

AFTER THE EXCHANGE:
CITIZENSHIP AND TERRITORIALITY IN THE FORMER BANGLADESH-INDIA
BORDER ENCLAVES

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Abstract

This dissertation explores how the exchange of the Bangladesh-India enclaves in July 2015 affected the lives of the residents in terms of their experience with citizenship and their understanding of territory. After the partition of India in 1947, 198 border enclaves were created that were entirely surrounded by the other country's territory i.e., Indian enclaves were situated inside Bangladesh and vice versa. Almost 55,000 people living in these enclaves were completely isolated from their respective nation-states and lived as de facto stateless populations for the last seven decades. During the exchange, the residents were given the option to choose their citizenship. Ninety-eight percent of the residents decided to stay in their homes and change their official citizenship, while the remaining two percent moved from Indian enclaves back to India proper to retain their Indian citizenship.

Drawing on the experiences of the former enclave residents in Bangladesh, the dissertation explores their choice of citizenship, whether the status of citizenship makes any difference in their lives, and the techniques of state-making and territoriality employed by the state of Bangladesh. The dissertation is based on a twelve months of ethnographic field research in the former enclaves and two months of archival research in Bangladesh. The ethnography involved (participant) observation, 89 in-depth interviews with different groups, and 6 focus group discussions with the former enclave residents.

The research finds that *acts of belonging* played a significant role in their choice of citizenship. As a result, an overwhelming majority decided to stay where they were and opted for a change in their citizenship. After the enclave residents were formally recognized as citizens, Bangladesh took numerous distinct measures to help smooth their transition as citizens. A process understood as *sovereign overcompensation*. However, it also reveals that such

extraordinary measures stemmed not from a 'sorry state' but as a byproduct of state-making. The nature of citizenship created from such overcompensation is termed as *showcase citizenship*. Showcase citizenship is used by the state as a means to conceal the unequal treatment of its citizens and the structural violence fashioned by numerous state apparatuses.

The research views these former enclaves as *symbolic spaces* that surpassed their real economic and strategic value to gain an amplified status in nationalistic debates and rhetoric. Therefore, it took almost seven decades for Bangladesh and India to finally exchange them. Bangladesh employed numerous techniques of governmentality and territoriality, ranging from controlling the population to building physical infrastructure in order to bring these spaces under its legible control. Bangladesh also placed special attention to land formalization. Thus, the research reveals that land became *flexible* as the state and its citizens struggled over land ownership.

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Chapter 1. Introduction: After the exchange

Introduction

On the evening of July 31, 2015 Abu¹, a man in his late thirties who is a marginal farmer and a seasonal day laborer, was preparing to leave his house with his wife and three kids to attend a night-long celebration with his fellow neighbors in India. The entire family was in their best outfits, everyone bursting in excitement, and had been looking forward to this night their whole lives. They went to the local bazaar to join their fellow neighbors. By the time it was 8.00 pm in the evening, almost the entire village including the elders, men, women, and kids were there to celebrate the biggest day in their lives. They all chipped in to arrange for a feast in celebration. Big fires were made with huge pots on them. A cow and a few dozen chickens were being cooked along with *pulao*². Kids were happy as they were allowed more than the usual freedom to play with friends, adults were happy as they were either participating in or enjoying numerous traditional games like *ha-du-du*. They were shaking hands, hugging each other, sharing cigarettes, chewing betel leaves and nuts. Some others were preparing candles to light at midnight and hoist a flag. Firecrackers were bursting, it was loud, it was noisy, and it was bright. This is how Abu shared his memory of one of the biggest events in his life. He said, ‘I can’t forget that night in my life. It still gives me goosebumps’.

Abu and his neighbors were celebrating the fact that after the midnight, their village would not be a part of India anymore, ‘it would become Bangladesh’.³ They would not be known as *chhitbashi*⁴ anymore, they would be officially recognized as Bangladeshi citizens. A dream come true for almost 55,000 enclave people living along the border of Bangladesh and India who had been waiting for this moment the last seventy years. An enclave is a portion of one state surrounded by the territory of another state (van Schendel, 2002).⁵ At the midnight of July 31,

¹ All the names used in this dissertation except those of the officials and public figures are pseudonyms.

² A fine grade aromatic rice occasionally cooked to celebrate an event.

³ This is Abu’s quote that I am using directly here. By this Abu means, the enclave would not be a part of India anymore, it would be merged with the territory of Bangladesh.

⁴ *Chhitbashi* is a common term to denote the enclave residents. This suggests, they are not citizens of either Bangladesh or India, rather their identity is that they are enclave people.

⁵ When referring to the enclaves of Bangladesh and India, in this dissertation, I mean the former enclaves as they do not exist anymore.

2015; Bangladesh and India exchanged and merged the 162 border enclaves that they shared between them i.e., the enclaves were not alien pieces of lands inside the host state, rather they became territories of the host state. At the same time, people living in those enclaves were recognized as citizens of the respective state (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). Before the exchange, these enclaves were *de facto* stateless spaces (R. Jones, 2009c). They were not administered by the home state because of an international border that separated them from their home state. The host state, on the contrary, inside which they were situated, would not govern them as they were literally pieces of another sovereign state (R. Jones, 2010). Such unusual geographic locations turned these small pieces of lands into ungoverned spaces in practice and their residents, in effect, became *de facto* stateless populations. After a protracted negotiation between Bangladesh and India, all these enclaves were finally exchanged and merged with the host state on the midnight of July 31, 2015. For the first time in their lives, 55,000 enclave people were recognized as citizens.

This dissertation tells the story of these formerly ungoverned spaces and the stateless people living in those enclaves as they experience the moment of exchange and are incorporated into the countries of Bangladesh and India. It is a complicated story with many facets—daily struggles, nationalism, leaving and finding new ‘homes’, state making, identity politics, citizenship, and many more that could possibly not be captured within its limited scope. A border lies at the heart of the story. A hastily drawn and redrawn border of nation-states that hardly cared about the people living and moving along those borderscapes (Brambilla, 2015; van Schendel, 2005). An understanding of this border and borderscapes demands attention to the king, the empire, the colony, the colonial ruler, the state, the nation, and above all the people.

Consequently, in this dissertation research I present a story of the former enclave residents who lived as stateless people in the land archipelagos known as enclaves. The focus of the dissertation is to understand how the exchange of the enclaves and a formal recognition of the enclave residents as state citizens have influenced their lives. At the same time, the dissertation research delves into an investigation of how the formerly stateless spaces are brought under state administration. Therefore, the dissertation research broadly offers a discussion of the role of the border in the lives of the former enclave people, their experiences of citizenship, and the process of state making and territoriality. The major finding of the study is that while

bringing those formerly stateless spaces and population under state legibility and territoriality, Bangladesh actively prioritizes serving the new citizens who were once excluded from such privileges. As a result, the active role of the state ends up in overcompensating the new citizens. On contrary, accessing state services remains a daily struggle for the regular citizens. Thus, the project suggests that citizenship remains only a useful status for those who are either actively supported by the state or possess the resources to negotiate with different state mechanisms.

Origin and exchange of the enclaves⁶

Bangladesh and India shared 198 of the 256 enclaves worldwide until they were finally exchanged in 2015 (Whyte, 2002b). There were also counter enclaves (an enclave inside an enclave) and dual enclaves (two separate enclaves that are geographically contiguous with each other) shared by Bangladesh and India. To simplify the exchange, the governments agreed to ignore counter enclaves which means, a counter enclave will automatically be merged and exchanged with the enclave. Additionally, in the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement (LBA), India and Bangladesh had already agreed not to exchange the dual Bangladeshi enclaves of Dahagram-Angorpota, which were the only enclaves that had actually been under state administration due to their close proximity to Bangladesh and connection through a narrow corridor. This resulted in the exchange of a total of 162 enclaves in 2015 (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015a; Shewly, 2013b). The total exchangeable land area of these enclaves was 98.5 km². Bangladesh and India respectively hosted 69.5 km² and 29.0 km² of these lands (R. Jones, 2010; van Schendel, 2002). According to a census conducted by both the governments of Bangladesh and India from 14 to 17 July 2011, the total population of the enclaves was 51,549 among which Bangladesh and India respectively hosted 37,334 and 14,215 people (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015b). Another count was carried out before the exchange from 6 to 16 July 2015 to remove the names of the people who deceased and to add newborns since the 2011 census. Three thousand more people were registered, most of whom were either newborns or newly married, making the total population almost 55,000 at the time of the exchange (The Daily Star, 2015).

⁶ A slightly modified version of this section appeared as a part of the chapter in the *Routledge Handbook of Asian Borderlands* titled, 'The decision to move: Post-exchange experiences in the former Bangladesh-India border enclaves' edited by Hosrtnann, A., M. Saxer, and A. Ripa in 2018.

For years, several myths have circulated about the formation of the enclaves including outlandish stories of late-night gambling and spilled ink on a map at the time of partition. However, historically the enclaves came into existence after a treaty between the Mughals and the Maharaja of Cooch Behar in 1713 (R. Jones, 2010; Whyte, 2002b). The treaty allowed both parties to retain the pieces of lands they controlled even if they were surrounded by enemy territory. The British came to the subcontinent and started to gain control over territories in the mid-18th century and the first proper demarcation of the enclaves took place between 1937 and 1938 (van Schendel, 2002; Whyte, 2002b). As the enclaves were kept unchanged, the Mughal enclaves ended up into the British territories (as the British were controlling the formerly Mughal territories) and the Cooch Behar enclaves were administered by the Kingdom of Cooch Behar. Prior to the partition of India in 1947, the existence of the enclaves was a local issue which merely meant that some areas were administered by Cooch Behar while others by Rangpur. Without a formal border, the administrative distinction had little impact on the lives of their residents.

The first attempt to exchange the enclaves was in August 1932 when the Director of the Land Records for Bengal requested that the Revenue Department exchange the enclaves between Cooch Behar and British India in order to simplify tax collection. Since Cooch Behar was an independent kingdom, this was the easiest practical solution. However, in March 1934, the director was notified that it was not possible because of protests from the enclave dwellers (Whyte, 2002b). This is the only known proposal of exchange before partition, and surprisingly the opinion of the enclave dwellers was taken into account.

The border created with the partition of India went through the area of the enclaves, but the enclaves were not addressed in the original partition documents because the princely states, like Cooch Behar, were given a choice of whether to join India or Pakistan. When the princely state of Cooch Behar eventually decided to join India in 1949, the odd administrative enclaves became political enclaves, little islands of India and Pakistan completely surrounded by the territory of the other country (Whyte, 2002b).

After the partition, the first initiative to exchange the border enclaves was taken in 1953. The Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammed Ali hosted the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in Karachi at the end of July 1953 and paid Nehru a return visit from 17 to 20 August. At

these meetings, an agreement was reached to exchange the Cooch Behar enclaves, but several internal political issues in both states, as well as deteriorating bilateral relations between the countries, made things more complicated and the exchange could not be executed (Whyte, 2002b). Nevertheless, Nehru seemed to be very keen on resolving the enclave issue when he said on 4 June, 1958 that ‘Any two reasonable persons on behalf of the two Governments could sit together and decide them in a day or two’ (quoted in Cons, 2014, p. 4; Whyte, 2002, p. 91). In the same year, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Firoz Khan Noon visited Nehru in Delhi from 9 to 11 September. In this visit, they agreed to exchange the enclaves without compensation for the net territorial loss to West Bengal. They also decided to divide the disputed Berubari Union in half. Berubari was an area near the enclaves that had been mistakenly depicted as part of both countries on different documents produced during the partition (Whyte, 2002b).

The Nehru-Noon Agreement attracted immense criticism both in India and Pakistan. Nehru was criticized because he agreed to transfer half of Berubari and did not ask for any compensation for the territorial loss. The agreement was challenged in several court cases that dragged on for 13 years. The Indian Supreme Court finally decided on March 29, 1971 that the exchange could proceed, but by that point East Pakistan (Bangladesh) had already declared independence from Pakistan three days earlier on March 26. On 16 December 1971, East Pakistan won its independence and became Bangladesh. The first Prime Minister of the country, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, had a friendly relationship with Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India. Mujib visited New Delhi from 12 to 16 May 1974 to discuss many political and economic issues. On the last day, Mujib and Indira reached an agreement based on the Nehru-Noon Accord to exchange the enclaves and solve the land boundary issues between India and Bangladesh. This is known as Indira-Mujib Pact, The Land Boundary Agreement (LBA), or the Delhi Treaty (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015b; Whyte, 2002b). According to this treaty, Bangladesh gave up its claim on Berubari, and in exchange, Bangladesh would retain the enclaves of Dahagram-Angorpota, which were only 178 meters away from Bangladesh proper (Cons, 2016). Bangladesh ratified the LBA on 27 November 1974, with an amendment in its constitution, but India delayed.

A series of political disputes between India and Bangladesh complicated the issue. The assassination of Sheikh Mujib in a military coup on 15 August 1975 created a hostile bilateral

relationship. Additionally, the initiative of successive governments in Bangladesh to replace its alliance with the India-Russia bloc with the United States-Pakistan and Islamic world affected the mutual trust between the two governments (Lifshultz & Bird, 1979). Over the 1980s and 1990s, different issues such as migration from Bangladesh to India, access to the Tin Bigha Corridor that connects the Dahagram-Angorpota enclaves to Bangladesh, India's suspicion that Bangladesh supported terrorists and insurgent groups, and the construction of the Farakka dam in West Bengal worsened the relationship. As a result, the enclave exchange remained overshadowed (Shewly, 2012).

In 2009, the Awami League (AL) and Indian Congress Party came into power respectively in Bangladesh and India, the same combination of political parties that signed the 1974 LBA. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, Sheikh Mujib's daughter, visited India in January 2010 and expressed the desire to reach a final solution to the long-standing problem of border issues in the spirit of 1974 LBA (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015b). All disputes over the un-demarcated sections of the border were resolved within a year of the visit (Shewly, 2012). In September 2011, the Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh, was scheduled to visit Bangladesh. During this visit different bilateral treaties were to be signed, including the enclave exchange agreement, but at the last minute, the West Bengal state government convinced Singh not to sign the water sharing and border agreements. Hence, only a protocol was signed approving the exchange of enclaves, but the document lacked a fixed deadline (Shewly, 2013a).

The lack of a fixed timeframe created dissatisfaction among the enclave dwellers on both sides and led to a sustained protest movement. For example, on 21 August 2011, residents of enclaves in India held a protest in the Metro Channel of Dharmatala, Kolkata demanding the exchange of the enclaves (Saha, 2011). Enclave dwellers from both countries decided to turn off all the lights in the enclaves from 11 September to 12 September 2011 in demand of a specific date of exchange (The Daily Prothom Alo, 2011). The biggest and the most serious strike took place in March 2012 in Putimari, an enclave of India situated in Panchagar district of Bangladesh. They began a hunger strike for an indefinite period with a three-point demand that called for the immediate implementation of the 1974 LBA as well as a definitive timeframe for the enclave exchange. The strike went on from 18 March until 11 April 2012 and only ended

with a promise from the Government of Bangladesh to press the issue with the Indian government (The Daily Star, 2012).

The protocol, not surprisingly, was opposed in India again. On 18 December 2013, a bill was introduced in the Indian Parliament for the implementation of 1974 LBA. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), and the Trinamool Congress Party protested the bill. Trinamool MP Derek O'Brian termed it as a 'Bangladesh Giveaway Bill' and Mamata Banarjee, West Bengal's Chief Minister and head of the Trinamool Congress, posted on her Facebook page 'We are not accepting, not accepting and not accepting [the agreement]. The state government will not implement it' (quoted in Cons, 2014, p. 2). As time passed, the bilateral relations between the two states improved as they signed several smaller agreements that permitted India to use Bangladesh's seaport and established a road transit route through the country. These concessions from Bangladesh influenced the political leaders in India, including Mamata, to accept the implementation bill and it was finally passed on 6 May 2015, with a unanimous vote for the exchange (The Daily Prothom Alo, 2015a). The newly elected BJP Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, visited Bangladesh and signed the exchange treaty on 7 June 2015. At midnight on 31 July, the enclaves were formally exchanged between the two countries leaving Dahagram-Angorpota as the only remaining enclave.

After decades of waiting, the actual exchange happened quickly and smoothly. Both countries were keen to know the population of the enclaves and the number of people who wanted to stay and leave. The enclave residents were given two choices: stay in the country of residence and accept a change of citizenship or move to their 'home country' and retain their original 'official' citizenship there. Home country and official citizenship are in quotes because in practice none of the residents had contact with these home countries and had received no services from them for decades. They had lived in a *de facto* stateless existence for many years. While Bangladesh offered no incentives for residents of Bangladeshi enclaves in India to move to Bangladesh, India came up with a resettlement package for the people from Indian enclaves in Bangladesh to encourage them to move to India. The package included 500,000 (US\$7,500) rupees per family, dry food for two years, kitchen utensils, animal feed, temporary camp in Cooch Behar, drinking water, medicine, healthcare, education, and eventually a house or flat (The Daily Prothom Alo, 2015b). At first, 1,006 enclave people in Bangladesh opted to relocate

to India while none of the enclave resident in India opted to move to Bangladesh (The Daily Star, 2015). However, a few decided not to move later, making the number 989 (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015c). By November 30, 2015 a few more decided not to leave for India, reducing the total number to 920 (Shewly, 2016b). According to the gazette of the government of Bangladesh, it recognized 37,535 Indian enclave residents as Bangladeshi citizens and later added 64 more making the final count as 37,599 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016b, 2017). Scholarly work had predicted that most residents would want to stay in their homes, but it came as a surprise to both governments that so few decided to move (The Daily Prothom Alo, 2015b). Although the relocation of the enclave residents was supposed to begin on 31 July 2015, it was postponed based on the complaints that some who had opted to move were threatened by others. After this, an observational period was introduced until 31 October when the enclave dwellers were issued a travel pass and could visit the place where they would be relocated in India (Ali, 2015).

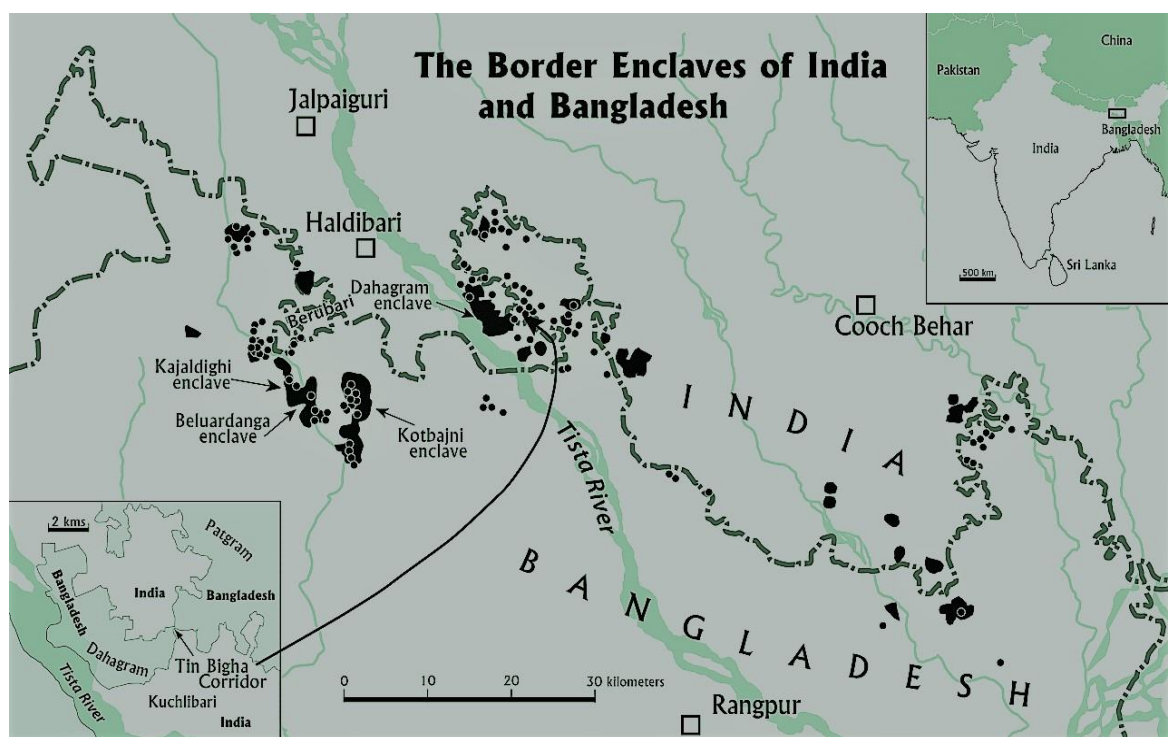


Figure 1 Former border enclaves of Bangladesh and India (Reprinted with permission from Jones 2009b)

Life before the exchange

Everyday life in the enclaves before they were exchanged was marked by lawlessness, violence, and insecurity. Being stuck in these small land archipelagoes added an extra layer of

financial hardship in daily lives as they were deprived of any government aids both by the home and the host state. Scholars who studied these border enclaves before their exchange offer more or less the same scenario where enclave residents lacked citizenship rights, were made of occasional victims of sovereign violence, and were in a constant state of anxiety (Cons, 2016; R. Jones, 2010; Shewly, 2013a; van Schendel, 2002; Whyte, 2002b). Enclave residents shared similar experiences when I asked them about life before the exchange. As Salma, a 23-year-old college student and one of the female leaders of the enclave exchange movement from Dasiar Chhara shared her experience of living in the enclave before the exchange.

Oh, you can't imagine how it was! You would not even be able to sit here if it was not exchanged. There will be no police, no law; and drug dealers would roam around freely here. There will be hundreds of motorcycles coming every day to buy drugs and police could not do anything. If anyone spoke against them [referring to the drug dealers], they would be in trouble. ...Especially for girls, it was really hard because of the lack of security. Parents would marry their daughters as early as they could.

Drawing on both the experiences of the former enclave residents and previous studies, in this section, I offer a brief scenario of everyday life and challenges in the former enclaves of India inside Bangladesh. First, I discuss how many of the enclave people ended up living in these enclaves; then I offer a discussion on their daily lives focusing on lawlessness and violence, immobility, reliance on the neighbors, and an informal system enclave council.

People living in these enclaves could be broadly categorized into two groups based on their reasons for living and/or moving in these enclaves. First was the people who were living in these enclaves before the 1947 partition. However, after the partition, the Hindu population in the enclaves of Pakistan (and later Bangladesh) and Muslims in India found them on the 'wrong' side of the border, as the border was drawn on the basis of religious majority. As both India and Pakistan allowed its population to exchange their land and properties to move from one side of the border to the other from 1947 to 1965, enclave residents also took the opportunity and exchanged their properties with their counterparts. This resulted in a movement of Hindu enclave residents to Bangladeshi enclaves inside India and vice versa (R. Jones, 2010). Although this property exchange arrangement was banned after a brief war between India and Pakistan in 1965, enclave residents continued to take advantage of the unique status of enclaves and kept moving from one side of the border to the other. As a result, during the time of the exchange, the enclave population was predominantly Muslim in Bangladesh and vice versa (R. Jones, 2010).

Therefore, I contend that religion played a significant role in moving from one side of the border to the other before the exchange of these enclaves but was not a determining factor anymore when it came to choosing a state of citizenship after the exchange in 2015. The second category of the population was the Bangladeshis who moved into these enclaves mainly because the land was cheaper and with the hope that soon the enclaves would be merged with Bangladesh. These were mostly the people from the downstream of Bangladesh who had either lost their properties due natural disasters like river erosion commonly known as *Bhatiyas* or the marginal population living around those enclaves (Cons, 2016; R. Jones, 2010).

Lawless and violent, this is how most of the former enclave people and the regular Bangladeshi citizens remember life before the exchange. As these enclaves were not administered by the host state and did not have a connection with the home state, they became de facto ungoverned spaces. Especially, during the 1980s and 1990s when India started building a border fence along its borders and tighten its border control, enclaves lost the last bit of semblance of a governing authority (Cons, 2016; R. Jones, 2010). As a result, Shewly argues that abandonment by the home state granted the condition of turning these people into *bare lives* and allowed the host state to practice its sovereign power over these rightless population (Shewly, 2013a). For instance, most of the houses in the Indian enclave of Garati in Panchagar district of Bangladesh were torched by some of the local Bangladeshi gangs in 2010 with no legal actions taken against them. Bangladeshi police would not take any action as the enclave was not under their legal jurisdiction, and Indian law enforcing agencies could not do anything as it happened inside another sovereign state (Shewly, 2013a). Such dilemmas for both the law enforcing agencies essentially turned these enclaves into ungoverned spaces where life was not protected by the sovereign but was made victims of occasional violence. As a result, scholars view these spaces as ‘sensitive spaces’ ‘spaces of exception’ and ‘container of bare lives’ (Cons, 2016; R. Jones, 2009c; Shewly, 2013a).

Being locked in the small enclaves, on the one hand, made its population immobile and on the other, compelled them to rely on the host state and their neighbors for daily survival. Since these enclaves were small in size, they lacked a self-sufficient economy. Enclave residents were completely dependent upon the local people and the local market to sell their produces, to avail their daily needs, and even for basic rights such as treatment in a hospital. Jumman, a fifty-

eight-year-old farmer and life-long enclave resident in Dahala Khagrabari shared his experiences of living like ‘parasites’.

You know, we were like parasites. We had to go to Bangladesh and completely depend on their mercy for anything. Selling our crops, buying kerosene, buying food, buying fertilizer, buying medicine and what not. Sometimes many would take advantage of our status and give us a low price for our products and ask for bribes for treatment in the hospital.

Another significant aspect of daily life in the enclaves was the local council. Many of the big enclaves formed their own local governance and arranged elections to choose a Chairperson. For instance, the big enclaves like Dahala Khagrabari, Dasiar Chhara, Garati, and others held regular elections to choose their council who would not only resolve the daily disputes but also would oversee the land exchange in these enclaves. Some of them came up with their own land management system with locally produced documents.

Research questions

Against this backdrop, this dissertation explores the experiences of the enclave residents who became citizens for the first time in their lives. It also delves into a critical understanding of state making and territoriality in the formerly ungoverned border enclaves. Scholars who studied the former enclaves before their exchange, have understood them more or less from an Agambenian framework (Agamben, 1998, 2005). Drawing on Agamben’s theorization of the sovereign, they suggest that these were stateless spaces abandoned by the state yet occasionally were made subject to state violence (R. Jones, 2009c, 2009a; Shewly, 2013a; van Schendel, 2002). There are instances when enclaves have also been understood as ‘sensitive’ spaces where the rule of the sovereign becomes ‘aleatory’ in nature (Cons, 2016; Dunn & Cons, 2014). In summary, scholarships on the former Bangladesh-India border enclaves suggest that these were spaces outside the purview of the state where people were stripped off their rights to have rights (Arendt, 1973). The exchange aimed at ending such inhuman conditions, brought these spaces under state legibility, and recognized the enclave people as right bearing citizens, at least on paper.

Recent literature on citizenship and state making in South Asia suggests that being citizens does not necessarily guarantee accessing all the rights and facilities that the state offers. It contends that the poorest of the poor become victims of structural violence due to corruption,

complexity, and inefficiency built into the bureaucratic organizations of these states (Gupta, 2012; Hull, 2008, 2012). This is a violence inflicted on the poor by numerous state mechanisms for which no single individual or party can be held responsible, thus they become ‘structural’ in nature (Gupta, 2012). In extreme cases, such structural violence leads to immense sufferings and sometimes to death of the resource poor. Consequently, the question remains, even if the former enclave residents are recognized as citizens and those spaces are brought under the sovereign control, does that really end the sufferings of the last seven decades? To what end do the newly accepted citizens get to enjoy their citizenship rights? What role does the state play in the process?

Thus, the dissertation aims to answer three broad research questions, each informed by subsequent sub-questions. These are-

1. Why did an overwhelming majority of the former enclave residents choose to stay at the host state and opt for a change in the citizenship?

The former enclave people were, officially, Indian residents living in Bangladesh and vice versa. Thus, when they were given the option to choose their state of citizenship, both Bangladesh and India expected a big movement across their borders. However, almost 98 per cent of them decided to stay where they were and opted for the host country’s citizenship. Thus, this research asks, what influenced their decisions in staying where they were? What role did a sense of belonging play in their decisions? Whether social memory, discourse, regional identity, and spatial socialization influenced their choice of citizenship?

2. Does the status of citizenship make a difference in the lives of the former enclave residents?

Since a majority of the former enclave residents were marginal poor and lack resources to negotiate with numerous state apparatuses, just a formal recognition as citizens does not really guarantee an experience of what Christian Joppke understands as ‘substantial citizenship’— a combination of status, rights, and identity (Joppke, 2007). Thus, the project asks, do people need access to certain resources in order to enjoy a full benefit of citizenship? What role does the state play in ensuring such benefits? What difference does it make in citizenship experiences with and without an active assistance from the state?

3. How does the state turn the formerly ungoverned spaces into legible state spaces?

One of the most crucial tasks of the state is to create legibility, argues James Scott (Scott, 1998, 2009, 2017). Thus, once the former enclaves were exchanged, both Bangladesh and India employed considerable resources and efforts in making the enclaves legible. In so doing, both Bangladesh and India initiated numerous state-making projects and employed techniques of territoriality. As a result, the dissertation aims to answer how does the state create legible spaces? What role does territoriality play in such projects? How does the state govern its population in the formerly stateless spaces? How lands are formalized in the former enclaves and brought under state control? And what took so long for Bangladesh and India to exchange these territories?

To answer these questions, I combine both archival and ethnographic fieldwork carried out in the summer of 2015 and in 2017-2018. During 2015, I conducted a pre-dissertation field work in June and July when both Bangladesh and India were preparing to exchange the enclaves and enclave residents were also preparing themselves either to move or to stay. I interviewed 13 enclave residents in four enclaves under Panchagar district of Bangladesh. I also interviewed the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO- the highest ranked administrative officer in charge of a sub-district in Bangladesh), and the Assistant Judge in charge of Debiganj upazila. I conducted a twelve-month ethnographic fieldwork from June 2017 to May 2018 in the former enclaves of India inside Bangladesh. During this time, I stayed in and around eight of the biggest enclaves distributed across three districts in Bangladesh- Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, and Panchagar. I also visited numerous other small enclaves all over the region. During this period, I conducted 57 in-depth interviews with the former enclave residents who chose to stay in Bangladesh. I interviewed 10 regular Bangladeshi citizens who reside around the former enclaves and have seen them before and after the exchange. This phase also involved 22 in-depth interviews with government officials at different hierarchies starting from the UNO to the clerical staff in land office. I further conducted 6 focus group discussions (FGDs) in the former enclaves. All the interviews were conducted in Bengali and I transcribed them with the help of my research assistant. Interviews were semi-structured while I used a checklist to guide the conversation. On an average an interview lasted about 43 minutes. While most of the interviewees permitted me to audio-record the conversation, a few of them, specially the government officials did not allow

me to record. Thus, in such cases, my research assistant and I took rigorous notes. While I use insights from those interviews, I do not quote them directly anywhere in the dissertation. I spent my downtimes, and the month of June and July of 2018 in conducting archival research in the Central Library of Dhaka University, the Central Public Library, the National Archives, and the Rangpur Public Library in Bangladesh. I also collected press releases, gazettes, Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), bilateral documents, newspaper articles from numerous online sources, including but not limited to, the government websites and news blogs. During my stay and visit in the former enclaves I shared countless cups of tea over conversations with farmers, businesspeople, shop keepers, local journalists, and many more from various walks of life. The appendix offers a detail discussion

Chapter structure

In addressing the research questions, this project will provide a partial and situated perspectives of life after the exchange in the former border enclaves of India inside Bangladesh. It is divided into eight chapters. All the chapters are structured in a way so that they provide an independent picture of the particular facet of the larger story of the state, its borders, and the people. Considered as a whole, they tell a detail story of state making, citizenship, and territoriality in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India. Part of the introduction chapter appeared on an edited collection titled *Routledge Handbook of Asian Borderlands*. Chapter two and three have appeared in journals *Area* and *Political Geography*, respectively.

Chapter one, *After the exchange*, offers a journey to these enclaves both in terms of their history and everyday experiences. In so doing, it offers a brief history of the enclaves, their exchange, and a narrative of everyday lives in the enclaves before they were exchanged. Following this discussion, the chapter presents the broader questions and the theoretical arguments laid down in the rest of the monograph. Further, the chapter sheds light on the methodological aspects of the research and ends with a brief introduction to the rest of the chapters that follow.

Chapter two, *Symbolic spaces*, provides an explanation as to why Bangladesh and India agreed on a territorial swap and why it took so long to materialize the exchange. In this chapter, I first present a brief history of the enclaves and their evolution by comparing them with other enclaves around the world. Then I focus on the idea of territoriality and nationalism to

demonstrate how enclaves have been used as a symbol of territorial markers and nationalistic debates. After that, I delve into a discussion on how the meaning of the enclaves was transformed from a source of constant conflict to a symbol of good neighboring, geo-economic and geopolitical gains that eventually led to the exchange. In the end I contend that, although rare, states may exchange territories if an exchange serves significant geopolitical and geo-economic interests for both the parties involved, and if states are able to depict the exchange as a victory for the nation. I demonstrate that nationalism and territoriality were used to justify both the existence and the exchange of these enclaves as they became what I term *symbolic spaces*.

Chapter three, *Acts of belonging*, focuses on a rigorous understanding of the choice of citizenship. I offer an explanation as to why the former enclave people overwhelmingly chose the citizenship of the host country, as opposed to a country that they ‘belonged’ to. I analyze how the disconnection of almost 70 years from their home state, and dependency upon the host land for daily survival influenced their decisions on the choice of citizenship. In so doing, I offer the concept of *acts of belonging*. I use the term as a departure point to refer to the actions that the former enclave residents performed not only to claim their membership to a certain state but also to similar mundane acts of daily lives that people living along the borderland perform (in most cases, their neighbors who were the citizens of the host state) on a daily basis. In closing the discussion, I present a conceptual framework to demonstrate how acts of belonging can be productively used to explain their choice of citizenship by combining the concepts of spatial socialization, social memory, and regional identity.

In chapter four, *Sovereign overcompensation*, I focus on the role of the state in treating the newly accepted citizens of the former border enclaves. Contrasting the role of the sovereign before and after the exchange, I detail out how a sovereign (re)acts in bringing the same group of people under its protection on which it once inflicted violence. At the same time, I explore how the newly incorporated citizens experience the rights and privileges offered by the state. In so doing, I argue that the formalization of the ex-enclave residents and incorporation of the lands into state territories brought them under the sovereign protection. Thus, the former enclaves were not anymore a ‘state of exception’ rather, they became the subject of state governmentality (Agamben, 2005; R. Jones, 2009a). The sovereign assumed an active role in ensuring that the newly incorporated citizens enjoy the amenities that come with the recognition by and protection

of it. This active role resulted in privileges for the former enclave residents that, in many cases, surpass the privileges enjoyed by the regular citizens of Bangladesh. This is what I call *sovereign overcompensation*. I do not claim that the sovereign compensates the former enclave residents for the violence once practiced over them instead, I argue that it employs these privileges as latent techniques of governmentality by offering selective conveniences. These conveniences are extended to make sure that the newly adopted citizens, who are mostly marginal poor, are able to navigate through numerous complex state apparatuses.

Chapter five, *Showcase citizenship*, continues the discussion from the previous chapter but from the perspective of the citizens. It explores the way newly adopted citizens of the former enclaves experience citizenship as a result of the overcompensation from the sovereign. Drawing on the experiences of the newly incorporated enclave residents, their neighbors who are regular Bangladeshi citizens, interviews with numerous state officials, and field observation, I argue that such overcompensation results into a peculiar category of citizens that cannot be comprehensively grasped by the conventional vocabulary of citizenship. I introduce the idea of *showcase citizenship* to refer to a category of citizens who are exceptionally treated by the state in ensuring that they get access to and enjoy the rights that come with the identity of being a citizen. At the same time, the state uses such citizenship as a means to conceal the unequal treatment of its citizens and the structural violence fashioned by numerous state apparatuses. Consequently, I argue that showcase citizenship is an informal and intentional creation of the state which is used to produce and foster an image of a caring state that is sympathetic to its citizens and actively helps all of them irrespective of their socio-economic and political conditions, although in reality it does not.

Chapter six, *Legible state spaces*, is a discussion on the state-making and territoriality techniques that Bangladesh uses in turning the former enclaves into legible state spaces. Drawing on interviews with numerous groups and based on field observation, I suggest that the state creates legible spaces by employing four techniques—central coordination, construction of physical infrastructures, counting and controlling the population, and by (re)production of homogenous spaces. After that, I offer a discussion on how the daily state making projects on the ground shape and are shaped by state territoriality. I identify four broader aspects of territoriality that Bangladesh practices over these spaces. These are, territorialization and institutionalization,

governmentality and governance, political control and sovereignty, economic regulations and tax collection. I suggest that state making and territoriality in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India go hand to hand and are two sides of the same coin.

Chapter seven, *Flexible lands*, is a detailed discussion of an aspect of state-making and territoriality. I focus on the process of land formalization, ownership determination, and land registration in this chapter. Lands, in the former enclaves, were never officially recorded in the host state's records. Lands were managed locally by the enclave residents before the exchange. Thus, the state of Bangladesh paid specific attention and employed substantial resources in documenting every parcel of land in the former enclaves. I present a brief scenario of land ownership and land related complexities in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India before their exchange in the first section of the chapter. Then, I present a discussion of current structure of land administration in Bangladesh in the second section to demonstrate the complexity built within the system. In the third section, I document the process of land formalization in the former enclaves and in the next section I discuss the complications arising from the process of land formalization. In the final section, I illustrate how the state and the citizens negotiate with and between each other regarding land ownership. In so doing, I argue that both the state and the citizens employ numerous resources and mechanisms to claim lands that at the same time are reasons and results of its flexibility.

In conclusion, *The state, its citizens, and territoriality*, I return to the larger question of state making, territoriality, and citizenship considering the theoretical arguments laid in the previous chapters. The broader implications of the research surpass its geographical constraints of land locked enclaves and intervenes in numerous fields of study including, but not limited to, critical border studies, political geography, citizenship studies, state, nation, territory, ethnographic methods, and subaltern studies. Thus, I conclude although unique in situation and characteristics when they existed, enclaves have provided valuable insights on numerous aspects of state making and citizenship and continues to be a rife place for such knowledge production even after they do not exist anymore.

Chapter 2. Symbolic spaces: Nationalism and compromise in the former border enclaves of Bangladesh and India ⁷

Introduction

After a long ride on a rickshaw van through zigzagging dirt paths, my research assistant and I finally arrived at one of the former Indian enclaves in Bangladesh. To be sure, I asked a man in a small shop that sold cigarettes, ‘Is this the enclave of Kotvajni?’ Unable to mask his irritation, he replied, ‘No, this is the *former* enclave of Kotvajni. This is now Bangladesh’. He put extra emphasis on the word *former* while answering. With a smile on my face and a small nod of my head, I said, ‘thank you’, feeling a little ashamed of my inauspicious arrival at the *former* enclave. Nonetheless, I was also excited to learn about this new chapter in the lives of the residents who had finally achieved the exchange of the border enclaves after almost seventy years of uncertainty and de facto statelessness.

Even during the many decades that they were enclaves, territorially surrounded by India or Bangladesh, they had no apparent marker to distinguish them from their surroundings. They had neither fences nor border guards to control or monitor the flow of the people. People in the enclaves were not ‘different’ by any measure from their neighbors, beyond their status and their lack of papers. This made it even harder to distinguish the enclaves from their surroundings. Yet, for almost 70 years from 1947 until 2015, residents of the enclaves like Kotvajni were not considered Bangladeshis, and these small pockets of land were not territories of Bangladesh. They had been, officially at least, Indian nationals living in an Indian territory, effectively cut off from the mainland of India and vice versa. These were essentially ‘stateless spaces’ as they were not administered by the surrounding state and the home state did not maintain any connection with them (R. Jones, 2009c; Shewly, 2013a).

Although these territories and their residents never received any care from their home states, they never lost their significance in the territorial and nationalistic discourses of Bangladesh and India, which played a role in delaying the seemingly obvious solution of an enclave exchange. Rather, they became what Jason Cons calls them ‘sensitive spaces’ that, for a long time played a central role, if not *the* central role, in the politics of belonging, inclusion and

⁷ A slightly modified version of this chapter has appeared in the journal *Area*. 2019, pp.1-8. Online first <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12539>

exclusion, and other aspects of nationalist discourses (Brubaker, 2015; Cons, 2016). As a result, merging these enclaves with their surrounding states – a solution adopted in both the treaties in 1958 (Pakistan and India) and 1974 (India and Bangladesh) – took almost seventy years (R. Jones, 2010; Whyte, 2002b). In describing the contradictory dual character of these enclaves, Cons says, ‘They are spaces that...the center thinks with intense passion, though not necessarily with great care’ (Cons, 2016, p. 21).

The 2015 enclave exchange between Bangladesh and India provides insights into questions that have intrigued scholars for years: Under what circumstances do states give up their territories? What plays the most influential role in a territorial exchange? Why did these territories become sensitive and how were their sensitivities undone to finally execute the exchange? What role did nationalism play in territorial debates, discourses, and exchange?

In answering these questions, I contend that, although rare, states may exchange territories if an exchange serves significant geopolitical and geo-economic interests for both the parties involved, and if states are able to depict the exchange as a victory for the nation. I demonstrate that nationalism and territoriality were used to justify both the existence and the exchange of these enclaves as they became what I term *symbolic spaces*. They became symbols of territorial marker and central to nationalistic debates surpassing their economic or strategic value.

The chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, I present a brief history of the enclaves and their evolution by comparing them with other enclaves around the world. The second section focuses on the idea of territoriality and nationalism to demonstrate how enclaves have been used as a symbol of territorial markers and nationalistic debates. The third section details how the meaning of the enclaves was transformed from a source of constant conflict to a symbol of good neighboring, geo-economic and geopolitical gains that eventually led to the exchange.

Enclaves in South Asia and beyond

Enclaves are relatively common and easy to find throughout the world, although they are not often discussed in the social sciences. Their numbers have nonetheless decreased sharply since World War II when there were a total of 256 enclaves around the world including in Bangladesh and India (Whyte, 2002b). Most disappeared or dissolved with the emergence of the

centralized state system, although a few still exist in the world and keep producing debates on territory, borders, migration, and the state (Cons, 2016). Some enclaves are bigger in size, with a relatively large population and a viable economic structure. For example, the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad bounded by Poland and Lithuania with a population of more than 430,000 (Vinokurov, 2007). Some enclaves such as the Baarle-Hertog and Baarle-Nassau, located respectively inside the Netherlands and Belgium, play a major role in the tourism industry (Whyte, 2002a). The Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco remain central points of debates regarding border walls, border violence, migration, and territoriality (Cons, 2016; R. Jones, 2016).

Bangladesh and India's border enclaves originated in a 1713 treaty between the Mughal Emperor and the Maharaja of Cooch Behar allowing them to retain and collect taxes from lands they controlled inside each other's territory (van Schendel, 2002; Whyte, 2002b). When the British divided the subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947, the enclaves in Indian territory came under the formal control of Pakistan and vice versa. Negotiations over an exchange were made in 1958 and in 1974 but failed due to ongoing territorial disputes between the states (Cons, 2012; Shewly, 2012, 2017). After three decades of inaction, Bangladesh and India initiated an exchange in 2009. A 2011 land boundary protocol sought to resolve border disputes and exchange all the enclaves (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015a; Shewly, 2013b). Consequently, at midnight on July 31, 2015, all the 162 enclaves were exchanged. Among these, Bangladesh and India hosted 111 and 51 enclaves, respectively, with a population of almost 55,000 (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018; Ministry of External Affairs, 2015a). Although debates regarding the enclaves and exchange began after the partition of British India in 1947, I limit my focus to the period of 1971–2015 since Bangladesh gained independence as a sovereign country in 1971 inheriting its enclaves from Pakistan.

Territoriality, nationalism, and the enclaves

When they existed, the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India became a source of constant anxiety both because of their unique characteristics and their place in the nationalistic discourses in postcolonial South Asia. Their physical location allowed neither the home state nor the host state to bring them under formal territorial control. Although they were clearly classified as enclaves, they did not have any formal communication with and enforced border control by

their home states. Additionally, they were territories inside the host state where the host could not extend its control as they were parts of another sovereign state.

According to Robert Sack, three primary principles of territoriality are classification by area, communication based on boundaries, and enforcement of those boundaries (Sack, 1986). Two of these (communication and border enforcement) could never be practiced on the enclaves when they existed that made them a constant source of tension. However, neither of these states were in a hurry to exchange them. Alex Murphy conceived the case of these former enclaves as an instance of self-determination where both Bangladesh and India were loath to surrender these fragmented territories which were not profitable by any means to hold on to (Murphy, 2013). Consequently, the mere existence of these enclaves was a source of tension on which both the states added multiple layer of complexities by placing them in the center of territorial and nationalistic debates.

Ideally, the state wants to differentiate its nation and culture from others. Rogers Brubaker contends ‘Polity and culture should be congruent: a distinctive national culture should be diffused throughout the territory of the state, but it should stop at the frontiers of the state; there should be cultural homogeneity within states but sharp cultural boundaries between them’(Brubaker, 2015, p. 132). Cons echoes this idea in context of post-colonial South Asia in his study of the enclaves. For Cons, these territorial oddities stood in sharp contrast to the prevalent idea that the nation and its territory must align. Thus, they remained a constant source of anxiety in the post-colonial imagination of nation and territory (Cons, 2016). Enclaves were used in national discourses both as a source of such anxiety by depicting them as hosts of bandits and anti-nationalists and at the same time, as places of national suffering, where fellow citizens had been living in disarray (Cons, 2016; van Schendel, 2002).

In an interview just before the enclaves were exchanged, the Assistant Judge of Debiganj, a town in Bangladesh, explained:

... moreover, these enclave dwellers have been involved with different illegal activities which now should be easy to control for the legal system. You know, when these were not under the control of Bangladesh, we could not do anything formally, and they [the enclave dwellers] have taken that advantage.

The Officer in Charge (OC) of Debiganj Police Station compared the situation before and after the exchange. Almost echoing the judge, he said:

For example, crimes like murder happened in the enclave of Kotvajni, but we could do nothing. Those enclaves were not under our jurisdiction. As a result, either the criminal would go unpunished or it was solved locally by them. Even Bangladeshis used to take this advantage after committing a crime. They would go and hide there, and the police would never go.... Now, things have changed, they are equally under our jurisdiction as any other place around.

Both of these officers perceived the enclaves as spaces that were not under state control. As a result, criminals and bandits who were not even citizens of the state were taking advantage of the situation. They committed crimes and took refuge in those enclaves which went unpunished. For them, criminals and anti-nationalists took advantage of the ungoverned state of these spaces. In sharp contrast to this narrative, the enclaves were also viewed as symbols of national sufferings and territorial markers. For example, Cons provides an instance when the residents of Dahagram-Angorpota, a large enclave that was unique in that it remained connected to its home state of Bangladesh, faced a blockade by their Indian neighbors that lasted for weeks. The blockade cut all the contacts of these residents with Bangladesh. Several deaths were reported due to a lack of food and medicine. In the Bangladeshi media this event was portrayed as an example of India acting as a hostile neighbor that does not care about the rights of the Bangladeshi citizens living in the enclaves (Cons, 2016). Such conflicting rhetoric of the enclaves turned them into symbolic spaces both in Bangladesh and India, spaces that surpassed their real values and became symbols of nationalism and state territoriality.

The contradictory stands of the states regarding their enclaves cannot only be reduced to their mere oddities. They need to be contextualized within a broader history of postcolonial cartography, territoriality, and nationalism. Thongchai Winichakul demonstrates that mapping is the technique by which groups of people are taught to imagine themselves as a nation in a territorially bounded space. This bounded space, or in other words, the borders of the state provide a territory that serves as the 'land' for a particular nation (Winichakul, 1994). Benedict Anderson demonstrates the way maps provide a boundary for the imagination of a community that would call itself a nation (Benedict Anderson, 1996). In context of pre-colonial India, Matthew Edney argues that Britain needed to produce a map of it as a single coherent political entity before Britain could dominate India as a colonial space (Edney, 1999). Supporting Edney's arguments, Sanjay Chatruvedi claims, 'The British imperial project was a remarkable success as the multitude of political and cultural components of India were replaced with a single

all-India state coincident with a cartographically defined geographical whole but “mutually exclusive” nations awaiting territorial divorce’ (Chatruvedi, 2002, p. 150). During the Partition in 1947, the popular belief was that Hindus and Muslims were incapable of living together peacefully imagining themselves as a single nation, thus making a separate territory for the Hindu and the Muslim were essential (Chatruvedi, 2002). Such a coercive idea of nation merely based on religious affiliations resulted in the biggest movement of people across the border in history and a heavy toll on lives (Chatterji 2002; Zamindar 2007). At the same time, this idea ignored other historical and cultural ties that people shared in pre-colonial India. Thus in India, the rise of nationalism was neither a result of print capitalism and common language, as Anderson demonstrates, nor a historical evolution (Aikant, 2006; Trivedi, 2003). Rather, it was a given idea that the rulers and people of post-colonial India struggled to cultivate and naturalize — an going process— which, according to Krishna, creates ‘cartographic anxiety’ (Krishna, 1994). Consequently, Krishna views India as a society that is stuck between the state of a ‘former colony’ and a ‘not- yet-nation’ (Krishna, 1994, p. 508).

Carrying forward this discussion, I argue that justifying a territorially bounded nation became a source of constant tension for a state that lingers between a former colony and a not-yet-nation. Post-colonial nationalism limited membership of the pre-colonial Indian population within a cartographic boundary based on religion. As a result, states in post-colonial India constantly struggle to reproduce state boundaries and provide the logic for such boundaries. The built-in coercion in the nationalistic idea of post-colonial South Asia results into a constant anxiety both among those who govern and among those who reside inside that boundary. Such struggles effectively led the states to turn the former enclaves, that existed beyond their territorial boundaries, into symbols of coercion, threat, sufferings, and nationhood. Thus, enclaves gained elevated status in nationalistic and territorial discourses that was effectively used to create and perpetuate differences between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ in postcolonial nation building in Bangladesh and India (Bridget Anderson, 2013).

The seed of territorially bounded nationalism in India was sown during the early 1900s when numerous nationalist movements focused on depicting an image of *Bharat Mata* (Mother India) within the map of India, effectively turning an empty abstract space into a place of national belonging (Kaviraj, 2003; Ramaswamy, 2002; Trivedi, 2003). Ashutosh Varshney

demonstrates that in India, two nationalist geopolitical imaginations can be found. A Secular nationalist one- combining territory and culture, and a Hindu nationalist one- combining religion and territory (Chatruvedi, 2002; Varshney, 1993). Significantly, both have territory in common, and they emphasize national assimilation within the territory and differences beyond the territory. Thus, by the time Bangladesh was born as a newly independent country in 1971, territorial and nationalistic rhetoric had a strong hold in India.

India played an active role in the independence of Bangladesh and both the states had a friendly relationship while Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Indira Gandhi respectively in Bangladesh and India were in power (Lifshultz & Bird, 1979; Shewly, 2012). In fact, one of the basic principles of the first constitution of Bangladesh in 1972 was secularism (R. Jones, 2008b). This was also the period when Bangladesh and India signed the Land Boundary Agreement in 1974 that aimed a resolution of all the disputed border issues and an exchange of the enclaves (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015a). However, a declaration of emergency in India from 1975 to 1977, the assassination of Mujib in a 1975 military coup and the subsequent takeover of power by the army in Bangladesh paved the way for fostering nationalism and territorial debates using the same enclaves effectively delaying the exchange.

Following the assassination of Mujib, the country went through a period of Islamization especially under the rule of Ziaur Rahman and H.M. Ershad from 1975 to 1990. For instance, Bangladesh replaced pro-India ties with pro-Middle East Islamic ties, brought a change in the constitution by introducing '*Bismillah-ar-Rahman-ar-Rahim*' (In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful) in place of secularism, and replacing the secular 'Bengali' nationalism with a territory based 'Bangladeshi' nationalism. Bangladeshi nationalism not only introduced territory into politics by excluding all other Bengali speaking people in West Bengal and around the world but also, introduced religion. The idea was that 'Bangladeshi' would differentiate Bengali speaking Muslims of Bangladesh from the Bengali speaking Hindus from India (Huda, 2004; R. Jones, 2007). The country became a full-fledged Islamic country, with Islam being declared as the state religion in 1988 (Cons, 2016; Huda, 2004). Both Zia and Ershad regimes produced a territory and religion centric Bangladeshi nationalism in which the enclaves were effectively used as flags of territorial tension and a sign of Indian aggression.

The same period witnessed the victory of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a rise of *Hindutva* or conservative Hindu nationalism, rising anti-Muslim attitudes, and discourses of border security and border fencing in India (R. Jones, 2012; Kaviraj, 2003; Kothari, 1998; Samaddar, 1999). With the rise of Hindu nationalism and body politics in India, Bangladesh was depicted as a nation of Muslims who were a threat to the internal peace of India (R. Jones, 2012; Krishna, 1994). Moreover, the BJP described the enclaves as hostages to Bangladeshi ‘infiltrators’ who illegally migrate into India, labelled the lease of a corridor as a ‘surrender of motherland’, and insisted that a border fence be built on the border (Cons, 2016; van Schendel, 2005). Concurrently, leadership in Bangladesh used the enclaves and enclaves residents to foster a hostile attitude towards India by depicting it as an aggressive nation that does not recognize the rights of its neighbors (Cons, 2016). As a result, by the 1990s, the Bangladeshi middle class was upset about Indian aggression, India’s use of Bangladeshi ports, its unwillingness to share water in the transboundary rivers, gas export to India, and above all, Indian hegemony. Across the border, Hindu nationalists were xenophobic with regard to an assumed barbaric pre-modern Islamic state, their infiltration into India, and territorial loss to Bangladesh should the enclaves be exchanged (Huda, 2004; R. Jones, 2012; Kabir, 2002). Such hostile attitudes not only halted any endeavor to exchange the enclaves but also, turned them into symbolic spaces of nationalist significance.

[From symbols of nationalism to symbols of victory](#)

After 2009, with changing political scenarios in both Bangladesh and India, both states turned the border enclaves from symbols of nationalism into symbols of national victory. The exchange of the enclaves offered India an opportunity to realize broader geo-economic and geo-political interests while for Bangladesh, they served as a symbol of nationalistic and territorial victory over its mighty neighbor. At the same time, both the states used the exchange to foster the image of a caring state that agreed on a territorial exchange for the wellbeing of their citizens.

The exchange took a new turn in 2009 when the Awami League (AL) and the Indian Congress Party came into power in Bangladesh and India respectively. Right after being elected as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina paid a state visit to India from January 10-13, 2010. During this visit, both countries promised numerous bilateral treaties. Among these, two of the most significant for Bangladesh were water sharing of the Teesta river and an exchange of the enclaves. At the same time, Bangladesh promised the use of its sea ports, roads

for transit, support for Indian candidature for a non-permanent seat in the UNSC between 2011-2012, and allotment of a thousand acres of land for establishing an Indian Special Economic Zone (SEZ) (Ministry of External Affairs, 2010). The Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh was scheduled to visit Bangladesh in September 2011 to finalize these agreements. But due to the opposition by West Bengal Chief Minister (CM) Mamata Banerjee no treaty was signed regarding water sharing and the enclave exchange. Only a protocol to exchange the enclaves without a specific deadline was signed (Shewly, 2013b).

This was a major blow for the Hasina government in Bangladesh and an embarrassment for the central government of India. The Bangladeshi media immediately started questioning India's 'friendship' with Bangladesh (Karim, 2011; Shewly, 2013b; The Daily Star, 2011; The Times of India, 2017). Nationalistic political opposition and the media in Bangladesh frequently depict the AL as a pro-India party that is 'selling the country' to India as an effective means of fostering xenophobia (Saleque, 2010). Thus, political pressure mounted for the Hasina government as India received what Bangladesh promised, and Bangladesh was yet to receive what it had been promised in the way of water rights and enclave exchange.

At the same time, the lack of a fixed timeframe in the 2011 protocol and the political events regarding the enclaves resulted much tension and dissatisfaction among the former enclave residents on both sides leading to sustained protest movements (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). Such movements on the one hand fueled the phobia against the enclave dwellers on the other hand, created conflict within themselves. For instance, fifty-three-year-old local politician Moinul Haque who was also the President of the India-Bangladesh Enclave Exchange Coordination Committee (IBEECC) of Bangladesh chapter, told me,

When we first started the movement, we did not have much support. [During that time] the government officials also were against us. One day I was summoned to the SP (Superintendent of Police) Office and he threatened to jail me in charge of activities against national security.

The General Secretary of the IBEECC, Golam Mustafa, who is a life-long resident of Dasiar Chhara shared the hostility they faced from the enclave people who were against the exchange.

You know they were the people who did not want this to be part of Bangladesh, they wanted it to remain part of India. So, they were always spreading rumors against us to

mislead people. Because of them we had to face a lot of problems.... It also created a tension among the neighbors. They thought we will be more powerful if the enclaves were to be exchanged.

Moinul and Mustafa's accounts demonstrate that there was suspicion and fear among the enclave dwellers, their neighbors, and the government officials. The SP threatened Moinul because at that time there was no bilateral dialogues of exchange and he perceived the IBEECC to be a threat to the national security. On the other hand, enclave residents who opposed the IBEECC spread rumors against them in various ways among which one of the significant was that once the enclaves were exchanged, enclave people would be more privileged and powerful than their neighbors.

As a result, tension was high both among those who were governing and those who were on the ground demanding an exchange of the enclaves by the time AL finished its tenure in 2014. AL won the general election for a second consecutive term in 2014, but the results were disputed because the main opposition party, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), withdrew before the vote. Thus, the AL was desperate to demonstrate an early achievement and kept pushing the water sharing and the enclave exchange issues. In 2014, the BJP won the general election in India under the leadership of Narendra Modi. Although it was the BJP that had historically opposed the enclave exchange and played the central role in depicting enclaves as markers of nationalism in India, Modi had different plans. His 'Neighborhood First' and 'Look East' policies paved the way for the implementation of the 1974 LBA. The Modi government wanted a positive start to strengthen the relationship with Bangladesh as the potential for opening a new trade-route to Southeast Asia via Bangladesh proved more significant than continuing to symbolize the enclaves as national territories. Between the two options (water sharing and enclave exchange), exchange was the easier to implement as this time Mamata Banerjee, the CM of West Bengal agreed not to oppose the implementation of the 1974 LBA. Consequently, the bill passed in 2015 with a unanimous vote by the Indian Parliament. Upon his visit to Bangladesh, from June 6-7, Prime Minister Modi signed 22 agreements including the enclave exchange. Finally, at midnight on July 31, 2015, the exchange materialized ((Ferdoush & Jones, 2018; Roche, 2015; Shewly, 2013b). The enclaves remained symbolic spaces, but instead of depicting them as markers of anxiety, they were transformed into symbols of regional cooperation and good will toward neighbors. At the same time, the AL capitalized on the

opportunity to depict the exchange as a success of the government that had been lingering for decades. It also used the exchange as a marker of moral victory and national achievement by emphasizing on the fact that Bangladesh gained more lands than India.

Conclusion

Winichakul contends that without the threat of a hostile neighboring country as a dangerous ‘other’, the trappings of state security such as borders, border guards, and armies become redundant (Winichakul, 1994). This was true both for Bangladesh and India, especially after 1975 when they devoted considerable resources and employed numerous measures to depict the other as a hostile cross-border entity. The enclaves existed in the nationalistic discourses of both Bangladesh and India as symbolic spaces, but in contradictory ways. In Bangladesh, they had fostered and sustained the project of Bangladeshi nationalism by depicting India as a hostile and aggressive neighbor. India used the enclaves as markers of territorial anxiety, portrayed them as hostages to infiltrators and bandits, used them in the politics of inclusion and exclusion, and depicted Bangladesh as a hostile Islamic country. However, changes in the political landscape and broader geopolitical and geo-economic stakes transformed the meaning of territory being swapped. The status of the enclaves was effectively transformed from markers of phobia to symbols of cooperation and national victory. Bangladesh used the exchange to ease the fear of an aggressive neighbor, while India used the exchange as part of an effective pro-neighbor policy and path to geo-economic victory. In short, the enclaves were the symbolic spaces that both these states used to create and foster territorial conflict as well as nationalism, to ease tensions and justify the logic of territorial exchange.

In this chapter, I introduced the concept of symbolic spaces to explain the outsized significance of the enclaves during their long existence and in the celebration of their exchange. In so doing, I have demonstrated that post-colonial South Asia inherited the concept of territorially bounded nationalism, which was based on the idea that people with different religious affiliations are not capable of forming a single nation. Thus, nationalism became, essentially, a struggle for maintaining and producing a boundary separating ‘Us’ from the ‘Others’. This constant pressure to sustain differences produces a nationalism that expands differences into a fear of the other. The former enclaves of Bangladesh and India served as an effective tool in this regard for a long time. The enclaves became symbolic spaces, surpassing their real value, proving useful for provoking anxiety and phobia. However, their symbolic status

changed in 2015 in the context of broader geopolitical and geo-economic forces. Bangladesh depicted the exchange as a geopolitical victory over a mighty neighbor, while India used it as a depiction of neighborliness and as a step on the road to long-term geo-economic and geopolitical gains. For the residents themselves, the exchange was a moment of exaltation, but also relief as their lives were no longer defined by the territorial oddity of being stateless enclave residents.

Chapter 3. Acts of belonging: The choice of citizenship in the former border enclaves of Bangladesh and India⁸

Introduction

On a late July afternoon in 2015, Joeeta a young female in her early 20s, was visited by a group of local government surveyors in her house⁹. She was asked to choose where she wanted to live, as the Indian enclave of Dasiar Chhara was to be merged with Bangladesh later that month as a result of the enclave exchange. Without a second thought, Joeeta answered, ‘I want to stay in Bangladesh and become a Bangladeshi citizen’. Technically though, Joeeta was an Indian enclave resident living in the former enclave of Dasiar Chhara, one of the 111 Indian enclaves hosted by Bangladesh. Nevertheless, she identified as a Bangladeshi and decided to choose Bangladeshi citizenship over Indian citizenship.

The same choice was offered to nearly the 55,000 enclave residents of Bangladesh and India when these two states finally exchanged their border enclaves and merged those with the surrounding territories on 31 July of 2015. These enclaves, which were small pieces of land, ended up within the border of the neighboring state after the partition of British India during 1947. This resulted in enclaves that were situated inside Bangladesh but belonged to India and vice versa. Bangladesh and India hosted 111 and 51 such enclaves, respectively. On paper, the enclave residents were officially Indians living inside Bangladesh and vice versa; in actuality, they lived totally isolated from their home country and were dependent exclusively on the host land (R. Jones, 2010; Shewly, 2013b, 2015). Consequently, when the time came, almost 98% of the enclave residents decided to stay where they were and opted for a change in their citizenship (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018).

Drawing on the interviews with former Indian enclave residents in Bangladesh, I offer an explanation as to why they overwhelmingly chose the citizenship of the host country, as opposed to a country that they ‘belonged’ to. I analyze how the disconnection of almost 70 years from their home state, and dependency upon the host land for daily survival, influenced their decisions on the choice of citizenship. In so doing, I offer the concept of *acts of belonging* to understand

⁸ A slightly modified version of this chapter has appeared in the journal *Political Geography*, 2019, Vol 70, pp. 83-91.

⁹ Pseudonyms are used throughout out this chapter to protect the identities of interviewees.

their choice of citizenship¹⁰. I use the term as a departure point to refer to the actions that the former enclave residents performed not only to claim their membership to a certain state but also to similar mundane acts of daily lives that people living along the borderland perform (in most cases, their neighbors who were the citizens of the host state) on a daily basis. I use the term both as a single concept consisting of the totality of acts and as individual actions of belonging. Acts of belonging are the mediators between the former enclave residents' daily lives and the numerous state and regional institutions that they had to negotiate with for survival. Although I am inspired by the concept of 'acts of citizenship' by Isin and Neilsen, the idea of acts of belonging is fundamentally different. Drawing on Robert Ware, while theorizing acts of citizenship, Isin makes a clear distinction between 'acts' and 'action' (Isin, 2009; Ware, 1974). He views both acts and actions being a 'doing' while actions also involve a motion or change in an object or a body. Thus, for Isin and Neilsen acts of citizenship refers to actions that make a difference or disrupt the socio-historical pattern (Isin & Neilsen, 2008). In this sense, the concept of acts of belonging is different than the acts of citizenship in two fundamental ways. First, I do not distinguish acts from actions, rather acts include practices, actions, and habits of the actor. Second, they are not necessarily actions by citizens to 'disrupt' the socio-historical patterns, rather they are actions by (non)citizens to demonstrate their connection to a place or a group. Thus, I argue that acts of belonging explain the actions, habits, and practices that stem from the sense of belonging and eventually led the former enclave residents to choose the membership of one state over another.

Jason Cons contends that in sensitive spaces like enclaves, the question of belonging is more than a simple narrative of the past. Belonging transgresses every aspect of daily lives in the struggle of fitting oneself within the idea of a 'nation' and a 'state'. Belonging becomes the basis for identity, hierarchy, inclusion, exclusion, and above all survival. Thus, who belong where and who have the right to belong remained prime questions in the former enclaves (Cons, 2012; van Schendel, 2005). As an answer to such questions, former enclave residents performed numerous actions ranging from buying properties and owning small business to 'managing' an address

¹⁰ Ilgin Yorukoglu uses the term 'acts of belonging' in her study of the queer women of Turkish descent in Berlin but from a social-psychological perspective to examine intimacy and belonging (Yorukoglu, 2014). Unlike her, I use the term to socio-politically understand the acts that lead people to choose their citizenship.

outside the enclave. These are instances of what I call acts of belonging. However, acts of belonging alone cannot simply explain the extremely complicated choice of citizenship in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India. Thus, I claim that acts of belonging influence and are influenced by ‘spatial socialization’, a process through which former enclave residents were spatially socialized to develop a connection to and identify with a specific place (Paasi, 1991, 1996). Spatial socialization, I further argue, is influenced by the ‘social memory’ and ‘regional identity’ of the former enclave residents which eventually played the determining role in their choice of citizenship (Berger, 2010; Carsten, 2007; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Paasi, 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2013; Till, 1999, 2003).

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I briefly discuss the history of the former Bangladesh-India enclaves and lives in these enclaves before the exchange in 2015. In the second section, I discuss the ideas of spatial socialization, social memory, and regional identity to contextualize how acts of belonging are related and relevant. Drawing on the interviews and experiences of the former enclave residents, in the third section I demonstrate how acts of belonging played a crucial role in their daily lives and eventually in the decision to choose a state of citizenship. Finally, I present a conceptual framework to demonstrate how acts of belonging can be productively used to explain their choice of citizenship by combining the concepts of spatial socialization, social memory, and regional identity¹¹.

Origin and existence of the former Bangladesh-India enclaves

The origins of the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India are traced back to the pre-colonial era in 1713 when a treaty between the Mughal empire and the Kingdom of Cooch Behar was signed to retain control over lands that they had already gained inside each other’s territory (van Schendel, 2002; Whyte, 2002b). It was the British administrators who, for the first time, undertook a proper demarcation of the enclaves in 1938 for administrative and tax purposes. Thus, enclaves remained a local administrative issue handled by the regional administrators of Rangpur and Cooch Behar before the partition of India in 1947 (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). However, they were not a local issue anymore after the partition as the enclaves ended up being on the other side of the international border of India and Pakistan. Since they were already

¹¹ I must also mention that, my objective in this chapter is not to complicate the idea of ‘citizenship’ itself. For the purpose of the chapter, I understand citizenship as a ‘sense of identity and belonging’ (Jayal, 2013, p. 2).

clearly demarcated by the colonial rulers, they were tagged as territories of India inside Pakistan and vice versa that could not be merged during the partition (R. Jones, 2010; van Schendel, 2002). Several treaties were signed between the host countries (between India and Pakistan in 1958 and Bangladesh and India in 1974) to exchange the enclaves, but due to numerous political and legal issues, it took sixty-eight years for the exchange to be executed in 2015.

Lives in the former enclaves kept getting harder as years passed by. It was in 1952 when, for the first time, the former enclave residents faced a legal barrier in crossing into their 'home states' as India and Pakistan introduced passport and visa to regulate cross-border movements (Whyte, 2002b). However, the border was open and porous with virtually no state authority to regulate cross-border movements (Samaddar, 1999). Thus, the former enclave residents were not yet contained in their small land archipelagoes. Enclaves soon became central in the nationalistic debates of India and Pakistan when they signed a treaty in 1958 to exchange these pieces of lands. The political oppositions both in India and Pakistan severely criticized the treaty and several court cases were filed challenging the legality of the exchange. By the time all legal barriers were resolved, East Pakistan gained its independence in 1971 and became Bangladesh (van Schendel, 2002).

India played an active role in the independence of Bangladesh and both these two states signed another treaty in 1974, that came to be known as Land Boundary Agreement, to resolve all the border disputes and exchange the enclaves. However, with changing political scenarios both in Bangladesh and India after 1975 the exchange got overshadowed and enclaves gained an amplified status surpassing their real values (Cons, 2016). Enclaves and enclave people became the pawn of a broader discourse where both Bangladesh and India used them as symbols of territorial and nationalistic markers without really caring about the people living in those enclaves (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). As border control got harder, enclave residents ended up being completely disconnected from their 'home state' and found themselves surrounded by a state that did not recognize them as citizens. This situation effectively turned the enclaves into 'stateless spaces' with a 'permanent state of exception' (R. Jones, 2009c, 2009a). They became the 'abandoned spaces' that contained 'bare lives' (Shewly, 2013a). Survival in such abandoned spaces became a challenge of daily life. Being abandoned by the home state, enclave residents found their own ways to navigate through and around different state authorities in the host state

(Ferdoush, 2014; Shewly, 2016a). With India's strict border control from the early 1990s and border fence guarded by heavily militarized border forces, daily lives became completely dependent on the host state.

Consequently, disconnection from the home state for years, dependence on and intimate connections with the host state for daily survival developed a sense of belonging to the host state among the former enclave residents instead of the home state. At the same time, the daily activities became acts of belonging to demonstrate their affinities to the host state. Thus, when the moment arrived for them to choose a state of citizenship, the choice was not fraught with ambiguity anymore for most of them. Rather, it was a moment when their belonging was officially recognized by the state.

Contextualizing acts of belonging: Social memory, regional identity, and spatial socialization

I discuss three distinct but closely connected ideas — social memory, regional identity, and spatial socialization— in this section to contextualize the acts of belonging of the former enclave residents. I argue that, to understand why the former enclave residents overwhelmingly developed a sense of belonging to their host state, we must take their social memories, regional identities, and spatial socialization into consideration. I contend that the former enclave residents of Bangladesh, although Indian citizens on paper, were spatially socialized as Bangladeshis, a process which both influenced and was influenced by their acts of belonging. This happened due to the fact that the former enclaves were regionally identical with their surrounding territories and the social memories of the enclave residents were consistent with the social memories of their neighbors within the host country i.e., Bangladesh. As a result, when it came to the question of belonging, an overwhelming majority of them developed a sense of belonging to the host state. I do not suggest that acts of belonging are results of 'true' and 'authentic' sense of belonging which were naturally born among the former enclave residents, rather they are the distinctions that were constructed by the nation-state of Bangladesh and India being separate political entities with distinct political ends.

Interests in social memory can be traced back to the early twentieth century when Hugo von Hofmannsthal first used the term 'collective memory' in 1902 (Olick & Robbins, 1998). After that, scholars in different fields used numerous terms to express more or less the same idea,

for instance, ‘cultural memory’ (Sturkin, 1997), ‘social memory’ (Fentress & Wickham, 1992), ‘national memory’ (Nora, 1989), and ‘images of the past’ (Olick & Levy, 1997). The contemporary use of the idea of social memory is credited to Maurice Halbwachs (Olick, 1998). He was the first to oppose the pure psychological use of the term ‘memory’ and viewed it from a sociological point of view. He argues that it is impossible for an individual to remember anything consistently and coherently outside their social groups. Social memories are the reflections of the past that mediate between a group or an individual and their connections with the society at present (Till, 1999). These are the myths, in an anthropological sense, that connect a social group with the broader society. At the same time, social memory becomes the bearer of traditions, identity, culture, and language. Thus, it integrates the individual to the society and eventually creates a sense of belonging to a place or a region. Different types of memories integrate individuals to their societies in different ways. In this regard, Assmann’s typologies of memory become crucial. He distinguishes among four types. First, is the transmission of knowledge which he calls mimetic memory. The second category is termed as material memory, objects that contain history. The third is the communicative memory, the memory that individual gathers through their language and communication. And finally, the transformation of meanings and consciousness from the past- cultural memory (Olick & Robbins, 1998).

The most relevant figure for the discussion of social memory is the French scholar Pierre Nora and his work on ‘national memory’ (Nora, 1989). In understanding national memory, Nora claims that memories of the past have been replaced by artificial memories, and memory sites are intentionally created by the powerful of a society. Such memories are artificially celebrated and remembered because they no longer occur naturally. As a result, national sites of memory and memorials become the active sites of manipulation of history. This manipulation is done through different means that are known as ‘agents of memory’ (Aguilar, 1999). These agents create, transform, and mediate the social memory between individuals and their surrounding regions. The three most influential agents of memory, that I propose played a significant role in the lives of the former enclave residents are: discourses and myths of the powerful (Foucault, 1977; Hobsbawm, 1983; Levi-Strauss, 1979; Noiriell, 1996; Smith, 1986), generations (Lambert, 1972; Mannheim, 1952; Paasi, 1991; Schuman & Scott, 1989; Williams, 1979), memory and sites of memory (Alderman, 2000; Berger, 2010; Cerulo, 1995; Olick, 1997; Spillman, 1997; Till, 1999, 2003).

The second idea that is directly connected to acts of belonging is regional identity. Regional identity, as a key concept, has attracted considerable attentions from geographers for a long time, nonetheless remains, a tough question to answer what exactly this identity consists of and how to best approach it (Keating, 2001; Paasi, 2003a). The concept originated in geography as 'regional consciousness' in the writings of Morgan (1939) that later gained renewed interests in German geography during the 1980s (Paasi, 2003a). Among the contemporary geographers, Anssi Paasi has engaged with the concept most widely. While understanding regional identity, the crucial question for Paasi remains, '...not how the individual and the social are integrated in space, but how can the sociospatial be conceptualized in the "production" of the individual/collective and vice versa' (Paasi, 2003a, p. 476). A regional identity arises only when a region is institutionalized. Drawing on Giddens's theory of structuration (1984), Paasi argues that institutionalization of regions is a dual process that transforms a region based on its constant interaction with the world system through numerous mediating stages. The way it works, according to Paasi, is that practices are institutionalized and then influence the spatial structure. Spatial structures influence the society, which in turn influences the state, and the state influences the world system. Following the same process, the world system influences the state, the state influences the society, and the society in turn, influences spatial structures (Paasi, 1996).

Once institutionalized, a structure of expectation related to that region is born (Paasi, 1991). A structure of expectation not only provides the basis for interactions between and among the people but also determines the way its inhabitants interrelate themselves with the regional institutions, norms, culture, and values. In Paasi's words, 'Structures of expectations form a frame that is bound to a specific region. This frame is quite permanent and is represented in the form of time-space-specific, region-bounded, institutionally embedded schemes of perception, conception, and action, which can comprise real, imagined, and mythical features of the region' (Paasi, 1991, p. 249). Thus, they remain more as an expression of the history of the region, not as an immediate experience of the people living in it.

The idea of spatial socialization is the third and most influential factor related to the acts of belonging. Due to their similar social memories and regional identities, the former enclave residents developed a sense of belonging to the host state that not only spatially socialized them but also, played a significant role in mediating the scale of socialization between the local and

the global through the regional and the national. Paasi utilized Shields' idea of 'social spatialization' to develop the concept of spatial socialization in his work to understand the Finnish-Russia border (Paasi, 1996; Shields, 1991). Spatial socialization is the 'process through which individual actors and collectivities are socialized as members of specific territorially bounded spatial entities and through which they more or less actively internalize collective territorial identities and shared traditions' (Paasi, 1996, p. 8). It is a form of collective awareness accumulating in the socio-spatial consciousness of people who strive to make sense of territorially-bounded spaces and social constructs that turn those spaces into a 'place' (Creswell, 2004). This awareness generally brings together social practices occurring at international, national, and regional scales. Among these, certain ones gain hegemonic status through different agents such as media, books, history, discourses, memory, politics, and education while others are silenced (Paasi, 2009a). Both the structure and the agent play equally significant roles in spatially socializing individuals by injecting discourses and traces of memory in their practical consciousness (Ferdoush, 2018; Giddens, 1984; Paasi, 1996, 2009a). Socio-spatial consciousness has material manifestation in forms of symbolic and material landscapes, memoirs, books, maps, drawings, paintings, stories, narratives, discourses, myths, statistics, and newspapers. The idea of spatial socialization broadly leads us to the idea of 'national socialization' (Paasi, 1996). Nationalism, in this context, is viewed by Paasi as 'a social process by which certain historically contingent forms of territorial identities, symbols, and ideologies are installed into the social and individual consciousness' (Paasi, 1996, p. 55). Thus, in this sense, national socialization occurs the same way as spatial socialization, but in this case, collectivities are socialized as members of a specific nation through the same mechanisms as individuals.

Acts of belonging in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India

A sense of belonging was sharp and clear among the former enclave residents before the exchange took place. As other scholars have shown and I found during my first phase of data collection, who belonged where and how they belonged were not vague for the former enclave residents (Cons, 2012; Shewly, 2016a). They were aware of the treaty between and the exchange promises made by Bangladesh and India. It was the states and broader political discourses that created the ambiguity and confusion around the exchange and the identity of the population. Some of them would be considered citizens of the home state while stateless in the host state. Among them, few would be considered 'proxy citizens' and all of them would be known as

‘enclave people’ (van Schendel, 2002)¹². As Gulam Mustafa, the General Secretary of the India-Bangladesh Enclave Exchange Coordination Committee (IBEECC) of Bangladesh chapter put it,

We never asked for India to take us. We have always demanded Bangladesh to recognize us, merge our enclaves with the country. We are Bangladeshis like you, like anyone else around us. We were born here, raised here, we belong here.

The story of Joeeta illustrates the sense of belonging of the people from the enclaves. Joeeta was born in a Bangladeshi enclave inside India. Her mother was an Indian enclave resident from Dasiar Chhara (within Bangladesh) who was married to a Bangladeshi enclave resident living inside India. After getting married, her mother moved with her father to the Bangladeshi enclave in India. However, when Joeeta was about three years old her grandparents, who still live in Dasiar Chhara, brought her back to Bangladesh and raised her. Though she maintains regular contact with her parents with the help of modern communication system, she had met them physically only once when she was 11. She grew up in Bangladesh, although inside an Indian enclave, she learnt to perceive herself as a Bangladeshi, not as an Indian enclave resident. She was also an active member of the IBEECC that led the enclave exchange movement. Consequently, when she was given the option to choose between India and Bangladesh, she chose Bangladesh knowing that this could permanently end the possibility to stay with her parents. In the courtyard of her grandparents’ home, when asked, ‘why did you decide to stay in Bangladesh?’ with a sad smile and poignant eyes, she told me,

Since I can remember, I have been here. I have never had a chance to connect with my parents except on facebook and over mobile phone. I feel a stronger connection to my grandparents here, to my relatives, to my friends, and neighbors here. This is where I belong. I see myself as a Bangladeshi, not as an Indian.... So when they [the official surveyors] came and asked where I wanted to stay [after the exchange], I had no doubt in

¹² Proxy citizenship was solely based on religious identities of the former enclave residents. The Hindus of the Bangladeshi enclaves inside India would be considered proxy citizens of India and Muslims of the Indian enclaves would be considered same in Bangladesh. Although, religion had a role in their decisions to either move or to stay where they were, it was not the most significant reason. I found there were a number of Hindu families who split regarding the decision to move from Bangladesh to India. As a result, few of the family members accepted Bangladeshi citizenship and others accepted Indian citizenship. Moreover, there were Muslims from Bangladesh who moved to India to become Indian citizens, and no Muslim families from India moved to Bangladesh. For a detail discussion on numerous identities and statelessness of the former enclave residents see van Schendel (2002) and to know more about the choices of those who moved from Bangladesh to India see Ferdoush and Jones (2018).

my mind. I told them, without thinking twice, I want to stay in Bangladesh and become a Bangladeshi citizen. (Explanations added)

For Joeeta, the only place that she belonged was her grandparents' home and felt connections with were the people around. Although, her parents lived in India, she was brought up inside an enclave in Bangladesh. She went to the schools in Bangladesh, she made friends with her neighbors who were Bangladeshis, and got actively involved with the movement of enclave exchange. For her the question of belonging was clear as demonstrated through her acts of belonging as an active member of the IBEECC.

Masud, a twenty-six-year-old elementary school teacher in the former enclave of Dahala-Khagrabari echoes Joeeta in explaining his choice to stay in Bangladesh:

Look, I still get goosebumps when I think of 31 July [2015]. That is our day of independence. From our childhood, we came to know that this is Bangladesh, we were born here. My father, grandfather, even my great grandfather lived here and died here. I have struggled a lot to come this far. Now, when we finally got our freedom and could be a part of Bangladesh and live like a proud Bangladeshi, why would we move to India? What is there for us?

A significant part of the school teacher's statement is the distinction he made between 'us' and 'them'. He perceived India as 'them', although, on paper, it was the country that he belonged to. The host state, Bangladesh, was the country he identified as 'us', the one that he belonged to not only because he was raised there but also, because of his connections through generations and life-long struggles to present himself as one of the Bangladeshis. These struggles are the acts of belonging that included but were not limited to 'managing' an address outside the enclave to get admission into a Bangladeshi school, buying land adjacent to the enclave, and hiding the identity of an enclave dweller. Such acts of belonging were not only the mediators between his identity and daily lives but also, were the results of a socio-spatial consciousness forged throughout his life inside Bangladeshi territory and being exposed to the narratives, discourses, and memories created by the state. This consciousness is based on a distinction he makes between communities existing at different spatial scales (Paasi, 2009a).

Social memories played a major role, along with regional identity, in spatially socializing the former enclave residents that influenced their acts of belonging and eventually, their choice of citizenship. Drawing on Foucault's (Foucault, 1986, 1995) analysis of discourse, power, and knowledge, Harding and Pribram (2002) argue that memory is created by an interaction between

these three elements. Sara Ahmed (2004) further demonstrates that memory mediates between an individual and the society in three different ways. First, memory mediates between an individual and social experiences, then it mediates between the physical and the social world, and finally, it mediates between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the self.

Karen Till’s (2003) idea of places and memories, with a focus on national commemoration, becomes relevant for the discussion here. Till focuses on three major aspects of national commemoration: place and sacralization of national imaginaries, changing political regimes, cityscape, and conflict over national places. According to Till, ‘places of national imaginaries’ denotes official places of memory created to establish a topography of nation, the maintenance of social stability, and the reproduction of existing power relationships. It also includes the narratives and symbols attached to these places of memory. Till identifies three places of memory: monuments, memorials, and museums. The state generally uses these places to naturalize historical narratives and representations. For example, The Central Shahid Minar in Bangladesh is one of the biggest and the most significant national monuments (a national monument symbolizing martyrs of the language movement in 1952). *Shaheed Minar* represents the blood and sacrifice of students and others for their mother tongue in 1952. The *Central Shaheed Minar* is located in the capital city of Dhaka, but a *Shaheed Minar* can be found in all districts, sub-districts, and at most universities and colleges within Bangladesh. People celebrate Mother Language Day by offering flowers at the *Shaheed Minar*, a holiday that the Prime Minister rings in. The *Shaheed Minar* and mother language celebrations represent the spirit of Bangladeshi nationalism and highlight the importance of Bengali language and culture. This is a national holiday widely covered in the country’s media. Similarly, the National Martyr’s Memorial is the national memorial to symbolize and remember the sacrifices of those who laid their lives down for the country’s independence. This memorial signifies a common history of struggle and the fight against the foreign power. Each year on December 16th, Bangladesh celebrates ‘Victory Day’ by offering flowers on this monument. The media widely covers this public holiday. Museums are another important symbol and producer of national memories. Museums play the dual role of connecting memory with the physical object as well as the place. Museum exhibitions institutionalize the knowledge and representation of the state through cultural objects that have been collected, classified, sorted, and exhibited (Till, 2003). Both the National Museum of Bangladesh and specialized liberation war museums portray the Bangladesh

Liberation War via numerous mediums. The Bangladesh Liberation War is a national event that ties the whole nation together by creating a sense of belonging.

All these places of the national imaginary represent Bangladeshi nationhood and national histories. These are inseparable parts of the production and reproduction of national discourses embedded in the spirit of the nation. Enclave residents residing in Bangladesh have always been exposed to such places of memory and nationalist discourses. They grew up with the same spatial consciousness and feeling of national identity as other citizens in Bangladesh. The same can be said of the residents living in the former Bangladeshi enclaves inside India. The place of memory was where they were born and stayed for their entire lives. As a result, their activities to express belonging to the country of residence included nationalistic acts such as singing the national anthem in the school, offering flowers in the *Shaheed Minar*, and celebrating independence.

During my summer research in 2015, when the former enclave residents faced the dilemma of whether to stay or to leave Bangladesh, I interviewed Sujan, an undergraduate student from the former enclave of Garati, in Panchagar. He had managed to find a way to get to school and eventually enrolled in an undergraduate college in Bangladesh, a rarity for enclave residents. He chose to stay in Bangladesh and explained his reasons as follows.

From my childhood, I have known that this is my country. I have struggled a lot to continue my studies. I had to always find a 'second way' to make sure that I could continue my schooling. I have learned how hard we fought for our independence, how we have become an independent nation. When I used to sing our national anthem every morning in my school, often I would get tears in my eyes. And now, when finally, I can say that I am a Bangladeshi and proudly declare that Bangladesh is my country, I would go to India? (Fieldwork, 2015).

A notable feature of the Sujan's answer is how he connects to the Bangladeshi identity. He had comparatively formal exposure to the agents of spatial socialization, nationalist narratives, and discourses, as one of the few from the enclaves to obtain schooling. Like any other child in Bangladesh, Sujan learned Bangladeshi nationalism and identity through the educational system. Not all former enclave residents had such rigorous exposure to Bangladeshi narratives and discourses, but they have still learned to identify themselves with those narratives and discourses over those of the home state mainly because of two reasons. First, they did not have a regular connection to their home state, a state that was a distant land for most of them as

opposed to the immediate host state. Second, their close association with the immediate region and their neighbors, as well as exposure to the host state's media and discourses taught them to imagine themselves as part of the host community.

The power of memory and sense of belonging are evident when one considers the words of Jahangir. Jahangir is a sixty-seven-year-old farmer born and raised in Dahala Khagrabari, who decided to turn down lucrative offers¹³ to relocate to India and instead remained in subsidized housing on a small plot of land in Bangladesh. When asked why Jahangir decided to stay instead of moving to India and taking the advantage of the package; he said,

If I offer you a lot of money and what not...will you leave your place of birth forever? I have been here since I was born, I saw my father, even my grandfather dying here. Even I saw the *Gondogol* [referring to the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War] But did we go to India? We could have gone there at that time. Lots of our neighbors had gone and never came back. We supported Bangladesh, not Pakistan. We hoped, after the *Gondogol*, Bangladesh would take us. But it took a long time to do so. Yet, we are still happy. We were born here, we breathed the air of this country, we drank the water of this land, we supported this country. I would never go to India for anything. This is my homeland; this is where I was born, and this is where I want to die. (Explanation added).

Localized struggles over naming, renaming, and changing the meanings, forms, and places of memory depend on who has the authority to do so (Till, 2003). Renaming streets, schools, theaters, and other public places are strategies to build support for particular political orders (Alderman, 2000; De Soto, 1996). Changing names of nationally significant public places, such as roads and airports, happens with regular frequency in Bangladesh, particularly as regimes of political power change. In case of the former enclave residents, naming and renaming remains a strategic act of belonging after the enclaves were exchanged. Of the ten high schools permitted in the former enclaves of Debiganj Upazila, for example, a significant number are named after important historical figures or ones known locally, such as freedom fighters and

¹³ The package included 500,000 (US\$7,500) rupees per family, dry food for two years, kitchen utensils, animal feed, temporary camp in Cooch Behar, drinking water, medicine, healthcare, education, and eventually a house or flat. However, during my fieldwork and interviews with the enclave residents in 2015, I found most of them were neither very clear about the package nor were confident on the promises (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018).

social workers. Some have even proposed renaming portions of the entire enclave after nationally or regionally significant figures. This strategy of (re)naming serves a dual purpose; first to express belonging to the surrounding state, and secondly to curry favor among authorities who decide the fate of these schools or institutions. (Re)naming, as an act of belonging, not only enables them to create a place of memory with which they can identify themselves but also serves as a politics of scale and local control (Alderman, 2000). I asked Rahmat about the school's name, which came from a historical figure with significance during the Bangladesh Liberation War. Rahmat is a local politician and influential figure who also sits on the governing body of the school. He answered:

We are Bangladeshis. We also feel as much as any others in this country for our nation. This name signifies our attachment to the country, to its history. Also, it helped us avoid a lot of conflicts and controversies in terms of finding a suitable name that will be acceptable to everyone.

Acts of belonging are not only connected to social memories and spatial socialization; they also mediate between an individual and their regional identity. I offer a case of Hakim Ali to demonstrate how these two are connected and influence the process of spatial socialization. Hakim was born in enclave X and lived there his early life. However, he moved to India in search of better opportunities in life when he was about thirty. He was married when he went to India, but he left his wife and the daughter in Bangladesh. Hakim eventually found his way to the city of Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and worked in the local brick fields. After a few years, he took his wife and the older daughter with him to India but left his younger son in Bangladesh to look after the properties he had. He lived and worked in UP until 2017, for more than thirty years from the first time he left the enclave. Every year during the rainy season, when the brick field was closed, he would return to the place he considered home, within Bangladesh. He would stay for a couple of months and then leave again.

After hearing his story, I asked, 'Since you have lived there for a while now, did you think of getting an Indian citizenship or try to get one?' and he answered:

I could have easily gotten Indian citizenship if I wanted to. I know so many of the workers who went after me, managed to get Indian citizenship. I had "adhaar" card for all my family members [a unique identification number provided to all the Indian residents that allow them an access to numerous government provisions]. If I had asked my *Mohajon* [owner of the brick field], he would've easily done it for me. But I never asked,

I never wanted to be [an Indian citizen]. ...*Amar atma to pori ase eikhane* [my soul belongs here]. (Explanation added)

Hakim continues-

It's hard to explain you know. They [Indians] are different, we [Bangladeshis] are different. Their food is different, their dress is different, their language is different, the way they behave is different, even the way they think is different. I could never be like them and would never want to.

For Hakim Ali, India was a land of opportunity where he went to make his fortune. He was an Indian enclave resident, living in Bangladesh, and despite spending almost half of his life in India for work, he did not identify himself as an Indian. For him, his soul belongs to the land in which he was born and raised. He developed his regional identity and spatial consciousness during his early life, a life as an enclave dweller residing inside Bangladesh. Numerous activities such as leaving the son in Bangladesh, buying properties, and coming back to the enclave during off seasons were his acts of belonging through which he demonstrated where he belongs. Although he had been exposed to alternative identity and narratives, he could not reject the identity that he developed in his early life. Another notable aspect of Hakim's story is that he ended up in UP, an Indian state which is markedly different in culture than Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal, with which Bangladesh shares a lot of cultural similarities. Thus, for Hakim, it was never easy to identify himself as a UP resident which sharply contrasted with the cultural identity he developed in his early life. For him, the way of doing things in UP were different than his way of doing things, the way people interacted was not the way he was comfortable with, even the way people thought of themselves in UP was not the way Hakim would think of himself. Consequently, when Bangladesh and India recognized enclave dwellers like Hakim to be citizens, he came back and chose Bangladeshi citizenship. An identity that he developed and longed for was finally bestowed upon him. Hakim's final words encapsulates it all:

I was born here, my father lies here [pointing towards the earth], it's time for me to go now [looking towards the sky]. I want to rest in peace here [points towards the earth]. This is my home, this is where I belong. India provided me with livelihood and food, but *bidesh hoilo bidesh ar desh hoilo desh* (abroad is abroad and home is home).

Different acts of belonging were a reoccurring subject during most of the interviews I conducted with numerous government officials. In answering my question of 'Why do you think such an overwhelming majority from the enclaves chose to stay in Bangladesh?' all of them

emphasized on the sense of belonging and belongings of the former enclave residents. For example, the UNO of Patgram Upazila Nur Kutub Alam told me:

Most of them [enclave residents] have been living here for years. The only properties that they own are here in Bangladesh. Who would want to go leaving everything [that they have] behind? Besides, most of them are settled here with friends and relatives all around [the enclave].

The Chairman of the Patgram Upazila Ruhul Amin Babul offered an elaborate explanation. In sharing his experience as the Chairman of the Upazila for two consecutive terms, he shared numerous instances that clearly demonstrate the acts of belonging of the former enclave residents. In one of the examples, he shared an event of a former enclave resident from Patgram who managed to earn a master degree from one of the public universities in Bangladesh and eventually got a government job as a college teacher. Once he got the job, he eventually bought lands near the enclave in Bangladesh and built a house there. After sharing this case, he said:

May be, all of them were not as brilliant as that boy was but they had some connections one way or the other. They would marry someone from Bangladesh or get married in Bangladesh. They would buy a small piece of land just beside the enclave or start a small business. They would often come to me for help.

Acts of belonging included both owning materialistic belongings and demonstrating connections to the host state through numerous means. In most cases, a small piece of land was the only property that the enclave resident owned which tied them to the host state. For those, who could afford to buy a land outside the enclave, the land was a marker of belonging. Similarly, other acts such as getting married outside the enclave was a significant strategy for the enclave residents to establish connections with the host land. All these are acts of belonging that tied the former enclave residents to their host state and influenced their choice of citizenship.

Acts of belonging and the choice of citizenship

Acts of belonging played the dual role of influencing and getting influenced by social memory, regional identity, and spatial socialization of the former enclave residents that eventually determined their choice of citizenship (see figure 2). The conceptual framework below demonstrates that the social memory of an individual is mainly created by the dominant discourses, knowledge, and traditions passed down from generation to generation, discourses of the powerful, and sites of memory. Regional identity is created by the regional institutions,

patterns of interactions, structure of expectations, and regional ways of doing things. However, numerous acts of belonging mediate between social memory and its agents as well as regional identity and agents of regional identity. Social memory influences the acts of belonging of an individual that, in turn, would mostly determine how they connect to a certain site of memory. Sites of memory, at the same time, influence their acts of belonging which demonstrates whether an individual accepts social memories related to it or not. Through the acts of belonging, individuals demonstrate their acceptance or rejection of a certain social memory. Likewise, different acts of belonging mediate between the agents of regional identity and its agents. For instance, structures of expectations raising from a regional identity determine the nature of the acts of belonging. Acts of belonging are concurrently used by an individual to demonstrate their familiarity to the structures of expectations that connect them to a certain region. Memory and regional identity influence each other constantly, as their agents continually influence each other. Both social memory and regional identity together provide the necessary collective territorial identities and traditions that are required to spatially socialize the members of a region. As social memory and regional identity are influenced by acts of belonging, so is spatial socialization. Acts of belongings are the means that mediate between a person's local and other spatial units such as regional, national, and supra-national. At the same time, they are the tools that demonstrate a person's belonging to a certain locality. Once spatially socialized, such an individual, if given the option to choose a state of citizenship, will ultimately choose the state that they have been spatially and nationally socialized.

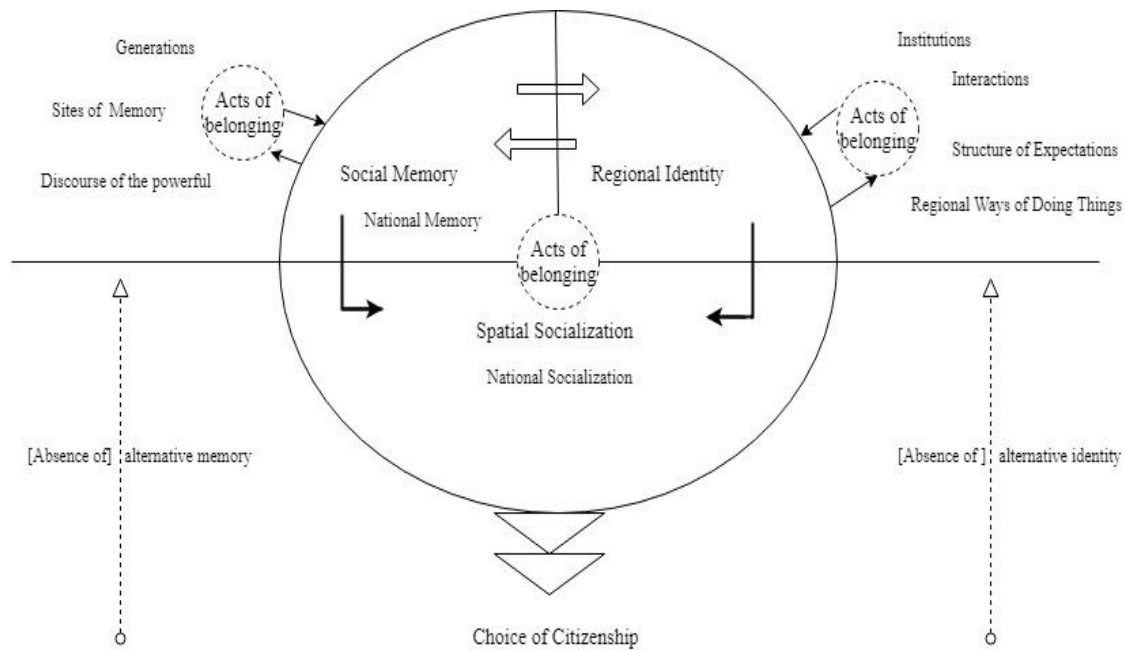


Figure 2 Acts of belonging mediating social memory, regional identity and spatial socialization

I have identified three major agents of social memory in this chapter. Among these, discourse is the most influential. Especially, the discourse of the dominant class. The dominant class holds the power to determine which discourse is to be remembered and which one is to not. Consequently, they control which event of the past becomes social memory and which does not. As Foucault states it, ‘Since memory is actually a very important factor in struggle... if one controls people's memory, one controls their dynamism’ (Foucault, 1977, p. 92). Scholars have demonstrated that, among different types of social memory, the one that acquires dominance is the national memory. National memory dominates the sphere of social memory, not because people naturally remember it, but because the state and the powerful ‘invent’ useful traditions to cover-up their fading legitimacy and/or create the ‘imagined’ identity of a nation (Benedict Anderson, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1983). Therefore, the state-engineered national memory, within numerous social memories, excludes others and gains the primary allegiance. According to Olick and Robbins, ‘The dominance of national memory over other memories thus not only excludes other contestants for control over the national identity but maintains the primacy of national over other kinds of identity for primary allegiance’ (1998, p. 127). Sites of memory remains another agent of social memory controlled by the dominant class. The powerful decide what site to be remembered, how to be remembered, and where the site should be erected (Berger, 2010).

Naming and renaming a site (Alderman, 2000), national anthems (Cerulo, 1995), museums and contents of the museums (Till, 1999, 2003), and mass media (Dayan, Katz, & Davis, 1993) signify and hold up the memory of the dominant class leaving few options for alternative sites and memories. Generations and their memories are other significant agents of social memory. Generations not only carry on the legacy of the national memory but also, they carry on alternative memories. These alternative memories can be completely opposite to the dominant social memory, they can be a territorially bound memory, a memory of the immediate community, a secret knowledge, tradition, cult, or an event. Individuals acquire these memories from their family members, their community, and the people around them. Karl Manheim (1952), the first known scholar to sociologically approach generations and memory, argues that social and political events shape generations through the experiences that they gain during their formative years. Moreover, Schuman and Scott (1989) demonstrate that, in terms of weighing importance to historical events, generations differ significantly.

Regional identity is developed and established only when a region exists for relatively a longer period with a territorial boundary, institutions, and interaction pattern that create a structure of expectations among its inhabitants. For a region to reach such a stage, as Paasi elucidates (Paasi, 1991, 1996, 2009a), it goes through a stage of institutionalization. However, the process of institutionalization is not a one-way process that ends once it has reached its peak. This is a continuous process that occurs between the region and the inhabitants of that region. Through acts of belonging, regional identity is created, practiced, changed, sharpened, renewed, and at times rejected. Following Paasi, I have identified four agents of regional identity development. First, the interaction that occurs between individuals and the institutions of the region. This interaction is a dual process that, on the one hand, influences the structural institutions of that region, on the other hand, influences the way individuals interact with those structural institutions. Structural institutions are defined as the regional offices, administrations, bureaucracies, boundaries, and any other entities that operate based on a defined structural form. The second is the institutions that drive the process of perpetual production and reproduction of regional interactions. Through these institutions, according to Paasi, regional consciousness takes place at various territorial levels. However, the roles and degree of regional consciousness varies based on the scale of the region. For example, the state apparatus normally possesses a much stronger and deep-rooted power relation with the inhabitants than the sub-regional institutions

(Paasi, 1991). When an established pattern of interaction and institutional framework are established, a structure of expectation is born. This is a frame that is specifically bound to regions and is relatively permanent. In describing the structure of expectation, Paasi says,

...can comprise real, imagined, and mythical features of the region. They are above all vehicles of sociospatial distinction, expressing collective spatial role based on knowledge or beliefs regarding the historical and cultural features of a region. These structures are gradually reproduced, not inevitably in the institutional practices originating from the region itself (for example local or regional media), but also by external, nonlocally controlled institutions (for example, the education system). Thus, compared with the structure of feeling, they are more expressions of the 'official' world view or ideology sedimented into the history of the region, not into the immediate experience of people living in it (Paasi, 1991, p. 249).

These three agents ultimately set up the fourth agent of regional identity, regional ways of doing things. Together, an established institutional framework, a defined and understood interaction pattern, and a structure of expectation create a regional way of life. A way that is typical of specific regions and is expressed through numerous acts of belonging of the inhabitants of a region.

Social memory and regional identity influence each other by the virtue of their agents. For example, the discourses of a region influence the institutional shapes and the interactions among people of that region. At the same time, structure of expectations plays a determining role in choosing the sites of memory for a region; generations can pass on the traditions and knowledge of a specific region that continues the regional ways of doing things.

Social memory and regional identity together play the role of creating, teaching, internalizing, and sharing collective territorial identities and shared traditions among individual actors and groups thus, spatially socialize them. Spatial socialization creates the feeling of 'us' and 'them' based on the territorially bounded region. People learn to distinguish between 'us' and 'them'. Discourses and narratives of a region, sites of memory, generational knowledge and traditions, patterns of interaction, institutional formation, and ways of doing things in a certain region spatially socialize its people through their acts of belonging. Once spatially socialized, they use numerous acts of belonging to (re)produce the recognized interactions and institutions. Thus, acts of belonging play the dual role of means and outcomes of spatial socialization. Such acts simultaneously connect their locality to a broader region and confirm their belonging to that region. As I demonstrated earlier, spatial socialization can be broadly applied to understand

national socialization. National socialization follows more or less the same process of spatial socialization. Once people are nationally socialized they start to imagine themselves as part of a nation. Once this imagination is born, choice of citizenship ultimately follows the territorially bounded region that is known to be the home for that nation. In case of the former enclave residents of India, their choice of citizenship followed the host country, Bangladesh, that they recognized as their home instead of the nation they had officially been a part of.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have showed how people like Joeeta and Hakim Ali have lived a life without any formal recognition as citizens by their home and host states for decades. The years of statelessness, as we have seen from their narratives, did not create much confusion when the moment finally arrived, and they had to choose a state of citizenship. Rather, the majority of enclave residents were reasonably certain about their decisions. In such a context, I have demonstrated how acts of belonging played the most significant role in their decision making by mediating between their social memory, regional identity, and spatial socialization. In so doing, I have argued that acts of belonging include both owning material belongings and performing numerous actions to demonstrate a person's connection to a certain place and a group of people. Acts of belonging are both the means and the outcomes of spatial socialization, a process through which people learn to situate themselves within a certain locality and other spatial units through their social memories and regional identities. Social memories of the former enclave residents were mainly determined by three agents. These are discourse and narratives of the powerful in the society, generations and their shared knowledge, and different sites of memory. I contend that these agents are largely controlled by the state to create a social memory for the state to legitimize its authority. At the same time, social memory influences regional identity by influencing the way people interact, the way they expect others to act, and the way institutions are designed in a certain region. In a similar fashion, regional identity also determines the discourses and narratives, knowledge and tradition, and above all, social memory of a given population. Both social memory and regional identity, independently and together, play the important role of spatially socializing a population. Spatial socialization, in most cases, leads us towards a national socialization that determines the individual choice of citizenship.

The application of the concept of acts of belonging is not limited to the enclaves but can be fruitfully applied beyond. Acts of belonging provide the necessary link that explains how

social memory, regional identity, and spatial socialization are interconnected and can be used to explain the choice of citizenship of numerous groups other than the former enclave residents. Acts of belonging demonstrate how individuals connect between micro institutions like family and larger state institutions like education by using their actions and belongings in everyday life. The concept can be productive in explaining numerous actions that stateless population residing in various camps perform on a regular basis to ‘normalize’ their daily lives as opposed to rupture the existing power structure (Dunn & Cons, 2014; Isin & Neilsen, 2008). By demonstrating how undocumented migrants perform numerous acts of belonging, the concept can be effectively placed within the scholarship of social movements to explain different protests and movements that migrants call for in demand of regularity and recognition by the state. Acts of belonging can productively be applied in studying diaspora and migration to understand how people on the move demonstrate connections to their homeland and create a distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Finally, acts of belonging enable us to contextualize the mundane actions of both citizens and non-citizens within the frameworks of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and nationalism.

Chapter 4. Sovereign overcompensation: Understanding the role of the state in in/excluding its citizens.

Introduction

On a hot, sunny morning in the summer of 2017, I met Azizul¹⁴ on his way back from the farmland where he cultivates bananas. He went to the field just after sunrise and was on his way back home as the sun became too hot to bear. Azizul is a young man in his early thirties who was born and brought up in the former enclave of Dahala Khagrabari in Panchagar district of Bangladesh. As we were passing each other, out of curiosity, Azizul approached us (my research assistant and me) and asked what we were doing there. I introduced myself and my assistant and explained our reasons for being there. After hearing that I was interested in learning the experiences of former enclave residents, he became more enthusiastic and invited us to his house to talk. Although I politely declined going to his house, I happily accepted his offer to talk. We sat down under the shade of a bamboo bush and started our conversation. At one point, when I asked how life after the exchange is, Azizul answered:

Life is good. You know, it's better than ever. We do not have any sufferings anymore (*amader ar kono kosto nai*). We have got roads, we have got electricity, we have got citizenship. The government is taking good care of us. ... Sometimes I feel we are enjoying higher privileges than other Bangladeshis.

Almost echoing Azizul, in a different conversation, the Chairman of Patgram Upazila in Bangladesh a man in his late forties, Ruhul Amin Babul told me:

They [the former enclave residents] are now our priority. We are instructed [by the government] to take good care of them. I always make sure that they are taken care of. The government provided special supplies for them. In fact, they enjoy better services than their neighbors.

Both Azizul and the Chairman's accounts reveal three significant aspects about the lives in and the management of the former enclaves in Bangladesh. First, the former enclave residents are provided all the services that a citizen expects from the state of Bangladesh. Second, the government has assumed an active role in ensuring that the former enclave people are well-served. Finally, such an active role has resulted in better state services for the former enclave residents than the regular Bangladeshi citizens.

¹⁴ All but the officials' names used in this chapter are pseudonyms.

Before the exchange of these enclaves in 2015, the former enclave residents lived in these small pieces of lands disconnected from their home states and abandoned by their host state. Studies argue that the disconnection from the home state allowed conditions to turn the residents into *bare lives* where they became subject to state violence but was never protected by the state (Agamben, 1998; Cons, 2013; R. Jones, 2009a, 2009c; Shewly, 2013a; van Schendel, 2002). They did not have any formal identification documents to prove their citizenship of the home state and were not recognized by the host state as they ‘belonged’ to another sovereign state. Thus, they were never formally documented as citizens either by the home or by the host state. As a result, enclave residents were deprived of any privileges that come with the recognition as a citizen. It was only after the exchange that they started enjoying such privileges for the first time.

In this context, I examine how the sovereign incorporates a group of people who were not only abandoned for almost the last seven decades but also were occasional subjects to its violence. At the same time, I explore how the newly incorporated citizens experience the rights and privileges offered by the state. In this chapter, I use the term sovereign to mean one who possessed the power to let live or to make die in the former enclaves and supplanted the power to administer bodies and management of lives after their exchange (Foucault, 1990, 2007). In so doing, I argue that the formalization of the ex-enclave residents and incorporation of the enclave lands into state territories brought them under sovereign protection. Thus, the former enclaves were not anymore a ‘state of exception’, but they became the subject of state governmentality (Agamben, 2005; R. Jones, 2009a). The sovereign assumed an active role in ensuring that the newly incorporated citizens enjoy the amenities that come with the recognition by and protection of it. This active role resulted in privileges for the former enclave residents that, in many cases, surpass the privileges enjoyed by the regular citizens of Bangladesh. This is what I call ‘sovereign overcompensation’. I do not claim that the sovereign compensates the former enclave residents for the violence once practiced against them. Instead, I argue that it employs these privileges as latent techniques of governmentality by offering selective conveniences. These conveniences are extended to make sure that the newly adopted citizens, who are mostly marginal poor, are able to navigate through numerous complex state apparatuses. Further, these conveniences are strategies employed by the state to nationalize a population that was born and brought up within the state territory but were not accepted as nationals. I identify three reasons for such overcompensation. One, the sovereign ‘embraces’ these spaces and their population as

part of its strategy to make them more legible (Scott, 1998; Torpey, 2000). Two, this is an active attempt by the sovereign to make ‘good citizens’ in order to incorporate them within the ‘community of value’ (Bridget Anderson, 2013). Three, this is a strategy by the sovereign to create a ‘hyperreality’ of an ideal state that cares about its citizens although in reality it does not (Baudrillard, 1983, 1994; Lane, 2000).

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, I offer a brief discussion on the lives of the former enclave residents before they were exchanged to demonstrate how they were made subject to sovereign violence without ever being protected by it. In the second section, I draw on my fieldwork to discuss how the sovereign overcompensates the former enclave residents by offering them selective services and special attention. Then, I offer three explanations for such overcompensation. Finally, in conclusion I summarize my arguments by claiming that the sovereign does not overcompensate to make up for the injustice or violence once inflicted on a population. Instead, overcompensation stems from the sovereign’s active role in bringing a set of population within its legible rule to homogenize and govern them. In the process of doing so, the sovereign pays extra attention to the selected population who, as a result, experience better privileges than the regular citizens.

Sovereign exclusion before the exchange

The former enclaves of Bangladesh and India came into being in 1947 as a result of the cartographic scissoring by the colonial rulers who divided the subcontinent between India and Pakistan (van Schendel, 2005; Whyte, 2002b). The enclaves ended up being on the other side of the international border, i.e., India’s enclaves became surrounded by Pakistan and vice versa. After the secession of East Pakistan (present day Bangladesh) from the West in 1971, the enclaves ended up being shared by India and Bangladesh (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). As years passed, and borders and bordering became harder, enclave residents effectively lost their connections with the home state and became totally dependent on the host state for their daily survival. Such a unique situation consequently turned the enclaves into what Van Schendel calls ‘non-state spaces’ and Jones calls *de facto* ‘stateless spaces’ (R. Jones, 2009c, p. 373; van Schendel, 2002, p. 139). Since most of the enclave residents were the poorest of the poor and lacked the resources to procure state documents to travel across the international border that separated their enclaves from their home state, in a majority of the cases, they would travel without formal arrangements (van Schendel, 2002, 2005). Such border crossings made the

journey 'illegal' thus turning them into 'criminals' or 'intruders' for entering the country that they 'belonged' to (Ferdoush, 2014; Shewly, 2016a). Such a condition made them a subject of sovereign violence both within their home state and at the same time, in their host state as the enclaves were 'spaces of exception' (Shewly, 2013a). As Shewly puts it, 'the enclave resident's body is given an extra-legal status by the home country upon which the host country exercises its sovereign power' (Shewly, 2013a, p. 27).

Scholars either draw on or extend Agamben's characterization of the sovereign and the state of exception in understanding the lives and abandonment of the enclave people before the enclaves were exchanged (Agamben, 1998, 2005; Cons, 2016; Dunn & Cons, 2014; R. Jones, 2009c, 2009a, 2010; Shewly, 2013a, 2015). Agamben's theoretical understanding of the sovereign has three major assumptions. First, drawing on Carl Schmitt's definition, he perceives the sovereign as one 'who decides on the state of exception' (Agamben, 1998, p. 11). Through the state of exception, the sovereign gains full control and power over subjects' legal rights and gains a monopoly over the final decision. Second, the task of the sovereign is to produce bare lives and abandonment through exclusion while at the same time, include them within the sovereign violence. Bare life is understood as the life of *homo sacer* (sacred man), 'who may be killed and yet not be sacrificed' (Agamben, 1998, p. 8). Thus, producing bare lives presents the sovereign with the power to kill without calling it a homicide. Finally, the third of Agamben's assumptions is that the sovereign creates a space and/or a condition where such power described in the first two can be exercised (Agamben, 1998, 2005).

Based on these three assumptions, Shewly described the enclaves as 'spaces of exception' and Jones saw them in a state of 'permanent exception' (R. Jones, 2009a; Shewly, 2013a). There are two major reasons for Shewly to perceive the enclaves as spaces of exception- a) they are excluded from legitimate state law but are occasionally subject to illegitimate sovereign power and b) they are the container of bare lives (Shewly, 2013a). Arguing along the same course, Jones sees these spaces as subject to the arbitrary decisions of the agents of exception, i.e., numerous state authorities such as border guards. Drawing on Judith Butler, Jones views these enclaves as spaces where the 'petty sovereigns' are rife with the power to decide on life and death without being subject to any accountable law (R. Jones, 2009a). The state was absent in protecting the enclave dwellers and denied providing them any rights, but

simultaneously made them occasional subjects to its violence. For example, in India in 2009, the state authority killed all the chickens around an enclave of Bangladesh as part of security measures against bird flu that included chickens of the enclave residents as well. Although Indian citizens received compensation from the state, the enclave residents did not. State agencies also played a part in turning them into *homine sacris* by refusing to prevent the other state from harassing and unlawfully imprisoning their enclave residents (Shewly, 2013a). In this example, the host country created another system of exclusion as it used biopolitical measures to deny any kind of medical assistance to the enclave residents (Cons, 2016).

Elizabeth Dunn and Jason Cons extend the discussion of the nature of sovereign power operating in the enclaves by arguing that the Agambenian framework does not necessarily capture the nuances of daily life in such spaces (Dunn & Cons, 2014). First of all, they contend that enclaves are best understood as ‘sensitive’ rather than ‘exceptional’ because multiple forms of power abound and compete in these spaces, provoking anxiety and insecurity between both those who are governed and those who seek to govern. Second, they suggest that the enclave residents are not merely bare lives, but rather they are ‘burdened agencies’ who make their ways through the complex terrain of sovereign power in their daily lives. Thus, instead of seeing the enclaves as subject to one sovereign power, they view them as spaces where the sovereign is aleatory in nature (Dunn & Cons, 2014).

The purpose of my discussion of abandonment is not to support or refute either of these studies but to elucidate how sovereignty has been used as the key idea to comprehend the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India. I use this as the departure point for my discussion in the next section to demonstrate how the same population is included and recognized as right bearing individuals by the sovereign that once excluded and projected violence over them.

Sovereign overcompensation after the exchange

The frequent narratives of satisfaction with the government among the former enclave residents like that of Azizul’s and emphasis on prioritizing enclaves and enclave people’s welfare among the state and non-state actors steered me to dig deeper into the issue. Eventually, I found out that in almost every aspect in their daily lives the newly adopted enclave residents enjoyed higher privileges and better access to resources than the regular citizens of Bangladesh

who lived around them. As I was interviewing Ali, a small shop owner at his mid-fifties who is a Bangladeshi and lives just beyond the edge of the enclave of Kotvajni, told me:

I feel like they [former enclave residents] are now more powerful than us [regular Bangladeshis]. They can go to the UNO whenever they want to, and the UNO will listen to them. They got electricity within no time. They did not even have to spend a single cent (*paisa*) to get the connection. Does that happen in Bangladesh? It is for them, that we got the connection. (Explanation added).

Although, the transcription makes it sound grave, the shop owner expressed it in a light mood. He also emphasized that he has nothing against the former enclave residents, but he was rather happy that they are now living like “humans”. Ali’s account reveals several significant features. First, he felt that the former enclave residents were more powerful because they had direct access to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), the highest government official in charge of a sub-district in Bangladesh. Second, without spending any ‘speed money’ (bribe to speed up the process), they got electricity connections which is rarely seen in Bangladesh. The government actively made sure that they do not fall victim to corruption in getting electricity connections. Third, even being Bangladeshi citizens, they did not have access to electricity until the enclave was connected to the power grid. Azizul’s account illustrates the situation in detail as I asked him the follow-up question on why he feels that they were enjoying more facilities.

You know, as I said. We got electricity in every single house here. We did not have to spend anything but to buy the meter. It does not happen like that. You have to bribe them, spend days after them to get a connection. But in the enclave, the officers came and made sure that everyone got connection. They even erected four/five polls to connect one single house at the edge of the enclave. Our neighbors [who were regular Bangladeshi citizens] got electricity because of us, otherwise they would still be in dark. (explanation added)

The UNO of Fulbari Upazila in Kurigram, Debendra Nath Urao, explained how the government is proactively ensuring a smooth transition and a better experience for the newly adopted citizens. He said,

We are clearly instructed to prioritize the newly adopted enclave dwellers. We are always concerned in ensuring a smooth transition for them. They have their own representatives who always come to me and express their concerns. Some of them don’t even wait for their representatives, they would come themselves with their issues. We take immediate measures to address their concerns. They know that my door is always open for them. ...The government has allotted special funds for development interventions in the former enclaves. We are building roads, bridges, mosques, temples, schools, community clinics, dams; everything that they need.

The accounts of Ali and Azizul clearly reveal that in many cases the services provided by the state surpassed their expectations. Further, the account of the UNO divulges that the state officials were given clear instructions to ensure a better experience for the enclave residents. As a result, numerous state agencies and actors assumed a proactive role to help smooth the transition. This extra effort was limited only to the recently adopted citizens and within the newly incorporated territories. For their neighbors who are regular citizens of Bangladesh, it was business as usual. Although on the surface the state is offering unique services and prioritizing the former enclave residents, at the same time these are instances of the conditions for governmentality by ‘new exercise of sovereignty’ (Butler, 2004, p. 61). This demonstrates a situation where the sovereign is developing a ‘tactic’ by not ‘binding’ the residents with its status of law, but instead by making them the subject of its ‘managerial power’ (Butler, 2004, p. 61).

Guchho gram offers another instance of the additional facilities provided for the recently adopted citizens in the former enclave of Kotvajni, in Panchagar Bangladesh. *Guchho gram* is a model village established by the state of Bangladesh that consists of 30 tin-made houses on a 1.2-acre land to provide housing for the marginal poor who lacked enough resources to afford a house. Each of these houses consist of two rooms and a kitchen with a sanitary latrine and an environment friendly stove (known as *Bondhu Chula*). A tube well is also provided for every three families. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, inaugurated the project over video conference on May 03, 2017 when a few of the dwellers of these houses were given the opportunity to directly talk to the Prime Minister. One of them was thirty-three-year-old Monsur who drives a rickshaw-van to earn a living and got a house in the *Guchho gram*. During my interview with Monsur, I asked how he felt talking to the Prime Minister. He answered with a proud smile on his face:

Could I have ever imagined talking to Sheikh Hasina (*ami amar baper jonmeo ki vabsi j ami Sheikh Hasina ’r sath kotha bolte parbo*)?! No! But I am so proud of it. ...The government not only gave us a country but also gave us a house, [they] took good care of us.

A similar example is found in the rehabilitation package offered by India during the exchange. India offered a generous package for those who decided to move to India from Bangladesh and accepted Indian citizenship. The package included 500,000 (US\$7,500) rupees per family, dry food for two years, kitchen utensils, animal feed, temporary camp in Cooch

Behar, drinking water, medicine, healthcare, education, and eventually a house or flat (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). During my summer research in 2015, I interviewed forty-year-old Ganesh, a small shop owner in Dahala Khagrabari, who decided to move to India and took the rehabilitation package into consideration. He said,

Look, most of my family members had moved there long before, and they are doing well over there. My uncle was the first to move there right after liberation. He got married and settled there. Then my sister got married there. I am the only person living on this side. I wanted to move but never had enough money and did not know what to do. Now, since India is taking us and also helping us to go there, I have decided to move with my family. (Fieldwork 2015).

Both of these are examples of special arrangements made for the former enclave residents by the state of Bangladesh and India. While both governments have numerous projects to support their vulnerable populations, none of those are comparable to the generous allowances included either in the *Guchho gram* project or in the rehabilitation package. Both examples of the *Guccho gram* and the rehabilitation packages are demonstrations of sovereign overcompensation in the sense that the state is actively preventing its marginal poor from being victims of 'structural violence' (Gupta, 2012). Structural violence is the condition where the poorest population of the state are left to die because of a lack of access to services created by the structured corruption and bureaucracy (Gupta, 2012).

Health services and education, two of the basic rights that the enclave residents were denied by the sovereign, were also actively provided to them after the exchange. Additional arrangements were made to ensure that all former enclave residents have access to health services. For instance, in Dasiar Chhara in Kurigram district of Bangladesh, a special medical team was assembled to provide free consultancy and service to the enclave residents. Moreover, three temporary clinics were established in the former enclaves to provide basic services. As I interviewed the Medical Officer of Debiganj Upazila in Panchagar district, he told me about three more community clinics that were established in the former enclaves in Debiganj which were providing 33 different services free of cost. Moreover, one CSBA (Community Skilled Birth Attendant) was trained for six months by the government to provide emergency services in these enclaves. At the same time, three volunteers were deployed in the enclaves to bring the enclaves under the family planning program and supply family planning tools for no cost. He also said that although no special arrangement is officially made for the former enclave residents

in the local hospitals, they are given priority if they come to seek medical assistance. I found similar experiences shared by the former enclave residents as well. A forty-four-year-old farmer Jalil Miah of Bashkata enclave in Lalmonirhat district shared his experiences of going to the government medical centers before and after the exchange.

If you were lucky and had connections, you would get some medical assistance in the hospitals [before the exchange]. If somehow, they knew that you were from the enclave, you would not get any assistance. I have seen a lot of our people die due to lack of proper health care, especially the pregnant women. If we had to go to the medicals, we would always try our best to hide our identity. But now the situation has changed. Now, we rather tell them that we are from the recently incorporated enclaves. They treat us especially if they hear that we are from the enclaves.

Similar scenarios can be found regarding education in the enclaves. The government has established several elementary schools in almost all of the big enclaves. For example, in Dasiar Chhara alone, three elementary schools were established. Four new elementary schools were established in the former enclaves of Debiganj. Depending on the size, distance from the nearest school, and population schools have been established where education is offered for free. Apart from that, to attract and keep students in the school the government offers numerous scholarships and programs. Although these are not special arrangements made by the state when it comes to ensure primary education for the enclave residents, the way the former enclaves had been included in the program is rarely seen or heard of. The Primary Education Officer, Runa Laila, who has been in charge of Debiganj Upazila from 2014, shared how they did it:

Right after the decision was made that the enclaves would be exchanged, we were instructed by the government to conduct a census in the enclaves to count the number of children aged 6 to 14. We also collected information on who goes to school and who does not. After the census, we sent our reports to the ministry. Based on the population, the size, and their distance from the town, decisions were made to establish new schools. The schools are now completed and will start operating from 2018. But even before they start operating, we tagged all the students from the former enclaves with nearest schools.... We specially look after our female students as their parents tend to get them married under-age.

Not only the regular state services like health and education, in many cases, the former enclave residents also enjoy a higher degree of safety than their neighbors. Although the former enclaves are under the jurisdiction of local police now, many of them have temporary police camps. These temporary police camps were set up due to higher crime rates found in the enclaves. I visited one of these camps in Dasiar Chhara. The camp is a *semi-paka* (brick walls

with tin roof and earth floor) structure with two rooms. An Assistant Inspector of the Police and four constables are always deployed in the camp. I had a hard time comprehending the necessity of a twenty-four-seven police presence and asked the former enclave residents about their opinion on it. Almost all of them took it as a matter of ‘pride’ that they had a special police camp in their area and had ‘hot connection’ (a connotation commonly used to mean easy accessibility) to the police. Nuruddin, a young man in his late twenties in Dasiar Chhara, expressed his views about the police presence. He said:

I feel good that we have a police camp here. It helps to keep the law and order situation under control in our area. The police station is far from here, so if we need emergency assistance, they can help us. Also, you know, it shows that we are important. We have hot connection with the police (he used the term *proshashon* which literally means administration in Bengali).

The Officer in Charge of Debiganj Police Station Aminul Islam shared his opinion illustrating prioritization of the former enclave people. He said:

I have an officer specially put in charge of the former enclaves. On top of that, my officers regularly go and visit those areas. They talk to the local stake holders, local leaders, and people. They have direct access to me as well. My cell phone number is provided, and they can call me any time. They also directly come to me if they have any issue.

The discussion so far elucidates that the former enclave residents were actively provided facilities that are not necessarily always provided to their neighbors who are regular Bangladeshi citizens. At the same time, it demonstrates that numerous state actors and agencies prioritize providing services to the former enclave residents. The process of actively serving the newly adopted citizens and prioritizing their necessities is what I call sovereign overcompensation. However, at the same time, I claim that the overcompensations are both latent and manifest tactics of bringing the population under state control.

Understanding sovereign overcompensation

Why the sovereign would play such an active role so that it ends up overcompensating the people that it once excluded yet remains unanswered. I offer three different but interconnected reasons behind such overcompensation in the section that follows.

Embracing the new citizens

Conceptualizing the state as a masculine institution that always ‘penetrates’ or ‘reaches into’ societies often loses sight of how at the same time, the state ‘takes hold’ and in many cases ‘nurtures’ its population, argues John Torpey (Torpey, 2000). According to Torpey, modern social approaches primarily focus on the masculine nature of the state where it is imagined penetrating every aspects of the society. However, Torpey claims that the state, instead of penetrating, also needs to embrace the people, because without embracing it cannot penetrate. He further demonstrates that the ‘penetrationist’ approach does not fully explain the mechanisms that are employed and adopted by the state to construct an enduring relationship between its subjects, which construct the social base of their reproduction. As Torpey puts it, ‘The metaphor of “penetration” of societies by states thus distorts the nature of the process whereby states have amassed the capacity to reconfigure social life by focusing our attention almost exclusively on the notion that states “rise up” above and surmount the isolated societies’ (Torpey, 2000, p. 11). As an alternative to this, he offers the idea of an ‘embracing’ state by which he suggests that the state embraces its population, individually and collectively, to administer and govern them effectively. For Torpey, the state must embrace before it can penetrate. Torpey draws the meaning of the term ‘embrace’ from the German word *erfassen*, which means to ‘grasp’ or ‘lay hold of’ in the sense of ‘register’ (Torpey, 2000, p. 11).

I draw on Torpey’s idea of the ‘embracing’ state in understanding how the state of Bangladesh ‘embraced’ its former enclave residents, who were once abandoned. After the exchange in 2015, the state has been performing all kinds of state making activities in these formerly stateless spaces which include adopting the new citizens. As has been demonstrated in the section above, the state is integrating its newly recognized citizens in a unique way that has resulted in sovereign overcompensation. Sovereign overcompensation is better understood if the state is seen as ‘embracing’ the former enclave residents as opposed to ‘penetrating’ these spaces. Embracing the newly accepted citizens in Bangladesh demonstrates how the state ‘nurtures’ a part of its population (Torpey, 2000). The state holds a particular population within its grasp to include them in the project of state making while excluding others. The case of the former enclave residents demonstrates similar instances where the newly adopted citizens are embraced and offered extra services by the state, but the regular citizens remain excluded from such privileges.

This becomes evident from the accounts of Riton, a third-generation resident of the former enclave of Bashkata in Bangladesh. Riton was born and brought up in the enclave and had lived there for 40 years before the exchange took place. He shared his experiences of being embraced by the state:

When I was young, I used to see my father and grandfather struggling every day. We did not have a state, no one wanted us. India never cared about us and Bangladesh would not accept us. But now days have changed. The Bangladesh government has accepted us as one of their own.

Not only Riton, but also the accounts of Azizul, Ali, and UNO Debendra Nath Urao in the previous section demonstrate that the state accepted and embraced the former enclave residents with special care. However, embracing is also used to single out the population of the former enclave for ‘special treatment’. The special treatment, according to Torpey, allows the state to sort out ‘who is who’ and ‘what is what’ (Torpey, 2000, p. 12). This embracing policy is further used by the state as part of its strategy to make legible state spaces by bringing them under the system of census, registration, voting, id cards, passports and the like (Scott, 1998). Thus, I contend that the sovereign embraced the population for special treatment that was once excluded and were made subject to its violence. This special treatment on the one hand allowed the state to make legible state spaces and govern the population, and on the other resulted in sovereign overcompensation.

Community of value

The state portrays itself as a collection of people who share common attributes such as ideas, ethnicity, religions, culture, or language. This is a strategy employed by the state to demonstrate that it is not an arbitrary collection of people hung together, but rather a ‘community of value’ (Bridget Anderson, 2013). By portraying itself as an agglomeration of people with similar values, the state claims legitimacy over them. In other words, the state decides who belongs to that community and who does not. The community of value ideally is composed of ‘good citizens’ who are law abiding, hardworking, productive, and uphold the value of the community. While they are the most desired citizens, there are other citizens who are ‘failed’ and others who are ‘tolerated’ by the state. Failed citizens are the ones who are incapable of or have failed to live up to the value of the state while tolerated citizens are neither ‘good’ nor ‘failed’; they are merely tolerated to be present on the state territory. Apart from these categories, there are ‘non-citizens’— often understood as someone who does not belong to the community

of value, such as a migrant or a foreigner (Bridget Anderson, 2013). Based on the distinctions between and among such categories of citizenship, state treatment and support vary. While the good citizens are embraced and nurtured by the state, failed and non-citizens are often left behind and are made victims of state violence. Moreover, they are also frequently labelled as ‘criminal’ and ‘illegal’. These are the tools for the state for creating the boundaries of ‘us’ and ‘them’ and justifying such boundaries (Bridget Anderson, 2013; Gupta, 2012). Bridget Anderson views the process of ‘naturalization’ as a tool for the state that uses it to socialize the non-citizens by integrating and incorporating them within the community of value. This is a process by which non-citizens are naturalized to become a part of the community. For Anderson, “Naturalization is when migrants become citizens, the moment when the Migrant, no longer solely an ‘economic migrant’, an ‘asylum seeker’, a ‘dependant’, becomes integrated, a fully incorporated member of the national community” (Bridget Anderson, 2013, p. 93).

I draw such insights from Anderson to understand overcompensation by the state for its newly adopted citizens in Bangladesh. I contend that the overcompensation is a result of Bangladesh’s active initiative to incorporate the former enclave people within the ‘community of value’. However, the key to understanding the overcompensation lies in the territorial oddities of the enclaves and the complex categorization of the enclaves’ residents. The former enclaves of India and Bangladesh were the odd territories that were situated within a state but did not belong to that state (R. Jones, 2010). As a result, those were territories that produced constant anxiety and tension among those who governed them as well as marred the vision of a post-colonial state of territorial contiguity (Cons, 2014b, 2016). The state’s intention to merge those territories within its spaces were apparent from the treaties signed in 1958 and 1974 that proposed an exchange of those territories without any compensation for the loss to the other party, although for various reasons, these states did not execute the treaties and bring these populations under their legibility until 2015 (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018; Ministry of External Affairs, 2015b; Shewly, 2013b; Whyte, 2002b).

This on the one hand demonstrates that the state always wanted to bring the enclaves under state legibility. On the other hand, this shows the peculiar position of the former enclave residents who were not recognized formally but were agreed by both the home and the host state to be accepted as citizens once the treaty was executed. Thus, the former enclave residents cum

newly incorporated citizens blurred the boundaries of ‘good,’ ‘failed,’ ‘tolerated,’ and ‘non-citizens’. They were not failed because they were not even recognized as citizens, but they were tolerated as they were living inside the state territory. Moreover, they were not foreigners or aliens from an immigration point of view as they were born and brought up within the host state (Brubaker, 1989; Isin, 2012a; Nyers & Rygiel, 2012; Sur & van Meeteren, 2018). They were not alienated in the sense immigrants and foreigners are alienated because not only they were born and brought up within state territory, but they also shared common traits in their culture, religion, ethnicity, language and like (Bridget Anderson, 2013; Paret & Gleeson, 2016; Zedner, 2016). Thus, they were already naturalized to the value of the community but were not formally accepted. The exchange allowed the states to territorialize these formerly non-state spaces and, at the same time, incorporate the former enclave residents within the community of value by socializing them to be ‘good citizens’ using different state mechanisms. The extra effort by the state to prioritize the formal enclave people and smoothing of the process of becoming a citizen are best viewed as the state’s effort to create a community of value that consist of good citizens. Bangladesh actively initiated numerous processes in order to allow it to incorporate and integrate the former enclave residents within the community of value. These active initiatives and extra efforts to create a community of value resulted in overcompensation. This is evident from the speech of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, who on her visit to Dasiar Chhara enclave on October 15, 2015 compared the enclave residents to flowers, saying:

You are the flowers of Fulbari¹⁵. We have got you among us, from now on no one will call you enclave residents anymore. You will not be deprived anymore (Rahman & Khan, 2015).

Hyperreality of a caring sovereign

In this section, I draw on the idea of *hyperreal* offered by the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard to understand the concept of sovereign overcompensation and claim that overcompensation is an act of creating the ‘image’ of an ideal state that cares about its citizens and actively helps them transition into citizenship smoothly (Baudrillard, 1983, 1994). Baudrillard claims that the contemporary world is a world of simulation, a world of images that blurs the boundary between the real and artificial. He distinguishes between three orders of simulation. The first order simulation is a representation of the real such as a picture or a photo

¹⁵ Fulbari in Bengali literally means home of flowers.

of a mountain. Second order simulation is a representation of the real with blurring boundaries such as a map representing the selective properties of the real world. Third order simulation is not even representation of the real, but rather is a creation of the real without any relation to the reality, which he calls hyperreal. For Baudrillard, this is ‘...a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal’ (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 2). He argues that the modern world has become a world of hyperreality where the powerful produce a hyperreality to serve their interests. Specifically, in understanding the capitalist mode of production, Baudrillard uses hyperreality to claim that the system cannot function without producing a hyperreality because of the inherent seed of destruction within itself. Thus, producing a world of hyperreality remains a major task for the capitalist system in order for it to survive. In explaining the process of third order simulation, Baudrillard contends that there are two ways of creating it—to simulate and to dissimulate, which respectively mean to pretend to have that which one does not have and to feign not to have that which one has (Baudrillard, 1994). Thus, Baudrillard claims that it becomes almost impossible to differentiate between the real and the hyperreal as they imply ‘social rapports’ and ‘social power’ (Baudrillard, 1983). He also argues that simulation only can function if individuals are made to believe that ‘rationality holds sway, and discipline, childishness, madness and so on are seen to be elsewhere’ (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 90).

Drawing from Baudrillard’s idea of simulation and hyperreality, I contend that sovereign overcompensation is a hyperreality that the state of Bangladesh created to produce an image of a caring state, a state that provides for its citizens and actively helps them to experience rights of citizenship. The active role of different government officials, the prioritization of enclave residents, and the ease in which they have access to state offices are examples of the simulation of a caring state. The state pretends to care for the newly incorporated citizens in ways that it does not do for regular citizens under normal circumstances. This becomes apparent from the accounts of the state officials, newly incorporated citizens, and the regular citizens of Bangladesh as I describe below.

Ahmed, who is a newly incorporated citizen of Bangladesh, has been living in the enclave of Kotvajni in Panchagar since he was born. A man in his late fifties, Ahmed owns a few decimal of land and runs a small shop to earn his livelihood. He was expressing his experiences of being a new citizen enthusiastically with me as he said,

We never imagined that we would get all these! The government is giving us everything. It is more than what we expected!

Almost echoing Ahmed but from a different vantage point forty-two-year-old Masum, a Bangladeshi citizen by birth who lives near the enclave of Dahala Khagrabari in Panchagar, expressed his views,

Look, I do not have anything against them [former enclave residents], but if you ask us [regular Bangladeshi citizens], I believe most of them will say this. The government is doing a little extra for them (*sorkar ektu beshi beshi kortese*), they do not do that for us.

An official¹⁶ in the Land and Survey Office of Debiganj, Panchagar shared his views regarding the government's role in actively helping the former enclave residents. He said,

The government took special measures to address the land issue. They brought special equipment and team from other part of the country and made special arrangements to survey their lands. They used digital machines and techniques. We worked day and night to do this. Their lands have been all registered and mapped within a very short time. This does not happen normally... We solved 1360 disputes within ten days.... We had to meet and report the progress every month to the upper level officials.

The accounts of Ahmed, Masum, and the official along with those of Ali and Azizul clearly indicate three major aspects of the state's role. One, the state of Bangladesh does not prioritize and actively help its regular citizens in the same ways it does for the newly incorporated citizens. Two, these are extraordinary arrangements for the special event of state making and nationalizing the formerly stateless spaces and populations. Third and most significantly, based on the exchange, the state produces the simulation of an active and caring state that helps its citizens to experience rights of citizenship by performing good stateship.

Thus, drawing on Baudrillard, I contend that sovereign overcompensation is the hyperreality that the sovereign produces to conceal the inherent violence, governmentality, power, discipline, and punishment within itself.

¹⁶ The official agreed to interview under the condition of full anonymity. Thus, I do not mention their rank, name, or anything related that could identify him/her.

Conclusion

When they existed, the former enclaves and enclave residents of Bangladesh and India were excluded from the protection of the home state and were occasionally made subject to violence by the host state. Former enclaves were understood as *de facto* stateless spaces or sensitive spaces where the sovereign inflicted violence without having to face any consequences. After the exchange of the enclaves, the formerly stateless spaces are brought under state governmentality and made legible by the respective host states. At the same time, the enclave residents are recognized as citizens and are endowed with rights and privileges that come with this recognition. In this chapter, by focusing on the process of bringing the former enclaves and their residents within state territory and making them legible, I have demonstrated that the state of Bangladesh assumed a proactive role in easing their experiences of citizenship. In so doing, the state actively offered privileges and services that surpass the services offered to its regular citizens. This active role of the state to help ease the experiences of the former enclave residents is what I understand as sovereign overcompensation. However, I claim that sovereign overcompensation does not stem from a sense of (in)justice by the state. Rather these are strategies employed by the state to bring those people and spaces under state governmentality.

In explaining why the sovereign overcompensates, I draw on the works of Torpey, Anderson, and Baudrillard (Anderson, 2013; Baudrillard, 1983, 1994; Torpey, 2000). Drawing on Torpey, I view the overcompensation as a process of embracing the new people and spaces, rather than penetrating them. In so doing, I argue that the sovereign embraced the former enclave residents and the enclaves in order to make them more legible (Scott, 1998). I further argue that conceiving the process of creating legible state spaces as ‘embracing’ instead of ‘penetrating’ allows us to understand the nuances of who is sorted out, for what purpose, and with what effect, or in other words, how the new citizens are separated for special treatment by the sovereign while for regular citizens daily life remains business as usual. By embracing the new citizens and ensuring a smooth transition to citizenship, I then argue, the state creates a community of value. A community of value consists of good citizens who live up to the shared values and ideas of the state. The active role of the state to smooth the transition from non-citizens to citizenship is an effort to create a population that share the same values and ideas of the nation-state within its boundaries. Finally, I demystify the overcompensation of the state by contrasting the state’s treatment of its regular citizens and the new citizens. In doing so, I draw on Baudrillard to claim

that overcompensation is a simulation created by the state. It is a hyperreality that does not represent the reality on the ground regarding how the state of Bangladesh treats its citizens. Instead, it is how the state would ideally like to present itself, as a caring entity that actively helps its citizens – a third order simulation.

Consequently, I conclude that the sovereign does not overcompensate to make up for the injustice or violence once inflicted on a population. Instead, overcompensation stems from the sovereign's active role in bringing a set of population within its legible rule and to homogenize and govern them. In the process of doing so, the sovereign pays extra attention to the selected population who, as a result, experience better privileges than regular citizens.

Chapter 5. Showcase citizenship: Experiences in the former border enclaves of Bangladesh and India.

Introduction

After working on my fieldnotes and organizing the day's work, I was almost ready to go to bed in my hotel room in Patgram, Bangladesh. It was a long and exhausting day as I walked miles under the scorching sun on a sandy road to visit the former enclave of Bashkata and interviewed a few of the local school teachers. It was passed 10.00 pm in the night that I heard a knock on my door. Assuming it was my research assistant, I opened the door and to my surprise, one of the teachers that I interviewed earlier, was standing in front of me! Not sure how to react, I invited him to my room. The teacher apologized for his sudden arrival and told me that he wanted to talk to me about some personal issues. Even more surprised now, we started the late-night talk! As it turned out, he was planning to sue the government on the ground that the school teachers in the former enclaves should be incorporated under the Monthly Pay Order (MPO) of the government. The MPO was a recurring issue in the interviews that I conducted earlier that day. However, when I asked him why he thinks that the judge would even accept the case as there are clear rules by the government on who gets to be incorporated under the MPO, his answer was,

Why not? We are the former enclave residents. We are special. The government is doing a lot of exception for us. They are helping us with all our problems; then why would not they think about us (the teachers)?

Emotionally charged, the teacher was making his arguments on the ground that they have the right to be treated exceptionally *because* they are the former enclave residents. At the same time, he was also arguing that the state should make an exception to the rule for them referring to other instances where the former enclave residents had been treated especially by the state. However, after a long conversation and reference to the formal rules of MPO in/exclusion, he realized that there was no legal ground on which he could sue the government.

The previous chapter demonstrates that the state of Bangladesh has been proactively assisting the former enclave residents to help ease their transition from stateless enclave residents to right bearing citizens. In doing so, the state treats the former enclave residents with exceptional services that are not typically rendered to its regular citizens, a phenomenon that I term sovereign overcompensation. In this chapter, I shed light on the experiences of the newly

incorporated citizens of Bangladesh resulting from such overcompensation and special treatment by the state. Drawing on the experiences of the newly incorporated citizens, their neighbors who are regular Bangladeshi citizens, interviews with numerous state officials, field observation, and analyzing government documents and newspaper reports, I argue that such overcompensation results into a peculiar category of citizens that cannot be comprehensively grasped by the conventional vocabulary of citizenship. Recognizing similar limitations of citizenship studies, Engin Isin contends that, ‘we need a new vocabulary of citizenship...we require new concepts rather than a recycling of old categories’ (Isin, 2009, p. 368).

Thus, in this chapter, I introduce the idea of ‘showcase citizenship’ to refer to a category of citizens who are exceptionally treated by the state in ensuring that they get access to and enjoy the rights that come with the identity of being citizens. At the same time, the state uses such citizenship as a means to conceal the unequal treatment of its citizens and the structural violence fashioned by numerous state apparatuses. Consequently, I argue that showcase citizenship is an informal and intentional creation of the state which is used to produce and foster an image of a caring state that is sympathetic to its citizens and actively helps all of them irrespective of their socio-economic and political conditions, although in reality it does not. Moreover, showcase citizenship is used by the political parties as a means of political camping. I identify five major characteristics of showcase citizenship drawing on the case of the former enclave residents. First, showcase citizenship is informally created by the state to conceal the unequal treatment and structural violence produced by different state mechanisms. Second, the state typically targets a marginal population for such exceptional treatments. In the current case, it is the formerly excluded people of the border enclaves. Third, such efforts result in a category of citizens who enjoy a higher privilege than their counterparts. In this case, the former enclave residents enjoy such benefits which their neighbors, who are regular Bangladeshi citizens, do not. Fourth, showcase citizenship, by design, creates further exclusion. Finally, such exceptional treatment typically lasts for relatively a short period of time since a significant part of such treatments is managed informally.

The chapter is divided in five sections. By reviewing some of the major studies on citizenship and state, in the first section, I situate the concept of showcase citizenship within the existing literature. In the second section, drawing on the interviews and firsthand observation

from the field, I shed light on how showcase citizenship is created and practiced in the former border enclaves of Bangladesh and India. I delve into a detail discussion of the concept of showcase citizenship in the third section. In the fourth section, I offer a discussion on the way both Bangladesh and India use the enclave residents in fostering an image of a caring state in national and international media by showcasing them. In conclusion, I contend that showcase citizenship although on the surface projects an image of a caring state, in reality, it creates further exclusion by better treatment of a selective group. At the same time, it also affirms that marginal population of the state remain victims of structural violence unless either they are actively helped by the state or they can find their own ways to negotiate with state mechanisms.

Citizenship and the state

Citizenship

The idea of citizenship is one of the most widely studied, yet a broadly contested concept across social sciences. It is not just because the meaning of citizenship has changed over time from simply right bearing members of the state to the right to have rights but also because of the changing socio-political contexts that, time to time, produce different meanings of (non)citizenship (Arendt, 1973; Marshall, 1963; Powell, 2002; Samaddar, 2012). Moreover, conceptualizing citizenship becomes further complicated as, in Saskia Sassen's words, individuals 'can move between multiple meanings of citizenship' (Sassen, 2006, p. 188). While it is beyond the scope of the work to have a comprehensive discussion of the trajectory of citizenship studies, I will briefly cast light on a few different concepts of citizenship that are closely related to the idea of showcase citizenship in the discussion that follows.

Studying graduated zones of sovereignty in Southeast Asia, Aihwa Ong offers the concept of 'graduated citizenship' referring to especially administered population according to their connection to the global capital (Ong, 1999, 2006b). She demonstrates that, to keep up with the pace of the global market, graduated zones of sovereignty are created especially in Southeast Asian countries where workers receive differentiated treatment depending on their skills and ethnic identity. Such biopolitically differentiated treatment of professionals privilege one group over another and results into affirmative actions within a transnational framework. Drawing on Ong's idea, scholars have studied graduated citizenship in other contexts. Shaun Teo demonstrates that the sandwiched class population in Singapore receive subsidized housing from the government that comes from the state's aspiration to create a class for global living while

similar subsidies are denied to the rest of the population (Teo, 2015). Duncan McCargo provides instances from Thailand where the state creates two types of graduated citizenship. One is legally constituted for the Thai Chinese minority while the other is informally managed by Thailand's Malay Muslims (McCargo, 2011). In some instances, marital status can also result in graduated citizenship (Friedman, 2010). However, majority of the studies understand graduated citizenship as broadly a state sponsored privileged scheme for selected citizens that serves local, national, and transnational networks of spaces to attend the demand of a global city (Bunnell & Coe, 2005; Rogers, 2014; Rogers & Darcy, 2014). While the concept of showcase citizenship similarly addresses the differentiated treatment of a particular group of citizens, it is fundamentally different in the sense that it does not serve the aspiration for a global citizen, rather it serves the state to conceal its unequal treatment of citizens across different social strata. Further, showcase citizenship is not created in a graduated state of sovereignty, rather they are created within a regular state of sovereign rule.

Sara Friedman introduces the concept of 'symbolic citizenship' to explore the way individuals and groups are marked appropriate to be included in or excluded from an idealized social body politic (Friedman, 2004). Studying the socialist nation of China, Friedman argues that symbolic citizenship rests on the concept of an ideal citizen who performs specific activities to reproduce the embodied practices of a nation state. Thus, according to her, such practices of citizenship symbolizes the structure of the civilization and progress of a specific nation, especially a socialist nation. Dorothee Schneider, however, uses the same concept from a slightly different vantage point in understanding the idea of 'American Citizenship'. Analyzing congressional debates, she argues that for most of the congressional politicians, American citizenship symbolizes three characteristics. These are willingness to pay taxes, hardworking, and being a member of a nuclear family (Schneider, 2000). Both these ideas are intimately related to Ong's concept of cultural citizenship—a process of 'subject-ification' through which citizens are made by a scheme of consensus based on power relations, surveillance, discipline, control, and administration (Ong et al., 1996).

Another closely related yet dissimilar idea is differentiated citizenship. Iris Young was the first to shed light on the differentiated treatment of its citizens by the state based on numerous properties such as gender, race, sexuality, age and so forth (Young, 1989, 1990).

Differentiated Citizenship is defined as ‘the granting of special group-based legal or constitutional rights to national minorities and ethnic groups’ (Mintz, Tossutti, & Dunn, 2013, p. 89). Young argues that differentiated citizenship is the best way to understand inclusion and participation in the practices of citizenship. Young also contends that the idea of full citizenship is not a helpful one as it does not capture the nuanced differentiated treatment of citizens in a state (R. M. Smith, 2011). Differentiated citizenship also calls for an examination of the complex nature of power relations by exploring the way political, social, economic, and cultural changes upset the existing social order (E. Cohen, 2009; McDonogh, 2008). While Young was among one of the pioneers in pointing out differentiated treatments of citizens by the state, the idea does not help us in understanding why the state proactively choose a certain group of people to promote and exclude others. At the same time, how such exceptional treatment serves the state is not substantially captured by the concept of differentiated citizenship.

Acts of citizenship has been an influential approach in the last decade for studying citizenship. This is an approach that shifts from the conventional way of viewing citizenship as formal status to ‘collective or individual deeds that rupture social-historical patterns’ (Isin & Neilsen, 2008, p. 2). Isin and Neilsen contend that we must approach the study of citizenship in a way so that it becomes impossible to reduce citizenship to only status or practices. Thus, they call for the study of the *acts* that constitute citizenship. In elaborating more on the discussion of citizenship, Isin identifies four central concepts of citizenship- actors, sites, scales, and acts (Isin, 2009). Actors, according to Isin, do not have to be necessarily status bearing citizens, instead, they can be noncitizens, aliens, migrants, refugees, state, and courts. Sites of citizenship are the fields where issues related to citizens assemble. Scales refer to the scope of the site and acts are the actions by which numerous actors constitute themselves as right bearing subjects (Isin, 2009). Thus Isin concludes that to be a citizen is ‘to break habitus and act in a way that disrupts already defined orders, practices and statuses’ (Isin, 2009, p. 384). Studies have identified numerous acts of citizenship such as sexuality (Andrijasevic, 2009), music (Mhurchú, 2016), exclusion and asylum (Squire, 2016). Further, Rutvica Andrijasevic proposes to use acts of citizenship as a methodology (Andrijasevic, 2013). However, the idea of acts of citizenship emphasizes greater attention to the way different actions by actors from various scales create new meanings and practices of citizenship. Thus, by design, the concept assumes that the actors actively produce acts of citizenship which disturb the existing socio-historical pattern. The case

of showcase citizenship, in this respect, is primarily different as it identifies creation of a group of citizens by numerous state actors who not necessarily actively rupture the social pattern, instead, enjoy the especial privileges offered to them.

The idea of inclusive citizenship has become another influential concept since the last decade which was originally advocated by Naila Kabeer (Kabeer, 2005). According to Kabeer, inclusive citizenship has four major aspects. These are: justice, recognition, self-determination, and solidarity. Justice stands for equal treatment of all the citizens irrespective of their economic, political, religious, and any other affiliations. By recognition, Kabeer means the recognition of the intrinsic worth of human beings as well as dignity and respect for their differences. Self-determination means the people's ability to exercise some degrees of control over their lives and be able to decide for their own. Finally, solidarity stands for the capacity of the people to identify themselves with others and be able to act in unity for the claims of justice and recognition. Similarly, Christian Joppke offers the idea of substantive citizenship that includes- status, rights, and identity (Joppke, 2007). As a status, citizenship means the formal membership of the state and the rules of access. As a right, citizenship is understood as totality of the formal capacities and immunities connected to the status. As an identity, citizenship refers to the behavioral aspects of individual acts and conception of him/herself as a member of the state as well as the acknowledgement of such behaviors by the state. One might argue in case of the former enclave residents, by definition, the special treatment of the state makes them inclusive citizens and offer them substantive rights. However, not contrasting the treatment to their counterparts who are regular citizens of Bangladesh results in a lopsided analysis. Thus, in this paper, I do not simply regard the former enclave residents as inclusive citizens with substantive rights instead, I compare their cases with the regular citizens of Bangladesh to demonstrate how the differentiated treatment by the state results in making showcase citizenship.

State

The idea of citizenship has been critically understood as a device to create and perpetuate differences between those who are recognized as citizens and those who are not (Bridget Anderson, 2013; Brubaker, 2015; N. Sharma, 2006). While these studies provide valuable insights to our understanding of citizenship, all of them operate on the assumption that citizens are entitled with certain rights while non-citizens are not. Contrasting this assumption, recent studies clearly demonstrate that for the marginal people in South Asia, citizenship remains

hardly more than a status. The state does not merely fail to protect their rights, rather it actively contributes to their violation. Thus, in the following discussion, I focus on the various ways states create and perpetuate differentiated treatments of its citizens, especially in South Asia. By reviewing some of the recent studies on the role of state created exclusion and violence, I demonstrate that showcase citizenship offers the state a means to conceal the structural violence and injustice built within it.

Akhil Gupta, in his study of the Indian state and its operation of bureaucracy, reveals that numerous state apparatuses systematically exclude the marginal population from various state sponsored programs (Gupta, 2012). Gupta argues that we should think of state not as a single entity but as a combination of different branches of offices. These offices are run by numerous bureaucrats at different levels-top to bottom. The execution of state activities happens at the bottom and the field level lower strata officers execute these activities. They neither have a unified vision of the state nor the people they work with necessarily have it. Thus, to have a better understanding of state operation, we must focus on how numerous state and non-state actors operate at the ground level. In analyzing the field level operation of the state, Gupta contends that due to built-in corruption, reliance on inscription, and complex governmentality Indian bureaucracy produces structural violence. A violence that is created by the state to exclude its marginal population and in effect, let them die although they are included within the sovereign project. For Gupta, this is structural in nature because no single actor can be identified behind the creation of such violence rather, it is built into the structure of power. Drawing on Agambenian framework, Gupta perceives the extreme poor as ‘sacred life’ who can be killed without considering it being a sacrifice- the *hominis sacri*. The extreme poor are deprived of the government aid because of widespread corruption among government and nongovernment actors, bureaucracy’s reliance on inscription or written words, and arbitrary governmentality. As a response to this, the marginal population bring in numerous tactics to navigate the fraught terrain of state governmentality and bureaucracy which results into an informal relationship between them. However, this additionally excludes those who lack resource to settle in such negotiations with state mechanisms and are in effect, deprived of numerous state schemes and aid. In a similar endeavor to understand the role of bureaucracy in the lives of ordinary Pakistanis, Matthew Hull also corroborates Gupta (Hull, 2012). He sheds light on Pakistani bureaucracy’s exclusive reliance on paper documents and informal use of such documents to

press for irregular advantages. On the whole, he argues that such informal and irregular actions turn the ideal of a rational and disinterested bureaucratic decision-making process upside down and results into a political economy of papers. The vulnerability of bureaucratic decision-making to manipulation by private individuals also blurs the distinction between public goods and private interests. He shows the role of petitions, visiting cards, and '*parchis*' — little slips of paper with requests for favor scribbled on them—in mediating the encounter between government officials and ordinary people. Thus, both Gupta and Hull demonstrate that informality and personal connections play a substantial role in everyday lives of the ordinary people of India and Pakistan. As a result of such informal influences, marginal people who lack resources, connection, or friends to negotiate with state actors are excluded in many respects.

Both Gupta and Hull identify numerous strategies that the poorer population adopt in negotiating such exclusions by the state. However, Partha Chatterjee offers a comprehensive theoretical analysis of such strategies which he calls 'the politics of the governed' (Chatterjee, 2004). Chatterjee demonstrates that the ordinary people work their ways out in an informal manner to negotiate with state mechanisms to access numerous facilities and in so doing, they choose how they are governed. Chatterjee uses the term political society to denote underprivileged groups who do not fit the definition of a civil society rather, uses numerous paralegal arrangements to constitute a relationship with the state. He views the entire process as subaltern subjects of India coming up with their own politics in order to survive the exclusionary state mechanisms which in turn, results into political society. Such battles for development entitlements by the subaltern subjects allow them to 'meaningfully inhabit and simultaneously alter the contours of legal citizenship' which they have been granted on paper by the state, but in practice are denied (A. Sharma, 2011, p. 965).

Reliance on personal connections to deal with the state, although is common, has not been seen as a constitutive dimension of citizenship (Berenschot & Klinken, 2018). Drawing on case studies from Indonesia, Berenschot and Klinken argue that such personal connections demonstrate three dimensions of social affiliation that characterizes everyday citizenship and state making which are mediation, invocation of social norms, and use of social affiliations (Berenschot & Klinken, 2018). They further argue that 'Ordinary citizens experience state laws and policies as a random and unpredictable force. They see that personal influence, politics and

money shape bureaucratic outcomes just as much as do formal rules' (Berenschot & Klinken, 2018, p. 101). Thus, according to them *informality* is a crucial factor in the mediation between citizens and the state. Joseph Harris identifies differentiated treatment by the health care system to its citizens depending on their social status in Thailand (Harris, 2013). He contends that depending on their status, citizens, aliens, migrants, and stateless population receive differentiated treatment by the hospitals. At the same time, who receive a full waiver of the treatment depends on social-political connections and informal arrangements.

In the post-colonial states of Southeast and South Asia, daily negotiations with numerous state actors and mechanisms, thus, remain a troubled ground for the marginal population. On the one hand, they rely on informal connections and capitals to access various state facilities on the other, state mechanisms act on a random manner that results in a day-today insecure and anxious avenue. The poorest of the poor who are neither able to manage any informal means nor even attach themselves with the mediating networks such as a political society are typically excluded by state mechanisms. They become victims of the structural violence and are turned into *hominis sacri*. The former enclave residents, in most cases, were the poorest of the poor who lacked most of such resources and at the same time, did not belong to a political society as they were not even recognized as citizens until the exchange. In such a context, Bangladesh proactively assisted, both formally and informally, its new citizens so that they gain access to state services which results in a new category of citizenship that I call showcase citizenship.

Experiences in the former border enclaves

I delve into experiences of the former border enclave residents in this section to demonstrate the way they have been enjoying the exceptional privileges offered to them after the exchange. In so doing, I compare their experiences with the regular Bangladeshi citizens who live near and around them and at the same time, draw from interviews with numerous state and nonstate officials.

The most striking difference that I observed during my field research in the former enclaves was the residents' easy access to different government offices compared to the regular Bangladeshi citizens. While it is common for the local leaders and individuals with connections to regularly visit different government offices and officials in pursuit of services, the majority of the poor Bangladeshi citizens living in the rural areas do not get such access. Moreover, most of

the times, they are not treated in a ‘friendly’ manner by the officials. It becomes rarer when it comes to directly meeting the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)- the highest ranked administrative officer in charge of the subdistrict or the Officer in Charge (OC) of a police station. Contrary to this scenario, the former enclave residents enjoy a higher level of access to numerous government offices and officers. At the same time, they are encouraged by the officials to come directly to their offices to share their needs or complaints. Almost all the officials I interviewed expressed similar views, which explained the easy access, that they have been instructed by the government to help the new citizens in every way possible. For instance, one of the officials¹⁷ in the Upazila Land and Survey Office of Debiganj told me, ‘We were told by our superiors in every meeting to help them every way possible. They told us, there is special instruction from the government [to help them].’ The officer also mentioned that they had solved 1,360 land related disputes within ten days. At that time, they did not have any regular office hours, they would work till evening or late night to solve each case.

I interviewed the UNO of Patgram upazila, Nur Kutub Alam, almost at the end of my fieldwork and specifically pressed the issue of access with him. I asked him, *‘Do you think the [former] enclave residents are given priority by the government officers? If yes, why?’* He answered,

Yes, we are specifically instructed to assist them. ...Because there is a sympathy about them, about the inhuman way they have lived so far. So, the government wants to help them to bring them forward. We are told to help them as much as we can. I take special care of the enclaves in my upazila. I keep in regular contact with the representatives from the enclaves, the Chairman also actively help them. They are always welcome to my office.

Following his answer, I asked the UNO whether they received any formal instruction to assist the enclave residents from the government. He said, there was no formal instruction on paper, but they were orally instructed by the higher officials. I asked all the officials and political leaders the same question and everyone had more or less the same answer.

¹⁷ The official agreed to interview under the condition of full anonymity. Thus, I do not mention their rank, name, or anything related that could identify him/her.

The majority of the former enclave residents and regular Bangladeshi citizens I interviewed shared similar experiences. The owner of the hotel that I was staying in Patgram has been living there for the last three decades. He is one of the locals with easy access to government offices and has seen the enclave residents before and after the exchange. In sharing his view regarding the lives of the former enclave residents, he said,

What did they have [before the exchange]? Nothing. No one [officials] would even recognize them, let alone help them. They would also try to avoid any official or government offices. Now, ... *ore babare* (my god!) you will always see one or two of them hanging out in the office with the Chairman. They will go directly to the UNO or the OC, they don't care! Most of the Bangladeshis (regular Bangladeshi citizens) would not dare to do this!

Almost echoing the hotel owner, Salam Miah¹⁸, a small farmer aged forty-two from the enclave of Bash Kata in Patgram shared his experiences after the exchange.

We are really happy. We never imagined life would be like this. We have got more than what we expected. We lived like animals [before the exchange], now we live like a king. We can go anywhere we want to. We go directly to the UNO, we go directly to the police. We share our problems directly to them.

Several significant aspects regarding experiences of the former enclave people could be identified from the interviews above. First, the officials are instructed by the government to actively help enclave residents in smoothing their experiences of citizenship. However, the instruction is informally carried out from one level to another, one office to another office. Informality becomes a significant aspect of everyday practice of citizenship for both those who administer and those who are administered (Berenschot & Klinken, 2018). Second, the abandonment of the enclave people before the exchange results in a latent sympathy that works in favor of them. Their history of struggle and abandonment works in creating an intimate emotional relationship between citizens and the officials in personal life, a phenomenon that Carol Johnson identifies as 'affective citizenship' (Johnson, 2010). Third, because of the combination of such active role of the state and the latent sympathy among government officials, former enclave residents gain easier access to numerous services and offices compared to their neighbors. Contrary, for their neighbors who are regular Bangladeshi citizens, accessing such

¹⁸ To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms have been used for all the respondents except for the officials.

services remains a daily struggle as they do not receive the active assistance by the state and state officials.

Another aspect of such exceptional services is found in connecting the former enclaves with power grid. The enclaves had existed without any power supply from Bangladesh until they were exchanged. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, was scheduled to visit Dasiar Chhara on October 15, 2015 almost two and a half months after the exchange was executed. On her visit, she inaugurated power supply to Dasiar Chhara for the first time in the former enclaves (Rahman & Khan, 2015b). This is an exception in itself as in most cases, especially in rural areas of Bangladesh, to get an electricity connection people would normally have to wait months and sometimes years. However, Dasiar Chhara was connected to the power grid within two and a half months. One of the engineers¹⁹ overseeing electricity supply to Dasiar Chhara shared his views. He said, they were notified of the PM's visit to Dasiar Chhara and her plans to inaugurate electricity supply during the visit. They had only about two months before her visit. Thus, they put all their resources and efforts in connecting Dasiar Chhara to the national power grid within a very short period. He also mentioned that he has never seen, in his entire career, any village of Bangladesh being connected to the power grid that fast.

'Speed money' (a bribe to speed up the process) is an open secret in Bangladesh when it comes to getting electricity connection. At the same time, it involves complicated paperwork including submitting an application, getting approvals from numerous officials and so forth. On top of this, if someone's house is far from the existing power line, it would likely take more time, speed money, and paper works to get an electricity connection. As a result, navigating such a complex and expensive process remains a nightmare for most of the poor Bangladeshis who lack resources. Even if one finds a way to get the paperwork done and put the speed money in the right place, it takes months to get the connection. But in the case of the former enclaves, getting an electricity connection was not a problem at all, rather the concerned officials actively made sure they all get connected. One of the former enclave residents of Dahala Khagrabari, Abul Hossain who is a marginal farmer in his late sixties shared his experiences to me. He said,

¹⁹ Although the engineer agreed for the interview, he denied being audio recorded and did not agree in revealing his name in any form or anywhere. Thus, I do not directly quoting him but summarize what he told.

This is like dream for us. All of us got electricity connection in our houses. We got electricity within a year of the exchange. ...the village beside us got electricity after us [although they were Bangladeshis from the beginning]. In fact, they got connected because we were getting connected.

Following his answer, I asked him if they had to bribe any personnel to get the connection. With a strong shake of his head to express 'no', he said-

No, no, we did not have to spend a single taka except for the meter. High-level officials came here and told us to let them know directly if anyone asked for money for the connection. Normally you would have to spend thousands of *taka* to get a connection, we did not have to spend anything. ...Even the house at the edge of the enclave got electricity. They erected three/four polls just to connect that house.

I asked the majority of my respondents about their experiences about getting an electricity connection and almost all of them shared similar opinions across enclaves. Enclaves were connected to the power grid quicker than they expected and all of them got connection without having to deal with the bureaucratic complexity or bribing. However, this is a rare instance that is only limited to the former enclave residents. For the regular Bangladeshi citizens around the enclave, it is dramatically different. Ali Ahmed, a regular Bangladeshi citizen who lives close to Dasiar Chhara and owns a small tea stall, shared his experiences of getting a new connection for a house that his son-in-law recently built near the enclave of Dasiar Chhara. During my interview with Ahmed, he frequently referred to *bishesh subidha* (special facilities) that the new enclave residents were getting. I asked him to give an example of the 'special facilities' he was referring to. He shared his experience of getting a new connection for his son-in-law's house.

Look, these polls and the lines (referring to the electricity polls and lines in Dasiar Chhara) you are looking at, they did not have to spend a single *paisa* (cent) for these. *Sarkar* (the government) came to their houses and gave them electricity. Now, when my son-in-law built a house and needed electricity connection, we had to go through everything. ...Submitting your application, go and frequently request the officers to sign the file and of course, you know, give them *cha khawar taka* (a common term used to mean bribe). After roaming around in the office for about a year, we finally got electricity.

Not only access and services, but also the former enclave residents are actively prioritized when it comes to the distribution of government aid and allowances. *Guchho gram* offers an instance of such a case. *Guchho gram* is a model village established by the state of Bangladesh

that consists of 30 tin made houses on a 1.2 acre land to provide housing for the marginal poor who lacked enough resources to afford a house in the former enclave of Kotvajni, in Panchagar district. On top of the free house, among the inhabitants of *Guchho gram*, 16 households were given a government aid card, known as VGD (Vulnerable Group Development) card, that provides them with 30 kilogram of rice each month. Two of the inhabitants were given elderly allowance, and two more were given widow's allowance. I found similar case in Dasiar Chhara as well. The local administration allocated 2,950 VGD cards for Dasiar Chhara alone, while there were only 1,600 inhabitants in Dasiar Chhara who were eligible for such government aid. I asked the UNO of Fulbari Upazila about the generous allowance of VGD cards and what they did with the extra cards. He replied,

The government is keeping an eye on them. The local government allocated almost three thousand VGD cards for them. Every eligible person from Dasiar Chhara received a VGD card. There were only sixteen hundred of them. So, we distributed rest of the cards among other poor in the upazila. We also try our best to include them (the former enclave residents) in different government schemes.

The issue of VGD cards first caught my attention during an interview with Atiar Hossain in Dasiar Chhara. He is one of the local leaders and is actively involved with local politics. In sharing his opinions about life after the exchange [in Dasiar Chhara], he said,

You will not find a single person in Dasiar Chhara who has not received a VGD card. In fact, *sarkar* (the government) allocated more cards than people in Dasiar Chhara.

This generous allocation of VGD cards and active role of the local government in including the vulnerable group under government schemes is not a common scenario in most of rural Bangladesh. In fact, in the majority of the cases, the number of VGD cards allocated is fewer than the number of eligible individuals. Further, who get the card also becomes a local politics because, in most cases, local leaders who are in charge of distributing such cards either give it to their persons of choice or use it as a leverage on the marginal population. Thus, not always all those who qualify for a VGD card end up getting one in rural Bangladesh. As I interviewed Aslam Ahmed aged thirty-seven, who is a regular Bangladeshi citizen and owns a small tea stall near Dasiar Chhara shared his observation over a cup of tea,

Look brother, I have been living here since I was born. No one cared about these people (enclave residents) even a couple of years ago. Now the government has gone crazy (*akhon sarkarer matha kharap hoia gase*). What aren't they giving them? ... They do not find enough people in Dasiar Chhara to give [VGD]cards. Contrary, look at us! Some

people do not get a single card even spending days after days just requesting the Chairman or the Member!

The interview excerpts from the UNO, Atiar, Ali, and Aslam clearly demonstrate an active and exceptional role of numerous state and non-state actors in extending exclusive care and services to a group of people who have been newly incorporated as state citizens. At the same time, it shows that the treatment of the regular Bangladeshi citizens with similar socio-economic status remain as usual. Neither there was an abundance of VGD cards nor (non)state actors actively reached them to ensure that they got one. Life remains a daily struggle of navigating complex state mechanisms for them. It indicates that citizenship remains merely a status for the marginal population until they either find a way to negotiate with several state mechanisms or are actively helped by the (non)state officials (Gupta, 2012). Moreover, differentiated treatment of the newly incorporated citizens and the regular citizens results in what Franka Winter calls ‘exclusion through citizenship’, an occasion where the state excludes a group of citizens in order to create another group of good citizens (F. C. Winter, 2014).

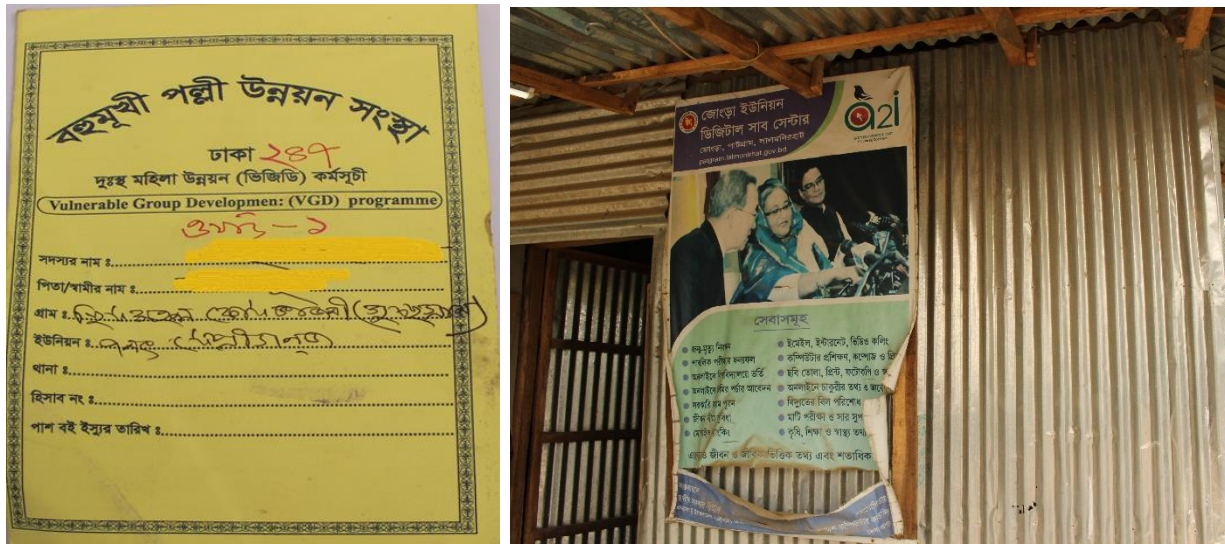


Figure 3 A VGD Card on the left and a Digital Subcenter on the right

‘Digital Sub-center’ or ‘Information Center’ was another feature that caught my attention when I was visiting the former enclaves. As part of the Bangladesh government’s vision 2021 of

making it a ‘Digital Bangladesh’, it has been setting up small offices at Union²⁰ levels to provide online services at door steps, especially to the rural population who lack such resources and skills. These centers were previously known as Union Information and Service Centers (UISCs) and currently termed as Union Digital Center (UDC). According to the government statistics, there are now 4,554 such one-stop centers dotted all over Bangladesh (a2i, Prime Minister’s Office, n.d.). Typically, services that are provided include online birth registration, online application for passports, public examination registration, death registration, utility bill payment, photocopying, job search, and computer compose. I found similar centers in the former enclaves of Dasiar Chhara and Bash Kata although none of them are Union. They are locally known as *Information Center* and *Digital Sub-Center* respectively in Dasiar Chhara and Bash Kata. The information Center in Dasiar Chhara is a tin roof concrete walled room located in the Kalirhat Bazaar, one of the marketplaces in the enclave equipped with a computer, a printer, a scanner, internet connection, and solar powered light and fans. Nur Islam, a former enclave resident who managed to get a college degree oversees the center and provides such services to the residents of Dasiar Chhara. The Digital Center in Bash Kata is located in the middle of the enclave just across a primary school. This is a tin made room with similar amenities to the Information Center of Dasiar Chhara. Rezaul Karim, who is a paramedic runs the Digital Center. He opens the center at afternoon every day, and the enclave residents come here to avail services. The Digital Center also works as a meeting place for the local leaders and people. Rezaul told me that there are three such centers established in the former enclaves to help enclave resident in accessing ‘digital services’. The enclave residents, especially the students, go there for internet access and online applications. These centers are an instance of the exceptional services offered to the newly incorporated citizens by Bangladesh in the sense that none of them are Unions, these are villages. Digital centers were allocated to the enclaves so that the enclave residents do not even have to go to the Union.

Exceptional service to or active prioritization of the former enclave people are common in other aspects too, especially in education, voting, and agriculture sector. Most of the former enclave residents could never get a government issued identity card such as a passport or a

²⁰ Union is the second lowest administrative unit in Bangladesh that consists of several villages. Union offices are also the ground level offices that execute numerous government policies at bottom level.

national identity card in Bangladesh as they were not Bangladeshi citizens. However, after the exchange, one of the first documents that the former enclave residents actively sought to manage is a national identity card. Bangladesh also made a list of voters in all the enclaves within the first six months of the exchange so that they could vote in the local elections and later in the national. The Upazila Election Commission Office was instructed to develop the voter list immediately after the exchange and to provide them the National Identity Card. Bangladesh launched a new biometric ‘smart’ identity card with fingerprint and retina recognition technology in late 2016. The pilot project was launched in few of the upazilas in Bangladesh. Fulbari upazila in Kurigram was one of those, and among the people in Fulbari upazila, Dasiar Chhara residents were the first to get the smart card. The Chief Election Commissioner of Bangladesh visited Fulbari and inaugurated the project with Dasiar Chhara residents. All of them got smart id cards before anyone in their district or region (interview with the Election Commissioner of Fulbari).

The former enclave residents also enjoy a higher degree of privilege when it comes to farming. The majority of the enclave residents are either marginal farmers or own farm lands. Before the exchange, farmers from the enclave did not get any government subsidized fertilizer, seed, or water for irrigation as those were only limited to citizens. Thus, managing such services were not only difficult but also unpredictable. However, after the exchange, the enclave farmers are specially taken care of by the *Upazila Krishi Office* (Sub-district Agriculture Office) and its officials. I found numerous farmers’ clubs in the former enclaves of Debiganj and Patgram. The farmers’ clubs are small cooperatives of local farmers established after the exchange. They not only help the local farmers in obtaining government subsidized fertilizer and seed but also, they own several farming instruments such as power tiller, seed sowing machines, harvesters and so forth. *Upazila Krishi Office* donated these machines to the club so that the club members can rent them at a cheaper price. The officials also helped them to form the club and manage it. In an interview with the president of Bashkata Farmers’ Club, Ainul Islam who also owns a small shop in the enclave, shared how the club was born and now operates.

After we became Bangladesh (meaning after the exchange), the agriculture officers started visiting the enclave. They asked us to go to the upazila office and shared information about many trainings that they provide for free. They also told us to form a club with the local farmers and taught us how to run the club. So, I took the initiative, I founded the club and almost all the farmers are now members of the club. They gave us the machines and also trained us how to operate. Now we rent those machines to our

members and other farmers and the club is making good money. We have now become a model in this area.



Figure 4 A farmer showing the machineries available in Bashkata Farmers' Clubs

The exceptional treatment of the former enclave residents and the active role of numerous government officers in helping them is not only limited at the lower level of administration. The Prime Minister of the country, Sheikh Hasina, made it clear when she visited the former enclave of Dasiar Chhara just after a couple of months they were exchanged. In her speech during the visit on October 15, 2015 she said:

You are the flowers of Fulbari²¹. We have got you amongst us, from now on no one will call you enclave dwellers anymore. You will not be deprived anymore. (Rahman & Khan, 2015)

Showcase citizenship

Showcase citizenship is an informal creation of the state that is used as a means to conceal the structural violence created by numerous state mechanisms. I identify five characteristics of showcase citizenship drawing on the case of the former enclave residents and delve detail into those features in the discussion that follows.

First, showcase citizenship is created by the state to serve the purpose of concealing the unequal treatment and structural violence produced by different state mechanisms. As has been shown earlier, it is now a well-documented phenomenon that states, especially in Southeast and South Asia actively promote exclusion and violence against the marginal population (Bear & Mathur, 2015; Berenschot, 2010; Berenschot & Klinken, 2018). Due to various reasons, including but not limited to, bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, misuse of inscription, personal connections, lack of resources, lack of education, and misuse of power marginal poor are excluded from the much-needed state services. Thus, despite being included within the sovereign project of the state, they fall victims of sovereign exclusion, which in many cases, result in extreme violence and sometimes in their death (Gupta, 2012). However, no single entity or individual can be held responsible for such exclusion and violence as it is a creation of the state structure, hence called 'structural violence'.

Like other states of South Asia and Southeast Asia, structural violence is rampantly prevalent in Bangladesh. Corruption, bureaucratic ambiguity, bribery, and unequal treatment of the resource poor people is a common scenario. However, structural violence also stands against

²¹ Fulbari in Bengali literally means home of flowers. Thus, the PM compared the former enclave residents with flowers.

the constitutional foundation of the state of Bangladesh where an equal treatment is guaranteed to every citizen irrespective of their difference in religion, ethnicity, race, opinion, resources and such. Thus, it is highly unlikely for any state official to formally acknowledge that their corresponding office does not treat all the people equally, in other words, promotes structural violence. At the same time, it is also commonsensically understood that they are more likely to be victims of structural violence given their marginal socio-economic and political background. It was apparent from the interviews and actions of the government officials that they are aware of the fact that left alone, the former enclave residents would more likely be victims of structural violence. For example, the UNO of Fulbari mentioning 'sympathy' and 'special care' for the former enclave residents, frequent reference of the field level officers to 'special instruction' from the higher level, visit of higher level officials to enclaves and making sure no one becomes victims of bribery or corruption in getting electricity connection, and finally the Prime Minister's speech ending up with a promise of not letting them being 'deprived' anymore all indicate the active role of the state to prevent them from being victims of structural violence. On the contrary, the regular Bangladeshi citizens who shared similar socio-economic and political resources living around the former enclaves were not extended such exceptional services or access to resources. Thus, life remained the similar struggle of negotiating with numerous state mechanisms for them. Consequently, I contend that the special treatment of the newly incorporated citizens by the state and state officials creates an exceptional category of citizenship that serves a dual purpose for the state, a) project an image of a caring state that upholds the constitutional rights of all its citizens irrespective of their backgrounds and b) conceal the structural violence built in within the system.

Second, the state typically targets a marginal population for such exceptional treatments. In the current case, it is the formerly excluded people of the border enclaves who were the target population for such exceptional treatment. A population for such treatment might be marginal in many respects including but not limited to, economically, politically, religiously, and ethnically. The newly incorporated citizens of Bangladesh who received such exceptional treatments were mostly socio-politically and economically marginal people living along the borders of the state. Their marginality can be traced back to the fact they were officially excluded from state services and protection until the exchange in 2015. Thus, they made a ripe target for the state not because the state cares about its marginal poor in general, but because showcasing such a population

serves several purposes for the state and state mechanisms. One, showcasing a marginal population with state backed up privileges help to project an ideal image of a rational and impersonal bureaucracy that treats all its population equally irrespective of their backgrounds. Two, it projects an image of the state officials who efficiently perform their duties and demonstrate there is no space for corruption or bribery within the system. Finally, it also serves the purpose of, what Rogers Smith calls, ‘politics of people building’ by offering numerous ‘stories of peoplehood’ (R. M. Smith, 2001). In context of America, Smith demonstrates that three types of stories (economic, political power, and constitutive) help politicians creating a sense of political peoplehood. Drawing on the same logic, I contend that the exceptional treatment of the marginal population enables the state to come up with stories of economic trust and help, stories of opportunities for political power exercise and representation, and constitutive stories of national belonging.

Third, such efforts result in a category of citizens who enjoy a higher privilege than their counterparts. In this case, the former enclave residents enjoy such benefits which their neighbors, who are regular Bangladeshi citizens, do not. Showcase citizenship, by design, creates an elevated group of citizens who are protected from the majority of the structurally shaped violence and exclusion. Thus, despite sharing similar socioeconomic and political properties with the neighboring population, these selected group of citizens enjoy a greater level of amenities from and access to the state. Such treatment also results into what Ong calls a mutation in citizenship (Ong, 2006a). New practices and state driven motives result into differentiated treatment of citizens who enjoy diverse terrain of growth and privilege. At the same time, sites of such treatment are not defined by conventional geography either. They are ‘spaces of assemblages’ that become sites for new ‘political mobilizations and claims’ (Ong, 2006a, p. 500). Conceptualizing such an exceptionally treated group of citizens as a distinct category also leads a move away from the conventional scholarship of ‘spaces of citizenship’ and helps bring other geographical categories such as scale, place, and mobility into consideration (Desforges, Jones, & Woods, 2005). Showcase citizenship demonstrates a ‘scalar configuration and engagement with place’ (Desforges et al., 2005, p. 440). Such citizenship is not created within the broader space of a nation-state instead, is created by the state at a micro scale that brings a renewed engagement with the place. These are places that are merged within the spaces of the

nation-state where a formerly excluded and *de facto* stateless population are newly recognized as citizens and given mobility within the social and political hierarchy.

Fourth, showcase citizenship, by design, creates further exclusion. While, on the one hand, exceptional treatment and active role of the state result in a privileged group on the other hand, it creates further exclusion by upholding a certain group of people over others. In a study on the bloggers of Peru, Franka Winter shows that in an effort to making good citizens, the state creates further exclusion by excluding other groups on the basis of the criteria for such good citizens. Thus, Winter argues that in such cases exclusion is created through citizenship. Similarly, in case of the former enclave residents, I argue that, creation of a group of citizens with exceptional treatment further marginalizes other poor who are already marginalized. Marginalization in this sense is the ‘injustice through which certain subjects are denied access to the common resources of a political order’ (Turner, 2016, p. 148). The experience of Ali Ahmed and his son-in-law elaborates such instance of marginalization. While, the former enclave residents of Dasiar Chhara were actively helped by the government officials in connecting them with the electricity supply without having to bribe any official, Ali Ahmed spent months to get a connection and also had to bribe. Such marginalization further excludes resource poor citizens not only from their counterparts who are actively helped by the state but also from other citizens who possess such resources. Moreover, the process of creating showcase citizenship results in exclusion and sense of deprivation among those who do not receive active assistance from the state. Allocation of VGD cards in the former enclaves elaborates this point. The newly incorporated citizens who are eligible were allocated a VGD card each. In fact, there were more VGD cards allocated by the government than the number of eligible citizens in Dasiar Chhara. In contrast, many eligible regular citizens either do not get a VGD card or have to manage numerous (non)state actors to avail one. But usually they do not protest against it and remain silent about the mismanagement in fear of being deprived of similar benefits in the future (A. Sharma, 2011). Both having to manage a service through personal connections and not being able to complain against anyone in the fear of additional deprivation results in further exclusion of such groups of citizens.

Finally, such exceptional treatment typically lasts for relatively a short period of time as in majority of the cases they are provided informally. Informality is used as a mechanism to help

one group of citizens while others are denied similar services using the same mechanism, thus informality concurrently becomes a significant aspect of everyday life of the former enclave residents and for the officials who administer these spaces. The above section demonstrates that most of the exceptional treatment and care from numerous government and non-government actors are informally provided. The government officials have been informally instructed by the government to help them. Thus, helping them in practice is totally dependent on the officials at the field level as there is no such written rule. At the same time, the easy access to UNO or the OC's office, higher level officials' visits to the enclaves and their instruction to contact them with any complains, the UNO's maintenance of a direct contact with enclave leaders are all performed informally. There is no formal basis on which the former enclave residents could demand such privileges for an indefinite period that makes such exceptional treatment a temporary phenomenon. The example of the Primary School Teacher at the beginning of the chapter elaborates the significance of informality in creating showcase citizenship. The teacher planned to sue the government just because he thought they have the right to be treated exceptionally and the government has taken exceptional steps for the former enclaves. However, it also did not take too long for him to realize that there was no such formal rule or decree by the government that made them eligible for an exceptional inclusion under the MPO. Thus, I contend that informality becomes a significant aspect of creation of showcase citizenship for several reasons. One, it allows the state and state officials to help a certain group of people without formally acknowledging the fact that such assistance is not rendered to everyone. Second, informality does not leave any paper trail and enable state mechanisms to shield the target population from structural violence without having to acknowledge that such violence exists. Three, informally rendered services are flexible and can be withdrawn or changed at the discretion of the concerned officials at any time. Consequently, I argue that reliance of personal connection to deal with state mechanisms and state mechanisms' reliance on informality to deal with a selected group of citizens 'should be seen as a constitutive dimension of citizenship' (Berenschot & Klinken, 2018, p. 95). As a result, informality should not remain outside the purview of the study of citizenship neither should it indicate a lower quality of citizenship, rather it should be viewed as a mechanism that at the same, time both mystifies and demystifies the bureaucratic ambiguity embedded in state mechanism (Berenschot & Klinken, 2018; Best, 2012).

Showcasing it to the nation and beyond

On March 04, 2016 in the inaugural ceremony of seventh Bangladesh-India Friendship Dialogue, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali said-

The enclaves have been exchanged and people's movement has been completed without any difficulty. Implementation of remaining parts of LBA is also going on in a smooth and time-bound-manner. By so doing we have set examples to the rest of the world (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016a).

Both the government of Bangladesh and India took the opportunity to capitalize on the successful enclave exchange in fostering an image of a caring state as the territorial exchange gained considerable attention in national and international media all over the world. As the statement of the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh demonstrates, they showcase the exchange as an example for the 'rest of the world'. Drawing on such instances both from Bangladesh and India, in this section, I demonstrate how the enclave exchange and the newly incorporated citizens are showcased in the media and bilateral documents. Further, I also demonstrate how the ruling party, Awami League, in Bangladesh takes advantage of the special treatment of the former enclaves for political camping and a weapon against the opposition.

As the exchange gained pace after the 2009 election, both India and Bangladesh started acknowledging the sufferings of the people living on those enclaves and took a sympathetic standpoint towards them. For instance, the Land Boundary Agreement published by the Ministry of External Affairs of India mentions,

The exchange of the enclaves will mitigate major humanitarian problems as the residents in the enclaves and others on their behalf had often complained of the absence of basic amenities and facilities (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015b, p. 25).

Moreover, on their website, the Ministry of External Affairs of India elaborately presents the arrangement that the government had made for those who decided to move to India from Bangladesh. It says,

The State Government of West Bengal has put in place elaborate arrangements for their stay in temporary resettlement camps and for issue of necessary documentation to them. Facilities made available at the camps include tin houses, common dining hall and kitchen, community toilets, anganwadi centre, playground equipment, etc. Arrangements for bank account opening, biometric enrolment, currency exchange and relief kit for each family have been made (Ministry of External Affairs, 2015c).

However, a critical look into these documents and media reports reveal that these are arrangements made especially for those people who decided to move to India, not for those who were already living in India for the last seven decades. Those who decided to move to India from Bangladesh had a special status as *Indians coming back to their homes* with more media attention. Therefore, I contend that such arrangements for the returning group enabled the Indian government fostering an image of a caring state by showcasing how it actively helps its marginal population. At the same time, it helps hiding the fact that other people who had been living in the Bangladeshi enclaves inside India and were accepted as Indian citizens were not offered such treatments.

Similarly, Bangladesh showcased the enclave residents to create an image of a caring state both in national and international media time-to-time as government officials including the prime minister frequently mentioned the unforeseen arrangements taken by the government. For instance, just before the exchange in May 2015, a minister of the government of Bangladesh who wished to be remained unnamed told the *Dhaka Tribune* that the prime minister is very much aware of the inhuman lives in enclaves and directed concerned ministries to ensure welfare of the enclave people. According to the cabinet member, prime minister Sheikh Hasina

... directed the related ministry to ensure welfare of the people of the enclaves, specially ensure health facilities and education. She instructed that roads be constructed for smooth communication and the homeless be provided shelter. She also talked about providing employment opportunities for them (Dhaka Tribune, 2015).

Such unnamed, yet detailed description of the meeting and sharing the intention of the prime minister with the media demonstrates that the government actively promoted their activities and intentions of helping the enclave residents by showcasing their sufferings before the exchange and a changed life after they were incorporated as citizens of the country.

Not only the special treatment of the former enclave residents was showcased in the national and international media to foster an image of a caring state but also, Awami League took the advantage of such an international event against its political oppositions. For instance, When Sheikh Hasina visited the enclaves in Kurigram right after the exchange, she declared that the government will do everything for the welfare of the enclave residents. She further mentioned that no government but Awami League only had the courage to discuss and execute the Mujib-India Treaty. Moreover, she also said in her speech ‘Your agony would have ended a

long time ago if the Father of the Nation was alive' (Bashar, 2015). Her visit was widely covered in the national media and, taking the advantage, Sheikh Hasina also mentioned that

Do not consider yourselves as residents of enclaves anymore. You are now citizens of this country... A long time has passed. But we are very sincere to fill in the gaps. So, I have come here today (Bashar, 2015).

The discussion above clearly demonstrates that although the former enclave residents enjoyed a higher degree of access to and services from the state of Bangladesh which helped smooth their experiences of citizenship, they were not extended to the regular Bangladeshi citizens. Similarly, such special arrangements made by the West Bengal Government in India was also limited to the selected category of enclave residents who decide to move to India from Bangladesh. However, these special arrangements were widely circulated in the media and gained national and international attention that helped both the governments foster an image of a caring state. Further, in Bangladesh such arrangements were used by the ruling party to showcase its success and a political camping against the opposition. Therefore, I postulate that the experiences of the citizens in the former enclaves inside Bangladesh as a result of sovereign overcompensation does not represent the regular citizenship experiences of the marginal population living along the edge of the state. Instead, these are instances of a specially treated group of citizens who are showcased by the state.

Conclusion

Following up the discussion of sovereign overcompensation, in this chapter, I explored the effect of such overcompensation. In so doing, I introduced the idea of showcase citizenship to refer to a category of citizens in Bangladesh who are exceptionally treated so that they are ensured easy access to privileges that come with the recognition of citizens. However, I identify this active role of the state as exceptional because Bangladesh does not necessarily perform the same actions for all its citizens, especially for those who are the marginal poor. At the same time, I also contend that showcase citizenship is used by the state as a means to conceal the unequal treatment and structural violence created by numerous state apparatuses.

While citizenship, as a concept, has been extensively theorized, scholarly work has, to a surprisingly small extent, engaged in empirical study to explore how people understand and practice their citizenship on the ground (Nordberg, 2006). Although there have been a few ground breaking empirical works on citizenship after Nordberg's comment, most notably of Isin

and Neilsen's acts of citizenship, scholarship has leaned more towards theorizing the concept without connecting it to field level experiences. Showcase citizenship is both an empirical and a theoretical study of the concept that draws from the experiences of the former enclave residents, regular Bangladeshi citizens, and numerous (non)state actors. On the one hand, it demonstrates the way different citizens experience the status of citizenship and on the other, it theorizes such differentiated experiences by offering a unique category of citizenship yet to be addressed in the existing literature.

Viewing the study of citizenship as 'an unfinished project' Isin identifies three ways to intervene in the study of the scholarship. First, 'deorientalizing' or 'decolonizing' citizenship from the juridico-political practices. Second, 'uncovering' citizenship from the juridico-political discourses, and finally, 'reinventing' citizenship with an objective of 'forging a new conception of the political subject from unconcealed knowledges' (Isin, 2012b, p. 568). The current study is an effort to move away from the assumption that citizenship is exclusively constituted through juridico-political practices and a reinvention of the conception focusing on the (non)political subjects. Instead, the applicability of the concept of showcase citizenship reaches beyond the scope of current study in at least three aspects. One, it places *informality* within the study of citizenship and views it as a constitutive aspect of citizenship especially in the Global South. In so doing, it does not necessarily view informality as an anomaly, on the contrary, it demonstrates the significance of informality in the study of citizenship. Two, the idea of showcase citizenship can be fruitfully applied in further studies of bureaucracy and the state both in a similar and dissimilar context to understand how 'irrationality' and 'subjectivity' play a role in numerous state mechanisms. Finally, it could be used to understand the creation, projection, management, and concealment of structural violence in the daily lives of the subalterns and the operation of the state.

Chapter 6. Legible state spaces: State making and territoriality in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India.

Introduction

The origin of the former border enclaves of Bangladesh and India in 1713 was the result of a treaty between the Mughal empire and the Cooch Behar king who agreed on retaining the pieces of lands and collect tax from those that they had taken into control within each other's territory (R. Jones, 2010; van Schendel, 2002). Thus, to bring these spaces under their control and administration. Without the presence of a sovereign state and its territorially bounded borders, for almost the next two and a half centuries, enclaves remained a local administrative issue both in the pre-colonial and the colonial periods. However, they gained international status in 1947 when the Indian sub-continent was divided between two sovereign states, India and Pakistan. Enclaves were not merged with the host state's territory, instead, were retained as pieces of lands surrounded by the host state that belonged to the home state. To simply put it, India's enclaves ended up inside Pakistan and vice versa. It continued as Bangladesh inherited those enclaves from Pakistan after its liberation in 1971. Not until 2015 that these enclaves were finally exchanged, and the host state could formally incorporate those spaces within its territory (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018).

Although enclaves and enclave people had regular contact with their home state at the beginning after the birth of India and Pakistan, scenarios changed quickly. Due to numerous reasons such as the introduction of passport and visa by India and Pakistan in 1952, deteriorating bilateral relations between these two countries including a brief war in 1965, birth of Bangladesh in 1971, legal suits against enclave exchange treaties, India's 'war against terrorism', fencing of the entire border with Bangladesh, and deployment of heavy machineries and technologies to 'secure' its borders effectively cut almost all connections of the home state with their enclaves (Cons, 2016; R. Jones, 2012; Samaddar, 1999; van Schendel, 2005). As a result, enclaves and enclave residents became contained within a state that did not officially recognize those spaces and their people. Moreover, the state across the border that they belonged to, on paper, could not extend any state facilities due to the international border dividing them. Effectively, the enclaves became *de facto* stateless spaces which were neither legible to the host nor to the home state (R. Jones, 2009c). Consequently, state interventions and infrastructures including basic services like education and health, official identification, roads, and electricity were absent in these enclaves.

To simply put it, any state making projects were formally absent in these spaces. Thus, scholars comprehend the former enclaves as ‘abandoned’ (Shewly, 2013a), ‘forgotten’ (R. Jones, 2010), ‘spaces of exception’ (R. Jones, 2009a) and ‘nonstate spaces’ (van Schendel, 2002).

However, as Alex Murphy suggests that states loathe to have non-state spaces within its reach, India, Pakistan, and (later) Bangladesh were no exceptions (Murphy, 2013). Treaties were signed between India-Pakistan and Bangladesh-India respectively in 1958 and 1974 to merge these enclaves within the territory of the host state although was eventually materialized in 2015 (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). Both Bangladesh and India invested significant resources to bring the former enclaves under their legibility after they were officially exchanged at the midnight of July 31, 2015. Numerous projects of state-making and territoriality have been undertaken in these formerly non-state spaces.

Therefore, the discussion in this chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, I present a brief picture of the enclaves before they were exchanged to portray the absence of state in those spaces. In so doing, I draw on both secondary literature and primary data from my fieldwork. I delve into a detail of everyday state making projects undertaken by the state of Bangladesh in the second section. Drawing on interviews with numerous groups and based on field observation, I suggest that the state creates legible spaces by employing four techniques—central coordination, construction of physical infrastructures, counting and controlling the population, and by (re)production of homogenous spaces. In the third section, I offer a discussion on how such state making projects shape and are shaped by state territoriality. I identify four broader aspects of territoriality that Bangladesh practices over these spaces. These are, territorialization and institutionalization, governmentality and governance, political control and sovereignty, economic regulations and tax collection. In the conclusion, I suggest that state making and territoriality in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India go hand to hand and are two sides of the same coin.

Non-state spaces before the exchange

In describing a general scenario of the former enclaves of India inside Bangladesh, Reece Jones puts it,

India does not treat the Indian citizens as residents and provides no services to these areas. However, because the enclaves are not officially Bangladeshi territory either, the

Bangladeshi government does not administer them. This leaves the resident in a space without an official authority to set rules and establish order.There are no markets. There are no schools. There are not health facilities. ...There are nor laws, and there are no police or judge to settle disputes (R. Jones, 2010, p. 17).

The residents of the former enclaves that I interviewed, shared a similar view that of Jones. Imdad, a sixty-two-year-old farmer who was born and brought up in Dahala Khagrabari, shared his experiences of living in the former enclave before the exchange.

Oh, don't even ask! Is that describable in words? We were like animals in the jungle. We were neither Indians nor Bangladeshis. Our crime was that we were enclave dwellers. Neither India cared for us nor did Bangladesh accept us. There was no law, no security, nothing. There was no life.

Both Jones' and the Imdad's account suggest that there was no presence of state mechanisms and facilities in the enclaves. Enclaves lacked paved roads, electricity, gas, water supply, hospitals, schools, police, law and any other basic state provisions. Simply, any sign of state services was absent within the state.

Scholars understand such an absence of the state from various vantage points. In his seminal article on the Bangladesh-India border enclaves, Willem van Schendel uses 'non-state spaces' to describe the enclaves of Bangladesh and India (2002, p. 139). He simply uses the term to denote the inhabited yet un-administered status of the enclaves by demonstrating the absence of either the host or the home state in these enclaves. Drawing on Agamben's theorization of sovereignty and bare lives (Agamben, 1998, 2005), both Jones and Shewly flesh out the contradictory presence and absence of sovereign power in these enclaves. Analyzing the random use of force by different state officials, specially the border guards and police, Jones calls them *de facto* stateless spaces where exceptions become rules and sovereignty is displaced (R. Jones, 2009a, 2009c). Furthermore, Shewly calls them 'abandoned' spaces as both home and host states abandoned any project of state making including the basic task of providing birth certificates or any other identity documents (Shewly, 2013a). Moreover, she also indicates that state officials sometimes played a deliberate role in creating such abandonment as no one was willing to take the trouble for dealing with the complex bureaucratic mechanisms of the state (Shewly, 2013a, 2016a).

Such abandonments did not only stem from the presence or absence of sovereign power in the enclaves, but also were results of an exclusion from other governing and territorial

strategies of the state. Mapping and counting population for the purpose of governing the people have been two of the fundamental tasks of state making and governance for the state (Foucault, 2007; Winichakul, 1994). However, neither Bangladesh nor India did ever include these enclaves in their official maps. Moreover, enclave residents were never included in the census of these countries either (R. Jones, 2009c). Van Schendel suggests that the host state played a key role in creating such abandonment by citing an instance where state officials from Pakistan were denied entrance to conduct a census in the enclaves in India in 1951 (van Schendel, 2002).

An absence of the state was acutely felt during a serious crime committed, a humanitarian crisis, or natural hazards in these enclaves. The Bangladeshi enclave of South Moshaldanga inside India was attacked by their neighbors (regular Indian citizens) on May 11, 2000 during which five of the houses were looted, two men were abducted, and fifty-five houses were set on fire (van Schendel, 2002). But Bangladeshi officials were not allowed to enter the enclave neither were they allowed to distribute relief to these people. A similar incident happened in Bangladesh in 2010 when the Indian enclave of Garati was attacked by a Bangladeshi gang. They torched almost all the houses in the enclave, but no one was punished or arrested for such a serious crime. Indian officials could not come to Bangladesh and Bangladeshi legal agencies would not interfere in a matter that did not happen within 'Bangladeshi territory' (Shewly, 2013a). When I visited the enclave in 2015 after 5 years of that event, I could still see signs of the arson as many of them used the burnt tin to rebuild their houses (figure 5). During my fieldwork in 2017, I came to learn about a similar event that was not only inhuman but also was painfully indicative of the absence of the state in these enclaves. On September 28, 2014 Selina Begum, a mother of two kids and a six-months pregnant, was brutally murdered in the enclave of Votbari in Patgram, Bangladesh. As, the murder happened inside an enclave, police in Bangladesh did not intervene. To make things worse, Indian police were not allowed to get in Bangladesh and operate in the enclave. While one of Selina's relatives was writing an application to the Officer in Charge of the Mekhliganj police station in India to do something about it, the lifeless body of Selina remained untouched in her house for two days where she was murdered (figure 5). However, considering the exceptional inhumane nature of the event, the local Chairman took initiative to preserve the body in a facility in Bangladesh. Although eventually Selina's body was taken to India for an autopsy, no one was punished for the crime. In such a backdrop, after the exchange of these enclaves, both Bangladesh and India merged

them within their state territories and started turning them into state spaces by employing numerous state making projects and techniques of territoriality.

Making state spaces

The state as an institution is never complete, it goes through a constant process of change. Thus, ‘treating the “state” as a finished product gets in the way of understanding it’ as it is ‘always in the making’ (Lund, 2016, p. 1200). After the exchange of the former enclaves and incorporation of those within the state purview, Bangladesh assumed an active role of turning the previously ‘ungoverned’ spaces into state spaces. This is what Scott understands as making

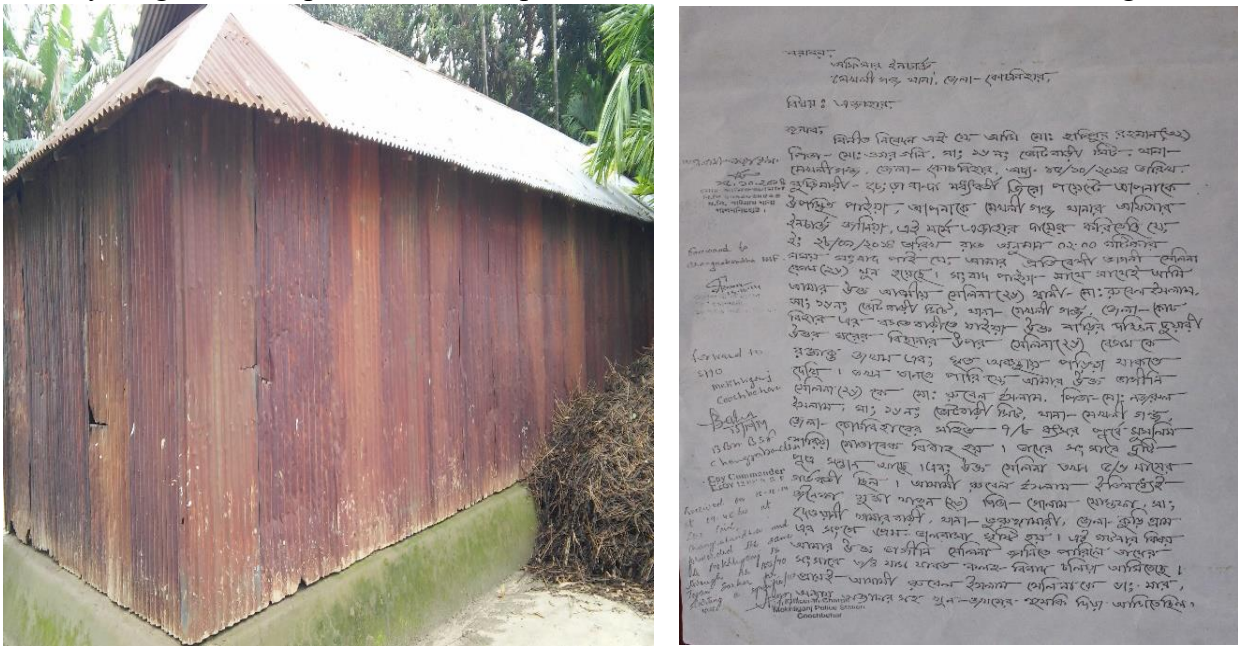


Figure 5 Burnt tin house in the former enclave of Garati (left), A copy of the application submitted by Selina’s relative (right)

legible state spaces²² (Scott, 1998, 2009). For Scott, legibility has been the central problem of statecraft and, historically, states have invested immense resources into making spaces legible. By making legible state spaces, to reduce it to its rudimentary sense, Scott means to turn ‘zones of refuge’ into ‘zones of governance and appropriation’ (2009, pp. 22, 41). Legibility is a condition that allows the state to manipulate its population by capitalizing on any means and

²² Although Scott focuses on the highlands of Southeast Asia which were outside the purview of the state when he uses the term nonstate spaces and making them legible, these enclaves were not outside the purview of the state in that sense as they were within state territories. However, I borrow the term from Scott not to suggest that these were outside the state purview but to mean the absence of state in daily lives.

resources available. It is the state intervention in almost every aspect of people's lives through numerous ways to bring them under state regulation. Scott writes,

Legibility is a condition of manipulation. Any substantial state intervention in society-to vaccinate a population, produce goods, mobilize labor, tax people and their property, conduct literacy campaigns, conscript soldiers, enforce sanitation standards, catch criminals, start universal schooling-requires the invention of units that are visible. The units in question might be citizens, villages, trees, fields, houses, or people grouped according to age, depending on the type of intervention (Scott, 1998, p. 183).

In order to create legible spaces, the state uses what Michael Mann refers to as 'infrastructural power' (Mann, 1984, 2008). Infrastructural power allows the state its capacity to penetrate civil society and implement its political agendas throughout its space. This is an instrument of political control that is implemented through numerous means starting from central coordination to facilitating communication and building IT networks, standardizing weights to guaranteeing an exchange value for the money, establishing educational institution to providing health services. Thus infrastructural power is the state's 'institutional capability to exercise control and implement policy choices within the territory it claims to govern' (Soifer & vom Hau, 2008, p. 220). Mann suggests that although capitalist democracies are despotically weak, they are infrastructurally strong and tend to use such power in binding a population. As a result, he contends 'the greater the state's infrastructural power, the greater the volume of binding rulemaking' (Mann, 1984, p. 190).

Further, we must also keep in mind that state cannot be experienced at its entirety at the local level. Instead, state is experienced by the people through its agents like the headman, land record officials, local offices and institutions. Akhil Gupta encapsulates the idea as he says,

At the local level, the state cannot be experienced as an ontically coherent entity: what one confronts instead is discrete and fragmentary: land record officials, headmen, the police, and so forth. It is precisely through the practices of such local officials and institutions that a transnational institution like the state comes to be imagined (Gupta, 2012, p. 90).

Drawing on such insights from Mann and Gupta, I view the entire process of state making in the former enclaves of India inside Bangladesh as a process of extending state's infrastructural power using numerous apparatuses and officials in everyday life. In so doing, I divide the state making strategies employed by Bangladesh into four broader categories, which

are: a) central coordination b) construction of physical infrastructures c) counting and controlling the population, and d) (re)production of homogenous spaces.

a) Central coordination

Central coordination is one of the most significant aspects of infrastructural power which the state materializes through its administrative apparatuses. After their exchange, the former enclaves have been brought under the central administrative structure of Bangladesh by categorizing and assigning them under the local administration. Enclaves were either merged with an adjacent union²³ or were made into a new union. All the unions are headed by an elected Chairperson and are administered directly under an upazila which is headed by a government assigned officer known as the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO). All the state resources in an upazila are allocated and managed by the UNO's office. Thus, merging these enclaves with a union or making them into a new union allowed the state to bring them directly under the state administration. In bringing the enclaves under state jurisdiction, their boundaries were drawn and redrawn, they were (re)mapped, and eventually (re)bordered. They appeared within the official map of the state, their boundaries were changed as they were divided, merged, and joined. For instance, the former enclave of Dasiar Chhara was redrawn into three sections and each of them were merged with their adjacent unions. On the contrary, three of the adjacent enclaves named Dahala Khagrabari, Balapara Khagrabari, and Kotvajni in Debiganj upazila have been merged and made into a new union. Drawing on Judith Butler, I suggest this to be an instance of governmentality replacing sovereign violence as Bangladesh gave up its exclusionary power over the enclaves and replaced it with governmentality (Butler, 2004). This also provides an instance of the way new regimes have been established through a merging of physical, bureaucratic, and social convergence in the formerly stateless spaces (Murton, 2017a).

Another significant strategy by Bangladesh in bringing these enclaves under central coordination was to formalize each parcel of lands. As I demonstrate in the next chapter, the state took special measures in documenting all the lands in the enclaves and made them legible within a very short period of time. Lands in the former enclaves have been mapped, registered, divided, and in cases, taken over by the state. Lund understands such an effort to employ numerous

²³ Unions are the lowest administrative units of Bangladesh which are formed by combining several villages.

institutional actors and apparatuses as the quality of ‘stateness’ which is created by a ‘structural frameworks of rules through which collectively binding decisions are made and enforced’ (Lund, 2011, p. 887).

b) Construction of physical infrastructure

On my way to 119 Bashkata enclave in Patgram, Bangladesh, I was accompanied by Auwal, one of the local leaders of enclave exchange committee. In his mid-40s, Auwal was born and brought up in the enclave and does farming for a living. We took the main road that connects Bashkata to the local bazaar. However, we were not walking on the road instead, we had to walk on the bank of the road as it was under construction (figure 6). It was a mud road that was being turned into a pitch road by the state of Bangladesh. Auwal, my research assistant, and I were having hard time breathing as it was a dry summer day and the air was heavy with sand and other fine particles from the construction. Despite, Auwal clearly was not bothered rather he sounded happy and proud when he told me, ‘Look we are getting a new road! It is the first time that the enclave people would get a pitch road. They [the government] are also building a dam along the river’.

This was a common scenario in all the former enclaves that I visited. Either a road was already built or was being built to connect the former enclave with the existing networks of the roads. Before the exchange, there was no such state infrastructure in the enclaves. Enclave people took own initiatives to make small culverts and bridges with bamboo and wood. Now, new roads, bridges, dams and other physical infrastructures are being built by the government (see figure 6). Development of roads and other physical infrastructure is a fundamental aspect of the project of nation-state building as new roads produces state reach, consumerism, connections and territoriality (Murton, 2017b). In a similar fashion, new roads on the one hand, connect the former enclaves with the existing state road networks of Bangladesh and on the other, allow the state to easily penetrate those spaces. They increase state legibility and mobility in those spaces where the state was once absent. Not only roads and dams, but also all the former enclaves are connected to the national power grid that supplies electricity. Electricity connection has, one the

one hand, increased the mobility of the population on the other, allows the state to reach door to door through different mediums like the television, radio, and other online platforms. Thus through the physical infrastructure state spaces are being created ‘both in terms of the materiality and the discursive construction’ in these enclaves (Sabhlok, 2017, p. 1717).



Figure 6 A road (left) and a dam (right) under construction in the former enclave of Bashkata

c) Counting and controlling population

States have always been eager to know and control its population. One of the most ancient technologies of such control is to conduct censuses. Both Foucault and Scott show, knowing the exact number, formation, distribution, and other nature of the population has been of immense importance to states as it allows the state to manipulate and control its population (Foucault, 2007; Scott, 1998). Contemporary states employ numerous biopolitical techniques including census, immunization, birth control, biometric id cards, passports, and like to make its population legible. One of the first steps to make the former enclaves legible was to conduct a census that was jointly undertaken by India and Bangladesh. It was in 2011, even four years before the enclaves were exchanged, both the states agreed on counting the population. Special arrangements were made as Indian state officials came to Bangladesh to count the enclave population inside Bangladesh and vice versa (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018). Later, both parties shared the census results. Cons observes such technologies of controlling population along the enclaves in Bangladesh as a tactic of daily governance and demonstrating the presence of the state (Cons, 2016). Census is so intimately connected to state making, that this was the first positive signal of an exchange to many of the enclave residents. As I interviewed Selim, a young man in his late twenties and a primary school teachers in Kotvajni enclave, he said,

You know, there had been many talks about the exchange. In fact, we have been hearing it since we were born that they are going to exchange the enclave soon. But we knew, it was not going to happen. Every time we hoped, we were disappointed. But when they came to conduct the census, it was the first time that we really became hopeful. This was the time that we thought, it might happen this time and it did!

Many other enclave residents shared similar views as of Selim's. Both the countries did another headcount in 2015 just before the exchange to know the exact changes in population distribution from 2011. It was not just the census; Bangladesh employed all other technologies of population control right after the exchange. Enclave people were included in the first national census and there was a significant camping in the former enclaves regarding the census. Moreover, they were all instructed to go to the Upazila Election Commissioner's Office to register as a voter and get their national identity card, another technology to count and control the populations' movement (Curtis, 2001).

Immunization, birth control, employing volunteers to supply birth control tools, and clinics to provide health services to the enclave residents are also instances of everyday state making in the former enclaves. Foucault suggests, '...one never governs a state, a territory, or a political structure. Those whom one governs are people, individuals, or groups' (Foucault, 2007, p. 122). Since governance remains one of the fundamental tasks of the state and state making, so does population. Bangladesh provides immunization for free, in fact, makes it compulsory for all the parents to bring their newborns and kids to immunize. Following the same rule, enclaves were brought under immunization projects just after they were merged. Volunteers and paid workers are employed to ensure every household in the enclaves are provided with birth control tools for free of cost too. Such 'politics of population control' not only extends the state's infrastructural power over spaces but also, enables the state to keep the people of newly created state space under state regulations, an essential elements of state making (Hartmann, 1995).

d) (Re)production of homogenous spaces

One of the fundamental conditions of making legible state spaces is to create homogenization across and within spaces. Homogeneity in terms of population, infrastructure, language, scales, weights, currency, practices, and so forth. Thus, the making of state spaces is fundamentally a project of making it appear 'the same throughout' that enables the state to 'introduce its presence, control, and surveillance in the most isolated corners' (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 86). The endeavor of Bangladesh in making state spaces in the former enclaves is, consequently,

an endeavor of creating homogenous spaces. That is, to homogenize the former enclaves with their surrounding territories that had been under state legibility from before. Apart from interventions in population control, central administration, and physical infrastructure construction, Bangladesh effectively creates and perpetuates its projects of homogeneity through symbolic power, the power to ‘constitute the given’ (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170). It is the power that allows the state to naturalize its practices of classification, codification, regulations, and rules (Loveman, 2005). Thus, one of the most effective ways of doing so is to extend state’s ideology and discourses among its population.

Drawing on this insight, I suggest that the establishment of schools, colleges, and other educational institutions in the enclaves is a practice of creating homogenized state spaces by Bangladesh. The state not only established educational institution but also ensured that every eligible child attend them with numerous incentives such as tuition waiver, scholarships, and food. This serves a dual purpose for the state, one, it allows the state to homogenize the enclaves with their surrounding areas and two, it officially enables the state to spread its ideology and discourses. In a similar fashion, Bangladesh offers numerous state subsidized services like fuel, tools, fertilizers, seeds, and training to the farmers of the former enclaves. Moreover, numerous state programs to support the poor, to provide subsidized food, elderly allowance, and widow’s allowance are in full pace in the former enclaves. Such programs create an opportunity for, what Mara Loveman understands, a primitive accumulation of the symbolic power, as these programs are immediately recognized and accepted by the enclave residents (2005, p. 1657). Once instated by the state and accepted by the people, such programs become naturalized allowing for a routinized exercise of the symbolic power. As a result, they become something that ‘goes without saying’, they become part of the routine state practices (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 168). Consequently, such routinized state making practices allows the state to create homogenized state spaces.

Territoriality and state making

Infrastructural power derives from a territorially bounded space that the state has control over. Thus, the project of state making involves a territory which the state in question controls under its sovereign power. In case of the former enclaves, the state of Bangladesh initiated and performed state making projects only when they came under its sovereign power as a result of the territorial merge. Fleshing out the infrastructural power, Hillel Soifer suggests that state’s

capabilities in penetrating the society is largely dependent on its central institutions and their abilities in reaching its territories (Soifer, 2008). Almost in a similar fashion, but from a different vantage point, Lefebvre categorizes making of political spaces (and state spaces) into three types. Ideologically, the state uses coherence and cohesion to create a homogenous space across its territories. For practical purposes, the state uses numerous means of actions, and for tactical-strategic purposes the state subordinates a territory's resources to fulfil its political goals (Lefebvre, 2003). Therefore, what I suggest is that the project of making legible state spaces is intimately related to a state's territory and a discussion on state making, therefore, must include a discussion on territoriality. As Lefebvre contends, 'the state and territory interact in such a way that they can be said to be mutually constitutive' (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 87).

Territoriality is much more than simply a strategy of controlling territory, it involves thinking, acting, working, being worked, implicating, and being implicated (Delaney, 2008). It is mainly the experience of unity, anchors, and landmarks shared by a group of people that constitutes the idea of an "outside" and "inside"(Ouali, 2006). John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge refer to territoriality as the acts of 'mastering space' (J. Agnew & Corbridge, 2003). However, for the current discussion, I adopt the definition of Robert Sack, 'the attempt by individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area' in understanding territoriality (Sack, 1986, p. 14). These 'geographic areas' are what Sack recognizes as territory. But scholars would argue that constraining the idea of territory within its geographic aspects oversimplifies it, territory also comprises measures and techniques of controlling land and terrain (Elden, 2013). As Stuart Elden puts it, 'Territory is not simply an object: the outcome of actions conducted toward it or some previously supposedly neutral area. Territory is itself a process, made and remade, shaped and shaping, active and reactive' (2013, p. 17). While I completely agree with Elden in defining territory, I limit my discussion to its definition in the current chapter. Although such limitation might appear as, what Elden has criticized, being an understudy of territory and often in relations to territoriality (Elden, 2013), my objective in this chapter is not to engage in a detail discussion of the concept of territory, rather to flesh out the practices of state territoriality.

Modernist concept of territory, argues Alex Murphy, developed in relation to the sovereignty and nation-state ideal in the post-Westphalian politico-territorial order (Murphy,

2013). Such concepts served in normalizing and naturalizing at least three basic principles that governs the relationship between a nation-state and its territory. These are, a) earth's surface should be divided into distinct territorial units, for instance, states b) the state should reflect a specific pattern that would politically and culturally represent communities, for instance, nations, and c) the territory under state's control should be free from any external interference (Murphy, 2013). Naturalization of such principles, in turn, results in what Murphy calls a 'continuing allure' of territoriality, the norm of the nation-state system to hold onto its territory even with grater loss (Murphy, 2013). Drawing from such insights, I suggest that the project of state making in the former enclaves of India inside Bangladesh concurrently is a project of territoriality. However, in resisting what Agnew calls 'territorial trap', in this chapter I view state making and territoriality as a dynamic process of creating social and political space, (re)drawing territorial lines, practice of governmentality, and institutionalization.

State and territoriality are constitutive of each other, that is, in the process of making legible state spaces Bangladesh practices territoriality over such spaces and in practicing territoriality, it creates legibility. I identify four broader aspects through which territoriality is practiced in the former enclaves. These are- a) territorialization and institutionalization b) governmentality and governance and c) political control and sovereignty d) economic regulations and tax collection.

a) Territorialization and institutionalization

The process of territorialization is not a singular process, instead, is always either followed or preceded by deterritorialization (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). De- and re-territorialization is thus a continuous process of making and remaking of control, jurisdiction, and authority. Drawing from such insights, Jason Cons suggests that de- and re-territorialization is carried out on a regular basis in the enclave of Dahagram (Cons, 2016). Few of the examples being drawing and redrawing boundaries, presence of government surveyors, and erecting boundary markers in the enclave. In a similar fashion, I contend that, Bangladesh has been carrying out the project de-and re-territorializing the former enclaves by employing numerous techniques. First, Bangladesh employs the civil administration to administer the population in order to territorially bind them. Tactics of such territorialization include, but are not limited to, registering the people in the national data base with the former enclaves being a permanent address, employing state personnel in forms of volunteers and paid workers to control population

growth, and publishing gazettes with the name and addresses of all the former enclaves who chose to stay in Bangladesh. Peter Vandergeest and Nancy Peluso view such utilization of the local administration as an important aspect of internal territorialization (1995). Such internal territorialization allows the state to territorialize formerly nonstate spaces within the nation's *geo-body* by spatially including them within the nationhood (Winichakul, 1994). The second tactic is land registration and formalization. As I discuss in the next chapter in detail, Bangladesh invested substantial resources and manpower to document every parcel of lands in the formal enclaves. While such formalization created legibility, at the same time, it allowed the state to create territorial integrity that enabled it to ease the 'cartographic anxiety' (Cons, 2016; Krishna, 1994). In so doing, Bangladesh institutionalized those lands by recognizing them as legitimately transferable. Finally, through the same process of land formalization, Bangladesh categorized those lands into two major groups, privately owned and state owned. The state took over those lands that it categorized as either *khas* or as *chars*. *Khas* lands were mainly those that were left by the enclave residents who moved to India without selling them and *chars* were the big silt deposits inside or on the bank of a river or other water bodies. This categorization allowed the state to expand its territories by 'enclosing' some of the lands that did not belong to the state before 2015 (Blomley, 2003).

b) Governmentality and governance

Governing is one of the attributes of the sovereign power which is different from 'ruling' or 'commanding', it is rather an intelligible schema adopted by the state to control multiple aspects of the people's lives through policing (Foucault, 2007, p. 116). Judith Butler suggests that in the contemporary era, the sovereign is developing a 'tactic' by not 'binding' them with its status of law, instead, by making them the subject of its 'managerial power' (Butler, 2004, p. 61). However, governance is intrinsically linked to both state territory and governmentality. Michel Foucault understands governmentality as a technique of the state to govern its population (Foucault, 2007). Especially from the beginning of the seventeenth century, the state started assembling new apparatuses to govern, to start with is the apparatus of policing. Both governance and governmentality are intimately related to territory as they involve the sovereign to practice these techniques within a territory under its control. In linking the relationship between territory and governance Murphy says, 'Territory is so important to political governance in part because it provides a locus of the exercise of political authority over

a range of interests and initiatives' (Murphy, 1996, p. 104). Similarly, Bruce Braun contends that the problem of population and its management brought the state to directly work with its territory, especially with the qualities of the state territory (Braun, 2000). Thus numerous actors, for instance, the politicians, military leaders, police, journalists, teachers, and activists become key to the production of territoriality and to the process of governmentality (Paasi, 2003b).

Drawing from such logics, I suggest that governmentality and governance are intimately connected with territoriality in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India. The state intervenes into the former enclaves by installing various state apparatuses, especially to police those spaces. In some of the former enclaves which are bigger in size and population and have been known for 'criminal' activities, the state has established temporary police camps. The camp is located inside the former enclave where four constables and an Assistant Sub-inspector (ASI) of the police are always present. While, it shows a higher 'privilege' for the former enclaves, at the same time, it demonstrates the sovereign's longing for controlling its population by applying numerous mechanisms of punishment, security, and discipline. Having a police presence not only allows the state to control and discipline the former enclave residents, it also enables it to inflict 'punishment'. It demonstrates the converted power of the sovereign from 'let live' and 'make die' to exposing them to death without directly proposing their death (Agamben, 2005; Foucault, 1990). The camp also serves several practical purposes for the state by providing intelligence to the local police and state authorities, and as markers of state territoriality. Consequently, I suggest that aspects of territoriality are connected to governmentality in the process of scalar governance- local, regional, national, and supra-national. At the same time governance shapes governmentality and affects practices of territoriality. Territoriality in turn, affects the implications and operations of governmentality (Arts, Lagendijk, & Houtum, 2009).

c) Political control and sovereignty

Being able to exercise the sovereign power and politically control a space are fundamental conditions of territoriality from a state's perspective. From the early Greek-Roman period the state being sovereign with a territory to legitimately practice its power has been the classic feature of territoriality (B. R. Nelson, 2006). Thus, sovereignty has been a principle governing relationship among governments and at the same time, it has been a territorial ideal (Murphy, 1996). The former enclaves of Bangladesh and India, although were territories of sovereign states, their unique geographic location never brought them under direct control and

sovereign power of either these countries. As a result, they became the abandoned spaces where occasionally the sovereign inflicted violence (R. Jones, 2009c; Shewly, 2013a). They remained outside of state governance. However, after the exchange, both states gained legitimate political control and sovereign power over these spaces. Hence, they started the project of state making that, in turn, initiated the process of territoriality. These enclaves have been reclassified into administrative units, communication through physical and administrative infrastructures have been established, and state apparatuses have been employed to control these spaces and their people. Three rudimentary tendencies of territoriality- classification, communication, and control have been established by employing the sovereign power of the state (Sack, 1986). Such processes of territoriality brought them under the political control of the state by tapping meaning on them. A space only becomes a territory when certain meanings are attached to them (Paasi, 1996). The former enclaves became meaningful state spaces as they were not only included in the existing administrative terminologies such as a union or a ward but also, their people were recognized as legal citizens of the state and brought under sovereign protection.

d) Economic regulations and tax collection.

Enclosing a certain territory and be able to collect taxes and control economic activities from within that boundary are classic aspects of territoriality. The state, since its beginning, have put enclosures for its economic gains (Blomley, 2003). The state, as a container, has practiced such enclosures to secure particular outcomes, especially economic outcomes (Taylor, 1994). However, such activities of enclosure, tax collection, and economic control do not come without violence and coercion inflicted by the state (R. Jones, 2016; Tilly, 1992). Referring to state making processes in the global south, Youssef Cohen and colleagues suggest that the state uses its administrative apparatuses to penetrate deep into its territory while backs up such penetration with its other coercive apparatuses like the police and the army, thus the process remains inherently violent (Y. Cohen, Brown, & Organski, 1981).

The former enclaves were too small to be economically significant to the state, yet as part of state territoriality, Bangladesh brought them under its economic regulations and tax collection immediately after the exchange. However, in this case, the process of state making was not violent in the above sense as there was already a longing among the citizens to be recognized formally and a willingness to pay taxes as part of the formalization process. Thus, I suggest that tax collection and regulation of economic activity became a symbolic power for the state in case

of those enclaves. Employing similar existing economic regulations, bringing the enclave people under state's tax scheme, stopping 'illegal' business such as drugs in the former enclaves territorialized them more in a symbolic sense than from a sense of economic gains.

Consequently, economic activities, regulations, and tax collection constituted the 'given' aspect of state territoriality, they became symbolic markers (Bourdieu, 1991). These became the 'distinct political-economic processes and moments' that territorialized a certain space within a state boundary (Murton, 2017a, p. 240).

Conclusion

Governmentality, governance, and territoriality are intrinsically connected as each of them influence and get influenced by the other two (Arts et al., 2009). Drawing on the Foucauldian insight that governmentalities emerge out of an interplay between various aspects of governing in a territorially bounded space of the state, Arts and colleagues suggest that there is a constant process of structuration among these three. That is, governmentality shapes governance and forms of territoriality, while new forms of territoriality in turn affects governmentality and governance. Following a similar line of argument, drawing from the instances of state making and territoriality in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India, I suggest that these processes are not only intimately connected to each other, but are sometimes, hard to distinguish. The process of state making can at the same time be a technology of territory and tactics of territoriality. Similarly, territoriality, in turn, creates and perpetuates the process of state making and allows a presence of the state in the former enclaves.

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that the state creates legible state spaces using four techniques. These are use of its administrative apparatuses to centrally coordinate the space, construction and erection of physical infrastructure to increase state legibility and presence, counting and controlling population by employing numerous techniques, and creating homogeneity within and between spaces. Territoriality, in contrast, is practiced by institutionalization of spaces, employing numerous techniques of governmentality, politically controlling and projecting sovereignty, and economically regulating those spaces. It does not take long to find out that all these techniques and technologies are sometimes the same and sometimes complement each other. To elaborate, the state uses administrative apparatuses to create legibility while at the same time such apparatuses territorialize those spaces. They also are used in governing the people and inflicting sovereign power over those spaces. Similarly, in

order to govern the people, the state uses its resources and technologies to count and control population. Building physical infrastructure, the same way, allows the state to access these spaces and at the same time those infrastructures work as symbols of state territoriality. They also help in creating a homogenous space that partially produces a routinized interaction, which in turn, normalizes and naturalizes the state's presence, thus produce and reproduce the symbolic power. States use symbolic power sometimes to substitute for its coercive apparatuses and sometimes to routinize economic activities. In effect, I conclude, that state making and territoriality in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India goes hand to hand and are two sides of the same coin.

Chapter 7. Flexible lands: The state and its citizens' negotiation over lands

Introduction

Perhaps because land is something that cannot be literally moved, relatively permanent, and impossible to hide; the first property of land that comes to mind is that land is fixed. However, studies show and so does this chapter that land is anything but fixed, it is extremely flexible (Verdery, 1994). Drawing on the post-exchange experiences of land formalization in the former enclaves of India in Bangladesh, in this chapter I document the way the state of Bangladesh incorporates the enclave lands that were once excluded from its territory and at the same time, the way the former enclave residents officially register their lands. Land formalization, in this sense, means the official recognition of a parcel of land by the state with written rules and statutes (Benjaminsen, Holden, Lund, & Sjaastad, 2009). While formalization of land is not a unique phenomenon rather, one of the mundane acts of the state, formalization of enclave lands is unique and offers an opportunity to look beyond the daily actions of state and nonstate actors regarding its lands²⁴. It is unique, first, because these lands were never registered in the official records of the host state although were inside the state boundary and second, the enclave residents did not have any option but to be in control of the land to claim its ownership. At the same time, the formalization process offers a unique moment of land claim both by the state and its citizens where numerous state and nonstate actors come together to interact, negotiate, and manage land ownership which makes the entire process fluid, and the land in question extremely flexible. As Katherine Verdery puts it, 'It is a struggle of particularization against abstraction, of specific clods of earth against aggregate figures on paper, and of particular individuals and families, reasserting thereby their specificity against a collectivist order that had sought to efface it' (Verdery, 1994, p. 1073).

As I was conducting my field work during 2017 and 2018 in the newly incorporated enclaves along the border of Bangladesh and India, the most frequent issue that came up was regarding land. In fact, in most of the interviews I conducted both with the government officials and enclave residents, they raised land issues before I even mentioned it. It was roughly a

²⁴ While Stuart Elden (2013) argues that territory should be seen in terms of land and terrain, in this chapter my purpose is not to engage in a discussion of the interconnectedness of land, terrain, and territory. The previous chapter offers a detail discussion on land, territory, and territoriality.

narrative of how effective and successful the government was in dealing with the land issue from the government officials. Contrary to this, it was a mixed story of satisfaction, corruption, complexity, and anger from the former enclave residents. It did not take much time to find out that the land ‘takes on plastic properties’ as it disappears, moves, stretches, shrinks, and sometimes is created (Verdery, 1994, p. 1086).

The chapter is divided into five sections. I present a brief scenario of land ownership and land related complexities in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India before their exchange in the first section. I delve into a discussion of current structure of land administration in Bangladesh in the second section to demonstrate the complexity built within the system. In the third section, I document the process of land formalization in the former enclaves, and in the next section I discuss the complications arising from it in detail. In the final section, I illustrate how the state and the citizens negotiate with and between each other regarding land ownership. In so doing, I argue that both the state and the citizens employ numerous resources and mechanisms to claim lands that at the same time are reasons and results of its flexibility. Thus, the objectives of this chapter are twofold, one is to document the process of land formalization in the former enclaves in Bangladesh and two, to demonstrate the role of the state and its citizens in plasticizing the land.

Land in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India

Complexities regarding land in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India can be comprehended only if discussed since the partition of India in 1947. Both India and Pakistan agreed on a land swapping system right after the partition that allowed the residents in both the countries to exchange their lands and properties in order to move with a majority of their co-religionists (R. Jones, 2009c; M. M. Rahman & van Schendel, 2003). However, after the war of 1965 between India and Pakistan the official exchange was stopped, and India declared the Enemy Property Act that allowed it to confiscate properties of the people who left to Pakistan declining Indian citizenship (Shewly, 2013; The Enemy Property Act, 1968; van Schendel, 2002). Land was defined as the enemy property among others such as the house and belongings. At this time, enclaves provided an alternative as Muslim families fleeing India could legally move to the enclaves of India inside Pakistan (later Bangladesh) which were, technically, still part of India (R. Jones, 2009c). Studies also show that similar movements happened from Pakistan to India (Cons, 2012; van Schendel, 2002).

Enclave lands formally were parts of the state that was across the international border and enclave residents had to register their lands and change in ownership in their home countries. Such procedures not only involved a long travel and complexity of navigating state mechanisms but also involved the risk of being arrested while traveling as “illegal intruders” (Ferdoush, 2014; Shewly, 2016a). However, land registration still formed the backbone of the connection of the enclave people with their motherland (van Schendel, 2002). Such connections and scenario changed in the late 1980s when India introduced a strict procedure of selling and buying land (Shewly, 2016a). Formal land registration in the enclaves eventually stopped with such a firm policy and strict border control by India. However, this did not stop selling and buying lands in the enclaves by any means instead, it became a local matter without any uniform system across different enclaves (D. Chowdhury, 2018; R. Jones, 2010). For instance, the enclave people in Garati in Panchagar district of Bangladesh came up with their own documents and land registration system while some used Indian stamp papers, and yet some others used Bangladeshi stamp papers to buy and sell lands (van Schendel, 2002). Drawing on Hansen and Stepputat, Bert Suykens argues that these are instances where in the absence of the state, its hegemonic power and authority are realized by borrowing its language and mechanisms to attach a greater value to the deeds of land ownership and registration (Hansen & Stepputat, 2001; Suykens, 2015). The combination of the absence of the state, lack of a formal land registration system, movements of people, and above all the geographical oddities of the enclaves resulted into highly complicated issues regarding land ownership some of which are as follow.



Figure 7 A locally produced stamp paper in the former enclave of Garati for land registration (left) and a few land registry documents done in India during the 1970s and 1980s (right).

With no state recognized system, the entire procedure of land registration became a local matter that made it susceptible to forgery. Lands were sold and bought on a stamp paper or a locally produced document (as shown in figure 7) with a few witnesses. On the one hand, this made it easy for someone to reproduce the document, but on the other hand, allowed the owner to sell the same land to numerous buyers with different witnesses. As I interviewed Rafique²⁵, a young adult in his mid-twenties in the enclave of Garati during my summer fieldwork in 2015, he mentioned several such cases where people took the advantage of local land registration system and sold the same land to numerous buyers. He also expressed his greatest concern regarding determining the real owner once the enclave officially becomes part of Bangladesh. Another complexity resulted from the local elites both inside and outside the enclave who bought lands in enclaves. In the Bangladeshi enclaves inside India, there were enclave elites who had greater resources and connection to Indian journalists, local politicians, and border guards. They would often buy lands from the ordinary enclave residents who desperately needed to sell the

²⁵ All the names used here are pseudonyms except the government officials to protect their identity.

land and use their connection to formally register that land (Shewly, 2016a). Similarly, in the Bangladesh side, regular Bangladeshi citizens who lived around the enclave also bought lands in the enclave because of a cheaper price and with the hope that the enclave would be soon merged with the state territory (D. Chowdhury, 2018; R. Jones, 2010). In a majority of cases, there would be no formal land registration as these were enclave lands. This also allowed the local elites to claim lands using their connections and power although they might not have really bought it. Rafique mentioned several such cases that happened in Garati during the interview. The Enemy Property Act in India (1968) and the Vested Property Act of 1972 in Bangladesh added another layer of complexity in land ownership in the former enclaves. After its independence from Pakistan, Bangladesh declared the Vested Property Act in 1972 which was essentially a similar act to that of India's Enemy Property Act allowing the state to take over any land and property left by "enemies" (Oikya, 2017). It eventually became a tool to deprive the religious minorities especially, the Hindus in Bangladesh (Barkat, 2000). In the former enclaves, in both sides, the religious minorities became victims of such discriminatory acts and local elites took the opportunity to claim lands from those who either left or were compelled to leave. For instance, approximately 300 acres of land in Batrigach enclave in India were vested because of their status as "Pakistani lands" which were eventually redistributed by and among the local political elites. Similarly, a local lawyer took over the entire enclave of Sibprosad Mustafi in India (Shewly, 2013a). Comparable instances are abundant in Bangladesh too. I found several cases in numerous enclaves where lands of religious minorities were vested and then taken over by local elites. Unofficial swapping also adds another layer of complexity to the land ownership in enclaves. Although the swapping of lands was formally stopped in 1965, it continued unofficially. There are instances where an entire village moved out during the late 1980s and individual cases of swapping continued till the late 1990s (Cons, 2013; Shewly, 2016a). Such unofficial swapping resulted in ownership of lands without any proper documents. Ownership was completely based on being in control of such lands and at the mercy of the local elites. The cheap price of the enclave lands came up with another issue regarding land ownership in the former enclaves. For several reasons, including the possibility of exchange and opening of the Tin Bigha Corridor²⁶, there was a mass exodus of Hindus from the enclaves. Taking such an

²⁶ A piece of an acre of land that connects the Bangladeshi enclave of Dahagaram-Angorpota with its mainland which is leased by the Bangladesh government from India.

opportunity, people from mainland Bangladesh bought those lands left by the Hindus and moved in the enclaves who became known as *bhatiyas* (Cons, 2016). Again, in most of the cases, such taking over of land had no proper documentation and was completely based on the ability to hold onto the land. Similar instances are found in the India side where powerful people grabbed lands inside the enclave and brought landless people to live and cultivate those lands with a contract of equal share of the product (D. Chowdhury, 2018). Such arrangements resulted in leasing of lands without any written documents and allowed the leaser to live on and work the land although they were not the owner. Last but not the least, the moving landscape created yet another complexity in land ownership inside the enclaves. Some of the lands, especially *char* lands (island like sand deposits), created as a result of the river flow and river bank erosion, are highly unstable as they are born and submerged every now and then (van Schendel, 2005). According to the Presidential Order of 1972 in Bangladesh, all the *chars* became *khas* land, meaning, they came under the control and disposal of the government and no private ownership was allowed over such *khas* lands (Mukherji, 1976). As many lands ended up being *chars* as the river or other water bodies moved inside the enclave, the 1972 order eventually turned significant amount of enclave lands into *khas* lands and allowed the state to claim those by practicing the technique of enclosure (Blomley, 2003). On the one hand this resulted lands with no individual owner and on the other, owners with no lands in the enclaves.

Current structure of land administration in Bangladesh

The structure of current land administration in Bangladesh is a highly complex, less coordinated, and a collection of inefficient bureaucratic bodies that is notoriously known for its rampant corruption and unfriendliness towards the citizens, especially poor citizens who lack resources (Hasan, 2017; Transparency International Bangladesh, 2005). The built-in complexity and emphasis on paper records allow numerous (non)state actors to intervene at each level of hierarchy. What Matthew Hull shows in context of Pakistan's land administration can be equally applied to Bangladesh where illegibility and opacity are 'produced by the very instrument of legibility' (Hull, 2008, p. 4).

Three separate bodies under the Ministry of Land are in charge of the entire land administration in Bangladesh- land management, land survey, and land transfer and registration. Each of their operations are handled by a different set of offices and officers that stretches from the national to the local level with clearly defined responsibilities (Hasan, 2017). Consequently,

anyone dealing with land issues in Bangladesh have to deal with these three offices and separate sets of officers.

Land management

The Ministry of Land is the supreme authority when it comes to land and land management in Bangladesh. The management office oversees policy making, supervision, and collecting tax and revenue from the land. It also manages abandoned and vested property, and *khas* land including fisheries. Another significant task of the office is to perform land acquisition on behalf of the government (Ministry of Land, n.d.-b). Two relatively new bodies have been established in 1989 by the Ministry of Land to help facilitate its duties, Land Appeal Board and Land Reform Board. The major task of the Appeal Board is to inspect and evaluate the works of the subordinate land courts and deal with the cases that have been appealed in the lower court (Ministry of Land, n.d.-a). Land Reform Board primarily supervises the activities of field level offices and implement land reform measures.

From the national level, the Management Office stretches to the local level. There are several hierarchical divisions of the office at each level of administration in Bangladesh. Each division has a Divisional Land Management Office that is headed by the Divisional Commissioner who supervises the activities of the lower level offices. The Divisional Commissioner also hears appeals against the next level, which is the Deputy Commissioner's office. The Deputy Commissioner's Office is headed by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) in charge of the concerned district. At the upazila level, the management is headed by the Assistant Commissioner of Land (AC, Land) with the help of other upazila level offices and officers. The field level land records and activities are generally performed at this hierarchy. There is another level of office that works under the AC, Land which is the union level, the lowest unit of land management in Bangladesh. However, the union level office works directly under the instruction of AC, Land.

Land survey

The land survey which is also known as land settlement is headed by the Land Records and Survey Department in Bangladesh under a Director General. The settlement office is responsible for the Cadastral Survey (CS) and the preparation and publication of the Records of Rights (ROR) which is also known as *khatian*. Their primary tasks are to make maps, register and print the ROR, determine the country's international border, and establish control point for

preparing *Mouza* (collection of individual plots) maps (Land Record and Survey Department, n.d.). Under the Directorate of Land Records and Survey there are several other hierarchical offices. Zonal Settlement Offices are established to handle the task of the department at district levels. The District Zonal Settlement Office is headed by the Zonal Settlement Officer. Under the district office, there are Upazila Settlement Offices which are headed by the Assistant Settlement Officer (ASO) in most of the upazilas in Bangladesh. *Kanungo* (senior surveyor), *Amin* (surveyor) and other personnel prepare and update the pre-survey (known as *khanapuri jarip*), mark the plot, make the cadastral maps, and fill up the ROR at upazila level. After finalization of land records and survey, the upazila office sends the ROR and the maps to the Deputy Commissioner's Office that preserves them in a record room. A copy of the record is also maintained at the AC, Land Office (Banglapedia, 2015).

Land transfer and registration

Land transfer and registration in Bangladesh is recorded by the Office of the Land Transfer and Registration which is headed by the Inspector General of Registration. The office oversees all district and sub-district (upazila) offices respectively known as District Registrar's Office and Sub-Registrar's Office. Any transaction and transfer of land must be done through a deed on stamp papers and be validated by the Sub-registrar's Office. Once a registration is complete, a notice of Land Transfer (LT) is sent to the AC, Land Office (Hasan, 2017).

Apart from the Ministry of Land and the offices mentioned above, there are several other ministries and departments of the government that are directly or indirectly involved with land issues in Bangladesh. These are the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, and the Roads and Highways Department.

Because of the minimum coordination between and among the three major offices concerned with land formalization, inefficiency of the personnel, heavy reliance on paper documents, and widespread corruption land becomes one of the most complicated issues to deal with in the country. On top of this, influence of the powerful in taking and keeping control of *khas* land, mismanagement of vested property, dominance of *mastans* (professional musclemen), and sometimes involvement of state agencies such as the army in land grab make land management a hub of negotiations between state and non-state actors (Feldman & Geisler, 2012;

Hasan, 2017; Suykens, 2015). Extreme reliance of paper documents, on the one hand, causes a backlog in all the offices and on the other, creates openings for forgery, exclusion, and illegitimate power practice over ordinary citizens as bureaucratic documents possess the capacity ‘to make things into being’ (Frohmann, 2008, p. 1573; Gupta, 2012). As a result, documents become something than what they say, they become what Hull calls ‘graphic artifacts’ by which he means (mis)use of files, lists, and visiting cards as tools for exploitation and illegitimate appropriation (Hull, 2008, p. 503, 2012). Moreover, tampering with documents, dominance of *dalals* (middlemen in the land office, who in most cases, work as the mediator between the consumer and the officers in exchange of money), and unfriendly attitude of the personnel make land formalization a lengthy, complicated, and exploitative process for most of the people in Bangladesh (Hasan, 2017). In such a context, the former enclave residents, whose land had no official records in the land management system of Bangladesh, dealt with the process of land registration. Although, they did not have to deal with the usual process and normal wait time as the government of Bangladesh took special measures to formalize enclave lands, land (formalization) was neither a simple process nor was it immune to mismanagement and corruption. Rather the entire process became a negotiation between the former enclave residents and the land management system.

Land formalization in the former enclaves

Soon after the exchange of the enclaves on August 01, 2015 the Ministry of Land in Bangladesh published a circular regarding how to bring the enclave lands under state legibility. The Land Records and Survey Department came up with the procedure of land formalization and formed concerned committees from national to local level. The committees consisted of selected members with specific responsibilities prescribed by the Ministry of Land.

At the beginning of the circular, the ministry acknowledges that it is time consuming to record the enclave lands following the traditional method/process, thus the government has decided to take some special measures in order to produce the ROR and CS maps for those lands in a short period of time (see figure 8).

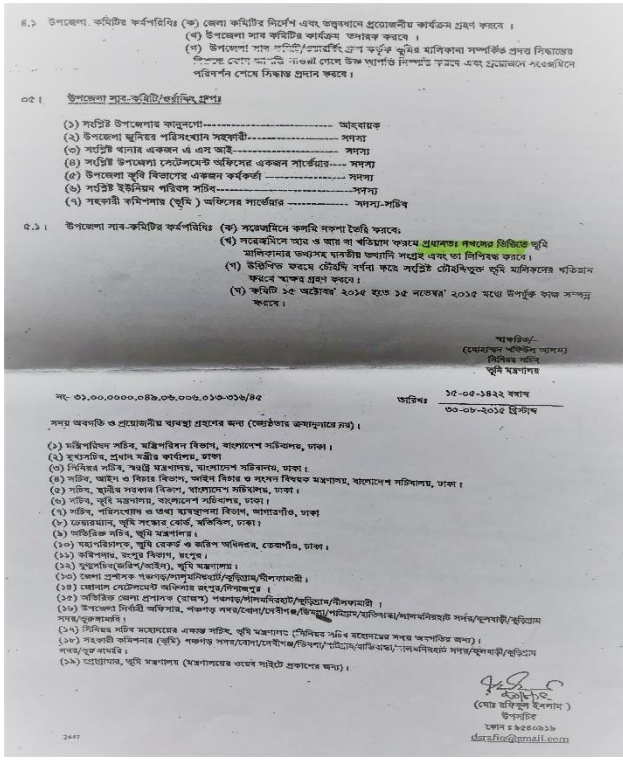
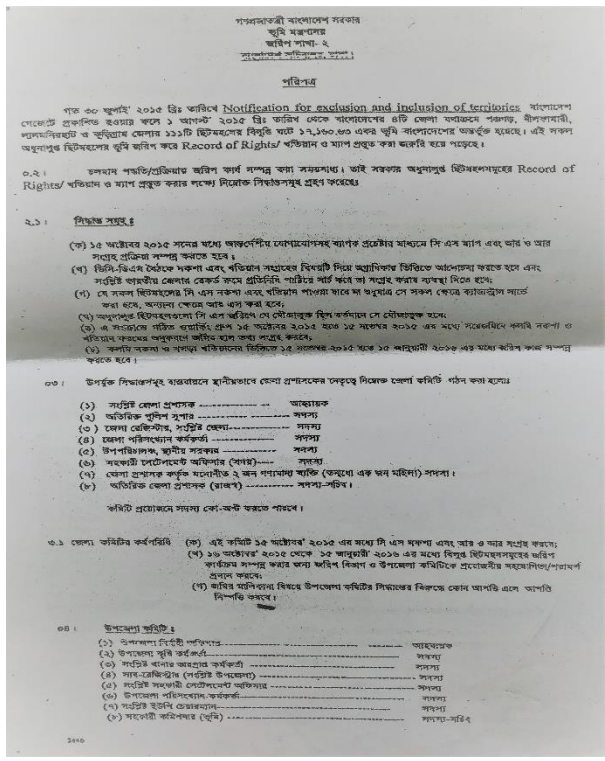


Figure 8 The Bangladesh government circular on land formalization and management in the former enclaves (left) and the decision to decide land ownership based on *dakhla* (highlighted in green on the right)

Some of the decisions are as follow-

- i. The CS maps and the RORs must be prepared by October 15, 2015 with utmost priority in combination with internal communications and contacts.
- ii. CS and RORs must be given priority in the District Collector (DC)-District Magistrate (DM) meetings and if necessary, measures must be taken to collect records from the concerned Indian office by sending representative officers.
- iii. The Working Groups will work in the field to collect updated information about the land following the existing maps and *khatian* forms from October 15 to November 15, 2015.
- iv. Based on the map and the *khatian*, survey of those lands must be completed from November 15, 2015 to January 15, 2016 (Translated from the original circular in Bengali).

In order to facilitate the entire process, four Joint Secretaries were put in charge of the four districts that contained the former enclaves. They would oversee and facilitate the entire process

from national to local level. Three committees were formed at the district and upazila level with defined responsibilities.

District committee

The district committee is headed by the DC who functions as the convener. The Additional DC (ADC) of Revenue is the member-secretary, while the Additional Superintendent of Police, District Registrar, District Statistics Officer, Deputy Director of the Local Government Division, Assistant Settlement Officer, and two civilians including one woman nominated by the DC are members of the committee. The district committee is given three responsibilities. These are- a) collect the CS map and ROR by October 15, 2015, b) provide necessary support to the survey division and upazila committee to complete the land survey in the former enclaves from October 16, 2015 to January 15, 2016, and c) resolute any appeal against the upazila committee's decision regarding land ownership.

Upazila committee

The upazila committee is headed by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and (s)he acts as the convener. The AC, Land is the member-secretary of the committee. Rest of the members are Upazila Agriculture Officer, Officer in Charge (OC) of the concerned police station, Sub-registrar of land, Assistant Settlement Officer, Upazila Statistics Officers, and the concerned Union *Parishad* Chairman. Tasks of the upazila committee include- a) take necessary steps to carry out the district committee's orders, b) supervise the upazila sub-committee, and c) resolute any appeal against the upazila sub-committee's decision regarding land ownership.

Upazila sub-committee

The upazila sub-committee, also known as the Working Group, is the lowest field level committee that is headed by the *Kanungo* as the convener. The Surveyor of the AC, Land office is the member-secretary. Upazila Junior Statistical Assistant, an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of police from a concerned police station, a surveyor from the Upazila Settlement Office, an officer from the Upazila Agriculture Office, and a Commissioner of the Union *Parsihad* are the members of the sub-committee. Their tasks include a) make the cadastral map at field level b) collect and record all the ownership information based on *dakhal* (in possession of the land), c) describe the *chouhoddi* (lands around all four sides of the concerned land) and collect signature of the owners of the *chouhoddi* land on the ROR form and d) complete all these tasks by November 15, 2015 (Translated from the original circular in Bengali).

Once the working group was formed, they started their first phase of land formalization in the concerned upazilas from October 15, 2015. Under the supervision of the *Kanungo*, the working group first surveyed every plot to make the *khanapuri jarip* (household survey). *Khanapuri jarip* is also known as pre-survey in some of the enclaves. Before the pre-survey, the working group collected the CS maps that were available for the *mouzas* which were based on a 1962 survey. They made their own maps of those plots for which CS maps were not available. However, as the circular from the Ministry of Land suggested, the *khanapuri jarip* was based on *dakhal*. This means the land was recorded on their names who were literally in possession of it. Although in context of a slum in Bangladesh, Suykens suggests *dakhal* means to ‘take control of’, in the current case I contend that the notion of *dakhal* is better captured as ‘in possession of’ (Suykens, 2015). As I interviewed one of the surveyors in an upazila office²⁷, he told me,

We followed *dakhal jar bhumi tar* policy (those who possess the land own the land). We asked the people around who had been enjoying the land and they told us who was the real owner. This helped us eliminate any bogus owner at the beginning.

During the *khanapuri jarip*, the working group visited each plot of the former enclaves and filled up the *khanapuri* form. The *khanapuri* form includes the name of the owner(s) of the land, the size of the land, plot number, and the name and signature of the owner(s) of the plots at east, west, north, and south of the concerned plot (see figure 9). Once the *khanapuri jarip* was done they were compiled in books. Information collected at this stage was used to fill up the *khatian* form which is also the first draft of ROR. The ROR includes name(s) of the owner, each owners’ share, type of the land, size of the total land, a hand drawn map, and a description of what is around the land (for instance a road in west, a canal in south) and the name of the owners of surrounding lands (see figure 9).

²⁷ The surveyor asked for anonymity; thus I do not mention the name or the specific office.

After the draft ROR was completed, it was given to the Settlement Office for extraction of the area of each plot and to map the plot. The settlement office then used special instruments and teams to digitally map the land in order to make the first draft of the map. Using modern instruments and bringing special teams to survey and map the land were extraordinary in the sense that such instances are not common in Bangladesh. It was arranged to speed up the process and finish the survey and mapping within the target timelines set by the ministry. At this stage, a preliminary entry of payable revenue for the land was determined and the draft RORs were distributed to the owners. The owners got their first look at the official land records and also had the opportunity to dispute against any errors or discrepancies at this stage.

Once the mouza maps were completed and the series of *khatians* are finally published, a copy of the complete records were sent to the district office, one was sent to the ministry and the other was preserved at the AC, Land Office. Lose records of the final *khatians* were also distributed to individual owners at this stage. Finally, 32 inches to 1-mile village map was produced that included all the plots, their shape, location, and number which was made available for collection (see figure 10).

When I was almost at the end of fieldwork during March-April of 2018, some of the enclave residents had the final map and the ROR. However, ROR is not the final proof of land ownership in Bangladesh. Thus, it must be mentioned that although the former enclave lands are now formally brought under state legibility with clear maps and records, former enclave residents are yet to completely experience the land formalization system in Bangladesh.

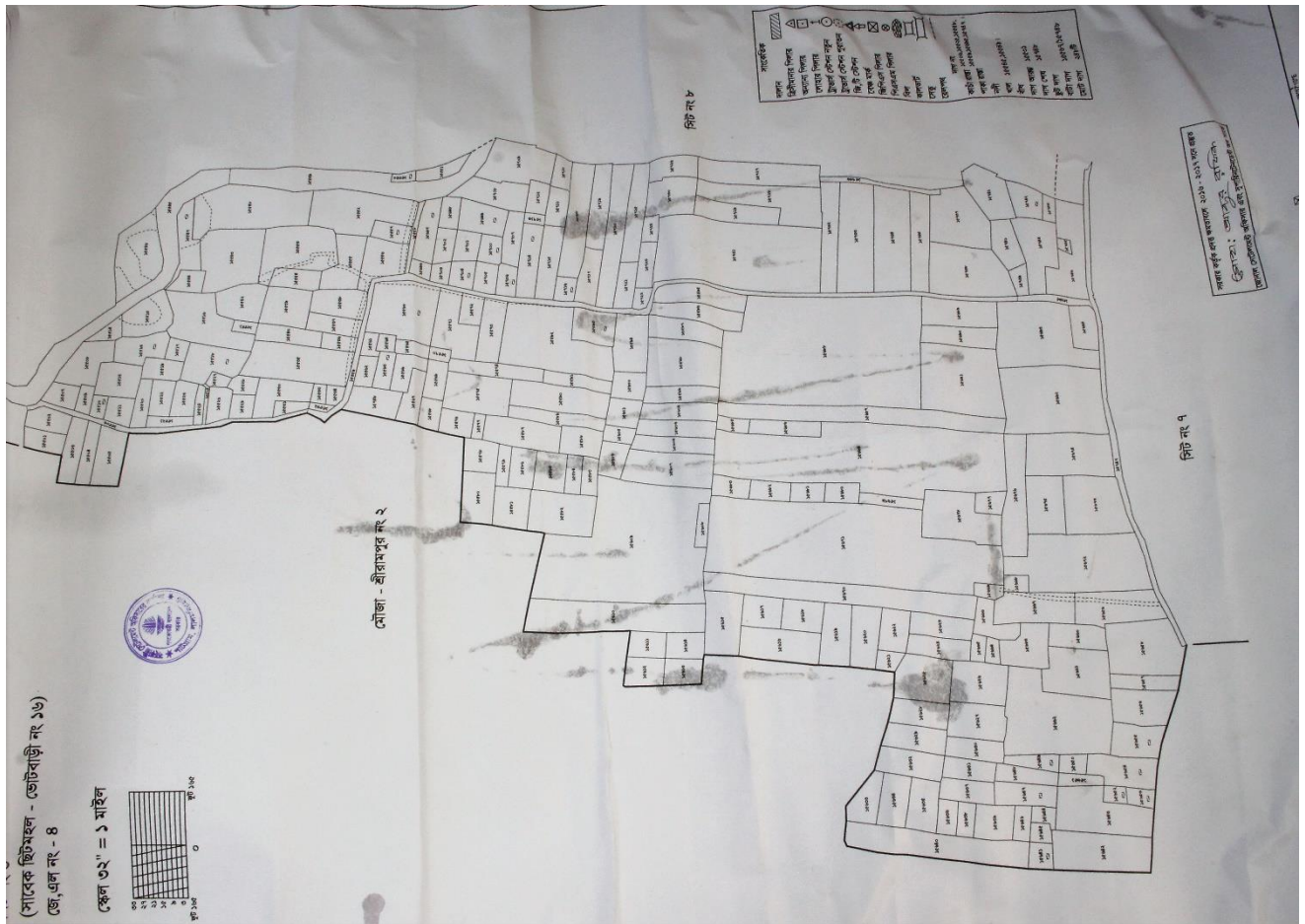


Figure 10 A final map of 32 inches to 1 mile of all the plots in a former enclave.

Complexities regarding land formalization in the former enclaves

With already a complex land formalization system, involvement of numerous committees and personnel, a tight schedule by the state, and a higher level of corruption; the process of land registration and records was not a simple task. Numerous complexities raised that were either not addressed or were informally managed by the enclave residents and state officials. I delve into some of those complexities in this section.

On top of the complex land formalization system in place, the former enclave residents officially never had any experience of dealing with the land formalization process in Bangladesh before the exchange. Lack of education and resources made it further complicated for them. Although, from the state level there was clear instructions on how the land would be formalized, not everyone was certain about it. Even most of the officials at field level I interviewed were not aware of the entire system. They only knew what they were told to do by their superiors. I could only grasp the entire process of land formalization once I interviewed a few of the mid- and

higher-level officials and read the circular from the Ministry of Land. Thus, it is not hard to imagine that for most of the enclave residents the process was not very clear, rather was fraught with ambiguity. They simply followed what they were asked to do by the field level officials. As I interviewed Gani, a small business owner in his late twenties from the Bashkata enclave in Lalmonirhat, he shared his experience of land formalization that grasp the hitches they went through.

Look brother, I have only read till grade two. I know how to write my name and read a little bit, but I can't make sense of the complex land registration laws that the government made for us. I only did what the officers told me to do. They came to my land, asked if I have any paper for those lands and for how long I have been owning that land. And after that, they measured and did their stuff, and then they gave me a *khatian*. I hear that this is my proof for land ownership. What happens after this, I don't know.

Gani's account clearly suggests that he was not certain how his lands are going to be formalized and he kept his faith on the 'officers'. Due to a lack of education and resources, he did not even bother to ask any question to the officers and was happy that he got the ROR. However, he was still not sure if the ROR was the final proof of his land ownership. Complex paper works and lack of education and resources made some of the simplest issues intimidating and fearsome for enclave residents. For instance, I met Bakkar Miah in the former enclave of Dasiar Chhara who was at his late sixties. Bakkar moved to the enclave thirty years ago with his family. He bought the land from his neighbor on which he lives. The neighbor opted to move to India, did not sell their land, and left it behind when they moved. Thus, this land became a *khas* land. But as Bakkars's land was also a part of the same plot on the 1962 CS map, he got a notice from the local land office. The notice simply asked him to go and clarify the issue with the AC, Land (he showed me the notice). However, since he was illiterate and was not willing to share this complication with his neighbors for numerous reasons, he went to show the notice to a *dalal* in the local land office. The *dalal* told him that it is a complicated issue and he might lose his land if proper steps are not taken. The *dalal* promised him to solve the issue in exchange of money and Bakkar agreed. He ended up paying 5,000 BDT (approximately 60 USD) to clarify the issue which, in reality, was nothing but a simple meet up with the local AC, Land.

Second and the most complex issue regarding land was hereditary issues. Every official I interviewed agreed that solving hereditary issue was and remains the biggest challenge in the former enclaves. The UNO of Fulbari said,

Most of the disputes we got were regarding hereditary issues. It was the hardest to determine who should get how much of their father's land. For instance, maybe there is a brother who cultivates all the lands and there was another brother who owns a small business. Now the brother who cultivates the land has *dakhal* of the land and was registered as the owner of the land in the pre-survey. But, according to our law (Bangladesh's law), since there was no written instruction from the father, the other brother would inherit half of those lands. He would come and file a dispute to us. To make things complicated, the other brother in most of the cases, would argue that their father (orally) gave the land to him. Now how would you solve that?

In the enclaves, land was registered to the person who was in possession of that land during the *khanapuri jarip* as the state followed '*dakhala jar bhumi tar*' policy. However, at the same time, Bangladesh follows hereditary law that has a clear instruction on how properties would be divided among siblings and others once the father passes away without any written instruction. As the interview of the UNO suggests, such conflicting policies created the biggest complication regarding land. The case of Aynal in Bashkata enclave elaborates the issue. I met Aynal during my first visit to Bashkata and he was intensely enthusiastic in sharing his complaints against the land registration system. Aynal is a young man with a family of four including his wife and two kids. His only source of income is from the land that he inherited from his father. His father inherited the land from his grandfather who had three kids, two sons and one daughter. That is, Aynal's father was supposed to divide the land between his brother and sister. However, after the death of his grand-father, Aynal's uncle moved out of the enclave and left the land to his brother (Aynal's father). Aynal's aunt also got married outside the enclave and moved out. Thus, all the lands his grandfather owned ended up to Aynal's father and being the only son of his father, Aynal inherited all these lands and was in possession of them. As a result, during the *khanapuri jarip* all these lands were registered under Aynal's name. However, things got complicated at the second stage when they were allowed to dispute against any discrepancies. Aynal's aunt filed a dispute against Aynal claiming her hereditary right over her father's land. According to Aynal, as her aunt was already married to a Bangladeshi and had more money and resources, she managed to convince the local officials and got her share. Thus, when the final ROR and map was produced, Aynal lost part of his land to his aunt since the government officials decided in favor of her aunt's inheritance claim. This is a huge loss for Aynal as his livelihood is based on those lands and he had been working those lands for years. Aynal is still convinced that he had been deprived of his rights and the government officials decided in favor of her aunt because her family was more powerful. As he told me,

What kind of justice is this? First, they came and told us that land would be given to them who are in possession of the land. I got all my land in the *khanapuri jarip*. All my neighbors got the land that they had *dakhal* over. Why did it become an exception only in my case? Why after having my lands in the *jarip* I had to lose it in the *khatian*? Just because I am an enclave resident?

Although Aynal was emotionally charged and thought he was the only exception to the policy of '*dakhal jar bhumi tar*', he was not. I found several similar cases to Aynal's in all across the enclaves during my field research. Such hereditary issues were either solved during the dispute stage and by a mutual understanding between the involved parties or was yet to be solved as many were preparing to take the cases to appeal to the court once they received the final documents.

The third issue was regarding the *khas* land and vested property. Those who opted to move to India and left their properties behind became vested property and was taken over by the state. Further, *chars*, rivers, canals and such other water bodies were registered as *khas* lands which also were taken over by the government. While I found most of those who decided to move either sold their properties or gave it to their relatives who stayed in Bangladesh, there were several cases in few of the enclaves where some of enclave residents left their properties without selling it to anyone, in case, they decided to come back. However, these technically became enemy property and the state took over them. Furthermore, *char* lands which, before the exchange, were enjoyed by the enclave residents on the basis of *dakhal* or were their lands before the river eroded and moved, were now *khas* lands. Effectively, the enclave residents lost ownership over those *khas* lands which was a major blow to most of them as those were generally highly fertile and provided their livelihood. Although the vested property did not affect the enclave residents directly, they became a source of corruption and harassment. Those like Bakkar who had an adjacent land to the vested property either became a victim of corruption or were able to register some of the lands to themselves using the same mechanism. For instance, I interviewed Bellal in Dasiar Chhara who is a freelance surveyor and informally helped the surveyors of the Bangladesh government's surveyor team. He was recruited by the state surveyor team with a promise that he would be given some money after the survey is done but was not. He shared his experiences of working with the survey team and their corruption regarding the vested property and *khas* land. According to Bellal, during the *khanapuri jarip*, some of the people in the government team would intentionally entry part of the land as vested who had an adjacent

property that was vested (those like Bakkar). After that, the owner would be blackmailed saying that if they do not give them money, their land would end up being vested. In fear of losing their lands, the landowner would bribe them to correct the ‘mistake’ in the primary entry. The exact opposite of this also happened when an enclave resident bribed the state team to register part of the adjacent vested property under their name and eventually became owner of that property. Bellal also suggested that some of the *khas* lands, especially canals were taken over by local elites using the same mechanism.

The case of Farooq elaborates a complexity regarding *khas* land. Farooq is a former enclave resident in Bashakata and used to cultivate a *char* in the river that runs by the edge of the enclave. According to him, several years ago the river moved towards the enclave eroding some of his lands and new lands (*chars*) were born on the other bank. So, he took over those chars and started cultivating on them and kept doing so until the exchange happened. After the exchange, that part of the river became Bangladesh’s territory and the *char* became *khas* land. He could never ‘convince’ the officials that this was his land and eventually lost it.

The final complexity regarding land in the former enclaves arose as a combination of the *dakhal* policy and the lack of proper land records in the enclaves. As has been mentioned above, there were many families who moved to the enclave during the 1990s and 2000s due to a cheaper price of land as well as were settled by local landowners to cultivate their lands. In many cases, those who moved had no proper land documents to prove the transfer of the land. They were enjoying the land as they were in possession of that particular plot. However, when lands were being formally registered, they found that their land was claimed by several others as they were able to produce some kind of documents claiming the ownership of the same land. In a majority of the cases, these did not become a big issue as the disputes went in favor of those who had been in possession of the land. But the issue became more complicated with the marginal farmers who were leasing the land. These lands were apparently in possession of the farmers who were cultivating them, but they were not the owners. Although, in most cases the working group asked people around these plots and were able to determine the true owner, there were several cases where it was not possible to do so. It happened both ways. For instance, a farmer who had been cultivating a land for a substantial period of time could have easily argued for its ownership as he had been apparently in possession of that land. On the contrary, sometimes local elites who

owned land in the enclave also used their power to claim land of which they were not the real owner. In such circumstances, land became an extremely flexible property over which ownership was negotiated between and among the state and the former enclave residents themselves.

Negotiations over land

Drawing on the discussion above and other studies that focus on land formalization and negotiations between the state and citizens, in this section, I demonstrate the way former enclave residents negotiated over land ownership with the state of Bangladesh. Land formalization offers moments where state and citizens' relations become sharply visible as Suykens argues, 'land disputes and land sales are particular revelatory moments when these negotiations and relations become visible' (Suykens, 2015, p. 487). Suykens also contends that in such moments people's property is constituted in terms of relationships and negotiations with different state and non-state actors instead of legal and illegal or formal and informal. As the discussion above illustrates, in case of the former enclave residents, negotiations over land ownership was dependent on many factors among which relations with state officials, local political leaders, connections, and resources were significant. Assembling land as a resource involves numerous actors ranging from villagers, scientists, legal experts, and government officials (Cons & Eilenberg, 2019; Li, 2014b). Interaction among these actors allows the state to practice its power over people by employing numerous mechanisms of exclusion and coercion (Hall, Hirsch, & Li, 2011; Peluso, 1993). Similarly, such interactions open up for moments of intense rearrangement that might potentially alter the social order which Christian Lund understands as 'open moments' (Lund, 1998). Thus, the negotiation over land must be viewed both from the perspective of state actors and the former enclave residents. Below I offer a conceptual framework that demonstrates the negotiation over land between diverse state actors and citizens in the former enclaves of India inside Bangladesh.

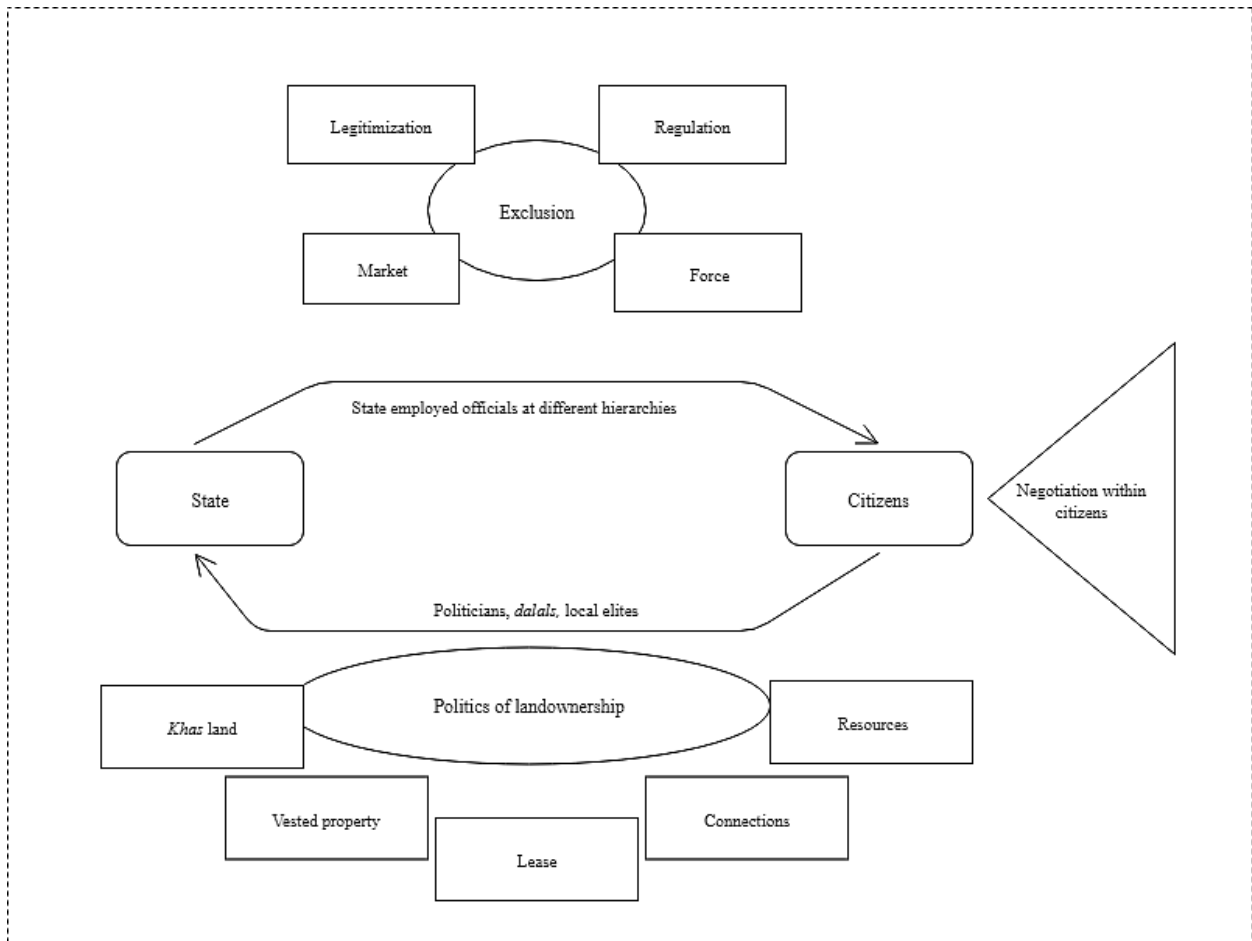


Figure 11 Negotiation between state actors and citizens over land in the former enclaves of Bangladesh and India.

Based on the framework, I argue that state employed officials at different hierarchical levels negotiate with the newly incorporated citizens. However, their negotiation with the citizen is mostly determined by their power of exclusion as they represent the state at different levels and practice the power of the state on behalf of it. Citizens, on the contrary, employ their own tactics to deal with such exclusionary forces by mediating actors like politicians, *dalals*, and local elites which I view as politics of landownership. Citizens not only negotiate with the exclusionary power of the state employing such tactics but also, use similar tactics to gain access to state owned *khas* lands and vested properties. However, such negotiating power significantly depend on the citizen's connection and resources. The negotiation is not only limited between the state and the citizens, it also occurs within citizens themselves.

In the negotiation over land, state is represented by numerous state actors at different hierarchical levels. Nonetheless, no single institution or actor ultimately determines the questions

of ownership, power, and authority rather, a collection of institutions and actors combinedly perform such duties sanctioned by the state on behalf of it. Lund views this fragmented property of the state as ‘fragmented sovereignty’ (Lund, 2011). According to Lund, when state actors are able to define and enforce collective decisions on members of the society, it bears state quality or what he calls sovereignty. But such sovereignty is fragmented since no single actor or authority alone makes decisions. These are, according to Lund, a collection of institutions endowed with different resources that engage in co-producing property and political subjects (Lund, 2011). In case of the former enclaves in Bangladesh, I argue, that different offices and officials concerned with land formalization (e.g. land registration, transfer, and management) used their authority and power over the citizens in deciding who gets to own the land. The officials at field levels who were in charge of mapping and surveying, and making the *khanapuri jarip* became what Judith Butler calls ‘petty sovereigns’, those who decided on who owns the land and who does not (Butler, 2004). Thus, the field level officials became the key players in land negotiation who on the one hand represented the state with the power of exclusion and on the other hand, were much more susceptible to external forces and corruption.

Exclusion is a key idea in the study of land and land relations and almost all studies, starting from the most conservative to the most radical, operate on the assumption that exclusion is inevitable in land relations (Hall et al., 2011; Li, 2014a; Peluso & Lund, 2011; Sikor & Lund, 2009). In fact, Tania Li argues that land’s usefulness to humans depends on exclusion (Li, 2014b). Thus, I focus on the four aspects of exclusion identified by Hall, Lund and Li (2011) in understanding the negotiation of state actors with the citizens. I adopt their definition of exclusion to refer to ‘the ways in which people are prevented from benefiting from things (more specifically, land)’ (Hall et al., 2011, p. 7). Moreover, following them, I view the opposite of exclusion to be access, not inclusion. Although, my focus is exclusively on state actors while discussing the power of exclusion, it is not only practiced by the state and state actors, numerous non-state actors possess and practice the power of exclusion as well.

Exclusionary power depends on four factors—regulation, force, market, and legitimation. State actors of Bangladesh employed these four powers both individually and with a combination of each other over the newly incorporated citizens during land formalization and negotiations. Regulation, being the rules of access and exclusion, was determined by the state.

With the circular from the Ministry of Land and existing state laws, the state of Bangladesh determined the nature of land ownership. These regulations also include the boundaries of the land, type of land use, and the kind of ownership and enclosure of those lands. With such regulations by the state, state actors at different levels were vested with the power to determine land boundaries (mapping), types of land (*khas* land, private land, water bodies), and kind of ownership (private or state ownership) (Blomley, 2003). Although not overtly, but force was used by the state actors covertly in often times. Especially it becomes apparent from the structure of the committees at different levels that included a police officer. Moreover, conflicts arising during the pre-survey stage were handled by the police force if necessary. Even during the dispute resolution phase at upazila level, the local OC worked along with the AC, Land to solve those disputes. Market forces, although is a significant aspect of exclusion, in case of the former enclaves, was not as significant. It was because selling and buying of lands were prohibited for a certain period of time by the state. The final power of exclusion is legitimization. Land ownership, type of lands, and possession of the land is not only determined by regulation of the state, such regulation must be recognized as legitimate. Legitimization of such regulation are sanctioned by the state rules and performed by the state actors which at the same time is accepted by the citizens involved in the process.

While state actors used the power of exclusion, citizens negotiated with such power in numerous ways. Such negotiations involved actors like politicians, local elites, and *dalals* who had access to the state offices and officials. Citizens used their connections and resources in employing those actors not only to negotiate with numerous exclusionary powers by the state but also in gaining access to lands as well as in many cases to state properties such as *khas* and vested lands. Using connections and resources (both legal and extra-legal), in many cases, citizens were able to negotiate their land boundaries and change the status of land from *khas* to private lands. At the same time, they employed *dalals* to mediate their interactions with state officials like that of Bakkar. Moreover, bribery played a significant role in negotiating the exclusion from and access to lands. Drawing on Verdery (1994), I view the entire process of land negotiation as politics of landownership. The politics of landownership is the process where citizens employ numerous resources and actors to negotiate with the state in gaining access to lands and exclude others. The negotiation happens between the citizens and the state actors either directly or mediated by other actors such as politicians and professional middlemen like the

dalals. One's power of negotiation depends on the resources and connections one could readily dispose in such interactions.

In many cases, the negotiation happens within the citizens themselves. As numerous interviews with government officials and former enclave residents demonstrate above, citizens either came to an arrangement within themselves on a disputed land or were compelled to come to such a decision as the land in question was threatened to be taken over by the state. Such negotiations sometimes involved *shalish*, an informal mechanism to settle disputes that involved the two parties and other actors (in most cases local politicians and elites) nominated and by the parties involved (Suykens, 2015).

The political dynamics of land ownership is flexible and largely determined by how authority is contested and settled. Such contestation and settlement eventually made the entire process of land formalization very much flexible in the former enclaves of Bangladesh. Land became flexible as it disappeared, stretched, shrank, transformed, and was seized. State actors used their power of exclusion over the newly incorporated citizens in negotiating landownership and determining the types of lands while citizens responded to such power using resources and mechanisms available to them in form of money, contacts, and mediators. Although the entire process of land formalization is an effort to officially record the lands and bring them under state legibility, informal negotiations such as *shalish* and extra-legal activities like bribery and misuse of power were integral part of the entire process.

Conclusion

Land rules only apply to the group or the society where they have developed (Boone, 2013). Thus, land formalization in the former enclaves in Bangladesh assumed its unique feature as it mostly followed *dakhal jar bhumi tar* policy in determining land ownership. However, other existing state laws, especially the inheritance law played a significant role in land formalization. One of the biggest challenges the state faced in incorporating former enclaves within state territories was land formalization as land became extremely flexible during the process. They were the 'invisible lines' that the state made into being and negotiated with the citizens in legitimizing those lines (Dekker, 2016). In so doing, both the state and the former enclave residents closely interacted with each other to determine the type of the land and its ownership. In this process, state actors used their exclusionary power over the citizens while citizens

employed other mechanisms such as connections, mediation, and bribery to deal with such exclusions.

In the pre-exchange period, enclave lands were managed by the enclave residents themselves without any official document. Some of them came up with their own stamp papers, while others used either Indian or Bangladeshi stamp papers to transfer lands in the former enclaves. However, such transfers were susceptible to forgery and had no legal stand once the enclaves became part of the host state. Recognizing such extraordinary circumstances in the former enclaves, the Ministry of Land in Bangladesh came up with special instructions on how to formalize the enclave lands and determine land ownership. It employed all the three concerned offices related to land issue in Bangladesh with committees and sub-committees to work at different administrative levels. The upazila committee worked at the field level to document the lands and land ownership; and was charged with the responsibility to conduct the pre-survey and develop the first draft of ROR and maps. This was also the phase when lands in question became flexible as citizens started negotiating.

The negotiation between citizens and state officials finally determined the owner of the land. However, the negotiation was a dynamic process that involved numerous actors like local politicians and mediators, and factors like power and authority. I have offered a conceptual framework to understand the process of land negotiation where I argue that state actors mainly used the exclusionary power vested on them by the state to negotiate with citizens. The exclusionary power includes four major aspects which are regulation, force, market, and legitimization. For instance, the cadastral map sometimes became an instrument of exclusion and coercion in the hands of those who commissioned them. They became active and partisan (Harvey, 2006). On the contrary, citizens used their resources, connection, and mediators to deal with such exclusionary power and to gain access to their lands. I view the entire process of negotiation as politics of landownership that changed the properties of lands into plastic and flexible as it disappeared, shrank, stretched, and was sometimes created. Land negotiation in the former enclaves became ‘as much about the scope and constitution of authority as about access to resources’ (Sikor & Lund, 2009, p. 2).

Consequently, in this chapter, I document the land formalization procedure in the former enclaves in Bangladesh by comparing the pre- and post-exchange land tenure system. In so

doing, I demonstrate that due to a lack of proper land documentation and diverse land management system across enclaves, the entire process of land formalization was given special attention by the state and extraordinary measures were employed. However, the formalization process itself became a fluid and dynamic method as both state actors and citizens employed numerous forces and mechanisms that at the same time were the reason and the result of flexible lands.

Chapter 8. Conclusion: The state, its citizens, and territoriality

‘You are the flowers of Fulbari²⁸. We have got you amongst us, from now on no one will call you enclave dwellers anymore. You will not be deprived anymore.’

-Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, in her speech delivered in the former Dasiar Chhara enclave on October 15, 2015.

The end of an era

The remark of the Bangladeshi Prime Minister marks an end to the age-old issue of enclaves along the border of Bangladesh and India that produced anxiety, resulted into conflicts, kindled nationalistic debates, and demonstrated territorial allure. In fact, these enclaves came into existence even before the birth of these two nation-states (Whyte, 2002b). They started taking shape as a “rupture” to the national imaginations of India and Pakistan, and eventually of Bangladesh and India, once states started concentrating on the project of nation building based on a defined territorial space (Cons, 2016). This marks the end of decades’ abandonment, statelessness, violence, struggles, and longing for a citizenship for thousands who lived in these fragments. Moreover, they also mark the end of an era in world history as with the exchange, the total number of world enclaves has sharply reduced to 59 from 256.²⁹ While enclaves have generally been understudied in the academic world, recent interests in them provided valuable insights on state making, bordering, nationality, citizenship, territoriality, governmentality, and sovereignty (Baud & van Schendel, 2005; Catulda, 1979; Cons, 2016; Dunn & Cons, 2014; Ferdoush, 2014, 2018; R. Jones, 2009c, 2009a; Murphy, 2013; Shewly, 2013a; van Schendel, 2002, 2005; Vinokurov, 2007; Whyte, 2002b, 2002a). This dissertation provides a narrative of a unique moment right after the enclaves were exchanged and the enclave people were brought under state protection with a recognition of citizens.

In the section that follows, I provide a brief summary of the findings of the dissertation. I do so by revisiting the broader questions that I started with. After that, I engage in a discussion on the contributions and broader implications of the findings of this project. In drawing a

²⁸ Fulbari, in Bengali, literally means house of flowers.

²⁹ According Whyte (2002) and Vinokurov (2007), the total number of enclaves including the 198 of Bangladesh and India were 256. Since the enclave of Dhagaram-Angorpota was not exchanged, 197 of the 256 do not exist anymore.

conclusion, I contend, although unique in situation and characteristics when they existed, enclaves have provided valuable insights on numerous aspects of state making and citizenship and continues to be a rife place for such knowledge production even after when they do not exist anymore.

The state, its citizens, and territoriality

The objectives of this project have been to answer a) the choice of an overwhelming majority of the former enclave residents in deciding to stay at the place they were and opting for a change in citizenship b) to understand the way a recognition of citizenship makes a difference in the lives of the former enclave residents, if any and c) to document the process of state making and territoriality in the formerly stateless spaces, i.e. the enclaves.

a) The choice of citizenship

The principal finding of the project is that acts of belonging best explains the choice of citizenship. Acts of belonging tied the former enclave residents to the host state in numerous ways as opposed to their home state. As a result, they overwhelmingly chose to stay where they were and became a citizen of the host state. I demonstrated the broader theoretical thread that ties the overall discussion of the current research. In so doing, I argue that we must equally treat the role of the state and the people for a comprehensive understanding of any border in question. Then I demonstrated the way the former enclaves became *symbolic spaces* that played a role in the halt of the exchange and at the same time, immobilized the enclave residents that locked them in their land archipelagoes. Extending from such discussions, I provided a theoretical framework to explain why they overwhelmingly chose to stay where they were instead, moving to the country that they belonged to.

I offered the concept of *acts of belonging* that brings social memory, regional identity, and spatial socialization of the former enclave residents into conversation. I use the term both as a single concept consisting of the totality of acts and as individual actions of belonging. I demonstrate that acts of belonging are the mediators between the former enclave residents' daily lives and the numerous state and regional institutions that they had to negotiate with for survival. In doing so, I identify agents of social memory and regional identity to elucidate the way they are mediated by acts of belonging. Acts of belonging on the one hand mediates between social memory and regional identity and on the other, within and between their agents. Further, I show

that acts of belonging connected social memory and regional identity of the former enclave residents with the place that they were born and brought up, hence, spatially socialized them. Spatial socialization, eventually, nationally socialized them that dominated their choice of citizenship. As their memory, regional identity, and spatial socialization aligned with the state that they had been living, the ultimate choice for them was to stay and become a citizen of that state. As a result, more than 98 percent of them stayed where they were and accepted the citizenship of the host state.

The limitation of finding is, of course, its inability to explain the choice of those 2 percent who decided to move. Although, I do not engage in a discussion of their choices in this project, I provide an explanation of the decision to move elsewhere.³⁰

b) Recognition of citizenship and life after the exchange

In elucidating the influence of the exchange and being recognized as citizens in the life of the former enclave people, I argued that the state of Bangladesh actively helped the newly recognized citizens. Drawing from the works of Agamben (1998, 2005) and Foucault (1990, 2007), scholars, who study enclaves before they were exchange, view them as containers of bare lives where the sovereign inflicts its power without protecting them (R. Jones, 2009a; Shewly, 2013a). I explicated how the sovereign accepts the same group of people when it brings them under its protection. In so doing, I showed that the newly incorporated citizens were actively assisted by the state through both an informal and a formal mechanism in order to ensure that they get access to amenities that come with the status of citizenship. To understand such a unique phenomenon, I introduced the term *sovereign overcompensation*. Sovereign overcompensation results from the active role of the state in helping a group of people while rest of the group are treated as usual. As a result of such overcompensation, I argued, the former enclave residents experienced a smooth transition to citizenship. However, I do not suggest that the state over compensated because it once abandoned and inflicted violence over this group of people, rather, I contend that such overcompensation happened simply as a result of creating ‘good citizens’ who would adapt to the ‘community of value’ (Bridget Anderson, 2013). Moreover, this is also a ‘performance’ of good stateship that creates a ‘hyperreality’ of a caring state.

³⁰ For a detail discussion please see (Ferdoush & Jones, 2018).

Extending the discussion from this point, I also suggested that because of the state's active role in helping the new citizens, they experience a facelifted Bangladeshi citizenship. Because, such assistance from the state is only limited to the former enclave residents, and it is business as usual for the regular Bangladeshi citizens. Referring to the subaltern experiences and structural violence in South Asia, I contend that such a facelifted citizenship is best understood as *showcase citizenship* (Chatterjee, 2004; Guha & Spivak, 1988; Gupta, 2012; Hull, 2012; Maggio, 2007; Spivak, 1988). This is showcase, I argue because, the state uses such citizenship as a means to conceal the unequal treatment of its citizens and the structural violence fashioned by numerous state apparatuses. Essentially, I concluded that although the newly incorporated citizens are experiencing a smooth transition to their citizenship, it reconfirms that the state in South Asia, by design, is a discriminative and violent apparatus. Because, the regular Bangladeshi citizens around the former enclaves, who come from a similar socioeconomic background, remain a victim of structural violence. For them, life remains business as usual, a daily struggle of negotiation with the state.

c) State making and territoriality

The dissertation project answered the reason for the territorial exchange, demonstrated Bangladesh state's strategies in creating legibility, and its practice of territoriality. I introduced the term *symbolic spaces* to understand the status of the enclaves within the nationalistic and territorial discourses of Bangladesh and India. Analyzing archival sources, and primary data, I offered a chronological evolution of the enclaves' discourse within the territorial imagination of states. I demonstrated that post-colonial South Asia inherited the concept of territorially bounded nationalism, which was based on the idea that people with different religious affiliations are not capable of forming a single nation. Thus, nationalism became, essentially, a struggle for maintaining and producing a boundary separating 'us' from the 'others'. This constant pressure to sustain differences produces a nationalism that converts those differences into a fear of the other. The former enclaves of Bangladesh and India served as an effective tool in this regard for a long time. The enclaves became symbolic spaces, surpassing their real value, proving useful for provoking anxiety and phobia. However, their symbolic status changed in 2015 in the context of broader geopolitical and geo-economic forces. Bangladesh depicted the exchange as a geopolitical victory over a mighty neighbor, while India used it as a

depiction of neighborliness and as a step on the road to long-term geo-economic and geopolitical gains.

In documenting the process of state making and techniques of territoriality, I suggested that Bangladesh creates legible state spaces by employing four broader techniques. First, the state uses its administrative and repressive apparatuses with central coordination. To coordinate and control, the state constructs physical infrastructures like roads, bridges, and dams. It also employs resources in counting and controlling the population and producing homogeneity across spaces. Such state making project goes hand-to-hand with territoriality. The state uses its infrastructural power in internally territorializing and institutionalizing these spaces. It employs numerous government offices and resources to practice governmentality in the former enclaves. The state inflicts its political power and sovereignty over these spaces, and it brings these spaces under its economic regulations and collect taxes from them.

Finally, as part of the state making project, the dissertation research focused detail on the land formalization in the former enclaves. None of the enclave lands had any formal records in the host state as they were not part of that country. After the exchange, Bangladesh invested considerable resources and undertook special measures to document the lands and at the same time, fix the problem of land ownership in the enclaves. In documenting the process, first, I pointed out numerous complexities regarding land ownership in the former enclaves. Then I provided a brief overview of the existing land registration system in Bangladesh to show the complexities already built into the system. However, I also demonstrated that the state of Bangladesh took special measures to speed up the process as it was aware that enclave lands could not be registered and formalized following the existing procedures. Thus, numerous committees at different levels were formed with defined responsibilities. Once the state started documenting lands, it became a constant negotiation between the state, the enclave people, the local elites, and was subject of corruption, nepotism, and favoritism. As a result, land became extremely flexible in the enclaves.

Broader implications

The first implication of the dissertation is that the idea of symbolic spaces not only provides an explanation of the territorial exchange in South Asia, it can also be fruitfully used in the broader literature of territoriality, nationalism, and sensitivity in South Asia and beyond.

Alexander Murphy contends that modern states hold on to its territory even when it is not profitable for it by any means (Murphy, 2013). He understands such a tendency as territory's allure. This project contributes towards such an understanding of territory by showing that if a territorial swap can be presented as geo-economic and geo-political gains, nation-states are likely to swap territories. However, such swapping does not indicate an end of territory's allure, rather reconfirms it since the swapping allowed the state to govern and gain firm control over those spaces. Territorial contiguity, sensitivity, and cartographic anxiety have been markers of the project for nation making in South Asia (Cons, 2016; Krishna, 1994). The research reconfirms that artificially created discourses and tensions have played a significant role in the territorial debates and bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India, and at the same time, have been used as pawns in the broader geo-political stakes.

Another broader implication of the project is its intervention on the study of citizenship and broader political geography as it offers the concept of acts of belonging. The idea of acts of belonging threads numerous thoughts, especially social memory (Alderman, 2000; Nora, 1989; Jeffery K Olick, 1998), regional identity (Paasi, 1986, 1991, 1996), and spatial socialization (Paasi, 1991, 1996) that have been studied separately before. In identifying the connection between and among them, the project offers a framework to understand how and why people choose a state of citizenship. Acts of belonging demonstrate how individuals connect between micro-institutions like family and larger state institutions like education by using their actions and belonging in everyday life. The concept can be productive in explaining numerous actions that stateless population residing in various camps perform on a regular basis to 'normalize' their daily lives as opposed to rupture the existing power structure (Dunn & Cons, 2014; Isin & Neilsen, 2008). By demonstrating how undocumented migrants perform numerous acts of belonging, the concept can be effectively placed within the scholarship of social movements to explain different protests and movements that migrants call for in demand of regularity and recognition by the state. Acts of belonging can productively be applied in studying diaspora and migration to understand how people on the move demonstrate connections to their homeland and create a distinction between 'us' and 'them'. Finally, acts of belonging enable us to contextualize the mundane actions of both citizens and non-citizens within the frameworks of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and nationalism.

Such a take on citizenship moves through and beyond the traditional approaches of looking at citizens and their experiences as a taken for granted situation where they are either included within or excluded from state facilities. Rather, it provides a much needed new vocabularies in understanding citizenship (Isin, 2009). The experiences of the showcase citizens can be broadly applied in many respects where the state prioritizes one particular group over others, in understanding the informal measures of the state to help its citizens, and also in reconfirming the state's discriminative behavior in treating its population (Brubaker, 1989, 2015; Harris, 2013; Hull, 2012).

The next implication of the project lies in presenting and theorizing a different facet of the sovereign. Agamben's influential theorization of the sovereign has been widely used and adopted in political geography, and in the study of the camps and enclaves (Agamben, 1998, 2005). Drawing from Agamben, scholars view the enclaves as abandoned spaces where the sovereign inflicted its violence without protecting them (R. Jones, 2009a; Shewly, 2013a). Others have viewed the enclaves as sensitive spaces where the sovereign power is inflicted in an aleatory fashion (Cons, 2016; Dunn & Cons, 2014). However, all these studies theorize the enclaves on the assumption that they are outside the purview of sovereign protection. The current project departs from this point to demonstrate what happens when a sovereign brings the same group of people within its protection that it once excluded. In understanding such a phenomenon, I suggest that the sovereign overcompensated the former enclave residents in many regards. This allows us to move beyond the discussion of sovereign violence by connecting it to the theorization of state embracing (Torpey, 2000), categorization (Bridget Anderson, 2013; R. Jones, 2009b), and other post-structuralist approaches (Baudrillard, 1983). It also can be implicated in the understanding of camps and camps dwellers' experiences within and beyond those spaces.

The fourth implication is a contribution to the studies of subalterns in South Asia, especially of Bangladesh (Guha & Spivak, 1988, 1988; Ludden, 2001). The research illuminates the subaltern experiences of citizenship along the borders of Bangladesh and India. In so doing, it reveals that although they have been one of the most marginal groups, former enclave residents were not a silent group just at the receiving end. They acted and reacted within their limitations to negotiate with the state and had their own politics and strategies (Chatterjee, 2004). It also

demonstrated that the former enclave residents took a full advantage of the easy access to state officials and active help provided by the state, in fact, an instance that the subalterns can be heard and they can make themselves 'speak' (Spivak, 1988).

The other implication of the project lies in broadening our understandings of the way states create legible state-spaces and practice territoriality in the formerly ungoverned spaces. In so doing, it contributes to the literature of state making and legibility as it documents the nuances of a nation-state in governing its spaces (Foucault, 2007; Scott, 1998, 2009). Such insights could be fruitfully used in understanding state making projects in the frontiers of South Asia and elsewhere. At the same time, it contributes in creating a wider image of the interconnection between state making, territoriality, and governmentality (Arts et al., 2009). The nuances of land formalization and registration contributes to the growing literature of corruption, bureaucracy and the state in South Asia (Gupta, 2012; Hull, 2012) by documenting numerous state and non-state actors' role at the field level. Moreover, it also provides insights on how land becomes a flexible property in the interaction of state, citizens, politicians, elites, and other actors on the ground (Lund, 2011, 2016; Verdery, 1994).

Finally, the dissertation intervenes in the growing literature of ethnographic methods, sensitive issues, and international fieldwork (Cons, 2014a; Middleton & Cons, 2014; Sultana, 2007). It sheds light on the difficulties of conducting fieldworks on an issue that might be considered 'sensitive' to some, ways around those sensitivities, and sometimes dealing with the frustrations of getting stuck with such 'barriers'. It also provides insights on what is understood as 'mobile ethnography' and 'mobile methods' by demonstrating ways mobilities of the researcher significantly influence their credibility in the field (Cidell & Lechtenberg, 2016; Miller & Ponto, 2016; Sabhlok, 2017). Moreover, it discusses the crucial role a capable research assistant plays in determining, to a great extent, the success or the failure of a fieldwork (Middleton & Cons, 2014).

For almost seventy years, the border enclaves of Bangladesh and India remained examples of oddities in the post-Westphalian era of nation-states where they marred the vision of a territorially contiguous nation state (Cons, 2016; R. Jones, 2010). They created anxiety among those who governed and even among those who were governed. They were places that the state really did not care about but thought with great passion (Cons, 2016). They surpassed their real

values and became strategically important to the state that they belonged to, they became amplified spaces. Thus, Cons and Sanyal suggest that these are the marginal places, yet the 'vantage points' which provide greater visions on borders, state, nationality, and citizenship going beyond their geographically insignificant size (Cons & Sanyal, 2013). However, their end does not suggest an end in their significance. As the dissertation clearly demonstrates, the enclaves continue to be an important place for knowledge production even after they do not exist anymore.

Appendix – Methods. Navigating the ‘field’: Access, sensitivity and reflexivity along the border of Bangladesh and India

Introduction

Ethnographic fieldwork has come a long way from the model of its forerunners who went out and stayed in a ‘different’ society to study them, like Bronislaw Malinowski’s endeavor to observe the ‘savage’ or Edward Tylor’s study of the ‘primitive’ (Malinowski, 1985; Tylor, 2018). Specially with the postmodern turn and feminist interventions, the idea of ethnographic fieldwork has moved away from the classical ‘Malinowskian image’ where a lone white man lives among the ‘natives’ for years to gather ‘uncontaminated’ data from the ‘field’ (Gardner, 1999; Gupta & Ferguson, 1997; Stocking, 1992). Instead, the problematization of a distinction between a ‘native anthropologist’ and a ‘real anthropologist’ working with the ‘natives’ has gained more attention (Narayan, 1993). Scholarships regarding fieldwork has moved towards a more intersubjective understanding between the researcher and the people s/he researches as Kim England has it, ‘The intersubjective nature of social life means that the researcher and the people being researched have shared meanings and we should seek methods that develop this advantage’ (1994, p. 82). Contemporary ethnographers and ethnographic methods are receptive of the fact that fieldwork is an intersubjective experience which not only demands attention to the researcher’s reflexivity and positionality but also, calls for a critical examination of the idea of ‘being there’ in the ‘field’ (Coffey, 1999; Coleman & Collins, 2006; England, 1994; Gardner, 1999; Nagar, 2002). At the same time, the meaning of ‘field’ and ‘home’ are also critically questioned (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997). Therefore, in this methods appendix, I describe a detail of my experiences in the ‘field’ and/or in the ‘home’ where meanings of both these terms became blurred as I often became an insider, an outsider, both, and none (Gilbert, 1994; Mullings, 1999). Drawing on my experiences and encounters during the fieldwork, I also describe the challenges of working on a ‘sensitive’ topic that often raised doubts and suspicion about my ‘real’ intentions that not only resulted in tensions but also occasionally defied my access to numerous spaces and people (Cons, 2016). Consequently, my purpose is not to present a chronological and mechanical description of how and what data I collected instead, I offer a narrative of my experiences in the field that is shaped by intersubjective experiences, positionality, and reflexivity.

The meaning of the ‘field’ is not fixed, rather it is constructed, negotiated, and made (Middleton & Cons, 2014). In their critical examination of the ‘field’, Akhil Gupta and James

Ferguson draw our attention to the idea of ‘field’ and ‘home’ in anthropology by pointing out that the ‘field’ has been romanticized as a place that is ‘raw’ where the researcher ‘enters’ in and ‘exits’ from after collecting data. On the contrary, ‘home’ is the place where the ethnography is written and polished (1997, p. 12). Such distinction of ‘field’ and ‘home’ leads to a ‘hierarchy of purity’ argue Gupta and Ferguson, and call for a careful attention to the idea of field as site, method, and location (1997, p. 13). My objective although is not to problematize the idea of the ‘field’ in this methods appendix, yet I must mention that such distinctions became somewhat blurred for me because of my positionality as a researcher who was born and raised in Bangladesh and at the same time, was conducting the fieldwork in Bangladesh as part of his training as a political geographer in an American institution. Therefore, it never was an easy negotiation for the ‘ethnographic self’ within me (Coffey, 1999).

Starting from the researcher’s positionality to the tools applied in collecting data, from the researcher’s relationship with the research assistant to the selection of the site, all of these in one way or the other, influence the research. Thus, it remains a crucial task for researchers to reflect back on such issues not only when they are writing ethnography but also constantly when they are in the field. As Nick Megoran has it, ‘Data are not waiting in the “field” to be merely “plucked”: they are fashioned and influenced by the research methods that we use’ (Megoran, 2006, p. 626). Similarly, conducting international fieldwork also demands being attentive to histories of colonialism, development, and local realities so that the researcher is able to avoid the trap of creating and perpetuating the relations of domination and control (Sultana, 2007).

Therefore, the fieldwork for me, became a constant process of negotiation, management, defying challenges, building rapport, gaining access, and reflecting back on my thoughts and actions. In brief, it could be said that it was a continuous process of ‘methodological impression management’ that allowed me to work and think through the sensitivity of the ‘sensitive’ topic I was researching on along the border of Bangladesh and India (Cons, 2016; Gengler & Ezzell, 2018, p. 808). Thus, the discussion that follows has three objectives. First, to shed light on the challenges of access and ways around or through them during the fieldwork especially because of the apparent ‘sensitivity’ of my research topic. Second, placing my positionality and reflexivity within the research and comprehend the way they might (have) affect(ed) the research project. Third, documenting the nuances of uncertainties and ethical dilemmas that remain

outside the control of the researcher which might not pose a threat to completely undo the fieldwork, yet carry the potential to jeopardize the project if not paid attention to. In conclusion, I suggest that ethnographic research is essentially a subjective experience and we must pay serious attention to such subjectivities of both the researcher and the research participants in order for the research to be reflexive.

Getting access

Being aware of the sensitiveness of the research topic from the beginning, my first and foremost concern regarding access was to get the ‘right visa’ to India. Because of my citizenship status, I was not required to have a visa to conduct a research in Bangladesh. But in order to carry out a comparative study between the enclaves both in India and Bangladesh, which was my original plan, I had to attain a research visa from India. While, positionality and reflexivity of a researcher are widely addressed in the literature, a researcher’s visa dilemma and political identity are poorly addressed, particularly when it comes to border research in South Asia (Shewly, 2012). Thus, I started contacting researchers who had previously worked on similar issues and asked about their experiences regarding a research visa to India, the first step in ethnography (Crang & Cook, 2007). It took no time to find out that none of the previous researchers were able to attain a research visa from India even when the majority of them were ‘foreign’ researchers from the US, Europe, and Australia. In sharing his experiences of working on the enclaves of Bangladesh and India, Brendan Whyte writes that he never received a research visa from India although his quest for the visa delayed his fieldwork for a period of six months. He finally conducted his research on a tourist visa (Whyte, 2002b). He also suggests that a researcher from South Asia is relatively in a disadvantageous position when it comes to researching border related issues as they are ‘viewed with some suspicion in his own country, let alone when seeking information in the other’ (Whyte, 2002b, p. 36). In India, questioning the frontiers and unsanctioned possession of detail maps of border areas are punishable offense and ‘inquiry into these spaces, both journalistic and academic, are vigorously policed’ (Cons, 2016, p. 36; Whyte, 2002b). While such formal restrictions do not exist in Bangladesh regarding researching its borders, it always creates an anxiety among those who govern.

Thus, considering the reality and insights from the previous researchers, I gave up the plan for applying for a research visa to India from the beginning. My plan was to visit some of the former enclaves in India on a tourist visa. Therefore, on my first month of research in

Bangladesh, my research assistant and I applied for a tourist visa to India. Generally, it does not take more than a week or two to hear back from the consulate. While my research assistant received his passport back with a visa stamp on it, I was yet to receive mine. After waiting for almost a month, I heard back from the consulate with further queries regarding my status in the US (as my passport had a US student visa on it). Followed by a silence of almost a couple of weeks, I finally received my passport back with my application for a tourist visa being rejected! What determined the decision remains a matter of speculation. Maybe my previous application for the American Institute of Indian Studies Fellowship (AIIS), already an approved affiliation with one of the institutions in India had raised an alert; or may be the consulate officer simply did not find my profile fit as a tourist, who knows! Frustrated but not surprised, I worked on my alternative plans in Bangladesh which I had in place before I started my fieldwork.

As I mentioned above, access to the numerous former enclaves in Bangladesh was not a challenge because of my identity as a Bangladeshi. Moreover, I am from the same region where all these enclaves were situated, I speak the same dialect, and have had previous networks established that allowed me an easy access to the enclaves and enclave people. However, the biggest challenge of access that I faced came from numerous government officials, both at the field and at the policy level. I paid a visit to the UNO's office two weeks in advance I planned to start my data collection in one of the earlier sites. While I had made previous arrangements with the UNO over telephone for a meeting, when I arrived at his office on the agreed morning, I had to nudge his memory about our previous conversation. After a detailed question and answer session regarding my research, my studies at the US, and revealing of my identity as a university faculty in Bangladesh, the UNO started speaking in a mix of Bengali and English! He asked me to show official documents regarding my permission to work on the issue from the US institution and submit a copy of those to his office along with a formal application. Baffled with the sudden change in his attitude and tone, I submitted a copy of my approved research proposal, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, and a formal application. Since, it was an informal visit to the UNO, I left after the meeting and started preparing for my stay in that upazila. That evening, I got a call from the UNO on my phone asking me when I plan to start, and he also offered to arrange my stay at the government guest house! Baffled again, I agreed happily to his generous offer and started arranging for my stay. Although, I was able to interview almost all the officers in charge of different offices during my stay at this upazila, I could never interview the

UNO or the Chairman. Every time I went to the UNO's office to interview him, I was either kept waiting and finally told he was too busy to talk at that moment or he directed me to some other officers for an interview. Sometimes, I would go to his office on a previously agreed time for the interview and he was nowhere to be found. Either he was out of the office attending a meeting in the district or was somewhere else of which no one had a clue.

I faced similar difficulties arranging a formal interview with the Chairman of the same upazila. When I first called the Chairman on his cellular phone, he was very cordial and told me that he would call me back at the evening since he was busy at that moment. After waiting for a couple of evenings when the Chairman did not return the call, I made another call. Apologizing for the delay, the Chairman asked me to meet him at his house that evening. Upon arrival at his house on our agreed time, I was told that he had gone out as something important came up. Again, after waiting for a couple of days, I contacted the Chairman over phone. We had arranged another meeting! With further frustration, I was told that the Chairman had gone to Dhaka (the capital city of Bangladesh) when I arrived at his house on our arranged scheduled. Although I do not have a definitive answer to what caused such repetitive missing of appointments by the Chairman or the constant denial by the UNO, drawing from other researchers, I can only hypothesize. May be the sensitive nature of my research made officials like the UNO or the Chairman uncomfortable as any issue related to borders are known to probe anxiety among the state and its officials in Bangladesh (Cons, 2016). The repetitive disregards of granted appointments, asking to produce formal documentations, and speaking in a mix of Bengali and English were all a demonstration of 'othering' by tying me to the US (comments like 'oh, you people are living an extravagant life over there') (Sultana, 2007). Such denials and random acts of the officials might also be understood as acts of the 'petty sovereigns' who made the decision on behalf of the state at a given moment (Butler, 2004; R. Jones, 2009a). Having learnt my lessons from such instances and recognizing the value of informal connections in Bangladesh, I used my networks to ensure an access to the officials for the rest of my fieldwork. While, such connections, in most cases, allowed me an access to and interview with the officials, many of those ended up being less useful for several reasons. Answers were guarded, interviews were rushed, frequent and deliberate change of topic, denial in accessing government documents, and condescending attitude towards me were the significant reasons that affected my access to the government offices and officials. These were the moments that I felt exactly what Sally Moore

felt, 'If excuses were made, I could never tell whether they were lies. And perhaps worst of all, I felt I could never show anger. I hated this, but making a nice face was the price of getting on with the work' (Moore, 2009, p. 181).

Another challenge of access was to the religious minority groups who decided to stay in Bangladesh. My apparent religious identity as a Muslim, previous bitter experiences of being a minority, existing power relations, lack of confidence in sharing sensitive information with a random researcher, and above all, unavoidable presence of other curious people and gate keepers made it a challenge to interview people from such groups. As I was conducting my fieldwork in enclave X, I came to know about a family of three Hindu brothers. One of the brothers moved to India with his family and the mother, while two other brothers remained in Bangladesh. Excited to finally have found a family that decided to split, my research assistant Morshed and I started asking people about where they live and how to get there. By the time, we arrived at their place after a long and confusing ride on a rickshaw van, we found out that a curious group of people had already gathered at their house and were waiting for us! Someone had already called one of their neighbors over cellular phone and informed them about our arrival. Frustrated with the day's work being ruined, I had some informal talk with the family in front of at least fifteen to twenty of their neighbors. I noted down his contact number and called him that evening to have an interview in a more private space but was gently denied. Having my lessons learnt, I took extra precautions in my next encounter. I came to know about another Hindu family that split in an enclave in a different upazila while I was interviewing one of the local leaders from the same enclave. The leader introduced me to the head of the family Nobanu³¹ over phone and shared his contact number. I was able to convince Nobanu for an interview, but he preferred meeting me in the club of the enclave at the presence of the leader. The night before the scheduled interview, Morshed and I spent planning on how to interview Nobanu without having the leader present there. Then we decided that after the arrival of Nobanu and a formal introduction by the leader, Morshed would ask the leader to show him the enclave and help him interview others to keep him busy so that I have a guaranteed one-on-one conversation with Nobanu. Morshed did his job successfully that allowed me a three-hour conversation with Nobanu, the first hour of which was just dedicated in building rapport and making him confident about the anonymity of his answers.

³¹ Pseudonym

While there were minor difficulties regarding access except those already discussed, I was able to overcome most of them sometimes by carefully planning ahead, with a cautious presence of mind, with the help of Morshed, using my connections, and sometimes with unexpected strokes of luck.

Positionality

The researcher, at the end of the day, is an instrument in their research. Thus, a researcher is positioned both within the research and the field by their age, gender, sexual identity, 'race', and so forth which en/disable certain insights within the research (England, 1994; Hastrup, 1992). For instance, Farhana Sultana shares her experiences of conducting fieldwork in rural Bangladesh where she was constantly judged for having short hair and the length of her hair being a matter of regular fun and curiosity (Sultana, 2007). Similarly, Naheed Islam had to underscore her 'feminine' qualities like highlighting marital status and homemaking skills in gaining access to the Bangladeshi immigrant community in Los Angeles (Islam, 2000). Consequently, the positionality of the researcher, to a great extent, determines the outcome of the research and needs to be considered with serious attention. According to England, the biography of the researcher directly affects the research in at least two significant ways. First, researchers' personal traits such as their color, gender, religion, and nationality. Second, it affects the power relations between those who are studying and those who are being studied (England, 1994). As a result, what to reveal and what not to reveal becomes a constant negotiation for the researcher in the field. Nevertheless, there is no definitive answer to such a question. Depending on the demand of the situation and the nature of the research, researchers have opted for different options. For instance, Kathleen Blee straightforwardly portrayed her beliefs regarding 'race' while she was conducting her fieldwork with a white supremacist women group (Blee, 2000). On the contrary, Pete Simi inserted himself within the Aryan activist group by portraying him as one who believed in their ideology (Simi & Futrell, 2010). Thus, researchers find them in a constant negotiation with their positionality in the field regarding what they reveal and what they hide. This is what Gengler and Ezzell refer to as methodological impression management that enables 'ethnographers think through a number of potentially thorny interactional dynamics throughout their fieldwork' (Gengler & Ezzell, 2018, p. 808). Drawing from Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical lens, they suggest that methodological impression management allows both a

preventive and a corrective measure at the field. In short, the investigator constantly manages the representation of their researcher-self in the field that is directly linked to their positionality.

Conducting fieldwork in Bangladesh, particularly along the northern region of the country, presented with the first dilemma regarding my positionality. I was born and raised in Rangpur, the northern division of the country. Thus, I was going to my 'field' as well as to my 'home' at the same time. 'Field' versus 'home' became a problematic distinction as it blurred the classic duality of 'entering' and 'exiting' the 'field' (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997). While Rangpur is one of the big cities in the country, it is not as urban as the capital Dhaka is. Moreover, historically within the greater Rangpur (the eight districts that the Rangpur division is consist of), there is a sense of regional coherence among the people as they share similar dialect, ways of life, and other subtle nuances that only a person born and raised in that region is thought to be able to appreciate. Thus, from being Rangpur easily made me one of 'us' among the research participants. Being sensitive to such a communal feeling, I recruited Morshed who was also from Rangpur and even was a student at the local university. Such positionality made us an 'insider'. In almost all the interviews, we were asked where we were from and our answer resulted in a silent nod of approval or a smile with 'oh, you are one of us' among the research participants. It made me a *deshi* just not in a sense that I was from the same country but was also from the same region. It facilitated me to gain rapport, to strike a conversation with a random person like the rickshaw puller we hired or a farmer working in the field, and to connect with countless references that the research participants pointed to within the conversations. However, I do not claim that such commonality made me a complete 'insider' among the research participants. I was, in Kirin Narayan's terms, a 'native' with complex backgrounds that sharply marked my differences from the research participants (Narayan, 1993). I could never be one simply because I was not one of the former enclave residents, I did not share the similar experiences of statelessness and violence. I was a class privileged regular Bangladeshi citizen who had been educated in one of the country's top universities, who was now going to a US institution for higher education, and above all who had been living in the capital city for more than a decade. I became the 'other' through my class privilege (Lal, 1996). Being acutely aware of my differences, I constantly negotiated my positionality. I became more selective on what clothes I would wear when I visited the former enclaves, I would always sit at the same level as my research participant(s). I would not say no to their generous offer of tea, and even sometimes

would chew betel nuts with them. It was a constant negotiation of positionality as Sultana has it ‘Such little actions, however mundane, are not insignificant’ (Sultana, 2007, p. 379). As a researcher my positionality was not fixed within the binary of insider/outsider rather shifted through the mutual construction of me as the researcher and my research participants (Nagar, 1997; Shewly, 2012). Such (dis)similarities occasionally turned me into an insider, an outsider, both, and none (Mullings, 1999).

Morshed and my gender identity as males posed one of the biggest challenges regarding interviewing women in the former enclaves. Dominated by Islamic and patriarchal values, especially in the rural areas of Bangladesh, many people believe that it is inappropriate for unrelated men and women to talk to each other (R. Jones, 2008a). Thus, every time I went to a household either the head of the family or another adult male would come and talk to me although females will be standing around when I interviewed them. In such cases, women would occasionally step in and comment but a full-fledged interview with a female in a regular household was almost impossible except two of my interviews. Rest of the females that I interviewed were either officials, school teachers, or public figures like local leaders.

Another similar limitation that my positionality caused was the religious identity I was attached, a Bangladeshi Muslim. It did not matter whether I personally was a believer in any particular religious belief, just being born in a Muslim family put me in the positionality of suspicion and doubt when I interviewed people from religious minority groups, especially Hindus. There is a latent tendency among many Muslims in Bangladesh to brand Hindus as ‘spies of India’ especially if they have a family member or friend living across the border. Therefore, anyone I interviewed, whose family member(s) had moved to India, were extra cautious and their answers were guarded. The first difficulty was to even convince them for an interview. They were reluctant to talk and, in many cases, when I asked for an interview, the answer was ‘What is there to talk with me? You already know better than me’. Even when I could convince them for an interview, their answers were on the surface and very generic in nature. For example, I came across a number of stories of Hindu families being victims of violence and mistreatment by local leaders and musclemen during my fieldwork. But even after repetitive assurance of absolute anonymity, most of the Hindu people I interviewed would not acknowledge such incident happening to them. The most common answer I got was ‘Yes, I heard

such incidents about X, but it did not happen to me'. My identity as a Muslim simply stood in my way to convince them in opening up, as I was already 'othered' as a 'Muslim' who could not be trusted with such personally sensitive information. Even my offer to stop audio recording was not successful in probing them to share such experiences, if any. I was only able to convince Nobanu in opening up after a long, and long it was, session of building rapport. Nobanu was also more confident in opening up because of his firm position in the society. He was economically well off and was an active board member of a local political party with connections that most of his fellow Hindu neighbors lacked.

While my positionality made me an 'other' in few cases such as those mentioned above, in most cases, my presence was accepted as a *deshi*. Where I was from, how I looked, how I talked positioned me 'as an acceptable outsider doing "useful" research' (Sultana, 2007, p. 379). At the same time, such acceptance as a *deshi* and nature of my research resulted in a sociable image of me that called for personal curiosity and questions. Often my research participants were not shy about asking how much money I make in my job, who is paying me for doing the research, how much money I would get after I finish the research, how is life in the US and so forth. Thus, skillfully answering such questions without offending the research participant, listening to what they had to say rather than what I was interested in was a large part of the constant negotiation of different positionalities to fit myself in the given moment (Moore, 2009; Sultana, 2007). Not only was it a struggle of fitting in within the given situation but it was also a tussle between my positionality as a 'researcher' and a 'sympathetic' human being. As England acknowledges, I must too, there were moments when I was sympathetically listening to the struggles of the research participants and concurrently was thinking how great a quote this might be for my paper (England, 1994)! Therefore, it must be asserted that because of my positionality, among many other reasons, it has not been a comprehensive representation of life in the former enclaves and most importantly, it was never my intention either. Thus, this dissertation research remains a partial, positionality driven subjective representation of the former enclave residents inside Bangladesh. It ultimately has been a hierarchical relationship between the research participants and me as I was the one to finally decide what information to present and what to omit (Nagar, 2002; Sprague, 2005; Wasserfall, 1993).

Reflexivity

Being conscious and reflecting back on how the researcher's positionality might (have) affect(ed) the research is simply what is understood as reflexivity. Particularly in ethnographic research, researchers are 'displaced' persons who have to first see and then speak, thus 'they go to the field as "strangers" and draws on the situation to decide on questions' (Katz, 1994, p. 68). Therefore, being reflective of the situation both while in the field and writing ethnography remains a crucial aspect of the research. Being reflexive allows the researcher to challenge pre-given categories and narratives, and at the same time, opens up 'the research to more complex and nuanced understanding of issues, where boundaries between process and content can get blurred' (Sultana, 2007, p. 376). Reflexivity is also an integral part of how the researcher inserts him/herself within the web of power relations and how that affects methods, interpretations, and knowledge production (Kobayashi, 2003).

Therefore, during both my time in the field and writing about research participants, I have been constantly reflective of what I observed, how I talked, how I positioned myself within a certain interaction, how my presence was being perceived, and most importantly how all of these influenced the entire research. Instead of seeing reflexivity as 'ticking boxes to fulfil some criteria', I delved into understanding how I reached my results by critically interrogating my work on a regular basis (Behar, 1996, p. 13). For instance, right after every encounter with my research participants, Morshed and I would have a brief chat on what went right, what went wrong, and what could have been done better. And at the end of day's work, usually in the evenings or nights Morshed and I would carefully cross check our notes that helped us to unearth what was said with what meaning and purpose by the participant(s) (Crang & Cook, 2007). I offer an example during the earlier phase of my fieldwork with a local leader, to elaborate further. While having a discussion on the alleged corruption of the local political leaders, a poorly timed question abruptly changed the direction and mood of the interview. After that question, the leader's answers became more guarded and aggressive. The mood of the room was clearly not comfortable anymore. He disagreed to be audio recorded any longer, so I turned off the recorder. After this, the leader started being more personal with occasional demeaning comments about researchers who 'think they know everything'. Neither Morshed nor I had any doubt about the gravity of such an incident and called off the day's work. We had a long discussion reflecting on the interview at that night in our hotel room. After playing the recorded

portion of the interview several times and careful considerations, we came to make a list of certain issues and questions to be addressed tactfully with further sensitivity. Such incidents certainly made me more introspective in thinking about and through questions like ‘how do I hope participants will understand me?’ (Gengler & Ezzell, 2018, p. 827). At the same time shaped me being a better ‘identity manager as much as [a] data gatherer’ (Harrington, 2003, p. 618).

Reflexivity played a central role in both choosing research participants and conducting interviews. I chose my respondents using three major techniques. First, to validate certain newspaper reports, vulnerabilities, and previous research findings I purposefully chose some of my respondents. For instance, the families that split in deciding either to stay in or leave the host country were purposefully chosen. Second, accidental sampling technique to interview farmers, fishermen, businesspeople, shopkeepers and others who live and move through the former enclaves on a regular basis. Third, snowballing to follow up stories, incidents, and significant events that I learnt from my interviews using the other two techniques. Having a focus on events and situations that were brought up during interviews, and reflecting upon them opened many new avenues of investigations that I had not considered before. In addition, using a loosely structured checklist as opposed to a structured set of questions allowed the interviews to be more reflexive. While I used the checklist to guide me through the conversation following broader themes, I did not ask the same questions to everyone. Instead, questions following up on the respondent’s answer were my primary source for the next step in the conversation. Instead of ‘talking with’, such a technique allowed me to ‘talk to’ the research participant on the one hand and on the other, it enabled a real time reflexivity in the interactions I had with my research participants (Nagar, 2002, p. 183). As Tim Rapley has it, ‘This is a central rationale of qualitative interviewing — *that it enables you to gather contrasting and complementary talk on the same theme or issue*’ (Rapley, 2004, p. 18 emphasis in original).

Not only personal reflexivity, Kevin Ward and Martin Jones (1999) also call for ‘theoretical reflexivity’ when engaging in ethnographic research. Drawing insights from Giddens’s idea of structuration (1984), they pay specific attention to the agency of the researcher and the researched. They attempt to ‘structurate’ research agency by considering both personal and theoretical reflexivity (Ward & Jones, 1999, p. 309). Following Maureen Cain (1990), they understand theoretical reflexivity as the process of constructing new kinds of theoretical

perspectives (Ward & Jones, 1999). At the same time, they suggest researchers to be more sensitive to the duality of structure and agency through the process of research. In both senses, theoretical reflexivity has been a central concern of this dissertation research. Individual chapters are theoretically reflexive in the sense they not only engage with existing theoretical stand points but also situate the people and the phenomena within the site(s) it finds themselves in (Cain, 1990). Consequently, the dissertation research, both personally and theoretically, led the reflexive 'I' within me to a journey of continuous new insights that just reconfirmed what England already had suggested, a researcher is not 'an impersonal machine' (England, 1994, p. 82).

Uncertainties and challenges in the field

Every ethnographic fieldwork has its own uncertainties and challenges merely because the researcher is not in control of the research site, they simply insert themselves within the site. At the same time, numerous challenges arise depending on the nature of the research and its 'sensitivity', based on where the research is being conducted, and how the research participant perceive the researcher. When I conducted my fieldwork, the enclaves did not exist anymore, they were regular Bangladeshi territories. Yet, their sensitivity was not fully undone because of their close proximity to the international border between Bangladesh and India, their sensitive history, and special attention of the state. They were spaces that probe anxiety and tension among the state officials. As a result, many of the government officials like the UNO and the chairman mentioned earlier avoided an interview, sometimes a request of interview was denied, and other times I got carefully guarded answers. Although, the government gazettes and notices are public documents, in many cases, I was not allowed to access them. However, unlike Jason Cons I was not directly denied, rather was occasionally avoided tactfully as I was told that the officer was not able to locate the file among the piles of the documents in the store (Cons, 2016). The most common incident after an interview with government officials were a casual request to not write something that 'hurts the image of the country'. For instance, I was trying to schedule an interview with a medical officer in one of the upazilas that hosted the former enclaves. I visited him and requested for an interview at his convenient time. He was reluctant and told me to contact later. I personally knew his superior officer and used that connection to schedule an interview later with the officer. This time, the officer was warm and welcoming. He offered me tea and snacks as well. However, his answers remained extremely guarded and on the surface. At

the end of the interview, when I turned off the recorder and was about to leave, he told me ‘Remember, this is your country too. Please do not write anything that would hurt the image of the country’. Although, I was able to overcome some of the challenges of access by using personal networks, in many cases, they resulted in interviews where the participant was already over conscious regarding not to share any information about a ‘sensitive’ issue that apparently could ‘hurt the image of the country’.

Over attention and lack of privacy presented another challenge both to my participant observation and conducting of interviews. As the former enclaves were small in size and almost everyone knew everyone, the moment Morshed and I entered the enclaves, we immediately attracted people’s attention. Random people would stop us and ask who we are, why we were there, where we were staying, and such questions. In many cases, they would insist on having a cup of tea with them in the local tea stall where they would introduce us to their friends and neighbors who were already in that tea stall. By the first couple of days, almost the entire enclave would know about us, if not having already seen us. Such over attention resulted in a lack of privacy during the interviews. In a majority of the cases, either we were already followed by a few people on our way to some one’s house or within the first five to ten minutes in an interview, a group of people would show up including the neighbors. As Reece Jones has it, ‘the idea of privacy is somewhat foreign’ in sharing his experiences of conducting fieldwork in Bangladesh, I conducted a majority of my interviews in presence of other people because not another venue was available (R. Jones, 2008a, p. 220). Although, such situation raises serious questions regarding the genuineness of the participant’s answers, people were surprisingly candid as such public discussions are very common, and most of them shared similar experiences having to live in the enclaves.



Figure 12 Over attention from the people during interviews

The other challenge was to interview women who were not officials or public figures. As mentioned earlier, it is not common for women especially in rural Bangladesh to talk to unrelated men. While such a custom made it smooth for Morshed and I to walk around and talk to other males in the enclaves, it resulted in a less gendered perspective in my data. Although one might think recruiting a female research assistant would have facilitate conversation with women, it was not a suitable solution. Being familiar with the local norms and drawing on Jones's experience, I knew it would cause more trouble than provide a solution (R. Jones, 2008a). It was highly likely to raise questions about the relationship between the female research assistant and the researcher. At the same time, for a female in Bangladesh, staying in a hotel without a family member like the husband or the father accompanying would prove to be more problematic especially in the rural areas.

An ethical concern needs attention as it was not possible to strictly follow in the field. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Internal Review Board (IRB) demands written consent of the respondents who were interviewed. But in the former enclaves it proved to be impractical as most of the people do not know how to read and write. Moreover, signing a written form is perceived to be a huge issue that makes people suspicious about the researcher's intention (Zaman & Nahar, 2011). Thus, verbal consent was sought before the interviews and were only recorded with the participants' permission. These are the ethical concerns that according to

Sultana 'are not captured in the "good" ethical guidelines of institutional paperwork, but have to be negotiated and grappled on a daily basis in the field' (Sultana, 2007, p. 379).

Conclusion

A reflexive fieldwork (analysis) must take into account of the production of knowledge, the intersubjective experience of both the researcher and the research participants, the shifting contexts, and social situatedness of the researcher in terms of their gender, race, sexuality and social differences. A critical aspect of the research is also to ask questions such as who is it being written for by who with what purpose (Nagar, 2002)? Therefore, ethnographic research could be anything but impersonal. As England has it, 'The researcher cannot conveniently tuck away the personal behind the professional, because fieldwork *is* personal' (England, 1994, p. 85 emphasis on original). Ethnographic research is not only about the researcher but also is equally about the research participants and their identities. Such identities must be seriously considered as they emerge through the research process. As a result, for research participants to have meaningful roles in the research, we must pay attention to the power, knowledge, and truth claims that are constantly negotiated (Domosh, 2003).

In this methods appendix, I have demonstrated the challenges faced during the field work along the border of Bangladesh and India both due to the 'sensitivity' of my research topic and my positionality. I have also situated myself within and through the research to demonstrate how the research project might have been affected both in the field and in presenting the results. However, I further illuminated numerous tactics that I adopted in dealing with such positionality. In so doing, I have been reflexive of my own positionality and daily interactions with the research participants. I have reflected back on what research participants meant even if they had not pronounced it by paying thorough attention to the subtle nuances of conversations with them. Such reflexivity allowed me to be more politically engaged, materially grounded, and institutionally sensitive (Nagar, 2002).

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