respect to space much like our understandings of gender relations. For Massey, space is social relations "stretched out" (p.2) and is multiple. She argues that the different experiences of space based on varied relations to it make

spaces, contested terrains. She sheds light on the workings of sexism, colonialism and relations of capital accumulation working in changing the geography of social relations in a city.

Continuing this line of thought pertaining to space as contested terrain, I use Johan Galtung's (1969, 1990) concepts of violence – structural, direct/personal and cultural – in order to show how contestations for space is negotiated by the use of power by certain members of the population and in what is becoming alarmingly common, by the state. Violence, according to Galtung (1969), is "avoidable insults to basic human needs, and more generally to life, lowering the real level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible" (1990, p.292). Galtung further makes typologies of violence starting with direct violence as that violence which may be physical/non-physical and which is committed by an identifiable actor. Structural violence or social injustice on the other hand, is violence that may not be visible, has no specific actors, but which results in "unequal power and consequently unequal life chances" (1969, p.171). While direct violence is an event, structural violence, in the form of exploitation, lack of access to resources and marginalization, is more a process. In 1990, he added another dimension, that of cultural violence, which uses those aspects of religion, symbols, ideology, art, language etc. that can be used to make the use of direct and structural power justified and legitimate. I use these important conceptualizations of violence in order to analyse the everyday experiences of my respondents in their interactions with city space. Harvey (2012) also suggests that a process of "creative destruction" (p.16) is undergoing in cities where neoliberal visions of urban restructuring is achieved with violence that forces the replacement of the old with a new. This capitalistic logic of commodifying city space, which is supposed to be a common resource, results in spatial segregation based on unequal, exclusionary social relations leading to conflicts and displacement of the disadvantaged (Harvey, 2012).

A crucial point of departure that one can discern in literature about cities is the focus on the role played by information technology or specialized services in making some cities important global nodes and the impact of this transition on labour relations and spatial practices. Castells

(1989) and Sassen (2001) have argued that these cities produce a spatial segregation and economic polarization where formal, information based jobs are overvalued with a simultaneous increase and devaluation of low paying, informal, labour intensive jobs. Portes, Castells & Benton (1989) discuss the shift in labour relations post the 1970s from its formalized nature to its informal nature, thereby undoing the decades worth of struggle that had put in place a sound state sponsored social security system. The polarized valuation of labour and the consequent lack of social security among informal, street based workers is pertinent for my thesis because it brings out the workings of global political economy and its impact on the local, daily experiences of my respondents in their interactions with the people in the city, its space, state authorities and relationships between themselves.

Thus, I use concepts from these three main bodies of literature so they can complement each other's gaps, in order to complement each other, to analyse the spatial effects of neoliberal urbanization on the lives of my respondents who do street based work in the city of Bangalore. Discussing urban scholarly work so far, Ong and Roy (2011) point to two major trends that characterise such work. One is the Global Political Economy framework that looks at urbanization solely in terms of spaces of capital accumulation and two, the postcolonial approach which focuses on the agency of subaltern communities within such urbanization. They call for a need to move away from universalisms and hegemonic characterizations of the "North" and "South" and to explore the complex situations that are in conversation with the global. Scholars whose work focus on non-Western contexts also point to the excessive focus on these regions as sites of knowledge production and insist on using more transnational perspectives, looking for those aspects which are usually not searched for in urban scholarship which has an almost taken-for-granted assumption of neoliberalism (Roy 2009; Leitner et al, 2007; Parnell & Robinson, 2012;). Although I am under no illusion that this thesis achieves what these scholars have pointed towards, I will, to the best of my capacity attempt to blur these presumed divisions, use concepts

whose meanings do not restrict to geographical boundaries and which do not reify categories or phenomenon, including neoliberalization.

2.3 Urbanization in India

In this section, I will review some pertinent sources with respect to urban development in India and its trajectory over the years. It is perhaps useful to begin with a disclaimer regarding the inherent unevenness, multi-directional and unexpected nature of neoliberalism(s) and its consequent effects - in this case urban restructuring (Harvey 2005, Banerjee-Guha 2004). Kundu (2003) traces urban development in India since the 1980s, when urban governance structures underwent a drastic transformation whereby an unprecedented thrust on private participation to provide for infrastructure and basic amenities coupled with decreased state intervention was pushed for. Coinciding with this, Banerjee-Guha (2009) discusses the shift in national planning priorities on urban development, post the seventh Five Year Plan of India (1975-1980). The National Commission on Urbanization set up in 1985 and its consequent report made political decentralization by enacting the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act by which Urban Local Bodies became more "independent" and their budgetary allocation was shrunken. There was a concentrated focus to heavily invest in the "mega-cities" with a population of 4 million to 8 million (of which Bangalore was one), resulting in governance and spatial implications for these cities (Banerjee-Guha, 2009, p.105).

The urban development trajectory in India so far, especially after the 1990s, is one that exhibits a classic case of what Harvey (2012 calls urban entrepreneurialism, when urban development is largely being directed with the coming together of state, private and civil society members, transforming forms of governance. Towards this, there is an increased focus on large scale infrastructure goals, facilitation for real estate corporations to access land resource is visible in almost all of major Indian cities in order to make cities "world class" in their appeal to attract foreign investment (Banerjee-Guha, 2009). This has resulted in the increasing criminalization of

the poor and a project of re-modelling the city based on elite aesthetics, which usually means displacing and dispossessing the urban poor made possible by various forms of violence (Banerjee-Guha, 2009; Bhan 2009). But one aspect that is under-studied in scholarly work, with respect to changing forms of urbanization, governance processes and the workings of neoliberal ideology is in understanding how this affects caste (Kudva, 2013) and gender relations in everyday urban spaces and in my study I hope to address this crucial gap.

If spatial restructuring is one side of the urban entrepreneurialism story, in order to make this possible, are the changing structures of urban governance, especially the influx of para-statal bodies and the involvement of corporate honchos, technocrats and other non-elected "experts" who work closely in the processes of urban governance at multiple scales - from the local urban body to national and supra-national levels. In an illuminating paper written by Baindur and Kamath (2009), the role of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, in re-drawing the mechanisms for urban infrastructure finance and governance in India is discussed. There is a focus on infrastructure building and shifts in governance processes by a thrust on private sector participation, resulting in the withdrawal of the state from meeting its obligations to provide basic services. Here, the state takes on the role of allocating public funds to leverage private capital and enforce IFI stipulated *reforms* in making public funds accessible to lower state bodies. The authors argue that these IFIs are promoting the commercialization of urban services at the same time as they are prioritizing large infrastructure projects which eat away resources that could have been spent on basic services for the poor. They provide detailed examples of one of India's flagship urban renewal programmes JNNURM, which was modelled on such logic. This programme spent less than one third of the funds spent on building infrastructure to provide basic services to the urban poor. These developments have been possible due to a withering away of democratic spaces in urban governance where it is increasingly eminent citizens of the city or some other similar group who under the banner of civil society organizations wield power on decision making and influence urban development

priorities (Banerjee-Guha 2009, Baindur & Kamath, 2009). Due to the increasing hegemony of neoliberalism, Bhan (citing Nikolas Rose, 2009) refers to a culture of "self-responsibilization" enveloping people's subjectivities. This is when the poor are increasingly made to assume responsibility for their own selves, where access to services are disappearing or are finding means of being curtailed by a state that retreats from its responsibility of providing services to the communities most affected by these very urban transformations.

As literature surveyed so far has informed us, the trajectory of urban transformation in India, especially in recent times mirror a neoliberal agenda, albeit with its own local specificities, inter-acting actors at various levels which are all working in shaping the subjectivities of the people in cities. However, it would be a one sided story if there was no discussion of space, here urban space, as a site of contestation and challenge against dominant, hegemonic orders. Scholars, while being mindful of the neoliberal logic underpinning urban transformations and visions, pay equal attention to the reality that such spaces are shaped by confrontations and claims between competing subjectivities to assert "presence" of the powerless, an assertion of their right to the city (Massey, 1998; Benjamin, 2010; Sassen, 2010 p.10, Bhattacharya & Sanyal, 2011). These contestations need not always result in the overthrowing of dominant structures or even be collective or visible. Often times people who are shunted out of the "worlding" (Roy & Ong, 2011, p.312) visions have strategies of survival which may or may not lead to dismantling exclusionary structures, but which are articulated by these groups as a means of resistance or sheer survival – as "making do" (de Certeau, 1984). According to de Certeau the art of "making do" is the multiplicity of tactics used in order to bend, re-signify, and get around rules/ constraints that are imposed upon the weak within the existing norms and space.

To analyse such power struggles, I find Partha Chatterjee's (2004) concepts of civil society and political society useful although with some limitation which will be demonstrated as the

thesis progresses.[11] For Chatterjee, at the heart of modern politics lies the tension between values of freedom, equal rights on the one hand and affirmative action for certain groups demanding additional attention, based on historical injustices or discriminations. Popular politics is about heterogeneity, about being in multiple times: modern/pre-modern, homogenous - utopian/ambivalent – real. Amidst this, he sees civil society, consisting of law abiding, corporate classes, the domain of "culturally equipped citizens" (p.41) participating in the sovereign nation-state, setting the political-moral hegemony in popular politics (Chatterjee, 2008). Then there is the political society, consisting of marginalized populations who become objects of governmentality, of "policies of welfare and security" (p.37) often classified into groups that can be traced back to a nation's colonial history. Political society populations are those who belong to disadvantaged sections of the society and might often transgress laws with the assertion of a right to live. Chatterjee, while rhetorically questioning the bourgeois nature of Indian cities, identifies an increasing visibility and strong-hold of the civil society actors who consider populations as encroachers in their imaginations of a city modelled on Western imaginaries. But it is not as if the political society is dormant, for Chatterjee understands democracy as the various strategies of politics that the population employs, i.e. making democracy the politics of the governed. This concept can be used for the case of Bangalore, to which I will now move, to analyse the increasing influence of elite groups setting the agenda for Bangalore, against which, the political society are devising their own mechanisms of resistances.

[11] In a critique to Chatterjee's distinctions of civil and political society, Bhaviskar and Sundar (2008) problematize certain attributes that Chatterjee attaches to each of these groups. Firstly, they argue that contrary to his categorization of members of "civil society" being law abiding, in reality it is this class of people who flout laws and manage to get away with such violations. Secondly, he categorizes the political society as being "governed" and provided welfare by the state, but again Bhaviskar and Sundar argue that whatever this community has managed to claim, is because of their organization strategies and resistance and not because of the state being conscious of its responsibilities. I agree with both these objections, and I will show how both these aspects work with respect to the urban restructuring in Bangalore. With these critical points added to Chatterjee's concepts, especially as reflected from my own field experiences, I continue to use them because I think they are relevant in understanding urban politics in Bangalore.

2.4 Urban Restructuring in Bangalore

Bangalore, with its evolving epithets from that of "garden city", "pensioner's paradise" to "silicon city" and most recently "garbage city" is a fascinating place to study the many hybrids, incoherence and contestations inherent in a city. Nair (2005) in her extensive book about Bangalore, documents the several attempts made by academics to study Bangalore, from its geography, its socio-economic composition, from the perspective of the urban poor mainly slum dwellers, its emerging structures of governance to social movements that emerged in the city. She classifies her own effort as an articulation of the "styles and forms of urban democracy and the city as a site of a continuous redefinition of Indian citizenship" (p.20).

The particularity of the software industry's growth in Bangalore and its impact on the cultural, political subjectivities in the city is an aspect that most works on Bangalore, in the last two decades, discuss. Most works also focus on the increase in mega infrastructural projects, change in governance structures and shifting priorities of the state that suit select political and economic interests (Nair, 2005; Benjamin, 2008; Upadhya & Vasavi, 2008; Mukherjee 2014). Some authors give a detailed account of the emergence of "experts" under state auspices in corporatizing governance structures. For instance, the Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF) was the first of such endeavours, which consisted of software company heads and certain other elite members formed by former Chief Minister S.M.Krishna, who wanted to turn Bangalore into Singapore (Nair, 2015; Benjamin 2010; Coelho, Kamath and Vijaybhaskar, 2011). The latest in the string of such groups is the aforementioned Vision Group, headed by the current Chief Minister of Karnataka. This group is set to implement the Bangalore Blueprint, prepared by the NGO Janaagraha, whose indubitable presence can be found in all avatars of elite governance in Bangalore, as well as for profit companies dealing with micro-finance, urban infrastructure, housing for the poor, to name a few (Rohit 2016).

Studies have also revealed the impact of urban spatial restructuring due to major infrastructural projects impacting the lives of the local communities which depend largely on

informal, manual labour in the city. CASSUM studied the impact of the flyover over the city's main market – K.R.Market – and the loss of livelihoods that the flyover caused for the vendors and the people who would carry loads of vegetables, fruits, flowers within the market. The Metro rail project, defying protests by small businesses, home-owners whose shops and houses had to be demolished to make way for it, continues to be built in Bangalore since 2006 at a huge expense (that has severely inflated) and is looking to raise an additional Rs.12,000 crore for its second phase through loans from international financers and through bonds.[12] People lost sources of livelihood, slums were evicted and its inhabitants put to the peripheries and a process of gentrification has come about where the metro lines make its way (CASSUM, 2007). Discussing the bias of urban reforms in Bangalore to suit the needs of the software industry and the people associated with this industry, Mukherjee (2014) alludes to the successful lobbying by the above mentioned BATF to construct a 25 kilometre IT corridor connecting two IT and software hubs in the city. These privatized, autonomous spaces offer software professionals a bubble, away from the hustle and bustle of the city for work, leisure and recreation. Resistance by farmers whose lands were acquired went largely unheeded by the KIADB (Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board), a para-statal, which acquired land on behalf of these IT companies at a fraction of the market rates of these fertile agricultural lands (Mukherjee, 2014; Benjamin 2008). Mukherjee (2014) also finds in her study that the farmers who lost their lands to IT companies are now employed in daily wage labour like street vending and construction work.

[12] The Bangalore Metro Rail Project was proposed in 2002 and a special purpose vehicle, the Bangalore Metro Rail Transit Limited (BMRTL) was formed to implement the Metro Rail Project. In 2005, the BMRTL became the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL). The final project approval was obtained in 2005. Project construction began in July 2007 (CASSUM, 2007). The Metro project has undergone a cost escalation of almost 70 per cent in its first phase of the project (of which only a few stretches have been made operational so far) totally costing Rs.13,845 crores from its initial estimate in 2006. See http://www.bangaloremirror.com/bangalore/others/Metro-Phase-I-cost-is-now-Rs-13845-crore/articleshow/46639341.cms. In order to meet the additional fund requirements, BMRCL is not only dependant on government funds but also has borrowed loans from International funders such as AFD (Agence Francasie de Developpement), JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and by floating Namma Metro bonds. See http://www.deccanchronicle.com/current-affairs/280116/metro-a-slow-train-to-progress.html

The growing influence of the emerging industry leaders in city planning, enthusiastic heads of governments bent upon transforming Bangalore to a Singapore or a Paris, the influence of mass media and development priorities both domestic and foreign which saw infrastructure development in cities as a means of achieving growth work in tandem to make the city on the lines that matched with the hegemonic idea of how a high tech city should be. Nair (2005) points to the shift among the middle class from housing plots offered by the city development authority to more stylish housing complexes offered by private builders. This brought with it a whole new style of consumption practices in certain areas of the city, for instance, the Dollars Colony she points out, where a spurt in malls, swimming pools, golf courses sprung up to cater to the "American dream" targetting specifically those who had returned from a trip abroad and for those who were non-resident Indians (p.133). Mukherjee (2014) while discussing the campuses of IT corporations in the outskirts of the city speaks of the Infosys (software company) campus and how it designed its buildings replicating the Sydney Opera House, the Louvre in Paris to make foreign clients "feel at home" and give its own employees a "global" feel. Appadurai's (1990) concept of *scapes* I think captures well the workings of disjunctures, de/re-territorializations, desires, realities, and heterogenity that the "global" city of Bangalore has come to be. I see the workings of all five scapes – ethnoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, technoscapes and ideoscapes – at work which makes possible the interaction and intra-action of the global-local forces in shaping the consumption patterns and imaginaries of Bangaloreans.[13] I try to capture these desires, struggles, contestations resulting from living in a city like Bangalore by learning about the *everyday* lives of people affected by these global visions of the city.

[13] Ethnoscapes: The necessity or the desire for people to move from one place to the other, led by technology, policies, global movement of capital. Technoscapes: The movement of advanced technology across boundaries. Financescapes: The movement of capital across border and ever changing markets and newly emerging economies. Mediascapes: refers to the electronic and other forms of media which produce and disseminate information and also carry images of the world around the world created by several actors. Ideoscapes: refer to the ideologies of the states, counter-ideologies of political movements connected with realization of certain imagined or believed ideals (Appadurai, 1990).

2.5 The Politics of the Everyday

For Lefebvre (1987) a careful examination of everyday life meant understanding social relationships better, perceiving the shift from pre-modern variety to modernist uniformity and introspecting on the alienation and consumer culture that capitalism had brought with it. He beautifully articulates the juxtapositions in the everyday, whose critique, he argues, is crucial to reflect on the culture, politics and economy that capitalism has been producing, which in turn has been producing alienated individuals:

> The everyday can therefore be defined as a set of functions which connect and join together systems that might appear to be distinct. Thus defined, the everyday is a product, the most general of products in an era where production engenders consumption, and where consumption is manipulated by producers: not by "workers," but by the managers and owners of the means of production (intellectual, instrumental, scientific). The everyday is therefore the most universal and the most unique condition, the most social and the most individuated, the most obvious and the best hidden (p.9).

Writing in the same year as Lefebvre, Smith (1987) in her *The Everyday World as a Problematic,* questioned mainstream sociological knowledge production that had no place for women's experiences. She argued for a feminist sociology that emerged from the everyday, subjective experiences of women who were marginalized by a patriarchal structure. She recognized that knowledge production, which shaped much of what we see and how we see, was itself a domain steeped with masculine subjectivities and that knowledge from the standpoint of women was essential for feminist politics. Following Sandra Harding in *The Science Question in Feminism* (1986), Smith insisted that a standpoint epistemology based on the everyday would allow for meaning-making of experiences that were partial, multiple and open-ended. But for Smith the *problematic* of such a project was to go beyond the everyday subjective experiences of women to link them to structures and institutions of marginalization, without wiping away or usurping the everyday lives of women.

One of the most important contributions made to connect the everyday to larger structures which are implicated in the everyday has been by Feminist GPE scholars and/or activists. Enloe (2014) speaks about the intricate ways in which the everyday lives of the

marginalized are enmeshed in global power relations and how these inequities in power are gendered. She argues about the importance of the mundane, as for her, it is in being curious about the mundane that one can learn how global structures work its way in to the personal and also how the many personals can in turn shape or make the global (Enloe, 2011). Smith (1986) and Enloe (2004) mirror each other when they opine that it takes looking from the vantage point of the subjugated, listen to the "margins, silences and bottomrungs" (Enloe, 2004, p.42) to analyze the workings of power which has enabled certain actors to keep the marginalized at the margins.

Feminist urban scholars also point to the important need of analyzing everyday experiences of women, especially those marginalized by neoliberal urban reforms in order to understand how neoliberalism works in less abstract ways, filtering its way to multiple localities and scales (Peake & Reiker, 2013). In a compilation of essays by Feminist GPE scholars about the importance of the everyday and its reflection of gendered global transformations, its editors Elias and Roberts (2016), call for an incorporation of feminist analysis while using the everyday and also to expand the geographical scope, which is thus far limited to countries in the "global North". My study attempts to do exactly this, using ethnographic methods as a means of learning what the experiences of people in street based work say about the impact of neoliberal urban reforms on their lives.

Although there are studies focusing on non-Western cities undergoing neoliberal transitions and its impact on street based workers especially street vendors, (Bayat, 2010; Etzold 2015), and similar such studies done in major cities in India (Bhowmik, 2004; Anjaria, 2010), there are far fewer works which employ a gender analysis to focus on the everyday of street based communities to reveal the varied experiences of urban restructuring programmes and how seemingly naturalized power relations are in fact deliberately, violently created. In a valuable intervention, Hubbard (2004), though still staying with Western cities, uses a gender lens to analyze the marginalization and invisibilization of sex workers. He argues that it is masculinity,

acted out in the many mechanisms of control/revenge on sex workers, coupled with the need of capital accumulation that restricts access to city spaces.

In fascinating work done by Phadke, Khan & Ranade (2011), in the city of Mumbai, India, the authors argue for a feminist re-claiming of the concept of "loitering" in the everyday public spaces in a city – its parks, tea stalls, bus stations, trains etc. They critique the over-emphasis in public space literature and debate around safety/danger issues and argue for pleasure/fun to be associated with women's movement in public spaces. They argue that loitering is a feminist case to claim public space, to enjoy purpose-less movement not only of women but of all marginal groups. But the focus is more on a generalized access to city space by women and other marginalized groups, than in focusing on neoliberal urbanization and space with respect to urban restructuring and street based work.

This review of literature has informed my thesis by revealing certain gaps in existing bodies of literature but more importantly by pointing to relevant theories/concepts that can be used to study the connections in the devaluation of labour of street based communities, neoliberal urban restructuring and everyday experiences using a gender lens. A study that deals with these various, inter-connecting aspects with gender as a key framework has so far missed focused attention from scholars and this study aims to fill this gap. When a gender analysis is employed to the everyday experiences of people most affected by these transformations in a city, it allows for a closer understanding of how the everyday is embedded in and contributes to larger processes which seem distant and unconnected. Such an examination is crucial in drawing attention to the gendered impacts of an urban development model that is becoming increasingly hegemonic, especially in the rapidly urbanizing regions of Asia and Africa. In the chapters that follow, the experiences of my respondents are discussed and analyzed using theoretical tools that emerged from this chapter.

Chapter 3: Devaluation as an Everyday Reality

Characteristic to cities following a neoliberal logic is the polarized valuation attached to certain processes, labour and the people who perform it. Especially so in cities which act as co-ordinators of global processes, there emerges a new urban regime based on polarized spatial organization of the economy and the reorganization of labour processes where certain kinds of work is overvalued for its profit making capacity and certain others that are not as remunerative are devalued (Sassen, 1996). Valuation of labour has been a highly debated topic, especially with feminists condemning the excessive and exclusive valuation of productive labour, claimed to be mostly done by men, which meant the invisibilization of reproductive labour performed in the households predominantly by women (Mies 1986, Waring 1988). Arguing for a re-writing of reproductive economy, Peterson (2003) urges for an accounting of historical lapses which have obscured unequal gender, race and class relations and work to further entrench these unequal power relations. She focuses on an increase in the informalization of labour as a result of global economic re-structuring dictated by SAPs, competition, profit maximization and argues that the productive economy is enabled by reproductive labour that is commercialized/become part of paid work *and* informal labour done by "feminized" groups (2003, p.11). There is a feminization of informalized and flexible work which is essential to the accumulative logic of capitalism dictated by masculine subjectivities.

In this chapter I use the above theorization to argue that there is a systematic devaluation of the labour expended by street based communities in Bangalore, a city that boasts of its IT prowess. The communities whose experiences I will share are those who work as street vendors selling fresh food, fruits, flowers, vegetables; street based women sex workers and pourakarmikas who clean the city of its garbage. That capitalism and moreover neoliberalism has resulted in commercializing intimate labour such as care work and sex work, making it part of the reproductive labour economy, has been established by feminist scholars (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2004; Maher, Pickering & Gerard, 2012). In addition to sex work, the labour

involved in meeting people's food requirements and cleaning the city is essential for the servicing and the reproduction of people. These works, typically expected to be done by women in the private sphere of the households, in this case is done in the public sphere.[14] Through the narratives and its analysis, I show the ways in which reproductive labour is being devalued in order to make way for prioritizing certain other, more valued, productive activities. I also show how valuation of labour is related less to its spatial nature and perhaps more related to the gendered nature of certain kinds of labour. Through this, I intend to demonstrate the constructedness of these dichotomies, which work to obscure and perpetuate caste and gendered power inequalities by rendering such devaluation as naturalized and non-political.

3.1 All Roads Lead to Informalization and Privatization

Four women, with the green coats over their sarees, brooms in hand are sitting on the divider of a very busy main road at around 12:30 p.m. on a hot summer day in Bangalore. I go up to them and ask why they are sitting in the middle of a road when buses and cars are whizzing past them. They point upwards to the branches of a tree under whose shade they are resting. These women are pourakarmikas who have just finished their work of sweeping the roads and clearing garbage for the day. The only place they can find to rest is on the divider of a main road. One of them laughs and says "I might get hit by these vehicles one of these days." Understanding my inability to speak in Telugu, the language they are most fluent in, they direct me to where I can find more pourakarmikas when I tell them that I want to speak to them to write a "report" about their lives.

I find another group of women similarly huddled, with their brooms around them a few roads away, some sitting on the pavement, others sitting on the road, just before going to mark their presence to the male supervisor for the second time in a day. For a moment they hesitate to

[14] I use the dichotomous terms productive/reproductive, private/public in order to show the terms' mutual non-exclusivity. In a sense I use the terms strategically to finally blur its boundaries and show the dependence of the gendered, hierarchical, overvalued sphere on the one that is devalued.

speak with me suspecting I'm from the "owner's" side.[15] A few minutes later they share about their lives, their daily work as pourakarmikas as we walk together to the office.

> I wake up at 4 in the morning, cook, take a bus till here and do sweeping.. After sweeping I do domestic work in one of the houses here and on my way back work in another house...I reach home at 8 p.m. on most days. My husband's earnings are not enough for his alcohol and *beedi,* so it is on my earnings that my family runs. My older son works in courier delivery and now my daughter is also going to work since she has school holidays...I get Rs.6600 as a pourakarmika and I have to pay Rs.5000 rent.[16] What will I feed my children with this salary? Nobody cares about our difficulties. We all want to be permanent workers but where will that happen! So many people like my mother-in-law worked for 20 or more years and have died waiting to be made permanent workers...(Interviewed on 18th April 2016)

This is a testimony of Rani, in her early forties, working as a contract pourakarmika for the past four years. Her daily struggle to make ends meet and the hope to become a permanent pourakarmika is directly linked to neoliberal urban re-structuring. In the early 1990s, like most developing countries, India was forced to undertake major economic re-structuring as part of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) imposed by IFIs following a Balance of Payments crisis. As part of the conditionalities of the loan, "rationalization of staff" was to be agreed upon in municipalities (in the case of Bangalore the city corporation is called the BBMP) which meant that recruitments for the post of pourakarmikas were to be no longer made by the Government but contracted to private firms. Since then, there has been a division between permanent pourakarmikas and *guttige*/contract pourakarmikas in the valuation of their work, although the work they do is exactly the same. Bangalore has almost 22,000 pourakarmikas, of whom approximately 18,700, including Rani, are on contract work. Their counterparts who are permanent employees (employed before 1993) get salaries of Rs.14,000-18,000 per month and worker benefits such as insurance and a pension but the contract pourakarmikas who work as

[15] The women are directly employed by private contractors who in turn apply to the city corporation (BBMP – Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) for tenders to manage solid waste. These private contractors are commonly referred to by the pourakarmikas as "owners". The word choice is telling of the nature of the hierarchical, exploitative contractor-pourakarmika labour relations.

[16] 75 Rupees make 1 Euro http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/convert/

much as them get a paltry Rs.6690 with benefits (Provident Fund and Health Insurance) that the pourakarmikas are not sure of ever receiving or making use of (D' Rozario, 2015).[17]

Rani, in order to make ends meet, has to work as a domestic worker in other houses because of the abysmal wages she gets as a pourakarmika and the inherent insecurity of her job: "Leave if you want to, there will be others who will work" is the common reply the pourakarmikas get when they ask questions about their wages or threaten not to work. For pourakarmikas who work in all localities of Bangalore, waking up even before the sun rises to ensure clean neighbourhoods for its people, it is cold apathy and discrimination they receive in return. One of the pourakarmika women tells me "Some people don't even give us water because we belong to this [Madiga] caste and do this work. They don't like that we touch their glasses and sometimes give water in toilet mugs or just say they don't have water". It is not only the economic devaluation of the pourakarmikas' work that comes through in these experiences, but the devaluation of an entire community embodying the intersections of a certain caste, occupation and gender.

The work conditions of the pourakarmikas are inhuman and nothing short of exploitation. Ninety per cent of the pourakarmikas are women employed in back breaking sweeping work. Their day starts as early as 5 a.m. and ends at 2.30 p.m. Most women work on empty stomachs and the high incidence of anaemia among them is a consequence of this. Their hunger at times compels them to suffer the indignity of having to accept stale, leftover food given by residents. With no option to go to toilets, most women avoid drinking water inspite of working in the sun for long hours. Some of them chew betel leaves to keep their throats from drying. The women tell me that they have to buy the brooms they sweep the city with, using

[17] Due to lack of sources about Pourakamikas, the majority of factual information is from an unpublished Position Paper about the Pourakarmikas by Clifton D' Rozario, a lawyer and a trade unionist, part of a trade union which has been organizing contract Pourakarmikas for several years now. I have also included testimonies, opinions from a documentary on the organization "Thamate" which is a collective of pourakarmikas and manual scavengers fighting for their dignity and justice. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jz-g0uN-axE

their own money. When I ran into a Karpu, a pourakarmika sweeping in K.R.Market, working for more than twenty years now, she told me how the gloves that the contractors gave them either tore within a day or caused boils on their hands. She said there was no option but to clean all the filth with her bare hands. As we were speaking, a vendor tossed a box full of rotten fruits into the garbage pile that Karpu had to clean. Without a single paid holiday in the entire year, the pourakarmikas have to turn up every morning at 6.30 a.m., 365 days of a year or have their wages cut for absence. The supervisor (belonging to the same caste as the pourakarmikas, once a pourakarmika himself who managed to become the supervisor because of having the right contacts with the contractors) almost gloats about this, sitting in his office and says "Even if there's a curfew, we work...but we get police protection". The division of work is extremely gendered and it is always men who supervise the majority women sweeping the streets and a few male garbage mini-van drivers. I observed an attendance taking routine when all the women (around twenty of them) were lined up on one side of the road and the supervisor on the other, who was barking orders at the women and raising his voice when the women talked back to him. The women tolerate all this in order to keep the job, however exploitative it is.

The successive governments of the state of Karnataka (of which Bangalore is the capital city) play deaf and blind to the plight of pourakarmikas firstly due to the lack of political will to prioritize the demands of the community and secondly by blatantly flouting several labour legislations that provide for fair wages and employee benefits of pourakarmikas. Protests go ignored or at best get empty promises from elected representatives and bureaucrats. Why this is happening becomes clear when we take a look at some of the priorities of the state, the Tender SURE project, in this case. As the pourakarmikas protest in front of the corporation office demanding unpaid wages, the state had its priorities marked out in constructing "world class roads" under the Tender SURE project, a public-private partnership (PPP), spending 200 crore rupees of public funds on *seven* roads stretching ten kilometers (The Hindu, 2012, August 18;

Times of India, 2013, November 24; The New Indian Express, 2014 December 11).[18] The approval for the Tender SURE project was given over a few hours in the Chief Minister's residence in a meeting with him, a battery of high level bureaucrats and most importantly, members of a private initiative City Connect.[19] City Connect was formed as a response to the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) India@75 mission 2022, which has a vision of India to be achieved by its 75th year of Independence. What is interesting is that this vision is based on the visions of a neoliberal business school Professor, C.K.Prahlad. Prahlad was the person who authored the (in)famous *Fortune at the bottom of the pyramid* (2004) , in which he argued that the way to eliminate poverty was to create markets for the poorest of people i.e. turning people in the "BOP" – bottom of the pyramid – into entrepreneurs and consumers.[20] Two of City Connect's members who need mentioning here are Ramesh Ramanathan, (who was introduced in the second chapter), and Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Chairman and MD of Biocon, a biotechnology corporation based in Bangalore. In less than a few hours, in a closed door meeting among the Chief Minister, senior bureaucrats, and members of an unaccountable, private, non-elected body, project Tender SURE was approved with assurance that "it would receive high priority from the Government of Karnataka" (Government of Karnataka, 2011).

It is these productive ventures based on neoliberal ideologies that are prioritized over valuing the labour of people such as the Pourakarmikas. When I walk to one of these Tender SURE roads in one of the most central areas of Bangalore, I notice that the tender coconut seller who was once visible to the main road, has now been pushed aside, he and his business being

[18] 200 crore = Rs. 2, 000, 000,000; One Euro is approximately Rs.75; It was agreed that the state government and the BBMP will share the expenses on these roads 50:50. The money spent on these seven roads equals half the entire budget that the city corporation allocated for the year 2015-16 under the head "welfare" for the urban poor in Bangalore. See http://bbmp.gov.in/budget-2015-161

[19] City Connect is a "collaborative platform catalyzed by Business for Civil Society and Government to work together to make cities more liveable" (emphasis mine). Source: http://www.cityconnect.in/about

[20]For details about the India@75 vision see http://www.indiaat75.in/Aboutus.aspx

literally invisibilised from the main road.[21] While deftly chopping the head of a tender coconut, he replies to my question about the upcoming building behind him: "This used to be a school ground of sorts. Now they are building a big commercial complex with five levels of underground parking". I see the name of a very popular real estate firm – Sobha Developers – on the tall blue enclosures lining the plot. It is perhaps no co-incidence that the Tender SURE project chose that specific road and a few other central roads in the city to make "world class". It is because the state in its nexus with corporate elites is prioritizing such ventures that the pourakarmikas demand for regular, fair wages are left unheard. With abysmal wages, the pourakarmikas, belonging to one of the most deprived castes among dalits and mostly women, find themselves having to endure the inhuman, exploitative working conditions. Most of the women work multiple jobs to supplement their meagre wages, gender roles making them carry the dual burden of running the household.

It is due to the privatized, devalued labour of communities such as the pourakarmikas, coupled with decreasing social security, that urban restructuring projects to make the city competitive and investor-friendly, find resources in the state coffers. For instance, the BBMP budget allocation for "Roads and Drains" and Infrastructure" are budget heads which always get the most funds allocation and "Welfare" is one that figures among the lowest priority areas. For the year 2015-16, while roads, drains and infrastructure got a total of 43 per cent funds allocated, welfare got 8 per cent and public health and education got a percent each (BBMP Budget, 2016). A budget analysis of the city corporation has showed that while actual expenses on infrastructure almost always overshoots the estimate, the actual expenditure for welfare, health and education is almost always under-spent, at times not even 50 per cent of the allocated budget (Narayana,

[21] After the completion of the Tender SURE roads, there was an order by the city corporation commissioner that no street vendors are to be allowed on these roads. When I went to one of these roads during fieldwork, two street vendors (both male) had managed to remain on this road and both of them were not very forthcoming to tell me if there were other vendors earlier and if they have been evicted. One other road which was re-done under this project used to have street vendors selling fruits, snacks etc., but today not a single vendor can be seen on this road. See http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/bengaluru/Street-Vendors-Prohibited-from-Using-Footpaths-on-Tender-SURE-Roads/2014/12/22/article2583210.ece#

2013).[22] Baindur and Kamath (2009) have shown how infrastructure priorities are pushed for directly or indirectly by IFIs, coupled with the decreased role of the state in meeting its obligatory functions. It is not too far-fetched to say that it is on the under-valued labour of people employed in reproductive work, marked by their caste and gender identities that Bangalore builds its way towards becoming a "world class" city. The devaluation of reproductive labour, and diminishing access to labour/welfare entitlements, in this case of pourakarmikas, is made to look natural and apolitical but in fact, is a calculated step to keep the capitalistic-neoliberal wheel in motion while entrenching caste and gender inequalities.

3.2 Changing Consumption Patterns and Devaluation of Labour

One of the most common replies I would receive from my respondents was how, in recent years, their earnings were not enough even for their basic needs; meaning that their incomes are not increasing at the same level that costs are. If the previous section showed how valuing certain priorities over others are resulting in labour becoming devalued, this section speaks of the changing consumption patterns that my respondents were observing, as a reason for their decreased earnings. On one hot afternoon I spot Manju, a dalit woman continuing her caste based occupation of mending people's shoes on the footpath of a busy road. A few minutes into our conversation a potential customer comes along and I witness both of them trying to reach a price for the two pairs of sandals that the customer needs repairing. Manju says that she has to stitch the *chappals* all over, convincing the customer that she needs more money than the 50 rupees the customer offers to pay. Manju finally brings her price down to Rs.100 for the repairs. The customer walks away in a huff saying, "Instead of paying you 100 rupees to repair the *chappals*, I can buy new *chappals* with the same money". Manju tells me that the number of people who come to repair their footwear has drastically come down since "Lunar" sandals have come to the market. Lunar happens to be a brand of slippers in India famous for its cheap prices and

[22] This analysis was done by an urban researcher in Bangalore and is unpublished. The analysis is based on publicly available information about the budgets of the BBMP.

widespread availability, not to forget, effective marketing strategy. Similarly, vegetable vendors spoke about "Big Bazaar", "Reliance Fresh" and "online" as reasons for their work not getting the same number of customers as it once did.[23] "Earlier, people would come to the markets to buy vegetables, but now people like going to malls and Big Bazaars" says Lakshmamma, a vegetable vendor in the Malleshwaram market, whose shop was once inside the old Malleshwaram market which has now been demolished to build a shopping complex - "Yesterday I didn't sell anything because Big Bazaar had its discount day" she adds in a matter of fact way (Deccan Herald, 2015, January 23). Kamala, a woman in her late sixties selling flowers on the pavement in Malleshwaram speaks about the fact that the many retail shops that are in almost all localities discourages most people from going to the market. She also identifies the relative advantage that male vendors have with respect to mobility: "Men will rent a cart and go pushing it on the streets and sell their fruits/vegetables. Do you think it is possible for me to do?"

Nazreen, a single mother of three children in her forties, who does sex work for a living, speaks about the difficulty of finding customers on the street because clients are increasingly using Facebook and WhatsApp to meet with independent sex workers like her: "What should older people like us do? We don't know Facebook or WhatsApp". She also poignantly remembers the other changes in her everyday life that is a result of hegemonic consumption patterns made popular by media and corporations that woo people to buy differently. She speaks about the rarity it has become to eat a good Sunday family meal made out of meat – *mutton oota* – her sentiments shared by two other respondents as well:

> Life has always been difficult for us [sex workers] but earlier there was more joy in life (*jeevnadalli jolly nu ittu*). Every Sunday I remember buying *gudde maamsa* [a mixture of various cuts of meat/animal parts that would be sold in heaps in the local butcher shops and would be very inexpensive to buy] and cooking it at home..my children and I would enjoy the meat curry. But now I don't find *gudde maamsa* anymore...because of

[23] Big Bazaar and Reliance Fresh are supermarket chains that dot almost every locality of Bangalore. If not for these brands, several other supermarket chains selling packed vegetables and fruits along with groceries can be found on most main roads in Bangalore. The current central government recently took the decision to allow 100% Foreign Direct Investment in processed food retailing allowing companies like Walmart, Tesco IKEA to set up shop in India. See http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/budget-2016-retailers-like-walmart-tesco-to-gain-as-govt-allows-100-fdi-in-multi-brand-processed-food-retailing/articleshow/51202128.cms

> hygiene and diseases it seems. Now I have to go to air conditioned shops to buy meat. I have to wait at least one month to make non-veg these days. And the meat they sell in these malls, packed in plastic is very hygienic?! God knows how many diseases will come because of that! (Interviewed on 16th April, 2016)

What my respondents share is a new culture of consumption that is taking over people in cities. These are consumption patterns which suit the busy lifestyles that most people working in the private sector have in the city. The reasons for the change in consumption patterns can be analyzed in multiple ways. Firstly and importantly, the desire to shop in a mall, or in a supermarket which ensures a one-shop-stop for all the customer's needs is gaining popularity because of the constant bombarding of such images on the radio, in advertisements on television, international sitcoms and other kinds of cultural mechanisms made possible by globalization.

Here, I see the workings of what Appadurai (1990) calls *scapes* to refer to the fluid, multiple, at times non-unidirectional way in which ideas and desires transcend boundaries of space and time in a globalizing world. The workings of mediascapes and technoscapes are evident in constructing desires for certain ways of consumption through the many means of mass media. Online platforms are so popular that people buy furniture, order groceries and even order services of domestic workers using online marketing websites made possible by advanced communication technology. I see financescapes working not only in the political-economic environment brought about by a vision of cities underlined by capitalist accumulative logic, but also in the capacity of these retail chains/corporations/malls to raise money and multiply profits because of such an exchange of images and desires. In Bangalore's desires to become a "world class city" there is an implied ethnoscape not only for an imagined future that emulates certain "global cities" in Asia and outside, but also in the discomfort with Bangalore's chaos and heterogenity that most expats or Bangaloreans who return from a foreign stint will complain about. Finally, ideoscapes work in the construction of an ideology that values time spent buying in the confines of an air-conditioned supermarket more than time spent in the open local market, bargaining with vendors on the street. For most people who work in the IT or Financial sectors

for multi-national corporations, non-Indian shifts means sleeping during the day and working at nights. For lakhs of such employees, online shopping is becoming the common sense. Malls are usually overflowing with people during the weekends comprising a mix of shoppers, those from outside the city for whom it is a sight-seeing spot and for the many others for whom malls are a space of entertainment and recreation.

Secondly, and connected to the above explanation, certain hegemonic patterns of consumption are making sure that older kinds of consumption – for instance Nazreen being able to buy *gudde maamsa* – are being wiped out on the pretext of health and safety. One observes how global capitalism is dictating everyday habits of what we eat, what we buy and where we buy. Increasing privatization is not only affecting work patterns of people but also changing the way we consume, in order to make way for large corporates to make money off the busy lives people are leading in cities today. These practices have become so hegemonic that most of us do it unconsciously, and would rather drive to a gourmet chain store to buy organic products than walk to the local vendor to buy fresh vegetables.

Patterns of consumption in a city like Bangalore not only impact the daily lives of sellers by turning them obsolete in an age of information technology and enhanced mobility, but also impact the everyday experiences of the marginalized who cannot participate in these new modes of consumption because they cannot afford it. Again, it is by devaluing the work of people dependent on traditional modes of small scale selling, that these large, capital intensive retail stores, technologically advanced online portals, underpinned by the logic of consumerism, churn out high revenues becoming productive areans of economy.

3.3 The Insecurity Market

What are the repercussions of such rising devaluation of labour among those whose work can be categorized as belonging in the reproductive domain? One of the most common sentiments observed among my respondents was the anxiety and insecurity that they expressed over

decreasing earnings and commercialization of all basic needs. Manju, the woman who does cobbler work watches her prospective customer walking away and laments about the fact that she has not had her *boni* yet (around 4 p.m.) and that she will not be able to buy any food for herself and her daughter at this rate.[24] How do you manage to get by, I ask her. "*Saala*" comes her reply. *Saala* means debt in Kannada. Manju is a member of two microfinance groups that lend money to women. One of them, by the same people behind the NGO Janaagraha, is called Janalakshmi Financial Services (JFS). She tells me how much loan she received and the repayments she has to make towards it. I calculate the interest rate working out close to 30%. She is surprised for a few seconds but asks me what else she can do when she has two stomachs to feed working in this job. Debts were a part of the daily lives of almost all my respondents. Several times, I witnessed the collection processes of these money lending/savings institutions on whom the people bank upon to meet their monetary requirements. "Earlier I would take loans from my neighbour [those sitting next to the street vendors] and pay it back in a few days. Now, firstly, no one earns enough money to be able to help others and I have no guarantee that I can repay it in time" says Girija, in her early fifties, doing vegetable vending in K.R.Market, the city's oldest market.

Hema, in her mid-forties, is a flower vendor near the famous Infant Jesus Church, located in a very popular locality in Bangalore. She used to live in the land allocated for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS; the area popularly called the EWS quarters), land whose real estate value has sky rocketed in the past decade. When the city corporation entered into a deal with a private builder to lease out that land to build a shopping mall, Hema's was one of the 1512 families which were rendered homeless overnight following the demolitions (The Hindu, 19 Jan 2013). Her family moved into another rented house and they now pay ten times the rent they were paying in EWS. "It was unjust, but if I go to protests who will work and earn money for the house?" she questions me when I ask her about the demolitions. As I speak with her, three boys on a motorbike stop before us and one can see that Hema is used to the drill that follows. She

[24] *Boni* is when street vendors (or any self employed person doing daily transactions) earn the day's first earnings.

takes out some money and what looks like a debit card. One of the boys puts the money into his pocket, swipes the card and returns it to her. The boys are college drop-outs (appear to be from the same socio-economic background as Hema) and are collectors of JFS. They tell me that they have daily targets to achieve, which they do with ease. When I ask Hema what happens if someone finds it difficult to pay, she replies "why will they not pay! They know to take the money and eat it, how will they not pay. They have to pay!" After the boys leave, she tells me that her flower vending business and her husband's rickshaw driving work is not sufficient to get by and that she needs to find another job, perhaps a "housekeeping" job to earn extra money.

What is evident from these testimonies of devaluation and insecurity is the sense of isolation that it has brought among people resulting in the dependence on exploitative, neoliberal institutions such as microfinance. Microfinance corporations are laughing their way to the banks because of the profits made on the backs of Manju, Hema and the millions others like them who resort to these exploitative loans due to their measly earnings and commercialization of all basic requirements. Manju says how she cannot even access subsidized food entitlements because the Fair Price Shops in-charge of distributing food grains are demanding Aadhar cards, which her daughter does not have.[25] Their hand to mouth earnings coupled with almost no satisfactory state entitlements towards public housing, public healthcare, quality public education or social security for informal sector workers pushes them towards institutions such as JFS, which are now so profitable that they are attracting investment from foreign financiers (Dhanjal, 2016). It is on the insecurity, manufactured by the capitalist neoliberal political economy, which all my respondents doing devalued reproductive work are experiencing, and the gender role that burdens women to

[25] The *Aadhar* is a biometric identity card that was evolved to ensure "efficient delivery of welfare services and effective monitoring of governmental schemes". It is an authority set up by the Central Government. Nandan Nilekini, co-founder of the software company Infosys (headquartered in Bengaluru and one of the driving forces behind BATF) and the chairman of the erstwhile Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF) was appointed the chairman of this project. The Aadhar was supposed to be voluntary but now has been made mandatoryin order to access most basic services, forcing people to enrol in it. This is despite a Supreme Court order which says that this card should not be made mandatory for accessing basic needs. Today, without the Aadhar card people cannot access most welfare schemes. Like in Manju's case, lakhs of people are being denied subsidized food entitlements for not having the Aadhar card. Sources https://uidai.gov.in/all-about-uidai/uidai-background.html; http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/pds-card-holders-asked-to-submit-aadhaar-number/article8521249.ece

be responsible for taking care of the family, that neoliberal institutions such as microfinance, undoubtedly part of the productive economy, thrive. The political value of insecurity/fear is exploited by these institutions which not only work to cushion the impact of neoliberal re-structurings which manifest in the form of austerity measures, increased informalization, casualization of labour and privatization of basic services (Roy, 2010; Kunz, 2010), and also work towards the breeding of self-responsibility (Bhan citing Rose, 2009) for the poverty among the marginalized, whose gender, caste and class identities cannot be ignored. Hema's subjectivity that is severely critical of her co-members' possible defaulting on loans captures this sense of self-responsibility. It is a discourse that is made hegemonic by several aid agencies, private corporations and state actors with its thrust on micro-loans and entrepreneurship development among poor women that effectively works in relieving the state of its obligations towards the marginalized (Rankin, 2001).

3.4 Conclusion

What this chapter aims to do is to interrogate seemingly naturalized, apolitical dichotomies of productive/reproductive, public/private and their gendered hierarchies, in order to reveal their deliberate constructedness, working to entrench unequal caste, class and gendered power relations. I use the concept of "feminized" others to refer to the naturalized ideology that devalorizes certain persons (not only women), communities whose sub-ordination, exploitation and devaluation seem legitimate for embodying feminized skills, activities, work or traits (Runyan & Peterson, 2014). Within the Indian context, it can be said that people belonging to the Dalit community are a feminized community against whom exploitation and injustice is normalized, for being born inferior to the other so called upper castes.

In this chapter I have shown how the productive economy – infrastructure projects, retail food chains, micro-lending corporations, to name a few - are parasitically dependant on the devaluation of certain activities and communities that are rendered as non-productive. For

example, it is the non-payment of pourakarmikas' salaries, non-attention to ensuring better public services, eviction of vendors and sex workers from markets and public spaces, which is cross-subsidizing and making possible the seven "world class roads", the malls, the glitzy office complexes that all form part of the productive economy. Further, patterns of consumption made possible by global, capitalist processes make obsolete these communities which are dependent on older patterns of selling (and buying), again contributing to the rising profit margins of malls and supermarkets at the cost of vendors not very invested in the hyper capitalist, consumerist culture.

What this devaluation of reproductive labour essentially produces is anxiety and insecurity, as expressed by my respondents, which leaves them with very little option but to turn to exploitative financial institutions such as microfinance in order to make ends meet. Microfinance is one of the sectors which is posting very high profits, attracting funds from foreign investors – because they capitalize on this produced insecurity of marginalized workers in the city. Loyal to management guru C.K.Prahlad's vision, these firms are indeed making markets out of people in the "bottom of the pyramid", earning huge fortunes on the backs of women. What is evident from the analysis of people's experiences is that the de-valuation of certain kinds of labour is one that is systemically constructed/designed, bolstered by structural inequities of gender and caste.

Another rupture in the seemingly fixed, natural, gendered hierarchy that this chapter exposes is one that is concerned with the public and private. Feminists have long criticized this dichotomy, which valorizes the public sphere for its association with men, freedom, productivity and the consequent relegation of the private sphere for its association with women, exploitation and reproduction (Pateman, 1989; Peterson, 2000). What is common to my respondents, apart from being involved in reproductive labour, is the fact that they all work in the public sphere. What can also be observed is the shift from open, public spaces to private, enclosed spaces in the form of malls, gated communities that is being preferred and more valued, making suspect, the attachment of valuation with the public sphere and devaluation with the private sphere. This

shows the constructedness of gender dichotomies, the need for its constant interrogation and the constant metamorphosis these categories undergo depending on intersecting identities and changing contexts, pointing to its inherent lack of fixity (Haraway 1986, Harding 1986, Nair, 2005). This shows that physical space of work plays a less significant role in determining the value of labour when compared to labour's association with certain gender subjectivities (femininity) and its incapacity to earn handsome "returns" in tune with the capitalist neoliberal logic. It would be very interesting to delve deeper into the mechanisms of valuation of labour in global, urban neoliberal political economies but this remains beyond the scope of the current thesis.

Although valuation of labour may not be dependent on the physical space occupied to perform that labour, the access *to* certain spaces is restricted by governance mechanisms, for people engaged in doing street based, reproductive labour. In the following chapter, I examine this increasingly common phenomenon, put in place by a certain kind of governance structure underpinned by exclusion and violence – direct and indirect. How does violence, masked as governance, work to control and regulate the everyday spatial access of people performing reproductive labour in the city streets?

Chapter 4: Everyday Violence as a form of Governance

The idea of space as one that is not fixed or natural but one that emerges as a result of social relations is well-established by critical urban theorists and geographers (Lefebvre [1974/1991]; Castells 1977; Massey 1994). As seen in the previous chapter, the marginalization of certain communities engaged in work that can be classified as feminized, reproductive labour is because of a purposive design that makes possible the sustenance of an exclusionary, accumulative ideology. In this chapter, I explore the relationship to space – one that mirrors social relations – as experienced by my respondents doing devalued forms of labour the forms of labour. By using Johan Galtung's (1969, 1990) conceptualizations of violence – direct, structural and cultural – this chapter analyses how violence becomes an everyday reality for my respondents in the process of accessing space in the city. By analyzing the experiences of my respondents and the transformations in the processes of governance in the city, one sees the workings of cultural violence that renders direct and structural violence as natural and acceptable in the city. In this chapter, I argue that violence, couched under "governance" or naturalized divisions of labour, is a manifestation of the process of "othering", that works to feminize these communities, further legitimating their exclusion from certain spaces in the city.

4.1 Streets for "citizens" only?

The April 23rd 2016 edition of the daily *Bangalore Mirror* had a news item with the headline "The Street Hawk". The picture beneath it was of a fifty year old woman, Geeta Misra, a Karate Black Belt posing with a wry smile on her face almost screaming out "you better not mess with me!" The entire article was around her courage in fighting street "hawkers" in the area she resides in Bangalore. She was able to get a High Court order against vendors being able to sell their products on the footpath. The article was abound with rhetorics such as "truth will prevail", "the cause", "fight" etc. (Prasad, 2016). But the question needs to be asked: What "truth" and whose "cause"?

In another case, in the year 2015, some 40-50 carts which sold street food in one of Bangalore's most expensive areas, Koramangala, were evicted after certain residents complained of the "non-vegetarian food smells" that came because of the food sold on the streets (Alternative Law Forum, 2015). Here, the long line of street vendors occupying valuable space in Koramangala, coupled with the justification by affluent residents that the "non-vegetarian food smells" could not be tolerated was enough to drive the local politician and the BBMP to action, resulting in the overnight evictions of street vendors from that area.[26]

What these two examples of street vendor evictions driven by certain "citizens" of Bangalore suggest, is a demonstration of the power that they are able to exert on the judiciary, and state bodies in making certain spaces inaccessible to street vendors. While the first case received media attention, lauding the efforts of the "Street Hawk", the second one did not. A cursory analysis of the language used in such media coverage of evictions and mainstream discussions of street vending by citizens forums etc. show how street vendors are described as encroachers, illegal, dirty and a nuisance to free flowing traffic etc. What we see here are cultural tools – in terms of language, images, ideology – which legitimates and naturalizes violence that has structural roots. What is revealed under these cultural tools is the structure of caste that effectively expels those people "polluting" affluent/middle class neighbourhoods with "non-vegetarian food smells", the structure of class that reduces the urban poor to encroachers of public space and the structure of gender that devalues and uses violence against them for embodying an intersection of identities considered inferior.[27] Bhaviskar (2003) refers to such cultural violence as "bourgeois environmentalism" and observes it taking over several Indian cities. How middle class/elite concerns for the environment become the common sense, even if

[26] There exists a national law for the protection and regulation of street vendors in which Sec 3(3) provides that no street vendor be evicted until the provisions of the law are implemented i.e. forming a committee, identifying street vendors and giving them all identity cards. Despite this law which is on paper, on the ground realities are very different. See http://www.indiacode.nic.in/acts2014/7%20of%202014.pdf

[27] The notion of purity/pollution is tied to the caste system. Adherents to it believe that the brahmins are the purest of all humans and the least pure of all are the people who perform unclean occupations and eat non-vegetarian food, the dalits. However, I do not aim to generalize that all brahmins exhibit such disposition and neither do I intend to conclude that all non-brahmins denounce the brahminical ideology.

it comes at the cost of lives of these deviant "others" is shared by her, when she recalls the instance of a young slum dweller (who lived in slum that had one toilet for every 2083 people) in Delhi, being beaten to death by middle class "citizens" and the police for using the neighbourhood park to defecate. This example shows how cultural and structural violence legitimize direct violence. But not all violence is always visible, or affected solely by humans.

I am sitting on the terrace of Sadana Mahila Sangha's one room office in a bustling area of Bangalore as I watch the women panting after having climbed two flights of stairs on a summer day, temperature hitting close to forty degrees. A study conducted by the Indian Institute of Science predicts that "Bangalore will be an unliveable, dead city in five years" because of its focus on real estate development (Menezes, 2016). For my respondents, soaring temperatures means extra fatigue, decreased customers, pre-maturely wilted flowers, fruits and vegetables all of them directly hitting their earnings. This is also an example of structural violence, without any specific actors, but with consequences that reduce the livelihood and therefore life chances of those disadvantaged due to factors such as caste, class and gender. When I ask the women of Sadana if there has been any change in Bangalore that has impacted their livelihood, Seeta, identifies the period beginning from 2000s, when the then Chief Minister S.M.Krishna declared that he would make Bangalore into Singapore, as the period since when urban transformation has resulted in the entrenchment of gendered power relations manifesting in their everyday lives.

> The trees have all disappeared. Now there are flyovers and Metro (rail) construction sites...we find it hard to even stand on these roads for our work. Police harassment was always there and now to add to that, all these new projects are making sure that we don't have place on the streets. They [state, public] are sweeping us off the streets, like sweeping away dust...
>
> Members of Sadana Mahila Sangha (Interviewed on 16th April 2016)

In the above quote by the Sadana members, the metaphor of "dust" used by the women is a very striking one. It expresses the hostility that the city has always treated them with. A connotation of dust, meaning that which is useless, an accumulation that has to be cleaned, is communicated

to the sex workers in the form of dug up roads and barricades cordoning off spaces for a flyover or a metro rail. This suggests that physical space in the city has to be made more valuable for which they have to be cleared out from the streets. Harvey (2012) calls this "creative destruction" (p.16) and identifies that there is almost always a class character to these visions of restructuring that affect most those who are marginalized in the city. For instance, the metro rail construction in Bangalore which follows sex workers like a horrendous shadow is an example of creative destruction in action. The metro rail project began despite a lot of opposition from home owners and small businesses which were going to be cleared away in the process of its construction (CASSUM, 2007). Despite these protests, the metro rail continues to be constructed displacing thousands of people who were once living in the slums on which the metro is being built and destroying people's livelihood. Nazreen says "*Metro banthu, nam hotteg mann bittu*" [literally translates to "the metro came, mud fell into our stomachs" meaning their livelihood options are diminished after the metro project began]. Nazreen has been displaced two times already, thanks to the Metro. Once working on the iconic M.G.Road, Nazreen could no longer stand there once the metro construction began. She moved to K.R.Market but the metro construction followed her there too. When finding clients became difficult, she moved to Majestic, another very busy area, which has the city's main bus stand and railway station. The metro is being constructed there as well but hasn't yet reached a stage when Nazreen and many others like her will have to shift again. The impact of mega urban infrastructure projects on the everyday experiences of street based workers, is once again an indirect violence that has its roots in the structures of global capitalist, neoliberal urban restructuring that is invested in re-appropriating public spaces into commodities that guarantee a return on investment.

Another connotation of dust, as in filth, is due the experiences of moral condemnation because of doing sex work. This, of late, are coming from the shopkeepers near whose shops the women stand looking for customers. Sharing her experience Revathi says, "The shopkeepers ask us to move away and not stand near their shops because they say we spoil their business...by

putting off their customers who are all 'family' people". As against 'family' people, the visibilization of women who do sex work becomes a discomfort, as she challenges gender and sexuality norms while openly displaying her sexuality and using it as a means to earn a livelihood. For trespassing the moral boundaries that society draws for women, they are rendered as filthy. When I speak with a police inspector in charge of the jurisdiction where the women do sex work, he says that the sex workers have become "an embarrassment" for the department. He goes on to add that it is "public complaints" which forces them to threaten the sex workers to leave the streets or file "petty cases" on them, despite the full knowledge that sex workers cannot be prosecuted for doing street sex work under existing legislations. In the above experiences, although violence may not be directly causing physical harm, it *is* violence that has its roots in the societal construction of gender and sexuality and which is strengthened by cultural tools in the form of commonly used abuse words, media portrayals of sex workers, which naturalize the stigmatization of sex workers. Through this, the demands of certain people embodying privileged caste, class and sexual identities take precedence over the right to space of sex workers.

4.2 Syndrome of the "Fence Eating the Crops"

If the previous section analyzed the ways in which structural violence was legitimized and rendered as natural due to the workings of cultural mechanisms, in this section I analyze how these two typologies result in more direct forms of violence, involving subjective intentions of doing physical/non-physical harm. A very popular saying in Kannada goes "*Beli hola meydaage*" literally translating to "like the fence eating the grass"- referring to circumstances when the very systems/institutions built to ensure protection are the ones which violate what it is meant to protect. This section shows how direct violence is largely deemed as legitimate by the perpetrators of such violence which most times happen to be institutions set up to safeguard the interests of the marginalized. Violence becomes a tool to demonstrate the inferior power position

of people and communities who are structurally and culturally disadvantaged, and is an effective mechanism which further strengthens the process of feminization by "othering" these communities.

Having worked with members of Sadana Mahila Sangha for three years now, I am aware of the almost routine instances of violence that the sex workers are subject to by the Police. Drafting a series of letters to the State Human Rights Commission, the National Human Rights Commission, The Women's Commission and The Ministry of Women and Child Welfare, attaching photos of the clotted calves, legs and hands of women is commonplace for organizations working in support of Sadana Mahila Sangha. I speak to Latha, one of the newest members of Sadana about her experience doing sex work in K.R.Market.

Latha was married at a very young age to a man much older than her. Having had no idea that he was already married, she tried living with him for some time, but could not bear the physical and emotional violence he and his wife inflicted upon her. She moved to the city with her two young children and has been living with her mother and children doing sex work for eight years. Her son is a daily wage construction worker while her daughter is studying is almost finishing school. She tells me how she had quit sex work after her daughter hit puberty and joined her son in construction work. "The money was less, but there was peace. I could sleep well," she remembers. But after an accident at the worksite where her son injured himself, his treatment expenses forced her to borrow loans. She came back to sex work and says she will remain in it explaining, "I can earn more money here. The police are the biggest problem. But I have to manage somehow until I earn enough money to clear my debts and fulfill my daughter's desire to become a doctor"

Latha's case is not an isolated one. It captures the experiences of many sex workers and single mothers like her. Most women in Sadana got into sex work mainly to escape poverty, oppressive marriages, and families or, in a few cases, after being trafficked. The oldest members remember times when the police would put chilli powder into their vaginas and give electric

shocks to their vaginas and nipples after raping them. After mobilizing as a collective, the degree of atrocities has come down, but the violence has not disappeared. The Police chase the women and hit them with their *laathis* (wooden batons) on the roads. They are routinely called to the station and booked with "petty cases" (as the inspector told me) or made to pay fines pointlessly. Sometimes, the violence is not physical, but has to do with publicly humiliating them, calling them derogatory names over the loud speaker in police vans, while they wait for buses to go home, or are with relatives purchasing items in the city centre. Latha is visibly infuriated as she recollects a recent experience:

> I was eating food from a street vendor.. he [police constable] came and talking loudly said to the food seller 'why do you give food to people like her?.' I just left the plate and walked away feeling humiliated. They don't let us stand on the road, they chase us, what if we get hit by a car? Will he pay for the hospital? These days I don't run; that makes him angry. He recently said 'if I see you standing here again, I will chase you till your house and beat you up till your body gets swollen'. I went away, but I am not going to let this go quietly. (Interviewed on 16 April 2016)

In the above experience, one observes the feeling of the entitlement to be violent when the police constable publicly announces that "he will chase her [Latha] till her house and beat her up." That some policemen (and policewomen) use very foul language and think they have unrestricted access to commit violence, physical or not, on sex workers reeks of the patriarchy embodied in state entities which aim to "discipline" these "characterless" women. It is common for women to be abused, asking them to go find other "respectable" jobs. Common examples of "respectable jobs" given by the police and members of civil society are "garments" and "domestic work". With Bangalore being one of the hubs of garments manufacturing units, thanks to the global (gendered) division of labour (Runyan & Peterson, 2014) and the furthering of feminization of labour in the form of increased demand for domestic workers in Bangalore, I understand this increased disciplining of "deviant" sex workers with its roots in changes in global economic structures. Thus it is structures of global capitalism and patriarchy re-enforcing severely unequal gender power relations in the city.

If the deliberate action of most police personnel cause violence against sex workers, their inaction too contributes to sustaining certain forms of direct violence. Kavita, another sex worker in her early thirties, a single mother of a 14 year old daughter, explains why she cannot stop inhaling drugs (whitener's thinner)

> A group of gangsters slashed my thighs because I refused to have sex with them. If I go to police to complain they won't even care, they'll ask me 'who asked you to be a whore'. So I have to take drugs to forget the pain and not feel hungry. (Interviewed 16 April, 2016)

All the above experiences show how the sex workers are criminalized, ostracized and dehumanized by mainstream society and state institutions that are supposed to safeguard such vulnerable communities. The ways in which structures of patriarchy and capital work along with cultural forces to inflict direct violence on people, especially sex workers, who challenge the gendered access to space, is telling, through the above experiences (Hubbard, 2010).

During my discussions with the Sadana members, they mentioned that they are noticing a change in the way street vendors are now being treated by the police and the city corporation. Leela mentions that almost every evening, the police can be seen harassing street vendors in the city centre:

> When I see the street vendors being harassed I think 'oh it is not just us, they are also being targeted now'. They abuse them saying *suule magne* (son of a bitch). They are making all of us who depend on the streets to be criminals. This is our police, our government, our system..
>
> Leela, member, Sadana Mahila Sangha (Interviewed on 16 April, 2016)

The above quote articulates, through the perspective of the sex workers, that they are not alone in being portrayed as "criminals" in the city for using its space in order to earn a livelihood. The use of the term criminal is a stark signifier of the discourses that are projected on the urban poor using street space to earn a livelihood (Etzold, 2015). It is also ironic that the people who are acting well within the law should be made to feel like this, while, in fact, it is the police and members of "civil society" who are not respecting legislations that exist to protect the interests of street vendors and sex workers. They get away with such disregard for the law, because the structural forces of caste, class and gender work in their favour. It is by making the legitimate

users of public space "criminals" that these actors are able to portray themselves as law-abiding, worthy citizens. In remembering the abuse word (which is a very common one) used for the street vendors, Leela perhaps connects it with an abuse word *suule* (bitch) that she has been called several times. If the sex workers are stigmatized and "othered" for being a *suule* the fact that the police refer to the street vendors as sons of bitches is perhaps a revealing use of language that seeks to make both the communities a common "other."

Apart from verbal and physical abuses, a common response from all my respondents in the K.R.Market and Avenue Road area was how they would be harassed every single day, sometimes in short intervals throughout the day, to pay bribe to the police and their "agents." I observe this firsthand, as I walk around Avenue Road, a street that is known for its street vendors, after dusk. I see a policeman openly taking bribes from every single cart selling vegetables. I follow him while he systematically pockets bribe and abuses people when they refuse to give him a bribe "He calls us shameless, he is shameless, dying for thirty rupees from people like us" grumbles a woman selling beans. A banana seller in his late thirties tells me that the bribes he pays adds upto Rs.230 per day out of the Rs.500-600 he is able to earn daily. "They take away the scales and cart sometimes. But if they touch the fruits, I will not keep quiet. These fruits are like my children" he says, visibly upset at being threatened to move away from the market street and not having sold more than half the fruits on the cart. The yellow bananas had already started to turn black.

I however do not wish to stereotype all police personnel as exhibiting a ready tendency to harass those who are vulnerable. In K.R.Market, where most of my street vendor respondents are from, I spoke to a young police constable. I asked him whether he chases vendors and sex workers from the streets:

> I don't know about sex workers..I haven't chased them, but yes I have to chase vendors sometimes... I feel bad doing it, I know they come to fill their stomachs...but if I don't do my work, they [referring to the higher ups inside the station] will shout at me saying I'm useless at even maintaining one road. (Interviewed on 25 April 2016)

In the above quote, what becomes apparent is that a masculine subjectivity is constructed by my respondent to instill fear and demonstrate authority because of the fear that he in turn feels of those above him in the professional hierarchy. There is a conflict between his personal values, experiences and his professional duties that emerge due to the pressure exerted by his seniors (who themselves form part of a hierarchical structure), who in turn feminize him as "useless" for his incapacity to "maintain" one road. This aspect of masculinity or demonstrations of power as requiring the construction of femininity or the powerless is eloquently articulated by Girija below.

Within a stone throw's distance from the police constable, I speak to Bhavani, my oldest respondent, and Girija, his neighbour, about associations they are part of or acts of resistances that are being planned against police harassments. Bhavani, tired of my questions about resistance snaps "Ohh! What do you know! This is like a marriage. It takes a husband and wife to make a marriage...Similarly our vending...we *have* to bribe them to be here"; Girija retorts "What marriage! They need us more than we need them. Without us, they won't even have money to buy themselves tea and water."

These last lines of Girija is telling of the dependence of the ones with power on the ones with less power, of the exploiters on the exploited, of the centre on the margins, in order to remain in places of power. This was theory coming from people being exploited in the market. It spoke volumes about the way unequal power structures work, about the manner in which gender relations work. That what seems naturalized has essentially been actively *produced*, made to look like a norm is what can be drawn from Girija's words. What is glaring through these examples is that there is nothing natural in the construction of neoliberal cities, and it takes the coming together of structural, institutional and cultural powers to keep certain communities in the margins (Enloe, 2004). The creation of an "other" from which to set oneself apart, but at the same time being dependant on that very "other" to re-enforce one's identity as distinct from the other, is what one can draw from Girija's observations. That the overvaluation of certain kinds of labour is dependent on the devaluation of many others; the prioritizing of certain projects is

made possible by ignoring the priorities of marginalized others, and, that the display of masculinity is reliant on the feminization of bodies to enforce violence upon, to instill fear in, is what Girija's retort can tell us.

4.3 Manual Scavenging in the Silicon Valley

Yet another form of violence related to space in the city of Bangalore, is unique in itself as it is different from the relationships to space that my respondents from the street vending and sex worker communities had. If structural, cultural and direct violence was used to create "others" to *keep certain communities from* accessing city spaces, in the case of pourakarmikas and manual scavengers, structural and cultural violence performs the function of "othering" by ensuring that they *remain "naturally" associated with certain spaces.*[28]. Pourakarmikas as aforementioned belong to the Madiga community for whom cleaning other people's waste has been an occupation that is historically attached to their caste. All my respondents who did pourakarmika work mentioned that they belonged to the Madiga caste, and that they were actually from the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh which used to be part of the British controlled Madras Presidency. Most of them also mentioned that their close family members are/used to be employed in this job. The exploitative conditions in which they work has already been explained in chapter three. In this chapter, I intend to show how pourakarmikas and manual scavengers are a community enduring structural and cultural violence, at times resulting in the worst form of direct violence, i.e. death.

Manual Scavenging, or the occupation of cleaning other people's excreta, has been continued in India until today, despite there being legislations that ban this work, the most recent one enacted in Dec 2013.[29] It goes on silently by way of disposing people's excreta where there are no toilets or where no drainage system exists for toilets and also by getting inside blocked

[28] Pourakarmikas and Manual Scavengers belong to the same occupational sub-caste, most commonly referred to as Madigas in Southern India. This community has historically been made to do "unclean" occupations such as skinning animals, burying the dead carcasses, cleaning other people's excreta etc. Usually, male pourakarmikas double up as manual scavengers and take up these jobs either as a means of livelihood or as supplementary income.

[29] See https://india.gov.in/prohibition-employment-manual-scavengers-and-their-rehabilitation-act-2013

manholes and sanitary pits to clean them. Women and men work as manual scavengers, although it is usually men who get into blocked manholes to clean them. Most of them resort to drinking alcohol heavily in order to numb their senses from the smell in the manholes, which in turn affects their health and lifespan, more adversely than people who sweep the roads.[30] While the ones who are lucky come out alive, many of them die due to asphyxiation (Gowhar, 2015; Sheth, 2016; Philip 2016). In one of the most recent cases of deaths in a neighbouring city to Bangalore, the young men had agreed to do get into a pit due to financial distress – they had recently quit their work as pourakarmikas, as they had not been paid their salaries for several months (Bhuvaneshwari, 2015). In another ironic case that reflects the apathy of the state towards this community, two young men died of asphyxiation cleaning a manhole in front of the house of the current social welfare minister, whose ministry is in charge to implement the banning of this work and provide the manual scavengers with rehabilitation (Gowhar, 2015). The Safai Karmachari Andolan, a campaign fighting for sanitary workers' rights and dignity, identified that 1,327 lives have been lost in the past two years in the process of cleaning sanitary pits in India (Varma, 2016).

Springer's (2012) articulation that the entrenchment of the ideology of neoliberalism and its use of violence, becoming so common and normalized that we fail to even notice it in everyday spaces, is an apt analysis for the experiences of violence that is faced by the pourakarmika and manual scavenging community. Here, even when violence takes its most extreme form, the most it receives is a column space in the side of newspapers (if they care to report it at all) and "grief" as expressed, if at all, by a minister. Neoliberal institutions such as privatization/contractualization of labour along with structures of caste, class and gendered subjectivities are seen working in tandem, reinforcing oppressive structures which have

[30] That some of the male manual scavengers resort to drinking alcohol to be able to get into the sewer pits is common knowledge among those who work with this community. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jz-g0uN-axE (10:50) for the experience of a community organizer, organizing people doing manual scavenging speaking about the health status of this community, especially the addiction of alcohol and its reasons.

historically marginalized this community. In a city that boasts of its technological prowess and one that aspires to be "world class", certain dalit men continue to have to clean manholes and at times lose their lives doing it. If forms of violence join together in evicting people from high value spaces for doing devalued, reproductive labour, these very forms of violence come together in order to entrench the caste, class, gender status-quo by ensuring that certain communities are relegated to occupy spaces that have historically belonged to them.

4.4 Conclusion

Spatial exclusion takes many forms in the city. In its most visible form it comes in the way of excluding people from occupying valuable space that is in conflict with the interests of the privileged, presumably morally upright residents of the area who have a certain entrepreneurial/aesthetic vision for the neighbourhood. In its less visible form, spatial exclusion is made effective by the privileged sections not sharing space with the disadvantaged and never once questioning the reason why certain communities suffer social injustice at a scale and frequency that makes such injustice seem commonplace. I used the concepts of structural, direct and cultural violence to articulate the everyday experiences of my respondents in their relationship with accessing space in the city. I argue that violence is a necessary ingredient in creating spaces of exclusion, in building cities with neoliberal visions, and that it is a mechanism that works in "othering" and feminizing communities employed in doing devalued reproductive labour for the city.

As Girija said, the perpetrators of violence are dependent on the existence of certain communities upon whom violence can be perpetrated, in order for their identity to be made. That this "othering" is not natural, but is one that is planned for and is exercised with alarming frequency, on the one hand shows how certain powers are continually working to keep the margins at its place. But on the other hand, if violence needs to be exercised, it also means that there are forms of resistances that warrant measures of violence in order to achieve certain

visions of the city. It is towards these acts of resistances employed by the "others" against certain "citizens" that we now turn.

Chapter 5: Everyday Resistances

As much as the last two chapters speak of the ways in which the value of labour done by street based workers is diminishing, of the everyday violence they experience, of economic insecurity that underscores their daily existence, they also speak about their tenacity, an almost obstinate persistence to defy and manoeuvre their way through constraints – both the tangible and intangible. The sheer necessity of being able to survive in the city perhaps is a source of their strength. Some of my oldest respondents were street vendors who have been working for more than twenty years, educated their children, had them married, and continue to sustain homes - all from the earnings of daily vending on the streets. The fact that they have been in this work for so long, on the one hand, says very little about the economic mobility they have achieved, but on the other hand, is telling of their resilience to continue work that is constantly threatened by the growth of the city. It speaks of a politics that they have been part of for so long, consciously or not, against that of exclusion, inequity and against exploitative structures of caste, class, gender. The intent behind writing this chapter is two-fold – firstly to recognize the varied practices of resistance, of the politics to make known one's "presence" (Sassen, 2010, p.10) that my respondents/their community take part in, and secondly, to identify future possibilities of creating a politics of the marginalized to keep the city from becoming a laboratory for neoliberal technocrats and state functionaries.

Chatterjee's (2004) civil society and political society become relevant concepts which can be used here, with some limitations. Certain affluent and middle class Bangaloreans, the "publics" in the previous chapters who seem to be part of the corporate class with the state on its side imposing its upper/middle class vision of Bangalore, whose entrepreneurial, aesthetic/environmental priorities get preference over the survival needs of the city's marginalized, are the *citizens* who form the *civil society* as per Chatterjee's conceptualization. Against their increasing influence over the city and as subjects of governmentality, emerge the political society – in this case, the street vendors, the sex workers, the pourakarmikas – the

populations, who are *governed* using mechanisms of governmentality (Chatterjee, 2004). For Chatterjee, democracy currently is not the "government of, by and for people" (p.5) but it is the politics of the *governed.* The rest of the chapter will discuss the politics of the governed – the politics of my respondents (and the communities they belong to) - as observed and shared by them, will speak of some of the current obstacles to creating mobilizations and also discuss a few openings that could be considered for building solidarities across occupational boundaries.

5.1 The Politics of the Governed

My street gives me joy... it gives me food. I respect my street. Streets are nobody's private property. *Rasthe yaar appandalla, thaathandalla* [the streets belong to no one's father or grandfather]..

Revathi, 45, member of Sadana Mahila Sangha

What becomes clear in the above quote is the relationship Revathi has with "her" street. The words used by Revathi to express what Bangalore's streets mean for her captures the value held by the streets through her eyes – a space she where she meets and interacts with a multitude of people, finds customers for her work and a space that makes it possible to dream and realize them. The use of the personal pronoun "my" is indicative of a sense of ownership she feels over the street works in, at the same time being conscious of the denial of space she and her community members have been facing. More importantly, the use of the words "father", "grandfather" suggests the gendered nature of property ownership or owning space that she and many others like her who are being subject to a systematic exclusion from certain spaces, are challenging. This spirit of challenging ownership of space, staking claim to space to prove one's presence/identity is also present in Revathi's personal life. After being insulted and ostracised from her family, mainly by her brother in law, for being a sex worker, Revathi says that the anger and hurt motivated her to remain in Bangalore, do sex work, save money and prove to her family that she was in no way inferior to them, especially to her misogynist brother-in-law. She bought a plot of land right next to her brother-in-law's house and built a house with her money as a challenge to him. She says "He is embarrassed now. I told him 'if you think you can do anything

because you're a man, remember I am no less as a woman.'" Clearly, the personal and the political are not distinct spheres for Revathi.

Revathi is part of Sadana Mahila Sangha - a collective of sex workers that was born out of a politics which believed in challenging a patriarchal, oppressive state. The wake-up call was when sex workers employed to educate peers about HIV, learnt that women were suffering harassment and torture from the police, which they saw was more urgent to address than the HIV prevention programme that was receiving global funds and attention in the late 90s/early 2000s. The women, having had enough of going to court, with their heads bent, hands folded to say "*tappayithu swami*" (I'm sorry, my lord) to the judge when produced after being charged on false cases (such as "seducing or soliciting for the purpose of sex work" or theft cases) by the police, decided to contest these cases against them. Out of 545 such cases, they won close to 350, with the rest disposed off due to several reasons. Since then, Sadana has been a very vocal collective in speaking against police violence, state control and the emphasis on "rehabilitation" that NGOs and civil society like very much to speak about. If collective action is one strategy to resist against increasing violence against them, the moral support the members get from being part of the collective is also crucial in building individual resistance mechanisms. Latha, who was verbally abused by a policeman says:

> I have the group behind me..I'm not scared anymore. If they [some police constables] order me to move I now ask 'why should I move?' He [a Police constable who has been harassing her] said he will chase me till my house and beat me up. I don't care if I get hit by him for continuing to stand there...I will find a reason to complain against him. I will not leave him...(Interviewed on 16 April, 2016)

But despite Sadana's collective and individual battles against the predominant attitude of the police, they are aware that the root of the problem lies elsewhere – in the "public pressure" the police routinely quote. They feel that, without sensitizing the public, conversing with the people who continue to stigmatize and ostracize them, addressing police violence alone will be ineffective. Towards this, they, along with theatre activists scripted a play called *Hasivu Kanasu* (Hunger and Dreams), reflecting experiences from the women's own lives. This play, performed

by the women themselves, who have no background in theatre whatsoever, mirrors the harsh realities of a city, triggers the audience to reflect on its biases and hypocrisy, uses irony and humour to speak about urban renewal programmes, and most importantly, humanizes sex workers as people, like everyone else in the city, working to fulfil their hunger and dreams. If the "publics" are in action trying to exclude the marginalized from their visions of Bangalore, the marginalized are in action too, finding their own means to challenge their marginalization.

I speak with a young police sub-inspector, in charge of one of the main areas where sex workers and street vendors work. I ask him, feigning naivety, if they have evicted any street vendors or prevented sex workers from standing on the main streets:

> We can't evict them like that. If we file cases against the sex workers, they put cases back on us...they go complaining to the human rights commission and it is unnecessary problems for us. The street vendors have their own associations. You must know, they gathered for a very large protest in Freedom Park against evictions. Also there is a court order saying you cannot evict them [street vendors]... we do not really have rights to evict them..(Interviewed on 25th April, 2016)

What is clear in the above words is the recognition by the police that the communities they exert power over are not powerless. It depicts the cognizance that these communities are forming their own alliances, finding their own mechanisms of resistance against the control of spatial mobility and the harm that is causing their livelihoods. The associations that the sub-inspector speaks about, the "protests in Freedom Park" and the sex workers filing cases with the human rights commissions are examples of the politics of the marginalized that the state is very vigilant about.

If, for the street vendors and sex workers, it is challenging spatial impositions in the immediate, for the pourakarmikas it is a more long drawn battle against exploitative labour conditions. Exploitation happens at many levels in the case of the pourakarmikas, from the level of the supervisor, immediately above the pourakarmikas and usually from their own caste, to the contractors who employ them, the state bodies and the successive governments which come to power, who turn a blind eye to the everyday exploitation of the pourakarmikas. Inspite of this complex web of actors, at multiple levels, it is because of the continuous pressure from the

pourakarmika unions on the successive governments, on the BBMP and through legal recourse that they are even receiving what they currently are. And just when one thinks mass mobilizations are a thing of the past, protests such as the garment workers' gives one hope in the collective power of the marginalized, however fleeting it may be. When I was in Bangalore for my fieldwork in April 2016, in a phenomenal show of strength, thousands of women garments workers subject to extreme exploitation, got together on the streets of Bangalore's IT hubs and blocked traffic to resist the move of the current Modi-led central government that decided that the Provident Fund (employee entitlement where a part of the salary of the employee is saved along with an equal percentage that the employer has to contribute towards the fund) contribution of the employer could only be withdrawn after the employee reaching 58 years of age. Enraged by this amendment that would prevent them from accessing their hard earned money any time they wanted, some 10,000 garments workers, mostly women, took to the streets, bringing large parts of Bangalore to a halt due to their protests. They entered software companies asking those employees to join the protest only to result in the software employees being terrified of the "mob" and companies having to declare a holiday! The protest resulted in the government withdrawing the order, but more importantly, it was a resurgence of hope and optimism about the fact that collective, public means of resistance could still be imagined in Bangalore. (Business Standard, 18 April 2016).

At times, it is collective, public acts of resistance that results in changing systems that are out to further marginalize the already exploited, but the politics of claiming entitlements may not always be as visible or as collective, taking head-on the systems which work to marginalize them. Sometimes there may be a quiet reclamation of what has been denied, like street vendors who decided to turn up days after being evicted, sit in their usual places and begin to vend. At times, politics may take the shape of de Certeau's "making do" (1984). Making do is when sex workers co-ordinate with one another to tip each other off about a policeman doing his rounds who could spell trouble; it can be when street vendors time their entry into a street according to the

changing shift timings of the police (on my way back from fieldwork one evening, I saw, as if like clockwork, a stream of carts selling vegetables, groundnuts etc., enter a busy market street as soon as the police van left the road after having ended a work shift). The grudgingly paid bribes to the policemen are another way of making do to be allowed to use space on the streets without necessarily confronting the system which constricts the use of space in the first place.

James Scott's (1990) concept of infrapolitics could also be seen on the streets among these communities as a means of venting out their frustrations or anger in a hidden transcript expressed when surrounded by people of their own.[31] Maria, the pourakarmika who sweeps the area I live in, says "Bangalore will rot if we all decide not to come to work for one week", fervently hoping that all pourakarmikas unite to do it. When the vendors grumble and curse some of the policemen who force them to pay bribes; when the performers in the play *Hasivu Kanasu* snidely render a monologue facing the audience, saying "like we don't know the stories of these 'respectable-family' persons", – I consider these as instances of infrapolitics that is brewing among the marginalized. As much as I am critical of over emphasizing these individual, micro politics of the street based communities, I have come to realize that these (much critiqued) everyday forms of resistances available to the people, for whom openly resisting oppressive systems or structures is often not an option when the earnings of that day decide whether they can buy food or not, is a crucial way of challenging spatial segregation and control. These forms of infrapolitics, atomized actions to claim space also challenges the mainstream idea of resistance as always visible, collectively taking on oppressive structures (Stella, 2014).

These strategies to a large extent can be seen as what Bayat (2010) calls the "quiet encroachment of the ordinary", although I have concerns with the usage of the term

[31] Infrapolitics for Scott is the public displays of hidden transcripts and these are often the political avenues available for those people who cannot always publicly resist. Hidden transcripts are "offstage" criticisms, behaviour, and language of people who are dominated, against the structures that exploit them. Scott says "and when the rare civilities of open political life are curtailed or destroyed, as they so often are, the elementary forms of infrapolitics remain as a defence in the depth of the powerless" (p.201)

"encroachment"[32]. When the politics of the marginalized is termed encroachment, we tend to further the discourse of the poor being "illegal" occupants and stereotype them as people who evade the law. What remains unsaid is the structural inequities that make them "encroachers", *if at all*. In many cases, as in the cases I have shared about my respondents, the vendors and sex workers are doing *nothing* outside of the law and are in fact being illegally persecuted by certain sections of the civil society and the state for exercising their right to livelihood and accessing space. What they are doing is quietly *re/claiming* space that has been denied to them due to their caste, class and gender identity and not encroaching upon it. In the pourakarmikas case, it is the state itself which is in blatant violation of several labour legislations (D'Rozario, 2015). Like Chatterjee (2004), Bayat (2010) too classifies the dispossessed and marginalized as resorting to illegalities, albeit with moral power, in order to survive. Bayat (2010) gives the example of people tapping electricity, squatting in public spaces, vending in streets etc., as the "quiet encroachment" but what the political society populations are essentially doing is claiming the disappearing "public" in public services or claiming the commons that are being made inaccessible to them or exclusive to certain privileged sections of people. I feel that this is an aspect that authors need to take time to qualify to bring about a discursive shift in the way we conceptualize the urban marginalized.

In fact, Bhaviskar and Sundar (2008) while critiquing Chatterjee's (2004) attribute of the illegal to the political society, draw our attention to the fact that it is the certain members of the civil society who are transgressing laws and acting with impunity, confident that their privileges of caste and class will rescue them from being punished. Biocon, a major biotechnology firm, whose CEO Kiran Mazumdar Shaw waxes eloquent on the formula to make Bangalore the "smartest" city, backs the private management of the only public art gallery in Bangalore among many other things, is alleged to be responsible for polluting a lake by disposing its effluents into it. People,

[32] Bayat defines it as "non-collective but prolonged direct actions of dispersed individuals and families to acquire the basic necessities of their lives (land for shelter, urban collective consumption or urban services, informal work, business opportunities, and public space) in a quiet and unassuming illegal fashion" (p.45)

who once farmed and sustained all their life activities with the water in the lakes, today have resorted to buying water because the lake is now a dump-yard of chemical wastes (Navya, 2009; Upadhyay, nd). Of course, mainstream media will not dare report about these illegalities with the same fervour they report a street vendor eviction drive. Ironically, what is covered in media is Kiran Mazumadar Shaw saying that biotechnology can be used as an effective means to clean polluted lakes! (Balakrishnan, 2015). In the face of dominance of the ideology that the "movers and shakers" (NEWS9, 2016 May 11) of Bangalore espouse, their access to capital, access to corridors of power, how effective can these quiet claiming of entitlements – be it space, fair working conditions - be when neoliberalism is working in ways that deter the collective coming together of the deprived against structures of exploitation?

My meeting with Sadana members is a grim reminder of this reality. Having been working with *Sadana* for more than three years, I expect a usual Saturday afternoon, the day I meet them - a room bustling with women and decibel levels reaching the sky. But this Saturday was very different, with a total of seven women in the room. One of the members who never failed to come to the Saturday meetings, Aaliya, the women fill me in, has gone to Dubai on a contract for three years to do housekeeping work. The others are probably in another job or do not have the money to spend on rising public transport costs, or are forced to work extra time as a sex worker, the women who are present explain. The Saturday meetings used to be a place where women learnt about each others troubles, spoke about it, planned actions against it. With women being increasingly criminalized (for no real reason) for standing on the roads, they have to find other means of livelihood, which means that they do not have the time nor resources to come for the weekly meetings anymore. Keeping people so busy that they do not have the time to sit down and decide to even protest seems like an effective strategy used by the state to keep people from collectively resisting. By making it increasingly difficult to access social services, by continuing to devalue and criminalize certain kinds of labour, by constructing the cloud of insecurity always looming large above people's heads, it seems like a sinister ploy by the state and certain vested

interests working with it, to push people who will potentially pose conflicting claims against the dominant, to such marginalities (of course, making hegemonic the responsibility of poverty on their own individual selves) that having the time to resist simply becomes unaffordable.

So in times when already isolated workers are becoming more insecure about their livelihoods in a neoliberal city, when untouchability and segregation are taking more nuanced and rationalized forms, when the state acts more as an entity that respects the priorities of the powerful and acts against those of the marginalized, what forms of resistance and coalition formations can work to draw attention to the struggles of those in the city who labour to service and reproduce its people every single day? In *Rebel Cities* David Harvey (2012) makes a very important point about the term "rights" in the concept of the right to a city being an empty signifier that can be filled with meaning by real estate developers as well as the homeless. When the conception of rights itself is contentious, there primarily emerges a struggle to define whose rights need identifying, followed up with the struggle to materialize it. Towards this, he identifies that it is when urban politics is concentrated on the labour processes involved in the "production and reproduction of urban life" that revolutionary ideas to imagine the urban differently may arise (Harvey 2012, p.xvi). Therefore it is the people who make urban life possible, whose work *reproduces* urban life – in this case the sweepers who keep the city clean, the vendors who sell fresh, healthy food, the sex workers providing intimate labour, but of course not restricted to these communities – who have the primary claim to the city, but whose labour and lives have been so devalued in the capitalist, neoliberal city that the claimants are made out to be encroachers.

When Nazreen and the other women in Sadana Mahila Sangha speak empathetically about the cart of a street vendor lying in front of a Police Station after being seized, the tender okra broken and wilted, one sees a silver lining in the form of inter-community solidarities that could be built among street based workers. Mobilizing street based communities has been discussed before among organizers of urban deprived communities and in fact members of

Sadana even took on the responsibility of building alliances with street vendors, rag pickers and homeless persons to come together as a community of street based workers. The effort is ongoing with some success, but the particularities present in each of these works and the people who do these works, became a reason why this attempt has not been working with the same gusto with which it was envisioned. This thesis claims to have no answers towards this conundrum and I am aware that efforts of this kind take many years to materialize as a political movement, but perhaps there could be attempts made to start speaking to each other on the street with the commonalities of devaluation, of governance through violence (direct, structural and cultural) and of controlled spatial mobility that emerges as common to all these communities. If these communities are making their presence be felt through quiet claims, along with such quiet claims, there is a crucial need to look for any commonalities that allow for these them to share space not only as workers in the streets, but as allies within the political society against the collaborated forces of neoliberal capitalism and the state.

5.2 Conclusion

In this chapter, I intended to show how cities, as much as they embody exclusion, violence and inequality, motivated by a neoliberal reasoning, are as much spaces that demonstrate a contestation against a fixed ideology, fixed terms of spatial use and the domination of a few powerful entities. I am not saying that the powers of the contesting claimants, in this case the corporate led civil society and the governed political society, are always equal in eliciting positive responses from the state. But what the narratives of certain state representatives and members of political society do point to is the state's knowledge of the power of the political society and the political society's multiple strategies in challenging their restricted access to space and dignified livelihood options. A variety of contestations - from individual to collective, planned to unplanned, legal to cultural, fighting structural oppression to making do, public demonstrations

of opposition to infrapolitics – all form part of the contested landscape of Bangalore, a city that is caught in between conflicting (and at times intersecting) desires.

There is no denying that the challenges to these forms of contestations are many. As expressed by most of my respondents during our discussions, the option of resisting was severely hampered by the "lack of unity" among persons within the same occupational categories. Another important factor that discouraged people from resisting against oppression was the dependence on earning their daily wages in order to be able to sustain themselves and their families. The anxiety and the insecurity that is being produced by interests (private and state) which believe in the capitalist neoliberal ideology was working very well in making sure that resisting had become unaffordable for these communities. I also observed a few cases where hegemonic discourses of being responsible for one's own poverty (and surmounting it), of improving the "get-up" of the city, were working its way through to the very people who were being adversely affected by these discourses, making them rationalize the developments taking place around them.

These challenges persist and might take more nuanced forms in the days to come, but what could be attempted is, in the first place, a serious introspection of why the many attempts at coalitions fail, which might lead to imagining and doing coalitions differently. One of the attempts that has been done in this study is to find a more or less common reason in the workings of a capitalist neoliberal ideology and the ways in which it effects the everyday lives of a city's marginalized, as a possible starting point to discuss the constructed feminization of a cross-section of communities. In building on the micro-resistances, but finding ways to go beyond it to make known the claims of the *reproducers* of the city, a possible revolution of the urban marginalized could be possible.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

David Harvey, in his lecture "The Neoliberal City", speaks about the need to pay attention to the "connections"; connections that explain the Vice President of Goldman Sachs getting a $52 million bonus while thousands of people lose their pension rights; connections that help us understand the basis of wealth/power concentrating in certain kinds of economies, organizations, individuals while people are being dispossessed and can barely manage to earn a living. He asks of academics to contribute in making these connections and expose how seemingly disconnected processes are, indeed, connected, resulting in inequalities that are reaching new heights of severity with each passing day.

This thesis has been an attempt to make such a connection. I have shown how the mundane, everyday experiences of certain people doing street based work are connected to global economic re-structuring processes, with specific attention to transitions in urban spaces. The project itself was motivated out of the curiosity to understand the ways in which our everyday experiences are gendered; the question to which I was looking for answers from the field, was what the experiences of street based workers could tell about the gendered impacts of urban restructuring in Bangalore, India. From the experiences of street vendors, sex workers and pourakarmikas, I learnt that their reproductive labour for the city was undergoing steady devaluation and that it was on this devaluation that more productive activities and economies, from the scale of the city to IFIs and investment banks, were dependent upon. I learnt why violence in its various forms, some seen, most others invisible, was an everyday feature for most of my respondents in the city for employing various strategies to assert their presence in the streets or demand a more equitable allocation of resources for themselves. That this violence was deliberately used to mark these communities as "encroachers" "illegal occupiers" "undeserving", following dominant discourses around street vendors, to render them as the "other" was visible, although the intersections of caste, class, gender played a role here as well, in determining the

extent of othering. It was the connections emerging from these global-local intra-actions that my respondents made me see on the field.

In understanding this knowledge from the field using gender as an analytical category, this thesis reveals the constructedness of gendered dichotomies that emerge throughout this thesis – that of reproductive and productive labour; of public and private; femininity and masculinity, powerless and powerful, to name a few. That these hierarchical dichotomies are not natural but are deliberately and consistently *produced,* therefore entrenching power inequalities of caste, class, gender, is what this thesis is able to demonstrate. In doing this, I aim less to reveal the non-fixed, non-natural character of these categories (which have been well established by feminists), but more to show how when these categories are employed to analyze experiences of my respondents, the non-naturalness, the political intent and the deliberateness behind their being subject to "feminization" experiences can be revealed.

The responses in this study reflect the experiences of largely women, since they formed a majority of my respondents (24) doing reproductive work for the city. Almost all of them (except one street vendor and two respondents who were pourakarmikas) shared that it was mostly their earnings (and at times their children's) which ran the household, as the women were either single parents or because their husbands would rarely contribute to domestic expenses. My youngest respondent was a twelve year old girl who was going to the market to buy flowers that she and her grandmother would tie and sell on the streets. Her mother was no more and her father "would come home once in a while" she said. Although I do not want to make generalizations, based on the experiences of my respondents, it was women who were multiply burdened with the responsibility to survive (Sassen, 2000). Devaluation of labour and decreasing access to space in the city, as a result of neoliberal urban restructuring, was resulting in women having to work extra hours, extra jobs and remain in oppressive jobs in order to make ends meet. This does not however suggest that men do not suffer the impact of such inequitable visions of city-making, but serves to highlight how gender roles attached to women, are sustained and deepened in such

an environment, in turn working to strengthen neoliberal institutions further. This thesis has also showed how the structure of caste is further entrenching itself with market mechanisms and decreased welfare, adding to the deprivation of these groups of people.

In times when development is synonymous with urbanization and investing disproportionate resources to build competitive, productive, investment-friendly cities, this thesis points to the repercussions of such a mission on the vast number of urban marginalized at whose expense these visions are realized. In India, there has been somewhat of an obsession to make cities "world class", without regard to the violence and dispossession of the already deprived, that is required for this vision to be materialized (Banerjee-Guha, 2009; Bhan, 2009). The recent right wing government in India, led by "development man" Modi, plans to build 100 "smart cities", a model that is based on the highly critiqued smart cities model of certain Western cities (Gowen, 2014; The Hindu, 28 Jan, 2016; Poole, 2014).[33] Harvey (2012) describes the fate of future cities as "fortified fragments", "gated communities" and "privatized public spaces" (Harvey, 2012, p.15). The smart cities project in India, driven by business interests and visions of certain "citizens", mirrors Harvey's prediction and is designed as a competition between states, which have to "win" in order to qualify for being granted certain smart cities. It is against such neoliberal, exclusive, inequitable visions of urban restructuring that this thesis speaks.

The political potential in bringing together the communities which work to re/produce cities, and to start conversations about how the external borrowing by the BBMP for a mega project, for instance, could impact the hours of sleep a street vendor or a pourakarmika or a sex worker gets, will go a long way in identifying structures which need to be challenged in a

[33] The Smart Cities project (2015-2019) is a national urban renewal mission with an objective "to promote cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of 'Smart' Solutions". "Smart Solutions" which are technologically driven and focus on infrastructure development in areas marked out under the mission will be focussed upon in order to "enable cities to use technology, information and data to improve infrastructure and services." (http://smartcities.gov.in/). The funding structure is 50:50 between the centre and state governments and each selected city gets Rs. 100 crore per year with the state governments having to contribute an equal amount. Two cities in Karnataka have been selected out of twenty cities in the first twenty shortlisted cities. See http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/belagavi-davangere-among-top-20-smart-cities/article8165461.ece

concerted and collaborated manner. It could lead to marginalized communities finding some commonalities regarding the causes and the factors contributing to their marginalization, and collectivize against those forces which are dependent on certain people remaining marginalized. For the state and "civil society" members, such collective, voicing of dissent, will serve as a reminder that people are indeed joining the dots and understanding the workings of the neoliberal urban ecosystem which they are active in sustaining.

Inspite of some of these contributions, I see that this thesis is lacking in several respects. Time and space limitations resulted in experiences of people concentrated mostly in central areas of Bangalore. Although the method of selecting my respondents were random and followed an ethnographic method, the experiences of people who have migrated recently from other cities, experiences of transpeople or non-cis gender persons in the city, could not be gathered. Perhaps this is also telling about access to central city spaces only by people embodying certain identity characteristics. Due to a limited word count, several experiences of my respondents could not be shared here. That I had to translate the experiences from Kannada to English resulted in certain nuanced meanings and emotions that could not be captured in English, although I have tried to retain certain expressions, words in the original language for prospective readers who might know Kannada. I wish I could develop more about the concept of "value" with respect to urban neo-liberal political economy, based on more in depth conversations with people and learning more about the theoretical concepts used in such a study. Inspite of these shortcomings, I value this thesis for teaching me not only the rigour involved in scholarly work, but more importantly, for teaching me to listen more carefully to the voices of experience, because on the streets of Bangalore, I saw theory in action, articulated by the men and women I spoke to, in a language of the everyday.

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