Religion-marked Spaces and Memories of Violence in Mumbai

Inhabiting and Remembering

Sumanya Anand Velamur

Thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)
University of Bergen, Norway
2022

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

Religion-marked Spaces and Memories of Violence in Mumbai

Inhabiting and Remembering

Sumanya Anand Velamur

Thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)
at the University of Bergen

Date of defense: 10.06.2022

© Copyright Sumanya Anand Velamur

The material in this publication is covered by the provisions of the Copyright Act.

Year: 2022

Title: Religion-marked Spaces and Memories of Violence in Mumbai

Name: Sumanya Anand Velamur

Print: Skipnes Kommunikasjon / University of Bergen

Acknowledgements

The greatest share of my debt is owed to my interlocutors, who have generously shared their time and lives with me. Quite literally, this thesis would not have been possible without them. The city of Bombay/Mumbai has been and continues to be an inspiration like no other.

I thank István Keul and Michael Stausberg for providing a mid-career professional with this opportunity. They introduced me to the world of European academia and encouraged me to explore ideas that would have been fleeting in ordinary circumstances. In this, the University of Bergen and the academic staff at the Department at Archaeology, History, Culture Studies, and Religion have been equally complicit, and my gratitude is due to them as well. I am grateful to the late Arne Mykkeltveit, who was kind enough to pick up the lost Indian at Bergen Airport in 2015. In the department administration, I am indebted to Anna Lisa Arefjord, Torunn Saunes, and Sarah Hordvik for patiently helping me through Norwegian bureaucracy. A special thanks is due to Grethe Bruvoll whose warmth made the Norwegian winter bearable.

The Mumbai Project and scholars associated with it, Martin Fuchs, Raminder Kaur, Gopika Solanki, and Heinz Werner Wesler have contributed immensely to chapter drafts of this thesis. For their invaluable comments on early drafts, I am also grateful to my PhD colleagues at the department, Anna Charlotta Österberg, Jane Skjoldli, Knut Aukland, Håkon Naasen Tandberg, Michael Hertzberg, and Konsta Kaikkonen. I have also received exceptional feedback at several junctures from senior colleagues in the department including Håkan Rydving and Marie von der Lippe. This thesis has benefitted greatly from sessions with Professors Nancy Ammerman and Abby Day and PhD colleagues, Julia Kuhlin, Liudmila Nikanorov, and May-Lisbeth Brew, all associated with the Religion, Values, and Society research group. I am deeply obliged to Abdullah Imteyaz Ahmad (Professor in Department of Urdu), Jamshed Ahmed (Professor in Department of Arabic), and Tabish Khan (Post Doctoral fellow in Department of Urdu) at Mumbai University, who met me over an afternoon, to discuss ماحول (*māhaul*). I am grateful for comments for parts of my thesis by Professors Nida

Kirmani, Ghazala Jamil, Rashna Poncha, Jesse Palsetia, and Kathinka Frøystad, who were kind enough to give my chapters a fair reading and suggest improvement. Sucharita Kanjilal was a reassuring last-minute reader, and I am grateful for her inputs. I am indebted to Sharvari Shastry and Nikita Gandhi for their insights during the revisions. I must thank Sanam Solutions for proofreading several drafts of my thesis.

I owe a great deal to teachers Jennie Mendes and Aninha Lobo for nurturing my academic interests; and Anjali Kanitkar, Helen Joseph, and Ulka Mahajan for making my personal political. I thank Anita Patil Deshmukh for nudging me in this direction. Tania Tauro and Madhu J must take credit for eliciting from me a feasible research proposal one evening at a café. Rucha Chandvankar has been an indispensable force in guiding this thesis, right from helping design my interview schedule and suggesting readings to commenting on drafts of my chapters. Shachi Phadke's assistance with Marathi translations, processing field visits, and discussing ideas has played a vital role in this work. I am blessed to have Marinha Fernandes' undying confidence in my abilities. To Cherie Ann Pereira and Anabel da Gama, I am grateful for the gentle, ferocious women they are, always inspiring through example. Beroz Cooper, Tushna Contractor, Trupti Srinivasan, Godawari Singh, Laxmi Singh, and Marise Fernandes, I will always be grateful to their banter and their compassionate support through the years. To Reshma Ludbe, Shahazade Akhtar, Anil Kumar Valmiki, and Rohan Chavan, I am happy for unconditional friendships and help during fieldwork. I am grateful to Sayyed Mohammad Yunus for giving me a patient and quick explanation on Islam-related concepts. Reva Yunus has been a source of comfort and reassurance throughout the process. I am grateful to Basma Fatima for being my social life in Lisbon and traversing the long distance from تَکلّف (formality) to بے وَقُوف (silliness) in a short time. My Bharatanatyam teacher Amrit Akolkar and my Kalaripayatu teachers, Belraj Soni and Dilna Sreedhar for helping keep the body and mind active and focussed.

Bergen was home for some time. I am happy to have had fantastic company at lunch with Bruno Abreu da Costa, Konsta Kaikkonen, Thomas Slettebø, Åsmund Gjerde, Tomas Larsen Høiesæter, Magnus Halsnes, Asger Hougaard, Moa Airijoki, Kristoffer

Økland, and others. My office space would have been very uninviting were it not for them. Discussing life, PhD, India, Norway, and Portugal over coffee and cake with Bruno was a pleasure. Jane's unique combination of kindness and intelligence has meant a lot to me during my days in Bergen and my subsequent days of writing. Life would have been a lot less colourful without my part-Desi officemate, Charlotta. In Jannie Idsal I found an understanding neighbour and a steadfast friend. In Oslo, I discovered an ally in Moumita who commiserated with me on being a brown woman in Norwegian academia.

COVID-induced lockdown would have been unbearable had it not been for Table Tennis with Ruchira Arakal; outings at the park with Sana Sheikh; good food and good times with Rajesh Aerat and Sangeeta Menon. To Sangeeta, my neighbourhood political ally, I owe a special debt of gratitude for keeping me in the straight and narrow. There is no knowing if this thesis would have seen light of day without her patient counsel.

Members of my family have been very encouraging. I am grateful to the pragmatism of my maternal grandmother, Ambu, whose "ஸர்தான்" (a Tamil phrase used much like the English dismissive "ok, then!" or "yeah, right!) reflected a self-assuredness that I wish I could emulate. To my paternal grandmother, Rukki, I am grateful for her gumption and raw intelligence. My aunt Prathima, "Aunt Jo," was my first feminist role model and I could not have asked for a better one. To my cousin, Radhika, I am so grateful to have had a home in Europe other than my own and a compassionate ear whenever I needed one. I am thankful for her constant cheerleading since 1983.

My sister, Arundhati, always found structural causes for my problems, an important exercise in assigning responsibility that helped me overcome debilitating inaction. Her intense love has been a great source of strength. Finally, I thank my parents to whom I also dedicate this thesis. They have pored over every word of every draft. To them I owe so many of my thoughts that have found voice in this thesis. Their critical minds have introduced me to worlds both within and beyond their ken. Thank you for the माहौल (atmosphere*).*

To Amma and Appa

One taught me to care for people

The other taught me to care for peoples

Abstract

Mumbai (erstwhile Bombay) is home to several religion-based segregated spaces, particularly of minority religions. In an ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2015-2018, I explore the relationship that inhabitants of such spaces have with the space they reside in and what memory narratives of violence circulate within these spaces. I chose three different minority religion-based segregated spaces or what I call religion-marked spaces; Mumbra with a Muslim majority; Dadar Parsi Colony with a Zoroastrian majority; and Gautam Nagar, a Dalit–Buddhist majority space. I chose two incidents of violence that took place in the '90s in Mumbai, the Bombay riots of 1992-93 and the Ramabai Nagar massacre of 1997, to study the memories of violence.

The term "ghetto" is often used in the context of Muslim spatial segregation and Dalit spatial segregation both in academic as well as popular literature. In an overhaul of the term, I argue for its reconceptualization to accommodate different dynamics in the production of minority segregation in the Indian urban landscape. In this reimagination, I abandon the use of the term in isolation and instead, conceive of it in conjunction with the Hindi/Urdu, *māhaul*, that is often used by inhabitants of Mumbai (and my interlocutors) to describe the areas they live in. *Māhaul* differs across space and time. It serves to delimit spaces while at the same time diffusing around to exist at varying levels of intensity. It accounts for individual variations in experiences within a neighbourhood. It accounts for the multiculturalism within a locality. It allows us to comprehend space from the perspective of inhabitants. Through a semantic exploration of the word, I conceive of the *māhaul* as referring to physical surroundings, spatial culture, and habitus. That is, *māhaul* refers to the material dimensions of space, the culture within, and the dispositions engendered by the space. When ghetto is used as an adjective for *māhaul*, the term "ghetto *māhaul*" captures the different processes that lead to the formation of different minority religion-marked spaces. A ghetto *māhaul* is characterized by the religious *māhaul*, *pañcāyati māhaul*, and the safe *māhaul*. A religion-marked area provides an experience of safety within one's own community leading to the safe *māhaul.* The religious *māhaul* refers to the preponderance of a particular religious culture within a religion-marked space. A *pañcāyati māhaul* refers

to the experience of surveillance. Finally, I argue that while all three religion-marked spaces demonstrate a ghetto *māhaul* to some extent, Mumbra and Gautam Nagar additionally exhibit a place-based precarity that is not encountered in Dadar Parsi Colony. This place-based precarity is experienced through boundary-making strategies that describe disgusting spaces especially when perceived from outside. Place-based precarity has different manifestations; in Mumbra it manifests as victimized place-based precarity and in Gautam Nagar, it manifests as empowering place-based precarity.

Memories of the two violent events differ across the three spaces in two ways. First, the quantity of memories that each of the events inspire occupy a rather large range. Second, the kind of memories (very often determined by the point of the interview at which they occur) differ considerably across the three spaces. With this context, I identify five different aspects of memories of violence. First, flashbulb memories (Brown and Kulik, 1977) are those that describe what the individuals were engaged in when they received the news of the violence. Second, first-hand experiences of direct violence refer to those memories where interlocutors describe personal experiences of direct violence. Third, Lifestone memories are those that emerged at points in the interview to indicate life transitions. Fourth, intergenerational memories refer to those that are transmitted from one generation to another. And finally, I group as absent memories all those instances where interlocutors declared they did not remember anything. Employing a narrative analytical strategy, I argue that the memories from Mumbra and Gautam Nagar must be seen within the framework of place-based precarity. In contrast, I argue that the data from Dadar Parsi Colony provides a launching pad to write an oral history of space and violence of the Colony that is locally specific and rooted in Bombay Parsi identity.

In sum, this thesis demonstrates the complexity of the term ghetto used in the Indian urban context. It includes the concept of place-based precarity within the discussion of the term ghetto. It advocates analyses of memories of violence within the context of this place-based precarity. Finally, it demonstrates through a localized oral history how memories of violence intersect with historical trajectories and spatial identities.

Contents

Acknowledgements 5

Abstract 11

Contents 13

Table of Figures 17

Part I: Introduction and Methodology 19

1. Chapter 1: A case for religion-marked spaces in Mumbai 21

1.1 Introduction 21

1.2 Cosmopolitan Mumbai? 23

1.3 Conceptualizing Religion-marked Spaces 27

1.3.1 Concepualizing Religion 28

1.3.2 Conceptualizing Space 32

1.3.3 Religion-marked space 34

1.4 Conceptualizing Violence 37

1.5 Literature Review 38

1.5.1 The Study of Segregated Spaces in Indian cities 40

1.5.2 Study of spatial aspects of memories of violence 46

1.6 Summary and chapter outline 52

2. Chapter 2: Research Methodology 55

2.1 Introduction 55

2.2 A multi-sited ethnography in the making 56

2.2.1 Evolution of the research design 56

2.2.2 Why multi-sited ethnography? 58

2.3 Presenting the field 61

2.3.1 Mumbai 61

2.3.2 Dadar Parsi Colony 66

2.3.3 Mumbra 73

2.3.4 Gautam Nagar 82

2.4 Violent Incidents in Mumbai 85

2.4.1 The Bombay Riots, 1992–1993 ... 88
2.4.2 The Ramabai Nagar massacre 1997 ... 90
2.4.3 Two instances of religious violence ... 91

2.5 Doing fieldwork: data collection, analysis, and writing ... 93

2.5.1 Data Collection ... 94

2.6 Reflexivity: positionality, power, and representation ... 106

2.6.1 Researcher Identity ... 109
2.6.2 Reflexivity across spaces ... 110
2.6.3 Reflexivity vis-à-vis interlocutors ... 116

2.7 Conclusion ... 122

Part II: Interrogating Space in Religion-marked Spaces ... 125

3. Chapter 3: Māhaul here and māhaul there ... 127

3.1 Introduction ... 127

3.2 What is *Māhaul*? ... 128

3.2.1 *Māhaul* in conversations ... 129
3.2.2 *Māhaul*—a semantic analysis ... 133

3.3 The Multilingual Field ... 144

3.4 *Māhaul*: A conceptual tool to understand space ... 146

3.4.1 *Māhaul* as spatial culture ... 147
3.4.2 *Māhaul* as surroundings ... 151
3.4.3 *Māhaul* as Habitus ... 155

3.5 *Māhaul* in the study of space and religion in Mumbai ... 161

3.6 Conclusion ... 162

4. Chapter 4: Ghetto māhaul ... 165

4.1 Introduction ... 165

4.2 Why ghetto? ... 166

4.2.1 History of ghetto in Europe and America ... 168
4.2.2 The Ghetto in India ... 171

***4.3* The ghetto *māhaul* ... 179**

4.3.1 The safe *māhaul* ... 181
4.3.2 The *pañcāyatī māhaul* ... 185

4.3.3 The religious *māhaul* ... 191

4.4 Conclusion ... **196**

5. Chapter 5: Māhaul boundaries, disgust, and precarity ... ***199***

5.1 Introduction ... **199**

5.2 *Māhauls* and boundaries ... **201**

5.3 Boundaries circumscribing spaces of disgust ... **208**

5.4 Experiencing place-based precarity ... **220**

5.4.1 The victimized place-based precarity in Mumbra ... 222

5.4.2 The empowering potential of precarity in Gautam Nagar ... 228

5.5 Conclusion ... **239**

Part III: Memories of Violence in Religion-marked Spaces ... ***241***

6. Chapter 6: Memories of violence ... ***243***

6.1 Introduction ... **243**

6.2 The study of memory ... **244**

6.3 Differential spatial memories ... **246**

6.3.1 Flashbulb memories ... 247

6.3.2 First-hand experiences of violence ... 251

6.3.3 Lifestone memories ... 253

6.3.4 Intergenerational memories ... 255

6.3.5 Absent memories ... 256

6.4 A narrative approach to memories ... **259**

6.4.1 The interview context ... 265

6.4.2 Biographical sketch and analysis ... 266

6.4.3 Thematic field analysis ... 267

6.5 Conclusion ... **277**

7. Chapter 7: Place-based precarity and memories of violence ... ***279***

7.1 Introduction ... **279**

7.2 Place-based precarity and memories of violent events ... **281**

7.2.1 Mumbra's Kaneez: Being followed by a place-based precarity ... 286

7.2.2 Gautam Nagar's Nalin: *Brahmanvad* and the mobilizing potential of place-based precarity . 298

7.3 Conclusion **305**

8. Chapter 8: Dadar Parsi Colony ***307***

8.1 Introduction **307**

8.2 Towards a local oral history of Dadar Parsi Colony **308**

8.3 Bombay's Dadar Parsi Colony **316**

8.3.1 Mancherji Edulji Joshi 319

8.3.2 The vision 323

8.4 Narratives of violence **334**

8.4.1 A peaceful space 336

8.4.2 An exemplary minority space 340

8.4.3 The Palamkote Hall Myth 346

8.5 Conclusion **357**

Part IV: Conclusion ***359***

9. Chapter 9: "Curioser and curioser!" ***361***

9.1 Introduction **361**

9.2 New insights **361**

9.3 New horizons **366**

Appendix 1: Interlocutors' Fictional name, Age and Sex ***369***

Appendix 2: Interview Guides ***373***

References ***387***

Table of Figures

Figure 1 Map of Mumbai showing the locations of Gautam Nagar, Dadar Parsi Colony, and Mumbra vis-à-vis my location in Kanjurmarg.................................... 65
Figure 2:The putlā, Bust of Mancherji Edulji Joshi. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur. 66
Figure 3: Mancherji Joshi Chowk, PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur 66
Figure 4: Map of Dadar Parsi Colony (shaded area) with landmarks. Map not to scale. (Google Maps, Google, 2021)... 68
Figure 5: One gate of the Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens, F (North). PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur 69
Figure 6: The Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur........... 69
Figure 7: Sohrab Palamkote Hall. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur 70
Figure 8: Entrance of Rustom Faramna Agiary. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur....... 71
Figure 9:View of Agiary gate with Plaque announcing the crossroads. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur 71
Figure 10: Entrance to Rustom Tirandaz Triangle Park. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur... 72
Figure 11: Inside view of Rustom Tirandaz Triangle Park. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur... 72
Figure 12: As you enter Mumbra when you come from Mumbai, a selfie point greets you, proclaiming love for Mumbra. To the right you can see busts of a host of Maharashtrian heroes, including Tilak, Ambedkar, and Shivaji, with the legend jay Maharashtra, victory to Maharashtra. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur..................... 73
Figure 13: Map of Mumbra (with black border) with landmarks. Map not to scale. (Google Maps, Google, 2021)... 75
Figure 14: The elevated platform outside Mumbra station where battle tank Vaijayanti once stood. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur.. 77
Figure 15: A gateway to Mumbra railway station is a giant structure shaped like the letter M. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur.. 78
Figure 16: People walk by the gates of Mumbra Police Station nestled between the trees. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur 79

Figure 17: Mumbra Fire Station. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur.............................80
Figure 18: Darul falah mosque undergoing renovation. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur 81
Figure 19: Map of Gautam Nagar (black border) with landmarks. Map not to scale. (Google Maps, Google, 2021) 83
Figure 20: The Takshshila Buddhavihar. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur 84
Figure 21: Shivaji, Buddha and Ambedkar share the dias inside the Buddhavihar. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur..84
Figure 22: Early morning on April 14th, 2017, the stage is set for the celebrations. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur...97
Figure 23: Semantic tree demonstrating synonyms of Māhaul within the context of akash. Adapted from Brihad Samantar Kosh (Kumar, A. and Kumar, K., 2013). All English meanings taken from McGregor, 1993...135
Figure 24: Semantic tree demonstrating synonyms of māhaul within the context of paristhitī. Adapted from Brihad Samantar Kosh (Kumar, A. and Kumar, K., 2013). All Engligh meanings taken from McGregor, 1993. 136
Figure 25: Summary of differential spatial memories across the three spaces 259
Figure 26: Screenshot of @dadarparsicolony_dpc Instagram handle 327
Figure 27: Screenshot of @dadarparsicolony_dpc instagram handle.......................327
Figure 28: Screenshot of @dadarparsicolony_dpc Instagram handle 328
Figure 29: A post from @dadarparsicolony_dpc Instagram handle.........................328
Figure 30: A post from the @dadarparsicolony Instagram handle..........................329
Figure 31: A post from the @dadarparsicolony showing an ariel view of the five gardens..329
Figure 32: Screenshot of @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle.......331
Figure 33: Screenshot of architectural heritage of the Colony in the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle 331
Figure 34: A post on the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle 332
Figure 35: A post on the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle 332
Figure 36: A post on the @macherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle 333
Figure 37: A post on the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony instagram handle 333

Part I: Introduction and Methodology

1. Chapter 1: A case for religion-marked spaces in Mumbai

An Introduction

1.1 Introduction

One afternoon in early 2017, I arranged to meet a contact in Kamraj Nagar. Kamraj Nagar lies on the eastern side of the Eastern Express Highway at the junction of Chembur and Ghatkopar. I had already started interviews in Mumbra and Dadar Parsi Colony but was yet to finalize a Dalit[1]–Buddhist space. I was at my wits' end as several contacts had fallen through. My contact at Kamraj Nagar, let us call him Sandeep[2], asked me to meet him at the autorickshaw stand across the Eastern Express Highway from Kamraj Nagar. On the phone I had briefed him about my project and had asked him if I could visit Kamraj Nagar and determine if it fits my research purposes.

Sandeep spent three hours showing me around Kamraj Nagar. Kamraj Nagar is what is called a slum[3]. A central unpaved road ran through the middle and small *galīs*[4] (lanes, alleys)—so narrow that only one person can walk through at a time—ran across the unpaved central road. Down the central road, I came across two churches, two mosques, and more than three different temples. Sandeep, a political worker allied with a national political party, took me through the *galīs* and introduced me to residents. He would then leave me to talk to people. Once he asked me again to describe my project

[1] Dalit is the preferred name of the erstwhile untouchable caste which forms the lowest rung of the caste hierarchy. The untouchable caste were traditionally relegated to menial jobs and were not allowed to participate equally in public life, including being denied access to education and livelihood options. The Dalit community in Maharashtra was organized and led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who also led the community in a mass conversion to Buddhism, a political and emancipatory move to discard the exploitative yoke of Hindu caste society. These converts are called *Baudh* or Dalit–Buddhists or Neo-buddhists, referring to the new emancipatory version of Buddhism that Ambedkar called Navayana Buddhism.

[2] All names of interlocutors and other actors in the field have been changed to retain the confidentiality and privacy of the interlocutors.

[3] Here, I use slum as an administrative category used by the Government of India. It is an important marker in the census for housing development. In essence, for administrative purposes, the slum is an urban spatial entity that is characterized by poor public services, congested living spaces, lack of infrastructure, that may or may not be regulated. It is necessarily a space of socioeconomic deprivation and requires administrative attention. (Yadav and Bhagat, 2017)

[4] At first appearance all Hindi words have been explained in parenthesis next to where they occur.

again. In Hindi, I repeated that I wanted to study spaces in Mumbai in which a majority of residents belonged to one religion. Sandeep shook his head incredulously, “You will not find such spaces in Mumbai. Look, in Kamraj Nagar, people of all religions live together. There are Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, North Indians, Tamilians like you, and Maharashtrians. This is Mumbai. We are not divided along religious lines.” I nodded. “Yes, it does seem like Kamraj Nagar is not the kind of space I want to study.” He retorted, “But there is no such space in Mumbai.” I abandoned my non-committal stance because it seemed like he was exhorting me to engage with him on this. I said, “Well, I have started work in Mumbra and Dadar Parsi Colony. Don’t they signify as Muslim majority and Parsi majority spaces?” He thought a while and said, “I suppose that’s true. But then those are very different from places like Kamraj Nagar.” (Fieldnotes, Kamraj Nagar, 2017, January 23)

While I abandoned Kamraj Nagar for precisely this reason, it serves as a good launching pad to discuss what I mean by religion-marked spaces. Sandeep points to an important idea that dominates the public imagination of Mumbai, that Mumbai is popularly regarded as cosmopolitan[5] (Patel, 1995). When he vociferously denied the existence of spaces with a majority of residents belonging to one religion, he emphasized the image of Mumbai as a cosmopolitan (indeed possibly the most cosmopolitan) city in the country, with religion relegated to the backseat in everyday interactions.

Is Mumbai spatially cosmopolitan? While the city might be inherently diverse, do cross sections of localities, neighbourhoods, and spaces reflect this diversity or do they tend to be homogenous? To answer this question, a brief history of the ethnic make-up of the city and the contestations over space is warranted. Significantly, it is important to situate this discussion within the context of the research questions that drive this thesis. Through this dissertation, I seek to answer two overarching questions.

[5] Patel (1995) refers to cosmopolitan to mean diverse and mixed. Like Menon and Adarkar (2004, p. 13) who claim that “Bombay’s cosmopolitan character emerged in the late nineteenth century and was marked by diversity, hybridity, secularism, distanced from caste and religious particularisms and, many times, transcending these differences.” It is in this manner that I believe Sandeep uses the word cosmopolitan.

1. How do people living in religion-marked spaces in Mumbai relate to the space they live in? How do they conceive of the space? What do they like about it? What do they dislike about it? How do they compare it with other spaces in the city?
2. How do people living in religion-marked spaces in Mumbai remember incidents of religious violence? What are the narratives that circulate about such incidents within the area? How do these narratives compare with those from other areas?

These two questions beg an explication of what I mean by religion-marked spaces as well as a discussion on violence in Mumbai. In the following section, I provide a brief history of Mumbai's ethnic diversity and spatial contestations. Next, I discuss what I mean by religion-marked spaces within the context of my research questions. The rest of the chapter engages with a literature review to locate my research in a larger body of academic explorations involving religion, space, and violence in Mumbai. I conclude with a chapter outline of this thesis.

1.2 Cosmopolitan Mumbai?

The cosmopolitan character attributed to Mumbai has its roots in the British colonial project, when the city was no more than an archipelago of seven fishing islands, Colaba, Little Colaba, Bombay, Mazagaon, Parel, Mahim, and Warli, known as the Seven Islands of Bombay. At that time, the islands were home to the Kolis, Pathare Prabhus, Palshis, Panchkalshis, Bandaris, Vadvals, Bhois, Agris, and Brahmins, the original inhabitants[6]. Prior to the British colonial establishment, the Portuguese made significant contributions to Bombay's demography through the introduction of Christianity in Mumbai, successfully converting whole villages of the original inhabitants to Catholicism. These are the East Indians, called so to differentiate them from the people of the West Indies. With the East India Company's takeover of the islands in the latter half of the seventeenth century, incentives to encourage immigration into Bombay, like a five-year tax holiday in 1670 and a promise of ethnic

[6] For a brief and comprehensive history of the ethnic composition of Mumbai/Bombay, refer to Poncha (2018a).

harmony were given to encourage immigrants to set base in Bombay (David, 2018, p.16). This brought the Parsis, Armenians, Jews, Dawoodi Boras, Gujarati Banias, and Brahmins from Salsette[7] to Bombay. In the short span of time between 1661 to 1675, the population of Bombay increased from 10,000 to 60,000 (Poncha, 2018a, p.9). The population of the city continued to burgeon over the course of the next century, and Bombay became home to a variety of new immigrant communities, including Rajasthani Bhatias, Goud Saraswat Brahmins from the Konkan, and ironsmiths and weavers from Gujarat, among others (David, 2018). In the nineteenth century, Bombay's fate was inextricably linked to the trade in opium and cotton, and it is to this that Bombay owes her ascendancy as a powerful global city (Farooqui, 1996). Expansion continued undeterred during this time. In a span of little more than 30 years (ranging from 1827 to 1865), Bombay's population increased from 230,000 to 816,000, attesting to a growing economy (Dossal, 1995, p. 96). However, Bombay was subjected to the vagaries of a global economy. Consequently, when the American Civil War ended and Bombay's textile industry suffered losses, the population once again dipped to 644,405 in 1872 (Kidambi, 2007, p. 22). These dynamic demographic changes point to the significance of the immigrant population in Bombay in the nineteenth century: "according to census figures for 1891, just about a quarter of the total population was born within the city's limits." (Kidambi, 2007, p. 22). This ensured that the city became a centre for unparalleled diversity in terms of language, caste, class, and regional affiliations. "No less than 62 dialects were recorded at the census of 1901, of which the main ones were Marathi (the mother tongue at this time of half the city's inhabitants), Gujarati (spoken by a quarter of its inhabitants), and Hindustani (the principal language of 15% of the population but certainly understood by a much larger proportion)" (Kidambi, 2007, p. 23). The city was now flooded with a sizeable working class and proletariat, apart from the business classes, which formed the main immigrant community in the previous century (Kidambi, 2007). The nineteenth century also saw the evolution of a new English-educated indigenous bourgeoisie that was engaged in

[7] Salsette is the island just north of the seven islands that made up Bombay initially. Today, after massive land reclamation projects, the seven islands, along with Bandra, and Salsette, no longer resemble islands but rather a peninsula connected to the Indian mainland on its northeastern side. Salsette now forms the north and northeastern part of what is now called Greater Mumbai.

professional occupations. Bombay's position as a commercial and financial capital continued into the twentieth century and well after independence in 1947. There was a constant inflow of immigrants from neighbouring areas and the rest of the country. Post-independence, Bombay provided refuge to people from all over the country; refuge from unemployment, poverty, famine, floods, and all manner of man-made and natural disasters. The narrative of the "Bombay Dream" or "city of dreams" is probably due to this phase in the city's history. Subsequently, Bombay proved to be a magnet for people, and at the last census, the area under the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), the urban administrative unit of government, included a population of 12.3 million (Census of India, 2011). According to the United Nations (2018, p.4), as of 2018, Mumbai has a population of 19.98 million. Today, Bombay, rechristened Mumbai[8] in 1995, continues to attract different communities from all over India as a city of opportunities.

This is the brief history of Mumbai's ethnic composition. How were these multitudes accommodated in the physical space that was Bombay/Mumbai? The answer lies in the historical spatial trajectory of Bombay/Mumbai. While discussing segregated Muslim space in early twentieth century Bombay, Masselos (1976, p. 77) proposes that while Muslims were spread out in all parts of the city, there were spaces of Muslim concentration within different areas. He based this on census data for particular areas where the proportion of the Muslim population to that of the total population was around 60%. But within each area, the Muslim populations, itself further divided along caste lines, could be located in one or two localities. How did this kind of cosmopolitan and, at the same time, segregated spatial pattern come about?

Political contestations of land (and by extension of physical space) have been as old as the establishment of the British colonial city. During the Portuguese colonial era, land was most often used to generate revenue in the form of rent. With the coming of the British, Bombay became an administrative centre. Initially, the island of Bombay

[8] When speaking in Marathi, Bombay was always referred to as Mumbai. In Hindi and other languages, variations like *Bambai* were used. Throughout this thesis, I will use Mumbai. The word "Bombay" will be used in instances where I am speaking of Bombay before 1995. I also retain its use if it appears in my interviews.

had a Fort town, built by the British for administrative purposes. The Fort town that was in the southern part of the island was separated from the "native" town by a large *maidan* or esplanade, a precursor to segregated living in which imperial masters were separated from the natives. However, Farooqui (1996) observes that a neat segregated pattern did not really emerge since the capitalist imperatives of the city had given rise to a wealthy indigenous business class that was capable of owning property and living in the Fort town. Farooqui contends that the colonial city of Bombay was segregated along class lines rather than racial lines. Within the Fort area, however, the indigenous population was concentrated in the northern part, whereas the Europeans dominated the southern part. The cosmopolitan and elite Indian business class notwithstanding, a bulk of the native citizenry lived in impoverished and congested living conditions outside the Fort area by the end of the nineteenth century (Klein, 1986). A majority of these were employed in the textile mills and preferred to live near the mills in what were called *chawls*. "The *chawl* was a row of single or double roomed tenements with a common corridor, and was two or three storeys high" and, usually, had a shared toilet and bathroom facility at the end of each floor (Kamat, 2018, p.164). The chawls were characterized by proximity, overcrowding, and poor quality of construction (Menon and Adarkar, 2004). The *chawl* became a key housing infrastructural element in producing the heterogenous working class that dominated the political scene in Bombay for well over a century. The *chawls*, while heterogenous and credited for creating class solidarities, were organized according to caste and kinship networks (Kamat, 2018). With greater pressures on resources, enormous land reclamation projects began to take shape in the nineteenth century (Poncha, 2018a), and many more were continued by the City of Bombay Improvement Trust set up by the colonial government in 1898 after the bubonic plague hit the socio-economic life of the city (Kidambi, 2007). The Trust initiated several projects with a view to improve congested housing situations through development of housing projects. Some of these like the Dadar Hindu Colony and the Dadar Parsi Colony, came to house elite middle-class Hindus and Parsis (though not exclusively).

Therefore, while the cosmopolitan image is not wrong in that Mumbai houses people of diverse backgrounds, its unique spatial and ethnic history has provided for religion-based segregated spaces. These spaces in Mumbai form the analytical core of this thesis. Indeed, Mumbai is also the focus of the project "Dwelling and Crossing, the sociocultural dynamics of religious spaces in Mumbai," the larger project that my own research is situated within. The project is driven by the spatial approach that

> goes against the trend to homogenize different religions or groups as clear-cut entities, but aims at a spatial cross-section of religion. In particular, this refers to neighborhoods, sanctuaries with a cross-religious appeal, pavements and slums, and festivals with processions that cut across the city. Given the notorious tradition of religious tensions in the city, the project will also focus on the history and prevention of riots. (Keul and Stausberg, 2014)

This research study is framed against these perspectives and examines the ways in which religion and violence intersect with space. In this thesis, I explore how residents, those who live in those spaces either in rented accommodation or their own, relate to the spaces they live in and what narratives of memories of violence in the city, are perpetrated within these spaces. Within this context, what are religion-marked spaces?

1.3 Conceptualizing Religion-marked Spaces

In this section, I consider the main terms that contribute to my understanding of religion-marked spaces. First, I examine religion and how I intend to use the concept of religion in my thesis. In the same vein, I explore theories about space and how I intend to use the concept of space. And finally, armed with these two conceptualizations, I describe and define religion-marked spaces as a unit of analysis for the purposes of this study.

I will take a short detour to where my interest in this topic began. While working in a sports-for-development organization, Magic Bus, I was involved in a project that sought to use sports to bring peace to conflict-ridden areas. Wallis and Lambert (2013),

in a reflexive and pragmatic evaluation of the Football for Peace (F4P) programme in Israel, remark on challenges faced in the field. The F4P programme seeks to use football as a means to bring together children from across religious divides in Israel in order to inculcate the value of peaceful coexistence. In order to do this, children from paired Jewish and Arab communities are engaged in a five-day F4P programme. One of the challenges they observe is that while children make friends across religious divides and exhibit new values of coexistence during the five-day programme, they go back home to their communities where they are faced with counter narratives from their homes (Wallis & Lambert, 2013, p. 105). In the case of my work with Magic Bus, this was exacerbated by the fact that community boundaries also coincided with spatial boundaries, giving rise to spaces that were dominantly populated by members of one religion. This gave rise to my interest in religion-based segregated spaces in Mumbai. The study of religion-based segregated spaces calls for an exploration of both religion and space in India.

1.3.1 Concepualizing Religion

For the purposes of this thesis, I conceptualize religion as a political category. What does this entail? In the following pages, I describe religion as a category. Then, I briefly explore some of the theories that have dominated the study of religion in India. Next, I describe Ambedkar's Navayana Buddhism as a tool by which to understand religion as a political category.

Hausner and Gellner (2012) argue there are atleast two divergent aspects of the empirical phenomenon of religion, that of religion as category and religion as practice. Based on an ethnography of Nepali religion amongst immigrants in Britain, they describe religion as category as "the state's taxonomies or categories of religious identity, and people's subsequent use of them, whether for political or other purposes" and religion as practice as "personal and/or group worship, which usually involves a ritualized practice that may or may not correspond to a putative census or other category." (Hausner and Gellner, 2012, p. 974) To make the error of subsuming one into the other is to fall into the trap of what Hausner and Gellner (2012, p. 975) call "methodological religionism" which is the conceptual notion of taking religious

boundaries for granted and as unmutable. While people in the field might believe in methodological religionism, in that they believe that their religion both as category and practice overlap substantially to be almost indistinct, it does not help to make that assumption as researchers of religion.

The discussion over the category of religion in India is often subsumed within the discussion of the category of Hinduism as a religion. In their introduction to their edited volume *Rethinkng religion in India*, Keppens and Bloch (2010, p.1–23) trace the different theories that have come to dominate the study of religion in India. Early concepts of religion, which were based on western notions where Christianity functioned as a prototype religion, did a disservice to the concept of religion in the Indian context. Christianity and the associated notions of religion limited the understanding of experiences in India. With the advent of Said's Orientalism, the concept of religion began to be questioned for not only its Christian antecendents but also the colonial imperative that required categorization of religion in a certain way. This colonial imperative and the Christian antecedents of the study of religion, gave rise to an understanding of Hinduism from the perspective of scriptures and rituals, a Brahminism that was, arguably, not the religion of many Indians. Subsequently, scholarship engages with the idea that, while the colonial elements in the construction of Hinduism is undeniable, it was based on some social differentiation that already existed in Indian society prior to colonialism. An offshoot of this is the Hindu nationalistic imperative that necessitated the construction of a glorious Hindu past of which today's Hinduism is but a mere continuation. In more recent times, scholars have called for reversing the colonial antecedents of the study of religion by relying on traditions from the east (Asian traditions) to demystify and problematize concepts that have emerged from the west (King, 1999).

> To accept modern Western epistemological theories without highlighting their cultural and social particularity is to remain within a long and well-established tradition of Western arrogance about the superiority of Western ways of understanding the world. (King, 1999, p. 182)

In order to understand the various influences and critiques of the analytical term, I take Ambedkar's Navayana Buddhism as a launching pad. Navayana Buddhism was instituted at a time when a newly independent India was emerging from colonial rule and making its own modern identity. Navayana Buddhism sought to give a modern and more egalitarian understanding of religion to incorporate western ideas with what was originally an Indian religious tradition, that is, one that originated in India. In 1956, a few weeks before he died, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism, encouraging others from the erstwhile untouchable caste to follow suit. Ambedkar explores his concept of Navayana Buddhism through the teachings of the Buddha and he uses the term religion in two distinct ways. The first is religion as it is understood by a majority of people. This included not only western religion but also Indian religions like Hinduism against whose dominant narrative he sought to provide an alternative. He clearly distinguishes between this understanding of religion and Dhamma (Navayana Buddhist term for religion), where the former is conceived of as private, spiritual practice of the western style and the latter is conceived of as a moral code of conduct for social life. Religion and Dhamma's purposes are also different. While the former wishes to explain the origins of the world, Dhamma seeks to morally reconstruct the world, (Ambedkar, 2011, p.167–173). In a second meaning, in a prescriptive vein, he uses the term religion, to mean a moral code, one that was necessary for society. Here, Dhamma itself is the ideal religion. Like Durkheim, Ambedkar construes of religion as having the dual function of providing sacred morality and enhancing social cohesion in society (Omvedt, 2003, p.19). Ambedkar's reimagining of Buddhism to serve the purpose of Dalit emancipation (Contursi, 1993; Fitzegerald, 1997; Fuchs, 2004; Bellwiinkle-Schempp, 2007; Jaoul, 2016; Omvedt, 2003; Wankhede, 2008), is significant in conceptualizing religion for two reasons. First, it engages with the many criticisms that the study of religion in India has garnered through time. Second, it allows for the imagination of religion as a political category. Let us consider these aspects in more detail.

Ambedkar's Navayana Buddhism addresses these debates not only as a theory of religion but also as a category with an active potential towards social change. First,

Ambedkar pits Buddhism against Brahminism, complicating further the binary of the East and West or Hinduism and Christianity (Omvedt, 2003). From a simple binary, one is now contending with other interpretations of religion in India; interpretations that stand against colonially constructed, Brahminical ideas of Hinduism while also standing against western notions of religion, vis-à-vis Christianity (Pandey, 2006) . Second, Navayana Buddhism is essentially a political project that seeks to "replace subaltern religious life with a rational substitute that matched the Dalit movement's quest for self-respect and modernity." (Jaoul, 2016, p. 50) Third, Navayana Buddhism provides for a "political theology" where we can study religion when it is deployed for political processes. According to Contursi (1993), elite religious discourse and political discourse share common philosophical assumptions, contributing to each others. With the conversion to Buddhism, social and spiritual goals coincide and alleviation of social suffering becomes a religious preoccupation. While providing an alternative religious practice for Dalits in the quest for social justice, Ambedkarite Buddhism also provides a critique of traditional and dominant conceptions of religion (Fitzegerald, 1997).

Navayana Buddhism also allows us to to imagine religion as a political category. Consider the folk ways of referring to religion. In folk terms, the term religion is used as a stand-in for the Urdu *mazhab*, *qaum*, and the hindi *dharma*. Mark Jurgensmeyer notes that while conceptualizing religion, he

> found that instead of one term for religion, there were many terms that described different aspects of religiosity—qaum, a word that means 'nation' or 'community'; mazhab, which means 'beliefs'; dharma, the term often used by missionaries to describe religion, which means ethical law or moral order; and panth, which means a fellowship of faithful believers. Someone who wore the qaumik turban of Sikhs could ascribe to traditional Hindu dharmic values and follow a Muslim pir as part of a local panth. (Jurgensmeyer, 2020, p. 27)

Religion as a political concept allows for all these different ways of religions to coexist. When one belongs to the political category of a particular religion, it is either because of a process of self-identification or ascription from an external body. Either way, the

ascription can be instrumentalized for political purposes. This is best reflected in the process of census taking in India. The census of India enumerates, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity as the main religions in india. Religions with smaller populations identifying with them are listed as Other religions. Finally, there is the category of the the “Religion not stated”. Like most institutional exercises, Census taking also has its origins in British India. According to Gill (2007, p. 242), the British objectives for this exercise was three-fold. First, to understand social composition and demographics of the counry to better control it with; second, to understand the resource potential presented by the people in terms of human and cultural potential; and third, to enhance the visibility of Christianity in the country. Currently, census enumeration in any country has two objectives (Gill, 2007, p.241). The first to understand the socio-economic demographic composititon of a particular country or polity. Second, a census seeks to construct a characteristic demographic and socio-economic space by introducing new categories, removing old categories or making changes to the categories. There are two aspects of religion that contribute to conceptualizing religion as category. First, is the administrative or government motivated categorization that ascribes religion to people. Second, is people’s own self-ascription to a religious identity. In both cases, religion as category has political potential.

Finally, Navayana Buddhism takes into account Indian caste structure that forms the basis of any discussion on society in India. This is done precisely by its well-articulated avowed stance against the pervasive influence of the caste structure, especially the discrimination and dehumanizing of Dalits. Therefore, just as religion functions as a political category, Caste too functions as a political category. The category of Dalit caste completely subsumes the category of Navayana Buddhism. But other castes and religions display a variety of mutual imbrication.

1.3.2 Conceptualizing Space

Let us now turn our attention to the concept of space. I explore the different theories of space and argue for a nominal and administrative understanding of space in Mumbai, for the purposes of this thesis.

Space has been the focus of inquiry in several disciplines including anthropology, archaeology, geography, and sociology (not to mention the obvious preoccupation with space in the physical sciences). There has been a gradual shift in geography and archaeology from treating space as a scientific, objective entity to one that is arrived at phenomenologically (Tilley, 1994; Ashmore, 2002). The phenomenological approach views "space as a medium rather than a container for action, something that is involved in action and cannot be divorced from it. As such, space does not and cannot exist apart from the events and activities within which it is implicated" (Tilley, 1994, p.10). This is also what differentiates space from place. According to Cresswell (2015), space is more abstract, and the sheer act of naming a space can make it a place. "Place is bounded and specific to a location and is a materialization of social forms and practices as well as affective experiences" (Gieseking et al., 2014, Kindle edition, loc. 380). That the way space is used by people provides a window into their world and meaning making has been implicitly understood by anthropologists and sociologists alike. However, the power hierarchies that shape this meaning-making of space, referred to as place-making by some scholars (Low, 1999, 2017), has received little to no attention. Classically, anthropologists have "gone to the field" to "study cultures". Implicit in this is what Gupta and Ferguson (1992, p.7) call the "assumed isomorphism of space, place and culture". Critiquing this view of space as being naturally discontinuous, they argue that spaces must be viewed as hierarchically interconnected. Proceeding from this early critique, much of subsequent anthropological work on space and place has concentrated on processes that construct space rather than the material concerns of space (Baumann, 1996; Escobar, 2001; Hannerz, 1996). Donner and De Neve (2006), for instance, in their introduction to their edited volume, *The Meaning of the Local*, argue that the neighbourhoods and localities in cities are worthy of study precisely because they are the sites in which all manner of political processes and social power relationships are produced. More importantly, they argue, that among other things, these are the places that are of utmost significance to their inhabitants.

Setha Low (1999, 2017) combines the two complementary perspectives on space, those of social construction of space and social production of space, to understand how

people interpret public space in cities. In her reckoning, social production emphasizes the materialistic aspect of space, the social, economic, ideological processes that create physical space and its setting. In contrast, social construction of space refers to those phenomenological, symbolic experiences of space that have been mediated by social processes like exchange, conflict, and power. While by her own admission, these are not mutually exclusive concepts, they allow the anthropologist to spatialize culture. "By 'spatialize' I mean to produce and locate—physically, historically, affectively, and discursively—social relations, institutions, representations, and practices in space. 'Culture' in this context refers to the multiple and contingent forms of knowledge, power, and symbolism that comprise human and nonhuman interactions; material and technological processes; and cognitive processes, including thoughts, beliefs, imaginings and perceptions" (Low, 2017, Kindle Edition, loc. 292). By spatializing culture this way, Low gives primacy to the ethnographic method.

Taking this understanding of space, for this thesis, the spaces I wish to study exist first as administrative, nominal spaces. Naming itself gives them meaning to both inhabitants of the space and those outside. However, these are not administrative spatial units in the same way.

1.3.3 Religion-marked space

Taking religion as a political category, both selfascriptive as well as government ascribed and space as administrative, nominal spaces, this research focusses on religion-based segregated spaces. Research studies indicate a marked increase in the number of segregated living spaces for Muslims in Mumbai after the Hindu–Muslim communal riots that took place in 1992–93, when Muslims from the city fled to safer areas to live with co-religionists (Gupta, 2013; Jasani, 2008; Robinson, 2005; Shaban, 2018). There are many such Muslim spaces dotting the city, including Kurla, Govandi, Oshiwara, and Mira Road, among others. The phenomenon of religion-based segregation is not exclusive to Muslims, however. East Indians (predominantly Christian first inhabitants of Mumbai) occupy old village spaces that now form East Indian enclaves (Cardoz, 2018). Parsi Baugs represent the Zoroastrian community

looking out for its own people with affordable housing (Poncha, 2018b; Dalal, 2018). *Bauddhvadis* (Buddhist hamlets/spaces) also dot the cityscape. Some of these religion-based segregated spaces are exclusive and gated like the Parsi Baugs. Most of them, however, are not officially segregated spaces and yet sport a majority of the population belonging to one religion. More importantly, these spaces are known to the inhabitants of Mumbai, both within these spaces and outside, as spaces dominated by one religion. It is not entirely surprising, for instance, for one to refer to an area as marked by the presence of people of a certain religion. In many conversations with fellow *Mumbaikars*[9] I have heard the phrase "M area" to connote a Muslim area. Similarly, I have heard Buddhist slum, Buddhist vada, and Parsi area. More importantly, popular media also refer to places according to the majority community that resides in them (Kumar, 2008, September 14; Shaikh, 2017, January 5; Kamath, 2018, January 4; and Mogul 2020, July 5).

Therefore, religion-based segregated spaces in Mumbai have two important charecteristics. First, a majority of population that resides in them self-identify as belonging to one religion. This is reflected in administrative documents, research studies and popular media reports. Second, these spaces have a reputation amongst outsiders as being associated with one religion. This is again represented in popular media. Necessarily, this categorization leans on the dominant discourse about space, one that is mediated by power and politics. For example, popular representations of Mumbra as a Muslim majority space must be seen in the context in which this ascription occurs. In Chapter 2, while discussing the spaces I study, I will also delve into the contexts in which these spaces are represented as religion-based segregated spaces.

For the purposes of this research, I label these religion-based segregated spaces as religion-marked spaced. While doing fieldwork, the working concept was religious residential clusters or religion-based segregated spaces or spaces with a majority of

[9] *Mumbaikar* is a local term that refers to "people of Mumbai," "Mumbai folk," "Mumbai residents."

residents belonging to one religion[10]. This is how I described my project to both colleagues and interlocutors and other people during everyday engagement. However, although these monikers communicated amply what I wanted to study, I had a few concerns about their phrasing. First, I found all three descriptive phrases rather unwieldy, even as they accurately described what I wished to study. They helped in the fieldwork process since it was essential for me to get my meaning across and use all the words necessary to do so. In contrast, religion-marked spaces is compact and elegant. Second, the idea of using the adjective "religious" for any of these spaces seemed to unintentionally evoke sacred connotations, and in Hausner and Gellner's words the practice aspect of religion. As already mentioned, this thesis considers religion to be a political category and is not concerned with the practice of religion. Although the areas I studied included within them sacred spaces like shrines, temples, and mosques, and religion as practice embedded in them, that does not form the focus of this study. My interlocutors identified with religions politically, irrespective of their personal beliefs and practices. Which brings me to the third reason for choosing the label "religion-marked spaces," which is that it allowed for a diversity of religious practices among the participants in my study. The label "religion-marked spaces" helps prevent inaccurate assumptions that conflate religion with space; not all interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony were practising Zoroastrians, for instance. A fourth reason has to do with academic work on Mumbai where words like "segregated spaces," "ghettos," "religious spaces" are so wrought with political and social meaning that they immediately conjure up particular images for those who encounter them. Instead, the phrase religion-marked spaces has never been used in the literature on Mumbai before and, therefore, I begin with a relatively clean slate.

In sum, religion-marked spaces are those that bear two dominant features: one, a majority of their residents self-identify as belonging to one religion; and two, they are popularly represented as belonging to a religion. In line with this understanding of Mumbai's spaces, I chose three spaces that were commonly referred to as "Muslim

[10] The third option being the best in describing the spaces in Hindi.

area," "Parsi area," and "Bauddh area" (Dalit–Buddhist area). Mumbra is the "Muslim area," Dadar Parsi Colony is the "Parsi area," and Gautam Nagar is the "Bauddh area." I will engage with a detailed discussion on my selection of these three field sites for my research in "Chapter 2: Research Methodology: Design, Data, Methods, and Positionality."

1.4 Conceptualizing Violence

The second line of enquiry that this thesis seeks to explore is memories of religious violence. What are the kinds of violence that Mumbai has witnessed? Mumbai (erstwhile Bombay) has not been a stranger to what is called communal violence (Engineer, 1984; Menon, 2018). Communal violence refers to violence between groups based on ethnicity, religion, region, caste, or language. These form the major fault lines of political India. A popular term to use instead of religious or ethnic in this context is "communal," which is well used and understood by scholars of India and South Asia and by policy makers as well (Varshney, 2002, p. 4). I will use communal violence, religious violence, and ethnic violence interchangeably in this thesis. In some cases, an incident of communal violence can be between a community or group and the state. Further, the state always plays a role, whether explicitly or tacitly, most often taking unofficial sides in a dispute or conflict (Brass, 1997).

Before going into the history of communal violence in Mumbai, it is important to critically examine some of terms that are used in this literature so as to clarify meanings of contested terms. One of the main manifestations of communal violence has been the riot. The word riot is widely used by popular media (see for example, Express News Service, 2021, December 17th), administrative documents, and scholarly literature. In academic scholarship, however, the term has been contested. Importantly, the antecedents of the term lie in British colonial administrative documents, where any kind of challenge to the the rulers was termed a "riot," whether it was a direct confrontation with the administration or it threatened the law and order in the country. Punathil (2021) demonstrates that this arbitrary use of the term "riot" for any kind of

violence between communities or between the state and communities obscures the nuances of such violence. Therefore, "riot" can have as broad a significance as "communal violence". For the purposes of this thesis, I look at a riot as communal violence and I follow Brass (1997, p.4) in defining a riot as an incident of violence "involving a large number of massed persons from opposing ethnic groups engaged in assaults on persons, lives, and property." (Brass, 1997, p. 4).

This thesis engages with two specific instances of communal violence in Mumbai that happened in the 1990s. In "Chapter 2: Research Methodology: Design, Data, Methods, and Positionality," I consider the history of communal violence in Mumbai and describe the two events chosen for this study, providing a rationale for why these make for interesting focus for the study of communal violence in Mumbai.

1.5 Literature Review

A spatial approach to religion necessarily focusses on the "locally particular" (and by extension, the spatially particular) aspects of religion (Knott, 2015, p. 2), and, in doing so, looks at the production of religion in space through the interactions of various other aspects of space. To this end, such an approach requires an engagement with many disciplines, such as geography, sociology, history, and anthropology, both in terms of method and theory. My research interests lie in the intersection between space, religion, religious/communal violence, and memory. Following from the research questions that guide this study, I am particularly interested in two interactions

1. The study of segregated spaces in Mumbai
2. The study of spatial aspects of memories of violence

I lean on several disciplinary legacies, including religion studies, nationalism studies, ethnicity studies, anthropology, sociology, and memory studies to appropriately situate my study. Here, I present the disciplinary confluence that informs my research and one that will also be informed by my research. Before delving into the literature on religion in the Indian city, I give a brief overview of the discipline of religion studies and its preoccupation with religion and space in India.

Work on religion and space in India broadly falls under two categories. In the first category are all those studies that have as the object of their study sacred spaces. In the second category, are those studies that focus on how religious practices are produced within a certain space and, in turn, produce the space. The first category of studies dominates the literature. Prominent amongst these are the studies on popular sacred cities (Eck, 1985, 1999; Hawley, 2020); pilgrimage and pilgrimage sites (Jacobsen, 2013; Cassio, 2019; Pinkney, 2016; Trevithick, 2006; Zelliot, 2011); and specific sacred sites (Bellamy, 2011; Sikand, 2003). The second category is less extensive (Sanjoy Mazumdar, 2005; Shampa Mazumdar and Mazumdar, 1999, 2004; Tandon & Sehgal, 2017). A third and more recent category engages with digital space and religion (Kulkarni, 2018).

The urban area as a space where religion works differently than in the rural has taken centre stage more recently. Not only has the notion that the urban and the modern is where religion goes to die been well and truly dismissed, but much evidence points to the fact that religion manifests in urban centres differently from rural centres (Burchardt and Becci, 2013; Gandhi and Hoek, 2012). As noted earlier, a considerable body of literature on the sacred and cities exists. While Eck (1999) and Hawley (2020) examine traditionally sacred cities, where the city as a whole forms the sacred unit of analysis, a large body of literature focusses on sacred sites within cities. This could focus on specific (popularly acknowledged) sacred sites within cities and include themes ranging from the production of space, representations of space, and contested space (Ahmed, 2013; Bacchetta, 2000; Moodie, 2018; K. Singh, 2010; Tandon and Sehgal, 2017). In addition, a recent but burgeoning literature focusses on wayside/pavement/roadside shrines—spaces that are not institutionally acknowledged and yet form an important part of people's religious lives (Henn, 2008; Preston, 2002; Shivam, 2016). A special issue on the subject, edited by Larios and Voix (2018), has also been recently published. However, the interaction between religion and the urban takes place beyond the sacred as well. One body of work that explores the interaction of urban space and religion focusses on the influence that urbanization, urban infrastructure, and urban use of space have on religious practices and vice versa (Hancock and Srinivas, 2008; Narayanan, 2014; Vevaina, 2013, 2015; Nejad 2015).

Another body of scholarship that engages with the themes of religion and space in urban india has to do with the scholarship on segregated spaces. This scholarship is pertinent to the first research question and in the following section, I lay bare this literature in detail.

1.5.1 The Study of Segregated Spaces in Indian cities

The study of spaces segregated along ethnic lines in India broadly falls under three categories: those pertaining to analysis of city spatial organizations, those engaged with caste-based segregation, and those that specifically focus on Muslim spaces of segregation.

First, let us consider the study of segregated spaces under the larger rubric of city spatial organization. In early studies, Mehta (1968, 1969) explores caste-based and religion-based segregation in Pune, amongst other lines of segregation including class status, remarking on the centralized upper castes vis-à-vis a decentralized lower caste. In terms of religion-based segregation, he observes that elite minority religious groups like the Jews, Parsis, and Christians exhibit greater centralization in Pune. This study made a significant contribution to the study of space in Indian cities as it accounts for different kinds of residential segregation within one city. It also highlights the temporal aspects of segregation in cities. In an ambitious study on Delhi, Dupont (2004) examines patterns of socio-spatial differentiation and segmentation in the city so as to tease out mechanisms of residential segregation both at the micro and macro levels, linking them to social and spatial strategies based on the traditional caste system as well as to the implications of global spatial organizations in the city. Finally, in a comparative study, Adukia, Asher, Novosad, and Tan (2019) specifically focus on two minority groups' segregation, the Scheduled Castes and the Muslims, in 3000 Indian cities and over 100,000 neighbourhoods. Their study finds that cities that demonstrate segregation along religious lines also show caste-based segregation. Within a city, both types of segregated spaces demonstrate an equivalent lack of access to public services, even as cities with more Muslims demonstrate a greater lack of public services than cities with more Scheduled Castes. This large-scale quantitative inquiry juxtoposes two kinds of marginalized segregated spaces across several cities, allowing for comparisons. What

is commonly neglected by all these studies that focus on segregated spaces within larger city spatial organization, are the subjectivities of the people who live in these spaces. Does the difference in Dalit spatial marginalization and Muslim spatial marginalization, for instance, engender a different outcome in terms of residents' relationship to space. This thesis seeks to answer this question through the methodological choice of an ethnography. Whereas Dupont's study offered insights into the political, institutional, and systemic processes through which religion-based segregation occurs, this thesis instead takes a phenomenological approach to understading the formation of segregated spaces: how do the experiences and subjectivities of those who inhabit these spaces shape the spaces themselves? While Adukia, Asher, Novosad, and Tan do compare scheduled-caste spaces and Muslim spaces, they do it across cities. This thesis focusses on only Mumbai and its segregated spaces.

In a second body of work, spatial segregation is considered under the umbrella category of caste-based segregation. In rural India, spatial organization based on caste has been extensively documented and researched by sociologists and anthropologists alike (Beteille, 1965; Karve, 1957; Srinivas, 1952, 1994). In an early study, D'Souza (1977) explores changing patterns in segregation with increasing urbanization and industrialization. Using census data in Amritsar district, they make three conclusive observations: first, that increase in industrialization and urbanization is accompanied by a corresponding increase in the degree of segregation of the Scheduled Castes; second, Scheduled Caste segregated spaces are characterized by their low socio-economic status; and third, Scheduled Caste segregated spaces are located in marginal or peripheral localities. This study has contributed to the scholarship with its unequivocal rejection of the idea that urban processes such as industrialization and urbanization will render caste-based discrimination obsolete. While an assessment of degree of segregation is a useful analytical tool to compare different spaces of segregation, the scope of this study is limited to Scheduled Caste spaces of segregation. It does not examine this in tandem with other types of segregation. In this thesis, I juxtapose three different minority religion-based segregated spaces to look at how they compare in terms of subjective experiences of residents. This approach is productive

in understanding religion-based segregation, both scheduled caste and otherwise, within the context of larger city processes.

More recently, studies on caste-based segregation in Indian cities have focussed on urban discriminatory practices. Vithyathil and Singh (2012) examined Ward-level measures of residential segregation along gender (Male–Female), caste (SC/ST–non-SC/ST) and socioeconomic (Literate–Illiterate) lines in seven cities, Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, and Hyderabad. Importantly, this study demonstrated that segregation according to caste status in Indian cities was significantly greater than segregation along socio-economic status. This is particularly salient for this thesis because it indicates that the processes of caste-based spatial segregation are different from those of class-based segregation. While the two kinds of segregation may overlap in various ways, this thesis approaches the problem of minority religion-based segregation across socio-economic status.

Sidhwani (2015) builds on Vithyathil and Singh's (2012) work, by studying Ward-level data on segregation in 10 big cities, namely, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ahmedbad, Pune, Jaipur, and Surat. In addition, they use measures of access to in-house drinking water, in-house latrine, and ownership of a two-wheeler to account for degrees of segregation along public, private, and aspirational goods. Importantly, this study finds that, while there is a high measure of segregation on caste lines in all these cities, a higher level of segregation is demonstrated along the lines of access to public and private facilties.

These two works have triggered a host of similar quantitative studies that seek to measure caste-based segregation across cities that make it possible for us to compare segregation. Haque, Das, and Patel (2018), for instance, explore caste-based, gender-based, and socio-economic status-based segregation at the Ward level in the cities of Uttar Pradesh. They found that quite like socio-economic status-based segregation, caste-based segregation was greater in small and medium cities than in the big metropolises. In another study, Bharathi, Malghan, and Rahman (2018) look at neighbourhood-level (rather than ward-level) residential segregation of spaces along

caste lines in five major metropolitan cities in India to demonstrate the workings of spatial segregation across these cities. In an ambitious recent study, G. Singh, Vithayathil, and Pradhan (2019) explore caste-based residential segregation across time in cities all over India. Using census data from 2001 and 2011, they argue that caste-based, residential segregation, far from diminishing, either persists or worsens over time across Indian cities, with city size and region being a major determinant of the phenomenon. These studies have brought to the fore the continued importance of caste-based segregation in Indian cities. However, these studies are mired in the shortcomings that attend any inquiry that is quantitative, in nature. First, they do not capture (indeed, they do not claim to) the experience of caste-based spatial segregation amongst the residents of such spaces. Second, they do not consider the specific historical trajectory of cities and how they produce these spaces. Third, they depend heavily on correlation of variables. In such cases, as readers, one must guard against making causative conclusions.

The shortcomings of the quantitive approach are addressed in historical and ethnographic approaches to caste segregation. Through an ethnography, Ganguly (2018) examines the unique socio-spatial stigmatization faced by a specific Dalit group (the Balmikis) in Delhi. Unlike the previous study, this work focusses on the experience of the residents of a segregated space. In a more recent study, through a study of the migration of Dalits to Chembur in Mumbai, Thatra (2020) demonstrates how urban planning policies from the 1920s to the 1970s contributed to the continuation of Dalit segregation practices within an urban setting. Both these works focus on the caste-based segregated space within the larger context of a city and its history and are, therefore, germane to this study. However, neither work examines Dalit spatial segregation in the larger context of other kinds of segregation (for example, socio-economic status-based etc.) or spatial segregation of other minority communities (for example, Muslim spatial segregation).

A considerable body of work on religious spatial segregation is about Muslim spatial segregation in India. These studies speak of Muslim spatial segregation as demonstrating and also as a consequence of Muslim general marginalization in the

Indian polity (Chatterjee, 2017; Gayer and Jaffrelot, 2012; Gupta, 2013; Jamil, 2017; Kirmani, 2013; Shaban, 2018). Here I recount some of the more recent works that bring to the fore nuances of this spatial segregation.

The most comprehensive work on Muslims and space is a volume of collected essays entitled *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*, edited by Christophe Jaffrelot and Laurent Gayer. These essays speak to the literature on Muslim marginalization in India in general, identifying socio-spatial marginalization in Indian cities as one mechanism (and a significant one at that) of marginalization that Muslims in urban settings in India experience. Based on ethnographic work in a wide cross section of cities, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Jaipur, Bhopal, Lucknow, and Aligarh to the west and the north, and Kozhikode, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Cuttack to the south and east, editors Gayer and Jaffrelot (2012) make some macro claims about Muslim spatial segregation in Indian cities. They argue that Muslims in India are losing significantly in the socioeconomic, education, and political arenas. The authors thus train their sights on the spatial organization of cities, linking this marginalization to the formation of the "Muslim ghetto" in Indian cities. For the first time, "Muslim ghetto," which hitherto had been used in its folk sense, is given a systematic, analytical treatment, thus bringing to the fore the nuances of Muslim spatial segregation, which had hitherto been taken for granted.

By juxtaposing different Indian cities, this volume underscores the importance of different historical processes in the formation of Muslim spaces. It points towards the heterogeneity between and within Muslim segregated spaces even when inhabitants experience an array of religion-based discrimination within the city. Several chapters in this work explore different Muslim segregated spaces in different cities focussing on historical processes that aided their formation and also delve into differences between the spaces (Galonnier, 2012; Jaffrelot & Thomas, 2012). In contrast, Kanungo (2012) and Kanchana (2012) find that Muslim spatial segregation is non-existent in the former's case of Cuttack and does not have the connotations of deprivation that it has in other cities in the latter's case of Kozhikode. While Mohammad-Arif (2012), like Kanchana, concludes that Shivaji Nagar in Bengaluru cannot be called a space of

marginalization and deprivation, she warns against downplaying the impact of national politics such as the Ramjanmabhoomi movement in city spaces and interactions. Rao and Thaha (2012) explore the political implications of the Muslim-dominated old city area of Hyderabad and examine the continued support to the MIM (Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen) amidst pervasive and widespread government neglect of the area. Rathore (2012) and Contractor (2012), in contrast, focus on a sociological and ethnographic enquiry into the lives and experiences of two Muslim spaces, Ramganj in Jaipur and Shivaji Nagar in Mumbai, respectively. In a departure from the rest of the book, Verniers (2012) explores the historical emergence of a Shia-segregated space in Lucknow that is constructed through the dynamics of a Shia precolonial elite and a majority Sunni population. This collection was instrumental in bringing into focus the different types of spatial segregation faced by Muslims in Indian cities. Many subsequent studies have used this as a launching pad to discuss Muslim segregated spaces. In Kolkata, Chatterjee (2017), and in Delhi, Kirmani (2013) and Jamil (2017) explore narratives within Muslim neighbourhoods, providing nuances to the literature on Muslim spatial segregation. The ghetto as a word to describe Muslim spatial organization gained popularity (Jaffrelot and Gayer, 2012) and notoreity (see Kirmani, 2013 and Jamil, 2017) over the recent years. The complexity introduced into the study of Muslim segregated spaces is welcome and overdue. Further, these qualitative approaches to the study of Muslim segregated spaces serve the purpose of theorizing people's experience of the spaces. I engage with this literature in important ways. My preoccupation, however, is to look at different religion- based segregated spaces (not only Muslim) in Mumbai, to understand how urban historical processes intersect with larger national political processes and produce locally particular spaces.

In a recent ethnographic study of the the woodworker's *mohallas* of the North Indian city of Saharanpur, Chambers (2019, p. 799) examines the performativity inherent in everyday convivial interactions between people. These *mohallas* are Muslim spaces and, according to Chambers, fit the national discourse of Muslim areas being dirty, dangerous, ungoverned, and uneducated. He makes the important observation that hidden behind what appears to be convivial interactions between people of different communities (Hindu and Muslim) may be larger socio-economic processes at work.

First, embedded within convivial exchanges are instrumentality, economy, and obligation. Second, he attends to processes of bordering and marginalization, ranging from the spatial to the subjective within his ethnographic material. Chambers refers to the Muslim *mohalla* as a margin space that can also be studied as a network hub due to its economic links to the rest of the city, country, and, indeed, global markets. And in viewing it this way, he contends that its residents are actively engaged in negotiating their boundaries. This work entreats us to examine the relationships of people in Muslim segregated spaces with the world outside.

There are three important aspects of the literature on spatial segregation and religion in Indian cities. First, the literature on Muslim spatial segregation is nested within the larger literature of Muslim marginalization in India. Second, the literature on Dalit spatial segregation or caste-based spatial segregation in Indian cities is nested in the larger literature of historical practices of segregation and discrimination adopted from older traditional and rural practices. Finally, works that look at spatial segregation across religion or caste in Indian cities are overwhelmingly quantitative, focussing on comparisons of segregated spaces across cities and within cities.

This thesis diverges from this literature, and therefore, contributes to it. By juxtaposing three different kinds of religion-based segregated spaces within the larger context of the historical development of the city of Mumbai, it brings the literature on Muslim spatial segregation, Caste-based segregation and class-based segregation in conversation with each other. Implicitly, this brings to the fore a discussion both of historical processes of segregation as well as the literature on minority marginalization. Further, by adopting a qualitative enquiry, this thesis contributes to the discussion on comparisons of segregated spaces within a city by focussing on the experience of space by the inhabitants.

1.5.2 Study of spatial aspects of memories of violence

Spatial aspects of memories of violence beg an examination of the literature under two different rubrics. First is religious violence and spaces in urban India. Second, is studies on memories of violence.

One body of scholarship regarding religious violence and space are predictive and explanatory models. Nested in the literature that deals with Muslim spatial segregation and Muslim marginalization in India is also the literature that engages with the role played by violence in spatial segregation. Before delving into this literature, an overview of the literature on communal violence is imperative. Communal violence has been the focus of studies in economics, political science, sociology, and anthropology.

Economic models seek to explain as well as to predict incidents of communal violence through economic factors (Mitra and Ray, 2014, Bohlken and Sergenti, 2010; Field et al., 2008). The credit for pioneering work on developing a political model that explains why communal riots happen arguably goes to Brass (1997, 2010, 2011). He engages with the notion of the Institutionalized Riot System, which looks at the discourse and instrumental factors that lead to an incident developing into a full-blown violent event. Brass (2010, pp. 49–51) argues that riot production can be understood with the metaphor of the three stages of drama—rehearsal, production, and post-performance interpretation. According to him, a well-oiled Institutionalized Riot System exists in Hindu–Muslim communal riots in India that is instrumentalized by different forces like political parties to produce riots. Brass's contribution to the study of Hindu–Muslim conflict and violence is his emphasis on the construction of animosities and violence through a variety of processes that explains why some incidents flare up into full blown violence and others do not. Subsequent to Brass' pioneering work, a number of studies focus on the electoral causes of conflict and violence between Hindus and Muslims (see for example, Wilkinson, 2006). While political and economic predictive models are important for the study of communal violence in urban India, they do not engage with the local particulars of the aftermath of such violence in a specific city. My research questions, on the other hand, are focussed on the aftermath of a violent event, around 25–30 years after the event. My thesis is not concerned with predicting incidents of violence; it focusses on consequences.

Against the backdrop of such predictive studies, an urban spatial element is explored in comparative political scholarship (one that is more germane to this thesis) that

juxtaposes different cities and towns to understand conditions in which communal violence is likely to happen. In an important study comparing different cities in India, Varshney (2002) examines the significance of intercommunal civic engagement amongst Hindus and Muslims in maintaining intercommunal peace. He concludes that intercommunal civic engagement, associational ones in particular, examples of which include festival organization, trade unions, business associations, and sports clubs, is a key determinant of whether a particular polity with a certain demographic of Hindus and Muslims will escalate to conflict and violence. Pertinently, the author makes obervations about the segregated spaces that Hindus and Muslims occupy in Indian cities. Segregated living spaces make it that much more impossible for intercommunal civic engagement, both associational and quotidian, to take place. Comparing the cities of Aligarh and Calicut (now Kozhikode), Varshney argues that the segregations between communities in cities like Aligarh is not only in terms of physical space, but also in education and professional settings. In Calicut, on the other hand, civic life demonstrates both associational and quotidian mixing of communities. He contends that this provides a strong explanation for why Aligarh is more prone to violence than Calicut, even though they have a similar demographic composition of Hindus and Muslims. Therefore, more the segregation in a city, spatial or otherwise, the more the city is prone to violence. In a more localized comparative study, Berenschot (2011) explores different levels of violence within a riot-hit city during the Gujarat riots of 2002. His study compared two different neighbourhoods in Ahmedabad, one that saw a lot of violence during the riots and the other that saw no violence. He concludes that the incidence of Hindu–Muslim violence depends on whether inhabitants are connected to institutions through patronage networks that are also benefited electorally from communal violence. These comparittive studies have made significant contributions to the study of violence. They inform policy interventions for peace building between communities that have been engaged in violence against each other. Further, they definitively construe spatial segregation as undesirable for social cohesion and prevention of violence. This negative reading of spatial segregation pervades the literature. In this thesis, through ethnographic data that focus on how people remember

incidents of violence, I complicate the notion of the undesirability of spatial segregation.

Anthropologists and sociologists have also examined the ways in which interactions between different communities foster peace or violence. Williams (2013), for instance, examines the negotiated everyday peace mediated by economic imperatives between Hindu traders and Muslim weavers in eastern Uttar Pradesh. However, a large part of anthropological and sociological enquiries into communal violence have focussed on the effects of such violence on individual and group identity. Hansen (2001) considers identity construction in postcolonial Bombay/Mumbai, the birth and growth of the ethnic political party, the Shiv Sena, and the aftermath of the Bombay Riots, to argue against contemporary popular understandings that view the growth of xenophobia and ethno-religious nationalism as anomalous to Bombay's modernity. Instead, he contends the xenophobia that the Shiv Sena caters to has strong historical roots in the city and the polarization between the secular and communal is a spurious understanding of the city. Moreover, he argues that the popularity of ethnic politics as espoused by parties like the Shiv Sena merely showed a resurgence of older forms of political clientelism that had been temporarily vitiated by discourse on democracy in postcolonial India. Hansen's final argument is that some of the seemingly entrenched ethnic categories over which such ethno politics have emerged have been far from watertight categories or groups, having been constructed historically through different forms of naming and organization.

While Hansen's study does not particularly talk about space, a subset of literature in this domain focusses precisely on this. Mehta and Chatterji (2001), in an early study, through ethnographic material collected in Dharavi, demonstrate how the aftermath of violence has caused a reorganization of space and a redrawing of territorial boundaries. In this work, the authors focus on the subjectivities produced by the experiences of violence through the continuous negotiation of violence. While Mehta and Chatterjee specifically focus on the time immediately after the riot and before normalcy set in, Robinson (2005) goes beyond by exploring the everyday life of victims over the years after the riot to examine different spatial and structural negotiations born of the

violence. In a sociological enquiry, Dipankar Gupta (2013) explores the long-term effects of ethnic violence in two different instances of violence between Hindus and Muslims, namely the Bombay Riots of 1992–93 and the Gujarat riots of 2002. After the initial upheaval that characterized the immediate aftermath of ethnic violence, a new negotiated normalcy set in. This normal is new and different from the old normal, the one that existed before the violence broke out. This new normal manifests itself in all aspects of a resident's life, including the space they inhabit. Gupta explores this new normal through interviews conducted in the cities of Mumbai and Ahmedabad to tease out the various threads that come together to form the new normal.

These three studies are important for this thesis in that they have as focus the aftermath of a violent event. In this thesis, I examine the aftermath of two violent events, distinct in important ways, but both located in Mumbai. Further, whereas Mehta and Chatterjee, focus on only one space, I explore three different spaces within the city, that demonstrate variations in intensity of violence experienced. While Robinson follows victims of violence, I focuss on current residents of these spaces in Mumbai, who might or might not have experienced the violent events directly. And unlike Gupta, this thesis does not seek to compare across cities, rather, confining itself to studying spaces within Mumbai.

The review so far indicates four aspects that define the literature and thereby create a gap. The first aspect has to do with the preponderance of literature on Hindu–Muslim violence. The second aspect has to do with the absence of literature that pertains to the relationship between spatial organization and caste-based communal violence. (While caste-based spatial segregation is considered to be itself a manifestation of structural violence, as noted in the previous section, there is no literature that speaks about the relationship between such spaces and specific incidents of violence). A third aspect pertains to the absence of studies that foreground narratives within segregated spaces. The fourth aspect is the focus on the spaces and people who have experienced the violence directly and conspicuously, while ignoring people and spaces who may not have experienced the violence directly but still form part of the city. This thesis seeks to fill these gaps in the literature. It does this first, by focussing on two different

incidents of violence in Mumbai from recent history; second, by engaging with narratives of violence that are generated within segregated spaces; and third, by including a diversity of spaces and people who may or may not have been affected directly by the violence. With regards to the third element, the spaces chosen for this study are diverse both in terms of location and demographics and their locus vis-à-vis the two incidents of violence.

This exploration is made possible by the use of memory narratives in this study. Memory studies has evolved as a discipline in its own right relatively recently. Scholars like Schudson (1995) have argued against regarding memories as anything but collective. This social aspect of memory is known in academic literature by a number of names, including social remembering (Misztal, 2003), collective memory (Halbwachs, 1992), and cultural memory (Assmann and Czaplicka, 1995). It is this memory that is pertinent in the present context.

A large body of literature on memories of violence in India belongs to studies of the partition of India. In a seminal and hugely popular work, Butalia (2017) engages with the task of reconstructing memories through different voices and subjectivities, beginning with an account of the partition that divided her own family. Raychaudhury (2004) explores the sense of nostalgia and the sense of trauma through narratives collected from partition refugees in West Bengal. In contrast, some studies explore the influence of social memories of partition on the present and future South Asian society and polity (Hartnack, 2012). Scholarly analysis of literary works on partition, both in the vernacular and in English, indicate a preoccupation with memories and memorializing (Kabir, 2002; Saint, 2019; Tiwari, 2013; Tomsky, 2008).

Another body of literature on memories of violent events emerges out of ethnographies of segregated spaces that usually have a "memories" element nested within them (Chatterjee, 2017; Contractor, 2012, 2017; Jamil, 2017; Kirmani, 2008, 2016). This literature has already been explored earlier where I explore the literature on Muslim spatial segregation. In a recent study, Chopra (2018) examines memories of a traumatic event in Amritsar in 1984 during the peak of the Khalistan movement that sought an

independent ethnic homeland for Punjabis. She explores remembering, commemoration, and erasure of memories of the state-lead military assault on the Sri Darbar Sahib in Amritsar during "Operation Blue Star" in June 1984. She demonstrates how space (the sacred site itself) and visual and material artifacts interact together to form inconsistent memories. In another interesting study, Kumbhojkar (2012) examines the commemorative Imperial Bhima Koregaon obelisk in Pune to understand present day contestations over power through contestations of memory.

These conversations on memories follow victims of violence. There are, however, other stakeholders in the city, vis-à-vis groups that find themselves neither intended victims nor perpetrators of violence. In this thesis I juxtapose memories of violence from three different religion-marked spaces. Residents of all three spaces are considered to be citizens of the the larger city of Mumbai. Interlocutors may or may not have direct experiences of the violence; they may or may not have participated in perpetrating violence; and they may or may not have even known about the violence. This way, I seek to examine nuances in narratives of these events amongst different religion-marked spaces within the city. Together, these narratives form strands of an entire local oral history of Mumbai.

1.6 Summary and chapter outline

The literature indicates several intersecting strands of interest in religion-marked spaces, memories of communal violence, and the city of Mumbai. This thesis engages with these niche intersections. In juxtaposing three different religion-marked spaces, this thesis contributes to the literature on Muslim spatial segregation, Dalit spatial segregation, continuities of segregation from rural to urban and urban spatial configurations concerning the city of Mumbai. Further, through the focus on memories and narratives of different violent events, this thesis seeks to engage with the literature on spatial circulation of memories.

In this introductory chapter "Chapter 1: The case of religion-marked space and violence in Mumbai," in "Part 1: Introduction and Methodology", I have provided a brief history

of the ethnic make-up and historical processes of spatial organization in Mumbai. I introduce my broad research questions, describing what I mean by religion, space, religion-marked spaces, and violence. I conclude with an exploration of previous research, identifying lacunae in which I locate my own research.

In "Chapter 2: Research Methodology: Design, Data, Methods, and Positionality" of Part I, I take the reader through my methodological journey, discussing my research design, fieldwork, choice of religion-marked spaces and choice of incidents of violence. I then delve into a discussion of the research process, including data collection, data analysis, and writing. Here, I conclude Chapter 2 with a reflexive discussion on researcher positionality, power, and representation with respect to this research project.

In "Part II : Interrogating Space in Religion-marked Spaces," I undertake an interrogation of the term "ghetto" used for religion-based segregated residential spaces in Mumbai. In "Chapter 3: "*Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there: *māhaul* as a marker of space in Mumbai," I provide an analytical concept of the Urdu/Hindi word *māhaul* to understand space in Mumbai. The word emerged from my interviews, and I collate the different understandings of it (its use within my interviews, its semantic universe, and its use in popular literature) to arrive at an analytic concept that can be used to understand space in Mumbai. In "Chapter 4: Ghetto *māhaul:* Approximating the ghetto" I delve into the term "ghetto," both in Western academia and in more recent literature on India. Again, driven largely by my data, I argue for a concept of ghetto *māhaul* that exists in all three spaces, one that allows for a conceptualization of "approximating the ghetto." A ghetto *māhaul* is constituted by three different *māhauls*, the safe *māhaul*, the *pañcāyatī māhaul* and the religious *māhaul*. In "Chapter 5*: Māhaul* boundaries, disgust, and precarity: Differential place-based precarity" I use boundary-work, as described by Nippert-Eng (1996) to look at the boundaries set by my interlocutors to their spaces (and *māhauls*). In this exercise, I argue that interlocutors in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar construct boundaries that delineate disgusting spaces, an aspect that interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony do not report. In the second part of this chapter, I delve deeper into the data from Gautam Nagar and

Mumbra to argue for the construction of a differential place-based precarity in each religion-marked space.

In Part III, I turn my attention to the memories of the two violent events. In "Chapter 6: Memories of Violence: Aspects and Narratives," I first examine the data and identify differential spatial memory narratives of violence. I argue that this categorization reflects the differences in kinds of memories across the three spaces as well as across the two events under scrutiny. In the second part, I argue for a narrative approach to the data on memory. Here, I emphasise the importance of examining the memories within the larger interview context. In "Chapter 7: Place-based Precarity and Memories of Violence: Mumbra and Gautam Nagar," I use the differential place-based precarity in Gautam Nagar and Mumbra as context within which to analyze narratives of memories of violence. I use one interview from each of these places. In "Chapter 8: Dadar Parsi Colony: A local oral history," I take the memories of violence from the Colony to argue that they contribute towards the construction of a local oral history that must be analyzed within the context of the history and identity of Parsis in Mumbai. In "Chapter 9: *Curioser and Curioser*!," I provide a conclusion of this thesis, summarizing my main findings, their implications to the study of religion, space, and violence in Mumbai, religious conflict, and I explore further research agendas that emerge from my work.

2. Chapter 2: Research Methodology

Design, Data, Methods and Positionality

2.1 Introduction

> The writing and reading of ethnography are overdetermined by forces ultimately beyond the control of either an author or an interpretive community. These contingencies – of language, rhetoric, power and history – must now be openly confronted in the process of writing. They can no longer be evaded. (Clifford, 1986, p. 25)

A study of religion-marked spaces in Mumbai raises many methodological questions. Most importantly, how does one design a methodology that is grounded in existing literature and that can sufficiently answer the research questions. The process of research, however, begins much earlier, indeed when one first sets pen to paper to articulate an idea. At this foundational juncture, we are confronted with the question of why we do what we do, leading to explorations of our own positionality in the field and the dynamic interplay of this positionality with the politics of power and representation. This chapter seeks to elaborate on these themes in a systematic fashion with particular regard to this research endeavour.

In the section that follows this introduction, I will explore the evolution of my research design. In a sense, this thesis is a single-site ethnography when we consider that it takes Mumbai as a unity. However, the fact that I choose three different religion-marked spaces within Mumbai at varying physical distances from each other, forming distinct spatial unities, makes this thesis a multi-sited ethnography. In section 2.3 of this chapter, I present the field. I first present Mumbai and spatial negotiations of Mumbai by residents, then I consider each of the three religion-marked spaces that form the focus of my study and provide detailed descriptions of each. In section 2.4, I explore violence in Mumbai and why I choose the two different violent events as a focus of my study. In section 2.5, I explore the fieldwork, including data collection, analysis, and

writing. Finally, in a reflexive exercise, I turn my attention to the dynamic interplay of researcher positionality, power, and representation vis-à-vis my experiences in the field.

2.2 A multi-sited ethnography in the making

2.2.1 Evolution of the research design

A research design usually evolves over time, sometimes as late as after fieldwork has begun. Initially, I was guided by the overall aims of the Mumbai project within which my study was located and which sought to focus on the sociocultural dynamics of religious spaces in Mumbai. The mandate for my sub-project was a focus on religion and violence in Mumbai. The scope was expansive enough for me to think of ideas that would pique my own interest.

My initial research proposal in 2015 entitled, “Religion-based Ghettoization and Violence in Mumbai” sought to focus on what I identified as three different religious ghettos in Mumbai. First, I identified Mumbra as a Muslim ghetto because it is often held up as an exemplar of the Urban Indian Muslim ghetto and one that was a direct consequence of the Bombay Riots (Gupta, 2013; Robinson, 2005; Shaban, 2018). This widespread understanding was itself interesting and posed questions: What was the spatial organization of the city before the Bombay Riots? How are other religion-based segregated spaces formed and sustained? With the background of the Bombay Riots, how do people in Mumbra remember the riots? Are their memories different from those from other parts of Mumbai? Does living with co-religionists influence how we remember incidents of communal violence? These questions required me to look beyond Mumbra, at other spaces of religion-based segregation in Mumbai. Dadar Parsi Colony appeared to be an obvious counter space, one that was affluent and not marked by violence. At the same time, I wished to include within my research ambit another incident of communal violence (other than the Bombay Riots). I chose the Ramabai Nagar massacre for my study because it happened, like the Bombay Riots, in the 1990s. Both gave me a span of 25 years, enough time for memories to be formed, modified,

and transmitted from one generation to another. The choice of the Ramabai Nagar Massacre led me to choose Ramabai Nagar as the third religion-based ghetto I wished to study. Armed with these three religion-based ghettos, I wished to answer the following research questions:

1. How does living in a religion-based ghetto influence the way its residents remember violent incidents? Does the religion of the ghetto influence the memory of violence?
2. In what way does living in a religion-based ghetto contribute to its residents' perception of safety and security, specifically with respect to communal violence? Does the religion of the ghetto influence the residents' perception of safety and security?
3. In what way is religion a factor in characterizing these ghettos to outsiders?

To answer these questions, I had envisioned a mixed-method approach, including ethnographic methods like participant observation, interview, focussed group discussion, and other qualitative research methods such as discourse analysis of media documentation and analysis of secondary data such as police complaints and incidents of communal violence recorded with the police.

Even before I began fieldwork, however, the question of using the word "ghetto" at all for the religion-marked spaces I had initially chosen came to the fore. My first concern was that the spaces were very different from each other and do not fit the traditional idea of the ghetto. In a New York Times article, for instance, Barry and Sorensen (2018, July 1) write about immigrant ghettos in Denmark. Here ghetto forms part of an administrative category of immigrants and specifically, relates to immigrants living in low-income neighbourhoods. Children from these spaces are termed ghetto children and parents of these children are called ghetto parents. The Danish government identifies these children as requiring instruction to assimilate into Danish culture. This administrative nomenclature is consequent of the general political rhetoric of the ghetto as a space that contains violence. The traditional notion of the ghetto, therefore, is one of impoverishment, violence, and crime.

Moreover, I found that it nettled many people (in non-academic settings) to hear me talk of these spaces as ghettos in the same vein. "Is Dadar Parsi Colony really a ghetto?" was a refrain I often heard when I explained my project. The idea that an affluent space like Dadar Parsi Colony could merit the label "ghetto" was unpalatable to both Parsis and non-Parsis alike. One person even objected to the use of the word for Mumbra or any space in the Indian context, suggesting that the Indian social, spatial, and political dispensation was not comparable to any western dispensation. Finally, I undertook an exploration of the word "ghetto" in the literature before I started fieldwork. In a manner of speaking, therefore, Part II "Interrogating the Ghetto" (Chapters 3, 4, and 5) of this thesis had begun even before I had started systematic fieldwork in 2016.

2.2.2 Why multi-sited ethnography?

It is this engagement with the literature that gave rise to a more streamlined set of research questions. While the three spaces and the two communal violence incidents remained the focus of my study, research questions and methods were substantially altered. First, I started calling the spaces religion-based segregated spaces or religious residential clusters to divest them from notions of the ghetto that I wanted to interrogate. Second, I broadened my research questions under the rubrics of "relationship to the space" and "memories of incidents of communal violence." Consequently, at the time of going into the field in 2016, my research questions were:

3. How do people living in a religion-marked space in Mumbai relate to the space they live in? How do they conceive of the space? What do they like about it? What do they dislike about it? How do they compare it with other spaces in the city?
4. How do people living in religion-marked spaces in Mumbai remember incidents of religious violence? What are the narratives that circulate about such incidents within the area? How do these narratives compare with those from other areas?

Central to both questions are the views, perceptions, and narratives of contemporary residents. How do people think of the space they live in irrespective of the particular historical trajectory that precedes the space? In terms of memories of violent events, I

was keen on understanding what was on the ground rather than what was written about and documented. Facts like the chronology of events were available on the internet, yet what were the lived experiences of people? This required in-depth engagement with my interlocutors, something that was afforded by the ethnographic method.

I think of my research as a multi-sited ethnography. I follow Falzon (2016, p. 2) in conceiving of "multi-sited ethnography as a form of spatial (geographic) decentredness." Falzon (2016) identifies three main affordances of multi-sited ethnographies in the social sciences. First is the "spatial turn" in the social sciences heralded by Foucault, Lefebvre, and others, which points to the social production of space and which has far-reaching methodological consequences to how researchers conceive of space. For instance, the concept of Mumbra as a Muslim ghetto born of religious violence is a concept that has been socially construed. That this forms the foundational concept for my idea demonstrates the complicity that researchers have in producing the field. However, by choosing other religion-marked spaces that are not Muslim and are not socially construed as born of religious violence, I seek to unsettle this particular complicity. A second reason for the rise of multi-sited ethnographies and anthropological research, according to Falzon, is that the local is not an isolated entity anymore like traditional anthropology envisaged. Inevitably, spaces are located within larger wholes, and in corollary, there is a movement of people, goods, and information that makes the study of a singular space inadequate for the study of a certain phenomenon. If I train my sights on just one of the field sites, instead of taking all three into consideration, I fall into the trap of "seeing" only one part of the proverbial elephant, that is, my knowledge would be limited to just one kind of religion-marked space. Finally, Falzon argues, the institutionalization of the social sciences within mainstream academia and academic constraints have refashioned how we work, making multi-sited ethnographies more doable than others.There were institutional constraints to my research design. For starters, I had three years to finish the research project from start to end, not, as Hannerz (2003, p. 201–202) notes from Evans-Pitchard's prescriptive writings on ethnography, 10 years that are required to study a single society. In another instance, my Norwegian Visa required me to live in Norway for at least half the time of the full duration of the PhD.

A number of scholars have argued for the criticality of adopting a multi-sited approach to anthropological research in specific contexts. For example, in the study of migrants, one is usually concerned with the place that migrants hail from and the place they have moved to. Ethnography in such cases will naturally have to include two or more geographical sites. Mand (2011) research on Punjabi immigrants in Tanzania, Britain, and Punjab demonstrates how such multi-sitedness allows for hitherto unexplored aspects of certain anthropological subjects. She takes two routes for multi-sitedness: first, to follow people as they move across geographical spaces and second, to map out peoples life trajectories and movements within their life span. In the second mode, Mand does not actually move from one geographical space to another but examines the way in which movements within one's lifetime interacts with gender identities. In her own research, it allowed her to question the notion of the Birtish Punjabi household, a significant centre of women's lives, as embedded in a locality and in networks within the locality. Transnational lives of Punjabi migrant women refer to a household with transnational networks that transcend locality. Multi-sited ethnography helps to provide new perspectives on old tropes in anthropology.

Mumbai as a field site spatially lends itself to a multi-sited ethnography. Mumbai, like any other metropolis, does not fit into traditional spaces of anthropological exploration. A major aspect of traditional anthropology is about "walking" the field, the "temenos of ethnography" as Falzon (2009, p.6) terms it. In this context, Falzon asks if it is possible to "walk" Mumbai at all. In my research endeavour, I like to think of the three different sites of religion-marked spaces as connected together through being a part of Mumbai's social fabric. In essence then, this thesis wishes to make a contribution towards the study of Mumbai itself.

One of the charges against multi-sited ethnographies is the idea that they lack sufficient depth. The kind of immersion over time that traditional anthropological methods require are simply not there. In his collection on *Ethnography through thick and thin*, Marcus (1998) addresses this critique arguing that differential descriptions of different field sites cannot be simply a function of access or logistics, but an integral part of the research design. There are reasons for which some things or some sites require thick

description and some don’t. In this context, Falzon (2016, p. 8) provides an alternative mode of thinking about ethnography, where he conceptualizes “space and time as methodologically interchangeable.” What this translates to in the field, Falzon claims, is to provide primacy to the method of participant observation that is central to ethnography, and just as researchers are obliged to follow people, goods, information across time, they are also obliged to follow them across space, in the event that they do demonstrate displacement with respect to space. This idea is central to my choice of spaces. Participants do live in discontinuous spaces, spread across the city, spaces that, essentially, interact with each other in limited fashions but generally form part of Mumbai. In asking my interlocutors to consider their areas of residence as a unitary space and to compare them with other spaces in or outside Mumbai, I am in effect, asking them to mentally move from one space to another.

Ethnographic exploration that gives primacy to interlocutors’ understandings, together with horizontal juxtapositions of the three spaces and vertical alignment with Mumbai, the city, allows for new epistemological and methodological insights both in the study of religion and the study of space in urban India.

2.3 Presenting the field

2.3.1 Mumbai

Mumbai is an elongated piece of landmass, stretching from North to South and is spatially best understood by inhabitants as lying on either side of three local commuter railway lines: the Western Line, the Central Line, and the Harbour Line.

For more than a century, these local trains have singlehandedly served to connect far flung suburbs to the economic capital of India. The significance of the local trains in the lives of Mumbai’s inhabitants is particularly noticeable by the specific language it has generated that other inhabitants will understand without context. For example, to do an “up-down” from place A to place B is to commute from place A to place B. Every station that is on the three lines has a West and an East side. This West–East division informs much of Mumbai’s residents’ navigation of their city. Class does not

mark out areas completely. For instance, South Mumbai, possibly home to some of the richest in India and having the highest real estate value in India, will also be home to slums, by definition lower and lower middle class neighbourhoods. Despite this, spaces do acquire a reputation of being marked by class. Malabar Hill is considered an upper class neighbourhood in spite of having lower class slums within its territory, for instance. Further, spaces are marked by other identity markers as well. For instance, Dadar is considered to be a traditional, Maharashtrian, upper middle-class area. Bandra is considered to be a Christian area. These are by no means exclusive spaces; such reputations only indicate a preponderance of a community and a rendering through the public gaze rather than an exclusive space.

In an exploration of what a multi-sited ethnography looks like in the field, Marcus (1998) proposes that researchers can "follow" people, a thing, a metaphor, a plot/ story/allegory, a life story/biography, or a conflict while constituting their field site. In looking for spaces that were considered to be dominated by one particular religious community and which did have a majority population (though not exclusive) belonging to one religious community, I was following spatial reputation and demography. Susewind (2017, p. 1286), for instance, argues that the study of the degree of segregation alone does not suffice in understanding Muslim-segregated spaces in Indian cities. The degree of segregation must be taken in concert with people's wider "mental maps" through which people experience, perceive, and judge the city. In an important discussion on constituting sites in multi-sited ethnographies, Hannerz (2003) observes how, invariably, one chooses sites from a pool of different sites that suit the purpose of the research design. More often than not, he argues, the selection of sites is cumulative, influenced largely by new insights, opportunities, and chance, occasioned in the field.

In Mumbai, it is common to refer to Mumbra as a Muslim ghetto in popular media(see Peer, 2015, June 10th). Starting off with Mumbra, I chose to go with two other distinct minority communities.The first is Dadar Parsi Colony. In the early stages of writing the research proposal, I had already decided on Dadar Parsi Colony. As the largest Zoroastrian enclave in Mumbai, the Colony is understood as a Parsi area. Additionally,

around 102 buildings within the Colony are regulated by a legal covenant that mandates tenancy and ownership to be Parsi. While looking for demographic information about Dadar Parsi Colony, for instance, I came across numbers only for the Parsi population within Dadar Parsi Colony, while numbers for other communities do not exist. However, it is also widely understood that the Colony is not exclusive to Parsis. The Colony, as a socioeconomically forward, elite minority space was very different from Mumbra. Are there other such spaces in Mumbai, that is, spaces dominated by people belonging to a priveledged, minority religion? Scholars who study Mumbai may seek to explore Christian (Catholic) spaces or Jewish spaces. Christian Catholic residential spaces include larger suburbs like Bandra and Orlem. While many catholics do live in these areas, they do not necessarily form the kind of overwhelming majority that Muslims do in Mumbra and Parsis do in the Colony. The population of Jews is very small in Mumbai, making for an insignificant political category (Nair, 2019, February 18th) .I chose to study the the Colony because it is a residential space of one of India's priveledged minority religion and, therefore, it can be considered as comparable to Mumba as a religion-marked space.

Second, I wanted to engage with a space that was occupied by a disadvantaged minority much like Muslims in the city but whose trajectory of marginalization and discrimination was different in important ways. For this reason, I chose to study a Dalit-Buddhist space. I sought to study Ramabai Nagar, which stood at the junction of Chembur and Ghatkopar on the east of Eastern Express Highway. But I found it difficult to find an entry there. Meanwhile, an ex-colleague provided me with a contact in Kamraj Nagar, the space featured in the Introduction to Chapter 1. But as mentioned earlier, the religious make-up of Kamraj Nagar did not fit my research design. Kamraj Nagar was thus abandoned. Finally, another ex-colleague introduced me to Gautam Nagar. Gautam Nagar is not a slum community the way Ramabai Nagar is. But it fit my key descriptor of a religion-marked space, which, although not exclusive, had a majority of residents from one community. Below, I produce a map of the three spaces, Dadar Parsi Colony, Mumbra, and Gautam Nagar and connect them with my place of residence, Kanjurmarg, to provide an idea of the geographical spread of my spaces within the territory of Mumbai. A glance at the map in Figure 1 below reveals that,

while Mumbra is almost equidistant to Kanjurmarg (my place of residence) as Dadar, Dadar Parsi Colony and Gautam Nagar are hardly a kilometre apart. In an important discussion, Falzon (2016) emphasizes the requisite condition of having the dispersed sites constitute a multi-sited ethnography, but asks exactly how dispersed these sites must be. He concludes that it is not important how dispersed sites really are, and that it is more essential that they be spatially different. In the case of my research, they do form different spatial entities both as administrative spatial categories and in people's mental maps. Mumbra, for instance, conjures up a different image from the image that Dadar Parsi Colony conjures up. Further, experiences in navigating these spaces is also varied, providing for rich data to analyse. In this study, therefore, the three sites under scrutiny themselves function as interlocutors. In the following pages, I will describe them in some detail.

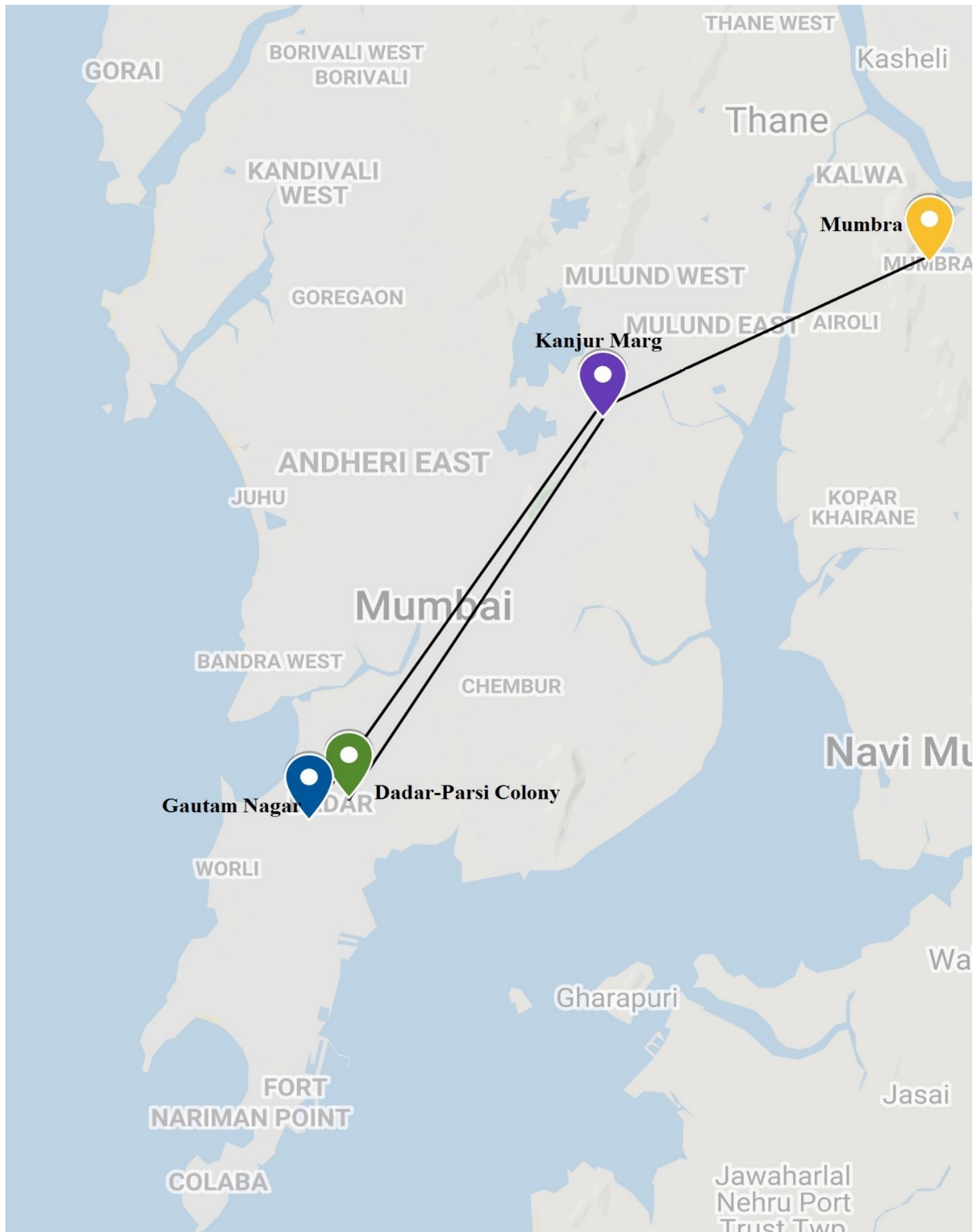


Figure 1 Map of Mumbai showing the locations of Gautam Nagar, Dadar Parsi Colony, and Mumbra vis-à-vis my location in Kanjurmarg

2.3.2 Dadar Parsi Colony

The best (in terms of efficiency of time) way to get to Dadar Parsi Colony from my home in Kanjurmarg is to take the local train on the Central line, towards Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus from Kanjurmarg railway station. About 30 minutes into your journey, you arrive at Dadar railway station, an important junction in the Mumbai metropolitan commuter train system. The distance between Dadar railway station and the Colony is less than a kilometre and easily traversed by foot. After exiting the railway station on the east side, I walk towards Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Road on Swami Gyan Jivandas Marg and take a left towards Khodadad Circle, popularly known as Dadar circle. At the circle, I take a right onto Lokmanya Tilak road, and the first left brings me face-to-face with what my interlocutors call "the *putlā*" or "the statue."

Figure 2:The putlā, Bust of Mancherji Edulji Joshi. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 3: Mancherji Joshi Chowk, PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

The statue is a bust of Mancherji Joshi, a Zoroastrian civil engineer who worked with the City of Bombay Improvement Trust (BIT). The BIT was set up in 1898. Kidambi (2007, p. 76–78) identifies six categories of work done by the BIT, including slum clearance, construction of east–west thoroughfares to improve peoples' commute, expansion of the city's residential space by providing more building sites, arranging for sanitary housing for the poor, development of vacant lands that were handed down by the BMC and the provincial government and, finally, establishing housing for the city's police force. Mancherji Joshi managed to persuade the Trust to approve a covenant with the Parsi Central Association Cooperative Housing Society, by which 102 plots in the Colony were reserved exclusively for Parsis (Iyer, 2014). Dadar Parsi Colony was developed as part of Bombay's first planned urban area. Mancherji Joshi envisioned a clean, sanitary, environmentally sound colony that would be affordable to middle class Parsis, who were flooding the city in search of work. The space was an overgrown jungle at that time, Bombay having just begun to expand in the Dadar area. Mancherji Joshi undertook the task of designing and developing both the Parsi Colony and the Hindu Colony that lies across the main road. This covenant has ensured housing for a majority of Parsi settlers in the area over the last 100 years and more.

Descriptions of the Colony by my interlocutors invariably began with the *putlā*. The *putlā* can be construed of as a sort of gateway into the Parsi Colony with Tilak Road marking its southern border. Below is a map of Dadar Parsi Colony with major locations pinned for easy navigation. Map not to scale.

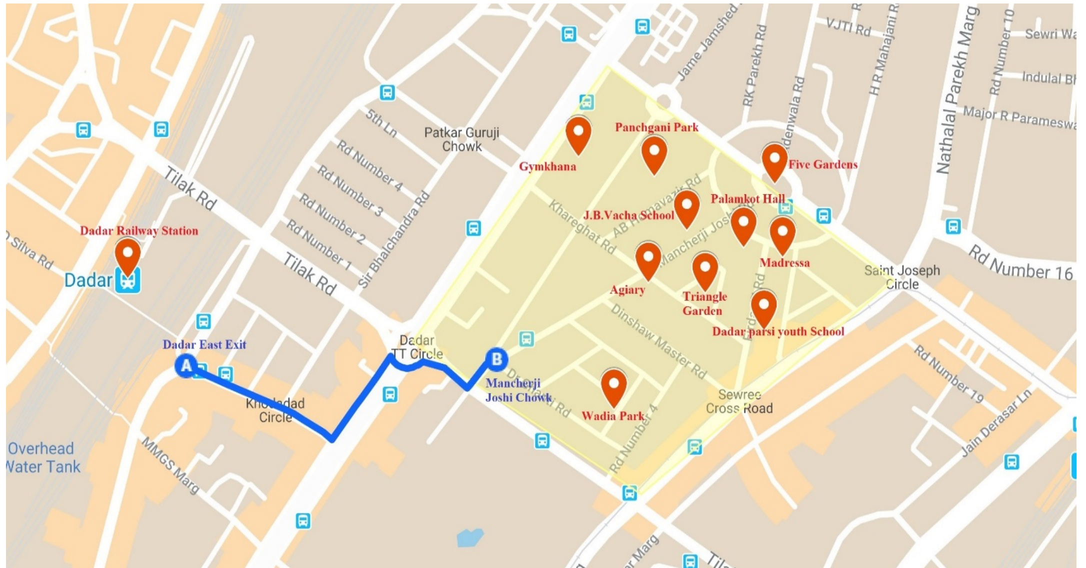


Figure 4: Map of Dadar Parsi Colony (shaded area) with landmarks. Map not to scale. (Google Maps, Google, 2021)

The *putlā* forms the junction of three main roads. The junction is called the Mancherji Joshi Chowk. Mancherji Joshi Road is the largest of the three. Mancherji Joshi Road cuts across to the Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens, made up of five gardens that belong to the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM).

Figure 5: One gate of the Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens, F (North). PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 6: The Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

The Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens, apart from providing open public spaces for residents, also boasts a children's park, a playground, and an open gym. The gardens are equipped with benches as well as promenades for walking/running. Opposite the children's park are the Dadar Athornan Institute and the Palamkote Hall, a

multipurpose hall owned by the community. My interlocutors mentioned the five gardens as significant not only in the Colony but also in their lives within the Colony. In addition, the Madressa was mentioned as critical in imparting Zoroastrian religious education. If you take the road that runs between Palamkote Hall and the Madressa, Firdosi Road, you will come upon Dadar Parsi Youth Assembly High School, a high school associated with the Madressa. G.D Ambekar Marg forms the eastern border of the Colony.

Figure 7: Sohrab Palamkote Hall. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

On Mancherji Joshi Road , there are two institutions that also form important parts of my interlocutors' lives. One is the Rustom Faramna Agiary, the Zoroastrian fire temple, which is at the junction of Khareghat Road and Mancherji Joshi Road. If you go east on Khareghat Road, you come upon the Rustom Tirandas Triangle Garden and Park that was also mentioned by my interlocutors.

Figure 8: Entrance of Rustom Faramna Agiary. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 9:View of Agiary gate with Plaque announcing the crossroads. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 10: Entrance to Rustom Tirandaz Triangle Park. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 11: Inside view of Rustom Tirandaz Triangle Park. PC: Sumanya Anand Velamur

Jame Jamshed Road runs parallel to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg and all the way to Mancherji Joshi Chowk cutting across Khareghat Road in between. Jame Jamshed Road skirts the backyard of the Parsi Gymkhana that opens out to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Road. Mancherji Joshi Chowk and Lady Jehangir Road run perpendicular to Jame Jamshed road form the northernmost boundaries of the Colony. While these are the administrative boundaries of the Colony, parts of the neighbouring areas are considered to be a part of the social colony. One of my interlocutors, Manaksha, for instance, lived outside the borders but considered himself part of the Colony.

Dadar Parsi Colony forms part of Mumbai South-Central Parliamentary constituency and Wadala Assembly Constituency. In municipal administrative categorization, it falls under F North Ward. Today, Dadar Parsi Colony houses between 8,000–10,000 Zoroastrians and is considered to be the largest Zoroastrian enclave/settlement in the world.

2.3.3 Mumbra

Figure 12: As you enter Mumbra when you come from Mumbai, a selfie point greets you, proclaiming love for Mumbra. To the right you can see busts of a host of Maharashtrian heroes, including Tilak, Ambedkar, and Shivaji, with the legend jay Maharashtra, victory to Maharashtra. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

Mumbra lies around 22 Kilometres to the north of Kanjurmarg in the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC), which forms part of the Greater Mumbai Urban Agglomeration. My first expedition to Mumbra began with a local train journey that took me from Kanjurmarg to Mumbra in 30 minutes. This train journey on the Central Railway makes for spatial interest for three reasons. First, it connects to administratively different Municipal Corporation districts in Maharashtra, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the TMC. Second, it connects the Islands of Mumbai to the mainland as it crosses the Thane creek on its way to Kalwa. Finally, after Kalwa station, the railway line moves towards Ulhas River taking a sharp turn at the river and runs parallel to it until it reaches Mumbra. This last aspect completely overturns the quotidian understanding of space in other parts of Mumbai. Let me illustrate with an example. If I got into a north-bound train and got off at a station in Mumbai, automatically, as a Mumbaikar I know that the West is to my left and the East is to my right, provided I face North, the direction in which the train is headed. This is how people (literate and otherwise) in Mumbai navigate spaces. However, with the sharp turn that the train takes at the Ulhas river, the north-bound train becomes south-bound. If you were to get off at Mumbra, facing the direction the train is bound, on your left is the East and the Ulhas river and on your right is the township of Mumbra. The east–west understanding of space does not apply here since only one side of the railway line is populated. This upending of orientation is experienced only by people who are from (i.e., resident of) Mumbai, the seven original islands, and Salsette. This also speaks to my own understanding of space in Mumbai as a Mumbaikar. Figure 12 in the next page shows the map of Mumbra with significant landmarks marked out.

Figure 13: Map of Mumbra (with black border) with landmarks. Map not to scale. (Google Maps, Google, 2021)

The first time Rehana took me around Mumbra was on a Sunday afternoon in late October and it was quite hot. We began our excursion at Mumbra railway station, at what Rehana called “The Tank.” A battle tank, Vaijayanti, was installed outside Mumbra Railway Station in 2013 by the Thane Municipal Corporation and the NCP MLA Jeetendra Awhad (Thaver, 2017). The Tank had the distinction of having played a significant role in the 1971 war against Pakistan. The engraving says that it is dedicated by President Pratibha Patil to the memory of Manish Pitambre for giving his life for the country (Thaver, 2017). When the tank was first placed, it became a tourist attraction. When I visited in 2016, however, it looked dilapidated, and I had a little trouble finding it amongst the mass of people and congested traffic. In a recent visit to Mumbra in 2021, I found that the Tank had been removed leaving in its place the remanants of an elevated platform with garbage strewn all around.

Figure 14: The elevated platform outside Mumbra station where battle tank Vaijayanti once stood. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 15: A gateway to Mumbra railway station is a giant structure shaped like the letter M. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

Rehana found me at the Tank and we started walking down south. Adjoining Mumbra station is the Mumbai–Pune Road. Today, one can traverse the Mumbai Pune distance in a much shorter time with the new highway. However, National Highway 48 runs parallel to this road. Immediately after the station, if you take a right that descends a little, you are in a milling market place. Rehana and I moved through the market place, through Zainy Colony and rejoined the Mumbai–Pune road at the Mumbra Police Station. From the Police station, we walked along the road for a while as Rehana pointed out significant landmarks: the Fire Station on the left and some government offices on the right.

Figure 16: People walk by the gates of Mumbra Police Station nestled between the trees. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 17: Mumbra Fire Station. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

On the right, we went down Dargah Road where she showed me the Dargah of Khwaja Fakhruddin Shah Baba and the adjacent Masjid. She went into the *dargah* for a brief prayer, while I sat outside observing people, as they came in on their way somewhere. When we recommenced our walk, Rehana took me ahead on Dargah Road through Amrut Nagar and back to the Mumbai Pune Road through a series of interconnected little lanes. She pointed out the Suhana Shia Masjid and Imambada rubbing shoulders with the more expansive Darul Falah Mosque. Behind the mosque was the Darul Falah Madrasa. The mosque served as an important landmark in Mumbra as I realized that it was used as a meeting point by my interlocutors.

Figure 18: Darul falah mosque undergoing renovation. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

Mumbra lies approximately 35–40 kms (depending on the route you take) north of Dadar. Occupying approximately six square kilometres of area, Mumbra is 80% Muslim and has a total population of 900,000 (Peer, 2015). While it falls in the outskirts of Mumbai, it is socio-economically linked to the city. Erstwhile, it was agricultural land and was occupied by indigenous tribal populations. In 1991, India adopted a New

Economic Policy and opened its economic doors to foreign competition. Almost immediately, the numbers of immigrants coming into the city from other parts of Maharashtra and other parts of India swelled, and the city started growing. The city began to expand towards the north and many of the suburbs like Mumbra started developing. Concomitantly, in 1992–93, the Bombay Rriots took place and disproportionally affected the Muslim residents of the city. In its aftermath, Muslims who had been residing in older neighbourhoods in Mumbai fled in search of safer havens. At the same time, the government of India, in response to this situation, provided the State Waqf Board [11] 10 square miles of land in Mumbra to build affordable housing to accommodate the large and sudden influx of Muslims in this area. This is how what was until 1991 a sparsely populated ru-urban area came to be a thriving metropolitan area.

2.3.4 Gautam Nagar

Gautam Nagar lies approximately 2 kms south of Dadar Parsi Colony, right next to Dadar railway station on the East side. Getting here from Kanjurmarg also required a half-hour Mumbai local train journey identical to the one I would take for Dadar Parsi Colony. A short walk of 500 Metres from Dadar East Exit on Dadasaheb Phalke Marg, heading south, brings us to a small Shiv Mandir. Beyond the Shiv Mandir is a conspicuous non-built-up vacant site. If you turn right at the Shiv Mandir and walk beyond the vacant site, you come to Gautam Nagar.

[11] The State Waqf Board is an arm of the Central Waqf Council, a statutary body of the Government of India that administers all movable and immovable properties for religious purposes in accordance with Muslim Personal law in India.

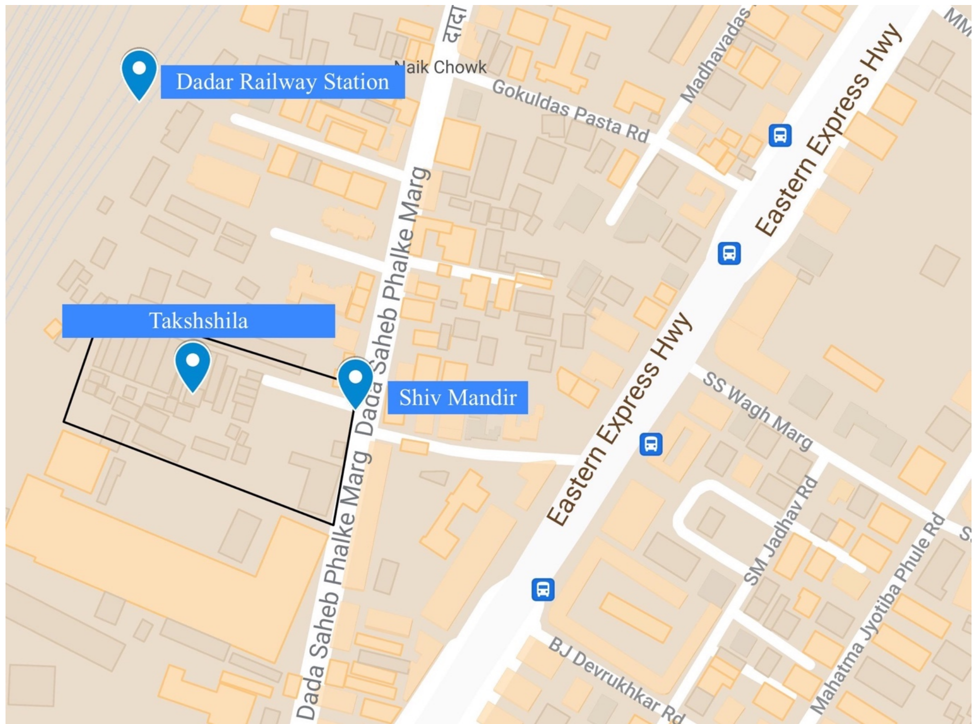


Figure 19: Map of Gautam Nagar (black border) with landmarks. Map not to scale. (Google Maps, Google, 2021)

A BMC colony, it was built to provide housing for class IV employees of the BMC. Most of the residents, however, have been living in the colony for over three generations, the BMC jobs having passed from one generation to the other. Parts of the colony are undergoing redevelopment with residents in transit camps elsewhere in the city or in make-shift homes in the colony itself. Only two buildings are fully populated and they are both six-storeyed (ground plus five floors) buildings. Each floor has 10 *kolis* (rooms), each of which houses a family of five on average, according to my interlocutors. In addition, the slum community has around 75 such *kolis*. My interlocutors reckon that the total population of Gautam Nagar is between 1000 to 1500. In between the two buildings is the Takshasheela Budha Vihar.

Figure 20: The Takshshila Buddhavihar. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

Figure 21: Shivaji, Buddha and Ambedkar share the dias inside the Buddhavihar. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

In terms of area, the two buildings and the slum community occupy a total of 2.06 acres. In terms of demographics, Gautam Nagar has two distinct communities residing within. According to my interlocutors, most of the residents belonged to the Mahar Dalit Buddhist community. The Mahars are a Dalit or untouchable community hailing from Maharashtra. They speak Marathi. In 1956, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, a Mahar Dalit himself, and leader of Dalit emancipation in India, lead a mass-conversion movement where he gave up Hinduism and embraced Buddhism in a move to reject Hinduism's oppressive caste practices. Many Dalits in Maharashtra and elsewhere followed suit with Mahars leading the movement in the largest numbers. Conversions continued right upto the '70s. The minority community in this area is the Gujarati the *Kathewadi*. They are also categorized as Scheduled Castes. They hail from Gujarat and speak Gujarati. They have not converted and are therefore considered and consider themselves to be Hindu. They contribute to around 10% of the total population in Gautam Nagar.

Having thus presented my field and the three different sites that form the focus of my ethnography, I now turn my attention to the violent events that I wish to study here.

2.4 Violent Incidents in Mumbai

In the following pages, I describe two instances of communal violence in the city during the '90s. At the end of this section, I argue for my choice of these two incidents for my study of communal violence.

Incidents of communal violence coincided with the growth of the city in the nineteenth century. The earliest recorded communal violence was in 1832, when Parsis rioted against the British in what is called the Dog Riots (Menon, 2010, p. 65; Palsetia, 2001a, p. 13). Parsis rebelled against the government's move to kill street dogs to deal with the menace of pariah dogs. The Dog riots resulted in damage to property. This was the first test of the mettle of Parsi–British relations. Two incidents of violence, both between Parsis and Muslims, broke out in 1851 and 1874, respectively. Chari (2015, January 16) reports that in 1851, Muslims were incensed by the pictorial depiction of

the Prophet in a Gujarati article that was pasted on the wall of the Jama Masjid in South Bombay. A month of rioting recorded the death of at least one Parsi. A similar incident sparked off another riot between Parsis and Muslims in 1874 (Menon, 2018), attesting to the increased competition between the Parsi and Muslim merchants of the city (Wadia, 2007; Palsetia, 2001b). Other than these major riots, Menon (2018) notes that Muharram processions were always a matter of contention because they invariably included lawlessness and rioting and skirmishes between Sunnis and Shias as in 1872 when 60 people were injured in rioting.

In 1893, Hindus and Muslims came to blows over the cow protection movement, spearheaded by Hindus and Parsis, that had begun around six years prior to the riots (Menon, 2018). Different sources place the numbers killed to somewhere between 80 and 100. Some historians refer to a preceding event of a Muslim mob going on a rampage destroying temples during Muharram at Kathiawar. This was arguably the most devastating riot of the century (Masselos, 1993). In the same decade, there were the plague riots of 1898 that were triggered when the government tried to forcibly evict a plague-affected person from their home in a Muslim area in Ripon Cross Road. This riot caused 19 deaths and injured 42. It was brutally quelled by the British.

Bombay saw a period of relative communal peace (even the Muharram riots having abated by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century) until the year 1927. From that year, there were several instances of communal rioting between Hindus and Muslims, during religious festivals, over the cow protection issue, or the playing of loud music near a mosque. The figures for the number of riots have been a contentious issue among scholars and the administration (Menon, 2018). Regardless, both accounts record a plurality of riots right up to 1947. In 1945, the stand-off between the All India National Congress Committee and the Muslim League served as the backdrop for prolonged communal tensions between Hindus and Muslims in Bombay. It is interesting to note that in this phase of the history of communal riots in Mumbai, the triggers are increasingly connected to the macro political landscape, whether it is the organization of communist unions of mill workers or the Indian National movement.

Intermittent rioting and violence continued until the partition of India when Bombay witnessed both Hindu–Muslim violence as well as a flood of new refugee immigrants.

Post-independence saw communal riots in Mumbai both along the Hindu–Muslim divide as well as along other communal fault lines. The birth of the Shiv Sena (regional Maratha–Hindu nationalist political party) coincides with several violent communal confrontations after the 1960s. These include confrontations along religious, caste, and linguistic lines. The 1950s and 1960s, for instance, saw a movement for the linguistic-based state of Maharashtra, which was separated from Gujarat in 1961. Violence on this account was most pronounced in 1955 (Heuzé, 2011). In the ’70s, the linguistic fault lines deepened as Tamil- and Hindi-speaking immigrants vied with Marathi-speaking immigrants for resources, and violence between these groups ensued (Heuzé, 2011).

In the ’80s, however, the Shiv Sena embraced the Hindu Nationalist agenda that had gained prominence on the national political stage. With this endorsement, Hindu nationalism became a significant political movement within Mumbai, deepening already existing Hindu–Muslim divides. Malegaon and Bhiwandi, two outlying suburbs of Bombay, have always been considered volatile for communal violence. Bhiwandi witnessed communal rioting and violence in 1970 as well (Heuzé, 2011). However, it wasn’t until 1984 that the massive Bombay Bhiwandi riots broke out, becoming the most devastating riots the city had ever seen. In many ways, this riot too was localized. Engineer (1984) analyzes the causes of the Bombay Bhiwandi riots and claims that the Hindu nationalist agenda of the Shiv Sena, a regional Hindu nationalist political party, had been very much at work before the riots and the fact that Indira Gandhi and her Congress did not pose a challenge to the growth of Hindu nationalism at the national stage, since they gained politically from it.

2.4.1 The Bombay Riots, 1992–1993

The Bombay Riots[12] of 1992–93 happened over two temporally disconnected phases and culminated with the bomb blasts in March 1993. The first phase of rioting happened on December 6, 1992. Triggered by the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in the state of Uttar Pradesh, at a distance of 1500 kms from Mumbai. Muslims around the country were incensed, and Bombay saw the worst ever violence at that time, both in terms of the number of lives lost and in terms of spread. The atmosphere worsened as Shiv Sena MP Moreshwar Save and Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray claimed personal responsibility for the demolition of the Masjid (Hansen, 2001). Police action to curb protestors was swift. Within a week everything was back to normal. It appears that this first phase of rioting happened spontaneously and as a reaction to the demolition of the Babri Masjid. According to official reports, around 200 Muslims lost their lives in the police action that followed the rioting, that is, only in the first phase of rioting.

The second phase of rioting happened after January 6, 1993. On January 8, a Hindu family was trapped inside their house, and they were burnt to death by Muslim mobs. This incident led to an escalation of violence. The next four or five days saw Hindu mobs loot, damage property, kill, and rape Muslims around the city. The official death toll was 800. One and a half lakh Muslims fled the city and about a lakh fled their violence-ridden neighbourhoods and sought shelter in the refugee camps that were set up by the government (Hansen, 2001, p. 122). Masselos (1994) contends that the January phase of rioting was fundamentally different from the December phase of rioting in terms of human and capital loss.

At around 1:30 p.m.on March 12, 1993, a car bomb exploded in the Bombay Stock Exchange building in South Bombay. It was followed by a series of 12 other bombs placed in strategic locations around the city, including the Air India building, Airport terminal, Plaza Cinema, passport office, three hotels, three bazaars, a fisherman's colony in Mahim, and a bank in Masjid (an area in south-east Bombay). A few weeks

---

12

later, the police also discovered consignments of arms and ammunitions in several parts of coastal Maharashtra. The state alleged that the underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, with the aid of Pakistan's intelligence service ISI, engineered the attacks. In March 2013, after 20 years of judicial proceedings, the Supreme Court upheld the verdict and the death sentence of one of the accused, Yakub Memon. He was executed in July 2015. However, the two main accused, Dawood Ibrahim and Tiger Memon, have been absconding and have not faced trial. Ibrahim is alleged to be living in Karachi, Pakistan.

The Justice Srikrishna Commission of Enquiry (or the Srikrishna commission, as it is popularly known) was constituted in 1993 by the State government of Maharashtra to investigate the causes of the Bombay Riots that had taken place earlier in the same year. With the Shiv Sena coming to power in Maharashtra in 1996, the commission was initially disbanded, but was reinstituted in response to public demand. Importantly, when it was reinstated, an investigation of the bomb blasts also fell within its purview, altering in important ways the original aim of the commission. The commission submitted its report in February 1998, but the Shiv Sena, which was heavily indicted in the report, refused to accept the conclusions of the report. According to the Srikrishna Commission of Enquiry, a total of around 900 people had lost their lives in both phases of the Bombay Riots. Of these, around 575 were Muslim. The commission also gave detailed recommendations, especially to counter bias against Muslims among the police. However, none of the subsequent governments have worked on any of the recommendations.

The Bombay Riots were unique in the city's history for the fact that they spread throughout the city; earlier riots had been more localized (Masselos, 1994). In contrast to earlier riots, the Bombay Riots did not see any loss of life and property either in Bhiwandi or Malegaon, the two areas that had hitherto been powder kegs of communal violence (Sainath, 1994). That the period between the first phase of rioting and the second phase of rioting was critical to understand the riots has been observed by many official commentators as well as scholars. For instance, Masselos (1994) points to the organizing of *Maha aartis* all over the city starting on December 26 and attaining increasing frequency the week before the January riots, as a significant way of

gathering and organizing a crowd to undertake the rioting work. Even the Srikrishna commission recognized the role of these movements in the intervening time between the two phases and indicted the Shiv Sena and its leaders in their report. Scholars and media commentators also point to the circumstances in Bombay that made the soil fertile for communal violence (Masselos, 1994; Sainath, 1994). For one, there is the element of land-grab that motivates violence. Further Bombay's large network of organized crime benefitted from the violence, irrespective of religious persuasion. The communalization of the police since the riots, either through recruitment processes or other means, has been deep seated and systematic (Engineer, 1993).

2.4.2 The Ramabai Nagar massacre 1997

On July 11, 1997, ten residents of Ramabai Nagar, Mumbai, were killed in police firing. Earlier the same day, residents of Ramabai Nagar had woken up to find the statue of Ambedkar[13] in their neighbourhood garlanded by a string of shoes/sandals[14] in a blatant attempt to insult Ambedkar and his followers (Human Rights Watch, 1999, 127–138). The people of Ramabai Nagar protested this insult and tried to lodge a complaint at the local police station. They were, instead, directed to a different police station. In the next few hours, the protesting crowd grew in numbers and effectively blocked the Eastern Express Highway, an important arterial road in Mumbai. Meanwhile, members of the Special Reserve Police Force (SRPF) arrived at the site and, led by sub-inspector Manohar Kadam, opened fire on unarmed protestors. Ten residents were killed and more than 25 injured in the firing. Four hours after the incident, a bus was set ablaze some 150 metres from where the firing took place. In subsequent legal proceedings, the police claimed that this showed how the protesting crowd was getting violent, justifying the SRPF's resort to violence (Patwardhan, 2011).

[13] Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar was a Dalit political leader, leading the Dalit–Buddhist Movement, and the architect of the Indian Constitution.

[14] Garlanding with footwear is an often used gesture to demonstrate disrespect in the political arena.

Ramabai Nagar nestles on either side of the Eastern Express Highway, extending from Chembur to Ghatkopar, Mumbai (and adjoining Kamraj Nagar, with which space I introduced this thesis). In 1997, it was predominantly a Dalit slum community, most of its residents being *Mahar* Buddhists[15]. Named after the wife of Ambedkar, the area has its own Ambedkar statue to commemorate his contribution to Dalit emancipation. Insult to the statue is considered an insult to the majority of the inhabitants of the space. Anecdotes of the firing that were videotaped and shown in the documentary "Jai Bhim, Comrade" by Anand Patwardhan also refer to a nearby *Buddhavihar* (A Buddhist place of worship) (Patwardhan, 2011).

In November 1997, the Maharashtra government, forced to take cognizance of the incident due to the large-scale protests that had spread across Maharashtra against the police, set up the Gundewar Commission of Inquiry to investigate the incident. The Commission published its report in 1999, clearly demonstrating that police action had been excessive and driven by caste prejudice. Manohar Kadam, the SRPF officer and belonging to the higher Maratha caste, was specifically implicated in the commission's report. In 2001, a sessions court Judge who was revieweing Kadam's appeal for anticipatory bail refused to take into consideration the findings of the Commission (Times News Network, 2001, September 13th). In 2009, a session's court found Kadam guilty of homicide amounting to murder and sentenced him to life imprisonment without bail (Pawar and Venkatraman, 2009). Subsequently, this too was revoked by the High Court and Kadam was let out on bail. In 2011, 14 years after the incident, the protesters, who were accused of setting fire to the bus, were acquitted since the investigation found that they were nowhere near the scene of the crime.

2.4.3 Two instances of religious violence

The Bombay Riots of 1992-93 and the Ramabai Nagar Massacre of 1997 have little in common. For one, they differed considerably in scale, as the Ramabai Nagar Massacre was a one-day event resulting in 10 deaths and localized to one slum community. The

[15] The Mahar caste is the Dalit caste that Ambedkar belonged to. When Ambedkar converted to Buddhism in 1956, many from the Mahar caste followed suit, together establishing Navayana Buddhism, a specific kind of political Buddhism articulated by Ambedkar for the liberation of the Dalit community.

Bombay Riots unfolded over several months, resulted in 900 deaths (with an additional couple of hundred deaths during the Bomb blasts), and spread across the city. For another, popular literature distinguishes between the two events, Bombay Riots is considered to have been violence between Hindus and Muslims, whereas in the Ramabai Nagar Massacre, it is generally considered to be the state (represented by the SRPF) against the residents of Ramabai Nagar (Dalit–Buddhists) (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Such representations are problematic because they suggest the existence of communal riots that occur without any type of state intervention. Around 90% of the deaths that occurred during the Bombay Riots were a consequence of police firing (Sainath, 1994). Brass (1997, p. 4), in exploring the difference between an incident of communal violence and a riot, remarks on how often police do take sides and are, at least, perceived to take sides by the community that bears the greatest losses. From the perspective of this thesis, therefore, state involvement in communal violence is taken to be implicit.Therefore, this study engages the tacit and implicit role of the police and political elite in communal violence.

There are a few similarities between the two incidents that make them interesting to pair together for my thesis. Both occurred during the ’90s, 20–25 years prior to my beginning my research, which make them long-ago enough for them to exist only in memories and contemporary enough to exist in peoples’ living memories. Since I was interested in how memories are constructed within these spaces, this timeframe seemed ideal. Secondly, they were both precipitated by the desecration of a sacred space. In the case of the Bombay Riots, it was the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, while in the case of the Ramabai Nagar Massacre, it was the desecration of the local Budha Vihar by the garland of footwear on the statue of Ambedkar. Furthermore, the two instances demonstrate violence against two different religious minority communities, both having unique trajectories of marginalization in the Indian context.

I will now turn my attention to the ethnography that I conducted. In the next section I describe the methods used in the field.

2.5 Doing fieldwork: data collection, analysis, and writing

Ethnographic fieldwork took place over two six-month periods between 2016 and 2018. My first systematic entry into the field was in October 2016, after spending a year in Norway engaged in coursework. During this period, I was able to sharpen my research design while engaging with some theoretical concerns occasioned by my initial research proposal. The first phase of fieldwork took place between October 2016 to April 2017. A majority of my interviews happened during this phase. From May 2017 to September 2017, I did a preliminary analysis and looked at gaps that needed filling from the field. Much of the fieldwork time during the second phase, from October 2017 to March 2018 was spent filling out these gaps through repeat visits and interviews. There were no new participant interviews at this stage. Before I delve into my methods of data collection, I will briefly examine my entry into the field and rapport building experiences.

I procured entry to my three sites through various contacts. Due to my experience in the development sector, I had professional contacts with many individuals and organizations working on a variety of themes and locations across Mumbai. It was through one of these that I was introduced to a development organization working in Mumbra. I am unable to divulge too much information about the organization itself in order to retain the confidentiality of my participants. Suffice it to say that the organization has a pan-Mumbai presence and started operations in Mumbra as early as the first few years of the millennium. Their office in Mumbra provided a perfect space for me to observe goings-on as well as interview participants. After initial contacts, I procured interviews with friends and family of participants through word-of-mouth. Two Zoroastrian friends and one colleague provided me with contacts in Dadar Parsi Colony. The Zoroastrian friends had themselves not lived in the Colony ever but knew enough people amongst their family and friends to secure for me an entry into the Colony. My first interview, however, was a contact I made through a colleague. Once I made the entry, other interlocutors were contacted through word-of-mouth. A friend

and former colleague in the development sector secured for me an interview with interlocutors in Gautam Nagar through his personal contacts.

Appendix 1 provides a list of my interlocutors, their age, and relevant biographical information.

2.5.1 Data Collection

Data collection for this project included participant observations, fieldnotes, semi-structured interviews, and family/group discussions.

On participant observations

Participant observation is the most extensively used ethnographic method and is commonly used in concert with other methods. “Participant observation is a data collection technique that requires the researcher to be present at, involved in, and recording the routine daily activities with people in the field setting.” (Schensul et al., 1999, p. 91). Ethnographers use participatory observation as the initial point of data collection and are usually engaged in observing events or settings. The phrase “participant observation” points to the intersection of two phenomena. One is to do with the act of observation, to consciously note one’s own sensory and affective information about the object of study. The second is to do with the process of becoming a participant in the object of study, that is, the process of gaining a degree of familiarity that aids data collection. The degree of familiarity and strangeness varied across the three spaces resulting in different forms of participant observation in this multi-sited ethnography.

In order to familiarize myself with the three spaces, I construed of “walking around,” “walking through,” “walking to,” and “walking from” as viable ways of procuring participant observation data. Lee and Ingold (2006) demonstrate the various ways in which the act of walking, that is fundamental to ethnographic fieldwork, provides particular insights to ethnography. They explore this through the lens of three different resonances between walking and ethnography. The first resonance is the ethnographer as a walker with feet on the ground. Through this resonance, walking within one’s

ethnographic physical space involves a combination of three modes. One mode is walking allows us to observe the world around us through sensory and other means. Video documentation of walks in Mumbra, for instance, show a crowded, bustling space, one that requires continuous negotiations while walking, so as to avoid people and traffic. In contrast, fieldnotes from an evening walk in Dadar Parsi Colony shows the preponderance of bird calls at that time of day, engendered by the Colony's green environs. In a second mode, solitary walking also allows us to withdraw into the self, thinking about the day's happenings, strategizing for the next day, and so on. Many of my walks in Dadar Parsi Colony were used to record field observations in audio form so that they were fresh. This also implied that I was reflecting on the day's happenings while walking through the Colony. A third mode of walking, where ethnographers on foot are engaged with the environmental and emotional aspects of space, allows for greater embodied fieldwork. While walking with Rehana around Mumbra, for instance, it was a long stroll that took around 3 hours, and it was a hot afternoon as well. Rehana offered that we eat road-side *shwarma* near her place, where we concluded our trip. She said she often ate at this place and that she could guarantee that they had the best *shwarma* in Mumbra. This aspect of walking, especially when we walk with our interlocutors, engendered greater familiarity with both space and interlocutor. Lee and Ingold's (2006) second resonance between anthropology and walking includes the routes and trajectories that participants take. Here, again, I turn to my walk with Rehana, who when asked to take me to what she considered were significant landmarks in Mumbra, took me over a particular route pointing towards both government and administrative buildings as well as religious sites and ending the tour at her home. In essence then, the walk with Rehana mapped out what Mumbra meant to her. In a third resonance, Lee and Ingold (2006) consider the sociality of walking, exploring orientation and body language, while walking with someone as essential in ethnographic fieldwork. One interlocutor in Dadar Parsi Colony first asked me to meet her at a café. Once there, we realized that the café was too bustling and noisy for us to have a good interview experience. We decided to find a park in which to conduct the interview. Conversation regarding my research started even before we reached the park. The park was relatively empty save for a few evening walkers. We

walked along the walking path and started the interview. After a while we sat on a park bench and continued the interview. There were differences, however, as to the extent to which I could do this in each of the three spaces. Both in Dadar Parsi Colony and Mumbra, “walking around” can be done quite inconspicuously owing largely to the fact that they are large spreads of space. In Gautam Nagar, on the other hand, I was always with someone and the space was too small for me to inconspicuously walk around. All of this “walking around” was recorded in the form of fieldnotes, audio recording, and video recordings.

Walking, however, was not the only way in which participant observation data was collected in the three areas. The development organization that formed my contact area in Mumbra, for instance, provided me a space within which to do a number of participant observation as a researcher in the field. The organization was not new to researchers interested in Mumbra and allowed me to participate in everyday life, including drinking chai with participants in the afternoon. I participated in group activities like a session on sexual orientations conducted by student social workers with participants in the organization. During a week in December, each day had a theme and participants would dress up according to the theme. I participated in this by helping them with costume and documenting (photography and video) their celebrations. I was witness to individual cases dealt with by social workers in the organization, including cases of marital discord and domestic violence. Finally, I was embedded in Mumbra at a time when they were having an annual show, and I was privy to their practice sessions, dance choreographies, play rehearsals, and speech writings. All of this gave me insights into the workings of the organization, the significance of the organization, and the office space for my interlocutors, the kind of problems faced by the inhabitants of Mumbra that were discussed in meetings, and, finally, the creative space afforded by the organization for its participants in Mumbra. The significance of the organization in the lives of my interlocutors is also reflected in the interviews.

In Gautam Nagar, participant observation took on two different forms. One is participant observation at my first contact’s house. Most of the interviews took place here, and I observed a lot of social interaction before, during, and after the interviews.

Further, as noted earlier, all rooms open out to a long veranda that looks over the space between the two buildings that make up Gautam Nagar. The veranda became a point from which to view many happenings over the evening time. Saee and I would stand at the verandah, while Harish made the filling for *vadā-pāv*[16], and watch people going around Gautam Nagar. This standing and watching together provided for new insights in participant observation. Finally, I participated in Ambedkar Jayanthi celebrations on April 14, 2017. This afforded me a space to observe happenings during an important celebration for the community. Celebrations included late night jaunts and early morning rituals. Harish and Saee invited me to spend the night at their home while participating in this event.

Figure 22: Early morning on April 14th, 2017, the stage is set for the celebrations. P.C. Sumanya Anand Velamur

[16] A streetfood snack of potatoes deep fried in yellow splitpeas batter that is eaten with bread.

Dadar Parsi Colony afforded very little space for participant observation. Luhrmann (1996) in the preface to her book, *The Good Parsi* remarks on her ethnographic experience with Parsis and calls it "a kind of 'appointment' ethnography." Comparing it to her earlier ethnographic experience with middle class London, which provided her with social gatherings in which to do her ethnography in public, her work amongst the Parsis involved greater number of one-on-one meetings. My own ethnographic experience in Dadar Parsi Colony was characterized by one-on-one socializing as well. The time I spent in a particular home in Dadar Parsi Colony was temporally circumscribed by the formal interview process. I was not privy to everyday life in the Colony. Much of my data from here is based on my interview data, which were, thankfully, deep and extensive.

On interviews

Interviews seek to understand peoples' ideas, beliefs, points of view without ever being explicitly concerned with an objective truth. In essence, then, interviews are founded on phenomenological and philosophical foundations (Bremborg, 2013). Further, Bremborg notes that the most important aspect of interviewing is the fact that it allows for data to be nuanced and complicated and unanticipated. This formed one of the main reasons why I chose interviewing as the main form of data collection. There is also another reason. It is easier to ask people for an interview than to tell people that one would like to do a "participant observation." An interview as a research method is widely understood across class, caste, and religion, and one that can be introduced even without building rapport. In most cases, rapport building happened during the interview.

The first foray into the field, between October and December 2016, included a few interviews in Dadar Parsi Colony and Mumbra. I had gone to these spaces armed with six or seven broad questions under the umbrella of the two broad research questions I had set for myself. The questions themselves were very broad, and I depended on taking cues from responses to proceed with the interviews. After a few interviews, I engaged with the data to determine what was working with the interviews and what was not working with them. Armed with new insight, I developed a more in-depth semi-

structured interview schedule that I present in Appendix 2. One challenge that I had encountered was asking questions regarding people's experiences in the housing market. How do I ask, for instance, if Muslims find it difficult to procure housing in mixed neighbourhoods or Hindu-dominated neighbourhoods? A friend suggested that I use media and academic research as a crutch to enable asking these questions. The following questions resulted from this discussion:

1. Some researcher/some newspaper article has noted that Muslims do not find housing in other parts of the city, and that's why some areas become predominantly Muslim. What do you think about that?
2. Some researchers/some newspapers have pointed out that a number of Muslims who were affected by the violence of the Bombay Riots of 1992–93 moved to Mumbra as they were looking for safety. What do you think about that?

This framing allowed me to distance myself from these assumptions while also giving space for interlocutors to engage with the idea, refuting or agreeing as they wish.

The semi-structured interview was divided into three main headings: life history, relationship to space, and memories of incidents of communal violence. I did not stick to this order in the interviews, preferring to allow for a conversation to unfold rather than interrupt a train of thought. I used it more like a checklist, often checking through the interview process for the information that I was yet to procure. I began all interviews with introducing my project, having already introduced myself as a PhD student studying Religion and Violence in Mumbai at the University of Bergen.

> I am studying how people living in religion-based residential spaces in Mumbai relate to the space they live in and how they remember violent events. By religion-based residential spaces I mean those spaces that have a majority of residents belonging to one religion. And for this, I have chosen Dadar Parsi Colony as a Parsi majority space, Mumbra as a Muslim majority space, and Gautam Nagar in Dadar as a Dalit–Buddhist majority space. So, my interview will first deal with questions regarding your relationship to your space, and then we will move onto questions on your memories of violent events. Do you have any questions?

Most interlocutors would take some time to understand the project. While Dadar Parsi Colony and Mumbra are known spaces, Gautam Nagar was less well known; so questions about where exactly it is located would ensue. Some respondents remarked on whether their space was really populated by people belonging to one religion. Always, they would conclude that while the spaces were dominated by people from one religion, they were not exclusive and did have people from other communities (religion, caste, region) residing in them. Interviews were recorded with consent, and I made sure that interlocutors knew that they could choose not be recorded if they wished by explicitly saying so. All interviews were recorded except one. Ardeshir of Dadar Parsi Colony did not want to be recorded, and I had to depend on my written notes for his interview. In another instance, while almost all of my conversations with Saee and Harish were recorded, they did exercise the option of not being recorded during parts of the interview because they were discussing what they felt were politically volatile issues that had no bearing on the research. While those conversations were recorded in my fieldnotes, I haven't included them in my data so as to respect their wishes. I also told interlocutors that I would be using pseudonyms and not their real names when quoting them. Most interlocutors were unconcerned about being identified in the research. However, Naheed from Dadar Parsi Colony did emphasize that I shouldn't mention the specifics of her job since it might reveal who she is. We together agreed upon a sufficiently vague identification for her.

Interviews over the three spaces were qualitatively different. In Dadar Parsi Colony, for instance, my interactions were structured, with people giving me an appointment and then proceeding to give me an interview at the appointed hour. Sometimes, very rarely, we were interrupted by phone calls. There were two exceptions to this kind of individual interviews. One is the group interview of Flavia's family. I had contacted Flavia through a friend and asked if I could come over for an interview. She was very forthcoming and asked me to come to her home for the interview. However, when I reached her home, she had gone out with her husband, Parvez, and their newborn and was expected back shortly. Her father-in-law, Farhad, and mother-in-law, Armaity, waited with me and asked me a number of questions regarding my project. Flavia and

Parvez returned and we continued to talk about my project. I decided to have a family discussion instead of the individual interview planned. In another instance, I had arranged to meet Sheharnaz at her home for the interview. At that time, Dinaz was visiting Sheharnaz, and I asked if I could interview the two of them together. All but three interviews occurred within people's homes. One interview was conducted in an office space. One interview was conducted partly in a café and partly at a home. And one interview was conducted in a park.

In stark contrast, Gautam Nagar had a fluid population walking in and out of interviews all the time. Many of the interviews were conducted in Harish and Saee's home, a small one-room kitchen, home to three adults and three children. There were constant interruptions from the children and neighbours passing around. Mid-interview, a passing neighbour would be summoned to be recruited for interviews at a later stage. In many interviews, Saee and Harish would enter into the conversation, asking their own questions and in some cases, taking the onus of clarifying my questions for the interlocutors. I acknowledge here the looming presence of Saee and Harish in all of the interviews in Gautam Nagar. One of my interviews took place in the Buddha Vihar on an afternoon when some preparations were afoot for some celebration at the Vihar. So, this interview was conducted amid a din of people talking, yelling, and moving furniture.

In Mumbra most of the interviews were conducted in the office of the development organization through which I had connected with interlocutors. This office gave me space to sit and talk to participants walking in and out, engaged in various activities and, in between, making time to give me interviews. This meant constant interruptions and general noise and din in the atmosphere. The first two interviews were a curiosity for the others as I found myself sitting with Kaneez and Farida, while a number of participants just sat around in a circle watching the proceedings. Since Kaneez and Farida were also organization employees, I had the feeling they were as much representing the organization as they were representing themselves. There were two family interviews that took place in interlocutors' homes.

Finally, while interview as a research method goes largely unquestioned, there was one interview during which my interlocutor confronted me on the choice of my method. I had visited Rehana's home to interview her father, Hanif, and step-mother, Rukhaiya. I introduced my project and asked for consent to record the interview. Rukhaiya, a PhD holder herself and lecturer at a local college, sounded unsure. I report the conversation below.

Sumanya: No. I will only record with your permission. If you are not comfortable with my recording this interview, I can switch off the recording.

Rukhaiya: No. I dont have a problem with the recording. But mostly, whatever PhDs I have come across, the analysis that happens, it happens only after a questionnaire is formulated. But what you are saying is beyond my comprehension. I dont have a problem with the interview being recorded. Its not like you are going to ask us a question that we wont answer. Even if you ask questions related to our income, we will answer, that is not a problem. But it is beyond my comprehension how you can do an analysis without a questionnaire.

Sumanya: Yes. But I do have predetermined questions. This is a semi-structured interview, not a survey. When you speak of questionnaire, you are probably refering to surveys. Am I right? Mine is not a survey because mine is not a quantitative method. Mine is a qualitative method. Now I have finished conducting three interviews. Once I have finished conducting all my interviews, I will conduct a qualitative analysis on the responses. What subject did you do your PhD in?

Rukhaiya: I did it in Geography from Aligarh Muslim University in Lucknow

The conversation continued about what I will do with the interviews, the exact processes that a qualitative interview data goes through during analysis.

Rukhaiya: Surely, you will also do a survey separately?

Sumanya: No. there is no survey component to my research. I am doing an ethnography. Ethnography involves going to the field and observing people and also interviewing them. It is part of a qualitative methodology.

We did eventually start the interview, more because Hanif put an end to what, probably, seemed to him an esoteric conversation between his wife and the researcher. But I was left feeling that I had not convinced Rukhaiya about my work. However, she didnt hold back in the interview; her suspicion that my whole project was a conjob made her more forthcoming in “instructing” me through her responses.

On Data analysis

Data thus collected included fieldnotes of participatory observations and interviews. In terms of data analysis, I began with a thematic analysis, looking for broad themes within my data.

While interview recordings were transcribed, I only used the transcriptions as a secondary mode of tracking data. For the analysis stage, I used only the audio recordings, since transcription was likely to have missed significant aspects of the data. The audio recordings gave me a clear indication of the way in which conversations were held, also providing me important cues from memories of the interview process. Only when using quotations during the writing of the thesis did I translate interviews from the original language to English. While quoting English interviews from Dadar Parsi Colony, I have stuck to original articulation (even if grammatically wrong) to retain the original flavour and import. Hindi and Marathi translations, I have made along with some consultation with colleagues. Wherever English words and phrases appear in Hindi or Marathi interviews, I have retained them as in the original adding the “sic” in brackets. Participant observation data, in the form of fieldnotes, audio recordings, and video recordings, were also subjected to a thematic analysis.

A thematic analysis with an interpretive approach “privileges meaning as ways to grasp action” (Bevir & Rhodes, 2006, p. 70). Indeed, an ethnography that privileges peoples’ beliefs and ideas has to necessarily be concerned with interpretation. Interpretation happens at two levels. One is at the level of the interlocutor, who, in this case, is

interpreting my questions, interpreting his/her space, interpreting the incidents of communal violence. An interpretive approach to analysis, on the other hand, refers to the researcher's own interpretation of the themes that are generated within the interview context. Both these levels at which interpretation takes place, allows for a phenomenological construction of the research world.

For the analysis on memories of violence, I alter my approach to include a narrative analysis. I discuss this in further detail in Chapter 6.

On Writing

The act of writing influences all aspects of research, from the literature review, data collection, and data selection to analysis and representation. Writing also forms the central thread by which all these processes hang together and, to that extent, is central to the research process. Van Maanen (2011, pp. 4–6) remarks on the limits presented by fieldwork in the writing of culture in an ethnography. Ethnographies are written from experiences, drawing from fieldwork that is inherently selective. Moreover, ethnographies are politically mediated, where there is always a power dynamic of who gets to represent whom and in what way. Further, ethnographers are influenced by the specific traditions and disciplines within which they have been launched. In a fourth limitation, personal choices of narrative and rhetorical techniques shape ethnography. Finally, ethnographic conventions are historically situated, changing over time. I will address the first two limitations, vis-à-vis experiential limitations and political mediation in the field, in the next section on reflexivity. Here I turn to the last three limitations to lay bare my writing journey.

In terms of scholarly traditions, there have been an eclectic mix of conscious and subconscious influences in my writing. I have referred to many works that have helped with both narrative and structure during the writing process. Works that influenced my writing included PhD theses of colleagues in the disciplines of religion studies, culture studies, and sociology (Aukland, 2016; Skjoldli 2017; Sen, 2016; and Yunus, 2018); published ethnographic monographs like Chatterjee's *A Time for Tea: Women, Labour and Post-Colonial politics in an Indian Plantation* (2001), Jalais's *Forest of Tigers:*

people, politics and environment in the Sundarbans (2010); Radhika Govindrajan's *Animal Intimacies: Beastly Love in the Himalayas (*2018*)*, and finally, historical works like Amin's *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922 – 1992* (1995) and Thomson's (2013) *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*.

With respect to narrative and rhetorical choices that one makes during writing, it is important to remember that writing is consequent of a series of negotiations that researchers are obliged to resolve at every stage. One of the negotiations that I was most often confronted with was the seemingly contradictory pulls between academic writing and being "alive in the writing" to use Narayan's (2012) descriptive phrase.

> Ethnographies can also be vivid, emotionally compelling and enjoyable, but if written within a conventional disciplinary frame they are also expected to be clearly argued, intellectually persuasive, and theoretically insightful. (Narayan, 2012, p. 5)

This formed a primary struggle for me. I found the opportunity for thick description were limited. Following Marcus (2011, p. 21), I realized that the choice between thick and thin descriptions has two constraints. One is a theoretical constraint and the other associated with fieldwork pragmatism. My interviews and fieldnotes were rich in their documentation of emotions. Even so, I had to restrict myself to only those aspects of the data that directly pertained to my research questions. Choosing ethnographic utterances became a difficult but necessary activity. More often than not, I would feel that there was more meat to be explored in a particular conversation, albeit not entirely relevant to the argument in the thesis. Abu-Lughod (2008) demonstrates for us how her field experiences in Egypt also made her feel that conventional ethnographic writing failed to capture the social world of her women interlocutors and she proceeded to write another book, one that focusses on her interlocutors narratives, stories, and songs to construct that world. Therefore, the corollary of choosing writing styles to consciously represent certain things implies that we can always write more than once, providing primacy to different aspects of our fieldwork.

Finally, ethnographic writing is as much a representation of the self as it is a representation of its purported object (Coffey, 1999; Van Maanen, 2011). An

ethnographic confessional tale, according to Coffey, paints the researcher as a conquering hero and the research process as a "voyage of discovery" (Coffey, 1999, p. 116). The negotiation that this entailed was the inclusion of the personal tale within an "objective" empirical context and the use of the pronoun "I" within a passive voice description of events. Initial academic writing wisdom learnt from years of schooling that privileged positivistic research over others made it almost impossible for me to conceive of personal narratives and the use of "I" as legitimate academic writing. However, exposure to different kinds of writing within the field of humanities helped me break away from such self-imposed limitations. The task soon was to strike a balance between the overly confessional narrative and the seemingly more objective empirical narrative. After all, an ethnography is more about another than it is about the self.

2.6 Reflexivity: positionality, power, and representation

In the Hindu mythological tale of Prahlāda, Prahlada's father Hiranyakashipu, in a bid to attain immortality asks the Lord Brahma for a boon. The clever king, anticipating some resistance were he to make a straightforward bid for immortality, phrases his demand thus:

> Then grant me that none of your creations will be the cause of my death. Not one of the things which you have created must be the death of me. No weapons should cause my death. I must not die inside the house nor should I die outside the house: not during the day nor during the night: not on the earth nor in the sky. Man should not kill me nor should an animal. Living things should not cause my death nor should non-living things be the instruments of my end. Devas, asuras or reptiles should all be unable to destroy me. Please grant me this boon. Please also assure me that I will be the sole suzerain of the universe and my wealth should be immense. It should never diminish. (Subramaniam, 2016, Kindle Edition, loc. 4616)

Brahma grants him his wish and leaves. Needless to say, Hiranyakashipu becomes an unstoppable force and resorts to terrorising everybody, including the gods. It then takes Lord Vishnu's incarnation as Narasimha; part man and part animal and, therefore, neither man nor animal; with lion claws, no weapon; on the threshold, neither inside nor outside the house; at twilight, neither during day nor during night; on his lap, neither on earth nor in the sky; to kill Hiranyakashipu and put an end to his evil.

I tell this story because it contains all the elements of reflexivity that I seek to explore in this section. Narasimha's position as one balancing many dualities is resonant with a researcher's position in the field where too, researchers are called upon to engage with insider–outsider and emic–etic dynamics and to find a balance. However, researchers hardly have the divine powers that Narasimha had, to do this effectively. Which brings me to the second aspect of reflexivity, that of power. Field research is imbued with power dynamics between researchers and interlocutors that are, more often than not, tilted in favour of the researcher. These power balances not only influence experiences in the field, but also determine the data collected. The greatest power wielded by researchers is the power of representation. We know the story of Narasimha as the story of Narasimha, an avatar of Lord Vishnu. Hiranyakashipu's voice died with him and Narasimha prevailed to tell the tale. Researchers too have the power to represent. More importantly, however, the politics of representation follows the researcher, as competing voices in the field clamour for attention.

In the following pages, I explore the significance of reflexivity in the research process, identify myself along with my various positions in the field, and explore the elements of positionality, power, and representation in the field along the two axes of space and people.

Traditionally, the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, and geography have colonial preoccupations that sought to essentialize peoples, cultures, and spaces. Towards the end of the twentieth century, however, feminist scholars, postcolonial scholars, and scholars of geography took dominant practices of knowledge production to task (Abu-Lughod, 2008; Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Katz, 1994; Kobayashi, 1994; Narayan, 1993;

Rabinow, 2007). Arguing for a more nuanced understanding of the researcher's own position in the field and vis-à-vis their interlocutors, across various socio-economic axes, these scholars argue that this position influences how and what kind of knowledge is being produced. It is now common for research writing in different disciplines across the humanities and the social sciences to include a reflexive stance.

In the context of this research, the complexity of the researcher's position in the field is exacerbated by the fact that there are two different axes in which researcher positionality must be regarded, one is vis-à-vis the three spaces and the other is vis-à-vis interlocutors. Mullings (1999, p. 340) argues that researchers must seek "…*positional spaces* (author emphasis), that is, areas where the situated knowledges of both parties in the interview encounter engender a level of trust and cooperation." In my own fieldwork, I have had to seek out these positional spaces, and they differed from one space to another. Most importantly, this has varied implications to the knowledge I produce about these peoples and spaces, one that is worthy of reflexive scrutiny.

Reflexivity is an epistemological and/or a methodological choice that gives primacy to the subjectivities of the researcher in producing knowledge. In this context, it is incumbent upon us to explore the traditional insider–outsider debate. While initially thought to be a dichotomy (either you are an insider or an outsider), scholars have well and truly discredited the idea and put in place a more nuanced understanding of positionality in the field (Abu-Lughod, 2008; Chacko, 2004; Kanuha, 2000; Merriam et al., 2001; Mullings, 1999; Narayan, 1993). In an interesting discussion, Kaikkonen (2020, p. 62–70), claims that the insider–outsider dichotomy and the emic–etic dichotomy in the study of religions are often times mistakenly conflated and polarized. He proposes instead to view both the emic–etic concept and the insider–outsider concept as relational axes allowing for complexity and nuance in researcher positionality. In this understanding, there is always an element of the outsider in any researcher, whether they adopt an etic strategy or an emic one. In contrast, the insider–outsider axis is a diverse mix of all of one's historical, socio-economic position in wider society as well as in one's relationship vis-à-vis one's interlocutors. Therefore, a

researcher can have a mix of many identities in the field. This is a useful way of looking at my own position in the complex field of Mumbai. Studying three different spaces and peoples, all variously familiar or distant to me, my position as a researcher places me as an outsider armed with an etic strategy. But as a resident of Mumbai, and one familiar with the workings of South Asian culture, in general, and positioned to contribute towards the larger literature on South Asia, I am an insider with an emic perspective. Merriam et al. (2001, p. 411–415), in a comparative analysis of reflexivity in four different research situations where researchers were differentially positioned vis-à-vis their informants, identify three themes that were relevant to the way the insider–outsider debate is framed. These are positionality, power, and representation. I find this a useful way of organising my own fieldwork experiences into analytically meaningful ways of seeing the field. First, I will discuss the elements that make up my identity in the field.

2.6.1 Researcher Identity

The story of Narasimha recounted in the beginning of this section, while providing a metaphor for reflexivity, also indicates my cultural identity. Stories from the Bhagavata Purana, of which this is one, form part of the repertoire of oral narratives bequeathed to me by my mother and grandmother. While after thoughtful adult consideration, I identify as an atheist (not least because of my father's atheistic influence), I still find myself dipping into this kind of Hindu cultural reference in everyday life. I am an upper middle class, fifth generation English educated resident of Mumbai. My parents are from Tamil Nadu, and we speak Tamil at home, or a hybrid of Tamil and English, that I have heard loosely referred to as Tanglish. I have been brought up in many different cities in India but have spent a lot of my teenage and early adulthood in Mumbai. I therefore call Mumbai home. I am a woman and have heightened sensitivity to gendered ways of being. I am a Brahmin and accrue the social capital that is associated with that caste. I am a social worker by profession, having been employed in Mumbai's thriving development sector for some years before the start of this PhD. Through my education and professional trajectory, I have developed an interest in human rights and the rights of marginalized groups. Because of this background, the spirit of advocacy

influences my fieldwork. My identity as a Bombay girl or a Mumbai girl is similar to the identity of the women from all three spaces.

There end our similarities. My positionality, with respect to caste, class, and religion varied in all three spaces and, to that extent, gave me diverse experiences in the field and influenced the data collected. My positionality in this research project can be viewed along two axes. One is my location vis-à-vis my interlocutors. The second axis is my position with respect to the three spaces I study. Giving primacy to both people and place, this section seeks to situate the field as well as the researcher on a relational axis.

2.6.2 Reflexivity across spaces

Rodman (1992) emphasizes the need to empower the concept of place, encouraging multilocality as well as multivocality. Since the differences between spaces form a main target of my study, they too have the potential that an interlocutor has. If the three spaces that form the focus of my study function like interlocutors, my research has been informed by my positionality with respect to these spaces. In this section, I consider my own positionality and the implications it has on my ethnography. While I have lived in four cities growing up, I spent some of my teen years and almost all of my adult years in Mumbai. I consider myself a *Mumbaikar*, and to that extent what one might call an insider in my field. Within Mumbai too, I have lived in the north-west suburb of Malad, the Central suburb of Sion–Koliwada, the southern tip of Colaba, the congested western suburb of Andheri East, the historical Mill district of Mahalakshmi East (Byculla West), and finally, the Central suburb of Kanjurmarg West that is very close to the border of Thane Municipal Corporation, the neighbouring urban administrative unit. All this apart from the one year I spent in a college hostel right in the middle of South Mumbai on Peddar Road. These far-flung areas represent very different social situations within Mumbai.

Despite this versatility of spatial living experience, certain Mumbai spaces have eluded me. In my experience of living in Mumbai, I have lived mostly in a particular kind of space, requiring interaction with a particular kind of people. As a daughter of an

employee of the State Bank of India, a Central Government agency that required employees to transfer for work every 3–4 years, I grew up, for the most part, in staff quarters, with other families of employees of the bank. The social make up of these spaces were homogenous in terms of class, but diverse in terms of religious, regional, and caste backgrounds.

My first foray into Gautam Nagar was in 2017 when a former colleague took me there to meet his acquaintance who would then become my contact in Gautam Nagar. Dadar, being a very central location, I have frequented the general area a lot during my years in Mumbai. In fact, I have even shopped right outside Gautam Nagar at the famed sari stores of Dadar East. However, I have never set foot in Gautam Nagar and would have been unlikely to have done so were it not for my research. So, this space was new to me too. Like Mumbra, I stand out here too, even if I am dressed conservatively. It is clear that I am an outsider based entirely on mannerisms. In spatial configuration, Gautam Nagar looked like many of the lower socio-economic spaces that formed part of my social work fieldwork experience. Even though there were concrete buildings, the socio-spatial life seemed to mirror those of slums. Congested, with an average of 5–6 people in each apartment unit that measured an average of 200 square feet, their doors were eternally open to a constant inflow of people.

I am not a complete stranger to Dadar Parsi Colony. As mentioned earlier, I have lived in Sion–Koliwada, barely a stone's throw from Dadar Parsi Colony. I have taken morning walks at the Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens. However, there ends my familiarity with the space. I had not ventured past the Five Gardens and was completely new to the other landmarks like the Agiary and the *putlā* that my respondents bandied about while talking about the space. I had of course seen the Parsi Gymkhana, perched on a passing BEST[17] bus on Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar road, that gave a pretty good view of the happenings in the Gymkhana even if only momentarily. I have always admired Dadar Parsi Colony for its clean and green surroundings. I felt least out of place in Dadar Parsi Colony for two reasons. First, there are fewer people on the streets

[17] BEST is the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport, a government agency that is in charge of all public transport in Mumbai.

than in either Gautam Nagar or Mumbra, both of which are densely populated. Second, there were more people on the streets who looked like me, dressed like me, and there was a feeling that there was something appropriate about my being there.

The first time I took a train to Mumbra was in August 2015 when I had just started my PhD and for the express purpose of making observational trips to the area I had selected for my field research. I chose to go there in the early afternoon, and I decided to just walk as much as I could making observations along the way. I walked along the railway tracks, towards the North, through the market area and then through the main road for around two hours. It was very apparent to me that this was a more impoverished area than my own comfort area. Sample this excerpt from my fieldnotes.

> (Rehana) asked me to come to Shimla Park in an auto rickshaw. I hailed an empty one and got in. I soon noticed that the driver was slowing down intermittently and looking for what I assumed to be other customers. I was divided in my head about whether to ask him to just speed up to my destination or just allow him to go ahead and see what happens. I realized soon enough that this was the norm. Moreover, this might give me an opportunity to see everyday interactions. As we rolled down the Mumbai–Pune Road, a man of around 20 hailed the auto and got in. I moved to one side, while he respectfully stuck to the other side, leaving a vast space between us. A little way ahead, another man, presumably of the same age got in. the first man got out, allowing the second man to sit in the vacant space between us while he reoccupied his seat near the other end of the auto. I realized that they were seated according to where they intended to disembark. Now, we were crammed in, bodies touching each other. At times like these, my body usually is on high alert. Contracting my body, I clutched my bag to myself. Once the first man disembarked, a *naqab* clad woman got in. The boy, respectfully, now moved to sit next to the driver so that us ladies could sit in the backseat comfortably. After some distance, Rehana called and asked me where I was. I asked around and relayed to her that I was in Amrut Nagar. She exclaimed, “Oh no!” then she asked me to get off the auto and cross the road and take an auto to Sanjay Nagar instead. She said, “My

> brother called to tell me that he is having friends over at our house. He doesn't like me to be in the house when his friends come over." So, I did just that. Paid off my autorickshaw driver, crossed the road, hailed another shared auto and disembarked at Sanjay Nagar. The concept of a private autorickshaw ride doesn't seem to exist here. (Fieldnotes, Mumbra, 13/10/2016)

This excerpt points to three disparate observations that contribute to discussions on positionality, power, and representation vis-à-vis the three spaces. The first is my initial annoyance and later resignation at having to share an autorickshaw, an aspect I circle back to at the end of this excerpt. It is not that the concept was wholly new to me. Most places in Mumbai offered both shared autorickshaw services as well as private autorickshaw rides, the former being more affordable. The surprise at not finding the latter alternative was what produced minor discomfort for me. I had to recalibrate my own ideas of personal comfort to get from one place to the other within Mumbra. This provided another indication that the area was more impoverished than many places in Mumbai. In contrast, I did not have any such discomforting experiences in navigating the space in Dadar Parsi Colony.

The second observation is the experience of being crammed into an autorickshaw with strangers. Phadke, Khan, and Ranade (2011, loc. 84), in their seminal work *Why Loiter?* describe notions of the "loitering woman" as being "mad, bad or dangerous to society." This theme, they argue, is couched in narratives of safety that fashion women's ideas of their access to public space. My own bodily reactions to being in an autorickshaw in such close proximity to strangers, and men at that, is also an indication of this kind of socialization. As a middle class Mumbai woman, I experience relative (relative to other cities in India) safety in public spaces, not least because of a vibrant womens' rights movement right from the middle of the nineteenth century. However, Phadke et al. (2011) contend that this relative access does not imply that women's access to public spaces in Mumbai goes uncontested. Women in Mumbai develop a variety of methods, manifested in their body language, to ensure their safety in public spaces: for example, calling home to tell someone if they get into a taxi or an autorickshaw, clutching handbags in such a way so as to allow the elbow to protrude

in a stance ready to plunge the elbow into anyone who usurps personal space. My reaction to my fellow travellers in the autorickshaw demonstrated for me how spaces were open to me, the researcher, only at certain times and in certain ways. For instance, it would have been impossible for me to "walk-around" or "loiter" alone in Mumbra late at night. Mumbra was crowded, but my presence as a woman would have been conspicuous. Dadar Parsi Colony would also not have been very safe to "loiter" around in the middle of the night. Unlike Mumbra, this was a quiet space with legitimate concerns around safety. Finally, I could have spent any time I wanted in Gautam Nagar because it was always crowded, and I was never alone. As mentioned earlier, I had spent the eve of Ambedkar Jayanthi in 2016, and we spent most of the night walking around the streets around Gautam Nagar, visiting the festivities at other nearby Dalit spaces. I felt most safe in Gautam Nagar.

The third element is the reference to the "*naqab* clad woman." I had already noticed the dominance of the *burqa*[18] in Mumbra like I had seen in no other place in Mumbai, save Kurla, a Central suburb with a huge Muslim population. While women without *naqab* were not entirely absent in Mumbra's public spaces, they were few and far between. While in a bid to dress appropriately, I had worn the traditional salwar kameez and dupatta, I began to wonder if it at all helped to make me inconspicuous in this space. My feelings about a dress code in the field are ambivalent. Coffey (1999), in pointing to the significance of the embodied aspects of ethnographic fieldwork, discusses situations that required researchers to dress a certain way to boost their complete immersion in their social world. Further, she emphasizes the need to "look as we are expected to (or not!) is a key factor in our ability to conduct research; to promote trust and reciprocity; and to establish the roles of participant or advocate"(Coffey, 1999). Establishing trust and building rapport are very significant themes in both the field of social work and ethnography, and I sourced much of my rapport building from my own forays into the field as a social worker. When I was working towards my

[18] *Burqa* and *naqab* were used loosely and interchangeably to refer to the full black garment that covers one from head-to-toe. It may or may-not include the nose-piece which covers the bridge of the nose and below. Almost all the women I interviewed in Mumbra would wear the *burqa* when they went outside the house.

Masters in Social Work, our institution had a rule that mandated either a salwar kameez or a sari for work in the field. The rule sought to engender respect amongst the students towards the communities in which they worked, and further, it was supposed to boost rapport building exercises. It was an old rule, and some of my colleagues and I thought it archaic. Mumbai, after all, turned out rather fashionable and "modern" on the streets. For instance, while the rule allowed for saris, nobody actually wore saris to the field, salwar kameez being the more natural option. During the same time, I met an Adivasi rights activist, who had grown up in South Mumbai but had lived the better part of the last 30 years in the Adivasi hamlets of Raigad District. In an informal conversation with her, she argued against a dress code in the field. She explained that in her context, if she was able to accept her Adivasi folk with their different culture, mannerisms, and dress styles, why would she assume that it would be difficult for them to accept her the same way. According to her, it was a disservice that urban, western educated activists and social workers do to the Adivasi population by assuming that they are more resistant to change. I partly agree with this reasoning. I say partly, because one must consider the fact that as a 60 year old and someone who has lived the majority of her adult life with the Adivasis, she speaks from a retrospective place where she does not have the concerns that younger people who are starting out in their field have in building and establishing rapport. Once rapport has been established, however, ideally it should not matter what one wears to the field because trust has already been established. In fact, if one continues to stress on the centrality of attire in the field, one falls into the trap of exoticizing the culture one is studying. However, it is one thing to establish rapport with interlocutors, quite another to avoid being conspicuous in the physical space that is the field. Salwar kameez was my attire of choice for the field. Both Dadar Parsi Colony and Gautam Nagar demonstrated an openness to different kinds of attire. In Mumbra too, all my female interlocutors wore western clothes, dresses, skirts, jeans, and t-shirts underneath their burqas. However, walking around Mumbra, my attire might have attracted some attention since, already, without a burqa, I stood out in the crowd.

2.6.3 Reflexivity vis-à-vis interlocutors

Like the spatial plane, I was a complete stranger to the interlocutors from Mumbra and Gautam Nagar. However, two of my interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony were people I knew from before the research project. I had studied with one of these persons during my undergraduate years between 2000–2003. I had not kept in touch, however, over the years and reconnected only now for the purpose of the research. The other person was a teacher from around the same time. I also reconnected with her after 2003 only for the purpose of research. In this subsection, I consider, how positionality, power, and representation intersect in this axis of analysis.

Harish and Saee, husband and wife, were my primary contacts in Gautam Nagar. During my second day visiting them, I interviewed Harish, as he sliced onions and diced potatoes to make *vadā-pāv*, street food that he will sell at his cart in the space between two buildings in Gautam Nagar. During the interview, Harish said,

> My telling you all this does not benefit anyone. Some people study, madam, just for the sake of studying. But when you study, you must think about what they felt in their heart, to understand what they are saying. Then you will understand what they mean to say..... You will get involved with us. And then you will present your research. You will present with your own emotions, your own wordings, voice modulation, and through that, people will get to know our feelings/emotions. You will be presenting our feelings, and the way you will present will be the way it will be received by the person you present to, the third party. (Harish, 40, Gautam Nagar)

Harish reflects two important aspects of representation in the field. One is the political nature of representation. He acknowledges the power that I hold in being a western-educated academic. He understands the power that is not only inherent in my position as knowledge producer but also in the access I have to resources, particularly in terms of access to avenues of dissemination. Having acknowledged all this, he also sees opportunity and power in representing himself and his people.

The second aspect of representation that Harish emphasizes, is his own feeling of responsibility towards presenting himself and his people correctly. So that when I represent them to an academic audience, I can do it well. This conscious sense of responsibility, while not articulated in so many words, in any other instance, was something that I sensed in many interviews with interlocutors in Gautam Nagar. For instance, when I asked Nalin what he meant by *Brahmanvad*[19], a word he had used while responding to a question, he quickly told me that I should speak to one of his acquaintances who was better at articulating these things. Similarly, Saee introduced me, very reverentially, to Mukund, whom she described as a teacher and who taught her, specifically, subjects such as English, and how he was the best person to talk to about the area since he has lived here for long and has a greater understanding of Gautam Nagar. He insisted on speaking in English and instructed me to ask questions in English even as I asked in Hindi. He seemed like someone who was interested in sociological/anthropological research in general and was influenced by Ambedkar. In some ways, I would classify him as an insider with an emic perspective, very invested in the small society that made up Gautam Nagar, but also adopting a conscious analytical lens while responding to my questions.

Representation becomes more complex when you consider that I am a Brahmin working at representing Dalit experiences in the case of Gautam Nagar.

> Saee accompanied me downstairs as I left for home after conducting two interviews. She had to join her husband at the vadā-pāv stand and help out this evening. As we went down, she said she and Harish, her husband, were trying to figure out what my caste was. I said, “Didn’t I tell you yesterday?” She said, “No. You said you were south Indian. But you didn’t tell us what caste you were. And that is what we were discussing last night. Harish wagered you were Brahmin. Are you?” I said “Yes.” It seemed that it was important for her to resolve this issue at the earliest. It was followed by other questions on caste and

[19] A word I explore in some detail in Chapter 7

> sub caste, all of which was had over a snack of *vadā-pāv*. (Fieldnotes, March 3, 2017, Gautam Nagar)

This was a day after I had started my interviews, having met Saee and Harish only once before when I was introduced to them. They were to speak to their neighbours and friends and get them to speak to me. I suspect that this was an important piece of information, one that was probably sought when they asked around for people to participate in my research. The discussion at the *vadā-pāv* stand later was all about caste. Saee was emboldened to ask a variety of personal questions, including whether I was married or not, why I wasn't married, and what my religious beliefs were. Some of these questions returned to the spotlight in informal conversations at different points during my interaction with the people at Gautam Nagar. But what is interesting here is that once I had become candid about my identity and beliefs, both Saee and Harish assured me that they had nothing against individual Brahmins as such. It was only Brahmanical institutions or *Brahmanvad* that was problematic to them. I assured them that I understood this. But how does one assure one's interlocutors that one has really understood or that the interlocutors understand that you understand your privileged position? I adopted, in this instance, what Ellingson (1998) describes as the format of the "confessional tale." While I cannot presume to empathize based on my caste, class, or religion, since I belong to the dominant on all three counts, I employed the gender lens. I told Saee that just as men are not likely to understand the trials and tribulations of women although we may expect them to empathize with our predicament, my role was not to contradict or dismiss what they say, but to understand their situation and represent the same as honestly as possible. She and Harish nodded, and I would locate this moment in fieldwork as significant in breaking the ice in Gautam Nagar. It allowed for greater candour from my interlocutors, and interviews took a more conversational turn with a lot of questioning from both researcher and researched.

This also meant that my authority on knowledge was called into question. For instance, when I was not interviewing but engaging in a political conversation, my interlocutors claimed that Indira Gandhi's husband, Feroze Gandhi was a Muslim. I argued that he wasn't and that he was, in fact, a Zoroastrian. My interlocutors though dismissed my

input saying, "I don't know where you get your information from. But this is what we know." In another instance, Harish told me that Ambedkar supported Jinnah's Two-Nation theory, the idea that the territory of Hindustan should be for Hindus and the territory of Pakistan should be for Muslims. I asked him where he got this information from. He said "hmm … I know it." I pushed further and asked, "Did you read it somewhere?" I ask because I would like to read it as well." He said, "No no. this is not the sort of information we get from books. We know because we were told by our parents and grandparents." He locates his knowledge as coming from traditional oral narratives, one to which I am not likely to be privy.

Representation and power take a whole different meaning in the dynamics between myself, the researcher and the interlocutors at Mumbra. For starters, there was no deeply reflexive moment in Mumbra where the ice broke and allowed me into the social life of interlocutors like it had happened in Gautam Nagar. I was always recognized as an outsider. There was a practised feel to the process as most of my interlocutors associated with the development organization were used to having researchers arrive for interviews. My interlocutors had an understanding that I would ask questions related to my topic and they would answer as candidly as possible. The two family interviews that I conducted in two homes were the only ones that slightly veered from this format. In one instance, after the audio recording was switched off, my interlocutors chose to give me a lengthy and detailed exposition on Islam and Sunni and Shia. Here, I felt that they had the same motives as those of Harish, a feeling of responsibility to represent themselves in a good way. In the other instance, there was a greater concern for me personally and my reasons for being unmarried, a recurrent theme in Gautam Nagar. Unlike Gautam Nagar though, in Mumbra interlocutors were not interested in me at all. No one asked me if I was Hindu or Muslim; if I had faith at all; if I was married or single; where I was doing my PhD; why I was doing it in Norway. Only once, an interlocutor, after she was assured that the recording device was switched off, decided to ask me some of the questions that I asked her. "What do you think of mixed marriages, *didi*?" she asked. I gave her my opinion. Finally, apart from Rukhaiya's doubts regarding my interview schedule, my research and authority went largely unquestioned, possibly because they were just not interested.

In Dadar Parsi Colony, the dynamics of power, positionality, and representation were overturned. Like Mumbra, I was always recognized as an outsider. More importantly, a lot of my interlocutors were suspiciously curious about Norway's interest in religion and violence in Mumbai. Why did the Norwegian Research Council fund a project on Mumbai? What was their vested interest? Who supervized me? Which country are they from? What do Europeans know of Mumbai? How did I come across the research project? How much are they paying me? Can I live within the salary in Bergen? Do I live there with family or alone? Where do I live here? Who do I live with here? These were the questions that were put to me, usually before interviews started. Not always suspicious in nature, a few interlocutors, in what seemed slightly patronising, also praised me as a woman studying for a PhD and wished me well in my research. I mention this here because I had never come across anything close to this patronising attitude in Gautam Nagar or Mumbra, attesting to differences in my own positionality vis-à-vis class, caste, and religion in the three spaces.

Possibly the best way to reflexively understand differences in interactions between the researcher and researched across the three spaces is to discuss the role of emotions in the field. Emotion forms the foundation for reflexivity in people within social settings (Burkitt, 2012). Furthermore, emotions colour a researcher's field work experiences as well. While talking about race in the field, Faria and Mollett (2016) remark on how the assumption that the researcher always is in a position of authority vis-à-vis the people studied is erroneous. It masks the complex interactions that take place in different field sites. They instead argue, among other things, the importance of attending to emotionality in order to deconstruct race.

In Gautam Nagar, for instance, conversations sometimes became confrontational and emotional[20].

[20] This is not to say that people were unfriendly in Gautam Nagar. It was with a certain sense of belongingness with which they interacted with me. While confronting me about my research, they were also comfortable inviting me over to spend the night during Ambedkar Jayanthi celebrations. And I now continue to be in touch with them on whatsapp.

> Nobody knows. What can I say? I have read about this right? My eyes are welling up with tears. What have they done to our community? You don't know, and nor does anyone else. (Harish, 40, Gautam Nagar)

Harish was talking about B.R. Ambedkar, one of the foremost leaders of Dalit emancipation in India and the leader of the mass conversion of Dalits to Buddhism in 1957. Often his eyes would well up with tears, and his throat would choke up. Many times he would verbally articulate his strong feelings with statements like, "Look! The hair on my hands are standing on end[21]!" It was obvious that he had very strong feelings about certain subjects like Ambedkar.

In her book, "The Cultural Politics of Emotion", Sarah Ahmed argues that our emotions orient us to align ourselves either with or against certain bodies (Ahmed, 2015). In this way, we are able to create collective surfaces. She analyzes texts that are in public circulation and looks at how these texts use pain, grief, anger, and other emotions to delineate different surfaces. Take, for example, Harish's emotional state in the lines quoted earlier. He assumes a certain expertise on the subject. And then, he delineates two surfaces, one of the community to which he belongs and the other of me and everyone else. Ahmed (2015, p. 191), in her concluding chapter poses the question of the relationship between emotions and justice. She argues that emotions work to differentiate between others by identifying those that can be grieved, giving grief a certain legitimacy. Harish is identifying Ambedkar as someone who can be grieved. And in articulating how I am not grieving the way he is, he further underscores the difference between him and me.

Critiques of reflexivity abound, the mildest being the charge that it is way too self-indulgent on the part of the researcher. More serious charges lie in the question of whether it at all produces better research than otherwise. In this section, I have traced my reflexive journey through three spaces, that demonstrates different interactions and processes that would influence the analysis in the chapters that follow. For instance, I

[21] One could translate this as, "Look! I have goosebumps on my hands." However, I chose the other translation because I felt it conveyed a certain seriousness to the situation that Harish wanted to convey.

had initially wished to compare these spaces, but the reflexive process demonstrated how the data wasn't lending itself to the kind of spatial comparisons I wished to make. This is not to render the data invalid but to say that the data is constrained by these factors and that these factors determine the direction the analysis takes.

Finally, the corollary of reflexivity determining the direction a study takes is the fact that it also affects and changes the individual consciously engaged in the reflexive process. Sweetman (2003) explores the notion of habitual reflexivity or the reflexive habitus. Speaking not about researchers, but individuals in general, he contends that reflexivity itself has become habitual and for those who possess this reflexive habitus, emotional self-monitoring, and constantly self-fashioning becomes second nature. While this may, over all, place such people at an advantage, Sweetman anticipates that it might also have the disadvantage of not allowing an individual to be who they are. If one were to apply this criticism to the self-reflexive researcher, one confronts the question whether the self-reflexive researcher in the field remains the same individual who began the research project. Does his/her habitual reflexivity, indeed one demanded by disciplinary conventions, render the researcher different?

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter engages with the research design and aspects of fieldwork within this project. A research design evolves as the project progresses and, in this evolution, is located a number of epistemological and methodological choices. I trace these negotiations and argue for a multi-sited ethnography of religion-marked spaces in Mumbai. I present the field, providing detailed descriptions of the spaces under scrutiny. In an exploration of violence in Mumbai, I examine the history of communal violence in Mumbai and justify the choice of the two incidents of violence for the study of memory of violence. I describe and reflect on research methods adopted in the field, including a note on writing, which is critical to any ethnographic work. Finally, I take a deep dive into the reflexive stance and how the intersection of researcher positionality, power dynamics, and the politics of representation come together to

influence the direction my study takes. The reflexive stance also influenced my researcher identity, transforming me in pervasive ways. We are now set to transition to the next part of this thesis. In *Part II*, I interrogate the term ghetto and how it applies to the Indian context. In the next chapter, I will focus on the term *māhaul* encountered during my interviews and use this to think of spaces in Mumbai and Indian cities.

Part II: Interrogating Space in Religion-marked Spaces

3. Chapter 3: *Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there

Māhaul as a descriptor of space in Mumbai

3.1 Introduction

> Patna remained a secret, but I learnt many of her secrets. I used to sit under the Peepul tree that grew behind the Gandhi museum and admire the Ganga. From a distance, I could hear the noises emanating from a boat, and I would be filled with the mystery of life. The need to be free of the distress caused by failing that Math exam took me to the solitude of the Ganga. Those were the times, when without announcing to anyone, I started living the city. As soon as I got home though the whole *māhaul* would change, as if the city must not enter the home.[22] (Kumar, 2015, Kindle Edition, loc. 103–112[23])

Ravish Kumar writes about his experiences in the city of Patna. He describes uncovering different secrets of the city, interweaving them with his own life experiences. He uses the word *māhaul* (a word I have retained and left untranslated) at the end of the paragraph in the context of not allowing the city to enter the home. The *māhaul* changes when he comes home. From this context, one can infer that *māhaul* signifies a space-bound atmosphere or mood (of the city or the home), and it can change

[22] In this chapter, all quotations from literature have been translated by this author. Quotations in the original have been provided in the footnotes for easy reference.

[23] The original text in the Devanagari script (Kumar, 2015, Kindle Edition, loc. 103–112):

> पटना एक रहस्य बना रहा मगर उसके कई राज़ मैंने जान लिये। गांधी संग्रहालय के पीछे पीपल के पेड़ के नीचे बैठ गंगा को ख़ूब निहारा करता। दूर नाव से आती आवाज़ को सुनकर ज़िन्दगी के प्रति रोमांच जाग जाता। गणित में फ़ेल होने की यातना से मुक्ति का अभ्यास मुझे कई बार गंगा के इस एकान्त में ले गया। यही वह लम्हे थे जिनमें मैं बिना किसी को बताए शहर को जीने लगा। जैसे ही घर लौटता सारा माहौल ऐसा हो जाता कि घर में किसी शहर को आने नहीं देना है।

with change in space. In this chapter, I engage with this word and its many meanings. I choose not to translate the word *māhaul* in any of the quotations that I reproduce henceforth. This includes those from my data as well as from literature, in general. This allows me to engage with the context in which the word is used, providing for a context-driven formulation of *māhaul*.

This chapter takes a semantic journey with the word *māhaul*. In the following section, I explore the word *māhaul* as it appeared in the conversations and interviews with my interlocutors. Through this exercise, I identify some of the major connotations evoked by the word amongst my interlocutors (and me). I also engage with dictionary meanings of the word and its uses in Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, and Gujarati literature, creating a contextual semantic analysis. At the end of this section, I marry the understandings of *māhaul* elicited from interlocutors with its meanings in literary works to define *māhaul* in the context of space in Mumbai. In the next section, I take a detour to look at the multilingual field and the rationale for using the word *māhaul* as an analytical concept even if it doesn't form part of the primary vocabulary of all my interlocutors. Following this, I argue that the data from all three spaces allows for an analytical conceptualization of *māhaul*; one that encompasses three main aspects, *māhaul* as spatial culture, physical surroundings, and habitus. Finally, I argue for the use of *māhaul* to describe spaces in Mumbai.

3.2 What is *Māhaul*?

Māhaul as an analytical concept suggested itself to me only after the first phase of fieldwork. While sifting through audio recordings of interviews, I found the use of the word at multiple points, in different contexts, and describing different things. It had appeared not only in the responses from my interlocutors, but even in my questions in Hindi a few times. During the life story phase of the interview, for instance, when my interlocutors mentioned places they had lived in, I had followed it up with a question asking them to compare the two places, their *māhauls*, specifically the similarities and differences between the places. Therefore, as a

Tamil speaker and a resident of Mumbai, the word was familiar to me and formed a part of my Hindi vocabulary. What does the word mean for my interlocutors? How is the word formally used in literature?

In this section, I first explore how the term *māhaul* was used in conversations between me and my interlocutors. What are the contexts in which it was used? And what are the connotations it conjured up for the audience? Then, I look at dictionary meanings of the word, delving into accepted usage, synonyms, contexts, and use in literary works. Finally, I attempt a definition of *māhaul* that synthesizes these different understandings of *māhaul* to arrive at an analytical tool to understand space in Mumbai.

3.2.1 *Māhaul* in conversations

During my interviews, the word *māhaul* was used in many different ways to signify its many meanings. I look at instances where it was used, arriving at a conception of *māhaul* as used by my interlocutors. *Māhaul* is contiguous with physical space; it can be qualified; it influences behaviour and is influenced by behaviour; it creates boundaries where a physical boundaries may or may not exist; in corollary, it obfuscates an existing physical boundary; it can refer to the material surroundings of a space; it can change over time; and finally, it is used to refer to ones' personal circumstances. The followings excerpts from my data demonstrate these different usages.

> In Nagpada there is a lot of freedom. This is true generally of Bombay city. You can easily come and go, nobody will interfere. Truly, in a place like Nagpada, I can go with my friends to catch the late show and return home safely at around 1:30 or 2:00 am. But the *māhaul* here is very different. If you come home at 12:30, you will find girls are cowed down by fear. If they return home alone, they will be harassed by a group of 4–5 boys. Nobody says anything. This is a very different area.… So, there is an issue here with mobility and access. You cannot come and go as you please. (Yumna, 31, Mumbra)

Yumna, a resident of Mumbra, told me she grew up in Nagpada in South Mumbai (what she calls Bombay city). In Mumbra, she lives near the railway station, in a building complex. The area is crowded through out the day and night since it is in the market place. Yumna works for a development organization and is interested in gender-related issues as well. I had asked her what she felt were the major differences between Nagpada and Mumbra. She describes the difference in terms of the freedom one is accorded. Nagpada (and more expansively Bombay city) provided her more freedom than Mumbra does. She articulates this freedom in terms of the safety and security that girls experience in the two areas. While girls felt safe in Nagpada, "girls are cowed down with fear" in Mumbra. Further, she emphasizes this idea through a reference to a time in the night until when it is safe to be outside the home. Her use of the word *māhaul* in this context refers to the different freedoms afforded by both spaces. While Nagpada's *māhaul* is free, Mumbra's *māhaul* is repressive, limiting mobility and access. Three aspects of the word are demonstrated in this example. First, a *māhaul* can be qualified (free or repressive, in this case). Second, a *māhaul* is contiguous with a physical space (the physical space that is Mumbra has a repressive *māhaul)*. Third, the *māhaul* determines how people respond to things and vice versa. When she says, "no one says anything", she is referring to how nobody reprimands the boys who harass girls on the streets. This unresponsiveness contributes to the *māhaul*.

In another instance, the word was used to describe a specific religious culture that is seen to inhabit the space. In the following example, I was interviewing Kaneez and Farida together, and I asked Kaneez to describe the *māhaul* of the space she grew up in. Like Yumna, Kaneez too grew up in a south Mumbai neighbourhood and had enough experience in a different space to compare with Mumbra.

> The *māhaul* was like this, that when you say Bombay No. 3[24], then people think of it as Dawood area. And we lived in a Muslim community.… We were raised at our maternal grandmother's house. There, for the most part, there was only

[24] No. 3 refers to the pincode of the area. Many parts of Mumbai are also referred to in this manner.

> the Muslim community. And from there, the road that goes down to the market place, after that the Hindu neighbourhood starts. So, the market that lay in between serviced both areas. But that was the boundary. (Kaneez, 36, Mumbra)

For Kaneez, the *māhaul* in South Mumbai is determined by the religious persuasion of the people who lived there. Significantly, in Kaneez's recounting, *māhaul* seems to delineate the Muslim area from the Hindu areas. The market place may or may not have been an administrative boundary; but the *māhaul* on either side of the market place made the market place a boundary. Not only does *māhaul* map onto spaces, it also creates boundaries where physically one may or may not exist, an aspect I will return to in "Chapter 5:*Māhaul* boundaries, disgust, and precarity*.*"

Māhaul was also used to describe the surroundings within a certain space:

> Here, you will find two kinds of buildings, TMC buildings and non-TMC buildings… (in the non-TMC building) you will find the *māhaul* is very bad. No parking, no facilities, garbage is just strewn around. (Rukhaiya, 45, Mumbra)

Rukhaiya's *māhaul*, like Yumna's, is qualified as good or bad. Rukhaiya lived in a building complex with her husband and step children. Her building was clean and well maintained. While approaching the building, though, Rehana told me that the street outside was a known crime-ridden junction with gangster violence, violence against women, and substance abuse being rampant. In the above quote, Rukhaiya is not referring to people or culture but the physical infrastructure of the space. "no parking, no facilities, garbage strewn all around" all this contributes to what she calls the bad *māhaul*, implying that *māhaul* has a material dimension. The physical configuration of a space, therefore, contributes to its *māhaul*.

The word was also used to describe changes over time. Take, for instance, Harish who was telling me what he likes best about Gautam Nagar: the fact that everybody is friendly and cooperates with each other. And then he gave me an example.

> This morning, I had a big fight. A huge fight with my friend. And people around us took sides, either mine or my friend's. It felt like it was going to end up in a physical brawl. But once the fight finished, my friend and I started talking nicely with each other… and when the *māhaul* became peaceful, we spoke for about half an hour about the week's happenings and other unrelated things. (Harish, 46, Gautam Nagar)

In Harish's reckoning, the quality of *māhaul* changes over time, and in this case a very short period of time. The "*māhaul* became peaceful" because of the conscious efforts of Harish and his friend to talk of things other than what they fought about. Actors within the *māhaul* have the ability to change the *māhaul* through their behaviour.

Finally, the word was used to describe one's personal circumstances as well.

> The *māhaul* at my home is very religious. According to them, I am the spoilt sister. May be because of this, they don't let my sisters go to work. My mother rules the household. And she says that if my sisters go to work, they will become like me. What does that mean? I don't know. What have I done or not done? So that feels a bit bad. (Yumna, 31, Mumbra)

This snippet followed a conversation where Yumna was telling me about her own religiosity and her own journey with faith. She had underscored for me the significant role played by a woman's organization in her lack of faith. At the end of this discussion, I had asked her how she would describe her family (her parents, brothers, and sisters) in terms of religiosity. She responded with the preceding quote. The fact that I asked her about her family and individual family members' religiosity and that she responded with this demonstrates that *māhaul* of a space is created by the people who inhabit that space. For Yumna, the *māhaul* was religious and stood in contrast to her own ideas. She then describes the specific circumstances that her relationship with her family members creates in the home. A *māhaul* or atmosphere is created that makes her feel bad. This feeling is because of how her

mother treats her and talks about her. Her personal circumstances and her relationship with other people contribute towards creating a *māhaul*. It necessarily makes her experience in this *māhaul* different from someone with religious beliefs similar to the rest of the family.

Māhaul, therefore, means many different things to my interlocutors. It is used to differentiate one space from another; it is used to describe the religious character of an area; it functions to create boundaries where physical boundaries might or might not exist; it refers to the infrastructure and physical surroundings of a space; it can be changed by actors within through their behaviour; it is used to describe the change in mood over time; it also refers to peoples' personal circumstances. Most of these meanings depend on the context in which the word is embedded.

3.2.2 *Māhaul*—a semantic analysis

According to the Oxford Hindi–English dictionary, *māhaul* has its origins in Arabic (McGregor, 1993, p.810). Dr Jamshed Ahmed (personal communication, February, 4th, 2020), Assistant Professor, Department of Arabic, University of Mumbai, contended that the word *māhaul* used in Urdu might have its root in the two Arabic words *ma* and *haula*, respectively meaning "which" and "surroundings". The dictionary goes on to define the term as "m.what changes: mood, atmosphere and environment (of one's upbringing)" (McGregor, 1993, p. 810). Significantly, this definition gives primacy to the fact that *māhaul* changes and has the potential to change, an aspect also demonstrated in the data. *Māhaul* changes over time and space.

The Hindi Wordnet[25] describes *māhaul* as *kisi ghaṭănā, kāryă, jīv, ādi ke ās-pās yā cāron or ki vāstăvik yā tarksaṅgat sthiti yā avăsthā*, which translates to "the real or contextual circumstance or state that surrounds or is near a certain event, action, or

[25]The Hindi wordnet is hosted by the Centre for Indian Language Technology. A useful resource to look up etymology of different words; it also has a similar website for other Indian languages. http://www.cfilt.iitb.ac.in/wordnet/webhwn/

being*”*[26]. The ontology nodes include the word *avăsthā,* which translates to state, condition, circumstance, situation, stage (of life, progress), age (McGregor, 1993, p. 63). Synonyms include *paristhitī*, circumstance (McGrecgor, 1993, p. 610); *parivesh*, surroundings, environment, atmosphere (McGregor, 1993, p. 609); *hāl*, state, condition, circumstance, situation, present time, account, story, news (McGregor, 1993, p. 1070); *hālat,* condition, circumstance, state of affairs (McGregor, 1993, p. 1070); and *vātāvaran*, air-covering, atmosphere (McGregor, 1993, p. 913). An example of usage is also provided on the website: *Sāmpradāyik dangon ke kāran yahāṅ kī paristhitī din pratīdin bigadtī jā rahī hai*. The sentence translates to “Due to communal riots, the *māhaul* of this place is becoming worse every day.”[27]

The *Brihat Samantar Kosh*, a Hindi thesaurus (Kumar, A. and Kumar, K., 2013), lists the two overarching contexts in which *māhaul* is used along with synonyms. One is *ākāsh* (sky), and the other is *paristhitī* (situation/circumstances). The following diagram reproduces the different meanings of these words.

[26] Author’s translation

[27] Author’s translation

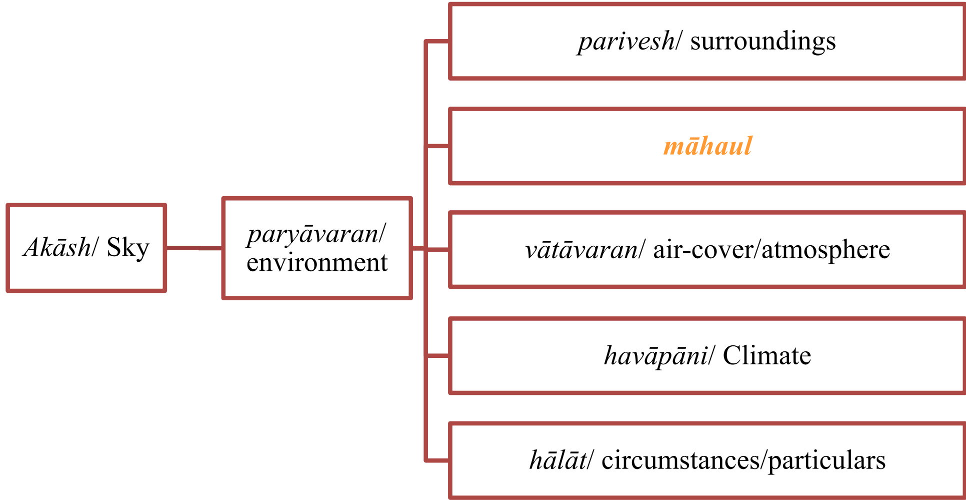


Figure 23: Semantic tree demonstrating synonyms of *Māhaul* within the context of *akash*. Adapted from *Brihad Samantar Kosh* (Kumar, A. and Kumar, K., 2013). All English meanings taken from McGregor, 1993

All these words map to environment, air, atmosphere, and physical surroundings

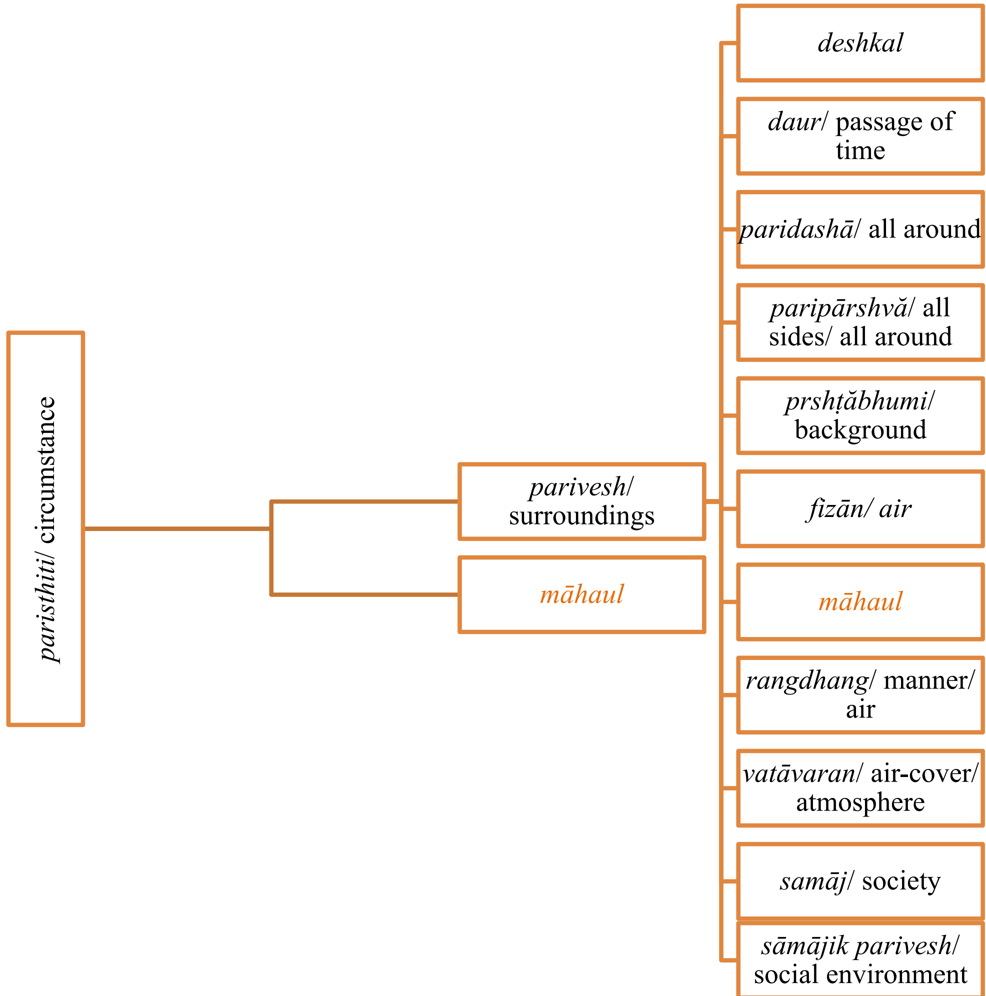


Figure 24: Semantic tree demonstrating synonyms of *māhaul* within the context of *paristhitī*. Adapted from *Brihad Samantar Kosh* (Kumar, A. and Kumar, K., 2013). All Engligh meanings taken from McGregor, 1993.

Within the context of *paristhitī* (situation/circumstance), *māhaul's* meaning includes *daur* (a passage of time, a stage in a process) (McGregor, 1993, p.515), *prshṭăbhumi* (background, context, atmosphere, milieu) (Mcgregor, 1993, p. 642), *samāj* (society) (McGregor, 1993, p. 986), *sāmājik parivesh* (social environment)(McGregor, 1993, p. 609), *rangdhang* (manner/ air) (McGregor, 1993, p. 847).

The semantic universe of *māhaul*, therefore, is rather large and has to be determined in context. It is instructive at this juncture to see how the word is used in literary works to understand its full range of meanings. In Umera Ahmed's novel *Lahasil*, she uses *māhaul* to mean personal circumstances.

> Ruth Brown hailed from a Methodist family, a family where boys were valued higher than girls. Where even the thought of a career for a woman was considered inappropriate. Ruth Brown's father was proud of the fact that he married a girl who was neither working nor had much by way of education. After marriage he did not allow his wife to work. She was a housewife through and through. It was in such a *māhaul* that Ruth was born.[28] (Ahmed, 2014, Kindle Edition, loc. 926)

Māhaul here is described for us in detail. It refers to the particular Methodist family that Ruth Brown belongs too. Further this *māhaul* is charecterised by a differential treatment of women and men. While this may or may not be the *māhaul* in which the family itself is located, this is the *māhaul* in which Ruth Brown was born.

> The refugees coming from the border, first settled in camps … and then gradually they started spreading like the tracks that emerge from the jungle.

[28] The following is the original text in Urdu (Ahmed, 2014, Kindle Edition, loc. 926)

روتھ براؤں کا تعلق ایک میتھڈسٹ فیملی سے تھا ایک ایسی فیملی سے جہں لڑکوں کو لڑکیوں سے ذیادہ اہمیت دی جاتی تھی ۔ جہاں عورتوں کاکیرئیر کے بارے مےں سوچنا بھی برا سمجھا جاہا تھا ۔ روتھ برؤن کے باپ کو اس بات پر فخر تھا کی اس نے ایک ایسی لڑکی سے شادی کی جو نہ توورکنگ گرل تھی اور نہ ہی زیادہ تعلیم یافتہ تھی ،شادی کے بعر بھی اس نے اپنی بیوی کو کام نہیں کرنے دیا ۔ وہ ایک مکمل ہاؤس وائف تھی ۔ روتھ نے بھی ایسی ہی ماحول میں آنکھ کھولی ۔

> They chose wet and dry wood to fire their stoves. The whole *māhaul* was smoky. Hunger deaths and unemployment were at the highest. History had never witnessed this extent of unemployed and restive people.[29] (Gulzar, 2017, Kindle Edition, loc. 2008)

Gulzar's context is the partition of India. He is describing for us what happened when refugees came across the border. In this context, *māhaul* is used first to describe the physical surroundings as the use of wet and dry wood has contributed to the smoke in the surrounding air. However, one can also argue that the talk of hunger deaths and unemployment in the subsequent sentences indicate that Gulzar is using the smoky *māhaul* here to also point towards the bleakness of being a refugee. *Māhaul* here is used both literally as well as metaphorically: literally referring to the tangible/material physical surroundings and metaphorically referring to the hazy prospect of being a refugee.

> "There was something strange about him. Never you mind, though."
>
> "Now what is this strange thing you speak off?"
>
> She smiled and got up to leave
>
> "Why are you creating this *māhaul*? Come on and tell me."[30] (Solanki, 2018, Kindle Edition, loc. 1010)

---

[29] From Gulzar's *Do Log (*Gulzar, 2017, Kindle Edition, loc. 2008), the following is the original text in the Devanagari script.

> सरहदों से आये रेफ़्युजी, पहले कैम्पों में जमा हुए... और फिर धीरे-धीरे जंगल से निकलती पगडंडियों की तरह फैलने लगे। सुखी-गीली लकड़ियाँ चुन-चुन कर अपने-अपने चूल्हे जलाने की कोशिश करने लगे। सारा माहौल धुआँ-धुआँ था। भुखमरी, बेकारी और बेरोज़गारी अपनी इन्तेहा पर थी। इतने बेरोज़गार और भटके हुए लोग भी इतिहास ने कभी न देखे होंगे।

[30]The original text is reproduced in Devanagari here (Solanki, 2018, Kindle Edition, loc. 1010)

In this conversation between two characters in a short story, the word *māhaul* is used to indicate “an atmosphere of suspense”. One character says there’s something strange about someone but does not say what it is, leaving the other character yearning to know what this is. He cajoles her to tell him and asks “why are you creating the *māhaul*?” So *māhaul* can be used instead of mood, and it can be created by what someone says or does.

Māhaul can just as well influence someone’s mood.

> Saying thus, the girl fell silent. Her home had a *māhaul* of happiness. She came up the tree happy, but she had become heavy hearted there. She got up and left. [31] (Solanki, 2018, Kindle Edition, loc. 3979)

In this excerpt, Solanki describes for us a character’s mood. Influenced by the happy *māhaul* at home, she had come to the tree happy. However, her mood changed while there, and she left. A change in *māhaul* had changed her mood. *Māhauls* affect individuals’ moods and behaviour.

> It is as a result of this influence, Babaji was able to remove casteism from the village and one day, within the *māhaul* of marijuana and sacred singing, when

—उसकी एक अजीब-सी बात है, लेकिन तुम रहने दो। तुम्हें नहीं बताती।

–अब ऐसी भी क्या अजीब है?

वह मुस्कुराती हुई चुपचाप उठकर चल दी।

–इतना माहौल क्यों बना रही हो? अब बता भी दो ना।

31 The original in Devanagari is reproduced here Solanki, 2018, Kindle Edition, loc. 3979)

कहकर लड़की चुप हो गई। उसके घर में ख़ुशी का माहौल था। वह ख़ुश होकर ही पेड़ पर आई थी, लेकिन वहाँ उसका मन भारी होने लगा था। वह उठकर चलने लगी।

> he indicated that the village head was a man of religion, the people were astounded. [32] (Shukla, 1968, Kindle Edition, loc. 20510)

Here, the word *māhaul* is used to mean influence. Marijuana and sacred singing together exert an influence on Babaji and the people of the village. A corollary is that a *māhaul* is experienced. According to Professor Abdullah Imteyaz Ahmed (personal communication, February 4th, 2020), Professor of Urdu, University of Mumbai, a *māhaul* has to be experienced. He explained with an example. Say one is inside a mall, and an accident takes place outside. While the accident is within one's surroundings, it does not affect the individual in question until they find themselves affected by the events. The *māhaul* engendered by the accident exists only when it is experienced by people in the vicinity. Dr Ahmed also contended that a *māhaul* must not only be experienced, it has to be experienced by more than one person. There has to be social agreement of the fact that the *māhaul* exists in a particular space. To that extent, it is a social concept. While speaking to the professors of Urdu and Arabic, conversation trailed off to how the origins of almost 90% of Urdu words can be found in Arabic. During this conversation, Dr Abdullah Imteyaz Ahmed said that most of these words came from Arabic and "…we have adapted them according to our *māhaul"*. He was quick to point out that here *māhaul* meant requirement or need. Arabic was adapted according to the needs of the Urdu speaking society.

> Boys from local universities go to watch English films. They don't understand English conversations, and yet, poor things, they smile to show that they do understand everything and that the film is very entertaining. In this *māhaul* of

[32] The original in Devanagari is reproduced here (Shukla, 1968, Kindle Edition, loc. 20510)

> इसी असर में बाबाजी ने गाँव से जातिवाद का नाम हटा दिया और एक दिन उन्होंने गाँजे, भंग और कीर्तन के माहौल में जब इशारा किया कि इस गाँव का प्रधान बड़ा धर्मात्मा आदमी है तो लोग चकित रह गए।

> incomprehension, Rangnath was also smiling just like that [33](Shukla, 1968, Kindle Edition, loc. 6820)

This excerpt shows a very different use of the word *māhaul*. Shukla gives the reader a background to interpret Rangnath's smile. *Māhaul* here is "background" or "context".

Other than literary sources, *māhaul* is also used in Hindi and Urdu media. A *chunavi māhaul* (election *māhaul*) refers to the *māhaul* created by imminent elections (Khelkar, 2017). In the context of market economics, *mandi ka māhaul* and *tezi ka māhaul* refer to a "meltdown atmosphere" and a "booming atmosphere", respectively (CNBC-Awaz report, 2017).

While the word finds a place in Hindi and Urdu dictionaries, it does not find a place in the Marathi dictionary even though Marathi owes many of its words to Urdu. However, it is used in Marathi literature sporadically. Kelkar (2004, p. 266) makes a passing reference to the fact that Hindi words like *ṭhos* and Urdu words like *māhaul* have been incorporated in the Marathi lexicon.

> My ears would perk up as the tambourine was stroked. The *māhaul* would become charged as he strained his throat and started to sing and all of life's eternal truths became self-evident[34]. (Katdare, 2019, Kindle Edition, loc. 762)

[33] The original in Devanagari is reproduced here (Shukla, 1968, Kindle Edition, loc. 6820)

> *देसी विश्वविद्यालयों के लड़के अंग्रेज़ी फिल्म देखने जाते हैं। अंग्रेज़ी बातचीत समझ में नहीं आती, फिर भी बेचारे मुस्कराकर दिखाते रहते हैं कि वे सब समझ रहे हैं और फ़िल्म बड़ा मज़ेदार है। नासमझी के माहौल में रंगनाथ भी उसी तरह मुस्कराता रहा।*

[34] The original in Devanagari is reproduced here (Katdare, 2019, Kindle Edition, loc. 762)

> *डफलीवर थाप पडली की मी कान टवकारायचो. त्याने गळ्यातील एक अन् एक शिर ताणून तान घेतली की माहौल जमायचा अन् जीवनाचं सारं सत्य उलगडलं जायचं*

Here *māhaul* is used to indicate a charged atmosphere engendered by the music of the tambourine and the singing. The word is used more commonly in Marathi media attesting to a more popular usage of the term than in literary contexts, like the following snippet from a media report on a Mumbai Times festival that was entitled, *The "end of tension" māhaul*

> This is the 9th year of the week-long Mumbai Times festival, which is overflowing with exciting events and activities. With each passing year this festival gets more glamorous. The opening ceremony for this festival held in the campus of Kirti College and sponsored by SOTC and Kyoni Academy, drew large crowds of youngsters. The māhaul created by Marathi songs led to dancing, applause and loud whistles which portrayed a 'no tension' *māhaul*![35] (Maharashtra Times report, 2009)

The use of the word *māhaul* here also refers to the mood created by Marathi singing and dancing.

Like Marathi, Gujarati too, includes many words from Urdu, Arabic, and Persian. The Gujarati that Parsi's speak, a dialect, in fact, is known to have many Persian words. The word *māhaul* is also used in popular Gujarati literature and media. Take for instance the following headline from a Gujarati Newspaper

[35] The original in Devanagari is reproduced here ((Maharashtra Times report, 2009)

> *आठवडाभर धम्माल कार्यक्रमांची रेलचेल असलेल्या 'मुंबई टाइम्स' कानिर्वलचं हे नववं वर्ष. वाढत्या वर्षागणिक या सोहळ्याच्या ग्लॅमरचा आलेख वरवर जातो आहे. कीतीर् कॉलेजच्या आवारात 'एसओटीसी' पुरस्कृत आणि 'क्योनी अॅकॅडमी'च्या सहयोगाने आयोजित 'मुंबई टाइम्स कानिर्वल'च्या उद्घाटनाला उसळलेली तरुणांची गदीर् याची साक्ष देऊन गेली. मराठी गाण्यांनी केलेल्या वातावरणनिमिर्तीत थिरकणारी पावलं, टाळ्यांचा कडकडाट आणि शिट्या हे सारं 'टेन्शन खल्लास' माहोलची प्रचीती देणारं.*

> In Saurashtra's markets, an holiday *māhaul* will exist until 8pm.[36] (Gujarat Samachar, 2021, October 31st)

Here the word *māhaul* refers to an atmosphere, a holiday atmosphere, as opposed to an atmosphere of a working day.

In sum, *māhaul* is a Hindi/Urdu word that is also used in Marathi and Gujarati. In literature, it connotes surroundings, both metaphorical and material; is a stand-in for mood; is an influence on mood; and is a background or a context. For my interlocutors, it is used to differentiate one space from another; it is used to describe the religious character of an area; it functions to create boundaries where physical boundaries might or might not exist; it refers to the infrastructure and physical surroundings of a space; it can be changed by actors within through their behaviour; it is used to describe the change in mood over time; it also refers to people's personal circumstances.

What are the points of conjunction and departure in the meanings in which my interlocutors have used the word and the way it is used in Hindi, Urdu, and Marathi literature? My interlocutors were specifically responding to the questions I had posed on the space they live in. Rukhaiya, a lecturer at a local college, was telling me about research projects undertaken by herself and her students. One of these projects included determining the socio-economic status of women in Mumbra. I asked her what the findings were. Her response was:

> It wasn't like conditions here were abject, like the *māhaul* in a slum. The *māhaul* of the people here was ok. It was not like the condition was very poor. (Rukhaiya, 45, Mumbra)

---

[36] The original in Gujarati variant of the Devanagari script is reproduced here (Gujarat Samachar, 2021, October 31st)

> સૌરાષ્ટ્રના માર્કેટયાર્ડોમાં આજથી તા. 8 સુધી રહેશે રજાનો માહૌલ

Within this context, she differentiates between two *māhauls*, one of the slum and the other of the women inhabitants of Mumbra. In doing so, she effectively communicates to me that the *māhaul* of the slum was one of abject poverty and the same cannot be said about the women of Mumbra. *Māhaul* here is used as a signifier both of space (slum) and class (very poor). Further, it demonstrates an intersection between both space and class as it describes space in terms of class ("the *māhaul* in the slum …was very poor"). Therefore, *māhaul* is used as a delineator, differentiator, and describer of space. In the sense of context and influence, *māhaul* is viewed as something that can be changed by actors through their behaviour within a space; it describes the personal circumstances of an individual; and it describes a temporally-bound mood within a space.

3.3 The Multilingual Field

Before I delve into the three aspects that make up the analytical concept of *māhaul*, there is one feature of the data that needs to be addressed. The word *māhaul* was used only in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar during interviews conducted in Hindi, Urdu, and Marathi. The word did not emerge in any of the interviews conducted in Dadar Parsi Colony since they were conducted in English. In the following section, I argue for the *māhaul* lens through which to examine the data from Dadar Parsi Colony.

In each space, I chose different languages to interview based on the comfort of my interlocutors and myself with the language. Interviewing in one language in each space, however, obscures the inherently multilinguistic character of the spaces themselves. Interviewing in Marathi in Gautam Nagar does not in any way determine my interlocutors' proficiency in Hindi or English, for example. In fact, to make such a determination would be an epistemological fallacy where one makes the mistake of assuming isomorphism of groups and language, to loosely borrow from Gupta and Ferguson (1992). There are three official languages in operation in Mumbai, Marathi at the state-level administration and Hindi/English at the national levels. Besides, considering the different communities that live in Mumbai, there are at the very least

17 languages that are spoken on the streets of Mumbai. These include Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, English, Tulu, Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, Oriya, Sindhi, Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Punjabi, Kashmiri, and Konkani. In addition, the Government of Maharashtra provides education in eight different language mediums in an effort to make education accessible to a wider population in their respective mother tongue. Government schools and schools that follow Indian boards of education also teach two languages other than the one used as medium of instruction. Across school systems in India, each of the two languages is offered at different levels of proficiency. Given this linguistic diversity, *Mumbaikars* are naturally multilingual. According to Pai (2005), children in Mumbai are exposed to at least four languages in their neighbourhood. But how do these languages interact with each other? According to Sridhar (2002), there are two important characteristics of multilinguals. First, multilinguals do not show the same level of competency in all the languages that they speak. Competency can vary from native proficiency to knowing a few functional words and phrases to get by. Second, multilinguals demonstrate selective competencies, learning each language for a certain selected purpose. So, although my interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony chose to be interviewed in English by me, they did slip into Marathi, Gujarati, and Hindi words and phrases every now and then to speak about specific things. Further, their language of choice while speaking to someone in a different context, like the grocer, will be different. This was best exemplified in my interview with Vahbeez. I had asked her about her experiences during the riots, and she was telling me where she was at that time and what happened. While describing to me an encounter with some rioters, she said,

> Fortunately, because of my dad's salt pans, spending time there as a child, I can speak good Marathi. I can pass off as a local with Marathi, and I told them what we were up to. They were exceptionally kind. (Vahbeez, 42, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Vahbeez had not really spoken to me in Hindi or Marathi. But through this story she conveyed to me that she counts Marathi among her languages and one in which she is

proficient. Importantly, her knowledge of Marathi came to her aid in a potentially violent situation.

In another instance, I was interviewing Tehmina, a retired school teacher at a high-end school in English. She spoke English well and seemed most comfortable speaking it. During the interview, however, she had to make a call to the local grocery store to order some ration. She spoke on the phone in a mixture of Hindi and Marathi.

Finally, to illustrate the prominence of Urdu words amongst Parsis, one can look at the literature on Parsi theatre that epitomized the eclectic cultural milieu that characterized Bombay in the late 19th century. Urdu literature has hugely influenced Parsi theatre and culture that came into prominence in the late 19th and early 20th century in Mumbai (Hansen, 2003; Isaka, 2002;). Parsi theatre, by all accounts, formed the precursors to current Hindi cinema or what is popularly known as Bollywood. Urdu's influence on the language of the city is, therefore, well documented and indisputable.

Māhaul, like many words from different languages in the subcontinent, is thus a popular concept that transcends linguistic communities and is part of the Mumbai lexicon. Furthermore, the analytical concept of *māhaul* that I construct in the following pages engages with interlocutors' various characterizations of space throughout the three spaces, Gautam Nagar, Mumbra, and Dadar Parsi Colony. It seeks to capture, more generally, a local register as an affectively charged term that my interlocutors used to describe their relation to spaces within the city. While the word itself has its roots in Urdu, its everyday use exceeds these particular linguistic roots. Thus, while my Parsi interlocutors might not have used this word specifically since we spoke largely in English, it is a word -- an emic concept -- they were intimately familiar with.

3.4 *Māhaul*: A conceptual tool to understand space

In this section, I develop the idea of *māhaul* as a conceptual analytic by bringing together spatial theory with local meanings of the term as they emerged in my

ethnography. This approach allows for a locally specific conceptualization of space. I argue that a *māhaul* has been used variously to imply spatial culture, physical surroundings, and habitus. This usage has enabled my interlocutors to communicate an idea of how they understand the space they reside in.

In the following pages, therefore, I consider different ways in which interlocutors have described their residential spaces, using different terms and different languages (Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, and English). *Māhaul* as described in the previous section, I argue, is how my interlocutors understand space, whether they use an Urdu synonym of the word or an English word to describe the space. This analytical exposition allows us to understand space the way my interlocutors do.

3.4.1 *Māhaul* as spatial culture

The concept of *māhaul* has been mentioned by scholars studying Muslim spaces of residence or Muslim neighbourhoods in India (Abbas, 2017; Chatterjee 2015,2017; Galonnier, 2015; Gayer, 2012; Kirmani, 2013). Most of these authors adopt the term from the people they study without engaging with the concept critically. Galonnier (2015), for instance, speaks of the Muslim *māhaul* that exists in Sir Syed Nagar, near the Aligarh Muslim University. *Māhaul* takes the very specific meaning of culture and a specific religious culture that is engendered by a disproportionately large presence of people belonging to a certain religion. Similarly, Chatterjee (2015) speaks of *māhaul* in the context of Muslim socio-spatial segregation in the city of Kolkata. Focusing on Park Circus, a *Musolman para*[37] (Muslim neighbourhood) of Kolkata, she argues that this socio-spatial segregation is accounted for by the prejudice and discrimination meted out to Muslims by the majority Hindu community as well as the feelings of insecurity Muslims experience. She refers to the Muslim *māhaul* that exists in this space as a "milieu, one that is not liberal or open" and as one that has the potential to "perpetuate Muslimness" amongst its residents (Chatterjee, 2015, p 98). Most of these studies on Muslim spatial segregation use the word as used by the people they study: a

[37] Author's emphasis

folk term that conveys the idea of a certain distinct culture associated with being Muslim.

> Actually, Mumbra is better (than Sion) … here, I had the opportunity to be free, I had the opportunity to discover myself.… Here, the *māhaul* is different. Here, it is not that there are only Hindus. In fact, most of the people are from Muslim religions [sic]. (Nazeen, 19, Mumbra)

Nazeen responds to my question asking her to compare Sion, where she lived before, to Mumbra, where she lives now. She lives in one of the building complexes in the more criminal part of Mumbra. Again, this is a space where gang violence, violence against women, and substance abuse are rampant. Even as she acknowledges these shortcomings of where she lives, she compares it favourably with the place she lived earlier. Specifically, she feels she received more freedom in Mumbra, a freedom that afforded her greater self-discovery. She associates this freedom with the fact that Mumbra has more Muslims, unlike Sion where her neighbourhood had "only Hindus".

However, does everybody have a common understanding of what *māhaul* means? Kirmani (2013, p.79), who uses the Muslim *māhaul* to denote Muslim culture, argues that even as the Muslim *māhaul* was an important pull factor for Muslims to move to Zakir Nagar in New Delhi, her respondents differed on what exactly, they thought, constitutes a Muslim *māhaul*. While some privileged the presence of religious facilities, others valued the sense of familiarity, comfort, and belonging that the *māhaul* afforded. She argues that "the multiplicity of views on what constituted the Muslim *mahol*[38] and when and why it became important exposes cracks in the identification of Zakir Nagar as a seamless, unified Muslim *Mohallah* and interrogates the label 'Muslim' itself'" (Kirmani, 2013, p.67). To my mind, this multiplicity of views also demonstrates that the word *māhaul* needs interrogation. If people conceive the Muslim

[38] Kirmani uses 'o' in her spelling of *māhaul*. She calls it the "Muslim mahol". Both spellings have been used in academic and popular literature.

māhaul differently, they are also perceiving *māhaul* differently. This is also borne out by my data where *māhaul* is largely context-driven.

Laraib describes the *māhaul* of where she grew up in Thane, which was a mixed neighbourhood.

> There, it was a very good *māhaul*. Like, if there was a festival or something, then everybody got together and celebrated it very nicely. We had nice neighbours there. Everybody used to mix well with each other. The area was also very nice. Everybody used to live together very nicely there. (Laraib, 19, Mumbra)

Laraib's idea of a good *māhaul* is in having social neighbours and having the opportunity to celebrate all festivals (of different religions, as she clarified later in the interview) together. While comparing Mumbra to Thane, she further emphasizes that this conviviality is not the case in Mumbra, where they do not even know when certain festivals happen because there is no culture of celebrating festivals of other religions. The religious culture in Mumbra, therefore, is more Muslim than cosmopolitan. She clearly prefers the cosmopolitan aspect of Thane over the Muslim culture in Mumbra.

In Dadar Parsi Colony, interlocutors did describe their space in terms of a space-based culture. Zenobia lives in a spacious apartment in a multi-storeyed building in Dadar Parsi Colony. Opulence and luxury mark the insides of her apartment which is filled with expensive furniture and other artefacts. The balcony overlooks one of the many gardens that Dadar Parsi Colony boasts off.When answering the question about the advantages of living in Dadar Parsi Colony, Zenobia said,

> So, we have always been born and brought up with the other communities. The colony ends over here, on the next footpath is Ward no. 177. This is Ward no. 178. So we have always mingled with non-Parsis … so it's a mixed community, but at the same time, we are brought up within the Parsi community… (the advantage of being brought up in one's own community) is that the culture is

> preserved, our festivals we thoroughly enjoy, our religion, all the religious, and pious occasions we enjoy together. So, I love being over here, and as I said, I have so many non-Parsi friends, my best friend also. So, it is not that we are only Parsi-Parsi sort of [sic]. (Zenobia, 75, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Zenobia notes that even as Dadar Parsi Colony is not exclusive, and she has had exposure to other cultures, it gives her the opportunity to experience the Parsi culture within the space. Unlike Laraib, she prefers the idea of living in close proximity with one's own community. Laraib and Zenobia seem to see the same situation in different ways. While Laraib misses the exposure to other religious festivals in the predominantly Muslim neighbourhood of Mumbra, Zenobia enjoys the heightened exposure to one's own religious festivials in the exclusively Parsi neighbourhood she lives in.

However, as mentioned in the previous section, the word is also used in cultural contexts that are not religious. Madan, for instance, refers to circumstances as having changed in Gautam Nagar. The interview with Madan took place over an afternoon inside the Buddh Vihar. I had not been to his home. He lived in one of the buildings that overlooked the Budddha Vihar and had spent the entirety of his life in Gautam Nagar. When he said that mixed neighbourhoods are far better than a space like Gautam Nagar that housed a majority from one community, I asked what advice he would give me if I wanted to move to Gautam Nagar.

> No, no. this is a good place to live. I can vouch that this is a good place to live in. Now the circumstances have changed. Now everything is good; everybody is educated and understands everything. So, the more people from other communities come in, the better. (Madan, 43, Gautam Nagar)

He uses the Hindi word *paristhitī* (a context word in the semantic illustration in Figure 24) to mean circumstances, to describe a change in the culture of the space.

In the examples shared so far, academic discourse has restricted the concept of *māhaul* to religious contexts. However, there are a few exceptions. Saigal (2008) speaks of the teaching *māhaul* in Mumbai's slums, one that is characterized by deprivation of material and infrastructure in the educational context. Here, *māhaul* is again a certain culture, a culture of education. Jeffery, Jeffery, and Jeffrey (2006, p. 116) explore the "*parhai ka mahaul"* (an academic/study/educational culture) engendered by educational institutions within a space in the small town of Bijnor in Uttar Pradesh. However, the overwhelming use of the word in academia, in the context of specific Muslim spatial segregation and its religious connotations, belies its general contextual use in popular parlance. As we see through the data, *māhaul* is most definitely used in place of religious culture but is not limited to Islam. At the same time, it can also be used in lieu of any kind of culture.

3.4.2 *Māhaul* as surroundings

In a different context, *māhaul* was used by my interlocutors to describe the sensory atmosphere and material surroundings as well. Mumtaz, a resident of Mumbra, for instance, asserted to me that she liked a silent *māhaul* unlike the one in Mumbra. Like Mumtaz, many interlocutors described the spaces they lived in through sensory and material cues.

I asked Madiha, a 25-year-old resident of Mumbra, whether she remembered Vikhroli, the place she spent the first few years of her schooling before moving to Mumbra around 20 years earlier. She lived with her parents and two younger brothers in a multistoreyed building. Her mother was political and was involved with major political parties in the area.

> Yes! I remember. I remember quite a bit. We used to play well then. I remember going to school. That time I was in a Marathi medium school. Everybody said "Why study Marathi?" So, Mummy pulled me out of the Marathi medium school and put me in an Urdu medium school. That school, I remember well. There was a banyan tree. We used to eat everything. We used to get government

> sponsored meals, boiled channa, khichdi. All good. I remember all that. (Madiha, 25, Mumbra)

Madiha remembers Vikhroli in terms of the things she used to do there, how she changed from a Marathi medium to an Urdu medium school, the visual of the Banyan tree, and the taste of the government sponsored meal. In other words, Madiha recalls the material surroundings of the place she grew up in.

Māhaul as physical surroundings, as described by Madiha in this excerpt, behoves us to consider the term "atmosphere" in academic literature. The term atmosphere does have a place in academic literature. Like the word *māhaul*, atmosphere is used interchangeably with mood, feeling, ambience, tone, and other ways of naming collective affects (Anderson, 2009). Bille, Bjerregaard, and Sørensen (2015) observe how atmosphere is characterized by an ontological and epistemological vagueness, which makes it difficult to study the word as the object of analysis. This aspect of the atmosphere is very similar to *māhaul* given its versatile uses and contextual meanings.

The material aspects of atmosphere pertaining to architecture, visual culture, and urban design is explored in literature. They emphasize the role of space and objects in creating an atmosphere (Edensor, 2015; Hudson, 2015; Sumartojo, 2015; Thibault, 2015). To influence people's feelings about space, urban design professionals manipulate physical space to modify the sensory experiences of the people within the space. Zumothor (2006 in Borch, Böhme et al., 2014, p.7), for instance, reflects on the quality of architecture and why some are more pleasurable than others.

Böhme (2014, p.43–50) argues that atmospheres emanate from things and persons; that we can experience such atmospheres as quasi-objective phenomena; and that the experience is, nevertheless, always bound to particular individuals, meaning that "atmospheres are in fact characteristic manifestations of the co-presence of subject and object". Pallasmaa (2014) suggests that atmospheres are experienced emotionally before being understood intellectually. In essence, atmospheres are experienced in

multisensory ways before people consciously reflect upon them. Madiha reflects on her life in Vikhroli at first by recounting her sensory experiences and then expressing a nostalgia for how she felt at that time.

Apart from the sensory experience of atmosphere, one also feels an atmosphere. An atmosphere may be good, bad, oppressive, fearful, or stigmatized. I interviewed Mukund in Harish's home where Harish and his wife had ushered him in and introduced him to me as their "teacher" and an Ambedkarite. They had told me that I should interview him because he knew all this and would give me a good perspective. Mukund was interested in my PhD topic and asked me a lot of questions about the topic and how I was doing research before we started the interview. Most of his answers sought to give me macro perspective on Dalit issues.

> Two communities lived here at that time. One was the Buddhist and the other is the *Kathewadi*. After that, because of these people since the *māhaul* dropped, the area started being called *Bhangivadi*. (Mukund, 50, Gautam Nagar)

Mukund is a Dalit Buddhist, and he was talking about a *māhaul* that was created in the '50s and '60s when two caste groups began to settle in Gautam Nagar. *Bhangi* is the name of an untouchable caste and is used derogatorily in common parlance. Considered the lowest of the low untouchable castes, *Bhangis* were usually engaged in scavenging, sweeping, and cleaning toilets. Here, Mukund refers to the *māhaul* as dropping because of the presence of these castes. The presence of the people from the *Kathewadi* a community emanated a certain *māhaul* or atmosphere that contributed to the space's disrepute.

The sensory aspects of spatial atmosphere were also a recurrent theme in my interviews with the residents of Dadar Parsi Colony. Many of them referred to the green precincts, the gardens, and the lack of noise as characteristics of the space.

> If you actually say Colony, I would not count my house as in the Colony because we are on the main road, and it's like then *andar*[39], from the *galī* the Colony starts. We are counted as within the Colony only. But we say thank god[40] we don't have place in the Colony. Thank god we are on the main road, so much of noise, vehicular traffic, human traffic. We all are deaf already. The television volume is already on 80, and we are still straining our ears. So, we are on the main road. (Beroz, 40, Dadar Parsi Colony)

I interviewed Beroz in the *madrassa*. She lived in one of the multi-storeyed buildings on the peripheries of Dadar Parsi Colony. Beroz is talking about how her building that is on the borders of Dadar Parsi Colony is sometimes not considered to be actually within the Colony because of all the noise, vehicular, and human traffic (by human she means pedestrian traffic). She distinguished the Colony as being a calm, peaceful space, with noise and chaos right outside its borders. Her own home, she describes as a frontier building, but one that is technically counted as being within the Colony. Beroz is clear on the real boundaries of Dadar Parsi Colony. She knows where it begins and where it ends. But in her description, she refers to an atmosphere, the sense of noise that is associated with the space outside the colony that, in her estimate, infiltrates/permeates the boundaries. *Māhauls*, like atmosphere, can delineate the boundaries of a certain space, distinguishing one space from another. Also, *māhauls* have the ability to diffuse around them, lessening in intensity. So, while delimiting, *māhauls* are also able to permeate. In this crucial aspect, *māhaul* is very different from both the concepts of space and place. Neither space nor place, however one defines them, have the ability to diffuse and exist in different intensities.

[39] *Andar*: within, inside (McGregor, 1993, p. 6)

[40] Beroz thanks god for being near the noise and traffic because she and her family, by her own admission, are loud. And this can easily be masked in a setting where there is a lot of background noise.

The preceding sections showed how *māhaul* is used to define a spatial culture and a spatial surrounding. There is another use of the term, one that fashions spatial behaviour a certain way, which is explored in the following section.

3.4.3 *Māhaul* as Habitus

> The *māhaul* in Mumbra was very bad/spoilt. It is best that a girl gets married by the age of 25 so that she can manage her own home properly. This is my mother's goal. Every day she wakes up being concerned about me and this aspect of my future. (Sanam, 23, Mumbra)

Sanam lives with her mother ad brothers and their families in a multi storeyed building. Sanam says two things that are of interest in this quotation. First, Sanam refers to *māhaul* to explain her mother's actions and behaviour. It is because of Mumbra's *māhaul* that her mother is concerned about her marital future. In other words, she reckons that in another *māhaul* or context, her mother's preoccupations may have been different. Second, she refers to her marital home as her home, not her mother's home. The *māhaul* requires her to leave her birth home, and the only way the *māhaul* would allow her to do this is by her entering her marital home.

While walking around Mumbra, talking to Rehana, I discovered that while she identified as a Shia Muslim, her mother was a Buddhist. Her mother, now divorced from her father, lives in Sion with her second husband. Rehana revealed to me that when she visits her mother, she has the freedom to wear shorts, pants, and leave the house without the *naqab*. I asked her if she ever felt like she could do that in Mumbra. She responded with a shake of her head, "if I went out without the burqa here, everybody would say, 'there goes Hanif's daughter, there goes Hanif's daughter'". In both these instances, Rehana and Sanam, are conscious of the fact that a particular space mandates certain behaviours, actions, values, and dispositions. While Sanam uses the word *māhaul*, Rehana does not. However, her description evokes the sense of a milieu that is associated with Mumbra.

Tanaz told me that she grew up in Madhya Pradesh and moved to Dadar Parsi Colony sometime in the ’70s, after her marriage. Tanaz lived alone in a sprawling apartment in one of the older buildings in Dadar Parsi Colony. The building overlooked one of the gardens in the Colony. It had wide, red stone staircases that were typical of old buildings. Each floor had a corridor at the ends of which were two apartments. Her husband passed away some years ago. One of her sons lived abroad and the other lived in another Indian city. She felt that there were huge differences even between the Parsis of Madhya Pradesh and the Parsis of the colony.

> Firstly, we wear sarees most comfortably. We speak Hindi. We know a lot more about Indian culture than they know and much more accepting of people, I think. The way we grew up. And respecting other people more than just accepting … I was very much an outsider here, and initially, people didn’t know I was Parsi. Because I wear a bindi and wear a saree … I used to wear sarees because I found them most comfortable. And they used to keep wondering who I was, and I didn’t look like this. I had my hair in a bun. I had long hair. So, I had everything that went against the Parsi image. Now I’ve become more Parsi, for the convenience of it shall I say. Cut my hair and all. (Tanaz, 72, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Tanaz too is describing the milieu. The milieu here is different from the one in Madhya Pradesh where she grew up. A certain “Parsi image” is promoted by the space like a certain “Muslim image” was promoted by Mumbra for Rehana. According to Tanaz, the “Parsi-image” is characterized by western clothes, wearing your hair short, and speaking English rather than Hindi. It is then up to the individual to either fall in line with the image or stand out. In scholarly works, especially pertaining to the study of religion, milieu has a specific history. Milieu was used in the 1990s by German historians to refer to a “structure of associations, rituals, political organizations, and trade unions as the centrepiece of Catholic life from the late nineteenth century to the 1960s” (O’Sullivan, 2009, p. 839). The catholic milieu in German history was used to understand catholic resistance (or the lack thereof) to Nazi propaganda (see e.g..

Brodie, 2017). In this understanding, a milieu is expressly structured by religious institutions and processes in society. It is also embedded within a broader national community that may or may not be religious. In this sense, *māhaul* can be understood as milieu but more importantly, as spatial milieu. Bourdieu's (2005a) concept of habitus can help understand *māhaul* as milieu.

According to Bourdieu, habitus is "a system of dispositions, that is of permanent manners of being, seeing, acting and thinking, or a system of long-lasting (rather than permanent) schemes or schemata or structures of perception, conception and action" (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 43). There are two kinds of habitus. Class habitus refers to the set of norms, values, and dispositions prescribed by the class to which one belongs. These are acquired by the individual through processes of socialization in families and educational institutions (Burke, 2016). An individual has his/her own unique habitus that is a combination of the class habitus based on the different class groups he/she belongs to and his/her individual peculiarities. For instance, a Dalit female urban individual will have a habitus that is a mixture of the three groups she belongs to as well as her own individual peculiarities. According to Waterson (2005), an important function of habitus is to produce a community.

For the purposes of this chapter, according to Bourdieu (2005b, p. 174–176), a habitus has three characteristics:

1. A habitus is not a principle of repletion. It is a generative schema that allows for invention and improvization within limits.
2. A habitus is a vicious cycle of structure producing habitus, which in turn produces structure. But this happens only if the objective conditions in which the habitus operates over time is similar to the objective conditions of which it is a product.
3. If objective conditions are not similar, that is, if it is destabilized in some way, there is a dialectical confrontation between habitus as structured structure and objective structure. In such cases, habitus serves as a structuring structure with

> which to perceive and transform the objective structure according to its own structure while at the same time, being restructured and transformed in its make-up by the pressure of the objective structure. This means that, in rapidly changing societies, habitus changes constantly, continuously, but within the limits inherent to its originary structure, that is, within certain bounds of continuity.

With this background, it is useful to think of *māhaul* as a kind of spatial habitus, the habitus within the social field, which, in this case is physical space with physical boundaries. Bourdieu (2005b, p. 185–186) talks about how ritualization of practices functions in assigning them an arbitrary time and space that exist independent of other external necessities. He gives an example from his field work with the Kabyle of Algeria. He observes how the organization of men and women in accordance with different times and different places constitutes two interchangeable ways of securing separation and hierarchization of the male and female worlds. In the interview snippet from Section 3.2.1 of this chapter, Yumna articulates how differently the two spaces are gendered; in Nagpada women and girls are allowed to be outside the home at night time, while in Mumbra, they are not. This understanding of *māhaul* is key to distinguish it from the English term atmosphere. An atmosphere comes closest to encompassing all the meanings of *māhaul*. But *māhaul* is additionally conceptualized as habitus that produces structure that in turn produces habitus.

When Rehana and Sanam or Tanaz move away from Mumbra or Dadar Parsi Colony, respectively, they are articulating the dialectical confrontation that Bourdieu speaks of when they describe the differences between these spaces. These differences heighten for them the mystified nature of the habitus in their spaces. And this is likely to happen more so in cities, where “we participate in multiple fields and learn to accommodate our practices to always changing environments and structures of power” (Friedmann, 2005, p. 314). However, according to Bourdieu, while a habitus is not natural or inborn, one is not conscious of it. In my interviews, it is only when pushed to consider the differences between their experiences in different spaces that these differences

emerged. Bourdieu too remarks on how habitus is a product of history and, therefore, amenable to change by history. At such moments, habitus is made either partially or fully conscious or explicit (Bourdieu, 2005a, p. 29). One interlocutor from Mumbra for instance, did exclaim that she had never thought about these differences before. But there were cases where, on thinking on the issue, interlocutors felt that one type of space was better than the other and that they would choose one over the other. For instance, Flavia of Dadar Parsi Colony disagreed with her husband on how mixed neighbourhoods are better for bringing up children. This interview took place in their home where she, her husband, her child and parents-in-law lived. The building was old and one gate afforded access to a business establishment. the building was only two storeyes and formed one of the original buildings of the Colony.

> Cross-cultural advantages, I feel the school exposes children to. This (the Colony) is where they meet people of the same community with the same thought processes. Suppose you are staying in a cosmo[41], and you are staying together over here like this, then your religious beliefs, your practices and everything is okay and accepted. Because you are living in a cosmo, you might question why this and why not. Questioning is not bad, but your acceptance of your own religion becomes a bit lesser. There are certain practices you might not want to follow them. If you see everybody doing it, you might get a sense of belongingness. See, before our new year, there are few religious days, 10–15 days, you have to go to the Agiary, you have to do certain things, prayers, so what you see you try to imbibe. At times, only parents are not enough as an example. A community together as an example also is good. (Flavia,30, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Friedmann, (2005, p. 315–319) lists the many different ways in which a habitus might be challenged—escaping the habitus through social mobility, changing the habitus through migration, challenging the habitus through social movements, accelerating

[41] Flavia referred to mixed communities, spaces inhabited with people belonging to different religions and cultures, as cosmo. She meant cosmopolitan.

change of habitus through greater exposure and experiences, and the breaking down of the habitus through collapse of the social order. In Rehana's case, an expanded exposure that included living in Sion with her mother, allowed her to view Mumbra's habitus as a non-objective structure. At the same time, she recognizes the limits of the space-based habitus when she tells me of her conscious decision to continue wearing the burqa in Mumbra. In Sanam's case, her exposure to other parts of the city, especially her work with an NGO, has also increased her awareness of what living in Mumbra entails.

The *māhaul*, therefore, fashions choices, behaviours, actions, and dispositions, either consciously or unconsciously, through material or embodied aspects of space. Let us, for a moment, return to the understanding of *māhaul* developed at the end of Section 3.2. *Māhaul* is used as a delineator, differentiator, and describer of space. In the sense of context and influence, *māhaul* is viewed as something that can be changed by actors through their behaviour within a space; it describes the personal circumstances of an individual; and it describes a temporally-bound mood within a space. The concept of spatial habitus appears to fit all but the last two aspects of space, vis-à-vis *māhaul* describes personal circumstances and it describes a temporally-bound mood within a space. *Māhaul* as culture, physical surroundings, and spatial habitus, together signify people's experience of space.

In summary, a *māhaul* refers to a spatial culture, the physical surroundings of a space, and a spatial habitus. A *māhaul* can be qualified; it is contiguous with a certain space; it delineates the boundaries of a space; it has the ability to permeate and lessen in intensity across this boundary; it refers to the sensory aspects of a space; it can change over short periods of time; and it can be used to describe people's personal circumstances.

3.5 *Māhaul* in the study of space and religion in Mumbai

Why use *māhaul* to study religion and space in Mumbai? Are there no equivalent terms already in usage that can be deployed in its stead? In this section, I argue for the use of *māhaul* in this thesis, for the study of religion and space in Mumbai.

In understanding the concept of the "crowd" in the Indian context, Gandhi (2016) examines three different Hindustani words used in lieu of crowd by his interlocutors in Old Delhi. He contends that these words are used in different registers allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the concept in a particular urban setting. His analysis shows the gendered and class-layered understanding of the term, an aspect lost when one thinks of the crowd from without. Gandhi uses the local vernacular semantic universe to help build a local understanding of crowd. Similarly, the use of the word *māhaul* indicates a locally specific understanding of both the space and the word. It is this aspect that is most interesting and useful about developing the word *māhaul* as an analytical tool in understanding space in Mumbai.

In a monumental effort at developing a spatial analysis of religion, Knott (2005) addresses the question of what space is. In her reckoning, space includes both the material or physical as well as the mental or metaphorical. That is, a space exists both physically and in the mind. When I introduced my research to my interlocutors, I mentioned the name of the space. However, the responses that were elicited included both material and metaphorical aspects of space. *Māhaul* takes both these aspects of space into consideration together. One is not separated from the other. The physical surroundings of a *māhaul* impacts its culture and vice versa. Instead of considering the material and the metaphorical as two distinct aspects of space, *māhaul* considers both of them in unison, as aspects of space that are irretrievably linked.

Knott's project is to be able to locate religion in supposedly secular spaces; arguing that space has the ability to tell us about everyday religion the way religious/sacred spaces cannot. She goes on to describe three different interactions between space and

religion. First, space can be a medium in which religion is situated. Second, it can form the basis of a methodological approach to the study of religion. Finally, it can be about the spaces that are created/produced by religion, religious institutions, and individuals within a western, secular, modern context. Knott's systematic spatial analysis includes identifying the constituents of space (what makes up space), the experience of space (how one experiences space physically, mentally, and socially), the activity of space (the active potential of space and those of places within space), and the meaning of space (the hypothetical change in constitution of space leading to a different space, for instance). Knott is careful to reiterate that this spatial analysis views the dialectic of the religious and secular as its object of study; one that is relevant only to western modernities. The religious and secular are not often that clearly demarcated, however. Indeed, the religion-marked spaces that form the object of my study are categorically associated with one or another religion in popular imagination as seen through media reports. The question, therefore, is how can we locate religion within such spaces and at the same time not fall into the trap of taking popular conceptions at face value. Spaces, after all, are just as easily produced by other socio-political forces as they are by religion. Another concern is what is considered religious and secular in such spaces.

Māhaul is analytically helpful in addressing these shortcomings of Knott's spatial frame of analysis. First, a religious *māhaul* can mean different things to different people and can still exist over a space and be a shared experience. The analytical concept of *māhaul* allows us to incorporate the nuances in the experience of religion within a space. Second, a space is defined by more than just its religious *māhaul*. Other *māhauls* that exist over space can be included as the secular aspects of space. Locating religion in *māhaul* therefore gives us a better idea of how this religion is conceived, perceived, and experienced in the space.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen that *māhaul* is most often used while comparing two spaces. In these comparisons, *māhaul* is not an absolute entity. A cultural *māhaul*, for

instance, exists more or less in one space compared to another space. So, while it delimits spaces and defines boundaries, it also diffuses around and can exist at lower intensities. *Māhaul* addresses peoples' perception of their surroundings. The religious component of a *māhaul* can be oppressive for some, while for others, it could be one that is conducive to free expression of one's religious identity. This conception of *māhaul* counters the use of the word as mainly associated with religion and culture in scholarly literature, so that we are able to understand space in terms of the ways in which inhabitants of the space understand them.

Using my interlocutors' conception of their space and their use of the word, I argue for a comprehensive conception of *māhaul* to understand space through the eyes of its inhabitants in the context of Mumbai. In doing so, I argue that *māhaul* stands for spatial culture, surroundings, and spatial habitus, thereby distinguishing one space from another. The analytical concept of *māhaul* provides a tool by which I can analyse the extant literature on religion-based segregated spaces in India. In the next chapter, I do just that.

4. Chapter 4: Ghetto *māhaul*

Approximating the ghetto

4.1 Introduction

> The kinship of the two cities is nowhere more apparent than in Venice's ghettos: the walls that surround it, the narrow entrances that lead to it and the slender, crooked houses—all of this reminded me of a part of Varanasi that I particularly love: the area around the Bindu Madhav temple near Panchganga Ghat. There too you find seclusion and serenity in the midst of noisy multitudes; there too you have a sense of being amidst a community that follows age-old customs, unobserved by the world. (Ghosh, 2019, p. 151)

In his novel, *Gun Island*, Ghosh's protagonist delineates what he believes are the similarities between a part of Varanasi and the ghetto in Venice. Serenity, seclusion, a sense of being with a community, and isolation mark the space. He does go on to tell us what he believes are the differences between the spaces. Other than Ghosh's literary prowess to transport readers across space and time to give a sense of oneness amongst peoples, one wonders if the comparison actually sticks. Can the similarities that Ghosh envisages enable us to use the label of the ghetto for that particular part of Varanasi? I would like to extend Ghosh's simile and ask, can words used for socio-spatial entities in medieval Europe be used for twenty-first century postcolonial Indian socio-spatial configurations? More particularly, what is the use of the term ghetto in the socio-spatial configuration that is manifest in Indian cities?

One of the uses of the concept of *māhaul*, as understood by my interlocutors, is to facilitate understanding of space in urban India. As argued in "Chapter 3*: Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there*,"* *māhaul* is a concept that includes within its ambit a spatial culture, physical surroundings, and a spatial habitus. It serves as a good analytical tool to understand space in Mumbai. In this chapter, I use the concept of *māhaul* to reflect on

the way the term ghetto has been used in academic works on Indian spatial dispensation. How can we (if we can, at all) use the term ghetto to understand spaces that are not, strictly speaking, ghetto-like spatial configurations and yet display some characteristics of the ghetto? In the following section, I engage with the history and literature of the term ghetto in popular and academic literature and in the European/American and Indian contexts. Next, I argue for an understanding of a *ghetto māhaul,* a concept developed to understand spaces in India that approximate a ghetto; that is exhibit characteristics of ghettos to different degrees. In the final section, I delve into my data and argue that there are three dominant *māhauls*, the safe *māhaul*, the religious *māhaul*, and the *paṇchāyatī māhaul* that make up the ghetto *māhaul*.

4.2 Why ghetto?

What is a ghetto? Does the term have any analytical value when it is used to describe spaces of religious clustering like Dadar Parsi Colony, Mumbra, or Gautam Nagar? In Dadar Parsi Colony, where I interviewed a family of four, one member of the family referred to the Colony as a ghetto. When I asked him what he meant by a ghetto, he answered:

> For me, ghetto is a zone which is exclusive for some people and no outsider can stay there … I will tell you what I mean by ghettoization: in Dadar Parsi Colony, there are some buildings which are only for Parsis, and this was done under British colonization. So, there are some buildings, for whatever reasons, are only for Parsis till they go into redevelopment. If they redevelop, then it is open to all religions. So only Parsis can buy those flats and similarly in some other Baghs as well. Same thing even for Jains, and there are some societies which are only Christian societies. They can't stop you, but they prefer. I think what happens in ghettoization is that, firstly, a person’s mind gets restricted to people of his own background and, secondly, because the person meets only people from his own background and chances of getting married within his own fold is higher. (Parvez, 36, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Parvez referred to Dadar Parsi Colony as a ghetto a few times in the interview. At one point, his vexed father, Farhad, intervened and said, “Don’t call it a ghetto. Ghetto has negative connotations.” But further into the interview, Parvez, again used the word. Exasperated, Farhad walked to the bookshelf and took out the dictionary and read out the meaning of the word aloud, “The word ghetto … it says here, is a part of the city occupied by a minority group. I guess that would apply to the Jews. There is no negative aspect of the ghetto here. So, I suppose Dadar Parsi Colony is a ghetto.” The discord between father and son was mainly semantic. They, in fact, agreed with each other on the specifics. For example, Farhad had earlier agreed with his son’s analysis of inbreeding within the Parsi community and even went on to say:

> So now what happens is as he (Parvez) was talking of colonies, if you are in a colony, in particular Jains, they will not like non-vegetarians to come there and stay with them. So, you know the tolerance becomes less, because, as I told you, when I was staying in Chowpatty, we had Christian family very close to us, and then, we had a Mohammedan family. So, during Eid, they would send us things; during Christmas they would send us things, and we used to do the same on our days; so, you know we used to understand their concepts also. Today (in the Colony) if you go to certain person and ask what is Christmas and how do you celebrate it, they might not know, but I know what Christmas means to a Catholic, I know what Eid means to a Muslim. (Farhad, 86, Dadar Parsi Colony)

The use of the word ghetto lead to a minor disagreement between father and son that in many ways reflect the debates surrounding the use of the word in contemporary Indian academic scholarship. So, what is a ghetto? In contemporary India, as already mentioned in “Chapter 1: A Case for Religion-Marked Spaces in Mumbai”, the term is most often used to refer to Muslim-dominated space and so is a trope in the narrative of Muslim marginalization in India. In the case of Mumbai, the term is used to refer to those spaces that emerged after the 1992–93 riots. These Muslim-dominated suburbs allegedly sprung up as the city’s Muslim residents fled from areas of heterogeneous religious make-up towards safer havens (Fernandes, 2012, December 10). Much of this

understanding appeared in the English language print media that sought to bring attention to the persistence of the problem of Hindu–Muslim relations in Mumbai (Singh, 2012, December 6; DNA web Team, 2015, September 19). In everyday interactions too, these areas had garnered a certain disrepute. Mumbra, for instance, was often referred to as "mini-Pakistan[42]" by commuters who lived outside the space. For me, as a social worker, the Muslim ghetto as a stigmatized space formed a very important part of my own understanding of the city. I was aware of administrative negligence of these ghettos and the pervasive fear of the majority community in the area (Jain, 2013). Further, the high profile Ishrat Jahan[43] case added to the pejorative connotations that the word ghetto had garnered along the way. The idea that Mumbra and Muslim ghettos in general harboured terrorists became widely accepted. In this section, I look at the origins and development of the word in academia, in both the western and the Indian context, to lay bare some debates on the concept and its use.

4.2.1 History of ghetto in Europe and America

The term ghetto, both in academic and popular parlance, has a long and winding history that begins in Europe in the sixteenth century[44]. In 1516, the Venetian senate passed a law that directed all Jews in the city to reside in the Ghetto Nuovo (Duneier, 2016; Michman, 2011). In due course, the word came to describe Jewish residential segregation not only in Venice but also in Rome and elsewhere[45].

---

[42] This is necessarily pejorative since Pakistan is considered the enemy and, therefore, the area has "anti-national," "haven of terrorism," and other associated connotations.

[43] On June 15th, 2004, Ishrat Jahan, a 19-year-old college student was amongst four killed by the police in an encounter against terrorists. The claim that Ishrat Jahan was a terrorist was refuted subsequently. This controversial issue consumed the national media at that time.

[44] For a comprehensive historical and political view of the term in the European and American contexts, refer to sociologist Mitchelle Duneier's book *Ghetto: The invention of a place, the history of an idea*.

45 In 1555, Pope Paul IV, ordered the formation of a ghetto for the Jews in Rome, which then endured for 300 years, constraining Jewish activity in a predominantly Christian city (Stow, 2001, p. 40). The organizing principle of the ghetto, in this context and at this time, was primarily religious. Wirth describes these earliest known ghettos:

> These ghettos were generally walled in and had one or more gates, which were locked at night. At sunset the Jews had to be inside the gates or suffer severe punishment. They were generally not to appear on the streets outside the ghetto walls on Sundays and important Christian holidays. (Wirth, 1928, p. 32)

The earliest academic treatment of ghetto is credited to Wirth (1927,1928). A member of the Chicago School of Sociology, Wirth argued that, given the history of prejudice and discrimination meted out to the Jews in European cities of the early Middle Ages, the Jewish ghetto was then one of voluntary spatial segregation, not born of edicts or legal orders. Consequently, Wirth argued that the contemporary Chicago ghetto was an area of first settlement for Jewish immigrants; they subsequently moved out to more reputed areas, leaving the ghetto for fresh immigrants. The ghetto in the United States, for Wirth, was a transit camp, a safe space before assimilation into the dominant culture. For Wirth, the ghetto was a natural part of the city, neither desirable nor undesirable.

In the 1940s and thereafter, with the advent of the civil rights movement and the increase in militancy and violence within the American ghetto (Anderson, 2012), the ghetto became the undesirable consequence and cause of racial discrimination (Duneier, 2016; Clark, 1989; Massey and Denton, 1993; Wilson, 1984). The ghetto became an undesirable space; specially a problem that needed to be addressed.

More recently, in a series of scholarly works, Wacquant (1997, 2007, 2012), has refuted these varying understandings of the ghetto and argues that academics who study ghettos have three proclivities: one, towards assigning the term ghetto to any urban area of widespread and intense poverty; two, towards analysing ghettos merely in terms of lacks and deficiencies; and three, exoticizing the ghetto by highlighting the unusual in the ghetto as seen from the dominant, outside standpoint. Taking the Jewish ghetto in medieval Europe as a point of departure, Wacquant puts forth four defining

---

However, scholars concede that Jewish spatial segregation existed much earlier than the actual formation of the ghetto in Venice, in fact, as early as the twelfth century; but at that time, it was never obligatory or enclosed (Duneier, 2016; Wirth, 1928). The spatial segregation of Italian Jews came to an end in the middle of the nineteenth century. However, it re-emerged in the twentieth century when Nazi Germany regarded ghettoization of Jews to be part of the final solution. In his book, Michman (2011) engages with the history of the semantics and the cultural contexts of the term to argue that Jewish ghettoization during the Holocaust was qualitatively very different from the ones experienced by the Jews during the late middle ages in Europe. However, academia, during and post the Second World War, took for granted the Nazi claim that the Jewish ghettoization followed the precedent set by the Catholic church at an earlier time (Michman, 2011).

characteristics of the ghetto—stigma, constraint, spatial confinement, and institutional parallelism (Wacquant, 2012)—characteristics that, he argues, were consistent with the phenomenon of the original medieval Jewish ghettos. Pattillo (2003), while agreeing with Wacquant, further elaborates, identifying race as the key identifier of a ghetto and not poverty.

The discussion, at this point, revolved around two aspects of the ghetto. One was whether the ghetto was a space of voluntary segregation like Wirth had posited or involuntary segregation. The second concern pertained to what the core organizing principle of the ghetto was. Was it religion like the Jewish ghettos of yore? Was it race like the black ghettos? Was it just a space of poverty and destitution as Wilson had posited? Addressing the first concern, Marcuse (1998, 2005) differentiates between a ghetto, an enclave, and an area of spatial concentration. An area of spatial concentration is the "generic term for any concentration of a particular group"; an enclave is a spatial concentration of people who, "self-defined by ethnicity or religion or otherwise, congregate as a means of enhancing their economic, social, political or cultural development"; and a ghetto is a spatial concentration that is used specifically "to separate and limit a particular group" (Marcuse, 1998, p. 8). Peach (2005) argues that while assimilation à la Wirth is one kind of ethnic accommodation, it is not the only one nor is it necessarily the most desired one. Another kind of accommodation is pluralism or multiculturalism where groups are economically integrated while being socially encapsulated, being able to maintain their separate identities. With this layered meaning to accommodation, Peach (2005, p. 45–46) identifies five types of ghettos/enclaves. First is the traditional Assimilation–Diffusion model following the Chicago three-generational schema where ghettos form the first stage of assimilation. Second is the American ghetto model which constitutes involuntary segregation with plural accommodation where minority groups maintain their distinct identity. Third is the persistent enclave model which is constituted by voluntary plural persistent segregated enclaves that are not necessarily the exclusive ethnic centre of the community. Fourth is the voluntary plural relocated model, formed when ethnic communities relocate en masse from the inner city to the suburbs. And finally, the

parachuted suburban model that constitutes concentrated areas of affluent, often transitory sojourners.

By distinguishing between these various understandings of segregation, Peach and Marcuse capture the range of connotations that ethnic clustering can have, and they reserve the term ghetto only for those types that are imbued with negative connotations. Indeed, not all segregation is undesirable. Such an understanding also allows us to take into account the different processes that lead to segregation. I will return to this nuanced conceptualization of the ghetto in the next section.

4.2.2 The Ghetto in India

The relevance of the two core discussions about the ghetto becomes even more pertinent in the Indian context. In Indian academic writing, the word has been adopted rather uncritically. In the context of Muslim marginalization, the word has been used both to refer to spatial segregation as a cause and as a consequence of violence (Contractor, 2012; Galonnier, 2012, 2015; Gayer, 2012; Gayer and Jaffrelot, 2012; Khan, 2007; Robinson, 2005, 2010). Even while these scholars acknowledge that it would be wrong to assume homogeneity of the Muslims within a ghetto as they might have different regional, socio-political, and linguistic affiliations, they are particularly interested in the stigmatized and marginalized aspect of the ghetto in their enquiries.

Gayer and Jaffrelot (2012, Kindle Edition, loc. 497–524), in their pioneering discussion on the Muslim ghetto in the Indian context, build towards an understanding of the ghetto based on Wacquant's ideas. They tease out five major characteristics of the ghetto. First, the ghetto is characterized by "social and/or political constraint over the residential options" of a given population. Second, a ghetto demonstrates "class and caste diversity", grouping people from different social backgrounds solely on the basis of ethnic or religious identities. Third, ghettos are characterized by neglect by state authorities, translating into a lack of infrastructure and educational and other facilities. Fourth, in a ghetto the locality and its residents are isolated from the rest of the city because of a paucity in access to public infrastructure as well as job opportunities.

Finally, there is a subjective sense of closure that the residents experience within a ghetto. Significantly, then, the class and caste diversity ensure that the ghetto as a space of extreme poverty and destitution, as posited by Wilson, does not exist. Further, Gayer and Jaffrelot's conception of the ghetto seems to be inclined towards an element of voluntary segregation within an involuntary structural imperative.

Contractor (2012), for instance, although with a cautious prefatory comment that Muslim spaces in India might not be explained with existing classificatory methods, claims that the evolution of Shivaji Nagar, a Muslim slum in Mumbai, as a peripheral space provides us with some parallels with racial and ethnic ghettos in the west. Prominent among these is the development of a space of social and cultural exclusion. In another instance, Galonnier (2012, Kindle Edition, loc. 2939–3009) explores two Muslim spaces in Aligarh to differentiate between two kinds of spaces. According to her, while the area of Shah Jamal in Aligarh appears as truly disadvantaged (as Wilson conceived of the ghetto) as it is ridden with conflicts and violence and lack of development, the "elite ghetto" of Sir Syed Nagar or "homo-academicus" does not fall into the same category. However, the residents of Sir Syed Nagar are withdrawn unto themselves for communal as well as political reasons. It is almost entirely Muslim, and they are neglected by the administration. Verniers (2012, Kindle Edition, loc. 2268–2386) demonstrates how the word ghetto is used in a non-Hindu–Muslim context. He explores the history and construction of the Kashmiri *mohalla* in Lucknow, popularly known as the Shia ghetto and "the royal slum." Locating the origin of the Shia–Sunni polarization in colonial history, he explains the current marginalization of the Shias, spatially, socio-economically, and politically. He argues that with the increase in the literature on the Muslim ghetto, the tendency to think of Hindu and Muslim as watertight categories is also greater. Verniers puts this perception to rest, constructing for us a majority Sunni community that is marginalizing a minority Shia community. The Shia ghetto is a Muslim ghetto all right, but it isn't ghettoized by a majority Hindu community like other Muslim spaces in Indian cities. These writers demonstrate the diversity that exists within Muslim spaces in Indian cities that possibly cannot be conceptualized with the single phrase, the Muslim ghetto.

Jaffrelot and Thomas (2012), in their study of the Muslims in riot-torn Ahmedabad, argue that Juhapura forms an exemplar of the Muslim ghetto. Their argument is founded on three characteristics of Juhapura: it brings together people who share only their religion with each other; the area is completely isolated from other areas vis-à-vis connectivity, transport, and commerce; and finally, it has been subject to state neglect. In contrast, they contend that the Muslim areas of the Old City, which includes old Muslim inhabitants, are ghettoized in only two senses: first, they are diverse in terms of class representation and second, they are cut off from the rest of the city. In effect, then, they seem to be indicating that Muslim spaces in Indian cities are ghettos in some senses, some ticking all the boxes of ghettoization like Juhapura and some ticking only few boxes like the Old City area. This conceptualization is particularly interesting to me because of the notion that the concept of the ghetto does not follow the all-or-none principle. The question then arises, what are the necessary conditions for a space to garner the ghetto label? As a corollary, what are the sufficient conditions for a space to qualify for the ghetto label?

In a concluding comment, Jaffrelot and Thomas (2012, Kindle Edition, loc. 1594–1628) argue that the ghettoization process and sheer violence have had unintended and not so negative consequences. First, it allows Muslims to be a majority in constituencies where they can elect their representatives, thus ensuring their continued representation in the political landscape. Second, there is a formation of a new elite in these spaces, as Muslims across class backgrounds look to live with each other for safety reasons. This leads to the third unintended benefit of ghettoization, that is the increased turn to modernization through education, especially of the English medium variety.

In sum, these researchers conceive of the ghetto as primarily a space of religious (Muslim) concentration, demonstrating caste, class, and regional diversity, formed due to protracted marginalization and/or incidents of targeted violence, that continues to face systemic neglect both from the administration and from the majority (mostly, but not always, Hindu) community. Ghettos as moments in Muslim marginalization is the

essence and the strength of this perspective. However, it can also be a weakness since it underplays or even obscures unique urban spatial processes and does not take into consideration that Muslims are not the only marginalized group in Indian cities. It is this gap that I wish to address in this chapter.

In an important critique, Nijman examines Marcuse's classification of the ghetto, enclave, and area of spatial concentration within the context of a more popular term that pervades Indian urban sociology studies– the slum. With the example of Dharavi, touted to be one of Asia's biggest slum (if not the biggest), he looks at social processes within the slum and argues that Marcuse's classification does not apply to the slum in Mumbai. According to Nijman (Nijman, 2010, p. 12–13), the discussion on western notions of segregation are irrelevant to discussing the slum in Mumbai for three reasons. First, the consideration of voluntary and involuntary settlement is moot. Second, if slums are exclusionary they are not so to their economic or social advantage. Third, unlike American spaces of segregation, slums are not categorized as desirable and undesirable. Spatial contestations in the Indian urban landscape means that this is the only way to usurp space for themselves. In a final analysis, Nijman argues that western spatial segregation of the Marcuse kind are relevant for organizing residential spaces. However, spaces like slums in Mumbai, are dynamic and contain more than one function within them. Dharavi, for eample, is a centre for industrial activity and people who reside in it also happen to work in these spaces.

The slum, however, is not the only spatial unit of analysis in Mumbai. indeed, it provides a contrast between how the socioeconomically different groups live in the city. But segregation around socio-economic lines is not the only type of segregation. In discussing the concepts of slum, ghetto, enclave, and citadel in the context of Muslim spatial segregation, Susewind notes

> if an ethnic group is relegated to certain neighbourhoods we speak of a 'ghetto'; if poor people are forced to club together we see a 'slum'; if an ethnic group

> voluntarily chooses to segregate, they form an 'enclave'; and if rich people isolate themselves, this constitutes a 'citadel' (Susewind, 2017, p.1288)

Ofcourse, this does not mean that they are exclusive spaces. A ghetto, might, overtime, morph into a slum. A ghetto might include a slum. A ghetto might include an enclave. Even a slum might have, within its territory, ethnicity-based segregated spaces. Therefore, while the criticism of the ghetto as inapplicable to the slum is well received, I would argue that these are anyway two different kinds of spatial segregation that we are comparing. The slum does not signify a religion-based spatial segregation.

A more incisive critique of the use of the term ghetto for Muslim spatial segregation has emerged over the last decade. Parveen (2014, p. 44) observes that there are three different ways in which Muslim localities in North India are imagined in the scholarly literature. First, they are described as cultural spaces where Muslim cultural practices are perpetuated. Second, they are depicted as polluted spaces, spaces rife with crime and terrorism, that is, the ghetto. And third, as political spaces where the majority–minority dynamics is played out. In her study of Shahjahanabad, a Muslim *ilaqe*[46] of Delhi, she examines the historical processes that contribute to making the Muslim space. She demonstrates how in its original spatial make-up in the Mughal period, space was primarily marked by caste (occupation) and class rather than religion. With the British ascendancy, however, spatial contestations began to be articulated in religious, majority–minority terms. The consciousness of a collective religious identity, colonial administrative mechanisms, and local politics have together contributed to this preponderance in the understanding of the Muslim *ilaqe* in the three terms of a cultural space, a political space, and a polluted space. If these spaces have come about in the scholarly imagination through these historical processes, then the ghetto literature must critically engage with these historical processes that are likely to be locally specific. Parveen suggests that Gayer and Jaffrelot's book initiates such a discussion and yet continues to use the ghetto image to illustrate the marginalization of the Muslim

[46] Parveen gives the meaning of the Hindustani word *Ilaqe* as locality, area or region.

population, continuing to play into the majority–minority space contestation that was, as she shows, historically produced. This is an important critique of the ghetto literature and calls into question the analytical utility of calling Muslim spaces ghettos.

In her ethnographic study of Muslim women in Zakir Nagar, a Muslim area in Delhi, Kirmani (2013, p. 106–107) takes Marcuse (2005) to task for making a distinction between an enclave (voluntary segregation) and a ghetto (involuntary segregation). She argues that such a distinction is farcical because the choice of residing in a locality is most often made within a complex set of competing constraints, which differs depending on the social position of the speaker. She goes on to describe how Zakir Nagar came to be a Muslim area, focusing on two broad aspects: first, the religious character of the space and, second, the religion-based insecurity that drove Muslims to live with coreligionists. But the insecurity experienced by her interlocutors was complicated by various factors such as class, age, regional affiliation, and gender. Religion-based segregation was represented as both a consequence of discrimination as well as a proactive choice that residents made. Zakir Nagar residents seem to indicate a combination of both necessity and choice as driving forces in their move to Zakir Nagar (Kirmani, 2013, p. 195–196). Kirmani's disengagement from the discussion on the ghetto is critical because she is pointing to the homogenizing of a peoples through a label. In the data from Mumbra, for instance, many interlocutors told me that they would move out of the ghetto if they were able to afford another place. Twenty-three-year old Mumtaz was particularly keen on making enough money to buy a home in Thane and move her family there. At the same time, Mumbra did not house only the poor. There were middle class Muslims who had owned spaces in prime locations in south Mumbai who had moved to Mumbra in waves ever since the riots. Kirmani's disagreement with Marcuse, therefore, makes sense in the context of Muslim marginalization in India.

In an interesting reflexive ethnography on the topic, Gupta (2015) argues that there exists a ghetto mentality amongst researchers studying Muslims in Mumbai. The question, she claims, is whether the ghetto really exists or is it an analytical concept

that exists only in our minds. Gupta (2015, p. 354) goes on to argue that in order to make the concept of the Muslim ghetto analytically more viable, we need to think of the ghetto effect, which goes beyond just a spatial dispensation. According to her, the ghetto effect may be defined as "a pervasive mentality, a disposition that structures interaction with the 'other', and even an aspect perhaps of the habitus of Mumbai dwellers" (Gupta, 2015, p. 354). She argues that the ghetto effect is produced by anthropologists and interlocutors in two distinct ways. Anthropologists do this through the choices they make in terms of the themes they study or the ethnographic methods they use. Muslim interlocutors, in turn, find themselves in a predicament: on the one hand, seeking to present and rectify public perception of Muslims and, at the same time, harbouring suspicion of the non-Muslim outsider researcher for the same reason. Gupta, by adding the researcher (and the larger body of academic work on the ghetto) into the mix, complicates matters in a productive way. If researchers are complicit in constituting the ghetto, does the Muslim ghetto actually exist in Mumbai? While I agree with Gupta, there are two concerns that her argument elicits. First, once the ghetto exists in popular imagination, can we ignore it? Whether in researchers minds or otherwise, Mumbra as a Muslim ghetto already exists. Once it is constituted (either collaboratively by the researcher and locals or solely by the locals) does it not make it a legitimate concept of analysis. And therefore, it becomes important to interrogate what influence this has on any scholarly work that is subsequently undertaken. Second, as researchers, is it possible to reconstitute the term in such a way that we can divest it from some of its connotations that seem to structure academic investigation in to the spatial segregation of Muslims?

In another epistemological stand, Ghazala Jamil (2017) provides an incisive criticism of the ghetto discourse. First, Jamil (2017, p. 34–35) objects to the use of the term ghetto because it "normalizes" segregation. Muslim segregation, she argues, is a "historically specific and functionally distinct condition," and the use of a term used for Jewish segregation or black segregation for Muslim segregation would be misleading because it would lead to conflating the different processes of segregation that historically took place in these different contexts. Jamil adds that it is easy to fall

into the trap of wanting to create a typology of these Muslim spaces. However, she chooses not to. Instead, she underscores through her writing that Muslims are indeed spatially segregated in Indian cities; however, there is a variability to how they are segregated, an aspect completely eclipsed by the ghetto discourse. More importantly, she points towards her own ethnographic work as significant to providing a voice for Muslims living in cities to imagine the space they live in from their point of view, providing for a complex imaginary pattern rather than the one conjured by the label ghetto. Jamil argues that the folk concept of the term ghetto limits its conception amongst researchers, development workers, journalists, documentary film makers, and the like.

The critique of the use of the word ghetto in the Indian context, therefore, falls into two main categories. One engages with the voluntary versus involuntary debate that characterizes all discussions of the ghetto since Wirth. The second provides an epistemological critique of categorizing spaces in India in these terms and specifically calls for discarding the term ghetto.

What this discussion demonstrates is that the word ghetto is not only used in academic literature, but it is also an English word that has gained a measure of currency in the popular media as well as amongst the people of Mumbai (as is demonstrated by four of my interviews). In the following section, I respond to scholarly critiques of the term, arguing for a new concept that I call the ghetto *māhaul*. In response to Gupta's critique, I intend to reconstitute the term so as to infuse it with greater meaning in understanding religion-marked spaces.

I find the Jaffrelot and Thomas (2012) conceptualization of the term, ghetto, useful to think of a ghetto as having certain necessary and sufficient conditions that could make a space more-or-less a ghetto. The more the number of conditions met, the greater the space is an exemplar of the ghetto- or in this case, have a ghetto *māhaul*. Further, I address Kirmani's and Jamil's epistemological critique of the use of the term by conceptualizing different degrees of ghettoization that can be explained by the different

processes that accompany segregation. Gupta's critique is also accounted for by the term ghetto *māhaul* that subsumes within it popular and emic perceptions of what a ghetto is. In sum, a ghetto *māhaul* exists over segregated residential spaces. I argue that this ghetto *māhaul* is characterized by the religious *māhaul*, the pañcāyatī *māhaul*, and the safe *māhaul*.

4.3 The ghetto *māhaul*

Kaneez, an interlocutor in Mumbra, used the word ghetto when talking about Mumbra. In an interview conducted in Hindi/Urdu, the English word seemed out of place. So, I asked her to clarify what she meant by a ghetto,

> Ghetto means when people of a certain community live in one place together, and they feel a certain safety in doing so. Within that space, no matter how many poojya pradhans (religious leaders) exist, you still feel a certain safety. It may be a Hindu ghetto where the pandits (Hindu priests) rule the roost. It may be a Musalman ghetto where the maulanas (Muslim religious leaders) rule the roost. So, if you look at all the ghettos that can be seen around you, you will see that the custodians of society[47] have a stronghold. (Kaneez, 36, Mumbra)

Kaneez conceives of the ghetto as having two important characteristics. First, a ghetto is one in which people from a certain community live together. Without referring to academic literature, Kaneez reflects on the religious dimension of the term. Later in the interview, she mentioned that spaces such as exclusive Bohri (a Shia Muslim sect that is considered to be socio-economically well off, relative to other Muslim sects) spaces and the Dadar Parsi Colony, even though made up of socio-economically well-to-do residents, would also constitute a ghetto because of the power placed with religious

[47] She used the phrase*, samāj ke ṭhekedār* which literally translates to "contractors of society." However, the phrase, in this context, is used in a sarcastic way. Nobody is actually given the contract of society. Here, she means those who have appropriated gatekeeper roles in society, determining what is good, bad, right, wrong, and so on. In other words, she is pointing to extra-legal sources of power.

leaders and the following of religious norms. Second, Kaneez reckons that people who do live in a ghetto source some kind of safety in living together.

Given the varied history of the term and the way my interlocutors use it, I argue that using the word ghetto in the Indian context needs to be more nuanced. Spatial segregation is not only Muslim-related in India; and it would be very difficult to tease out what the voluntary and involuntary segregations are due mainly to the histories of different peoples and spaces. Villages, for instance, are still structured with upper castes nearer the common resources and lower castes at the periphery. Whether voluntary or involuntary, therefore, is a moot point. Spatial segregation of Muslims should be seen in this larger context of how Indian cities and villages are organized.

Using *māhaul* as a marker of space, I argue that religion-marked spaces may or may not fit any specific definitions of the ghetto. However, a ghetto *māhaul* could exist, to a greater or lesser extent over a space. This follows Gayer and Jaffrelot's conception of the Muslim space that could be called a ghetto if it ticks a few boxes of ghetto characteristics. The ghetto *māhaul* can change, lessen, or deepen in intensity across time. This necessarily allows for accommodating different processes by which segregation takes place for different minority communities. If spaces can be more-or-less ghetto, then segregation happens in different ways for different people, depending on their histories, politics, and socio-economic factors. This conceptualization of the ghetto *māhaul* brings to the fore the particularities of ghettoization, irrespective of the community that resides there. It does not homogenize the Muslim ghetto. Further, the term is divested of its Muslim connotations. In doing so, I don't intend to downplay Muslim marginalization in India but, in fact, to heighten it in comparison to other areas of minority religious concentration. The intensity of the *māhaul* is different in different spaces, and that is also informed by the history and politics that surround both the spaces and peoples. Finally, this conceptualization of the ghetto *māhaul* speaks to the epistemological Islamophobia in academic (and other) discourses that Jamil delineates. I do this in two ways. The first is to do with the ethnographic method that Jamil herself identifies as a radical act of providing primacy to the voices of the inhabitants of a

space. Second, by juxtaposing other minority religion-based segregated spaces in Mumbai, I locate Muslim segregation practices within larger urban practices of segregation.

As shown in "Chapter 3: *Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there," *māhaul* refers to spatial culture, spatial habitus, and physical surroundings. It is how people in Mumbai understand space in all its sociopolitical and material manifestations. It differentiates between spaces; it defines boundaries; it diffuses across boundaries; it changes across time; it influences behaviour and is influenced by behaviour; and it also refers to a person's personal circumstances. In the following pages, I delve into my data to argue that some of the ways in which my interlocutors, across the three locations, describe their place of residence or their neighbourhoods were similar. I elucidate three different *māhauls* (physical surroundings, spatial habitus, and spatial culture) that exist in these areas, the safe *māhaul*, the pañcāyatī *māhaul*, and the religious *māhaul*. These three aspects together form the ghetto *māhaul*. The safe aspect refers to the feeling of safety that interlocutors experience in religion-marked spaces; the *pañcāyatī* characteristic is the experience of surveillance that exists within these neighbourhoods; the religious aspect is the preponderance of religious influences experienced within these localities. All three *māhauls* exist to a greater or lesser extent in all the spaces I have studied. For instance, while the religious seems to be intense in Mumbra and Dadar Parsi Colony, it is not so intense in Gautam Nagar; the safe *māhaul* appears to be most intense in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar.

4.3.1 The safe *māhaul*

My interlocutors, across the three spaces, spoke of the safety and security that they felt within their areas.

> The main advantage is that you pretty much know everyone around. So, you do know that there are a lot of people you can count on if you need something. It does feel nice having that around you, having that security. For example, my husband travels for work. So, when he is travelling, it does make me feel more

> secure because I know that there are quite a few people I can call in the middle of the night if I need some help. (Vahbeez, 42, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Vahbeez sources a sense of comfort and security from the fact that she knows the people around her. Socially though, she means the people with whom she engages in her own class. She does not, for example, mean the service class that she also engages with. Her parents and her husband's extended family, all live within the Colony. Most of her friends are Zoroastrian. At a later point in the interview, Vahbeez also describes a journey from one safe place (her grandmother's house in Tardeo) through volatile spaces to reach home in the Colony.

In another instance, while comparing her maternal uncle's home in Dahanu, which is not a Parsi-only space, with the Colony, Beroz says,

> But here I am happy living in the Colony because I feel safe and secure with my community members, and I am a devout Zoroasrian. So, I am very happy that way. (Beroz, 40, Dadar Parsi Colony)

There are two important aspects that Beroz touches upon. First, the fact that she feels a sense of security in Dadar Parsi Colony that, she implies, will be unavailable to her maternal uncle in Dahanu. Second, she sources this from being with her community members, that is, Zoroastrians. I will return to this second aspect in my discussion on the religious *māhaul*. Dadar Parsi Colony, therefore, provides its inhabitants with a sense of safety and security even amidst violent situations in the city.

How did respondents from other areas respond to questions of safety during the 1992–93 riots? In Gautam Nagar, for instance, not a single incident of violence was reported within the space. A heavy police presence was recalled. But the fact that nothing happened within the space was recalled with some pride.

When asked if she saw any incidents of violence during the riots of 1992–93, Fahima from Mumbra said,

> Nothing happened here at all. This side, in Kalva and Thana things were happening. That side, in Diva and Dombivili also, violence was happening. So, we were not even allowed to go out of Mumbra. I was young then, around 20–22 years of age. So, there was no question of me wandering outside of Mumbra.... Even here, there was talk of conducting a Mahapuja at the temple near the station. But the Hindus were the first to put a stop to it. … So, there was no incident for me to tell you about. Nothing happened within my sight. (Fahima, 45, Mumbra)

The concept of safety and security takes on a different meaning in the case of Mumbra. Mumbra was one of several Muslim-dominated suburbs that allegedly sprung up as the city's Muslim residents fled from areas of heterogeneous religious make-up towards safer areas (Fernandes, 2012; Gayer, 2012; Gayer and Jaffrelot, 2012; Gupta, 2013; Robinson, 2005). Unlike some of the other such areas that sprang up after the 1992–93 riots, Mumbra was a relatively untouched distant suburb. What is relevant here is that Mumbra was already considered a safe space before it was populated by other Muslims. In 1992–93, Mumbra was still sparsely populated, village-like, with a population of Scheduled Tribes and overgrown with forests. With the opening of the economy in 1991 and the expansion of the city at that time, Mumbra became a tempting space to develop for builders. However, at the time of the riots, it did not have the connotations it now has of being a safe haven for Muslims. Soon after the riots, however, the government of India provided the State Waqf board with 10 Square miles of land in Mumbra to provide affordable housing to the Muslims fleeing the city.

Kirmani (2013, p. 84–107) acknowledges religion-based insecurities as being one of the factors that encourage people to come to Zakir Nagar to reside with fellow Muslims. In her ethnography, she explores the ravages of each set of communal violence right from the time of partition to the anti-Sikh pogrom in 1984, the Babri Masjid demolition in 1992, the Gujarat riots of 2002, each of which have produced a wave of migration into Zakir Nagar. According to her, this religion-based insecurity (although not exclusively) contributed to the emergence of the Muslim *māhaul* in Zakir Nagar and,

in extension, a Muslim *mohallah*[48]. Feeling a sense of safety amongst co-religionists in the backdrop of communal violence is well documented amongst Muslims in India.

Madiha was born in 1992. She recollects that soon after she was born, mother and child were sent away to the village in Uttar Pradesh to her maternal grandmother's house due to the tense situation in the city. They had their own house in Kurla. When mother and daughter returned, the situation in the city had worsened, and they were forced to sell their home and look for safer spaces. What ensued was a series of shifts from Kurla to Sion to Vikhroli to Jarimari (all within a 10 km radius of each other), and then finally, the family came to settle in Mumbra in 1995.

It is clear that the safety and security was sourced from being with one's co-religionists. Further, there appears to be a positive correlation between the concentration of co-religionists and perceptions of degree of safety and security. In fact, when I asked Beroz how she would compare Dadar Parsi Colony with a completely exclusive gated Parsi community like Cusrow Baugh, where she would not have non-Parsis as neighbours, she responded:

> So, it's (a gated colony) very safe and secure for the Parsi community. If you have seen the situation here, it's become terrible. With all the ghatis running off, these ghodawallas and these bikers—three on a bike is the norm! (Beroz, 40, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Even while conceding that there is greater safety within the Colony than in a mixed neighbourhood, she believes an exclusive gated community like Cusrow Baugh is likely to be safer. In her reckoning, the *ghatis* (pejorative terms for people from a certain part of Maharashtra), *ghodawallas* (horse riders), and bikers who can access the public park space have compromised the safety of the Colony.

[48] According to Kirmani (2013) mohallah refers to neighbourhood or locality

The safe *māhaul* exists in all three spaces and is sourced from the fact that one's neighbours belong to the same religion. However, the safe *māhaul* exists to different degrees in all three spaces.

4.3.2 The *pañcāyatī māhaul*

The word *pañcāyat* was used by interlocutors from all three spaces, albeit differently. In this section, I argue that the ghetto *māhaul* is constituted by the *pañcāyati māhaul*. In this conceptualization, I use *pañcāyat* to mean two things. First, it refers to the community surveillance that my interlocutors have reported. Second, it refers to the continuity that these spaces seem to have with the interlocutors' native places.

But first, let us consider the words *pañcāyat* and *pañcāyati* . The Oxford Hindi–English Dictionary (McGregor, 1993, p.586) lists the different meanings of the term *pañcāyat*. First, *pañcāyat* refers to a village council (consisting of five or more members), village court, or arbitrating body. Second, it refers to a caste council (in a village) or arbitrators in an intra-caste matter. Third, it is a meeting of any body (to discuss a particular question) or village meeting. And fourth, *pañcāyat* refers to ironical chatter talk. In conjunction with *adaalat*, it means village court or arbitrating body. *Pañcāyat karnā* or *pañcāyat jodnā* or *pañcāyat baithanā* refers to assembling a council or forming a village court. A *pañcāyat nāmā* refers to a written decision or award of a *pañcāyat*. Finally, a *pañcāyat samitī* is the district *pañcāyat* council.

The word *pañcāyatī* is the adjective form of the word *pañcāyat*. It refers to something that has to do with a *pañcāyat*; something decided or authorized by a *pañcāyat*, regarded as equitable; or something public, common (as a building, an area). The Panchayati Raj System refers to the system of local self-government. The pejorative *pañcāyatī sala* refers to the whole council's or everyman's brother-in-law: a term of abuse). (McGregor, 1993, p. 586)

In academic scholarship and in the administrative context, the word *pañcāyatī* is used most commonly in reference to the Panychayati Raj System, the system of local self-government that was instituted in a bid to decentralize the administration in India in the 73rd amendment of the constitution (see Bryld, 2001; Rajaraman, Bohra and

Renganathan, 1996; Venugopal and Yilmaz, 2009; Deshmukh, 2005). In other academic scholarship, the term is used in conjunction with caste, in the study of caste councils within villages (see Kumar, 2012; Bharadwaj, 2012; Thakur, Sinha and Pathak, 2015; Thenua, 2016). In historical studies like the one conducted by Parveen (2014, p. 45), she refers to *biradari pañcāyat*, a traditional system of kinship or caste-based adjudication on local conflicts during the Mughal era.

The word, both its noun and adjective forms, are used in common parlance as well. In Hindi literature, for instance, it is commonly understood as a group of village elders. In Phanishwarnath Renu's (1982) short story, *Panchlight*, the title comes from the local term given to a Petromax lamp (brand of kerosene lamp) that the *panch* (members of the *pañcāyat*) had collectively bought for the village. In the following instance from Munshi Premchand's novel *Mansarovar*, the word is used in two ways.

> In the village, women have two parties—one constituting the daughters-in-law, another constituting the mothers-in-law. Daughters-in-law reach out to their party for advice and sympathy and mothers-in-law reach out to theirs for the same. Both have different *pañcāyats*.[49] (Premchand 2016, Kindle Edition, loc. 413)

Pañcāyat here refers to the ironical chatter that these different parties are wont to participate in. Second, it refers to the different kinds of adjudication in conflict matters that the two *pañcāyats* are likely to indulge in. Assigning blame for a particular situation, for instance, will differ across the two *pañcāyats* because they are made up of two allegedly opposing parties.

[49] Original quote in devnagari (Premchand 2016, Kindle Edition, loc. 413)

गाँव में स्त्रियों के दो दल होते हैं -एक बहुओं का, दूसरा सासों का! बहुएँ सलाह और सहानुभूति के लिए अपने दल में जाती हैं, सासें अपने में। दोनों की पंचायतें अलग होती हैं।

My interlocutors also used the word in different ways. Let us consider these.

> When I sometimes go to Vikhroli, I don't wear the *burqa*. I can be as I wish. My aunts who live there ask, "Why wear a burqa? Don't do it. Be as you wish." … Even in Santacruz, the atmosphere is free. You know, like they say, there is no *pañcāyat*. Here, on the other hand, if there is a fight, the whole place gets crowded. The crowd then starts to do a *pañcāyat*, setting up an inquiry as to what happened or what didn't happen. (Mumtaz, 22, Mumbra)

Mumtaz had lived in three different spaces through her life: first, in a *chawl* in Vikhroli (a central suburb in Mumbai), second, in a building complex in Santacruz (a Western suburb), and finally, she and her family moved to Mumbra. I asked her what the main differences between these three spaces were. She uses the word *pañcāyat* to refer to a certain kind of surveillance and judgment made by the people around her. She found this particularly pronounced in Mumbra and not so in the other spaces that she had lived in.

In another instance, I asked Saee to compare two spaces she had lived in, one as a child and one as an adult after marriage. The following was her response:

> There, we were a more mixed community. Our neighbours were Gujarati from the *Kathewadi*. And we all used to keep to ourselves. We used to go to their homes to celebrate their festivals, and they used to come to our house to celebrate our festivals. Here they fight a lot … since we are all Jai Bhim[50] people, we are allowed to celebrate only our own festivals. Recently, we had Holi. When we were small, we all celebrated Holi. Now the kids are not allowed to celebrate Holi. I allow my children to play. But here, they will call for a meeting. We say *pañcāyat*, right? The *pañcāyat* sits over the matter, "Hey, you are a Buddhist, how come you played Holi?", "Why did you go there to

[50] *Jai Bhim* loosely translates to "Victory to Bhim." Bhim refers to Bhimrao Ambedkar, emancipator of the Dalits. *Jai Bhim* is how his followers greet each other, giving up on more religious greetings like namaste or salaam.

> celebrate Holi?", "Why did you go touch the goddess' feet?" (Saee, 33, Gautam Nagar)

Saee is a 33-year-old mother of three, residing in Gautam Nagar since her birth. Interestingly, both spaces that she compares were within Gautam Nagar, where even though the Dalit–Buddhist community is in the majority, the *Kathewadi* community constitutes the rest of the population. The *Kathewadi* are a Dalit community hailing from Gujarat that identifies as Hindu and has not adopted Buddhism. However, while she grew up in a slum cluster, where there appeared to be greater mixing of the two communities, she now lives in a *chawl* type building, where the two castes are spatially separated. Her sentiments about the *pañcāyat* reflect those of Mumtaz.

Both Mumtaz and Saee are referring to the traditional institution of the village council. While Mumtaz uses the term in an abstract way, Saee is actually referring to a tangible *pañcāyat* that calls for a meeting and adjudicates for the community. In identifying the existence of the community *pañcāyat* in a religion-marked space, they are distinguishing such spaces from other spaces in Mumbai or any other urban setting. *Pañcāyat,* here, reflects a form of social control that is possible in such spaces and is less likely in other spaces.

In the Parsi context, the term is most often used to refer to the Bombay Parsi Panchayat. The Bombay Parsi Panchayat set up sometime between the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, was a political body born of the leadership of the Parsi mercantile class that sought to represent the interests of the Parsis as a collective in Bombay. In 1787, it received formal authority from the government as a representative of the community. While initially engaged in legal adjudication and matters of social control, the Panchayat became the main vehicle for Parsi charity after 1860 (Palsetia, 2001b).

> Of course, there is a lot of infighting now in Parsis.… It's just that as we say we wash our dirty linen in public, so it's just at the pañcāyat level. BPP is called the Bombay Parsi Panchayat. It's just too much politics and people wanting to

> get into powerful position and doing wrong. There's a lot of infighting right now. [sic] (Zenobia, 75, Dadar Parsi Colony)

All references to *pañcāyat* in the Colony was to the Bombay Parsi Panchayat. Here, the meaning is very clearly about an association that is in charge of governing. While this specific use of *pañcāyat,* is reminiscent of the surveillance meaning of the word, like mahaul, *pañcāyat,* generally is a word that forms a part of the Mumbai lexicon and is an emic concept, understood by inhabitants.

Considering these different meanings of *pañcāyat* and *pañcāyati*, I argue that the *pañcāyatī māhaul* refers to community surveillance and attended forms of social control within religion-marked spaces. It reflects a certain kind of social intimacy that is assumed or felt within these spaces that my interlocutors believe do not exist in mixed neighbourhoods.

> There is no question of accepting that we are childless by choice. I remember, one year at New Year's Eve, we were home just relaxing, the two of us, and suddenly, at almost midnight, somebody throws a letter through the door, and we were wondering what on earth was going on. And we went and saw, and someone had anonymously written to us, and it had to be someone from the Colony, telling us that our new year's resolution had to be to have children in that year. Now, you know it really can't get a lot worse than that. It's annoying, but it's also like okay. You've just lived all your life here, and so what do you do? (Vahbeez, 42, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Vahbeez was born in Dadar Parsi Colony, did her schooling here, her college was not a long commute either, and she even got married to another resident here. This was her response when I asked her what the advantages and disadvantages of living in Dadar Parsi Colony were. She obviously believes this to be a disadvantage of living in the Colony and one that she assumes would be different had she been living in a more mixed space.

The association of the word *Pañcāyatī*'s with the village also reflects a continuity from the native place that these spaces offer, contributing to a continuity of culture from wherever they hailed. Here, it is important to note that by village I don't mean the rural (as opposed to the urban), but I use it the way many Indians use *gamv* as the place they hail from. The Oxford Hindi– English dictionary lists a site, a place as one of the meanings of *gamv*, apart from its meaning village (McGregor, 1993, p. 262). Therefore, even a metropolis like Chennai can be a *gamv* as also a small rural village. *Gamv*, here, refers to one's roots or native place. The point here is that these spaces provide a simulation of a certain culture that exists elsewhere that is not Mumbai.

> Here, you can get your culture. Culture, as in, since we are Shia, so we get our Shia culture. And a little of Lucknow culture since we know some people from Lucknow who live here. (Rukhaiya, 45, Mumbra)

Rukhaiya is a 45-year-old resident of Mumbra, who moved here from her hometown of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. She shifted here to teach in a college and married a fellow resident and settled in Mumbra. This was her response when I asked what she liked about Mumbra. Earlier, she had declared, that Lucknow, the place she grew up in, will hold a special place in her heart. But within Mumbai, Mumbra comes closest to recreating Lucknow culture.

Rukhaiya's observation indicates that community-based spatial segregation in the city mirrors the village or native place in important ways. Accounts of spatial segregation in Indian villages appeared in sociological literature in the mid-twentieth century. In his book, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs*, M.N Srinivas argues that caste distinction and solidarity are expressed in the spatial segregation of the castes (Srinivas, 1952).

> The members of a sub-caste inhabit the same quarter of the village or town and frequently are all related to each other by agnatic or affinal links. They share a common culture and ritual idiom. They observe common restrictions regarding

> food and drink, and have certain caste festivals and rites not shared with others. They practice a common, traditional occupation, the secrets of which they do not share with others. They have caste-courts and assemblies where elders of the sub-caste belonging to different villages assemble and decide matters of common concern. The members of a sub-caste share certain common values and are actively aware of this fact when they come into contact with other castes. (Srinivas, 1952, p. 29)

In this account, Srinivas describes the spatial segregation and how a shared caste culture is transmitted within the space. It is this kind of village spatial segregation that is mimicked by religion-marked spaces in cities. Here immigrants from various parts of the country reside together and form spaces where they can transmit their culture across generations. But such spaces have come to mean surveillance for many of my interlocutors. At the same time, the *pañcāyati māhaul* allows for social familiarity that normalizes certain intrusions into peoples' lives.

4.3.3 The religious *māhaul*

In his book on the Roman Jewish ghetto, Stow (2001) reckons that the Roman Jews, being spatially constrained, cultivated a system of voluntary arbitration that allowed them to govern themselves in interpersonal and communal issues and give them a sense of control over their own destinies. In effect, the coping and survival strategies required to live a ghetto life allowed them to construct and perpetuate a unique Roman Jewish culture. Religion, he contends, is one of the central organizing principles of the ghetto. The ghetto literature in India also gives primacy to religion as principal to the ghetto. Indeed, it also appeared during my interviews. It is this aspect that I will explore in this section.

When initially I spoke to Kaneez, she mentioned the word ghetto for Mumbra.

> I feel that ghettos are being formed after '93 because, at that time, the māhaul was such that a Muslim saved a Muslim, a Hindu saved a Hindu. Of course, this

> is not completely true, many Hindus saved Muslims and many Muslims saved Hindu lives. But the trend of burqas and ghettos are being seen only after ’93…. In an area like Bombay, Madanpura, Nagpada, (where she grew up), we had never seen so much use of the *purdah*. Neither did we use *purdah*. Even in the house, we never saw too much of a trend with *purdah*. Based on this, I would say that the trend of *purdah* and the formation of ghettos is more evident after ’93. And after 2002, the trend has increased. (Kaneez, 36, Mumbra)

Kaneez makes two important points about ghettos. One that the trend of ghettoization was more prevalent since the 1992–93 Hindu–Muslim riots, implying that ghettos were an outcome of violence. Second, that the trend of ghettoization was attended by the trend of the *burqa* or *purdah*[51], implying that the organizing principle for the ghetto was religion. In her reckoning, while Madanpura does not qualify as a ghetto, Mumbra does. The trend of the *burqa* and the *purdah* systems, seems to be a crucial distinguishing factor between the two. Even in the quotation provided in the earlier section, Kaneez claims that ghettos are where religious leaders rule the roost. Many of my interlocutors spoke about how a distinguishing feature of Mumbra was the fact that one could visually see more *burqas*/*naqabs*.

In my data, there were reports of varying degrees of a specific religious culture in all three spaces.

> Actually, Mumbra is better [than Sion] … here, I had the opportunity to be free, I had the opportunity to discover myself…. Here the māhaul is different. Here, it is not that there are only Hindus. In fact, most of the people are from Muslim religions [sic]. (Nazeen, 19, Mumbra)

Nazeen was responding to my question asking her to compare Sion, where she lived before, to Mumbra, where she lives now. Specifically, she feels she received more freedom in Mumbra, a freedom that afforded her greater self-discovery. She associates

[51] *Purdah* refers to the veil that both Hindu and Muslim women were expected to adorn in North India. She used the two words interchangeably. While *burqa* refers to the black garment used by Muslims, *purdah* refers to the system of veil, followed by Muslims and Hindus alike.

this freedom with the fact that Mumbra has more Muslims, unlike Sion that had “only Hindus.” The religious *māhaul*, for Nazeen, is liberating. The same religious *māhaul* could be intimidating for someone else. Take, for example, the following snippet.

While telling me about how demographics have changed over the course of her life in Mumbra, Farida said,

> Everybody is divided. I didn’t feel this when I was younger. Now it is more evident. There is too much Muslim culture. Earlier, not so much. Earlier, we used to celebrate Dahi Handi[52] together. Now, even though it still happens, I feel like there has been a change. (Farida, 26, Mumbra)

Muslim culture seems to pervade the space, according to Farida. Also, Farida does not particularly like what she calls “too much Muslim culture.” She seems to believe that living with Hindus and Christians is better.

The pervasive nature of the religious *māhaul* was also observed when I was sifting through my field notes. My initial foray into Mumbra was with my contact Rehana. The 22-year-old took me on a long walk from the station to what she deemed the most important social and political spaces that dotted the area.

> As Rehana and I made our winding way through the small *galīs* of Mumbra market, Rehana told me she was taking me to the place where she usually buys her *naqab*s. (She did this often, warning me of what was to come). But when we did turn the corner and I saw the lane lined on both sides with *naqab* stores with *naqabs* of all shapes and sizes hanging in the store fronts, it took me by surprise, all the same. It occurred to me then that I had never seen a *naqab* store

[52] *Dahi Handi* is a Hindu religious festival celebrating the Birth of Lord Krishna. *Dahi* means yoghurt and *handi* refers to a pot. On this day, in Mumbai and Maharashtra, a pot of yoghurt is tied high up in a public space. Groups of young boys form a human pyramid to break the pot and claim a prize.

> before. And to suddenly stumble on to a host of them was a very different visual experience for me. (Field notes, October 16, 2016, Mumbra)

As a resident of Mumbai, where over 20% of the population is Muslim, it is strange that I had not seen a *naqab* store or that I was taken aback by the *naqab* lane. The visual became inextricably linked with my idea of Mumbra.

The religious *māhaul* of a space influences peoples' behaviour in that space. Dressed always in a full *naqab* sans the nosepiece, Rehana told me she was Shia. It was the time of Muharram, and when we came upon the temporary structure that Shias make for Muharram, she went inside to pray. The first time I met her, she spoke incessantly about the prophet and the Quran. It was only in my third meeting, when I spoke to her along with her family, that she told me her father was Muslim but her mother was a Buddhist. Divorced, her mother had moved to Sion, and when she visited her mother, she liked walking around in western clothes. Here, she was Muslim and had to wear appropriate attire. Kirmani (2013, p. 58–83), in a chapter entitled "Narrating the Muslim Mahol," speaks of the Muslim character as one that marks the neighbourhood of Zakir Nagar. Of the many signifiers of the Muslim character she enumerates, the high concentration of mosques, the greater number of azans, women in *burqas*, men wearing *namaz* caps, and the presence of restaurants serving non-vegetarian food are some. Through her interlocutors' words, she explains how, for many, the religious identity and, in extension, the Muslim *māhaul*, influences a range of behaviours within the space that include, but is not limited to, religious practice. In her discussion on women interlocutors and the wearing of the *burqa*, for example, she explores how the Muslim *māhaul*, on the one hand, allows for greater overt expression of religious markers like the *burqa* while at the same time policing the attire of women within the area.

In Dadar Parsi Colony, the Fire Temple was mentioned by almost all my interlocutors as a place they spend time in. Beroz, in fact, refused a marital proposal because there was no fire temple in the vicinity like there was in the Colony. And

as noted earlier, Beroz, a self-proclaimed devout Zoroastrian, also believed that living with co-religionists provided her with a sense of safety. Zenobia remarked on the way in which people become aware of Parsi festivals and rituals by being in the Colony with fellow Parsis. According to Flavia, the Colony's religious culture was important precisely because it helped in transmitting religious ideas and rituals to her child. On the other hand, her husband Parvez contended that it is this religious *māhaul* that was a disadvantage in bringing up children since it provided an insular existence.

The existence of a religious *māhaul* is considerably less in Gautam Nagar. In between the two buildings is a big water tank and a *Buddhavihar*. The water tank is where young men gather to socialize with each other. The *Buddhavihar*, containing a large newly acquired white statue of the Buddha and a bust each of Ambedkar and Shivaji, has weekly prayer sessions on Thursday evenings.

My contact in Gautam Nagar, Harish, is a deeply religious man who identifies as Buddhist; he follows Buddha but follows many of the prescriptive fasting rituals of Hindus as well, including praying every afternoon to his village deity. Once, when I asked him if that was not contrary to his Buddhist identity, he shook his head and said, "For us, it is very clear, first there is Ambedkar, then there is the Buddha, and then, somewhat lower, there are all the gods that we have been traditionally praying to."

Even so, Saee's comment in the earlier section when Dalit–Buddhist *pañcāyat*s questioned people celebrating Hindu festivals like Holi is noteworthy here. I visited Gautam Nagar and stayed over on the eve of Ambedkar Jayanti. Harish and Saee took me on a walk around the different Dalit neighbourhoods in the vicinity to see what celebrations were afoot. At midnight, all the women in Gautam Nagar sat inside the *Buddhavihar* and the men sat outside praying, chanting, and being led by a Buddhist monk in their prayers. Temporarily, the *māhaul* had been transformed into a religious one. Despite the presence of the *Buddhavihar* and weekly rituals

conducted there, the religious *māhaul* was not a pervasive presence in Gautam Nagar.

In sum, evidence from the interviews suggests that the religious *māhaul* is of greatest intensity in Mumbra and Dadar Parsi Colony and of low intensity in Gautam Nagar. All three aspects, therefore, exist to varying degrees over the three spaces under scrutiny. The safe *māhaul* engendered by living with co-religionists is almost uniformly experienced by inhabitants in all three spaces. In contrast, the *pañcāyatī māhaul* seems to be most experienced in Mumbra and Dadar Parsi Colony and less in Gautam Nagar. Similarly, the religious *māhaul* is experienced with greatest intensity in Mumbra and with much less intensity in Dadar Parsi Colony and Gautam Nagar. What does this say about the ghetto in India? What does it say about Mumbra as a Muslim ghetto? And what does it say about ghetto *māhaul* as an analytical concept to understand space in India? Given the different intensities of the different *māhaul*s over the three spaces, I argue that inhabitants of Mumbra experience the ghetto with greatest intensity. Inhabitants of Dadar Parsi Colony and Gautam Nagar experience the ghetto at a much lower intensity. In this way, the concept of ghetto *māhaul* accounts for various processes that lead to religion-based segregated spaces. It can interrogate and provide nuance to spaces that have already been popularly labelled as ghettos. Finally, it allows us to consider these spaces in dialectical relationship with each other and other spaces in Mumbai.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that religion-marked spaces in Mumbai can be understood as having a ghetto *māhaul*. The ghetto *māhaul* allows us to understand religion-based spatial segregation in the context of Indian cities. The concept also allows us to divest the word ghetto from its Western origins and anchor it instead in the Indian context and the local conceptions of the space my interlocutors inhabit. At the same time, the idea that a ghetto *māhaul* exists with varying intensity, depending on the process of segregation, the extent of marginalization of the

population, and the intensity of cohesion, allows us to think of spatial segregation in nuanced ways. Sourcing from the data that I have collected in the three different religion-marked spaces, I argue that all three spaces demonstrate having the ghetto *māhaul* to varying degrees. This ghetto *māhaul* is experienced in three different ways: the safe *māhaul*, the *paṇcāyatī māhaul,* and the religious *māhaul*. Each of these contribute towards creating the ghetto *māhaul*.

In arguing that a ghetto *māhaul* exists with varying intensities over these different spaces, do I fall into the trap of creating a false equivalence, one that ignores long histories of discrimination and privilege variously accorded to the different religious groups that inhabit these spaces? In the following chapter, I argue to the contrary. In "Chapter 3: *Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there," I had mentioned that Kirmani (2013, p. 62), in her exploration of Zakir Nagar in Delhi as a Muslim neighbourhood, remarks on how her interlocutors privileged a Muslim character to the space, arguing that the space had a Muslim *māhaul*. Through the narratives of her interlocutors, she examines the construction of this *māhaul* as a kind of Barthian boundary. Barth (1969), in his introductory essay, "Ethnic groups and boundaries," problematized for anthropology the inclination to take ethnic groups as immutable culturally watertight units. Barth, instead, calls for understanding boundaries as organizing behaviour and social relations. He argues that ethnic groups in contact imply "structuring of interaction which allows the persistence of cultural differences" (Barth, 1969, p. 16). Further, he proposes that there are different ways in which boundaries mediate articulation and separation and that this produces different kinds of permutations and combinations of multi-ethnic systems.

I follow Kirmani's lead to engage with the boundaries of the *māhaul*. A *māhaul's* boundaries may or may not map onto physical space. How are the *māhaul* boundaries determined? How are they placed vis-à-vis physical boundaries demarcating space? Do the people of the three spaces I study in this thesis construct different boundaries for their *māhauls*? If so, what are they? These are some of the questions I answer in the following chapter. Using Nippert-Eng's (1996) boundary-

work, I delineate some of the ways in which my interlocutors did boundary-work. In the second part of the next chapter, I focus on specific boundary-work done by my interlocutors in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar, one that differentiates them considerably from Dadar Parsi Colony and one that also distinguishes them from each other. This boundary-work speaks to the anticipated criticism of the ghetto *māhaul* as a concept that homogenizes different religion-marked spaces in urban India.

5. Chapter 5: *Māhaul* boundaries, disgust, and precarity

Differential place-based precarity

5.1 Introduction

> Then I tried to draw a circle with Khulna at the centre and Srinagar on the circumference. I discovered immediately that the map of South Asia would not be big enough. I had to turn back to a map of Asia before I found one large enough for my circle.
>
> It was an amazing circle.
>
> Beginning in Srinagar and travelling anti-clockwise, it cut through the Pakistani half of Punjab, the tip of Rajasthan and the edge of Sindh, through the Rann of Kutch, and across the Arabian Sea, through the southernmost toe of the Indian Peninsula, through Kandy, in Sri Lanka, and out into the Indian Ocean until it emerged to touch upon the northernmost finger of Sumatra, then straight through the tail of Thailand into the Gulf, to come out again in Thailand, running a little north of Phnom Penh, into the hills of Laos, past Hue in Vietnam, dipping into the Gulf of Tonking, then swinging up again through the Chinese province of Yunnan, past Chungking, across the Yangtze Kiang, passing within sight of the Great Wall of China, through Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang, until with a final leap over the Karakoram Mountains it dropped again into the valley of Kashmir. It was a remarkable circle: more than half of mankind must have fallen within it. (Ghosh, 1988, Kindle Edition, loc. 3420–3425)

In his novel *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav Ghosh uses the metaphor of a compass drawing a circle on a map in an atlas to demonstrate how wide an expanse a circle can cover. The character places the metal tip of the compass on Khulna, a city in Bangladesh that was just as far from the international border as was Calcutta on the Indian side. With Khulna as centre and with the distance between Khulna and Srinagar (India

Administered Kashmir) as the radius, the character proceeds to draw a circle that includes a number of different countries, cultures, and boundaries. Through this metaphor Ghosh makes an important observation about borders and boundaries. Physical borders and boundaries that emerge from historical–political processes do not necessarily reflect boundaries between peoples. At the same time, with the character making his own boundary with the compass, Ghosh suggests that boundaries can be crossed and new boundaries created where none existed before.

How does one create and destroy boundaries? In this chapter, I argue that the conception of the ghetto *māhaul* allows us to understand this boundary-making process. As described in the previous chapter, a ghetto *māhaul* exists in all three spaces to varying extents. That is, the safe *māhaul*, the *pañcāyati māhaul*, and the religious *māhaul*, all three contributing to the ghetto *māhaul*, exist to a greater or lesser extent in Mumbra, Gautam Nagar, and Dadar Parsi Colony. And yet one would not think of any of these spaces as similar in anyway. And the difference between the three spaces is not only one of degree. The narratives from Gautam Nagar and Mumbra point towards an experience of a place-based precarity that is not observable in the data from Dadar Parsi Colony. I use the notion of boundary-work to analyze my data from Gautam Nagar and Mumbra to argue for two different kinds of precarity experienced by my interlocutors in each of the two spaces. I begin with a vignette adapted from my field notes that serves as a point of departure for our discussion on boundaries and boundary- work. With this introduction, I analyze the existing literature on boundary-work, arguing for its usefulness in analyzing my data. Second, I argue that the emotion of disgust is instrumental in constructing the boundaries of both Mumbra and Gautam Nagar as undesirable spaces. Here, I also argue from my data why such an analysis of Dadar Parsi Colony is not fruitful. Finally, I look at the term precarity and argue for a place-based precarity that is particularly useful in describing the experiences of interlocutors from both Mumbra and Gautam Nagar. Furthermore, interlocutors from each of these spaces report experiencing this place-based precarity. I argue that these differences indicate that Gautam Nagar and Mumbra exhibit a differential precarity.

Mumbra residents experience a victimized precarity, while in Gautam Nagar the precarity includes a potential for empowerment.

5.2 *Māhauls* and boundaries

One hot afternoon in November, 2016, I asked Rehana to take me around Mumbra. My brief to her was simply to take me around Mumbra to show me what she thought was important about or characteristic of Mumbra. She agreed and asked me to meet her at the Mumbra railway station near the tank on display[53]. Soon, we were winding our way down the main road, taking detours wherever she felt she had to show me something. About four hours later, we wound up at her home, where she and her brother lived. However, sometime during our walk, we had crossed Mumbra and were now in Kausa[54]. Rehana told me her father and stepmother lived in Mumbra and she and her brother lived in Kausa, her father owning both the apartments. "But it's all the same. There's no difference really." In her mind, Mumbra's boundaries extended and included Kausa.

What did she mean? What about Mumbra and Kausa are the same? What is it that is not different, "really?" To understand this, one must understand the context in which this was uttered. What did her tour of Mumbra's most significant sites consist of? During the walk, Rehana had shown me the Mumbra market place, the police station, The Dar ul Fana mosque, the Dargah on Dargah road, her house, a popular college, an abandoned market place (one that was constructed specifically to de-cluster the main road but did not have the desired effect since small businesses preferred the hustle and bustle of the main road), and the *qabristān* (graveyard). In addition to this context, I had also told her about my project. While introducing the project to my interlocutors, I said "I am looking to study spaces in Mumbai that have a majority population belonging to or identifying with one religion. So, I chose Mumbra as a Muslim space,

[53] In chapter 2, I mention this army tank that was stationed outside Mumbra railway station.

[54] Kausa is a suburb of Mumbra.

Dadar Parsi Colony as a Parsi space, and Gautam Nagar as a Dalit–Buddhist space. In these spaces, I am interested in studying two things, one is how you relate to the space you live in and two, how you remember violent events" Given this context, what did Rehana mean when she said there is no difference between Mumbra and Kausa. While she acknowledged the administrative boundary between the two, to her, they are both seamless in terms of the physical surroundings, atmosphere, and the culture that exists within them. In short, the *māhaul* that exists over Mumbra extends over Kausa, making it seamless across both spaces. As we saw earlier, *māhauls* have the ability to diffuse around spaces and exist with different degrees of intensity across time and space. This seamlessness is further underscored by the fact that she has a home in both places. If the administrative boundary between Mumbra and Kausa has no meaning for Rehana, does her conception of Mumbra's *māhaul* have any boundaries at all? What are these boundaries? Indeed, what are the *māhaul* boundaries that Rehana and other interlocutors conceive of? Where does one *māhaul* end and another begin?

Lamont and Molnár (2002), in a review of literature concerning boundaries and borders, make the important distinction between symbolic boundaries and social boundaries. Symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. Social boundaries, on the other hand, are "objectified forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources (material and non-material) and social opportunities" (Lamont & Molnár, 2002, p. 168). The three areas chosen in this study have administrative boundaries that are symbolic religious boundaries since all interlocutors acknowledged the predominance of people of a single religious community within their areas. Mumbra's administrative boundary and the non-administrative boundary that Rehana conceptualizes when she speaks of the seamlessness between Mumbra and Kausa are both symbolic boundaries. Both boundaries distinguish what is contained within from what is outside it. In contrast, the caste dimension that characterizes Gautam Nagar and that also influences residents' access to opportunity can be considered a social boundary. It might do well to remember here that these conceptions of boundaries are essentially abstract and it is in

the specific case of Gautam Nagar that both the geographical/physical boundary and the social boundary coincide to provide us with a spatial boundary that is also discriminatory.

In another conceptualization, Wimmer (2013, p. 9) contends that boundaries display both a categorical and a social or behavioural dimension. Only when the two coincide can one think about a social boundary. Rehana acknowledges the boundary between Mumbra and Kausa when she tells me that we have moved to Kausa. But when she hastens to add that "there is no difference" between Mumbra and Kausa, she is telling me that the boundary is a nominal one, one only in name. In essence, she feels that there is no social or behavioural boundary between the two. Like Ghosh's protagonist in the quotation at the beginning of the chapter, Rehana acknowledges the administrative boundary, but at the same time, erases it by diminishing its significance and demonstrating the shared *māhaul* of both the spaces. Rehana exhibits an agency in conceptualising Mumbra that goes above and beyond its mere physical boundaries.

In order to understand this I turn to the literature on boundary-work or boundary-making. In her qualitative research on the employees of "the Lab," a research laboratory in Northeast United States, Nippert-Eng (1996) uses boundary-work to distinguish between the "home" realm and the "work" realm. Acknowledging the relational way in which these conceptualizations sit with each other, she views them as a continuum, where peoples' responses range from integration ("no distinction between home and work") to segmentation ("home and work aspects of social existence are conceived of and experienced as completely separate worlds"). We all have pre-existing cultural images of what each realm should be/look like. Growing up, having parents "go to work" or "work from home," for instance, contributes to our cultural image of what "work" means. Further, there are a particular set of constraints that each of our realms dictate. For example, having a toddler at home would impact our ability to work at home. Within this framework, we develop personal practices that allow us to maintain these categories in our own unique ways.

> Practices—like surrounding ourselves with different or similar objects or people at home and work, or developing commuting routines that help transform between home and work ways of being—play an important, mediating role between sociocogntitive constructs and social–structural constraints. (Nippert-Eng, 1996, Kindle Edition, loc. 185)

The three spaces I have chosen to study are different from Nippert-Eng's home–work conceptualization in important ways. First, they do not have a relational existence with each other, much less a dichotomous one, the way "home" and "work" do. Second, the three spaces I have chosen are physical spaces and not only conceptual notions. Both "home" and "work" have cultural symbolic meaning even if they are physically not separated, like when one works from home. However, as we have seen through the exploration of *māhaul*, there is a cultural *māhaul* that each of the spaces emanate and, to a greater or lesser extent, they emanate particular socio-structural constraints, that together influences our behaviour.

Nippert-Eng (1996, Kindle Edition, loc. 191–194) describes boundary-work as the "strategies, principles and practices we use to create, maintain and modify cultural categories." This emphasis on individual practices as being the core of boundary work is salient to my project for three reasons. First, it allows me to identify boundary work in my interviews, in individual practices/voices of boundary-making. For instance, Zarine while speaking to me about the advantages of Mumbra compared to Vashi, the neighbourhood in which she went to college, creates a boundary between me and her.

> The advantages of Mumbra lies in the fact that if there is a Muslim festival, we immediately come to know. In contrast, in Vashi, we would never come to know.… Yes, there (in Vashi) your festivals like Ganapati you will immediately come to know. (Zarine, 27, Mumbra)

She uses the Hindi expression *āp log*, which literally translates to "you people" and refers to "you and your folk." She identifies me as being a Hindu, and she assumes that Ganesh Chaturthi is my festival and a festival of my people. Discursively, she has created a boundary between me and herself.

Second, it allows me to start with my own boundary work, the one that I employed while introducing my project. Nippert-Eng (1996) speaks of the cultural background that imbues people's conceptions of "home" and "work." Historically and culturally, we value the segmentation of the two realms, the idea that "home" and "work" are separate entities and must be maintained as such. It is an interaction of these cultural norms and the individual's understanding of the two concepts that provide a framework within which practices and strategies are fashioned for one to negotiate "home" and "work." My interlocutors too have certain cultural ideas about the spaces they inhabit. They may or may not have had the opportunity to articulate them before this research. Moreover, through the introduction of the project, I perform boundary work. Initially, I define for them the space they inhabit by emphasising that these spaces have a majority of population identifying with one religion, the religion that they identify with. Next, I underscore this aspect by calling their space a "Muslim space", a "Parsi space," and a "Dalit–Buddhist space." When I asked them during the interview if they agree with my characterization of their space as a "Muslim space," a "Parsi space" or a "Dalit–Buddhist" space, they all agreed and expanded on it. For instance, the interlocutors from Mumbra stressed the fact that, while it was a majority Muslim space, there were also people from other religions living there, even if in a minority. In this way, they were able to discursively lay the boundaries for me to understand how they conceptualized their spaces. Another factor that influenced boundary making during my interviews was my own space of residence. Most of my interlocutors were aware that I lived in Kanjurmarg. One of my questions in the interview schedule was, "If I were to move from my place of residence to your area, what would you say? Would you recommend it or not?" In Mumbra, for example, this meant moving from the city of Mumbai to a margin space. In Dadar Parsi Colony and Gautam Nagar, in contrast, it meant moving from a border suburb to a central suburb. The connotations are different, and the responses possibly reflected this difference.

The third way in which Nippert-Eng's emphasis on individual practice is useful to my project results from the way I juxtaposed for my interlocutors Gautam Nagar, Dadar Parsi Colony, and Mumbra. Most of my interlocutors from Mumbra, for instance, had not even heard of Dadar Parsi Colony. When I told Saee, a Gautam Nagar resident, that

Mumbra was one of the spaces I had chosen for my project, she related to me an anecdote about her going to Mumbra for some event with her son. There had been a delay in coming back home, and being surrounded by Muslims at that late hour was a scary experience. Harish told me he had visited Dadar Parsi Colony as part of his job and was overwhelmed by the civility with which he was treated by the Parsi man to whose house he had gone. Despite being so rich, the man had welcomed him inside, asked him to have a seat and heaped praises on the hard work that his community (Dalit–Buddhist) was capable of. My interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony either did not know of Mumbra at all or only knew of it as a Muslim area, one that they had not ventured into. Only one of them, Tanaz, seemed to know of Gautam Nagar, but many were curious to know where exactly in Dadar it was located. My interlocutors were being asked to consider the spaces they inhabit in a contextual frame that included the other spaces. My boundary work had placed the three spaces in a relational axis for my interlocutors, where possibly none had existed before.

Apart from the emphasis on individual practices, an additional aspect that Nippert-Eng (1996, Kindle Edition, loc. 545–1486) elucidates and that is also central to my project is her conception of territoriality of the self. In her analysis, she identifies two different selves (identities/behaviours), one for the work realm and one for the home realm. The contents of these two selves might be converging or diverging depending on whether one is inclined to integrate or segment. Transcending the realms requires a transformation of the self to discard the contents of one realm and adopt the contents of another realm. This is interesting and relevant for my work because it very closely resembles my argument of *māhaul* as habitus. Each *māhaul* produces a certain kind of habitus for its residents, thereby affecting behaviour differently in different *māhauls*.

For illustration, let us turn to my data. When I asked 27-year-old Zarine what her preferred hang-out spots were in Mumbra where she lived with her mother, in Vashi where she went to college, or in any other part of Mumbai, she referred to her work with an NGO in Bandra, one of Mumbai's Central Suburbs.

> Every time we went to (Name of NGO), every Sunday, that is, we used to work a lot … we used to be exhausted towards the end; so we used to go for an outing to freshen up. We used to watch the sunset at Band Stand, and there, there used to be singing as well, young people strumming guitars, smiling as they sang their songs. We used to go there to enjoy. With full freedom. No *burqa*, nothing. Maybe some of the other girls did not remove their *burqas*. We, Rehana, Mumtaz, and I would remove our *burqa* and enjoy being at bandstand … even I know how to play the guitar. So, I would join the guys playing the guitar, while Rehana sang since her voice is good. Mumtaz would take pictures, videos, and selfies of all of us. We would also eat corn on the cob. Then we would go to the water and frolic for a bit. … That one year, we enjoyed a lot. Sometimes, even when there was no workshop, we would make up an excuse of a workshop just to come to Bandra. … What we were not meant to do, we did all of that. Our parents wouldn't have allowed us to go if they knew … our deadline at home was 10 pm. (Zarine, 27, Mumbra)

In this snippet, Zarine talks about the journey from Mumbra to Bandra as a liberating one that transports her across what she thinks are two very different realms. Bandra symbolized for her freedom and liberation. Bandra allowed her and two of her friends to discard their *burqa* if they wished. In a casual conversation, Rehana also told me how she used to remove her *burqa* in the train once the train had already traversed a few stations. She too was part of the group of three that went to Bandra to work with an NGO. Once, well-meaning older Muslim women advised her and her friends against this practice, highlighting to them the importance of wearing the *burqa* at all times. Bandra afforded them the anonymity they sought by allowing them to play a stranger's guitar in Bandstand while one of them sang. Zarine's narrative had an air of adventure and subterfuge. Clearly, Bandra allowed them to do things and be things denied to them in Mumbra. The commuter train journey allowed them to transform their selves accordingly.

One of the defining charecteristics of a *māhaul*, discussed in "Chapter 3: *Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there", was that it both defines boundaries as well as diffuses across

boundaries. A *māhaul* itself becomes a boundary in some senses. Taking Nippert-Eng's articulation of boundary-work as a set of practices and strategies that we employ to create and maintain cultural boundaries, I show how this understanding of boundary-work is uniquely positioned to interrogate my data. In the following section, I lean on Nippert-Eng's articulation of boundary-work to argue that my interlocutors from Gautam Nagar and Mumbra imagine their *māhaul* as circumscribing spaces of disgust. Such boundaries are absent in my data from Dadar Parsi Colony.

5.3 Boundaries circumscribing spaces of disgust

Boundary-work carried out by my interlocutors from Mumbra and Gautam Nagar view their respective spaces of residence and its boundaries in terms of disgust. This does not mean that they find their place of residence disgusting. On the contrary, many, both in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar, maintained that they felt fortunate to have a home there. What do boundaries circumscribing spaces of disgust mean in this context?

At the Library in Mumbra, the young girls were preparing for an annual programme, and I was privy to their preparations, which mainly constituted practising for a variety cultural show that they would put up. They were all involved in it from the ideation stage to the execution stage. As part of the variety cultural programme, they were practising two different skits to be presented. One was called *Talāq* and addressed the issue of Triple *Talāq*[55] that was the focus of women's rights activism over the past few years. The other was called *Anti-National*. Yumna was overseeing the practice, and when I interviewed her, I asked her about the significance of the central themes of the two skits. In addressing the specific case of *Anti-National*, she said that it was in response to the political nature of labelling people as anti-national.

[55] Triple *talāq* or *talāq-e-biddat* is the Islamic practice of divorce practiced in the Indian sub-continent where a man can divorce his wife by saying, writing, or texting the word *talāq* three times. It has been in the news recently, since himan rights organizations have taken to task the injustice and gender discrimination fostered by this practice. On July 30, 2019, the Government of India made the practice of triple *talāq* illegal and punishable by law (Prasad, 2020, July 30)

> Like, this happened only three or four months ago. This association with ISIS in Iraq. The police came and arrested our boys. So then, there was a huge banner that was set up in Mumbra basically saying that we don't support whatever happened in Iraq. We don't take training from Iraq. For how long do we have to keep reassuring that we did not do anything. Our whole lives will be spent reassuring that we did not do anything. We say this is our country. But even today, we are made to feel like we have arrived from outside. Because of the way we are treated. We are Muslims, so we must be dirty. We don't bathe. We wear black kurtas. We eat mutton. Our blood is hot. We create riots. How many allegations are upon us! (Yumna, 31, Mumbra)

Yumna identifies several characteristics by which Mumbra and its inhabitants are identified. First, is the association with ISIS, and terrorism in extension. This puts the residents of the space under constant surveillance of the police. A consequence of this is the need to reassure publicly that Mumbra's residents are not in a nexus with international Islamic terror outfits. From these specifics, she takes a step back to comment on how "we" are treated. She elucidates what she means by "us" – Muslims, dirty, not bathing, mutton-eating, hot-blooded, and riot prone. Finally, she observes that there are many such unfounded charges levelled at "us."

In terms of boundary-work, this snippet is interesting for three reasons. First, she is referring to a perception of Mumbra and its residents, but this perception is not held by Mumbra's residents themselves. According to her, it is, in fact, held by people outside Mumbra. She is referring to what she deems is an unjustified view held by the outsider. All the same, it is a perception that affects her and "us." Yumna is referring to a boundary that is created by outsiders that she is subjected to. Second, she brings together a number of aspects of this perception, that is felt at different registers. For instance, dirty, mutton eating, ISIS supporters, seemingly disparate perceptions coming together to form part of a larger perception. Third, this view is shared by government institutions (police, for example) as well as individuals. Boundaries, therefore, are constructed by both people from within and without; boundaries are experienced; and

boundaries are created by a specific combination of different perspectives that come together in a certain way.

The politics of meat eating emerged most prominently in interviews as characterizing spaces a certain way. When I asked Kaneez if she agreed with researchers who said that Muslims had a problem securing housing in other parts of the city, she responded with,

> Yes, of course. I agree. I have just been to Jaipur. And even there, we spoke about caste and work, and people were asked their opinion. A lot of revealing things came out. “Muslims are dirty. They eat fish which stinks. And the main thing is that they eat beef. And when they make beef, it stinks”. When you hear all this from colleagues you work with, then you realize the place where you live is such a safe space. (Kaneez, 36, Mumbra)

Kaneez lives in Mumbra and works for an NGO located in Mumbra, specifically working with women and children. As part of her development work, she has to attend seminars and workshops in other parts of Mumbai and also outside Mumbai. Apart from being exposed to people outside Mumbra, she is also exposed to ideas and ideologically driven narratives of social justice that form part of the development sector. She is, here, referring to a recent work-related workshop she had attended in Jaipur. She makes two important observations. First, that Muslims are considered dirty by non-Muslims and that this idea stems from the fact that they eat fish and beef. Second, she emphasizes that this idea is revealed to her only when she moves out of Mumbra (to Jaipur). This juxtaposition of Mumbra with a non-Mumbra space allows her to appreciate a place like Mumbra and the uncontested food choices that she can make in Mumbra. Within Mumbra, beef and fish are not considered stinky, dirty, or unworthy of consumption.

The corollary of having a food culture that allows for the eating of meat and fish is the ready and open availability of these products in the market.

> There, in Kurla, there were very few such shops. We haven't even seen such shops. Buying chicken, mutton from shops in the open was a rare thing, maximum restricted to one-two shops. Not too many. That was the area. To buy mutton, we had to go very far. (Sanam, 23, Mumbra)

Sanam identifies the open availability of meat and the visibility of meat shops as a defining feature of Mumbra. In describing the construction of Shivaji Nagar, a slum in Mumbai, as a "Muslim Space" by outsiders, Contractor (2012) reports on how the proximity to a slaughterhouse aids in the construction of the space as a forbidden territory, one that is associated with notions of being foul and undesirable. The eating of beef marks an undesirable cultural space. This was again reiterated by Zarine when I interviewed her.

> There (in Vashi), when it is Bakri Id, we aren't allowed to slaughter goats. Because people don't want all that blood and gore; they don't want it either in the market or in any other place. Slaughter should happen where everybody else is carrying out slaughter. (Zarine, 27, Mumbra)

But Muslims are not the only ones at the receiving end of this exclusionary eating framework. Dalits also face exclusion based on food practices (Ilaiah, 1996). Emraan Hashmi, a Hindi film actor, recently claimed that he was denied the right to buy an apartment in a housing society because he was a Muslim (Newswire report, 2009, July 31). Mukund refers to this when he says,

> I heard on TV that Emraan Hashmi eats meat; so, a building society decided not to give him a home..... If a man wants to eat meat, fish, or eggs, he should be allowed to eat whatever he wants. Take for instance Parsi Colony. They don't want to mix, be it with a Scheduled Caste person, Brahmin, Muhammadan, Punjabi. They just will not include because they don't want to mix.… So if you ask if it is good to live in a mixed community or within one's own community, I would say that if there were no discrimination, then it would be ideal to live in a mixed community as one. Suppose my neighbour is a Jain, a Brahmin, a Muhammadan, and anybody else, and when I eat mutton, chicken, or egg, they

> find it problematic, I would prefer to live with my own community. (Mukund, 50, Gautam Nagar)

In recent years, several reports have been circulating in mainstream media regarding the exclusion of meat eaters from residential buildings (Natu and Mukherji, 2015, May 30; Menon, 2012, April 11; Gentlemen, 2007, September 21; Bengali, 2014, November 24). Like Kaneez, Mukund also feels a certain comfort in living in Gautam Nagar, but he makes an important distinction. In an ideal scenario, where every community is accorded respect for the food practices of other communities, living in a space that had people from different cultural and religious persuasions would not be undesirable. However, with the current climate of food discrimination that seems to be prevalent in housing societies, he prefers to reside in the safety and comfort of a space that allows free consumption of meat.

The idea that food can be a semiotic device in understanding social and cultural processes is not a new one (Appadurai, 1981, 1988; Brown and Mussell, 1984; Douglas, 1966; Goody, 1982; Nandy, 2004). Mintz and DuBois (2002), for instance, review the literature on the anthropology of food and eating and categorize them according to their contribution to anthropology. The first category is the rather slim literature on classical food ethnographies that explore food production, preparation, exchange, symbolism, consumption, and nutritional consequences. The second category pertains to single substances like food sources. A third category includes research that explores the interaction between food and social change. In a fourth thread of enquiry are the studies that focus on the problem of food insecurity. The fifth category of research engages with the study of food and its connection with rituals and belief systems. Sixth, eating and food are inherently connected with determining group membership and identity. Finally, food has emerged as a significant pedagogical tool as well.

In the Indian context, Chigateri (2008) points to food hierarchies that value vegetarianism, meat eating, and beef eating in decreasing order. What this value hierarchy translates to is a hierarchical framework of social exclusion. In this thesis,

this food hierarchy allows for the construction of Mumbra and Gautam Nagar as undesirable, disgusting spaces that should be avoided. Osella and Osella (2008, p. 195–198) study the food practices, specifically festive meals, of two communities, the Travancore Hindus and the Kozhikode Muslims, in Kerala. They conclude that the Hindu community is far more regulated by concerns of purity and pollution, while the Muslim community is more cosmopolitan. More importantly, they describe how both communities are more likely to emphasize the distinctiveness of their food rather than the shared commonalities. More recently, in an interesting ethnographic work on Delhi's Old City, Gandhi (2013) argues that people have very crystalized notions of religious boundaries that is best imagined in body types, food preferences, and religious rituals that belong to the "other." However, in creating these boundaries, Gandhi argues that people also demonstrate a pervasive crossing of boundaries, one that is characterized by unequal prerogatives of Hindus and Muslims in that specific social context. In a section entitled "Seduction of difference" (Gandhi, 2013, p. 198–203), he explores how people cross these boundaries. For instance, dichotomy between *halal* and *jhatka* ways of killing animals for meat is considered to be an essential religious boundary between Muslims and Hindus. Even so, Hindus who consider *halal* meat to be more humane are likely to shop at Muslim butchers for the same reason.

These attitudes towards food and food hierarchies behove us to explore the emotion of disgust in some detail. Etymologically, the sense of taste is directly connected to the experience of disgust. However, it is not the only sense that can evoke disgust. I told Basma that I had heard through newspaper reports that Muslims were increasingly unable to find housing in mixed or Hindu-dominated spaces, driving them towards seeking housing in Muslim-majority spaces. I asked her if she agreed with this assessment.

> Yes, it happens. Wherever there are Musalmans, this happens. Whether it is a train or bus. Even in trains, we don't get place to sit. I can even understand if this happens to people like us. But sometimes I have seen that even if children happen to touch these people, they start cleaning that part violently. They don't want any sort of bodily touch. They believe that we people don't bathe for

> days. But we bathe every day. This is how they think. That we live in filth. So, when there is body touch, they move immediately to the side. They don't even give us space to sit. (Basma, 20, Mumbra)

There are two remarkable points that Basma makes. First, while my question was specifically about housing, Basma, almost immediately tells me that discrimination happens wherever there are Muslims. In her reckoning, the discrimination in housing is just a continuity in the general discrimination that Muslims face in India. Second, Basma tells us about the role played by the sense of touch in mediating disgust.

In considering the construction of disgust amongst the Hindu majority vis-à-vis Muslims in Ahemdabad, Ghassem-Fachandi observes that

> Disgust is most effectively carried by senses such as smell and taste, touch and sight, while, significantly, not by hearing. Its main domains are food and sexuality, offering possibilities for the oscillation between desire and revulsion, ingestion and evacuation, incorporation and expiation. (Ghassem-Fachandi, 2012, Kindle Edition, p. 171)

In the psychological studies of emotions, emotions related to food are widely studied, specifically those evoking disgust (Curtis & Biran, 2001; Rozin & Fallon, 1987; Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley, 1999). Rozin and Fallon (1987) associate disgust with a rejection of food. But not any kind of rejection. They locate disgust in a typology of food rejection that is based on the basic motivational factors behind the rejection. Disgust, in their estimate, has as its prime motivating factor ideational elements like who touched it or who made it or other sociological or historical considerations. This conceptualization allows them to define disgust as, "Revulsion at the prospect of (oral) incorporation of an offensive object. The offensive objects are contaminants; that is, if they even briefly contact an acceptable food, they tend to render that food unacceptable." (Rozin & Fallon, 1987, p. 23). Miller (1997, Kindle Edition, loc. 2620 –2737) demonstrates how disgust is a moral judgment and disgust, along with its cousins contempt, fear, horror and so forth, work towards creating a political and social hierarchy, where one is superior to the object of disgust while also being vulnerable to

being soiled by the object of disgust. In effect, disgust primarily requires the physical separation of the self from the object that inspires such revulsion. Ahmed (2015, p. 86–87) builds on this conceptualization when she explores the relationship between disgust and abjection (the act of casting away), contending that the boundary between the subject (the one experiencing the disgust) and the disgusting object itself becomes an object of disgust. In her estimate, it is not very clear if the disgust reaction creates this border as an object or if the border-object inspires disgust on its own accord. Ahmed also makes the point that disgust serves to hierarchize objects and spaces. We usually direct our disgust towards that which, according to us, is lower in some kind of value hierarchy.

Both of Ahmed's formulations, the relationship between disgust and abjection and disgust being a medium by which hierarchies are created, are important when we consider the ideas expressed by Yumna, Kaneez, and Mukund. While Ahmed speaks about the borders between subject and object where the subject is the one feeling disgust for the object, Yumna speaks of the disgust that outsiders have for the space of Mumbra and also for her. Yumna finds herself to be the object of disgust. And her response, vis-à-vis performing a skit called *Anti-National,* is to de-objectify herself and other residents of Mumbra from this outsider disgust. She seeks to do this by resisting the "surfacing" of her and other Mumbra residents with ISIS terrorists, for instance. Mukund and Kaneez have a different response to being this object of disgust. Their response is to find comfort within the boundaries of Gautam Nagar and Mumbra, respectively, and to view them as empowering since they normalize their food within the space. Being the object of disgust makes for the experience of a place-based precariousness. But also this precariousness is experienced differentially by the residents. Take, for example, Sanam's experience of Mumbra and the precarity she experiences.

> They (her neighbours from Kurla) have never come here or visited us here. And they don't want to come to Mumbra either. They told me that whatever happens, we will not come to Mumbra. There, we used to eat out of one plate. Neither she nor her husband discriminated against us (because we were Muslim). But

> they don't want to come to Mumbra. Because they have this feeling that everyone here is a terrorist. Whatever crime there is, all of it takes place in Mumbra. (Sanam 23, Mumbra)

For Sanam, moving to Mumbra has meant the breaking of ties with her erstwhile neighbours. While in Kurla, she experienced no discrimination from her Hindu neighbours for being Muslim. They lived together, ate together, and played together. But now that Sanam and her family have moved to Mumbra, it has created physical distances between them, with her Hindu friends refusing to visit Mumbra because of its association with crime and terrorism. Sanam experiences precarity in terms of place-based discrimination.

There are two important works that are instructive in this context. The first is an extensive ethnographic work conducted in Ahmedabad during the Gujarat riots of 2002, where Ghassem-Fachandi (2012) details how notions of non-violence and sacrifice, together with the affect of disgust engendered by the consumption of meat, constructs collective imaginings of religious identity. Consumption of meat, the particulars of slaughter techniques, the words used for slaughter, all contribute to construction of the Muslim minority as a violent individual who has no compassion in the mind of the Hindu majority.

However, the function of disgust is not restricted to hierarchizing only Hindu–Muslim relationships. In a more recent study, Tayob (2019) contends that hierarchization mediated by digust also takes place within the Muslim community. In an ethnographic enquiry with middle-class, educated, aspirational Muslims, Tayob examines how they internalize an ordinary politics of "embodied critique." (Tayob, 2019, p.7) In effect, he argues, not only does disgust have the potential to create a feared "other," it also has the radical potential to challenge social hieracrhies with a different articulation of disgust, one born of a different ethic. In his paper, middle-class muslims in Mumbai who are upwardly mobile and do not live in ghettos are faced with the ghetto and the disgust associated with it during the festival of Bakri Id, which requires a goat to be sacrificed. At this time, they are required to go to these spaces of disgust (most often

slum spaces) to acquire a goat for the festivities. When they encounter such a space, they too are disgusted like the Hindu majority. However, they seek to explain how the disgust is caused not because of the ethical context in which animal sacrifice is made but because it does not follow the tradition, which in their reckoning is a humane sacrifice. In this way, they are able to reimagine both sacrifice and disgust in such a way that it provides disgust with the potential to question Hindu nationalist notions of muslims being non-violent.

In a study based on ethnography conducted in coastal Andhra Pradesh and Hyderabad, Staples (2020) argues that there is a need to look beyond binaries, vis-à-vis vegetarian–non-vegetarian, cow protectors – beef eaters or high-caste Hindu – Muslim/Dalit. He contends that despite these binary narratives that animate media and other popular discourse, people engage with several considerations, ranging from health, environment, and class in making food choices. He destabilises the notion that meat eating and beef eating are only either subjects of disgust or communal solidarity. He demonstrates, instead, that there are contexts in which meat eating can be a health imperative, a matter of taste, or even a way to celebrate. Much of this has to do with the context in which meat is served or eaten. In the context of an urban high-end restaurant, for instance, the space is seen as a "cosmopolitan, transnational kind of space, one that existed within different moral parameters than either the home or the local restaurant." (Staples, 2020, Kindle Edition, p. 143). In other words, class and caste are mutually imbricated in producing different spaces where meat consumption can either be disgusting or desirable. However, what is most relevant to this thesis is Staples observation about the kind of residential contexts in which people make these different food choices. For instance, most of his vocal advocates for beef consumption belonged to a Dalit-convert, Christian community, who lived in the same neighbourhood with little daily interaction with the caste hindu community. Cooking and eating meat or even beef in the home would not have produced the disgust that other people experience when living in residential spaces that had a mixed community. Again in Staples own example, his Dalit-convert Christian interlocutor from Hyderabad had consciously given up the eating of meat because he was an upwardly mobile middle class person living in a urban space that was ethnically mixed. In his

reckoning, the choice was made so his children are not questioned about their caste. Staples sees this as an outcome of class— the fact that his interlocutor was upwardly mobile, middle class aspirant. I would argue that this is an outcome of residential segregation as much as it may have been of class. After all, his interlocutor may not have found meat eating a contentious issue if he had lived among coreligionists.

Yumna, Kaneez, and Mukund have, together, articulated two functions of the affect of disgust: one, to hierarchize majority–minority relations; and two, to hierarchize minorities from within as well. This is particularly significant because it addresses the question of how different Muslims and different Dalits negotiate their space of disgust.

Consider the following snippet from the field when I asked Nafeesa if she would recommend I live in Mumbra.

> They say this is a Muslim area. Here, Hindus can't live. It's not really like that. If we wanted to spoil the area, we could. If we wanted to make the area better, we could do that too. It's in our hands. (Nafeesa, 40, Mumbra)

Nafeesa identifies Mumbra as a Muslim area, one not meant for Hindus. Again, here she constructs a boundary between herself and me, where I am a Hindu, and acknowledges that Mumbra is not meant for Hindus or those outside Mumbra. She is quick to provide a disclaimer when she says "it's not really like that." Here there is a clear acknowledgement of Mumbra as a space being lower in some kind of spatial hierarchy, and her response is to negate that with the idea that the people have the potential to make the area better, resisting the fatalistic connotations that the boundaries circumscribing spaces of disgust take on. But inherent in this admission is that she and other residents have agency in making Mumbra hospitable for Hindus as well.

At this juncture, I turn to my data from Dadar Parsi Colony to examine why this lens of disgust does not fit in there. Dadar Parsi Colony is a prime upmarket, upper middle-class locality. While even residents of Dadar Parsi Colony reported having considered moving from the space (for a number of personal reasons), they never reported experiencing any type of disgust associated with being a resident of the space.

When I asked Naheed, how she would describe Dadar Parsi Colony to a stranger, she said,

> It's a heritage enclave in the heart of the city built up in the Bombay Bay in the early 1900s. It's built with wide roads, open spaces and large homes boasting both sunlight and ventilation to ensure that an epidemic would not spread. It's these features that make it one of the city's most sought after spaces and a great spot to raise families and grow old too. (Naheed, 30, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Naheed touches upon two aspects of living in the Colony that makes it distinct from Mumbra and Gautam Nagar. Wide roads, open spaces, and large homes for good ventilation speak of a well thought-out, planned cityscape. More importantly, Dadar Parsi Colony is a "sought after" space. Indeed, one of the recurrent themes in my interviews was the fact that the Colony was centrally located; was easy to access from different parts of the city; was green, quiet, and peaceful, all of this making the space more desirable than disgusting. Unlike Sanam, Kaneez, or Mukund, none of my respondents from Dadar Parsi Colony actually reported either being themselves objects of disgust or their space as an object of disgust.

> I had taken the Colony for granted until a friend of mine, just recently, around a year ago, wanted to buy a house here somewhere in Bombay. He also lived here, married and all that. So, we went to Mahim, Bandra, and some places, and there were houses costing around 2–3 crores that I wouldn't want to piss in. We saw some 4–5 houses. Good money we were going to pay too. That is the time I realized the value of this place where I am staying. I wanted to hug the house. You understand that? like I never realized that how blessed I am here in Parsi Colony … that was the time I realized because all those flats of around 3–4 crores, outside there, are slums, hospitals are far away, the approach is bad etc. That is the time I realized that boss, I am very lucky; that is all. (Ardeshir, 45, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Ardeshir is alerted to the benefits of living in the Colony when he is exposed to the real estate market while looking for a property for his friend. Dadar Parsi Colony forms

prime real estate in Mumbai. Not only is this space desirable for outsiders, it is also financially dear.

In the following section, I argue that the boundaries experienced by Gautam Nagar and Mumbra construct a place-based precarity for their inhabitants. The fact that inhabitants of Dadar Parsi Colony do not experience such boundaries precludes a similar analysis. These residents do not experience the place-based precarity the way residents of Mumbra and Gautam Nagar do. Further, I propose that inhabitants of both spaces experience a differential precarity, a victimized place-based precarity in Mumbra and an empowering place-based precarity in Gautam Nagar.

5.4 Experiencing place-based precarity

Precarity or precariousness, often used interchangeably, is understood as the uncertain and potentially vulnerable social condition of a population. It was originally used to describe the peculiar nature of risk-prone, uncertain employment that is created by globalization and neoliberal market forces (Neilson & Rossiter, 2005, 2008; Tsianos & Papadopoulos, 2006). Following Butler (2006), the word is also used in describing a general condition of life, one characterized by uncertainty and vulnerability. It sought to crosscut traditional class classifications, indicating how globalization and attendant risks affected a more heterogeneous population than just the working class. More recently, it is used in the migration literature and, along with labour precarity, indicates socio-political exclusionary forces such as access to welfare and citizenship (Anderson, 2010; Jørgensen, 2016; Round & Kuznetsova, 2016; Schierup, 2016; Schierup & Jørgensen, 2016; Trimikliniotis, Parsanoglou, & Tsianos, 2016). For instance, Schierup (2016) discusses migration and precarity in post-apartheid South Africa and contends that the experience of labour precarity is further complicated by ethnic politics of the native and the foreigner, giving racial undertones to economic exclusionary practices. In another instance, Round and Kuznetsova (2016) discuss the construction of the migrant as an object of disgust, one that is diseased and criminal, that in popular perception, strips the migrant of protection from attack and promotes labour

exploitation. In their analysis, they argue that migrant populations are simultaneously visible and invisible to the state, and the state abuses this aspect of their existence. The invisibility of migrants is particularly emphasized when the state is called upon to deliver welfare policies or provide protection from attacks. At the same time, they are visible to the state as populations to exploit for labour in a market economy. Much of the work on precarity has centred around Europe. Only very recently has some literature emerged regarding the differences between the Global North and the Global South in the experience of precarity (Bent, 2017; Mosoetsa, Stillerman, & Tilly, 2016; Rogan, et al, 2017).

Few scholars have focussed on the precarity that is engendered by space or place (Banki, 2013; Ettlinger, 2007; Waite, 2009). Much of this literature is concerned with migrants where the citizen–denizen dynamic institutionalizes the precarity of the immigrant. Waite (2009), for instance, argues for a critical geography of precarity, specifically one that focusses on socio-spatial contexts like crossing geographic boundaries. Banki (2013) argues for a concept of precarity of place, that is distinct from labour precarity, and that looks at the subset of the precariat that is non-citizen. She argues that there are several similarities between the concepts of labour precarity and precarity of place. First, they both have roots in neoliberal economies. Second, they both exemplify an anxiety of teetering on the edge; in the case of precarity of place, immigrants are most likely fleeing precarious conditions towards certainty and yet find themselves in precarious conditions that leave them not-homeless-yet. Third, it is difficult to designate traditional class and status to members of both kinds of precariat, giving us a heterogenous population. Finally, both kinds of precariat produce different mobilization strategies informed by the motivations and needs of heterogeneous victims, and social networks serve to mitigate both kinds of precarity (Banki, 2013, p. 453–456). Using the empirical example of the Burmese migrant in Thailand, Banki contends that this demography experiences precarity of place because of its vulnerability to deportation. Heterogeneous in terms of class affiliations, this group uniquely suffers restrictions in mobility, in forming networks, and in pursuing organized action for their own betterment. I use Banki's idea of precarity of place as distinct from labour precarity as a starting point for my analysis. I argue that through

the use of boundaries circumscribing spaces of disgust, residents of both Mumbra and Gautam Nagar experience a precarity of place. Further, I differentiate between two kinds of precarity of place. It is important to keep in mind that Banki is specifically concerned with the precarity of place that migrants experience. The citizen–denizen dialectic does not have the same resonance in the case of my project in Mumbai. My interlocutors are not migrants the same way. They have not crossed national borders in search of work. At the same time, all of them are migrants to the city of Mumbai in some sense or the other and to varying degrees. While most of the interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony and Gautam Nagar have been in Mumbai for at least two to three generations, many of my respondents from Mumbra were more recent immigrants from Uttar Pradesh. I find Banki's formulation useful for my own analysis for two reasons. One, it allows me to distinguish between different kinds of place-based precarity. Additionally, it allows me to look at precarity bottom-up, that is, precarity as experienced by interlocutors rather than as an analytical concept that people can be classified into. Using this bottom-up analysis of place-based precarity, I will proceed to demonstrate differential precarity experienced by my interlocutors in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar.

5.4.1 The victimized place-based precarity in Mumbra

In this section, I demonstrate that interlocutors from Mumbra experience four kinds of place-based precarity. These four include: the connotations of filth associated with Mumbra; Government negligence and administrative apathy; discrimination in the job market; and connotations of crime and terrorism associated with Mumbra. Interlocutors experience disgust from outsiders based on their residence in Mumbra. I argue that these constructions of place-based precarity lead to an experience of victimized precarity.

The first type of place-based precarity experienced by interlocutors is connotations of filth.

> This (littering) is a big problem. This is a not a good habit; the habit of spreading garbage and litter. The government needs to make strict regulations about this.

> That is the only solution. But the government does nothing. Just talk. Till today, whatever has been done by the government is only in the interest of filling their own pockets. They are not interested in anything else. (Hanif, 45, Mumbra)

I asked Hanif and wife Rukhaiya what they did not like about Mumbra. Rukhaiya blurted out, “the dirt.” And Hanif responded with the preceding quote. Hanif and Rukhaiya believe that the garbage and littering in public spaces is one of Mumbra’s prime problems.

Hanif also believes that the government is responsible for this state of affairs since governments are not working for the people but rather working for personal interests. This brings us to the second way in which Mumbra’s inhabitants experience place-based precarity: government neglect. Hanif means that government officials are more inclined to self-aggrandizing than working to alleviate the problems of the people they are supposed to serve. This frustration with the diminishing presence of the government in Mumbra was also expressed by other interlocutors.

Earlier, I had quoted Nafeesa’s response to my question on whether I should move to Mumbra. Before commenting about the space, she had responded with,

> It’s better you don’t. Because the kind of facilities you get in Bombay, you are not likely to get within Mumbra. Mumbra doesn’t have good colleges, schools, and general education facilities. (Nafeesa, 40, Mumbra)

The interview with Nafeesa was an uncommonly emotional one. She narrated a life of suffering and struggle, the fruits of which she is now deservedly reaping. And this success, this rags-to-riches story, and her own political activism has all been in Mumbra. Mumbra has, in a way of speaking, been instrumental in both her suffering and her liberation. Even so, she suggests that I don’t move into Mumbra. Mumbra, she contends, does not have the facilities that one from Bombay is used to. Here, she identifies me as someone coming from Bombay and, therefore, as someone who can easily access resources.

Some interlocutors also made more direct and strong indictments against government apathy in Mumbra.

> The government is also responsible for why this became and remains a Muslim area … (Why?[56]) because there are no other options … (like?) like, here, the land is cheap. Also, it's a negative aspect of this area that much of the land is illegal. Many times, buildings collapse, peoples' valuable lives are lost. Schools and colleges are private. The Municipality does not have much of a presence here. Here, those people who send their children to school or college, they spend thousands of rupees. Their children get an education only then. If you consider it, you will find that the education system isn't all that good here. May be, because they have a good family background, some of these girls are well educated. But ask an average 9th or 10th grader to write something or fill up a form, they are not able to. So, the education system is not good. I don't trust it one bit. Having worked with children in the area, I have realized that they don't know so many things. (Yumna, 31, Mumbra)

Yumna responds to my question of whether she agrees with my characterization of Mumbra as a Muslim area. She believes that the administration is responsible in large part for why this is a "Muslim area." While land is cheap, she identifies three aspects in which the government has failed its citizens in Mumbra. The lack of regulation of building construction, leading to loss of lives and property; the lack of proper education facilities; and finally, the diminishing presence of the municipality.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence of place-based precarity in Mumbra comes from the perception of the interlocutors that they are discriminated against in the job market. In a family interview, I asked Fahima, Mehmal, and Aziz what they thought were the disadvantages of living in Mumbra.

> This is all a Muslim locality. So mostly people from here don't get jobs. As you know, in any field, Muslims are denied opportunities. So, they are forced to do

[56] in parenthesis, here, I have included my questions that were directed at Yumna.

> their own business or remain unemployed. Because of this, Mumbra has a bad name. But this is true of most places. Not only of Mumbra. If you go to Dongri, I used to live in Dongri, there too it's like this. Because of unemployed people, Dongri has a bad name. (Fahima, 40, Mumbra)

> If I study in a college from here, then the stamp of being from Mumbra is placed on us. We are then evaluated on the basis of that stamp rather than on the basis of our percentage. Neither do they consider percentages, nor do they consider ranking. There are two colleges that are recognized in Mumbra. One is Kalsekar College and Abdullah Patel College. If you can get a stamp from either of these colleges, then it works well. (Aziz, 21, Mumbra)

Fahima was born and brought up in Dongri, a Muslim area in South Mumbai. She and her family first moved to Mumbra in 1987. In 1990, the family moved back to Behrampada in Bandra. In 1992 January, the family moved back to Mumbra. Since 1992 she as been living in Mumbra. Now she lives with her two children and her older sister, Mehmal. She finished her schooling and wanted very much to do a graduation degree in commerce. However, she got admission only in the Arts faculty which she was not interested in. So she quit college. She regrets not having a college education and is very keen to see her son study higher and in a well-paying job. Therefore, the conversation regarding his education and his prospects was a long one, and she commiserated with her son regarding the discrimination he faced because of his address.

For Fahima, the fact that Mumbra is a Muslim locality is closely linked to its having many unemployed youth and, therefore, also a "bad name." However, she believes that this is not the case with Mumbra alone. According to her, this is also the case with Dongri, another Muslim area in Mumbai. To Fahima, the boundary between Muslim and non-Muslim is also a boundary of stigma and discrimination. Aziz, on the other hand, feels the discrimination based on locality in the job market more significantly. As a 21-year-old who has lived only in Mumbra, his struggles in finding employment

are rooted in the fact that he is from Mumbra. When we had this discussion, Rehana, who had accompanied me to their home, also chimed in with her experience.

> I had told you that I worked at a call centre about a year ago. Remember? I went there because mostly girls don't choose to take jobs in call centres. Because they have a bad reputation. So, when they realize that you are from Mumbra, they were fine with taking girls, but boys were directly rejected at the application stage. They take girls in because when talking to customers, customers become soft when they hear a girl's voice. So, they can handle the complaints better. So, they were not rejecting the girls. But before taking on the girls, they said, "You are from Mumbra. We have taken girls from Mumbra before. But they leave the job in between. They say they are getting married or that their families do not allow them to work. You won't leave the job like that, will you?" They offered me the job after giving me this talk. So, I replied that I had no such problems. When I left that job, I moved to Sutherland. And there too, I had the same experience. (Rehana, 22, Mumbra)

Rehana is pointing towards an interesting gender dynamic within the employment discrimination meted out to applicants from Mumbra. According to her, young men from Mumbra face discrimination, while young women do not.

Mumbra's reputation for having unemployed youth coincides with the connotation of criminality associated with Mumbra, the third aspect of place-based precarity experienced by Mumbra's residents.

> The place where I live, that is also a danger area [sic]. I mean, murders happen every two months there. That much danger! Also, the area has many scandals. And most of the people are high on charas. And those guys harass everybody. So, the area I live in (within Mumbra) is a very danger area. And those who are decent cannot maintain their decency there. We need to stay strong. There are times when I feel like it would be good to leave all this behind and move out of Mumbra. And then, I remember the times we have lived here. And how much we have benefitted from moving here. We have not got that anywhere else. This

> is what I have observed. That's why I don't want to leave Mumbra. (Nazeen, 19, Mumbra)

Nazeen speaks of her area in Mumbra as a "danger area." Murder, drug abuse, and sexual abuse all form part of the criminal repertoire. At the same time, she is quick to reassure me that despite these drawbacks, the benefits that have accompanied their move from Sion to Mumbra far outweighs the negative effects of living in a crime-ridden area.

Further in the interview, she also mentions how people in Thane and other places outside Mumbra refer to Mumbra as "*chota* Pakistan" in a derogatory way. This labelling of the space with reference to "an enemy state" was a recurrent theme in my interviews.

> They label the area as *chota* Pakistan. (they say) "you stay there?" In fact, it is accepted that I will visit them during Diwali and other such festivals. But they don't send anyone here. (Sanam, 23, Mumbra)

It is important to note here that this label is not unique to Mumbra. In the case of Delhi, Kirmani (2013), Jamil (2017), and Gayer (2012) have observed this labelling of Muslim segregated spaces in Delhi by both inhabitants and outsiders. Jaffrelot and Thomas (2012) note the same moniker applied to Juhapura, the Muslim ghetto in Ahmedabad. This terror connotation is furthered by stories of the origin of Mumbra as a post-riot safe haven for Muslims, again a recurrent theme in Indian scholarship. When I asked if Muslims found it difficult to secure housing elsewhere in Mumbai, Kaneez, while acknowledging that Mumbra was formed after the Bombay riots, identifies other areas like Meera Road that had also been formed in the wake of the riots. According to her, they are all Muslim ghettos that are marked by the Hindu–Muslim violence of 1992-93. This was a recurrent idea amongst interlocutors from Mumbra.

To sum up, the place-based precarity experienced by interlocutors in Mumbra invoke connotations of filth, diminishing government presence, lack of basic facilities,

discrimination in the job market, and crime and terror. Together, they constitute a victimized place-based precarity. Not only is this precarity constructed by the inhabitatnts of Mumbra, it is also perceived as being constructed by people who live outside Mumbra. While the citizen–denizen framework of viewing precarity within migrant studies does not entirely fit this situation, all the aspects of precarity discussed above do reflect an insider–outsider dynamic. More importantly, the role of the state in this experience of precarity demonstrates that the "outsider" in this case includes the state. Jamil (2017, p. 125–126) argues that Muslim neighbourhoods can be conceptualized "as subjects of a governmentality that solicits their participation only through communal polarization and who are treated normatively as non-citizens at the minimum." She contends that this is brought about by three processes: the direct threat of violence and segregation; intense governmental surveillance; and the state's biopolitics, where young Muslim men are accused of terrorism, subjected to arrest without due process, and, in some cases, extrajudicial killing as well. The segregated space, therefore, does not provide succour and instead further marginalizes the Muslim. This aspect of Mumbra provides for a victimized place-based precarity.

5.4.2 The empowering potential of precarity in Gautam Nagar

Boundaries that circumscribe spaces of disgust characterize the data from Gautam Nagar also. In this section, I describe four different kinds of place-based precarity experienced by my interlocutors in Gautam Nagar: spatial and communal labeling; making distinctions between *Bauddh* and *Kathewadi*; experiencing historical continuity of suffering; spatially reminiscing continuity of suffering and perceiving Gautam Nagar as a space of social and political mobilization. The precarity here, as we can see, differs widely from the one in Mumbra. I argue that these particular experiences of precarity provide for a place-based precarity that is empowering, as opposed to the victimized one we encountered in Mumbra.

Like Mumbra, interlocutors from Gautam Nagar also experience a boundary that circumscribe a space of disgust, through the politics of naming. Sandesh, gave me a short history into how Gautam Nagar got its name.

> It used to be called *Bhangivadi*[57] sometime in the 1950s. After that, the name changed to Gautam Nagar when I was a child. They changed the plaque to Gautam Nagar, and that changed the way we looked at ourselves. Some of the social workers and activists in our area felt that Bhangiwadi or Sahavad[58] were not appropriate names for the area, it doesn't look nice. Gautam Nagar was named after Gautam Buddh[59] … the area gained respectability. The change happened sometime in the 90s. (Sandesh, 35, Gautam Nagar)

Sandesh points to two different names and how they each influenced the reputation of the place. The first, Bhangivadi, brought with it disrepute. In a transformative move, changing the name to Gautam Nagar, after the Buddha, has contributed to increased respectability of the space.

The politics of naming and identity, specially an interrogation into the categories of Dalit, untouchable, Mahar, and *bauddh*, has been a recurrent theme in studies of Dalit politics in India (Beltz, 2005; Fuchs, 2004; Jondhale & Beltz, 2004; Paik, 2011; Rao, 2009; Shah, 2001). It was also a recurrent theme in my interviews. Let me illustrate with an example from two separate conversations with Harish and Saee. In the first conversation that included both Harish and Saee, I was getting confused with the category of Mahar, so I asked, "Whoever greets with *Jai Bhim*, are they all Mahar?" Harish emphatically nodded, "Yes." My next question was, "Have other Dalit castes not made the conversion at all?" Harish responded without batting an eyelid, "Of course, they have. If you have converted to Buddhism, then you will greet with *Jai Bhim*." Saee was quick to see that I was confused. She responded,

> But why is everyone considered to be from Mahar caste? (she asked rhetorically) Because the Mahars were the first to embrace Buddhism; so if you

[57] *Bhangi* is the name of an untouchable caste. It is also used as a slur. Bhangivadi translated to *Bhangi* hamlet.

[58] *Saha* is the Marathi word for six. The buildings in Gautam Nagar were planned in typical BMC housing fashion with a ground floor and six floors. According to Sandesh and Saee, this is why Gautam Nagar was called Sahavad earlier.

[59] *Buddh* refers to the Buddha

> also embrace Buddhism, people will think that you were a Mahar before and that's why you became Buddhist. (Saee, 33, Gautam Nagar)

Saee was essentially giving me a political lesson on naming, her limited point being that Mahars were mostly Buddhists but not all Buddhists were Mahars. And yet it was commonplace to assume that all Buddhists had been Mahars. In another conversation with the two of them, Saee told me, "We don't like it when people call us *Jai Bhimwale.*" When I probed further, she expanded:

> Well, for one, it is used derogatorily. But more importantly, "Jai Bhim" is how we greet each other. Like you say "namaste" when you come across someone you know or the Muslims say asalam alaikum. We say "Jai Bhim" when we meet someone we know. Imagine calling people, "namaste-wale" or "asallam allaikum wale". It's not done. (Saee, 33, Gautam Nagar)

I asked if she would rather that they be called Dalit. She shook her head emphatically, claiming that that was used derogatorily as well. I asked, "Isn't Dalit the name given by Ambedkar to signify the oppression that Dalit people were subjected to?" Harish answered me, "Yes. That's true. But now, it is a word that is used almost like a slur. We would like to be called *Baudh*."

Harish and Saee point to two important phenomena. The need to constantly change the name of the category that they belong to as older names that were meant to liberate take on stigmatized meanings. Paik (2011, p. 237) comments on this need as she observes how "identity is a contradictory and continuing problem that arises out of the constant dialectic between social structure and psychological reality." Further, the need to infuse these new labels with new socio-political meaning was always motivated by the struggle for respectability and dignity. Paik (2011, p. 238) also observes this phenomenon when she asserts that this naming is "born from a longing for social recognition." The Dalit–Buddhists use naming and renaming as a tool to define (redefine) their boundaries in conscious ways.

To the Dalit–Buddhist interlocutors whom I interviewed, it was important to remove the word *Bhangi* from the name of the area for two reasons: first, to give the area respectability amongst outsiders; second, to identify the area with the Buddhists rather than the *kathewadi* community. The *Kathewadi* community is the minority community in Gautam Nagar, accounting for around 10% of the population, according to my interlocutors. They also fall under the administrative category of Scheduled Castes. They speak Gujarati, and they have not converted to Buddhism.

Saee belaboured this point for me.

> When the name Gautam Nagar was created, then people realized that there were Buddhist people here. Before that, people thought that 99% of the people here were from the *Kathewadi* community… I have no qualms in saying that, now that you have seen us and our homes and our way of living, we keep our surroundings neat and clean and tidy. But they, even today, live in filth; here and there a pile of rubbish wrapped in pieces of cloth. So, our identity and the area's identity changed.… They are also getting educated but not as much as we do. And even if they are educated, their mentality hasn't changed. Their building was in the front, and people would pass by their building and think "Oh! How filthy!" They didn't know how it was inside. It's natural. If we pick up a book, we are likely to think that its contents must be good if it has a beautiful cover. But if the cover is bad, we are likely to think that the book is no good … this is based on my experience (Saee, 33, Gautam Nagar)

Saee distinguishes between the Buddhists and the *Kathewadi* community. While the Buddhists have taken pains to remove connotations of dirt and filth that are traditionally associated with people of the Scheduled Castes, the *Kathewadi* continue to live in filth, even though they have an education. Most studies of the caste system or Dalits refer to the purity–pollution idiom that forms the central religious idea around which caste is structured (Bayly, 2001; Beltz, 2005; Dirks, 2011; Guha, 2016). For instance, Beltz (2005, p. 27), in his introductory chapter, demonstrates how the *Gazetteer of The Bombay Presidency* in 1885 speaks of the Mahar in stereotypical ways: they had

"muscular physiques, were filthy and uneducated, and they ate carcass meat, drank alcohol, did not respect moral values and belonged to the lowest caste." However, the idea that this dichotomy is fundamental to upholding the caste system has been contested over the years (Bayly, 2001; Beltz, 2005; Dirks, 2011; Guha, 2016). Even so, the Dalit search for a new identity has involved categorically disconnecting themselves from the social notions of dirt and filth. Saee's metaphor of a book cover representing what is inside the book also harks back to the need to sell a different idea of how they live. While they may belong to similarly stigmatized castes, she perceives the Buddhists as being more educated and, therefore, empowered while those from the *Kathewadi* continue in their old, traditional ways. In a seemingly competing conceptualization Nalin tells me about the unity with which the *Bauddh* and the *Kathewadi* people function to procure their rights.

> There are two kinds of people in this area. One is the Buddhists, and the other is the *Kathewadi*. They both are similar to each other as they both belong to SC (Scheduled Castes) category. Buddhists are mostly passionate people. If they are told one thing, they will try their utmost to achieve that thing. Secondly, they are really attached to this locality/area, and they have given their blood and sweat to make this locality better … we became one community. We could only do this because all of us were together and of one mind. (Nalin, 42, Gautam Nagar)

I interrupted him here and asked if he meant only the *Bauddh* people or the *Kathewadi* as well. He said, "No no. It's just one community. Their community is different. But if there is an issue, the communities do come together to fix it." What is remarkable about what Nalin says is that he clearly distinguishes between the two communities while also acknowledging that they come together for the sake of the shared space they inhabit. However, he foregrounds his theme of unity amongst the two communities by marking *Bauddh* as an essential category of passionate, hardworking people. This is specifically remarkable when seen in the light of a further comment he makes later on in the interview.

> The way this community is viewed by outsiders is different and wrong. No community should be subjected to such a perspective. In earlier days, I think before 1956, the days before Baba Saheb converted us. At that time, our community was paid no attention. We had nothing. Even now, people are divided amongst different leaders. Even so, savarnas continue to look down on us. And stop the community from prospering. (Nalin, 42, Gautam Nagar)

He locates the liberation of the community not only to Ambedkar but to the foundational event when Ambedkar lead the mass conversion of Dalits in 1956. Clearly, the conversion has been very important to his liberation process and continues to influence their lives as they continue to face discrimination from the upper castes.

Another theme that Nalin's observation highlights is the shared sense of historical suffering. Harish was telling me about exceptional and successful *Bauddh* individuals when the conversation transformed into a history lesson on the Bhima Koregaon war.

> So, we were untouchables; so, we had to wear a black thread on our hands, a pot hanging from our necks … if we wanted to spit, we couldn't spit on the ground, we had to spit inside the pot only. Behind us, we had to tie a broom … as we walk along, behind us the broom will sweep away. When the British began to aggress, the Peshwa were ruling. Who are the Peshwa? Brahmins. The Mahars told the Peshwa, we will fight the British for you. In exchange, you have to remove the black thread, the pot around our neck, the broom around our waist … the Peshwa did not agree, instead asserting that the Mahars were low caste in status. The Peshwa were over confident since they had already defeated the British twice. They thought they could defeat them once again. Then, the British played a game of double-politics [sic]. They told our Mahar battalion: we will remove your black thread and other signs of discrimination/humiliation, but in exchange, you have to fight the Peshwa and defeat them. So, our people said, let us do it, doesn't matter who lets us live with dignity. See, as I speak, the hair on my hands is standing on end. We were only 500, and the Peshwa were 27000. (Harish, 43, Gautam Nagar)

The Bhima Koregaon battle forms a critical part of Dalit mobilization, one that has been incorporated into folk lore of the definitive defeat of an upper caste army (Peshwa) by a primarily Dalit (Mahar) army (Kumbhojkar, 2012; Teltumbde, 2018; Thakur & Moharana, 2018; Zelliot, 2011). In 1818, the British East India company fought a numerically stronger Peshwa army and won the battle. The battle was part of the third Anglo-Maratha wars and was critical in British expansion in western India. Since the British battalion was overwhelmingly Dalit (infact, Mahar) the battle is celebrated as a caste victory over the Brahmin Peshwa rule. Every year on January 1, Mahars and other Dalits congregate at Bhima Koregaon, on the outskirts of the city of Pune to commemorate this event. One can also trace this embeddedness of Mahar consciousness in history through Ambedkar's rallying cry.

> Untouchable was not allowed to use the public streets if a Hindu was coming along, lest he should pollute the Hindu by his shadow. The Untouchable was required to have a black thread either on his wrist or around his neck, as a sign or a mark to prevent the Hindus from getting themselves polluted by his touch by mistake. In Poona, the capital of the Peshwas, the Untouchable was required to carry, strung from his waist, a broom to sweep away from behind himself the dust he trod on, lest a Hindu walking on the same dust should be polluted. In Poona, the Untouchable was required to carry an earthen pot hung around his neck wherever he went – for holding his spit, lest his spit falling on the earth should pollute a Hindu who might unknowingly happen to tread on it. (Ambedkar, 2014, p. 214)

Like Ambedkar (it is almost as if he is citing Ambedkar here), Harish emphasizes a historical continuity in the Mahar search for a life with dignity. Observe how he speaks of the Mahars of yore as "we," sharing common cause across generations, space, and time. Harish follows Ambedkar in constructing this historical continuity. In Harish's mind, the struggle for a dignified life has been a historical one, and one that is very much in the hands of the subaltern. This is most reflected when he says, "Perhaps it is natural that the lower caste or community are the only ones who know their own history. Nobody else knows their history." Further, Harish identifies the military

strength and, in extension, the armed nature of the struggle for dignity. Strength and power are sourced from the David and Goliath connotations to the story of the 500 Mahars fighting the 27000 strong Peshwa army. He identifies the power within the Mahars themselves. There are two aspects, therefore, of this historical continuity that Gautam Nagar inhabitants identify themselves with: one is the precarity engendered by historical suffering and the other is the empowerment perceived through this historical continuity.

A historical continuity of a peoples does not, however, say anything about place-based precarity. It is in concert with collective shared experiences of suffering within Gautam Nagar that this historical suffering provides for a place-based precarity. Reminiscences of a suffering childhood were more attached to the area of Gautam Nagar. While speaking to Ganpat about his memories of violence, the conversation took a different turn where he described how much he and his family had suffered during his early childhood.

> Those days we didn't have food to eat. No money. My brother-in-law was supporting our family, but his income was not enough. He used to come home at 11:30 p.m. So, he used to go to a neighbouring restaurant, owned by some people we knew, and used to bring home left-over vadas. When I think about it, my eyes become moist. (Ganpat, 32, Gautam Nagar)

Saee joined the conversation.

> When I was small, in second standard, my mother used to take up domestic work. There was a temple where she worked. In that temple, they used to make offerings of rice and fruits. The maharaj (priest) would keep some of the rice and fruits for my mother to bring home and cook for us. We have seen such days as well, here in Gautam Nagar. Things changed once my father got a good job … when I think of those days, I feel very bad. This is why I am attached to this area. So, we won't leave this place. (Saee, 33, Gautam Nagar)

They were reminiscing about a shared past of suffering and struggle. While they locate this suffering within Gautam Nagar, they also associate the upward mobility of their community very strongly with Gautam Nagar. Their history as a peoples is inextricably linked with the history of the place.

Finally, interlocutors in Gautam Nagar viewed their space as a point of mobilization. One of the significant aspects of precarity, indeed one that distinguishes it from concepts such as risk and vulnerability, is that it not only signifies a condition of being but also a point of mobilization (Neilson & Rossiter, 2008; Schierup & Jørgensen, 2016). Millar (2017), for instance, in examining the utility of the concept of precarity in labour studies suggests that, “For some, precarity certainly describes an experience of loss. But for others, it might constitute a refusal of waged work, an alternative political subjectivity, or a mode of life that does not conform to liberal ideals.” (Millar, 2017, p. 7). Similarly, Waite (2009, p. 412), while exploring the role of the concept of precarity in human geography, suggests that it is “both a condition and a possible rallying point for resistance,” and an articulation of precarity is necessarily concerned with social justice and imagining a different way of life. Schierup et al. (2015) take this duality further to suggest that there indeed is a human-rights based global governance on migration that seeks to address the injustices of precarious lives. But more importantly, if such a regime does not alleviate the sufferings of the precariat, a countermovement that challenges global economic and political order cannot be overruled. If indeed, as these authors claim, precarity has the potential for mobilization and resistance, what does this say about place-based precarity in Gautam Nagar?

Interlocutors in Gautam Nagar strongly exhibit this potential for mobilization. First, they construct a story of origin of the space that is Gautam Nagar that creates a sense of shared group identity.

> First of all, this is the town of our ancestors, that is, the Mumbai Mahanagar Palika[60] settlement, and we, the sanitation workers, meaning, we keep Bombay

[60] The Hindi or Marathi equivalent of the BMC, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation

> clean. And we have been doing this through many generations. Now, we are in the 5th generation … the plus point here is that our parents thought us capable and gave us an education. We get jobs here (BMC) because this is our caste-based occupation. If a father retires, his son or daughter will be entitled to the same job. The work is the same, sanitation and cleanliness. This is the plus point from the perspective of the law and the stomach. Minus point is this that the previous generation did not know anything about education. They only knew about their work in the BMC and were just concerned with securing a job for their children in the BMC. They were only concerned with improving the financial condition of their families, not so much education. While the current generation has shown many changes in this aspect, we are still left behind in terms of education, like we have been for centuries. (Mukund, 50, Gautam Nagar)

Mukund makes an interesting point about Gautam Nagar and its people. BMC jobs were inherited and, along with the houses in the *Mahanagar Palika* settlement, changed hands from one generation to another. Initially, uneducated people took up these jobs as a continuation of their caste-based occupations. But even as subsequent generations have garnered an education, the housing and job security that is provided by the BMC ensure that they continue in the BMC. Anil's father, for example, was employed at the BMC. When his father died a year earlier, his older brother who had completed his tenth standard, had to give up his education to continue his father's job to retain the home. His brothers and sisters, however, were free to pursue graduate and postgraduate study. Anil himself is currently working towards a Bachelor's degree in commerce and wishes to pursue a career in computers after finishing his degree. But Mukund further points to the paradoxical nature of such a relationship to their home. An entitlement to a particular employment, one that is caste-based, also becomes a spoke in the wheel of progress for the community. While progress has been made across generations in education, not enough has been made to bring people at par with others outside the caste and community.

This paradox also finds an echo in the Buddhists' ownership status in the BMC. On the one hand, Gautam Nagar, set up as a colony for Class IV employees of the BMC, allowed for rural Dalits to urbanize over the last few decades. Employed in what were considered to be menial jobs associated with sanitation work, over generations, they have had access to education and upward mobility. The current generation of Gautam Nagar people are mostly well educated and take on skilled work outside the BMC. Concomitantly, the land value has risen. On the other hand, however, in order to keep their home and land with them, they are obliged to have one family member employed in the BMC. In fact, during my interviews, I chanced upon the information that the residents of Gautam Nagar fought and continue to fight a bitter and protracted battle with the BMC to gain complete ownership of their homes.

> In 2015, we took out a rally. Our demand was to get full ownership of our homes. People have been living here since 1927. And they had proof also[61]. When they can give legitimacy and ownership to slum clusters, then why not us? We work here, we serve the whole of Bombay. This was our demand, and there was even a government GR[62] issued regarding this. … It was not implemented. It was just on paper. We wanted to make some changes in the GR and force the government to implement it. (Madan, 43, Gautam Nagar)

When Madan speaks about proof, he is talking about the proof of residence that is required to get ownership from the government. When slum settlements that have been in existence for a shorter period than Gautam Nagar have been able to get ownership rights, he reasons, there can be no arguments against giving the people of Gautam Nagar their full ownership rights. Currently, heads of households in Gautam Nagar have been given ownership rights to the rooms they inhabit. The land, however, is still BMC land, and this means that the government has the legal right to evict the people. There are two aspects of precarity that this demonstrates. One is the precarious condition of having a secure home that does not belong to one, and therefore, there is

[61] He means documentation of proof of residence.

[62] GR is Government Resolution

a vulnerability to eviction. Second, Gautam Nagar has provided for a place-based political mobilization that serves the interests of its residents.

In sum, interlocutors of Gautam Nagar see their boundaries as the consequence of a combination of factors that include naming and labeling, associations with the *Kathewadi*, historical continuities of suffering, spatially delimited shared experiences of suffering and socio-political mobilization. In other words, inhabitants of Gautam Nagar experience a precarity that has the potential to empower rather than to victimize them. Both Mumbra and Gautam Nagar residents experience place-based discrimination but place becomes a relegation to the margins for one while it is a point of mobilization for the other.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I take my discussions on *māhaul* and ghetto *māhaul*, delineated in the previous chapters, as points of departure, to argue for the construction of precarious boundaries in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar. I achieve this by turning to Nippert-Eng's notion of boundary work that provides for an appropriate lens with which to examine my data. Further, I propose that, unlike inhabitants in Dadar Parsi Colony, who only view their space as attractive and desirable, inhabitants of Mumbra and Gautam Nagar experience boundaries that circumscribe spaces of disgust. These boundaries contribute to the experiences of place-based precarity. However, the data indicates that the experience of place-based precarity in the two places is subjectively different. While Mumbra engenders a victimized place-based precarity, Gautam Nagar provides a precarity that demonstrates its empowering potential.

At this juncture, it is useful to review my main arguments in Part II of this thesis. "Part II, Interrogating Space in Religion-marked Spaces," provides primacy to the voices (and words) of my interlocutors in three different religion-marked spaces in Mumbai in order to engage with the concept of the ghetto in academic literature. In juxtaposing these three religion-marked spaces, I argue that *māhaul*, conceived of as physical surroundings, spatial culture, and spatial habitus provides for a more nuanced

understanding of space in Mumbai. Using *māhaul* and interlocutors' understandings of their spaces, I argue for a ghetto *māhaul*, conceived of as the safe *māhaul*, the *pañcāyatī māhaul* and the religious *māhaul*, that together constitute the ghetto *māhaul*. The analytical utility of the ghetto *māhaul* lies in the fact that it does not follow the all-or-none principle by which a particular space is categorized either as a ghetto or not a ghetto. Instead, it allows for a diffused understanding of the ghetto that exists in various intensities across time and space. Spaces in Mumbai may be more ghetto or less ghetto at different points of time and in different spaces. In the final chapter, I argue for a differential place-based precarity experienced by the inhabitants of Mumbra and Gautam Nagar.

In the next section, I turn my attention towards the memories of violent events and how these are remembered in the three different spaces that are central to my study.

Part III: Memories of Violence in Religion-marked Spaces

6. Chapter 6: Memories of violence

Aspects and Narratives

6.1 Introduction

The structure of this thesis reflects the interview sequence. Part II provides for us the context in which these memories were collected as data. In the initial part of the interviews, I was interested in understanding how my interlocutors related to the space they resided in. By the time I arrived at the questions regarding memories of violent events, my interlocutors had already spent some time discussing Gautam Nagar, Dadar Parsi Colony, and Mumbra as spaces that housed a majority of people belonging to one community. The memories that were elicited, therefore, must be viewed in this context.

Part III of this thesis addresses the second line of inquiry that I delineated in the first chapter. How do people living in religion-marked spaces in Mumbai remember incidents of religious violence? What are the narratives that circulate about such incidents within the area? How do these narratives compare with those from other areas? Here, I consider the data from memories of violence and how best to analyse them to answer the question best.

In order to do this, I first engage in a discussion on the study of memories, focusing on what makes a memory individually specific and/or one born of collective consciousness. If a memory is born of a collective consciousness, which collective does it belong to? Then, I engage in an exercise exploring five aspects of the memories that have been collected about the two incidents of violence that took place in the '90s. The significance of this exercise is twofold. First, it brings to the fore differences in kinds of memories across the three spaces. There is a preponderance of one kind of memory in one of the chosen spaces while another kind of memory is predominant in another space. Further, the two incidents, the Bombay Riots of 1992–93 and the Ramabai Nagar massacre of 1997, are remembered differently across the three spaces. These two

observations indicate that the kinds of memories associated with each of the two events varies across space, pointing towards a critical intersection of space, religion, and memories of violence. In the final section, I argue for engaging in a narrative approach to memory. Using the interview data of Shalini, an interlocutor from Gautam Nagar, I demonstrate how analysing memories of violence in the context of the narratives in which they are embedded will allow us to construct a biography of space. I use Rosenthal's (1993) formulations of Thematic Field Analysis to do this. This forms a perfect segue in to Chapter 7, where I look at memory narratives in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar and then, finally Chapter 8, where I look at memory narratives in Dadar Parsi Colony

6.2 The study of memory

To illustrate the complexities involved in the study of memory, I quote from one of my interviews in Dadar Parsi Colony.

> I wish I had better memories of the riots because it is a subject I am very curious about, and I have read millions of books on, but you want to know my memories, and sadly, I don't have any at all, but I can tell you what I have read. (Naheed, 30, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Naheed is a 30-year-old journalist whose job, that of covering happenings in the city, makes her interested in the city of Mumbai. This also coincides with her personal interest in the city. Her walls were covered with old newsprints of the Mumbai edition of the newspaper she works for, and she also told me how she was collecting a lot of material about the riots. She was 6 or 7 years old during the riots and feels a certain frustration at not being able to recall anything about the riots in her personal capacity. However, she does provide me with a lot of memories she has received from her parents' and older sisters' experiences of the riots. She tells me about a friend, a Muslim boy, who she has been conversing with about exactly this issue and offers to send me her personal writings on it. She also, as this vignette indicates, provides me with information from books and articles she has read on the issue over the years. Whenever

she recalled something to tell me, she would preface it with, “I don’t know if this is a memory I have or I read about it or heard someone speak about it.” At one point I had to reassure her that I was interested in whatever memory she had, personal or otherwise.

What is remarkable about this quote from Naheed’s interview is her awareness that memory (and its recall) is complex. To ask someone if they remembered something that happened in the past or what they remembered of it is to set in motion three distinct but interconnected processes. First, the question triggers a memory, one that exists in the head of the person to whom the question has been posed. Second, it behoves the person to articulate this memory in a language that is understood by the one posing the question. Third, the person who receives the memory processes it and files it away in their head. These processes are further complicated by the context in which this conversation takes place (Prager, 2009). Who is the one asking the question? Who is the one answering the question? What preceded the question? Furthermore, Naheed’s expressed frustration indicates that remembering has an emotional dimension (see Rimé and Christophe, 1997); one can feel different things while remembering. One can also feel different things while listening to someone recall. The interconnected processes of recall, the context-driven aspect of memory, and the emotional undertones/overtones that accompany remembering, all point towards the sociality of remembering (Halbwachs, 1992; Misztal, 2003; Pennebaker and Banasik, 1997). An individual does not exist in isolation and, therefore, does not remember in isolation. At the same time, an individual is recalling a personal idea, belief, or experience.

Naheed’s, and indeed every other interlocutor’s, memories of the violent events must be analysed within this context, that a memory is both individual and collective. Halbwachs (1992) suggests that all memories are collective in the sense that they are socially and culturally mediated. According to him, individuals belong to different social groups, and each group mediates the way a certain memory is stored, recalled, and reconstructed. At the intersection of these different collective memories, our individual memories emerge. Misztal (2003) suggests that there are three collectivities that the individual’s memories are connected to: family, ethnic group, and the nation. Studies in development psychology dwell on the family unit as not only the site where

memories are bequeathed from one generation to another but also where children learn the culturally appropriate ways in which to remember as well as the language in which to remember them(Nelson, 2003). This has not only far-reaching influences on collective memories but also influences the growth of the self.

The question, of course, is if all the individual memories are part of collective memories, formed through social interactions amongst individuals, groups, and institutions, to which collectives do they belong. All the memories in my data, for instance, belong to the aggregate of Indians; Indians living in Mumbai, if we were to narrow it down. They also belong to a group constituting all those who live in Asian cities. More importantly, interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony belong to the collectivity of Parsis, those from Gautam Nagar to Dalit–Buddhists, and those from Mumbra to Muslims. At the same time, both the residents of Gautam Nagar and the residents of Dadar Parsi Colony belong to the aggregate of residents living in Dadar. And many of my interlocutors from Mumbra belong to the specific demographic that constitutes migrants from the state of Uttar Pradesh to Mumbai. Needless to say, we all form parts of different collectives. However, this thesis is concerned with the intersection of three threads, memories of violence, religion, and space.

With this focus, I make two observations about the data. First, I examine different aspects of the memories of violence to determine how space and religion are featured in these memories. Second, taking the spatially differentiated memory types as a point of departure, I argue that the most appropriate approach to analyse these memories is through a narrative inquiry.

6.3 Differential spatial memories

In this subsection, I explore five different aspects of the data on memories of violence. This analysis reflects the differential memories across the three spaces under scrutiny. This way, I seek to bring the focus back onto the spaces and religions, rather than individuals, as units of analysis. Further, this analysis of memories allows for a segue into the next section of this chapter that seeks to argue for a narrative analytical

approach to the memories of violence.

Psychologists broadly distinguish between three categories of memories: semantic, episodic, and procedural (Boyer, 2009, p.4–5). Semantic memory refers to memory of the past that allows us to understand the present. Episodic memories refer to specific memories around particular events or situations in the past. Procedural memories are those associated with the knowledge of skills and processes. In many ways, when I asked my interlocutors to tell me about their memories of the Bombay Riots and the Ramabai Nagar massacre, they were most likely to narrate episodic memories. Episodic memories are coded as the *what, where, and how* of an event. But recall of violent events can also include semantic memories, like memories on why things happened. In the following pages, I describe five aspects of the memories collected in my data. They are flashbulb memoroes, first-hand experiences of violence, lifestone memories, intergenerational memories, and absent memories.

6.3.1 Flashbulb memories

Flashbulb memory is a concept I take from social psychology. Brown and Kulik (1977, p. 73) first described this phenomenon: "Flashbulb memories are memories for the circumstances in which one first learned of a very surprising and consequential (or emotionally arousing) event." The classic example that is cited is the one where people remember what they were doing when they heard the news of Kennedy's assassination. A 13-year-old news at that time, this politically momentous event had affected a whole generation of Americans. People remembered where they were when they heard the news, what they were doing, what they felt when they heard the news, and how it affected them personally. Brown and Kulik (1977, p. 74) called it flashbulb memory because "it is very like a photograph that indiscriminately preserves the scene in which each of us found himself when the flashbulb was fired." This vivid imagery component of flashbulb memories makes it a type of autobiographical memory. It differs from episodic memory in the fact that it codes the personal circumstances in which an event occurred. According to Brown and Kulik (1977), two things determine the quality of a flashbulb memory. First, the element of surprise or unexpectedness of the event in

question. The higher the level of surprise, the greater the chances that it would lead to a formation of flashbulb memory. Second, the significance or consequentiality of an event to the individual. For instance, from Brown and Kuliks' own example, the assassination of Martin Luther King would have had differential consequentiality to white Americans and African Americans. The greater the measure of consequentiality, the more elaborate the flashbulb memory but also the greater the frequency of rehearsal of the whole or part of that memory.

To illustrate, I will shift to the Indian context with a memory of my own. I have a very clear memory of my own personal circumstances when the news of the demolition of the Babri Masjid was relayed to me. I was a child, at home in Chennai (then Madras). I woke up to the usual sight of my father in the living room reading the newspaper. I went into the kitchen to get my glass of milk from my mother. I then sat with my father, sipping my milk as he read the paper, but my mother warned me against disturbing my father. She said that a mosque had been demolished in Ayodhya and that had made him angry and upset. I kept away from my brooding father that morning. In retrospect, I know that I was nine and half years old, probably getting ready for a day in school (the demolition took place on a Sunday, but the news must have filtered in on Monday morning) and that it was a winter morning. Following Brown and Kulik's (1977, p. 80) report on their study, my memory includes the "place" (the kitchen in my home in Chennai) in which I learned of the demolition, the "ongoing event" (drinking milk in the company of my father) that was interrupted by the news, the "informant"(my mother) who brought in the news, "own affect" (the solemnity of the occasion engendered by my mother's words and my father's serious aspect), and some immediate "aftermath" (not engaging with my father that morning) for himself or herself on hearing the news. It was a surprising and unexpected event, at least to the child me; it was unexpected since I did not engage with politics at that time. At that time, it was very slightly consequential since it only meant a small rupture in my quotidian morning rituals. In retrospect, however, it was hugely consequential, since with this began my long-standing interest in the Bombay Riots, fuelled by a move to the city in 1994. This could explain frequent recall and rehearsal, a factor that only

increased after my PhD began. As an observer from distant Chennai, it is unlikely to have been more consequential for me than it was for the citizens of Mumbai/Bombay (as many of my interlocutors were) at that time.

A recurrent type of memory in my data was in the form of such flashbulb memories.

> I remember I was attending an elocution competition at Charni road. Yes, I remember I was with mom and a couple of other teachers representing the school, and then opposite Charni road station … we saw motorcycles and cars being burnt, being broken down, and I remember, by cab we came home, and then we were very safe. And then it was almost like a curfew like situation. (Beroz, 40, Dadar Parsi Colony)

This memory recalls what Beroz was doing when the riots broke out. Flashbulb memories may or may not have anything to do with the event that is being recalled. For example, Beroz remembers representing her school in some event in Charni road and being there with her mother. The event itself is inconsequential to the riots. And yet she recalls this personal memory as one that ties her to the riots.

Following Brown and Kulik's formulation, studies on flashbulb memories experienced a growth spurt within two distinct approaches, the cognitive approach and the societal approach (Wright and Gaskell, 1995). The cognitive approach addresses Brown and Kulik's inherent supposition that flashbulb memories are formed due to special cognitive mechanisms that are distinct from the mechanisms that produce other types of memories (Christianson, 1989; Conway et al., 1994; McCloskey et al., 1988). Some cognitive studies are concerned with the accuracy or perceived accuracy of flashbulb memories (Talarico and Rubin, 2003; Weaver, 1993).

The societal approach to the study of flashbulb memories, pursued by researchers in the discipline of sociology, anthropology, and social psychology, focuses on the sociality of such memories. Neisser (1982) claims that flashbulb memories form a part of autobiographical memory that allows us to place our personal lives within a wider public context. This sociality aspect of memory is reflected in one of the characteristics

of flashbulb memories identified by Brown and Kulik, that the clarity and vividness of the memory was correlated with the emotional connect associated with the event in question. Brief emotional experiences associated with specific political events are more likely to result in the formation of precise and vivid flashbulb memories among people whose identities are more likely to be associated with the event (Gaskell and Wright, 1997).

If one were to consider my interlocutors as residents of their unique spaces and as representatives of their communities, beyond being just residents of Mumbai, in both cases of the violent events under scrutiny, the interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony belong to a group that was relatively little affected. In the case of the massacre at Ramabai Nagar, they were several kilometres away from where the violence was located and did not see anything at the personal level. In the case of the Bombay Riots, they were not implicated in the violence that took place between Muslims and Hindus. Yet, flashbulb memories of the riots were most common amongst my interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony. At the same time, the flashbulb memories refer to a time when they were unsafe, when Beroz was headed home from elsewhere; so relative to other times during the riots, they are likely to have experienced the most emotions while on this journey to safety.

In contrast, in Gautam Nagar there was no flashbulb memories of the Ramabai Nagar massacre even though several interviews reflected high emotionality associated with the event. Often, Ramabai Nagar memories were confused with other instances of Dr. Ambedkar's statue being desecrated. In Mumbra, Flashbulb memories were only recorded in a few cases even as interlocutors provided details of first-hand experiences of the violence of the riots. Some interlocutors also provided anecdotes of friends and family suffering during the riots and reported feeling highly emotional. Even so, flashbulb memories were few and far between. flashbulb memories in Mumbra were associated with either the demolition of the Babri Masjid or the bomb blasts. Interestingly, Babri Masjid was never mentioned in Dadar Parsi Colony.

This differential recording of flashbulb memories point to three significant factors about the memory narratives from the three spaces. First, the demolition of the Babri Masjid was an important political moment and marked the origin of the violence that resulted in the Bombay Riots for my inhabitants of Mumbra. On the other hand, it seems to play no role for my inhabitants in Dadar Parsi Colony. At the same time, interlocutors in Mumbra were not able to tell me what they were doing when the riots did break out or when they heard the news of the riots. Finally, what does it mean that neither the Bombay Riots nor the Ramabai Nagar experience elicited flashbulb memories from inhabitants of Gautam Nagar? To answer this question, one must look at the kind of memories that were elicited there.

6.3.2 First-hand experiences of violence

There have been ethnographic works that have followed victims of violence and documented and analyzed their memory narratives. Important amongst these are the works of Robinson (2005) and Hansen (2001) in Mumbai. My own ethnographic work did not seek out victims of communal violence, either of the Bombay Riots or the massacre at Ramabai Nagar. However, there was a fair possibility of encountering such stories given the dominant narrative of how Mumbra came to be predominantly Muslim.

Kaneez was around 11 years old when the riots broke out. At that time, she lived in an area in South Central Mumbai, which was a hotbed of violence. It was also the area where the underworld don Dawood Ibrahim had a stronghold. He was the one allegedly responsible for the serial bomb blasts later. So, the area she grew up in witnessed the violence first-hand. She described the hardships faced both because of the area and the violence and the fact that they were poor, daily wage workers. I return to Kaneez's memories in "Chapter 7:Place-based precarity and memories of violence: Mumbra and Gautam Nagar". Suffice it to say, here, that although young at that time, she is able to recall experiences of violence rather vividly. Such first-hand experiences of violence were narrated only by my interlocutors from Mumbra.

Considering the younger age demographic amongst my interlocutors in Mumbra, however, such instances of memories of first-hand experiences of violence were few and far between. Only six interlocutors from Mumbra mentioned being in Bombay during the riots, and only four of these described instances of violence that they had experienced themselves. Yumna, for instance, who was around 6 years old around the time of the riots also gives a similar account of the violence in Nagpada.

Interlocutors in Dadar Parsi Colony, while witness to violence, did not actually experience violence during the riots. In the case of the massacre at Ramabai Nagar as well, most didn't even recall reading about it, let alone experience the violence that was localized to one part of Mumbai.

Are there such first-hand experiences of violence in Gautam Nagar?

> Nothing happened in our area. But around our area, a lot of rioting happened … I have seen with my own eyes. Here, opposite there was an Irani hotel. They completely destroyed it. There was another hotel on the main road. There too they destroyed everything. Two hotels were destroyed in front of my eyes. We were small children then. 14 years old or 13 years old. We had gone to play cricket. And in front of us, we saw a mob approaching towards us. That time we couldn't recognize them. They came, and the violence started, and we ran away. We saw that they were destroying everything in their wake. It was a very bad time. (Nalin, 40, Gautam Nagar)

Nalin reports witnessing violence first-hand during the riots. But Gautam Nagar was safe; it was only when they went outside that they could see the destruction of property and rioting. A few interlocutors in Gautam Nagar reported witnessing violence first-hand. They all were, however, safe within their colony, and while they reported witnessing violent events, they did not experience the violence of either the riots or the massacre at Ramabai Nagar. However, everyone knew of the Ramabai Nagar story. It is a story they had heard, one that they will not forget.

6.3.3 Lifestone memories

Lifestone memory narratives of violent events are those memory narratives where the violent event/s form part of a person's life story and significantly influence the direction their life story takes. A term coined by me, Lifestone memories are like milestones in a person's conceptualization of their own life. Consider the following excerpt for illustration. The first question I asked Madiha was, "When were you born?" and this was her response.

> I was born in Kurla, Mumbai on 23rd June 1992. That time there was a lot of rioting. So as soon as I was born, my father sent us to our maternal grandmother's home. Mummy came back only 4–5 months after that. At the same time, we had to sell our house in Kurla because the rioting had increased. (Madiha, 24, Mumbra)

Madiha connects the riots to her birth. It is unlikely she actually has any memories of this event (and neither does she make such a claim). But it is very much associated with her autobiographical self.

In another instance, very early on in the interview, I had asked Fahima when she moved to Mumbra, and this was her response.

> First, we came here (to Mumbra) in 1987. Then we shifted back to Bandra, then we came back in '89. Then again, we moved to Behrampada in 90. Then again in 1992, when the riots happened, just before the riots, we moved back to Mumbra. December '92 is when the riots happened right? I mean the Babri Masjid riots. We had come here in January '92, and I remember the riots happened in December. (Fahima, 45, Mumbra)

Both these recalls of the Bombay Riots are significant because they appear at a point during the interview when I had not yet asked about the riots or violence. Instead, both recall the riots as part of their life story. For Madiha, the riots mark a transition in residence, from living in Kurla and moving to Mumbra. For Fahima the riots mark the

time just before which she and her family moved to Mumbra. In both cases, the riots mark a transition in both space and time.

The occurrence of such transition events and their place in the narrative of a life story has been the focus of studies on narrative identity. McAdams and Bowman (2001), for instance, explore the way in which events are presented in a lifestory narrative. They suggest that there are two kinds of narrative sequences, redemptive and contaminating. Redemptive sequences demonstrate a transition from largely negative outcomes to more positive outcomes, while contaminating sequences move from more positive outcomes to negative outcomes. Recall Nafeesa's emotional interview from "Chapter 5: *Māhaul* boundaries, disgust, and precarity: Differential place-based precarity." Moving to Mumbra from Kurla obviously was wrought with struggle and suffering. She moved to very bad living conditions, which she now recalls. But the move eventually proves to be good for her as she finds herself an owner of two homes and with some political power as well. Nafeesa is Madiha's mother. For Nafeesa, the move is a redemptive one. For Madiha too, the move is redemptive in the sense that it served the purpose of finding safety.

Crossley (2001) examines the way people who live with an HIV positive diagnosis rebuild images of themselves and the world to cope with their trauma. In this rebuilding process, the sense of space or place becomes all the more important. Crossley (2001, Kindle Edition, loc. 6130) demonstrates that in the important transition phase in the aftermath of a diagnosis of HIV positive, when individuals are involved in creating "healthy" and "unhealthy" images of the self, the delineation of psychogeographical spaces that were "safe" and "unsafe," "open" and "prohibited," "included" and "excluded" was important. For both Madiha and Fahima, Mumbra represents a safe space as opposed to the volatile spaces they moved from—spaces that provided them with the emotional and psychological resources to cope with the trauma of the riots. Lifestone memories were predominantly observed amongst interlocutors of Mumbra and their specific relationship to the Bombay Riots. No Lifestone memories were recorded in Dadar Parsi Colony or Gautam Nagar regarding either the Bombay Riots or the Ramabai Nagar massacre.

6.3.4 Intergenerational memories

These are memories of interlocutors born after the riots or when they were too small at the time to have any memories. They base their information of the riots solely on what their parents and grandparents and others have told them or what they garner from the media and elsewhere.

> Yes! Mummy and daddy do talk about it, that there was a scene in Bhandup. Even my maternal grandfather used to talk about the riots. We would just listen to these stories. (Farida, 26, Mumbra)

Farida comes from a political family, and in her words, every member of the family was affiliated to different political parties and ideologies. She told me her home was very active and lively with political discussions every other day. Therefore, it isn't surprising that within this climate of discussion the riots also became a topic of discussion.

> Sometimes, Mummy would tell us that they were shut in the house and were not able to leave the home. The sound of gunshots was heard outside. In Vikhroli. But I never paid that much attention. I am not that interested in history and geography**.** (Mumtaz, 22, Mumbra)

According to Assmann and Czaplicka (1995), historical knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another through life stories. In a study, participants from two groups, one whose parents grew up in the context of a violent political upheaval and the other whose parents grew up in a non-conflict context, were asked to recall 10 significant events in their parents' lives and to estimate the date when these events took place (Svob and Brown, 2012). One of their findings showed that 25% of the recall of the conflict group was related to the conflict, demonstrating that conflict and conflict-related memories were important for major life transitions and were remembered by the next generation. Farida and Mumtaz, whose words were shared earlier, exhibit the range in significance of such intergenerational memories in their lives. While Farida's natural inclination towards politics makes her interested in listening and coding these

memories a certain way, Mumtaz is only reminded of them because of my question. She categorically says that such memories don't interest her.

In my data, however, there were also instances where intergenerational transmission of memories happened between individuals who were not related. For instance, Sanam reported that she learnt a lot about the riots through the stories Farida's mother told her when Sanam visited her. Sanam and Farida are good friends. But Sanam encounters a lot of opposition to their friendship from her family. Sanam's family are Sunnis and do not like her visiting with or eating at Farida's home. Farida is Shia. But Sanam told me that she did not believe in making such differences; she continues to visit Farida and to learn a lot from Farida's mother. So, to Sanam, a lot of the memories about the riots were formed because of her interactions with Farida's mother. This is spatially remarkable because it indicates that people within a certain space are likely to exchange memories about events and, therefore, generate spatially determined stories.

> My sisters have a better recollection of the riot, one of them was in the college, and she came back, and she found Dadar station full of dead bodies and lots of blood. She was quite terrified and she came running home and woke up my mum and my mum had no idea that riots had broken out and that is when everyone started racing around. (Naheed, 30, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Obviously, intergenerational transmissions were restricted to those in their early to mid-'20s across the three spaces. Interlocutors from Gautam Nagar expressed the least intergenerational memories regarding both events. However, amongst the younger generations in Mumbra and Dadar Parsi Colony, the number of inter-generational memories associated with the Bombay Riots were high. In contrast, there was no intergenerational recall of the massacre at Ramabai Nagar in either space.

6.3.5 Absent memories

> No, I have not. Honestly, I'm quite away from it; I don't read the newspaper or watch the news. That's quite bad, but now I just don't do it. Focus on what I do. That's all. (Yazdi, 22, Dadar Parsi Colony)

This was Yazdi's response when I asked him if he remembered the killings at Ramabai Nagar in 1997. Yazdi was a toddler during the event. And does not recall what happened. More importantly, he justifies to me his lack of awareness, crediting it to the fact that he is not interested and consciously avoids such news. He perceives news of these as distractions. There were many young interlocutors who were either too young or were not yet born when the Bombay Riots and the Ramabai Nagar Massacre happened.

But there is also another kind of absent memory. I had asked my interlocutors in Mumbra if they remembered the massacre that happened in Ramabai Nagar in 1997. They didn't and looked perplexed. So, I described the incident to them. To which they responded, "Yes, it might have happened." None of my interlocutors from Mumbra remembered reading or hearing about this incident. However, they said they could believe it.

All the interlocutors from Mumbra and most from Dadar Parsi Colony were unable to recall the Ramabai Nagar massacre. The localized nature of the massacre might be one reason why people from the rest of the city do not remember this event. It is also possible that when the event happened, people read or heard about it in the news and subsequently forgot about it. It is difficult to say whether absent memories are forgotten memories or memories that just did not form in the first place. There was only one interlocutor who said he did not recall the Bombay Riots at all. Ardeshir from Dadar Parsi Colony was an officer working in the Merchant Navy and was on ship when the riots broke out. He did not experience the riots first hand. He also did not wish to speak about anything he might have heard.

There are three explanations for absent memories. First, that there really are no such memories that were formed in the first place for them to recall. For instance, Yazdi's insistence that he avoids such subjects and the fact that he was just born in 1997 and was in the Colony, quite distant from the events at Ramabai Nagar makes it very likely that he was hearing about the massacre for the very first time from me. A second possibility, as might have been the case of many in Mumbra, is that they probably did

read about it at that time but had forgotten it. Most probably, forgetting in Mumbra happened because again the violence was localized and far away from where they were and did not directly affect them. However, what is interesting is that many acknowledged that it sounded like a credible story. I hadn't expressly asked them to validate my narrative. But the idea of police opening fire and killing 10 people in Ramabai Nagar did not come as a shock or surprise to them. A third possibility lies in a theory of social forgetting or absent memories put forward by Van Vree (2013). Van Vree reviews the existing literature on social forgetting and identifies two strands of explanations; the paradigm of the hegemonic memory and the paradigm of traumatic memory. Van Vree looks at the years immediately succeeding the end of the Second World War and observes that there were very few memorials for Jewish lives lost in the holocaust. He proposes that existing theories of social forgetting do not provide sufficient explanation for why something is forgotten and remembered at a later stage. Following Goffman, he calls this framing. Frames are basic cognitive structures, guiding our perceptions and representations of reality.(Van Vree, 2013, p. 7–8) Van Vree argues that social forgetting or absent memories may be caused by the lack of appropriate frames or frames that include and exclude certain memories. This could, for instance, explain why interlocutors from Mumbra did not remember the Ramabai Nagar massacre. Their frames of reference simply excluded the event from memory.

The following figure gives an illustration of the five different memories observed in the data. Absent memories are provided in a different coloured box to demonstrate how they are not a category that exists in the data but one that I have created to account for different kinds of non-memories and forgetting.

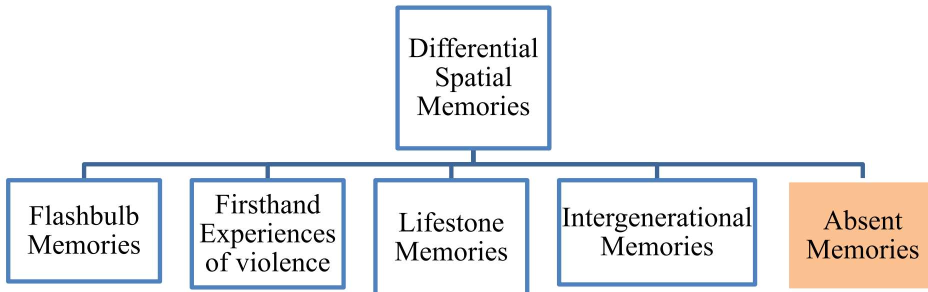


Figure 25: Summary of differential spatial memories across the three spaces

6.4 A narrative approach to memories

In this section, I argue that a narrative approach to the memories of violence is best suited to analyse the data. The differential spatial memories described in the previous section illustrate the diversity across the three spaces. This diversity indicates three aspects of the space. First, this diversity itself tells us about how differentially the respondents from the three spaces were affected by the violent events. The occurrence of Lifestone memories in only Mumbra and only in the case of the Bombay Riots, for instance, tells us something about the riots, the respondents, and their lives that is specific to Mumbra. The fact that there are no Lifestone memories from Dadar Parsi Colony or Gautam Nagar regarding either of the two incidents of violence also tells us something about the residents of these spaces and their relationship with each of the violent events and the city. Second, along with the nature of memories, even the quantity of memories differs across spaces and across the two incidents under study. A third aspect is the nested nature of these memories in different narratives. For example, memories of the Ramabai Nagar massacre in Gautam Nagar were most often nested in

narratives of "Ambedkar statue desecration" that included links to other such instances. These aspects indicate that interlocutors, while relaying autobiographical memories, are also relaying biographies of space; something I call an auto-spatial biography. Let us consider the third aspect in some detail.

> In 1992, I just got married. So, I had just shifted to Byculla. My place in Byculla was on the main road. It was a Parsi building; people were Parsi around. It was the main road. And I can still visualize shops burning. I saw one man kill another man—gunshot. And when we were standing on the balcony, they showed us the gun, and they told us to go inside. And the place where I was staying in Byculla was … that side was Maharashtrian and this side was Muslim. So, there was lot of things I could see. (Dana, 42, Dadar Parsi Colony)

I asked Dana if she remembered the Bombay Riots. She had said, "Of course I do, the ones in 1992 right?" I then asked her specifically, "Can you tell me what you were doing when the news broke out?" The preceding quote is her response to this question. Most significantly, Dana does not answer my specific question. There is no talk of when the news of the riots broke out or what she was doing at that specific time. Dana, instead tells me a story. A story, that to her, was possibly more interesting and more relevant to the interview than where she was when the news of the riots broke out. The story begins with situating herself and the circumstances that led her to witness certain things. Situating herself both within her own life story ("I just got married.") as well as physically situating herself in Byculla, at that time, placing her at a unique vantage point to witness certain happenings during the riots. She then goes on to tell me the particulars of what she saw and what happened. Much of the data concerning the riots and violence were similar to this vignette. Interlocutors would embark on narratives and stories, always placing themselves within the narratives, telling me their life story while at the same time telling me the story of the riots in Mumbai.

Inquiries into narratives have largely focussed on the significance of narratives in identity construction. We all live storied lives; meaning, we assimilate experiences into a life story that defines us (Brannen, 2013; Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Eastmond,

2007; McAdams, 1993). Further, research suggests that in the construction of the life story, one finds the intersection of self and memory (Fivush and Haden, 2003). This is often called autobiographical memory. According to Rubin (1999, pp. 1–15), there are five main components of an autobiographical memory. Autobiographical memories are verbal narratives, like the story that Dana tells us. They always contain some kind of imagery. Dana says, "I can still visualize shops burning," clearly referring to an image that is in her mind. Autobiographical memories contain emotions. This emotional component determines what is retrieved from memory and how it is retrieved. For example, the fact that Dana does not answer my question about where she was and what she was doing when the news of the riots broke out demonstrates that either she doesn't recall the specifics or that she doesn't think it important enough. Obviously, for her the emotional content of seeing people being shot dead had more significance than what she was doing at the time the news broke out. A fourth component that Rubin describes is that autobiographical memories are constructed. This means that they are not encoded or retrieved as wholes; instead, they are constructed at each retrieval by employing narrative, imagery, and emotions. In Dana's case, the two of us had already been talking about her life and the Colony. She had already told me that she had moved out of the Colony briefly after her marriage when she lived with her in-laws in Byculla. I already knew how she felt about Byculla and how she felt about Dadar Parsi Colony. She much preferred living in the Colony since she grew up there, while she lived in Byculla only for a short period of time, and she did not have good associations with the place. She lived in a gated Parsi *baug* in Byculla. She constructs this story of herself in the riots within this context. Finally, in a fifth component, Rubin examines the role of accuracy in autobiographical memory. Autobiographical memory, while vivid, is not necessarily accurate. However, people who have these memories believe in their accuracy, making this an interesting object of study for researchers.

The role of language, culture, and social interaction, therefore, become paramount in the construction of an autobiographical memory and narratives of the self. But as Dana's response shows, through her narrative, not only is she constructing/assimilating a narrative identity, she is also making definitive claims about the riots, the Parsis, and more generally, Mumbai, and its history. We know from her story that Byculla saw

violence during the riots, the violence was between "Maharashtrians and Muslims," and since she lived in a Parsi *baug* in Byculla, the Parsis were construed as bystanders to what was essentially a conflict between two communities that didn't include the Parsis.

It is in this set of contextual constraints that this narrative makes sense. This contextual stage is set not only by the interlocutor's own life story but also the research process and the relationship with the researcher. Chase (2005, p. 656–657) argues that there are five analytical lenses that contemporary scholars use in narrative inquiry. First, they treat narratives as a type of discourse, that is necessarily deployed to make meaning of past experiences in a certain scheme that makes sense to the narrator. Second, narratives are a form of verbal action. Narrators explain, describe, defend, challenge, entertain, or inform us about something. Third, narratives are produced within the context of a combination of enabling factors and constraining factors that are a result of one's resources and circumstances. Fourth, narratives are socially situated interactive performances that are a result of a particular setting, for a particular purpose, and for a particular audience. Before delving into the fifth analytical lense, let me illustrate these four analytical lenses by considering the interview process itself. My questions about memories of violent events were preceded in all cases by long, intense, and, in some cases, emotional discussions at the place of residence. My research methodology had primed my interlocutors on two counts; first, that I was interested in Dadar Parsi Colony, Gautam Nagar, and Mumbra as Parsi, Dalit–Buddhist, and Muslim spaces, respectively, and second, that I was interested in communal violence or inter-religious violence. So, their responses and recall, consciously or unconsciously, followed the interview purpose. Take another instance from my interview with Naheed. This comes early in the conversation, and she is at pains to impress upon me how much she loves this city. I had asked her if she liked Dadar Parsi Colony.

> I mean I don't think of it as Dadar Parsi Colony. I mean I'm a Bombay girl; I love the city… so, I know it far better than most other people do. I know its history; I know its heritage. I know its background, I know its politics, I know everything that there is to know about it. In every slum, I have a contact; in

> every place of worship I know the Maulana or the Pandit.… I think of myself as a Dadar Parsi Colony resident; it is a very small part of my life. This whole city is my life—no other place I would consider home. (Naheed, 30, Dadar Parsi Colony)

Naheed also shows me her bookshelf, which mostly contains books on Mumbai. In this context, one can understand her complete frustration with the inability to recall what happened during the riots. In articulating this frustration, she is not only expressing regret at not knowing about the riots but also acknowledges the significance of the riots to the city of Bombay.

A narrative approach to the analysis of data is, therefore, useful in important ways. First, it allows us to locate the memories in personal stories. For instance, Lifestone memories do not appear in the section where I specifically ask about memories but appear much earlier when interlocutors are engaging with their life story. Second, it allows us to locate space within memories of violence. In other words, a narrative approach allows us to examine the interaction of religion, space, and memories of violence in the data in meaningful ways.

Chase argues that a fifth analytical lens pertains to narrative researchers seeing themselves as narrators since they make narrative choices in interpreting data and ways of presenting their findings. This thesis for instance has already spent three analytical chapters looking at the ways in which interlocutors of the three spaces related with their space of residence. Space, ghetto, precarity, and religious segregation are already themes that I touched upon in the first five chapters. The narrative therefore is determined by these preoccupations. Consequently, I am also directed to look at the data on memories of violence in this context.

With the narrative approach to the memories of violence and with space as a central theme, I explain how the narratives are auto-spatial biographies. In order to do this, I follow Rosenthal's (1993, Kindle Edition, loc. 1145) formulation of Thematic Field Analysis which, "involves reconstructing the subjects' system of knowledge, their interpretations of their lives, and their classification of experiences into thematic

fields." Unlike the narratives that have emerged in my research due to the interview process, Rosenthal focuses on life story narratives that are more freewheeling and less directed by the researcher. The thematic field of a narrative is defined as the aggregate of life events and situations presented within a contextual thematic frame. Here the theme is central, and all the narrated events revolve around this central theme. Rosenthal contends that there is reciprocal relationship between the narrator's overall biological construct and the different biologically relevant experiences that are woven together within that construct. This is what guides the narrator in generating selective principles in telling a story. Memory that is recalled in this way, therefore, not only tells us about the selection of the memories but also how these experiences are perceived in a particular moment and a particular context. Rosenthal borrows from Glaser and Strauss (1966, p. 45–78 in Rosenthal, 1993, Kindle Edition, loc. 1255–1271) the steps of analysis:

1. Analysis of the biographical data: Biographical data are objective information that can stand independent of the narrator's interpretation.
2. Thematic field analysis (reconstruction of the life story) examines the order in which the information is presented during the interview.
3. Reconstruction of the life history involves reconstructing the perspective of the past or what meaning a particular event had in the biography.
4. Microanalysis of individual text segments explores segments of the interview and provides a detailed analysis of each within the context of the life story and the life history.
5. A contrastive comparison of life history and life story.

I use some elements of Rosenthal's process in my narrative elements. First, I provide an interview context, including in it details about the interviewee's personality and how they came to be in my project. Next, I provide a biographical sketch. Biographical information like age, family, are included here as well as, with specific relevance to this thesis, their spatial trajectory across the life span. Here, I also engage with their current preoccupations. Briefly I analyse this biographical sketch for the intersection of space, religion, and memories of violence, making hypothetical assumptions about

the interviewee and the space. In this analysis, I obscure some biographical information to protect the confidentiality of the interlocutor, but I try and add as much detail as possible to illustrate the approach. After the biographical sketch and analysis, I delve into the thematic field analysis. Taking the whole text of the interview as my data unit, I consider the different turns that the narrative takes as points of thematic shifts. Some of these turns are initiated by my questions, some by the interlocutors own need to explain, and some by conversations with others in the room during the interview. This Thematic Field Analysis includes the life history element as well. Analysis and meanings of life events and their significance is revealed as I unfurl the interview for the reader. At the end of this Thematic Field Analysis, I examine the ways in which space, that is, the interlocutor's place of residence, is featured in the narrative. Finally, I look at the individual text segments that are directly connected to my questions on the memories of violence. In this final analysis, I look at the ways in which the memories of violent events sit within the context of the narrative that preceded it. I illustrate this process with an example of an interview from Gautam Nagar.

6.4.1 The interview context

Harish and Saee had spoken to Shalini to participate in my research. She had agreed and I waited in their home for her so I could begin the interview. Harish and Saee had told me that Shalini was a political leader and had experiences in politics that they were sure I would be interested in talking to her about. But they both agreed that they would like her to talk about it. Specifically, they alluded to a certain disappointment that she had faced recently. Shalini came on time and was loquacious. She was used to speaking about herself, her life, and the Dalit–Buddhist community. The interview took 1 hour and 13 minutes. I asked questions in Hindi, and she responded in Hindi for the most part. There were times, however, when she slipped into Marathi. Obviously, she had a lot to say about Gautam Nagar, religion (Buddhism), and the incidents of violence under scrutiny.

6.4.2 Biographical sketch and analysis

Shalini was born in the 70s in south central Mumbai. At the time of her birth, her parents lived in one of Mumbai's infamous red-light districts, where she was also brought up for the first decade of her life. For the purposes of this thesis, I will call this space South Central Mumbai. She has three brothers. In her early teens her father passed away unexpectedly. She and her family moved to a space in Thane Municipal Corporation that was part of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. To put this in spatial perspective, she and her family moved from a prime location in the center of the city to a space considered to be beyond Mumbai city limits. For the purposes of this thesis, I will refer to this second place of residence as TMC. In the mid-'90s she got married and moved with her husband's family to Gautam Nagar. Today, she lives with her husband, two children, a brother-in-law, and his wife. Both her children are pursuing higher education and aspire to join the administrative services. Shalini entered politics around 2007 and has been involved in active politics ever since. But her political career received an unexpected blow earlier that year, and she speaks of it at great length.

In terms of space, Shalini has lived in three different areas in Mumbai and is in a position to compare these three spaces. The last twenty odd years, however, she has lived in Gautam Nagar and calls it home. In terms of religion, she identifies as Dalit–Buddhist. Her political identity indicates that she is deeply invested in F Ward and in Gautam Nagar. In terms of the violent events under scrutiny, she would have been a young adult during the riots and is likely to have some memories of them. She was in the area in TMC during that time, however, and was not affected by the riots since it was a peripheral space in 1992–93. South Central Mumbai, on the other hand, was at the centre of much of the violence, but she had moved out of there by the time of the riots. As a Dalit–Buddhist, she is likely to know about the massacre at Ramabai Nagar and as a politically conscious individual is likely to have a perspective, if not a memory, of it.

6.4.3 Thematic field analysis

Shalini's chatty interview can prove to be unwieldy if one doesn't break it up into smaller bits. In this thematic field analysis, I have presented the narrative as it happened where every thematic shift (occasioned either by my questioning, her own thought processes, or conversations with Harish and Saee) is marked by a new sub-section. In the beginning, after introducing my project, I would usually start with the life story prompt.

The life story prompt

In her response to my standard opening question vis-à-vis, "When were you born? Where were you born? When did you come here? What's your personal story?", she provides me first with the facts and then says,

> If I were to tell you about myself, I am proud of the fact that my father was not born a Buddhist. He was from Karnataka. One day, during his college years in Belgaum, he heard a speech by Bhayasaheb Ambedkar, son of Babasaheb. He was greatly influenced by this speech. And almost immediately he converted to Buddhism. He was from a Kshatriya Maratha caste and he converted.

This significant snippet tells us about how she views her own personal story as emerging from her father's conversion to Buddhism. Her father is the protagonist of this story at this juncture. His conversion is not from the traditional Mahar caste but from a caste that is higher in status, and it was therefore, considered an unusual one for someone from his social background. She sets up this story to tell us further in the interview about how her father encountered opposition from his caste community because of his conversion and ended up being ostracized by the community. Her mother also was from a Kshatriya Maratha Caste. Both her parents faced censure from both communities because the conversion to Buddhism indicated a movement towards a lower caste.

She then describes how her father was highly educated, a pioneer in his village. Due to his education status, he was accorded a great deal of respect in the village, and people

listened to him. According to Shalini, her father was instrumental in converting a whole village to Navayana Buddhism.

The scene changes, at this juncture; her parents moved from the village in a neighbouring state to Mumbai where her father joined the state government institution in 1969. He began at a lower level but was swiftly promoted to the position of clerk. He was engaged in social service related to Buddhism, and he was slowly also recruited into politics.

Father, Buddhism, and radical politics

At this point, I interrupt to ask her to elaborate on the social service that her father did with respect to Buddhism. What did she mean? He believed that Buddhism did not allow for superstitious practices and was based on atheistic, rational views. He promoted the religion amongst the community in South Central Mumbai. Since the area housed a lot of sex workers, and they traditionally believed in goddesses and superstitions, he dissuaded them from doing so and introduced them to Buddhism. He was so influential that to him goes the credit of establishing a Budhvihar in that area. This was sometime during 1969–70. Shalini is building a narrative of a time when she wasn't born, and so her narrative is informed by what she has heard.

Now, the narrative moves to her father's politics. According to Shalini, her father was one of the founder members of a radical Dalit political outfit.

> So, it was in our house that the (name of radical Dalit outfit) was born. The main leaders … all these people would visit our house regularly. It is for this reason I think that politics is inherent in me. Just seeing all this regularly … all these political leaders would come home and talk politics, political change and so on. My father balanced a life of government service, politics, the home and so on. But he was invested in both Buddhism and politics. These are two different things, you know. Dhamma and politics cannot be mixed. But my father was blessed with so much intelligence that he was able to balance both the ways of Dhamma and politics.

Here, the long investment made in her father's story has found root in her own personal story. She directly associates her own politics to her father's politics. Shalini obviously looks up to him both as a religious man as well as a political leader. Her narrative, at this point, takes a detour as she explains to me the purpose of the political organization that her father was associated with. In this macro analytic mode, she explains how the Dalit people were experiencing exploitation. After the death of Ambedkar, there was a gap in leadership and, while many spouted Ambedkar, there were few who really followed his teachings. The organization emerged in this context and promised to deliver justice in all cases of injustice. They were highly influential during this time, and even the police were afraid of them. Her father was one of the founding leaders but did not like to be known as such. But in the end, this organization also fizzled out.

The political underpinnings of the radical political organization are important to Shalini's story because she is establishing her parent's legacy in this part of the narrative and his commitment towards both the religion as well as fighting the injustices inherent in the caste system. Her tone is reverential when she speaks about him, and it appears that she wants not only to align her father with the organization but also herself with Ambedkar and the politics of the organization.

She continues the narrative from after her father's death. Her older brother felt that the red-light area where they lived was not a respectable place to have a family and so the family moved to TMC where she lived until she got married. Here she provides an opinion on this move. She suggests that this may not have been necessary since she felt quite safe in south central Mumbai. She says that there were many instances of Hindu–Muslim violence at that time. She had herself witnessed an incident of violence that was triggered by something to do with a 50 paise coin.

> I was little then. People took out swords and other arms against each other and physically fought. I have seen that also … I think this was during 1982–83, I don't know what caused it but … all over a coin of 8 annas (50 paise). Those days we used to get milk for 8 annas. So, someone didn't have the change. And

> that became the cause of the fight … they made a mountain out of a molehill. And then there was that other famous fight. That time curfew was imposed.

She is still telling me about events that happened in the place she grew up. She tells me about the Hindu–Muslim violence while arguing that this space was, in fact, safe for her and her brother need not have insisted on shifting to TMC. She continues that even though such violent outbursts between Hindus and Muslims happened often, she and her community remained untouched. This, she thinks is because they were spread over the area, rather than being concentrated in one place. I pause here and ask if she ever felt that she would be mistaken for a Hindu or Muslim, and if so was there any associated fear. She tells me how her father intervened in one case of Hindu–Muslim violence. She denies feeling such a fear and narrates the following incident:

> Once four people had come to our home. My father hid them in our house. They were probably Muslim. Two women and two little children. So for the ladies, we had applied vermillion and we had hid them. Why? Because if you are Muslim, the Hindus would possibly attack you. So, we intentionally had to lie a little bit and save them.

In this narrative, she is accruing to her father the role of savior. She also tells us how much religious performance matters in identification and violence. By making the Muslims apply some vermillion, he was sure that he would be able to pass them off as Hindus were the Hindus to attack. This narrative shifts to how the Dalit community was not involved in these Hindu–Muslim conflicts. However, she also concedes that the affirmative action promised by the Government of India in terms of reservation of seats in educational and other government institutions for the Dalits has definitely riled up political hatred among the Marathas and the Brahmins (the upper castes). And here she transitions to talking about Babasaheb Ambedkar's leadership. She ends with how adopting his leadership would help in mitigating all kinds of social wrongs.

Turning to Space

At this point, I shift the focus to space and ask if South Central Mumbai, she lived in a segregated community like Gautam Nagar. And what about the space in TMC? Both

these areas are what she calls "mixed" neighbourhoods, very unlike Gautam Nagar. While South Central Mumbai, which she grew up in, housed sex workers, TMC housed residents who were white collar people, officers, and people who earned well.

Other than Muslims, other communities, people from different regions in India lived together in TMC. She called it a "mini India." Her brother, who also took after her father in his politics, also promoted Navayana Buddhism and was engaged in political organization in TMC.

Now Shalini shifts back to her individual story and the present. In the mid-'90s she had an arranged marriage to her husband who lived in Gautam Nagar at that time. After marriage, she shifted to Gautam Nagar and has been living here ever since. She describes Gautam Nagar as being very different from her maternal home in TMC, which had been a more middle-class community. Because she was from a different state, everybody in Gautam Nagar thought she was from a different caste. It took some time to be accepted by the community here. When she first moved here, she claims that about 95% of the men in Gautam Nagar used to be alcoholics. Morning, noon, and night, the men drank and would fight over small things. People's customs, way of life, and clothes, all differed from TMC. Gautam Nagar had no culture, and people were sober only on April 14th, the birth anniversary of Ambedkar.

> It was in this context that the politician or the social worker in me emerged. And so, it was in 2007 that I was sitting in a meeting, and I was pulled into politics.

So here, Shalini introduces me to her active politics. The politics of the organization her father founded, her father's political legacy, and her brother's political legacy all lead to this moment of her own entry into politics. The story appears well structured like it has been rehearsed a few times. In fact, at this juncture, I ask about her recent political experience, and she interrupts me with, "Wait I will tell you all about it but later." I had interrupted an oft repeated story, and it didn't suit her chronology to talk about her recent political experience yet.

After this detour, she goes back to comparing the three spaces. She asks to speak in Marathi now. In South Central Mumbai, because of its association with the sex trade, she believes that there was no future. It was a strange world where "day was night and night day," referring to the working hours of the sex workers. So even if one was from a family not associated with the sex trade, one was associated with them. She herself claims to be unaffected by the sex trade. TMC was, in contrast, a white-collar neighbourhood. One lives within one's means. But people were individualistic, more concerned about their lives than society or community.

Gautam Nagar and Shalini's politics

When she first moved to Gautam Nagar, however, she didn't like it there either. But since 2007 (the year that marks her entry into politics) she feels Gautam Nagar is better than either of those places. She contends that the people in Gautam Nagar have a "good mentality." While one does encounter a lot of opposition to many changes, the people of Gautam Nagar listen and are willing to change given good reason. The people are more politically aware, while those of TMC were more concerned with their individual lives. People in Gautam Nagar are more amenable to being organized over issues of social justice. But even this is difficult at times. All of this has been made possible because the people have adopted Buddhism at least for the past four generations. The area has improved as people have received an education, "there are doctors, engineers, and lawyers here." Here she extolls the virtues of Buddhism and its emancipatory potential for the Dalit–Buddhists of Gautam Nagar. Harish and Saee join in, and they have a conversation about all that has been achieved through Ambedkar and Buddhism. Within a few minutes, however, Shalini takes control of the reins of the narrative again. "Let me continue" she says, and Harish interrupts her urging her to tell me what happened with her. She reassures him,

> I will … step by step. Brahmins realized that if another Babasaheb were to be born, what he could do! So, they decided to instigate the Buddhists into fighting amongst themselves. If three of us are sitting together, they would put one thought in one of us, another thought in the other, and a third thought in the third person, and we will end up fighting. We will not unite. What they want is, "You

> just vote. You don't stand for elections. And even if you do stand for elections, your own community will see to it that you don't get elected."

Shalini takes a deliberate step back to make macro claims about politics to set the stage for her own personal story. She describes the infighting that ensues within her community because of what she believes is interference from the Brahmins[63]. She sees this lack of unity as a big problem with her community. So, what was her story? Her caste certificate was from the neigbouring state, since her father was from there. Even though it says that she is a Mahar, to be eligible to stand for office in Maharashtra, she has to provide a caste certificate[64] and a certificate of domicile in Mumbai. Only then would she be allowed to stand for elections. The caste certificate from a different state made her ineligible for political positions.

Shalini feels she was denied the opportunity of standing for political office because of bureaucracy that could have been avoided had the officers in charge been clear to her about the documentation requirements early on. She tells me, further in the interview, that she was popular in F South ward and stood a good chance of winning. Harish and Saee chimed in. They also believed that she had a very good chance of winning. In the ultimate analysis, all three of them believed that this was a conspiracy by the upper castes to not give her the opportunity to stand for elections.

This whole conversation ranging from her recent political experience to the analysis of the events took around 15–20 minutes. I made very few interjections during this time. However, Harish, Saee, and Shalini all participated equally, giving me a sense of the politics of the area.

Gautam Nagar as a residential space

At this point, I felt the need to steer the conversation back to space, and I asked her what she would say to me were I to tell her that I was moving to Gautam Nagar. She

---

[63] While she uses the word Brahmins, I believe she uses it to mean all upper caste people.

[64] Some seats in different elected bodies are reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates. In order to prove one's credentials as a Scheduled Caste person, one receives a caste certificate issued by the government.

responds, “sure, you can! If you have the ‘daring’ and can tolerate this place.” I asked her to elaborate. By “daring” she means the ability to accept the *māhaul* here. “Once you take that step, within a year or two, you will become immersed in this space.” She doesn’t think it is an easy task to live in Gautam Nagar. To her, it is a challenging prospect for any outsider who moves in. At the same time, she reassures me that given time, even I can make a comfortable home here.

Shalini moved on to her current employment. But it is secondary to her social and political work in Gautam Nagar. At this juncture, she gives me details about what her family members do. About her two children she says that they have already decided to take up government jobs, one that gives them respect, a good income, and an opportunity to serve people. She also believes that the demographics of the space has not changed for four generations; the same families have been living here for over 60 years.

The religion turn

This turn was initiated by me when I asked her about her personal relationship with Buddhism and how she practiced Buddhism every day. Her first response is to talk about ritual fasting. Significantly, she compares it to ritual fasting in Hinduism, which she claims is farcical since it allows for consuming certain kinds of food. She also reports doing meditation and making a weekly trip to a *Buddhavihar* in Parel.

> We light candles in front of the Buddha. You know he is the son of a man. So, we don’t light lamps, instead we light candles. He accepted science and rationality as the basis of life … my day starts with prayer to the Buddha, and my day ends similarly.

One of her children has learnt Pali, the language that many Buddhist texts are in and has become a source of knowledge about Buddhism for Shalini. She claims that when they moved to TMC, she was briefly taken up with other religions mostly because there were other communities who lived together. At that time, it was only the home that promoted Buddhism. For some time she adopted many Hindu practices, like going to

take *darśan* of different gods and goddesses, ritual fasting on certain days of the week and so on. But in 2007, she abandoned all these other practices and embraced Buddhist practices completely. The new generation, she feels, has shed the last vestiges of Hinduism, adopting Buddhism exclusively.

I asked a related hypothetical question at this juncture. What if one of her children wishes to marry someone from a different community? Would she be comfortable with it? She categorically supports her children in any decision they may make. While it would please her most to have them marry a Buddhist like themselves, she believes that it is more important to gauge the maturity and economic capability of the person they want to marry. She also wishes them to marry into families that are as free as her own home. These are more important, according to Shalini, than the religion and caste community that they belong to.

My next order of business is to look at the individual texts concerning the memories of violence. But before I explore that, let me examine the ways in which Shalini experiences space. In the theme of turning to space, Shalini tells us about how different Gautam Nagar is from the other two places she had lived in. She does not like it in Gautam Nagar and her early impression of the space is that it was ravaged by alcoholism and associated evil. She sees a shift in this ever since her involvement in politics. To her, Gautam Nagar was a place of precarity in terms of social evils and at the same time it provided her the opportunity to mobilize and become a political leader. Her experience of the space is twofold and has shifted across time. Most importantly, as a political leader she sees the empowering potential that exists within the space. At the same time, she recognizes caste discrimination as being the main reason for her recent failure in politics.

The memories of violence

The interview schedule guided this turn as I decided to move the conversation along to violence. I recalled from earlier in the interview that she had mentioned how she had witnessed and heard of many incidents of Hindu–Muslim conflict and violence in South Central Mumbai where she had grown up. Had she seen any such communal

conflicts in Gautam Nagar? She immediately retorts, “No, not at all.” Then, I asked her where she was during the Bombay Riots, in the hope of eliciting a flashbulb memory if there was one. But there was none. She remembered the bomb blasts and remembered living in TMC at that time.

> I don’t remember much about the riots. But I do remember the bomb blasts. Where there were bomb blasts in 13 places around Bombay. My older brother just missed catching the train in which there was a bomb. He decided to wait for some friends instead. If he hadn’t, he wouldn’t be alive today. This was in Vikhroli. The Lord Buddha saved him by not letting him get onto that train.… I remember because it was the day of (one of) my brother’s birthday. In fact, we don’t celebrate his birthday even now for this reason.

This is her only memory of the riots and its aftermath. This memory has three significant elements. First, Shalini’s recall of the bomb blasts are explained because of their personal significance and the potential loss of her brother’s life. Second, Lord Buddha is credited with saving her brother’s life. Third, she and her family have memorialized it by not celebrating her brother’s birthday ever since. Gautam Nagar, or space in general does not feature in this memory as a significant element. Vikhroli, the station where her brother was supposed to get into the train was quite a distance from Dadar.

I then turn her attention to the massacre at Ramabai Nagar and ask if she remembers it.

> What happened at that time? Our leaders were splintered and our community had broken up into different factions.… So nine boys from Ramabai Nagar got together to unite the different factions since we are all one community. They started a protest fast.… Then a riot broke out around a vehicle, that is, people from a different caste, for reasons I don’t really know, started a riot.…So because of those riots, firing happened. Of the nine who had sat on a hunger strike, eight were killed. Only one 14–15-year-old child survived. Ever since then, Ramabai Nagar has taken on a unique significance for the community in Mumbai. There is also a memorial erected there.

Shalini's tone changes in this narration of what happened at Ramabai Nagar. She sounds more confident. And it appears to have an element of a meta explanation. She goes on to tell me how the violence that happened in Ramabai Nagar served the purpose of bringing the community together under one leadership. Subsequent political victories of the Republican Party of India, she suggests, were possible because of what happened at Ramabai Nagar. She ends this part of the conversation with the idea that the community needs another incident like Ramabai Nagar to re-organize it under one leadership. Unlike the bomb blasts, her account of the Ramabai Nagar massacre takes an argumentative tone, where she argues for the claim that the violence was a point of mobilizing the Dalit–Buddhist community under one umbrella. Finally, her recall of the Ramabai Nagar massacre is very much connected to her own work in mobilizing people as part of her political work.

This narrative analysis of the memories of the two violent events provides us with three elements for analysis. First, the significance of each of the events in Shalini's life is differential. Second, she believes that the Ramabai Nagar massacre had mobilizing potential, and therefore, she does not see the violence as particularly negative in the larger scheme of things. Third, it tells us about the significance of space. The Ramabai Nagar massacre, for instance, is memorialized. Considering her description of Gautam Nagar as a space where people are amenable to be mobilized around issues of social justice, Ramabai Nagar as a symbolic space of resistance helps her articulate her own mobilization strategies in Gautam Nagar. In essence then, as a political leader engaged with change, she sees the mobilizing potential of both place-based precarity and violence in Gautam Nagar.

6.5 Conclusion

The complexity, we have seen in this chapter of memory and recall are best illustrated by narratives; that is, the contexts in which they emerge and the way they are articulated. As an aswer to the question how do people remember incidents of violence within these spaces, I have explored different aspects of these memories that are

significantly influenced by space, vis-à-vis flashbulb memories, first-hand experiences, Lifestone memories, intergenerational memories, and absent memories (when interlocutors say they don't remember something). This categorization serves to underscore two aspects of memories: first, the way space is featured in these memories; second, the differential ways in which these types of memories are spread over the three spaces. These two factors indicate that these memories are spatially or locally particular and must be approached as such. In the final section of this chapter, I have argued that a narrative approach to these memory narratives reflect these differences in important ways. To validate this, I use Shalini's interview data as illustration. Shalini is an interlocutor from Gautam Nagar. I demonstrate the significance of the way in which these memories are recalled and at what point in the interview process they are recalled.

Recall from "Chapter 5: *Māhaul* boundaries, disgust, and precarity" the argument that there are differential place-based precarity in Gautam Nagar and Mumbra. In Chapter 7, place-based precarity forms the backdrop against which I will examine the memory narratives of violent events in these two spaces. I do this by first engaging with a discussion on the intersection between violence and precarity. Then I undertake a Thematic Narrative Analysis for two interlocutors, one each from each space. As mentioned in Chapter 5, interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony do not experience a place-based precarity. Therefore, to apply the same lens to that data would be incorrect. In Chapter 8, I argue for an oral history approach to the memories of violence from Dadar Parsi Colony and embark on writing just such an oral history of violence in that space.

7. Chapter 7: Place-based precarity and memories of violence

Mumbra and Gautam Nagar

7.1 Introduction

A narrative approach to the data on memories of violence can yield many different results depending on what we ask of the data. Narratives, themselves, can take on different forms. Within the second line of enquiry, in this chapter and the next, I seek to answer two questions. What are the memory narratives that circulate about such incidents within Mumbra, Gautam Nagar, and Dadar Parsi Colony? How do these memory narratives compare with those from other areas?

In "Chapter 5: *Māhaul* boundaries, disgust, and precarity*,"* I have already argued that my interlocutors from Gautam Nagar and Mumbra experience a differential place-based precarity. It is in this context, the context of living in a space marked by place-based precarity, that I try to understand my interlocutors' memories of violence.

> So, after 92–93, Mumbai was not as before. Now, there was always the possibility that riots would break out … we didn't have the courage to face it. If we spoke up, we would have been beaten up. Today you will flee from here; tomorrow you will flee from there as well, right? We didn't have the courage to speak up. (Kaneez, 36, Mumbra)

Kaneez's tone is serious as she contemplates how Mumbai has changed for her after the riots. The possibility of violence and rioting hangs above her head like a sword. People cannot be trusted. And she also observes that standing up to the violence requires courage, which she declares "we" didn't have. Who is the "we" she speaks of? This snippet comes at the end of a long conversation about all the violence she had personally witnessed during the Bombay Riots. The "we" is she and her Muslim

community that were affected during the riots. Finally, she provides an image of fleeing from one place to another, safety and security never guaranteed—the image of living on the edge. According to Kaneez, Mumbai's landscape changed irrevocably after the riots.

Let us consider another snippet, this time from Gautam Nagar.

> Madam, I want to say one thing. Why does this happen only with one community again and again … again and again, it keeps happening. Even in the villages. Any village you go to, such things happen. Why does one community do this with another community. Why are atrocities perpetrated against the *Bauddh* community only? … Even recently, it happened in Khairlanji. (Santosh, 35, Gautam Nagar)

Santosh and Mukund had just been telling me about their memories of the Ramabai Nagar massacre. And Santosh got emotional as he wondered why his community was being singled out for violence. He links what happened in Ramabai Nagar to other similar instances of violence, citing Khairlanji as an example.[65]

In both cases, one from Mumbra and the other from Gautam Nagar, there is a sense that the incidence of violence, in Kaneez's case the Bombay Riots and in Santosh's case the Ramabai Nagar massacre, have left each of these communities feeling vulnerable. However, there are important differences in how they recall these incidents of violence. For instance, Santosh firmly links the Ramabai Nagar massacre to similar incidents of atrocities against the Dalit–Buddhist community across the country. In contrast, Kaneez observes the change in spatial organisation that has taken place in Mumbai after the riots and her own experience of the city, the city itself has become a

---

[65] On September 29th 2006, four members of the Bhotmange family were killed in a village called Khairlanji. The two women, Surekha Bhotmange and her daughter Priyanka Bhotmange were reportedly beaten up with bicycle chains, axes, and pokers, paraded naked in the village and then raped till they were dead. Surekha's sons were also beaten up, their faces disfigured, their genitals mutilated, all before they were murdered (Vij, 2006). The spectacle was carried out for the benefit of the whole village. An hour later, a village meeting was summoned and the whole incident was hushed up.

threat to her now. How do the memories of violence sit with the place-based precarity that the inhabitants of both these places experience? In the following section, I explore the literature on violence and precarity arguing that while scholarship does focus on precarity and violence, the literature on the intersection between place-based precarity and violence is slim. After this, through the narrative approach demonstrated in Chapter 6, I examine two narratives, one each from Mumbra and Gautam Nagar to locate the intersection of place-based precarity and the memories of violence. I argue that memories of violence contribute in important ways to the experience of place-based precarity that inhabitants of these two spaces experience and this is best demonstrated by the thematic journey that narratives take, either driven by the interlocutor themselves or by the interviewer or by the interview circumstances.

7.2 Place-based precarity and memories of violent events

The condition of precarity as conceptualized by Butler (2006) is itself a life mired in structural violence. A pioneer in exploring structural violence, Johan Galtung conceptualized it as distinct from direct acts of violence and where social structures contribute to the violence. Such violence cannot be traced back to one single perpetrator. It demonstrates "unequal power relations and consequently unequal life chances" (Galtung, 1969, p. 171). Income inequality, poverty, hunger, discrimination of minority communities, and others would all count as structural violence. The elements of life that contribute to the experience of place-based precarity amongst the residents of Mumbra and Gautam Nagar demonstrate that they are at the mercy of structures. Precarity as a condition of unequal access to life chances, is in itself a condition of structural violence. When taken independently as a concept, it gives an idea of something nebulous that can apply to almost any of life's conditions or none of it. Galtung, however, made the important connection between violence and peace that helped clarify the concept further. He claimed that the absence of direct violence is not sufficient to determine peace. Positive peace is determined by the absence of structural violence. Galtung and Höivik (1971) also tried to operationalise the term to make it more amenable to study. They contend that if structural violence is limited to those life

conditions that lead to death in a slow or gradual manner, one can quantify this by calculating the number of years lost. This would allow for even comparative studies with other instances of violence.

Since much of the literature on precarity is focussed on migrant experiences, most of the studies on the intersection between precarity and structural violence also focus on this body of work. In an ethnographic study that explores the obstacles for undocumented immigrants in receiving health services in France, Laranché (2011) argues that there are intangible factors such as social stigmatization, precarious living conditions, and the climate of fear and suspicion that hinders immigrants' access to health care and, more importantly, diminishes immigrants' sense of entitlement to these services and rights. Discrimination, fear, and suspicion influence how both immigrants and health workers construe deservingness, or an individual's entitlement to health care rights. In this paper, Laranché conceives of precarity as the structural conditions of life imposed by the condition of being an undocumented immigrant. For instance, precarity ensures that a large proportion of undocumented immigrant men and women give up on health care due to more pressing concerns such as homelessness. While my interlocutors in Gautam Nagar and Mumbra are not transnational immigrants the same way as immigrants in France, this study is useful in understanding the different ways in which precarious life conditions contribute to structural violence.

A large part of the literature on precarity and violence has concentrated on areas that are undergoing protracted conflict over a long period of time. This would pertain to direct violence. In Palestine, for example, Joronen and Griffiths (2019, p. 69) suggest that there are innovative practices of hope in seemingly "hopeless topographies." In their study, they include within the ambit of violence a whole gamut of structural and physical violence, including expanding settlements, restricted mobilities, prohibited construction, new modes of land appropriation, home demolitions, targeting of families, intense surveillance, and bureaucratic and settler violence that together create hyper-precarious spaces. Area C in the West Bank, they claim, reflects just such a hyper-precarious space. The authors conclude that the precise nature of vulnerability engendered by the hyper-precariousness of the spaces opens up avenues of spatial and

temporal practices of hope that are precisely aimed at subverting the aims of the Israeli Occupation. In a concluding comment, they observe that similar exercises in different spaces within the occupation that differ in the extent of precarity that is experienced by Palestinian inhabitants might reveal different results; that is, spatial and temporal practices of hope will differ according to the degree of and kind of precarity experienced by the people. This is a formulation that the authors believe requires further research.

Joronen and Griffith's work and my study converge and diverge at several points to allow for further exploration. Like these authors, I have already observed there is a place-based precarity that characterizes both Mumbra and Gautam Nagar. Further, each interlocutor from each space reports a differential experience of precarity. Interlocutors from Mumbra experience a victimized place-based precarity; while interlocutors from Gautam Nagar experience a precarity of space that has an empowering potential. This section seeks to explore the interaction between these different subjectivities of precarity and the memories of violence. Further, Palestine and Area C form spaces where protracted conflict is taking place. In my case, however, neither violent incidents from the '90s took place in Mumbra or Gautam Nagar. As noted earlier, Mumbra became populated after the riots and did not experience any violence during riots. While Dadar was at the centre of the violence, Gautam Nagar was a relatively safe space during the riots. The massacre at Ramabai Nagar was localized and did not spill over to any other areas of Mumbai. Despite this distance from violence, interlocutors from Mumbra had vivid memories of the riots and interlocutors from Gautam Nagar also had emotional memories of the massacre at Ramabai Nagar.

In another study Junaid (2020) examines the counterinsurgency context in India administered Kashmir and how the fact of counterinsurgency engenders a discourse of loyalty that adds a dimension of precarity to Kashmiris' lives other than the one they are already living. Based on a case study, he examines how the politics of accusations, disloyalty and so on, within the dynamic political climate engendered by Indian occupying forces, counterterrorism, and terrorist outfits, replaces mourning with fear and suspicion. This fear and suspicion give birth to a discourse of loyalty that is played

out as a dilemma at the level of the individual and further precariorises individual Kashmiri lives even without the direct intervention of the state or the counterinsurgency forces.

In both Junaid's case and in Jornen's and Griffiths's case, there is the potential of physical violence, from counterinsurgency forces in the former and from Israeli occupation forces in the latter. Both the spaces, in terms of area, are rather large compared to the city spaces I have chosen for my study. In addition, both Kashmir and Palestine have within their political dynamics international intervention since they deal with national borders. That Mumbai is not in the throes of protracted warfare, or under a heavy-handed occupying force that threatens the peace imminently, makes my study different. Mumbai's place-based precarious spaces experience structural violence as shown in Chapter 5, but there is no documented direct violence. An exploration of the two incidents of violence that I take up in this chapter is useful in demonstrating how memories of incidents of direct violence intersect with the structural violence that spatial precarity engenders.

Do residents of religion-marked spaces that also demonstrate place-based precarity show any patterns in the way they remember violent events from the past that contribute to or mitigate this precarity? In a recent study, Chatterjee (2019) focusses on the Muslim-dominated area of Shivaji Nagar in Govandi in Mumbai. This area has already received some scholarly attention for its predominantly Muslim character (Contractor, 2012). Chatterjee argues that Shivaji Nagar has been constructed both in scholarly and popular narrative as a place of failure, waste, and death. Its inhabitants are characteristically engaged in precarious employment such as waste picking, slaughter work, construction work, and tailoring. The space is also considered to be environmentally vulnerable since it is in the vicinity of heavy petrochemical industries—a veritable gas chamber. Through her ethnographic work with the waste pickers of Shivaji Nagar, Chatterjee demonstrates how the residents of Shivaji Nagar play into these popular narratives of failure and are time and again called upon to perform labours of failures; failure to provide evidence of their innocence in starting fires at the garbage dumps; failure to provide identity documents as proof of ownership

of land; failure to articulate symptoms of their sickness and so on. She demonstrates how precarious employment leads to an existential precarity that pervades other aspects of people's social life. In conclusion, Chatterjee suggests that while the state of precarity exists everywhere, it might be geographically differentiated, suggesting that Shivaji Nagar precarity is different from and of a different degree than in other parts of Mumbai. That precarity is bound to geographical spaces and to religion-marked spaces is a significant observation for my own research. However, Shivaji Nagar's Muslim character is not the focus of Chatterjee's analysis. She makes a cursory observation that more that 80% of the population in Shivaji Nagar is Muslim. While discussing the garbage dump fires of 2016 and the natural assumption of guilt that the establishment labelled on the waste pickers, she observes that these accusations implied that a "Muslim *mohallā* (neighborhood), was presumed to house criminal elements, miscreants, and the guilty who had no stake in the city's future" (Chatterjee, 2019, p. 60). The Muslim-dominated character of the precarity that pervades Shivaji Nagar is implied rather than stated. She also demonstrates the tenuous relationship that the inhabitants of Shivaji Nagar have with the police, one that has its roots in the Bombay Riots of 1992–93.

What about the interaction between place-based precarities in Dalit–Buddhist spaces in Mumbai? Direct physical violence and structural violence have both been identified as significant in defining caste relationships. This analysis of caste-based structural violence finds its roots in Ambedkar's writings. Ambedkar's analysis of caste had two distinguishing features: the centrality of Brahminism to the development of caste relationships; and the "quasi-juridical basis of caste regulations" (Rao, 2009, p. 125). In particular, Rao examines how Ambedkar's theorization of caste and untouchability was influenced by the experience of civic exclusion that was often meted out to Dalits.

> In particular, *bahishkar* (caste boycott) was a principle of structural violence, the generic form of caste antagonism working at physical, economic, and psycho-religious levels. It was also transacted violence, a disciplinary tool caste Hindus used to temporarily separate an errant member of the body politic or an entire community. (Rao, 2009, p. 126)

The place-based precarity and structural violence is most often documented in spatial analysis of caste structures and in Dalit autobiographies. The question, however, is what other forms (other than the tenuous relationship with the police) of precarity do the different violent events engender for inhabitants of religion-marked spaces in Mumbai?

In the following pages, I will use the narrative approach to discuss two interviews of interlocutors, one each from Mumbra and Gautam Nagar, to understand how memories of violence contribute to or mitigate place-based precarity. The narrative approach used here has already been delineated in Chapter 6. In this chapter, therefore, I will keep the narratives brief so as to focus on the memories of violence that are embedded in the narrative context. In particular, I am interested in the intersection between memories of violence and space. What do memories of violence tell us about place-based precarity?

7.2.1 Mumbra's Kaneez: Being followed by a place-based precarity

In this subsection, I argue, that Kaneez, an interlocutor from Mumbra, reports experiencing two different kinds of place-based precarity; one to do with Mumbra's origins as jungle space with no infrastructure and, therefore, administrative neglect; and two, to do with the stigma that accompanies the word ghetto that spaces like Mumbra incur because of their emergence post the 1992–93 riots. Finally, her extensive and vivid recall of events during the riots indicate that there was a place-based precarity that she experienced even before moving to Mumbra. Her own precarious life journey and Mumbra's place-based precarity both intersect in her experiences of precarity.

The interview context

Kaneez works in an NGO based in Mumbra. She was available for an interview in the initial days of my entry into the field. The exchange began with a conversation between Farida, Kaneez, and me. Mid-way, however, Farida was called away and could not continue until a later time. The interview with Kaneez continued and was completed at

that time. The total time taken for the conversation was 1 hour 13 minutes. I did speak to Kaneez at a later date, to ask her to clarify some things she had said about space. But I do not include this 15-minute interview in this analysis because it did not have anything new to add about memories of violence. I also do not include the last 15 minutes of the initial exchange since we had already discussed the memories of violence within the first hour. The interview was conducted in Hindi, and Kaneez responded in a mixture of Hindi and Urdu interspersed with some English words.

The biographical sketch

Kaneez was in her mid-30s at the time of the interview. She was born in South Central Mumbai. She moved to a suburb in North West Mumbai after the riots. Finally, she and her family moved to Mumbra in 1996. During her childhood, she lived with her family that consisted of her parents, four siblings, and one grandmother. Now, she lives in Mumbra with six family members, including her mother and son. Her son, 15 years of age, studies in high school. She was divorced. While married, she had temporarily moved to her marital home. Within a year, however, she and her husband moved to Mumbra. She continues to live in Mumbra after her separation.

Kaneez, therefore, has lived in three spaces in Mumbai, South Central Mumbai, North West Mumbai, and Mumbra. Most of her life, however, she has spent in Mumbra. In terms of religion, Kaneez identifies as a Muslim, but she qualifies this identity. I will discuss this in further detail later in the analysis. As a woman in her mid-30s and being located in South Central Mumbai which saw so much violence, she is likely to have had memories of the riots. In this narrative analysis, we do come across some vivid memories. She is also likely to have memories of the Ramabai Nagar Massacre but she doesn't report any. Speculatively, this could be either because she knew about it at that time and subsequently forgot or she did not know about it at all.

Thematic field analysis

The life story prompt

I began the interview with the general life story prompt, asking Kaneez and Farida where and when they were born and when they moved to Mumbra. Kaneez was born in the early ’80s in South Central Mumbai. Significantly, she marks time with the Bombay Riots. In 1992, after the riots, her family moved to a suburb in North West Mumbai “for some reason.” She does not explore this reason, however. In 1996, the family moved to Mumbra. The riots form a Lifestone memory for Kaneez. This Lifestone memory also marks changes in residence within her life. While many interlocutors reported that they or their families moved from Mumbai to Mumbra after the riots, Kaneez’s narrative is remarkable in that the riots seem to have set in motion a chain of moves that ended with settling in Mumbra.

Childhood and safety in Mumbra

I now initiated a narrative turn by asking her about South Central Mumbai where she lived the first years of her life. This part of the interview has been explored in Chapter 3, “*Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there*,”* for its insights on *māhaul*. Briefly, she talks about this space as a “Muslim space” and economically middle class. Her father was a “turner-fitter” (a daily wage labourer doing odd jobs) and used to work for a company. Because of illness, he lost many jobs and had a tough time getting secure work. Finally, he did all kinds of temporary jobs once they shifted to Mumbra. Kaneez studied until the first year of middle school in South Central Mumbai. At the age of 15 or16 she was married and had to discontinue school for the same reason. After separating from her husband, she moved back to live with her parents and family. She restarted her studies and successfully completed her graduation in Urdu in 2011. She credits this to her association with the NGO she currently works for. She provides me a brief about her trajectory with the NGO where she started as a cleaning lady and then proceeded to take on other responsibilities, graduating along the way. She ends this section with Mumbra not being safe for women at that time.

> Those days, even rickshaw drivers, if they dropped you off at 12 in the night, they would ask if you are a bar girl or a dance girl. When I first experienced this, I yelled at the rickshaw driver … after this first instance, I became more and more courageous over time.

This is Kaneez's first foray into describing space. First, she contends that South Central Mumbai was similar to Mumbra in terms of its Muslim dominated character. Second, she provides a commentary about the safety aspect in Mumbra. This is something she circles back to later in the interview.

Marriage and divorce

This narrative turn takes place because I am interested in accounting for her time between getting married and getting separated. Within a year of her marriage, she quit and came back to her maternal home. Her husband did not hold on to a job and was irresponsible. She comments here that she had the "confidence" to fight for her rights even before she understood that she was fighting for her rights. At this juncture, she impresses upon me her sense of agency and control over her life. In this narrative of her personal journey, Kaneez ensures that her audience understands three things. First, her marriage was one of suffering and she was justified in leaving her husband. Second, at the time of the separation, she had access only to religious leaders for counsel in marital issues. The association with the NGO was vital to her access to legal procedures and aid in obtaining a divorce. Finally, as a woman with little education, she was reduced to doing all sorts of odd jobs in order to make a living. Kaneez places her life story in the context of women's liberation and feminism, a theme that recurs further ahead in the interview.

Working women in Mumbra

This turn in the narrative was initiated by my questioning Farida about where she would prefer to work. Kaneez instead gives me a macro perspective on women and work in Mumbra. According to Kaneez, very few women are allowed by their families to take employment outside the home. She concedes, though, that she has observed some changes in the last two to three years. She again credits the NGO for this arguing that

the organisation provided exposure to women and they, in turn, brought about change in the minds of their families. Women’s agency and the NGOs work in this regard has again become a prominent theme in her narrative. While in the earlier thematic field, she gives a personal story, here she is making macro claims about women, their agency, and the transformative work of the NGO in Mumbra.

Religious and political history

This narrative turn comes because I ask Kaneez specifically about her religious persuasion. She declares she is neither too religious nor is she an atheist. She likes to interpret her religion for herself. She specifically speaks about how religion promotes patriarchal practices like triple *talāq*. She believes that it is important to challenge these notions (she calls them myths) within the religion and break patriarchal control over religion. She does identify as a Muslim. Farida interjects at this point to say that she does not think of herself as a Muslim but identifies as an atheist. Kaneez agrees with Farida’s self-identification, and they both tell me about how unless they tell people their names, nobody realises they are Muslims. Their names give their religion away.

Why does Kaneez first identify as Muslim and not an atheist but then agrees with Farida when the latter says she identifies as an atheist? The interview process itself provides a clue. One is that Farida’s explanation was about how she is perceived by others. She is not perceived as a Muslim, and people are surprised to hear her name. Kaneez also believes that because she doesn’t behave like one, people are surprised to hear that she has a Muslim name. Here being Muslim, therefore, can have two different connotations. One is how they see themselves, and the other is how they are seen by others. When Kaneez initially claims she identifies as a Muslim, she is referring to her own belief and faith. When she agrees with Farida that she does not identify as a Muslim, she is referring to how she thinks other people perceive Muslims to be, and she does not fit that perception. In terms of political affiliations, Kaneez claims her family has no political associations. But she does identify the NGO as a non-political organisation that her family is affiliated to.

Mumbra, North West Mumbai, South Central Mumbai

I steered the conversation back to space and asked Kaneez to compare South Central Mumbai and Mumbra as spaces of residence. When they first moved to Mumbra in 1996 from North West Mumbai, Mumbra was little more than an overgrown jungle. There was no water supply, no electricity, and no proper roads. Mumbra's poor infrastructure did not make it very enticing for them since South Central Mumbai, being in the heart of the city was well heeled at that time. Even North West Mumbai, although a suburb was more populated and boasted better infrastrucutre in the mid-'90s. But they didn't have enough money to go back to live in South Central Mumbai. She reflects on the differences in Mumbra of those years and Mumbra now. Infrastructure has improved by leaps and bounds, and she views this as a definite improvement over the years. Most importantly, she paints a graphic picture of decrepitude that existed in the Mumbra of the '90s.

I recall her attention to living in North West Mumbai for some time and ask her how she would compare that with Mumbra. She recalls that there too the community she lived in was like Mumbra, a Muslim dominated space. Here she uses the word ghetto for such spaces. I have analysed this part of her interview in Chapter 4, " Ghetto *māhaul,"* while discussing the ghetto literature. Briefly, she locates the origin of the Muslim ghetto formation as a post Bombay Riots phenomena. She also observes that the rise of the ghetto is accompanied by the rising trend of the *burqa*.

Memories of demolition of the Babri Masjid

At this juncture, I decided to ask her about her experiences during the riots since she had already opened up the conversation on that subject. Significantly, she started with the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

> When Babri Masjid was demolished[66], at that time I was at home. By evening 6pm, the news had come. Before that we had heard that the karsevaks were going there. I was young and didn't understand much of it. Who was a karsevak?

[66] She uses the English word de-establish.

> I used to think a "car sevak" was someone who drove a car. I didn't understand that much Hindi ... I was in the 7th standard in Urdu medium, so I didn't know what a karsevak was.… So, a karsevak was one who drove a car and *rath yātrā* meant that someone sat on a *rath*[67] and made a *yātrā*[68].

Kaneez tells me that the riots introduced to her to a whole new set of vocabulary that was sourced from Hindi (Sanskrit-based) rather than Urdu. She demonstrates how the two languages are different in their religious register. Karsevaks refer to the volunteers to a religious cause (Friedland and Hecht, 1998, p.102). In this particular case, 300,000 kar sevaks engaged with the project of building a temple in Ayodhya were responsible for the demolition of the Babri Masjid (Friedland and Hecht, 1998; Rashid, 2017, December 10; Agarwal, 2019, November 9). Indeed, many of the images of the destruction of the Babri Masjid showed volunteers climbing atop the mosque. Karsevaks from around the country were mobilized to help bring down the mosque and build a Hindu temple in its stead. Similarly, in the days prior to the demolition, L.K. Advani, a prominent leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party, undertook a *rath-yātrā* a chariot ride, across the country. A *rath-yātrā* is a chariot procession: "the procession of a Vaishnava idol on a vehicle (esp. that of Jagannath at Puri)" (McGregor, 1993, p. 853). This particular meaning of the *rath-yātrā* has eluded the little Kaneez. Instead, she takes the two words in isolation and thinks a *rath yātrā* is a journey on a chariot. Kaneez is describing to me how her vocabulary has altered to include political Hindu connotations after the demolition of the Babri Masjid. According to Jaffrelot (2009, p. 1–2), *yātrā* has two different meanings: one is the relatively innocuous religious pilgrimage associated with Hinduism and the other is the "ethno-religious demonstration of strength by some Hindu militant organization." Jaffrelot contends that this second meaning has come about due to the instrumentalization of the pilgrimage *yātrā* to mobilize support for Hindu nationalist causes by Hindu nationalist leaders.

---

[67] According to the Oxford Hindi-English dictionary, a *rath* is defined as "1) chariot 2) vehicle (of the gods). (McGregor, 1993, p. 853)

[68] According to the Oxford Hindi-English dictionary, a *yātrā* refers to "1) going, proceeding 2) journey, expedition, pilgrimage 3) travel 4) a group of pilgrims 5) a procession of idols 6) (in Bengal) a popular dramatic entertainment featuring dance and song". (McGregor, 1993, p. 843).

The 1990 *rath yātrā* undertaken by L.K. Advani, he contends, has contributed to concretizing this meaning of the word.

Memories of the riots

Kaneez proceeds with her narrative. After identifying the demolition of the Babri Masjid as the origin of trouble, she describes what happened in South Central Mumbai. This is a long, vivid and, at times, graphic narrative.

> But when Babri Masjid was martyred, 6th December evening the news arrived. That day, everyone was shut in their homes. We used to live in a chawl system. One landlord owned the whole chawl. We all gathered in our chawl. So, everyone brought out their weapons from inside their house. Everybody wanted to protect our people. This was the *māhaul*. And the chawl in which we lived, it didn't have a gate on either side. And the gutter behind the chawl, that way was completely open. You might have observed that after '93, all the buildings started having gates. That's only after the riots. I have seen all this with my own eyes. We used to spend whole nights outside. The building had just one floor but inside it was just like a chawl … we never stayed at home. Because my mother was afraid. My older sister was 15–16 years of age and I was 10–11 years of age. When the '93 riots happened, my mother was scared that if somebody attacks us, who will save us. And others also had the same fears.

This part of the story is a recall of events immediately after the demolition of the Babri Masjid. There are two significant aspects to the narrative at this stage. First, Kaneez uses the phrase *Jab Babri Masjid Shahid Hui*, which literally translates to "When Babri Masjid was martyred." Contractor (2017) in her ethnography of memories of the riots in a predominantly Muslim space called Shivaji Nagar in Mumbai reports the same narrative. According to her, this phrasing of the demolition of the Masjid echoes the discourses of persecution of Islam and also provides a "temporal marker of the protracted alienation of the Muslims in the city" (Contractor, 2017, p. 140).

Second, Kaneez's account follows a testimonial narrative. She gives us an account of the fear that gripped ordinary citizens. And this fear made them see the demolition as an ominous sign and, therefore, the need to prepare for subsequent violence.

Kaneez then takes a step back to talk about her family and herself during the riots. She talks about her and her family's precarious employment. While still a child she was employed in some kind of daily-wage work, and her mother was employed as a domestic help. Earlier she had mentioned that her father used to sell boiled eggs on the roadside. All of these income-generating opportunities, that would be characterized as unorganized labour, came to an utter standstill during the riots. Imposition of curfew, meant to protect communities from the violence, proved to be detrimental to her family. In a second observation, Kaneez tells us that those who were housed in the relief camps were provided essentials. But government agencies and private organizations providing relief had not bothered to find out how people who stayed on in their homes were getting along.

She continues her narrative to recall the times of curfew.

> And during the curfew, my father and I went out to get some stuff.… We bought the necessary things and curfew was imposed. So, we were outside with all those things and were wondering how to get home with the imposition of the curfew. Our house was at least 3–4 *galīs* away from where we were. We lived in the Marwari street … while we were in one of the streets of Chaar Rasta. The one near the school. We had to get back from there. That I still remember vividly how we took circuitous route through different *galīs* to get back home. I cannot forget it. I cannot forget the curfew *māhaul*.… We leapt over walls to make our way home. Through the *galīs*. Abba suffered from asthma. He couldn't do a lot of jumping around.… We were at Gos Bazaar *galī*. Then we turned into Baban *galī*. Then, again we turned at Old Masjid. Then we ran opposite the old masjid. When we saw some vehicle coming towards us … we again slipped into Baban *galī*. In Baban *galī*, we again leapt over a wall and were in a *galī* that would take

> us closer to our *galī*. Then, again we saw them. We were running from the police vehicle. If we saw it turning, we would run.

Kaneez tells me a breathless story, painting a vivid picture of being cornered and fleeing. Significantly, she tells us how she was fleeing as much from rioters as from the police. Sainath (1994, p. 192–193) reports on the police involvement in the riots and the perception among the Muslims that the police were in cahoots with the Hindu rioters. He argues that a communalization of the police force has taken place over the years resulting in a systematic legitimization of communal politics by the media. All of this contributed to how the police behaved during the riots. Finally, she tells me that she did not actually witness any violence. She had heard of the violence of course. But ever since being caught outside during curfew, her mother decided she should not go out anymore. So, in her account, she was saved from actually witnessing violence.

Before we turn away

Having got quite a vivid description of events during the riots, I decided to turn again to space, so that I could ask her the questions from the schedule that I had left out because of the detour I took with the memories of the riots. Kaneez stopped me in my tracks.

> But I want to say one thing here … this took place in the Saat Rasta area[69]. There, one of our acquaintances lived. We called her *māmi*[70], but she was not related to us.… She was the one who taught us the Quran Sharif … She lived with us for many years. And in the beginning of ’92 she moved out to Saat Rasta.… She was originally from Malegaon. All her things were looted during the riots. Later, the trauma of being ruined in ’93 was too much to bear. She died of that trauma.

Kaneez makes a direct connection in this anecdote, between the riots and the long lasting effects of violence on peoples’ lives. People lost lives not only during the

[69] Another area in South Central Mumbai quite close to where Kaneez herself was living

[70] Name for maternal uncle’s wife

violence but also long after as the trauma of loss and dispossession set in. In effect, she is arguing that the riots contributed to peoples' sense of precarity long after it was over and normalcy was restored.

I halt with my analysis here since we have reached the end of the part of the interview that has to do with memories of violence. The interview went on for about 15 more minutes where we returned to talking about space, Mumbra, and, more abstractly, about the ghetto, in particular. But this narrative analysis is concerned only with the memories of violence. As already observed, Kaneez did not remember the Ramabai Nagar massacre at all.

Place-based precarity in Kaneez's memories

In Kaneez's reckoning, there are two distinct ways in which place-based precarity is manifest in Mumbra. First, she refers to Mumbra in the late '90s being a place with no infrastructure. She contends that this has changed. But she has witnessed governmental neglect of the space in her lifetime. Second, she recognizes the stigma surrounding the word ghetto that is used for Muslim segregated spaces that emerged post the 1992–93 riots, and she counts Mumbra as one of these.

At the first instance, memory of the Bombay Riots form a Lifestone memory in Kaneez's life story. It marks shifting of homes from South Central Mumbai to North West Mumbai and, subsequently, to Mumbra. Robinson (2005), in her interesting ethnographic work on the memory of both the 1992–93 riots in Mumbai and the Gujarat riots of 2002 makes some important observations vis-à-vis memories and how they intersect with space and time. These observations have provided an important frame against which to understand the data from Mumbra. She claims that the Bombay Riots of '92–'93 set off three different movements of Muslims within Mumbai. First, Muslim areas in Central Mumbai saw a greater influx and concentration of Muslim residents. Second, moving further outwards, suburbs such as Jogeshwari West, Kurla, Govandi, and Millat Nagar in Andheri West, all saw considerable increase in Muslim residents post the violence of '92–'93. Third, the distant northern suburbs of Mira Road and Mumbra saw a fresh settlement of impoverished Muslims fleeing for safer residential

spaces. Her ethnographic work follows victims of the riots. The fleeing to Mumbra has been a journey of many fleeings. Finding a safe haven that can provide safety and a decent quality of life has Muslims moving several times and ending up in Mumbra. The Bombay Riots did not uproot and make homeless Muslims in just one incident, it set off a chain of movement, with many people finally finding a home in Mumbra.

Kirmani (2013), in her ethnographic work on Zakir Nagar in Delhi, points out that Zakir Nagar was not formed due to any preceding Hindu–Muslim violence that was localized in the neighbourhood or in Delhi itself. However, her interlocutors pointed to four instances of communal violence in the country as a whole as contributing to their feeling of insecurity. The first is the Partition of India in 1947, the Sikh massacre in 1984, the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the attendant riots in 1992–93, and finally, the Gujarat pogrom of 2002. Unlike Bombay, Delhi saw only small-scale rioting in 1992–93, mostly located at the Muslim-dominated area of Seelampur. So, while Zakir Nagar itself saw no violence during that time, narratives of fear and apprehension dominated the people living there as well as provided fillip to further migrations to Zakir Nagar by Muslim immigrants.

Taking my cue from Kirmani, I suggest that Kaneez experiences place-based precarity in all of the places she inhabited, and this contributes to the place-based precarity she experiences in Mumbra as well. This provides a corollary to Kirmani's findings, suggesting that it is not only that places become precarious, but an individual who has experienced place-based precarity in a religion-marked space is also likely to carry it with them wherever they go, in a sense uprooting it and re-establishing it in a different place.

In her recall of the riots, Kaneez demonstrates that she was living this place-based precarity in South Central Mumbai even before she moved to Mumbra. She describes precarious employment that made curfew difficult to live through. Second, fleeing from the police indicates the role of the establishment in the riots. Even the Srikrishna Commission report observed the partisan nature of the state and the police. Third, as already observed, she demonstrates how the riots set off a chain of moves and a final

settling in Mumbra. So, the theme of fleeing for safety continues in her life long after the riots ended. Finally, her parting anecdote about the family friend in Saat Raasta, demonstrates that Kaneez is very much aware that the precarity occasioned by the riots is following her wherever she goes. In this case, the memory itself contributes to her experience of place-based precarity in Mumbra.

7.2.2 Gautam Nagar's Nalin: *Brahmanvad* and the mobilizing potential of place-based precarity

In this subsection, I argue, that Nalin, an interlocutor from Gautam Nagar, reports experiencing two different kinds of place-based precarity; one to do with the historical suffering that produces a space with the potential of mobilization; and two, to do with the tenuous nature of the Dalit–Buddhists legal claims to this space that is so integral to them. Nalin's exploration of the two violent events indicate that he believes that *Brahmanvad* or Brahminism, the underlying principle of the caste structure, leads to both kinds of violence and causes precarity for both Muslims and Dalit–Buddhists in different ways.

The interview context

Nalin was recruited by Harish and Saee for this project. He arrived on time to Harish and Saee's place for the interview. He was most comfortable talking in Marathi and only slipped into Hindi when I asked for clarifications. His interview was around 22 minutes long. He was clinical in his responses as he answered the questions he was asked. Throughout the interview, I felt that he was very invested in the representation of his community and was emotional about many of the things we were talking about. He understood the research process and was interested in what the end thesis would look like, accosting me on the staircase when I was there for other interviews and asking me how the writing was going.

The biographical sketch

Nalin was in his early 40s. He was born and brought up in Gautam Nagar. He also has a home in Raigad that constitutes a part of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. For the

purposes of this chapter, I will refer to this place as Raigad. This home was bought by his parents, who now live there with his younger brother, brother's wife, and children. His sister is married and lives in her marital home. Nalin himself continues to live in Gautam Nagar with his wife and two children.

He grew up in Gautam Nagar and continues to live there. He also has a good understanding of living in Raigad since his immediate family lives there and he visits off and on. He identifies as a Buddhist. With respect to the two violent events under scrutiny, he was a young adult during the riots and is likely to have remembered the events of that time and does report them. He was even older during the Ramabai Nagar massacre and reports memories of that as well.

Thematic field analysis

Introducing the project

As soon as I introduced my project, before I could give the usual life story prompt, Nalin started talking. Repeating my introduction, clarifying, and commenting. In response to my claim that Gautam Nagar was a Dalit–Buddhist space, he argues that it isn't true that only Buddhists live in Gautam Nagar. There are two communities that live here, the Buddhists and the *Kathewadi*. Both belong to the SC/ST category. He then focusses on the Buddhist community describing typical traits of the people including their being emotionally charged and very attached to the area. The community is united. Then he describes the differences between the two communities and specifically credits Ambedkar and his conversion to Buddhism as a radical move in empowering the Dalit–Buddhist community. In a final macro political analysis, he contends that the current Dalit–Buddhist leadership is "sold out" and this is the only reason that "*savarnas*" continue to hold power and don't "allow" the Dalit–Buddhist community to progress.

Nalin's preoccupation with representation of the Dalit–Buddhists is discernable from this first step in the interview itself. He is keen on correcting my perception that Gautam Nagar is a Dalit–Buddhist space. And then, descriptions of the Dalit–Buddhist and the

significance of Ambedkar in their emancipation are briefly touched upon to paint for me the idea of the Dalit–Buddhist as an emotionally charged, empowered community.

Social transformation

At this stage, I asked Nalin if there had been any changes within Gautam Nagar over the years. He explained to me that the "torture" that his community was subjected to in the past does not exist anymore. People have gotten educated and progress has happened. People have become professionals like doctors, advocates, and architects. And yet there are some issues that the community faces. People are not getting the jobs they wish to in the government sector. This is an important observation, where Nalin demonstrates that the caste system and discrimination do not exist the way they did in the past. By "torture" he is referring to the inhuman ways in which Dalits were treated which is more or less obsolete. To Nalin, the caste system endures in other ways making it still difficult for the community to progress.

According to him it's been a social system for many centuries and therefore, it is unlikely to end in the near future. As long as the brahmins are in power, and the Scheduled Caste communities are oppressed, the caste system will survive. And then he goes into a historical academic discussion on the caste system. He makes the important distinction between *Jaatibedh* and *Varnavyavastha*. According to him, the Brahmins accrued power through the *varnavyavastha* system.

What is the *varnavyavastha* system? The Purushasukta hymn of the Rigveda refers to four varnas (class, caste-group, or colour), as making up the body of the cosmic original man. "The Brahman was his mouth, the arms were made of Kshatriya, his thigh of Vaishya, and from his feet emerged the Shudras" (Rau, 1957; & Witzel,1997 as cited in Michaels, 2004, p. 169). The varna system is part of a larger system of categorizing all living beings called the *jati* (caste) system. The *Jati* system is characterized by a hierarchical structure based on levels of purity and pollution, with the Brahmans, the purest, at the top and the Dalits, most impure and polluting, at the bottom. Further, caste is regulated by "strict rules of endogamy and commensality" (Flood, 1996, p. 59). *Jaatibhed*, therefore, is the basis of the discrimination that Nalin feels Dalits have been

subjected to over the years. Historically, the untouchables were relegated to do menial tasks like clearing out dead carcasses of animals and clearing out human biological waste, tasks that upper castes would be loath to do. Over the years the privileged upper castes (this would differ depending on the demography of a particular area) have devised various creative forms of humiliation and violence to keep the lower castes in check. Being at the bottom of the hierarchy, the untouchable is at the receiving end of much of this violence. The system has also ensured greater economic power to the upper castes while the untouchables have been, for the most part, plunged in poverty. In fact, their very "Hinduness" seems heavily invested in the way the upper castes treat them; being defined entirely by the upper caste through their punishment and purity rituals and little else.

Turning to space

This thematic shift was initiated again by my enquiry into whether he had lived anywhere else other than in Gautam Nagar. He mentioned his home in Raigad, where now his parents and brother's family live. The community in Raigad was mixed, not a Dalit–Buddhist community like Gautam Nagar.

He grew up in Gautam Nagar and feels a sense of belonging to this place since it has people from his community. He feels supported and safe in Gautam Nagar. If he were in trouble, he is sure to have a whole lot of people hurry to be of help to him. He also sees a greater potential at mobilizing and uniting people in Gautam Nagar.

In contrast, he feels in spaces like the one in Raigad, if he were in trouble, people would come and help him in their individual capacities but unlikely to come together and unite for a cause. This is the main reason he prefers Gautam Nagar to a community that has a mix of religion and caste amongst its residents.

> But the family has grown and the house here is small. So, we had to move part of the family to Raigad.… But we never considered moving away from Gautam Nagar completely.

The conversation now shifts to whether he would recommend Gautam Nagar as a space of residence for me. He contends that this is a great place to live. Not only has it opened up opportunities for his community to pursue professional careers, it can also teach one many things about society, sociology, and religion.

> By religion, I mean that you will get to learn the principles of the Buddhist tradition. Within social and sociological learnings, you will learn about how a community unites together and takes action together.

For Nalin, not only does Gautam Nagar have mobilizing potential, it also has pedagogical value for someone like me. As someone so removed from this society, I can benefit from learning about Buddhism and mobilizing within the Dalit community by living here. Nalin is articulating the ethnographic potential of the space.

The conversation now shifted to areas that he hangs out in in Bombay and in Gautam Nagar. He visits Chaityabhumi, Shivaji Park, Dadar, regularly. A memorial for Dr. B.R. Ambedkar stands in Chaityabhumi and is revered by the Dalit–Buddhist. There used to be a *Buddhavihar* in the corner outside Gautam Nagar, where they used to hang out with friends. They also organized many programmes in the community there. But it was BMC property and they took it away from the Dalit–Buddhist. He and his friends tried very hard to retain the area for community recreation. He contends that if a Hindu wanted to build a temple, the local government would have given permission. But the Dalit–Buddhist community was not able to get the rights to the property.

Brahmanvad

Again, this turn was brought about by my question regarding religion-based violence in Gautam Nagar. He declared that there had never been any religion-based violence in this space. Then I ask if he had heard of any religion-based conflict or violence in the city. He immediately mentioned the Bombay Riots between Hindus and Muslims.

> Even behind that there’s a lot of history. Even behind that it is clear that *brahmanvad* was instrumental … you know what happens, madam, in India, RSS is a big organisation that is in operation. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

> While this organization is operating, under the name of this organization things that we don't want happen. Meaning the exploitation of the Dalits. Abuse of women. Terrorising people from Muslim localities. Provoking Muslims against Hindus. Provoking the Hindu against the Muslim. This is their (RSS) agenda.

At this point, Nalin tells me about a text message he received on WhatsApp. He had deleted it; otherwise, he could have shown it to me. The message claimed that the RSS sought to change the constitution of India. This has significant implications for Nalin as he considers the Constitution one of the most significant resources for Dalit empowerment. According to him, if implemented in its true spirit, the Constitution will prevent communities, castes, and religions from fighting with each other.

What is significant about this snippet is that even the Bombay Riots that was predominantly between the Hindus and Muslims, Nalin credits to *Brahmanvad*. So I asked him what he meant by *Brahmanvad*.

> *Brahmanvad*, madam, is such a concept that people haven't understood it yet. Because they don't want to understand. You get to learn Sanskrit language. You get to learn the Vedas. If you happen to read the Vedas, your tongue is cut off. Because it was not allowed. Now you are sitting here, doing a PhD. You wouldn't have been allowed to do a PhD those days.… Babasaheb was not against brahmins. He was against *Brahmanvad*. He was against that kind of thinking … the BJP is slowly taking away all the affirmative action that was guaranteed to SCs, STs and OBCs—like scholarships. This is discriminating against them in the field of education.

Brahmanvad or Brahminism, he believes, is the underlying principle of the caste structures. In the past, it was regulated by rules of who can learn to read and write and one was punished severely if one were to do things above their station. He makes the concept personal for my benefit, arguing that Brahminism was anti-women as well since I wouldn't have been allowed to do a PhD as I am currently doing. He borrows the idea from Ambedkar's own writing on Navayana Buddhism as being in opposition to Brahminism (Omvedt, 2003, p. 14–18). Finally, he makes a clear link between the

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and *Brahmanvad*, arguing that the Party (that is currently in power at the centre) sources its legitimacy from *Brahmanvad* and the traditional caste structures, which, Nalin believes, is in opposition to the Constitution of India.

Memories of the Bombay Riots

Nalin then moves on to accounting for specific events that happened during the riots. He reports a first-hand witnessing of violence.

> Nothing happened in our area. But around our area, a lot of rioting happened.… I have seen with my own eyes. Here, opposite, there was an Irani hotel. They completely destroyed it. There was another hotel on the main road. There too they destroyed everything. Two hotels were destroyed in front of my eyes. We were young then.… We had gone to play cricket. And in front of us, we saw a mob approaching towards us. That time we couldn't recognize them. They came and the violence started and we ran away. We saw that they were destroying everything in their wake. It was a very bad time. Even the Ramabai massacre happened like this only.

Nalin first demonstrates how Gautam Nagar was safe during the riots. However, right outside there was a lot of violence. He remembers the events with fear. And then, significantly, he tells me that the Ramabai Nagar massacre also happened similarly. He then moves onto describing the Ramabai Nagar Massacre.

Memories of Ramabai Nagar massacre

Nalin's memory of Ramabai Nagar massacre is recalled in more macro political terms.

> That time also, something similar happened. I do not remember the exact issue that started it. That time, they desecrated the statue of Babasaheb Ambedkar. All this is the agenda of the RSS. If anyone desecrates the statues of Ambedkar, this community will rise up in revolt … yes Police inspector Kadam was implicated. But who was his boss? Who gave him the orders? I am not saying RSS gave the orders. But it is definitely a question to ask.

Significantly, Nalin believes that both the riots and the Ramabai Nagar massacre were orchestrated by the RSS and its ideological allies. Muslims, like the Dalit Community, according to him are victims of *brahmanvad*.

Place-based precarity in Nalin's memories

In Nalin's accounts there are two different ways in which he experiences place-based precarity related to Gautam Nagar. First, he sees the mobilizing potential of Gautam Nagar as an advantage that he does not enjoy in a mixed community space. This understanding is specially anchored in the historical suffering and marginalization experienced by the Dalit community and, therefore, the increased need for mobilization. In a second way, through his anecdote about the *Buddhavihar* around the corner where he used to hang out with friends, he demonstrates the precariousness of his (and the community's) ownership on the land.

Nalin's recall of both the riots and the massacre at Ramabai Nagar is framed within macro political and social structures. It is this structural violence that has caused the riots and the Ramabai Nagar massacre, according to him. But more importantly, it is also this that provides Gautam Nagar with its unique mobilizing potential. Nalin's description of a place-based precarity could well be one engendered by caste structures. Religion and caste are not mutually exclusive in this case.

7.3 Conclusion

Kaneez builds a rich and complex narrative, fleeing from one space to another, seeking safety and better living conditions post the riots in Mumbai. Wherever she has lived, she reports experiencing a place-based precarity. This finding both supplements and complements Chatterjee's (2019) findings that the riots have given birth to tenuous relationships with the police, thereby contributing to Shivaji Nagar's geographically delimited precarity. Other than the police, traumatic memories of the riots, stigmatization of the post-riot Muslim ghetto, administrative neglect, and place-based precarity experienced in religion-marked spaces during the riots, all contribute to the precarity in Mumbra because. Further, Kaneez's narrative also complements Kirmani's

(2013) argument that communal violence happening elsewhere can contribute to Muslim-dominated spaces experiencing a place-based precarity.

In Nalin's interview, his narrative is preoccupied more with explaining macro social and political underpinnings of the violence and space than describing incidents in vivid detail like Kaneez. *Brahmanvad*/Brahminism forms the bedrock of all kinds of religious violence, whether Hindu–Muslim or violence against Dalits. Nalin looks to the constitution as a liberating force. In contrast, Satyanarayana (2020) argues that the discourse on free speech is instrumentalized by dominant caste members to continue to exercise structural violence in the form of hate speech, caste slurs, and other such means. Therefore, discourses on modern democratic processes can be used for liberating or oppressive purposes.

8. Chapter 8: Dadar Parsi Colony

A Local Oral History of Violence

8.1 Introduction

> One of my Muslim cab drivers said that he was living in a kind of a chawl as a paying guest of a Maharashtrian lady. One of those things in Wadala. And he said when there were three boys living in her room, Muslim boys, and these fellows came to attack these Muslim boys, she stood on the stairs and she took her knife—you know those Kolis[71] have their knife for their fish—and she said, "you touch any … these are like my sons. You will not touch them. You go over my dead body" and all. Quite dramatic. She screamed and shouted at them and in their language. She was a Hindu; so, then they went away. So those little pockets of bravery were there, you know. (Tanaz, 72)

This is an excerpt from Tanaz's interview—one of many anecdotes that she relates. All the stories are hearsay. But they are all vivid. These are the memories that shape her narrative of the riots. At one point, she tells me that a few days into the riots, she even braved a bus ride across the city to see what was happening. Suitably convinced that things were normal, she boarded a bus and left the safe precincts of Dadar Parsi Colony to see what havoc had been wreaked in the rest of the city. In an almost disappointed tone, she says, "Of course, I actually didn't get to see anything. I just came back home."

My interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony do not experience any place-based precarity. In fact, as observed in "Chapter 5:*Māhaul* boundaries, disgust, and precarity," they feel privileged to be living in the Colony and believe it to be an ideal location for residence. It is evident, therefore, that one cannot approach the data of memory narratives from

[71] First inhabitants of Bombay, Fisherfolk community

Dadar Parsi Colony with the same lens of precarity that I have adopted for Mumbra and Gautam Nagar.

In this chapter, I explore memory narratives from Dadar Parsi Colony and situate them within larger historical and local contexts. In the following section, I argue for writing an oral history of violence in Dadar Parsi Colony. For this, I take inspiration from two important works of oral history *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend* by historian Alistair Thomson (2013), and *Event, Metaphor and Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922–1992* by Shahid Amin (1995). In the next section, I briefly contextualize the emergence of Dadar Parsi Colony in the history of the Parsi settlement in Bombay. I then look at two ways in which my interlocutors conceive of the origin of the Colony. The first is to do with its founder and his personality. The second explores his vision of the Colony as a verdant space, a green, quiet oasis in the midst of the busy, concrete jungle that was Bombay. Following this, I explore the narratives of violence, arguing that the interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony construct the Colony as a peaceful space and an exemplary space inhabited by an exemplary minority. I also focus on the specific story of Palamkote hall and how different narratives of this story have become part of the Colony myth.

8.2 Towards a local oral history of Dadar Parsi Colony

> Oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did. (Portelli, 2016, p. 52)

Portelli remarks on the distinctive feature of oral history, vis-à-vis other historiography, that they are not so much concerned about events or what happened as much as with what it meant to the people whose oral narratives form the source material. Traditional historiography relied on written records for the construction of history. Oral histories, on the other hand, rely on oral traditions and peoples' narratives for their source. Another anecdote that Tanaz tells me is as follows:

> Of course, not in the Parsi Colony. But my own maid servant lived in Tardeo and her next-door neighbour was a Muslim; so, in the first riots, … the first riots happened immediately after the Babri Masjid. So, she got scared, and she left her home and brought some things—transistor radio and some little money—and she said, "If something happens to me, you keep this for me." So, we kept it. Then it became okay. December was quiet. Then again in January, it picked up no? So, in January when it picked up, Hindus, Muslims, everybody ran. That whole chawl was set on fire, and she said, and this is something that has struck me for years, you know what she said, "We all ran to Bombay Central. And this Muslim neighbour and I were sitting next to each other, and the Sena came and asked, "Who are the Hindus and who are the Muslims?" and then they separated them, saying Hindus go to platform number seven and others go to platform number ten, and so they separated them. And she kept feeling very bad because then she never got in touch with her friend you know, and she said, "I don't know where they went away because we were taken to a Municipal school as a temporary shelter." She said, "Where they took those people, I have no idea." So, you know those are little memories that become part of the larger narrative. (Tanaz, 72)

In both the anecdotes that Tanaz recounts, she is telling me of individual instances of solidarity between the Hindu and Muslim communities; that there were pockets of courage amidst the violence. These are the memories she wishes to report. First, they have struck a chord with her. She sees the story between her maid and her Muslim neighbour as sad because she believes that individuals were caught in a situation where they were separated. They had in fact, been friends. She recognizes the deep sadness in this story. Second, she places herself in the narrative by providing her maid help by keeping some of her things. And third, as she says, these are the little memories that have formed part of a larger narrative. What is this larger narrative? How does Tanaz reconcile her memories as part of the larger narrative?

In order to explore this, I examine two massive efforts at oral history constructions undertaken over the last 40 years. The first is *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*

by historian Alistair Thomson (2013), and the second *is Event, Metaphor and Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922–1992* by Shahid Amin (1995).

In *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*, Thomson (2013) explores the intersection of memory and identity. The book foregrounds the memories of Australian soldiers who participated in the First World War and their memories of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corp (ANZAC). In an introductory chapter (written for the first edition), Thomson lays down his own military upbringing and family history with respect to the First World War. This way, he also introduces the reader to the dominant narrative of the Anzac legend that influences public imagination. The legend speaks of the courage, good humour, endurance, and other laudable virtues exhibited by Australian (and New Zealand) soldiers at the front during the war. The legend has been constructed through several mainstream narratives. But the foundation stone has been established by wartime correspondent and historian Charles Bean (Thomson, 2013).

Thomson structures the book to include three different points of time in history: during the war, after the war, and the time between the 1980s and 1990s. In each of these time periods, Thomson approaches the work of constructing an oral history of Anzac through three different perspectives. First, he presents a conventional treatment of oral testimonies, exploring the diggers' experiences in war and after. In the second approach, he examines the Anzac Legend and how it came to be constructed. Here, he demonstrates importantly, how hegemonic dominant narratives emerge not by ignoring variety in experiences but by being sufficiently general and, therefore, being able to include all sorts of experiences. In a final analysis, he explores what he calls memory biographies. Of the 21 soldiers he interviewed in 1984, he chose three interviews that represented the diversity of experiences and remembering and interviewed them again in 1987. In the memory biographies he looks at individual narrative techniques and how the stories are told with reference to the Anzac Legend. In essence, he seeks to explore the interaction of experience, memory, and the legend.

In terms of theoretical underpinnings of his project, he uses the pun inherent in the word "compose" (Thomson, 2013, Kindle Edition, loc. 597) to establish the need for

memory narratives to have a certain public coherence while at the same time involving complex processes of selecting and discarding material to be recalled. The personal and the public narratives are recalled together through the memory narrative.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this oral history is the way in which a very clear hegemonic dominant master narrative, that is, the Anzac Legend, emerges. Scholarship, like Bean's historical works, toes a particular narrative, and it is important to look at what the dominant hegemonic narrative is. In the case of my data, for instance, there is some (admittedly varying) amount of scholarship both on the Bombay Riots as well as on the Ramabai Nagar massacre. But more importantly, spaces have dominant narratives. My interviews in Dadar Parsi Colony, as we shall see in the following pages, reflected a dominant hegemonic understanding of not only what the Colony meant to my interlocutors but also what it was supposed to mean to them. This dominant narrative can be gleaned from the history of the Colony, from Parsi history in India, and from popular documentation of the Colony. To contextualize the memory narratives of the violent events within this background is to contextualize the violence in the space. So, while Tanaz is probably referring to a narrative of the Bombay Riots when she speaks about "a larger narrative," I wish to shift the focus and look at how these memory narratives are embedded in the larger dominant narrative of Dadar Parsi Colony as a space.

The second remarkable aspect of Thomson's work and its relevance to my own work lies in his methodological choices, especially when he conducts the second round of interviews in 1987. In these interviews, he specifically wanted to explore four key interactions; those between interviewer and interviewee, those between the public legend and the private memories, those between the past and the present, and finally, those between memory and identity. His interview questions and process reflect this altered objective. For instance, in order to investigate the interaction between the public legend and individual memories, he began the interview with questions regarding their responses to various books or articles about the Anzac Legend. In writing his memory biographies, he uses a combination of two approaches towards analyzing memories. The first approach is to trace the construction of memory over the course of a time

period in a chronological fashion, revealing how changing identity and public contexts influence memory composition. The second approach focuses on a particular event that is being remembered and explores the layers of influence that time and context bring.

This aspect of the interview process is relevant to my thesis in important ways. First, I did not set out to write an oral history. I set out to document and analyze memories of two violent events in three different spaces in India. The idea of taking an oral history approach to the data from Dadar Parsi Colony suggested itself to me during the analysis phase. Concomitantly, while reading Thomson's work, I came to the conclusion, like Thomson, that the data could be read in different ways. While the data very clearly indicated people's memories of and experiences during the two violent events, the data could also be read as a life story that is composed in a certain way to narrate identity. In writing this oral history, I decided to focus on the interactions between space and violence, and space and memories.

In his seminal historical work *Event, Metaphor and Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922–1992,* Amin (1995) traces the different narratives of the story of Chauri Chaura. What is the story of Chauri Chaura? My own tenth grade history textbook, issued by the National Centre for Education and Research and Training (NCERT) that serviced the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), India, was possibly my first introduction to the Chauri Chaura incident. This 1987 edition narrated the story this way:

> Early in February, Gandhiji decided to launch a no-tax campaign in Bardoli district in Gujarat. However, in Chauri Chaura (in Uttar Pradesh) people turned violent and set fire to a police station causing the death of 22 policemen. When the news reached Gandhiji, he decided to call off the Non-Cooperation movement. The Working committee of the Congress met on 12 February 1922 and decided to concentrate on the popularization of the charkha, promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity and combatting of untouchability. (Dev,1987, p.73–74)

The excerpt is nested in a sub section of the chapter entitled "India's struggle for Independence." The sub section is titled the "Khilafat and the Non-Cooperation

Movement."

This textbook extract helps us understand how Chauri Chaura is currently understood in public memory. First, Chaura Chaura referred to an incident that resulted in the death of 22 policemen. Second, it marked an instance of violence in the Indian national movement—a violence that was marked by people engaged with the national movement turning violent against the administration (the police). Third, it pushed Gandhi to take the moral decision of calling off the non-cooperation movement at a time when it was at its peak and was successful.

This narrative is not reflected only in textbooks. Indeed, popular and authoritative historical works on the national struggle also recall the incident in a similar narrative form. In *India's Struggle for Independence*, Chandra et al., (1989) mention Chauri Chaura in the chapter titled "The Non-Cooperation Movement 1920–22."

> Gandhiji had been under considerable pressure from the Congress rank and file as well as the leadership to start the phase of mass civil disobedience. The Ahmedabad session of the Congress in December 1921 had appointed him the sole authority on the issue. The government showed no signs of relenting and had ignored both the appeal of the All India Parties Conference held in mid-January 1922 as well as Gandhiji's letter to the viceroy announcing that, unless the government lifted the ban on civil liberties and released political prisoners, he would be forced to go ahead with mass civil disobedience. The viceroy was unmoved and, left with no choice, Gandhiji announced that mass civil disobedience would begin in Bardoli taluqa of Surat district, and that all other parts of the country should cooperate by maintaining total discipline and quiet so that the entire attention of the movement should be concentrated on Bardoli. But Bardoli was destined to wait for another six years before it could launch a no-tax movement. Its fate was decided by the action of members of a Congress and Khilafat procession in Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur district of UP on 5 February 1922. Irritated by the behaviour of some policemen, a section of the crowd attacked them. The police opened fire. At this, the entire procession

> attacked the police and when the latter hid inside the police station, set fire to the building. Policemen who tried to escape were hacked to pieces and thrown into the fire. In all twenty-two policemen were done to death. On hearing of the incident, Gandhiji decided to withdraw the movement. He also persuaded the Congress Working Committee to ratify his decision and thus, on 12 February 1922, the Non-Cooperation Movement came to an end. (Chandra et al., 1989, p. 191)

I recall this snippet in full to illustrate the tone of the narrative. First, we are given a sense of the pressure that Gandhi was under from the Congress. Second, the government was unresponsive to both Gandhi and the All India Parties Conference. With this context in mind, Gandhi called for Civil Disobedience in Bardoli district. There is no indication of the local politics at that time. Chauri Chaura is only discussed in terms of what was happening with Gandhi and the Indian National Movement. When "Bardoli was destined to wait for another six years …" because some villagers in Chauri Chaura were "irritated by the behaviour of some policemen …" (Chandra et al., 1989, p. 191) thereby resorting to violence, there is a clear indication that Chauri Chaura was seen as a spoke in the wheel of the national movement, a completely avoidable obstacle, one that delayed, if not damaged, the national movement in important ways.

Amin takes this narrative as a point of departure, locating Chauri Chaura in the post-independence national imagination so,

> Indian schoolboys know of Chauri Chaura as that alliterative place-name which flits through their history books around the year 1922. Invariably, the riot is mentioned as a part of the activity of another subject, notably Mahatma Gandhi, and often the struggles of a nation. The number of policemen killed, Gandhi's torment, the suspension of an all-India movement because of localised violence – these are the images that school primers convey with their abbreviated allusion to the riot at Chauri Chaura. (Amin, 1995, Kindle Edition, loc. 139)

However, this simple narrative belies how this national narrative came to be over time.

To begin with, he describes the event and gives the socio-economic context of Chauri Chaura in the previous half century, specifically the emergence of Chauri Chaura railway station that made Chauri Chaura more town and less village. Then, in the immediate aftermath, we are given a glimpse of the way Gandhi and the Indian National Congress dealt with the news of the event. Gandhi was quick to make Chauri Chaura an example of the way in which the Congress organization had failed and, therefore, was quick to lay culpability at the feet of the participants in Chauri Chaura even as he acknowledged that there may have been many provocations. This is juxtaposed by an analysis of court documents and judgments that indicted the participants, sending some to the gallows and others to life sentences. In contrast, post-independence local histories tend to exculpate the participants in Chauri Chaura, focusing instead on the grand provocations that was presented by colonial rule itself. Today, for instance, there is a memorial to the participants who are hailed as martyrs in UP. The second half of the book concentrates on the oral narratives of descendants of participants of Chauri Chaura, examining local understandings of what happened. Amin undertakes interviews in the late 80s, when the families of those involved in Chauri Chaura were in their 70s and 80s. This work places the various oral narratives within the context of several competing narratives that existed through the different sources. And in this retelling, he finds a different narrative to the one that now exists in national memory. But not entirely so. Amin claims that even though there are slight variations in the regional familial discourse, they are tainted by and influenced by the national rhetoric. What is interesting, however, is the way in which the different retellings are reconciled with the national larger narrative.

Amin's approach is useful to this chapter on oral history in important ways. First, it provides for understanding the incidents of communal violence happening in a city as affecting spaces differentially. In Amin's case, the way the market place at Mundera remembers the event is different from the way people at Chotki Dumri remember the event. Second, it allows divesting the history of both these incidents of communal violence from dominant narratives. For example, the Bombay Riots are often spoken in tandem with other Hindu–Muslim violence that have happened in the city or in the country. Similarly, the massacre at Ramabai Nagar is usually analyzed within the scope

of violence against the Dalit community in Maharashtra. By juxtaposing these two events, this oral history wishes to look at their influence in understanding Dadar Parsi Colony within the city of Mumbai. Finally, Amin's approach allows us to foreground two aspects of the data: one is to amplify voices from the field, and the second is to focus on space as the main protagonist. In the following section, I situate the emergence of Dadar Parsi Colony in a larger history of Parsis in India and in Bombay.

8.3 Bombay's Dadar Parsi Colony

> My point of view is that I think, as a micro community, you kind of contribute a lot more to India. If you see the population of Parsis and their contribution to India, we are one of the most dynamic communities that way.… The reason being that, under the British, we were also favoured, but we took advantage of the situation, and we educated our young ones. And because of that, we are established; socially we are lot more liberal and lot more open minded as a community. (Parvez, 36)

Parvez goes on to tell me why he thinks it is important for Parsis to live in more mixed neighbourhoods, along with people from other communities. He even concedes that "we may dilute our identity in the process, but that is ok. It is very important that the young generation gets to meet different people from different backgrounds." Parvez's prefatory comments, however, are remarkable for two reasons. First, he locates the enterprising nature of the Parsi community to the advantage received from British patronage. Second, this advantage has created an open minded and liberal community that has made large contributions (in proportion to its share in population) to India. Parvez makes a connection between the present condition of his community and its historical antecedents. This historical consciousness of the community and its place in India were recurrent themes in the interviews. Dadar Parsi Colony and contemporary conceptions of it are located in this historical consciousness of both the community of Parsis in India as well as their unique trajectory in Bombay. In this section, I look at the brief history of Parsis in Bombay and the origins of Dadar Parsi Colony.

Dadar Parsi Colony, as a Parsi settlement appeared relatively recently in the history of Parsi settlements in Bombay. In an early history of Parsis, Karaka (1884) suggests that the earliest known Parsi in Bombay dates back to the Portuguese rule when Dorabji Nanabhoy provided important trade services and served as a go-between for the Portuguese administration and the natives. However, with the advent of the British and the growth of the city as a trade centre, a large number of Parsis moved from rural Gujarat and other trade towns like Surat to Bombay. Parsis exhibited loyalty to their government, demonstrating a seamless transition even when power changed hands as it did from the Portuguese to the British. The son of Dorabji Nanabhoy, Rastam Dorabji, for instance, proved to be an important military aid for the British. When the Siddis of Janjira invaded Bombay in the late seventeenth century, and the British garrison was unable to act effectively due to a bout of cholera, Rastam Dorabji led a militia of local fishermen to defend Bombay from the invading forces and retain it for the British (Karaka, 1884).

Karaka's history tells us a lot about Parsis as does his narrative. Luhrmann (1996, p. 96–99) remarks on this history as Karaka aligns the Parsis with the British and distances them from other Indians. In his reading, the nobility of the Parsis' Persian heritage uniquely positions them to become successful in British India. Luhrmann (1996, p. 96) acknowledges that historical memory, such as Karaka's, "is shaped by need and desire," pointing to the colonial elite's need to distinguish themselves from other Indians in the growing economy. The pro-colonization tone of this work notwithstanding, it is true that the Parsis did encounter economic advancement in colonial Bombay.

The good fortunes that the early Parsis in Bombay experienced were instrumental in bringing a lot more Parsis from rural Gujarat to Bombay. By 1813, Parsis had taken over the shipping industry in Bombay, securing and dominating trade with China. The growth in private trade ensured that there was also requirement of agents, suppliers and so forth, who were also sourced from the Parsi community. In 1811, for example, the Parsi population of Bombay Town and Island was 10,042 and by 1812, this population grew to 13,156 (Palsetia, 2001b). Around half of the population in Fort was Parsi

during this time. According to Karaka (1884), the census of Bombay taken in August 1851 estimates around 110,544 Parsis in Bombay. Parsis at this time owned half of Bombay. They also continued to be concentrated in Fort and the native town. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, they had spread to all parts of the city. By this time, Bombay had the highest number of Parsis in the world, depleting the Parsi count in the erstwhile Parsi stronghold, Surat.

Parsi history in India, therefore, for a large part is centred on the Parsi migration to Bombay and their fortunes connected with the growth of this city. In his historical work, Palsetia (2001b) demonstrates the different culture and ethos the Parsis developed in nineteenth century Bombay that contrasted with the Parsis of Gujarat. He explores the unique intersection of several political, social, and legal institutions that aided the formation of this unique Bombay Parsi culture. Luhrmann (1996), in an ethnographic enquiry examines the shift in identity that Parsis faced in a postcolonial dispensation that required them to be critical of their own colonial elite identity.

As a corollary, no history of Bombay is complete without reference to the Parsi contribution to its making. Histories delineating Parsi contribution to Bombay and India trace the successes of individual Parsi businessmen and industrialists contributing to the character of the city (see Poncha, 2018). In David's (1995), *Mumbai: The City of Dreams: A History of the first city in India*, the author dedicates several chapters to enterprising Parsi businessmen like Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, Jamsetji Tata, and others, while also including a whole chapter on *Fire Worshippers* as a community that finds a home in Bombay. He acknowledges that the Parsis dominated Bombay in the second half of the nineteenth century.

With the high Parsi influence on the growth of Bombay, it is not surprising that there is also a corresponding Parsi influence on the spatial dispensation of the city. The legendary Parsi characteristic of charity has influenced the landscape of the city. Most notably, the Wadias, one of the early Parsi settlers engaged in shipbuilding, are credited with making accessible and affordable Parsi housing for co-religionists in the city. According to Kurush Dalal (2018), of the 50,000 to 60,000 Parsis in the country, 90%

live in Bombay, and about half of these are housed in *baugs*. "Parsi baugs were exclusive, gated built spaces, consisting of identical buildings with tenements that ranged from the one room kitchen variety to three bedroom apartments" (Dalal, 2018, p. 182). The earliest Parsi colony was Nowruz Baug in Parel in 1907 (Dalal, 2018). Jerbai Wadia and her sons, built six *baugs* containing 1500 tenements and 1500 families living in them. Each family consisted of an average of 4–5 members. What the Wadias initiated pushed the Bombay Parsi Panchayat and other charities to engage with the construction of Parsi *Baugs* that dotted the city. Mumbai is, thus, dotted with century-old colonies that continue to house exclusively Parsi populations even today.

8.3.1 Mancherji Edulji Joshi

It is in this context of Parsi settlement in Bombay that the Dadar Parsi Colony, formally known as the Mancherji Joshi Colony, emerged in the early 1920s. Between 1899 and 1900, the Bombay City Improvement Trust (set up after the outbreak of the plague in Bombay in 1896) formulated the Dadar, Matunga, Wadala, and Sion schemes in North Bombay, as a means for expanding in the northern suburbs. The project sought to provide housing for 60,000 people at Dadar–Matunga, 60,000 at Sion–Matunga, and 85,000 in Sewri–Wadala (Dwivedi and Malhotra, 1995, p. 169). To this purpose, around 440 acres of prime agricultural land was acquired from the Dadar–Matunga scheme. This was further divided into 800 plots that were leased to the Government, the Zoroastrian Building Society, the Hindu Cooperative Housing Society, the Bombay Telugu Society, various public institutions, and private individuals. These then resulted in the creation of the Hindu and Parsi Colonies in Dadar and the Tamil Colony in Matunga, among other developments.

A civil engineer with the Bombay City Improvement Trust, Mancherji Joshi is credited with being able to persuade the trust to approve a covenant for the Zoroastrian Building society by which 102 plots in the Colony were reserved exclusively for Parsis. He is credited with the planning of both the Parsi Colony as well as the Hindu Colony which lies on the other side of Babasaheb Ambedkar Road. Architect Kamu Iyer (2014) compares Dadar Parsi Colony with other gated Parsi residential spaces thus:

> Dadar Parsi Colony was, in a sense, a gated community. Most buildings could be owned or rented only by Parsis. Yet, its exclusivity is almost imperceptible as it merges inseparably in the city's fabric unlike other gated communities that stand like lone objects in the city's landscape. (Iyer, 2014, Kindle Edition loc. 241–243)

Iyer compares the Colony with a gated community (*baug*) because the *baugs* were the most common-place Parsi housing initiatives in the city. The Colony resembled a gated community in that a majority of the buildings were controlled by the covenant. However, it was different from gated communities in the sense that it is not exclusive to the Parsis and, importantly, did not give the appearance of being exclusive. This was also the first housing initiative for Parsis that was initiated by a government development. Other housing projects for Parsis were initiated by private charitable trusts.

The story of the origin of Dadar Parsi Colony was explained to me by Zenobia, who at 75 had witnessed much of the area's history.

> Mancherji Edulji Joshi … was born in Karachi, and then, he was stationed here because of his integrity and good work. He was a chief engineer. In those days, most of the Parsi communities used to stay in the Fort area. Even now, there are quite a few Parsis staying over there; but like what is happening now, the builders have always had their eyes on good buildings to rebuild, and the Parsis also, when they got good prices for their old buildings, they started selling off the buildings, and middle-class Parsis were often dislodged. So suddenly, it dawned on him that, "Where will our Parsi community go if this is going to happen?" ... So then, one fine day, he thought of this place over here which was just an absolute jungle.… So, he just happened to talk to his bosses that, "this is the scenario, and my community will soon be on the streets, especially the middle class Parsis. So, can you allow me to build a colony sort of a thing over here so that the middle-class Parsis can come and reside over here," and as I said, because of his integrity, honesty, very good work, etc. they said yes … as

> I said, he was a middle class Parsi, and he died a middle class Parsi. (Zenobia, 75)

This excerpt demonstrates three characteristics of the origin of Dadar Parsi Colony. First, Zenobia underscores the lack of housing for new, immigrant, middle-class Parsis. Second, the space where the Colony now stands was an untamed, forested space. Third, she claims that the Colony was envisioned by Mancherji Joshi and it saw light of day because of Mancherji Joshi's personal qualities of integrity and hard work that earned him a good reputation as a chief engineer. Significantly, Zenobia emphasizes how Mancherji Joshi was not like the rich Parsi industrialists of Bombay. He was not as rich as them and could not provide for charities the way they could. However, he did depend on them for bringing in investment. This is significant in the emergence of Dadar Parsi Colony as being distinctive, in comparison to other Parsi settlements in Bombay. Without the financial backing, Mancherji Joshi depended on his reputation of being an honest, hardworking, good civil engineer employed with a government body to ensure that Dadar Parsi Colony emerged according to his vision. In what follows, Manaksha underscores the importance of Mancherji Joshi's reputation as an honest man with a pure vision.

> Previously, this Parsi Colony was very well laid out by a municipal engineer by name of Mancherji Joshi. A very respected figure, and a very straight forward figure, who would not think of taking one rupee to which he was not entitled. He laid out this Parsi Colony very well, and he laid out certain rules for the building constructions which made a beautiful colony. If you go to museum next to Jijamata Udyan there is a model of the Colony. Now, unfortunately, after so many years, lot of new buildings have come which don't follow those norms, and day by day, we see Mancherji Joshi's vision being destroyed. (Manaksha, 82)

Mancherji Joshi's reputation as an honest and straightforward man who had an aesthetic vision for the Colony stands in contrast to new builders who do not follow the rules set out by Joshi. Manaksha is also lamenting the loss of this aesthetic with newer

developments. Luhrmann (1996) demonstrates how Parsi identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was determined by the possession of three attributes: truthfulness, purity, and charity. Mancherji Joshi's reputation embodies at least two of these, his honesty and integrity speak to his truthfulness, while his vision for housing middle-class Parsis and fresh immigrant Parsis in Mumbai speak to his charitable character.

Mancherji Joshi had his work cut out for him since Dadar, at that time, was an outpost of the city of Bombay. Like Zenobia, Farhad also comments on the rural, undeveloped aspect of the space, which was then transformed into a beautiful colony by Joshi.

> Here means the lighting was very poor, transport was very difficult, trains used to be there but very difficult, so people did not like to come here. So Mancherji Joshi decided that he would develop this area. This was an agricultural area, see even today here there are no mosquitoes as elsewhere because it's an agricultural area. So, he decided to take this area and build houses for Parsis, so they would purchase plots, and they would develop or build their bungalows. That was a covenant for certain buildings which are meant for Parsis because they have invested, they have developed, they have built up the buildings, so they have reserved for Parsis. Because in our community, they wanted to see that we get the housing at the reasonable rate with the respect of taste. So that is how it is developed. (Farhad, 86)

This excerpt credits Mancherji Joshi's vision of transforming an almost rural agrarian area into a residential suburb. Developing an undeveloped, forested tract of land, Joshi envisioned an expansion of the city northwards and to create greater spaces for residents. Farhad also demonstrates how the covenant ensured that Parsis invested in the new land, providing legitimacy to Parsi exclusive buildings that the covenant stipulated.

> Now, gradually the buildings were built, and everywhere in those days, I was told, I was a very small baby that time, "to be let, to be let, to be let"; nowadays they have to fold their hands and say please give me a flat over here sort of. For

> that also, he had to say "please come and stay here." (Zenobia, 75)

Mancherji Joshi worked hard to persuade people to build in the Colony and also to move into Dadar Parsi Colony. Zenobia remarks on how the tables have turned now. Dadar Parsi Colony, from being a far-flung out-of-the-way suburb, has transformed into a much sought-after residential space that counts as being centrally located in the urban life of Mumbai.

Mancherji Edulji Joshi and his persona as an honest, hard-working Parsi who gained the trust of the British administration are inextricably linked to people's imagination of the space they inhabit and the kind of people they are. While almost all my interlocutors mentioned him, at least in passing as being instrumental in creating Dadar Parsi Colony, there were none who criticized him. He is seen as a hero and champion of middle-class Parsis amongst my interlocutors. His vision for Dadar Parsi Colony guides the way current residents view the city. But what was this vision?

8.3.2 The vision

> Of the private housing schemes, the most successful was that developed by the Zoroastrian Building Society which acquired a large plot of land east of Kingsway. Housing in this colony comprised picturesque and well designed two and three storeyed structures in varying styles. A fire temple, a training college for Parsi priests and dispensaries were also included in the design for the complex. All the buildings were constructed to allow maximum light and air, with wide spaces between. At the northern boundary, a fine open ground was earmarked for grass plots with a bandstand placed in the centre. (Dwivedi, 1995, p. 171)

Much of these elements that were included in the original plans have stood the test of time. Rustom Faramna Agiary and the Dadar Athornan Institute are the Fire temple and the training college, respectively. Towards the north of the Colony are the open grass plots now called the Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens. My interlocutors invariably mentioned these when I asked them about significant spots in Dadar Parsi Colony. In the initial interviews, I had asked interlocutors to draw maps of Dadar Parsi Colony,

the way they saw it, marking out spots that they felt were important to the landscape. They always mentioned the Mancherji Joshi *Putlā*, the Agiary, the Dadar Athornan Institute, and the gardens that were strewn around the Colony.

There are of course some changes as well. The Mancherji Joshi Five gardens, for instance, no longer sports a bandstand, but one of my interlocutors remembered a bandstand at the centre of the five gardens.

> You know the centre of five gardens was called bandstand, and every Sunday, there used to be a live performance over there. The main person who used to arrange that was Mancherji Joshi again. He used to call the police band, then he used to call certain ustaads also.… Then, at one time, my father was broadcasting radio prospects; in those days, it was not regulated and licensed and all that, and anybody could do the broadcasting. So Mancherji Joshi said, "why don't you broadcast to Thane and let them listen to our bandstand." So, my father used to broadcast from Gulshan Terrace … but unfortunately, in Thane not many people were interested; so, it died a natural death. (Manaksha, 82)

In his reminiscence, Manaksha communicates the significance of the bandstand in the social life of the Colony. He also demonstrates how much of an integral role Mancherji Joshi played in the Colony even after its development. Mancherji Joshi, himself, lived in the Colony. His vision of a picturesque, verdant, and quiet space continues to exist in the minds of contemporary residents of the Colony.

> When you say Dadar Parsi Colony then, it is like you know everyone is like, "wow you live there," you know; it is like green, and it is like nicely kept because of the three and two storey buildings. And now, if you see in this lane, if you just walk around, there are two or three plots getting redeveloped into 16 and 17 storeyed buildings, so now you will start seeing the difference. It won't be the real authentic Dadar Parsi Colony my dad grew up in; it would be all these high-rise buildings, and the charm is lost. It will be a concrete jungle now. (Sheharnaz, 37)

Sheharnaz grew up in Pune but moved to Dadar Parsi Colony after marriage. But her father grew up in the Colony, and she was familiar with it as a child. With development of high rises, she believes that the authenticity of the Colony will be lost. From being a green haven, it will become a `"concrete jungle." Sheharnaz also conveys a sense of loss because the Colony is not likely to remain green like it was in the past.

> If you go around the Parsi Colony, of course, the houses were built for the Parsis, and he (Mancherji Joshi) made it compulsory that whoever built building, it should be only one plus two floors and 15 feet open space all around the building. Each and every building had this; they had beautiful gardens, beautiful trees, and before the buildings came up, there are about 14 gardens in our Parsi Colony including the five gardens over here … so, there is lots of greenery for which we are still today fighting to see that the open space are kept well. (Zenobia, 75)

While interviewing Zenobia in her home, I also spotted a coffee-table book called *Trees of Dadar Parsi Colony.* Authored by the naturalist and environmentalist resident of the Colony, Katie Baglie (2014), it presents around 60 trees found in the Colony. Dadar Parsi Colony was envisioned as a verdant space and continues to have a verdant reputation, with many gardens and parks. Dwivedi claims that the layouts and schemes incorporated the garden city ideas that were prevalent at that time in England.

The *Mancherji Joshi Colony Directory* of 2003, a publication that provides details of the then residents in the area and the different associations and organizations that exist within the area, comprises an article entitled *Our Garden Colony* by Bahadur A Palkhiwalla. Its opening paragraph is as follows:

> As I write this article for the new Colony Directory, my mind goes back to the days when I used to see the Founder of the Colony Seth Mancherji Edulji Joshi take his usual morning walk at the Five Gardens. Possibly, if he were to take his second birth in Dadar Parsi Colony and go around again, he would be very pleased to know that now there are more trees and flowering shrubs. Even the residents are proud to be living here, than in other areas of Mumbai. [sic](Palkhiwalla, 2003, p. 33)

Many of my interlocutors valued the Colony for this verdant reputation. A cursory glance at the two Instagram accounts dedicated to the Colony will demonstrate the important role that gardens, parks, trees, birds, and animals play in presenting the Colony to the outside world. @dadarparsicolony_dpc describes the Colony as “one of the most beautiful colonies of the city” (Instagram, @dadarparsicolony_dpc, retrieved March 2021). Most posts on this Instagram handle are either focussing on the century-old buildings, their architecture, and the art-deco, or they are focussing on the trees and general verdant character of Dadar Parsi Colony.

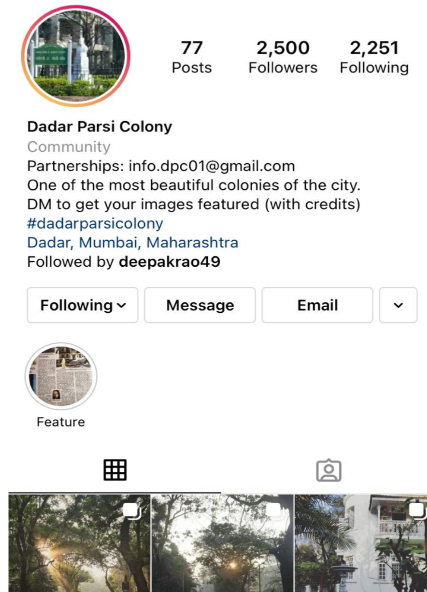


Figure 26: Screenshot of @dadarparsicolony_dpc Instagram handle

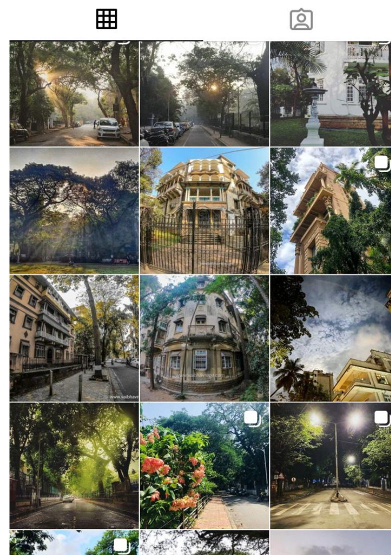


Figure 27: Screenshot of @dadarparsicolony_dpc instagram handle

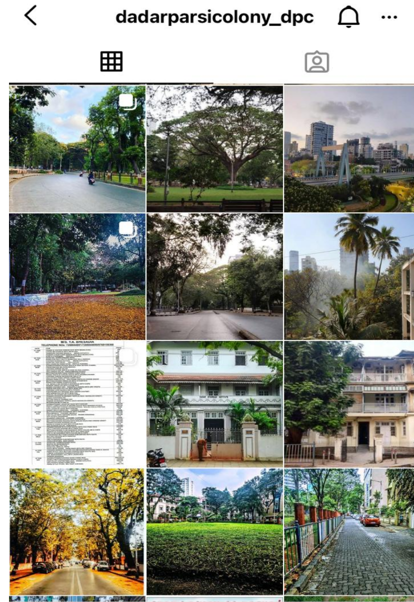


Figure 28: Screenshot of @dadarparsicolony_dpc Instagram handle

Figure 29: A post from @dadarparsicolony_dpc Instagram handle

Figure 30: A post from the @dadarparsicolony Instagram handle

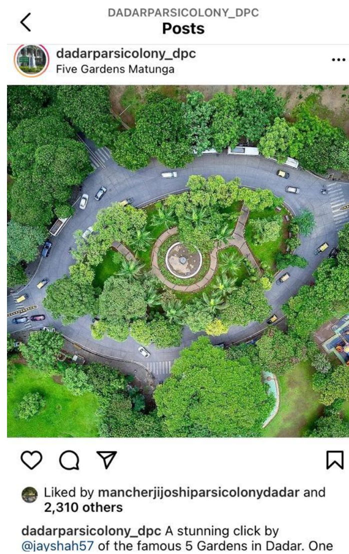


Figure 31: A post from the @dadarparsicolony showing an ariel view of the five gardens

Another Instagram handle that documents Dadar Parsi Colony is the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony (Instagram, @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony, retrieved March 2021). While this Instagram handle does show the green environs and the classical architecture that characterizes the Colony, it also includes posts that describe people and culture of the space (including quite a few posts on the Zoroastrian religion).

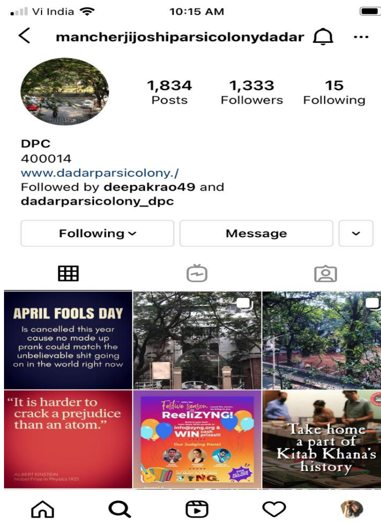


Figure 32: Screenshot of @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle

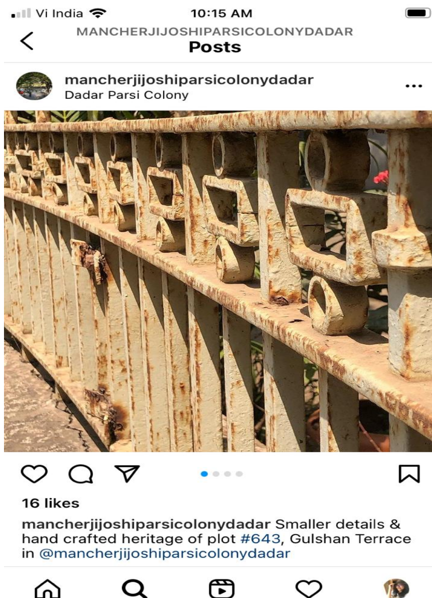


Figure 33: Screenshot of architectural heritage of the Colony in the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle

Figure 34: A post on the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle

Figure 35: A post on the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle

Figure 36: A post on the @macherjijoshidadarparsicolony Instagram handle

Figure 37: A post on the @mancherjijoshidadarparsicolony instagram handle

Having established the context of the emergence of Dadar Parsi Colony, according to my interlocutors, due to the good offices of an engineer in the colonial administration who sought to create a residential space for middle-class Parsis and as a verdant space that continued to be valued as such, let me turn my attention to the narratives of violence.

8.4 Narratives of violence

In this section, I engage with the memories of violent events and the narratives within which they are couched. These stories, I argue, construct for us an idea that Dadar Parsi Colony is regarded as an oasis of peace, non-violence, and quiet in a city that is violent. My interlocutors communicate this in three ways. First, they directly allude to the Colony as a peaceful space, directly linking the space to the majority population there, the Parsis. Parsis, and in extension, Dadar Parsi Colony, do not participate in violence, in some cases, even ridiculing the idea. Further, they build on their exemplary minority status to differentiate between themselves, Muslims, and Dalits, contributing to the understanding that space becomes violent or not violent because of the people that reside in them. Finally, I take up the recurrent story of Palamkote Hall in my interviews, arguing for the construction of a myth. In the several retellings of this myth, Dadar Parsi Colony emerges as a space of refuge engendered by the generous and justice-oriented Parsi community.

Even in the early stages of the interviews, while speaking about space, many interlocutors spoke of the Colony being peaceful. Interlocutors even characterized Parsis as essentially peace loving. Yazdi, a 22-year-old interlocutor, for instance, talks about the Parsis as a "peaceful race." Tehmina says, "Parsis are basically a peace-loving people. They don't get involved in violence." When I asked, "Never?" she emphasized, "Never."

Many of my conversations about violence in Dadar Parsi Colony would end with my interlocutors theorizing about why they thought Hindus and Muslims rioted at all. I would then ask them why they thought Parsis were never involved in violent conflict

situations. In response, Naheed, asked me, “Do you know that the first Bombay riot was a Parsi–Muslim riot?” I asked her for more details.

> So, from what I know, it happened in Bhindi bazaar. Parsis published a newspaper article depicting the prophet Mohammed. In the 1900s … early, from what I remember. I have a story here written about it so I can tell you. It was published in a Gujarati magazine. Sorry! (checking her phone for the details), it was much earlier than I thought. 1851 this happened. They published the biography of the Prophet in a Gujarati magazine, and that led to Muslim and Parsi clashes for a month in 1851. Basically, what happened was an unidentified person pasted a copy of the Gujarati article on the wall of the Jama Masjid in South Bombay. People came out, saw it after the Namaz and got fired up. So actually, the first two riots in the city, the first communal riot was Muslim and Parsi but the first riot itself was Parsi's rioting against killing of dogs by municipal officials. So, we weren't always the silly slugging community that you imagine. (Naheed, 30)

Naheed was referring to something she had read recently. So, during the interview, she located the piece of writing in Scroll.in (Chari, 2015, January, 16), an independent news portal on the web, on her phone and read out for me significant bits of the article, also sending me the link for my future reference. The first thing Naheed does is to disabuse me of the notion that the Parsis are a peaceful people. To support her argument, she mentions two incidents of rioting led by Parsis in the nineteenth century. The first one she mentions, the one she read about in Scroll.in, was an incident in 1851 when Parsis and Muslims came to blows after a Parsi newspaper published a profile (including an illustration) of the Prophet Muhammad in a Gujarati newspaper (I have mentioned this riot in Chapter 1 while exploring the history of communal violence in Bombay/Mumbai). The act of depicting was not enough to trigger the riots, however. As Naheed later emphasized to me, it was the “mischievous act” of pasting the article on the wall of the Jama Masjid in South Bombay that sparked the violence. The violence itself seems to be targeted at the Parsis and not the other way around. There is no account of a Parsi retaliation. However, this was a story of Parsis provoking

religious sentiment that Naheed felt ran contrary to the belief that Parsis did not get involved in incidents of violence.

The other incident she refers to as the first ever riot in Bombay was in 1832 (also mentioned in Chapter 1). Palsetia (2001a) refers to this as the Bombay Dog Riots of 1832. To deal with the menace of stray dogs on the streets, the British administration gave municipal authorities the legal power to kill stray dogs. The riots stemmed from Parsi religious sentiments being offended because of the slaughter of the dogs. Other religious communities also participated in the riots. However, a majority of the rioters were Parsi, and it was organized by the Parsis, who, by 1832, controlled a large part of the social and economic activity of the city of Bombay (Palsetia, 2001a, p. 17). With these two instances, Naheed seeks to contest what she assumes is a popularly held belief that Parsis are a peaceful people with no violent histories.

8.4.1 A peaceful space

Vahbeez was the only other interlocutor who mentioned the 1851 riots to me. She was overcome with laughter when she mentioned this and then went on to tell me why she found it so funny. She referred to a more recent event where residents of Dadar Parsi Colony took to the streets in protest.

> I thought it was just a laugh riot. Parsis rioting! I mean, c'mon. In between, just now, we had, there was this move to maybe have hawkers in the Colony, allowed in the Colony area. There was like this whole thing about "no, no, no this is not right. We don't want that." Everybody decided to take out a protest march. So, one Sunday, the Parsis, I mean there was a heavy amount of preparation; it even went to the extent that we were going to walk from Five Gardens to the Statue. You know the distance? Nothing. Just walk down that. So-called silent protest. Now, there was discussion whether there were going to be refreshments, on the chat, there was a discussion. (Vahbeez, 42)

Vahbeez's account of a protest march that took place in the Colony to protest the BMC regulations that allowed hawkers to occupy the pavements of the Colony is replete with irony. Once the decision to protest was taken, it was decided to walk the entire distance

from the Five Gardens to the Statue of Mancherji Joshi. The distance is around 300–500 metres, but she exaggerates, saying 50 metres to emphasize the short distance. She places the image of the rioting Parsi in this humorous context. She continued her story,

> We were just having a nice chat and walking down. My friend's niece says, "What if we have a stampede?" So, she is told by somebody, "Just jump onto the nearest parked car. No Parsi will ever damage your car." So, this is the hawkers protest march. With smiling policemen along the way who are looking at us like "crazy *bawas*.[72]"… At the statue all the Parsis melted away. Rest of them carried on to Hindu Colony. Everyone was like, "It's Sunday, we have to have *dhansak*[73]. It's Sunday, I need to have a beer. It's Sunday, I am going home." (Vahbeez, 42)

Through her story, Vahbeez constructs a certain image of the Parsi and the Colony that is at odds with the idea of protest. The exaggerated concerns of alarm are quenched by funny responses. Parsis value their food and drink and their Sunday over protesting for a cause. The Parsis take the protest march with levity, almost like it is a picnic. According to Vahbeez, this laidback, jovial, law abiding image of the Parsi is directly at odds with the image of a people who would take to the streets for a cause. Consequently, the Colony as a site for protest and demonstration is antithetical to its image as a peaceful space.

Vahbeez was not able to tell me exactly when this protest march happened. She was only able to say that it took place in the very near past, within the last two years. A demonstration fitting Vahbeez's description was reported in the *Mid-Day* (A Correspondent, 2016), a city-wide daily. It happened on a Sunday in March 2016. But there have been a few more such protests over the last couple of years, ever since the Street Vendors Act was passed in 2014. Seeking to provide greater livelihoods, the act allotted space scattered across Dadar Parsi Colony, Hindu Colony, and Matunga for

[72] Bawas (and Bawis) is a term non-Parsis use for Parsis. "Crazy Bawas" is often a term that non-Parsis use to refer to Parsis in a derogatory way.

[73] A Parsi meat and lentil dish.

1800 hawkers to sell their wares. Residents from Hindu Colony and Parsi Colony united to protest this legislation and took to the streets in demonstrations several times.

In a humorous newspaper report of such a demonstration in April 2015, filled with the same levity that Vahbeez expresses, Bachi Karkaria begins with

> Jimmy Gymkhanawalla is flexing his muscles. Homi Homeopath looks like an overdose of Nux Vomica. Soli Solicitor is preparing a brief which is anything but. Dadar Parsi Colony has never been so agitated—and certainly never so united—in living memory. (Karkaria, 2015, April 19)

Like Vahbeez, Karkaria emphasizes how uncharacteristic it is for Dadar Parsi Colony to be a site for an agitation and Parsis to be mobilizing for a cause. Her fictionalized Parsi names also indicate that the Colony's residents, for the most part, are upper middle class, professionals. Farhad recalls the same protest march, albeit more reverentially,

> For instance, there was some stupid law where BMC said that they will give all the footpaths here for hawkers, and that is when the whole Colony got together, not only here, but even the Hindu Colony, and there was a big procession to bring to the notice of those people there.…That is when the whole Colony got together, and there was a procession, that is the first and the last procession I remember in the last about 70 years since I have lived here. Otherwise, never processions. It came to their notice that these Parsis, who were never coming out, are taking part in this; then there must be something really wrong with this. (Farhad, 86)

Even though Farhad's tone is more serious than Vahbeez's, he agrees with Vahbeez that the Parsis are not known for protests, and more importantly, in his 70 years of residing in Dadar Parsi Colony, this was the only time that all the residents came together, united for a cause. And it is this aspect that lends credibility to any protest that happens here.

Why do Parsis not participate in protests? Zenobia referred to the small numbers of the community as being one of the reasons.

Parvez elaborates on this theme,

> We are less than a lakh, and I think we have common sense. With this kind of event we don't want to get wiped out in one riot, and we can't instigate any religious violence. Second is we never had the reason, and because we are an educated lot, we have lot of faith in the judiciary of India. So luckily, India is a very fair, and we have a very strong judiciary; so, whenever we are having any difficulties or challenges as such, we have used lot of our political clout because invariably we have someone or the other in the high place, whether it is politics or government.… That is how we handle, and there has never been a need to really indulge in violence. (Parvez, 36)

Pavez refers to two things that have prevented Parsis from getting involved in violence. One is the small numbers and, therefore, the risk of getting into violent conflict with another community. Second, he suggests that Parsis have greater faith in institutional processes and in the fact that they are able to infiltrate these institutions at the higher levels. This is the political influence that Parsis have, a socio-economic elite that came into prominence during British colonial rule (Luhrmann, 1996; Palsetia, 2005). Interestingly, the two instances of Parsis involved in a rioting situation (mentioned both by Naheed and Vahbeez) are both from the nineteenth century, when Parsi's formed a major chunk of the native populations and were a force to be reckoned with in the city.

> Of course, Parsis will bullshit and say, "no, no, we don't do all this bullshit." He's killing his own cousin to take away his house. He is a bastard that way. A Parsi is not what they portray themselves (to be). No. I know Parsis very well. He will take away something from his cousin, something from there when he can snatch it away. You understand? So, he can be violent. He can beat up a poor old man as well. But because he doesn't have the muscle power, he will not want to be violent because he will get beaten up. (Ardeshir, 45)

Ardeshir rubbishes the idea that Parsis are not violent. According to him Parsis are not involved in communal violence simply because they don’t have the numbers. It does not make practical sense. However, he insists, at the personal level, Parsis are violent and are capable of beating up their own kith and kin for property. Ardeshir, however, acknowledges that the non-violent image of the Parsi exists and that is how the Parsi wishes to be seen by non-Parsis.

The image of the peaceful Parsi, together with the image of the Colony as anything but a site of confrontation or demonstration contributes to the construction of the Colony as a “peaceful space.”

8.4.2 An exemplary minority space

Much of this peaceful Parsi image emerges from the Parsis’ construction of their own community as a model community in the polity of India vis-à-vis other minority communities. Buck (2017), in a study on the Hindutva ideology and minorities in India, distinguishes between the exemplary minority and the threatening minority. He argues that Hindutva ideology conceives of the Indian nation as one that is the homeland of Hindus and other religions that find their origin within this territory including Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. Of the people who follow religions that originated in foreign lands, the ideology construes a hierarchy where Muslims and Christians are classified as threatening minorities, and Jews and Parsis are classified as exemplary minorities. This allows Hindutva to claim to be pluralistic even while delimiting nationhood.

In my interviews, there were instances where belonging to the Parsi community had helped in potentially explosive communal situations. For example, where Hindu mobs have potentially mistaken Parsis for Muslims.

> I remember, initially, when initially the Shiv Sena came into existence, we had gone to a movie. I think I was just married at that time, and it was a night show. After the show, people said that don't go from Parel-Lalbag side … there’s a lot of rioting going on, this, that, and the other, and the women are taken out of the car, and they are raped, and there's fighting going on, this and that. But we said

> why should we take other route, and we came back the same way only … it was all quiet, but as we entered Parel Lalbaug, suddenly from one lane, a whole group of people came out shouting with sticks in their hands. They were saying roll down the glass windows, and somehow, I don't know why all of us together, I don't know why, said we are Parsis and started showing our sadra. And he said oh okay go. So, we came peacefully back home. (Zenobia, 75)

The *sadra* is the sacred inner shirt that Parsis are mandated to wear underneath their clothes, on the skin. Zenobia and her group were saved by the identification of the *sadra* as a particularly Parsi attire. While explaining how the Shiv Sena, a regional Maratha Hindu nationalistic party, is not hostile towards the Parsis, Buck (2017, p. 2811) recalls a similar anecdote that one of his interlocutors told him about. “They ripped his shirt off and saw that he was wearing the sacred shirt and thread that identify him as a Parsi.” Rustom, while talking about the riots, told me that he was concerned about the name *madressa* for the Parsi religious school, since it could be mistaken for an Islamic religious school. On the other hand, when I asked Ardeshir if he ever feared being mistaken for a Muslim, he said that Maharashtrians understand the difference between Parsi and Muslim, and the Parsi is considered decent by even the cops. A corollary of the bonhomie enjoyed by Parsis with the police is the fact that Parsis are more willing to call the police in case of trouble.

> I will tell you one story…. Somebody had put an explosive in a motorcycle, and that had gone off … so the police said that any motorcycles lying around, report them to us. Now, there was a motorcycle exactly opposite to our balcony, and I asked everybody whose motorcycle this was, and there was no answer. So, I went to the police station, and he said take a constable with you; so, I came here with the constable and showed him the motorcycle lying here for several days and nobody came. But what this poor constable could do. He is not given any instructions or training, and all that is given to him is a stick, so he takes the stick and starts hammering the motorcycle. By that time, a crowd collected and wondering what is this fellow doing. In the meantime, there was lot of damage on the motorcycle. After a while he turns around to

> the crowd and says, “There is no bomb in this.” The motorcycle belonged to Khushnaz husband, he was not married at that time, he was a shippie, and he had left his motorcycle and gone to sea. I don't know even Khushnaz knew that it was his motorcycle. (Manaksha, 82)

Manaksha paints for us a picture of an ill-equipped police force, and yet he has enough faith in the institution to make a complaint. Do other minority communities enjoy a similar level of faith and trust in Indian institutions? Buck (2017) argues that the exemplary minority, as envisaged by the Hindutva ideology, is not as inclusive as it wishes to sound. It is, in fact, exclusive of other communities, in its very constitution. Take for example this memory of the riots that Parvez had. In it, he describes how the Muslim identity is not very well integrated with Indian institutions.

> Amongst the police also there was a very very strong anti-Muslim feeling.… So, for example, on Mohammad Ali road, I had friends living in those areas, so they would boast of things like that “In my locality no cop can enter,” so I would say “Why?” “If he enters, then I will slap him.”… “While he is on duty, we will not touch him, but after he gets off his duty, then he is off duty, and I can go and slap him.” So, these things were happening and cops were also completely biased against them. (Parvez, 36)

Parvez makes two observations here. First, that the police were biased against the Muslims. Second, Muslims who lived in areas around Muhammad Ali Road (Muslim areas) had more power than the police in those areas. Not only was Muslim identity not well integrated with the state institutions and state mechanisms, there was an impression that Muslim areas were beyond the control of state institutions. In contrast to this perception of the Muslim identity, Buck’s argument as well as Ardeshir’s comment suggest that the Parsi identity is well integrated with the Indian state, Hindutva or otherwise.

One of the different ways in which Parsis are construed as the exemplary minority, Buck (2017) argues, is the enduring Parsi story, *Quesse-ye Sanjan* or the *Kissah-e-Sanjan*. It is the earliest documentation of the exodus of the Parsis from Iran to the

shores of Gujarat. A Persian poem comprising of 433 couplets, *Quesse-ye Sanjan* was composed in the sixteenth century by a Zoroastrian priest, Behman Kaikobad Sanjana. This quasi-historical text documents the arrival of the Parsis in Diu, where they settled for 19 years. The document argues that they set sail once again and landed on the shores of Sanjan sometime in 716 CE or 775 CE. They then met the reigning king of Sanjan, Jadi Rana, who, after conversations about their religion and placing a few conditions to their settlement, allowed them to settle in Sanjan, eventually even building a Fire Temple for them in the area. In scholarly works, the *Quesse-ye Sanjan* has attracted literary interests (Williams, 2009) and historical interest (Nanji and Dhalla, 2007). In popular imagination, however, as Williams (2009) notes, even as the historicity of this event may be debated, the story "reflects Parsi identity, pride and ethos." Over centuries, Buck observes, Parsis have narrated various versions of the story that may or may not be in Sanjan. One version, for instance, mentioned by Nanji and Dhalla (2007, p. 55), is the bowl of milk and a spoon of sugar story.

This version appeared in the conversation that I had with Dinaz and Sheharnaz. Dinaz was berating the Parsi priests who do not allow conversion to Zoroastrianism. Sheharnaz then explained this rigidity among conservative Parsis with a short version of the story.

> The Gujarati king said there is no room for you'll and sent a bowl full of milk; it was to the brim. Our head of the Parsi community then added sugar and said that we will sweeten your life and not interfere in what you are doing. (Sheharnaz, 37)

This story is not part of the *Quesse-ye Sanjan*, but does form part of the myth of the Parsi migration to India. It also dominates the popular understanding of the myth. Most importantly, it emphasizes Parsi commitment to not interfere with the religious life of the natives and to contribute socially, politically, and economically to India.

So, for instance, when I asked Rustom why he thought Parsis were not involved in violence, one of the reasons he mentioned was the fact that Parsis were asylum seekers.

> We feel we have been done a favour, being given asylum in this country, so the gratitude angle is always there. So that's why we never have asserted for our rights over here. We have always taken it as if we do our duty, we will be given our right; such sort of mentality has been there. It's a sense of justice that the Parsis will stand up; the sense of justice is very strong in most Parsis, but we don't generally resort to violence to get what we want. We try other legal, constitutional means to get what we want. (Rustom, 51)

The construction of the Parsi as a grateful asylum-seeking minority engenders the idea that the Parsi is also one that is unlikely to cause trouble in anyway.

This becomes especially apparent when my interlocutors compare themselves with other minorities in India. When I asked Beroz if she remembers the massacre in Ramabai Nagar, she responds:

> So very vaguely, I remember. Because the Ramabhai thing is always a controversial place. Keeps erupting into violence. Some mischief mongers you know desecrating the statue. They want to disturb the peace of the area, the locality, and that's why they do it.… See, just last week I read, a Mother Mary's statue was desecrated. But then, probably the Christians being a peaceful community, okay, police probe is on and off. But see the Dalits, probably the weaker, the downtrodden, the uneducated, illiterate section of the society, they get aggressive. So, the violence is from there. Why no violence when the mother Mary's statue was desecrated? I'm sure, God forbid, if the Mancherji Joshi statue, if that is desecrated, we are not going to break out into violence. For that matter, even in history, being a history professor, I'm drawing that analogy. See the educated people like Gokhale and Gandhi, they would always believe in peaceful resolution, signature campaigns, memorandums, appeals to the government. But it was this illiterate, uneducated section, okay? At that time, we said they have the guts to revolt to fight to be violent. So, it was always like that. Even in this Ramabhai Nagar, because of the Dalits and the illiterate

> section, they are more violent. Well, here it will be a more peaceful resolution. Even if the statue is desecrated. (Beroz, 40)

There are three remarkable comments that Beroz is making about Parsis, Dadar Parsi Colony, Christians, Dalits, and the City of Mumbai. First, she refers to Ramabai Nagar as a controversial space. And this, she contends, is because it keeps erupting into violence. She then analyzes that in the event of Mancherji Joshi's statue being desecrated, it is unlikely that the residents of the Colony will take to the streets or resort to violence. In a similar comparison of an event where the Mother Mary's statue is desecrated, she does not expect Christians to resort to violence. She then attributes this to the Dalit community being uneducated and downtrodden. She assumes that the Parsis of Dadar Parsi Colony and the Christians are educated and therefore unlikely to be violent. Then, as a student of history, she provides further evidence from history, equating the non-violent strategies adopted by Gandhi and Gokhale with the Parsi and Christian communities' hypothetical reaction to an incident of desecration. Finally, she equates Dalit with being illiterate. With her historical and communal analysis, she juxtaposes for us an image of the educated, model, non-violent minorities (Parsis and Christians) with the illiterate, uneducated, downtrodden, and violent minority of the Dalits. According to her, this gives birth to different spaces, making Ramabai Nagar a space for controversy and violence while the Dadar Parsi Colony is a space constructed by its exemplary minority residents.

In another memory of the Ramabai Nagar massacre in the Colony, Manaksha lays the blame squarely on the inhabitants of Ramabai Nagar and local politicians.

> Some truck loaded with petroleum products had an accident just outside that colony, and the people living in that colony started looting those vehicles. You can always unload oil or petroleum, and the police saw that this is a fire hazard, and they tried to control. In the meantime, politicians always look for a chance to excite people and get into the middle or top of the fight. So, this thing was put as a spark for violence, and it escalated to such a state that the police could not control the petroleum products being pilfered; it was not the question of

> pilferage but of the thing exploding and getting killed with the fire. And they just had to fire. Suppose you are an inspector, what would you do at that point. You can't say that I will fire at this person and I will fire at the leg and you just got to do the best you can under the circumstances. I did not see the violence, but it was on my daily route. So, night and day, I could see what was going on. (Manaksha, 82)

The police, in Manaksha's analysis, had to do what it takes to keep the city safe. Because if they hadn't opened fire, the petroleum filled truck was likely to be a fire hazard and would have caused damage to property as well as human lives. Manaksha is reflecting the mainstream media narrative of this event. Indeed, the police argued that the case was one of arson and required force to quell. Only the Gundewar Commission report clearly identified caste as the basis for the violence.

There are four disparate ways in which my interlocutors imagine the Colony as an exemplary space. First, they consider their Parsi identity to be useful in potentially explosive communal situations. Second, they contrast the Parsi identity as better integrated to the Indian institutions and processes than other minority identities, like the Muslims. Third, they dip into their historical narratives of their entry into India to develop the image of the non-interfering Parsi. Fourth, they compare the space favourably to other minority spaces (spaces that are occupied by other minorities) like Ramabai Nagar. Did the peaceful and exemplary space see any kind of violence? Is there an enduring story related to the Bombay Riots that marks Dadar Parsi Colony for its residents? The Palamkote Hall myth is one.

8.4.3 The Palamkote Hall Myth

> You see, in Wadala, there are quite a lot of Mohammedans around the Mosque; those people were targeted, and there was a Parsi corporator here who collected those people and gave them shelter in one of the halls which is here. So, they were all taken to the hall. Because they were being targeted and even the police from the other way round. So, they were actually open to lot of harassment. (Farhad, 86)

This was an oft-recurring story during my interviews. Farhad provides the four fundamental elements of the story. First, Wadala, the area adjacent to Dadar Parsi Colony has many Muslim (he called them Mohammedans) residents. Second, they became easy targets, not only for rioting Hindus but also for police harassment. Farhad's wife, Armaity provides more information on this.

> Even the nearby tailor shops also, they were targeted at Wadala. There were one or two tailor shops, and they literally took out the machines and broke the machines and threw it on the road and were badly targeted. (Armaity, 85)

Third, a Parsi corporator provided shelter to them in a Hall. Later in the interview, Farhad clarifies that he is referring to Palamkote Hall that overlooks the Mancherji Joshi Five Gardens and is separated from the Dadar Athornan Institute by Firdausi Road. The Mancherji Joshi Colony Directory says of the Sohrab Palamkote Hall:

> This hall was erected by the Hindi Graphic Silver Jubilee Fund. This monthly magazine was edited by its Proprietor Baimai Limji Palamkote in memory of her brother Sohrab Palamkote and author and poet who founded the magazine which was then published under the name of "Masik Majah." The Hall was opened on 22nd November 1928 by Sir Hormasji Cawasji Dinshaw Adenwalla. It is used by residents of North Bombay for festive occasions like Navjote, Weddings, Public Meetings and entertainment functions. [sic] (Mancherji Joshi Colony Directory, 2003)

Palamkote Hall is one of the institutions that was cited as being important in Dadar Parsi Colony by my interlocutors. Many referred to it when they listed the important landmarks that characterize the Colony. Nastaran, for instance, claimed that the Hall is often used for weddings and marked a landmark in the Colony. She, however, declared that it had nothing to do with the Parsi community. Fourth, Farhad refers to the intervention of a "Parsi Corporator." A Corporator is the elected leader of the Municipal corporation unit, an administrative unit within the city.

As I conducted more interviews, the story started fleshing out.

> Here also things were bad. Because we have our onion sellers over here who are Boris, who are Muslims. We were protecting them, and we put them in that Palamkote Hall and the Madressa, and we were like putting them because people were like after them. (Dana, 42)

Dana reiterates Farad's claim of the persecuted Muslim community in the neighbourhood. She identifies them as Boris, a sect of the Ismailis, a Shia Muslim community. A key difference in Dana's story is that she identifies the Madressa (the Dadar Athornan Institute was referred to as the Madressa by many interlocutors) along with Palamkote Hall as being two spaces where the Muslims were lodged. Dana inserts herself into the story here. Interestingly, at the time of the riots, Dana was married and lived in Byculla. Even so, she says, "we were protecting them," claiming a personal agency in the decision to give the Muslims of Wadala shelter.

Dana does not mention the Parsi Corporator, however. But most of the narratives of this incident gave a passing nod to the Parsi Corporator, if not placing him at the very centre of the story. Here is a very different story of the Palamkote Hall incident that Manaksha shares. At the very beginning, he claims that it all began with a rumour. A rumour set in motion a chain of events.

> Somebody spread a rumour that Middle East Sheikhs had sent arms to Muslims in Wadala, and they were coming to attack us. So, we went with whatever we could find, I went with a walking stick, and I was patrolling this area.… Wadala Muslims were under big danger. So Tirandaz, our local Corporator, he put all of them in the hall which is used for marriages and all that. So, he put them all in that hall, they were more than 1000, certainly more than 1000. He put them there, and they were quite safe over there. Then Tirandaz calculated that in the morning each one will want at least 1 litre (of water) to wash his bum, that means at least 1000 litres of water, and he thought, "where am I going to get 1000 litres of water?" So, in the middle of the night, he got these army trucks and put all the Muslims in the army trucks, and then army trucks were rolling, and the people patrolling were saying "Oh the Muslims are coming," but those poor

> people were just hiding down there, fearing for their lives. Fortunately, because of army trucks, nobody dared to attack them, and they were taken away to some safe place. Then Tirandaz thought that next election he would get Muslim votes; I think he got about two Muslim votes. (Manaksha, 82)

Manaksha is telling us a story. According to McAdams (1993, pp. 24–27), a story becomes a story if it has a few expected elements, what he calls the story-grammar. A story has a setting, a few human or humanlike characters, an initiating event (one that sets the story in motion), a consequence (of the initiating event), a climax, and a denouement. Manaksha was partly provided the setting when I asked him what he remembered of the riots. But he provides his own setting with the establishment of the rumour concerning, "Middle East Sheikhs providing arms to the Muslims in Wadala." The characters in his story include himself, the Wadala Muslims (as one unit), and finally, Tirandaz, the local Parsi Corporator. Manaksha himself was an 82-year-old who had grown up in the Colony, went abroad for higher education, and came back to Bombay with a zeal to help build a newly-independent India. He was a manufacturer and lived all his life in the Colony and worked in Thane. Now retired, his narrative tended to be entertaining with many anecdotes and tangents, with a view to entertain and amuse. In his story, the initiating event was Tirandaz's provision of shelter to the Wadala Muslims. "Oh! the Muslims are coming!" suggests a suspense-filled climax. But the safe transportation of the Wadala Muslims represents the denouement. In an anti-climactic after-thought, Manaksha tells us that Tirandaz might have gone through all this trouble for more Muslim votes, but is unlikely to have succeeded in getting any. In the final sentence, he uses irony as a literary device.

In his story, Manaksha makes three important observations. First, the Wadala Muslims were both feared as well as pitied, suggesting two antithetical responses towards the same object. Second, Tirandaz was guided by a political pragmatism in his decision to remove the Muslims from the Colony due to a resource crunch, even though his first instinct might have been an altruistic one, that of providing safety to Muslims. Third, Tirandaz, at the core, was a politician and was motivated by the prospect of garnering more votes from the Muslim vote bank.

These are Manaksha's own interpretations of the event. Every retelling of this story in my field work, had mild variations, even though the fundamental elements of the story remained undisputed.

> At that time, we had a Parsi corporator, one Mr. Tirandaz. I can vouch for him like I can vouch for my grandfather. Honest and upright Parsi, although he was a Corporator.… But he was one more middle-class Parsi who was born and died as a middle-class Parsi.… He was the one who had protected some of the Muslims in our Colony hall … because, according to him, it wasn't right. So, if there was a conflict between the two communities, we tried to protect them instead of being against them or whatever. (Zenobia, 75)

Zenobia provides a setting that is not so much about the time and place of the incident but more about establishing the credentials of Tirandaz, the man. This set up works well to argue that Tirandaz's decision to protect the persecuted people was a principled one, one born of moral authority. She prefaces her story with a description of the character of Tirandaz. Although he occupied a position of power, she argues, he was "honest and upright." Being born a middle-class Parsi and dying as one speaks to her of the uncorrupted person that Tirandaz was. She claims a certain intimacy with him, equating her knowledge of him with that of her knowledge of her grandfather. Further, the honest and upright Parsi coincides with her description of Mancherji Joshi who, according to her, was a man of integrity. Incidentally, Mancherji Joshi also stood for elections and won three times to become Corporator for the area. Zenobia, then, extends this "do- gooder" reputation of Tirandaz to "we," the Parsi community. Like Dana, Zenobia also seeks part of the credit for housing the Muslims in Palamkote Hall.

Like Zenobia's story, other people have intimate as well as distant connections.

> Across the road from us lived Rustom Tirandaz who had helped out a lot of Muslims by putting them in this Palamkote hall to save their lives, and at one point, he was really scared that people would come for him … my father had a gun license so he (Tirandaz) had requested. My poor father was sleeping in the

> front bedroom so that if Rustom uncle called out to him, he could run to the balcony and go and help him, but luckily nothing happened. (Vahbeez, 42)

Vahbeez remembers Tirandaz asking her father for help since he had a gun license. Vahbeez was very young when it happened, in school or junior college. She herself was distanced from the incident because she did not witness it, nor was she consulted in the process. However, she does remember her father playing a role in the story, and that takes the spotlight in her narration. Through this, Vahbeez also inserts herself into the story.

> Once, only very faintly when riots were done, I don't exactly remember which, but I think it was in 1993. At that time, I used to see Muslims running and wanting to come for shelter because some things were happening in the Wadala bazaar, which is just behind us. But we were told not to give shelter. Then, in Palamkote Hall, which is right next door, we had given shelter to them because they were afraid for their lives.… But we (at the madressa) were told that because children were here, don't take a risk. (Rustom, 51)

Rustom worked at the *madressa* or the Dadar Athornan Institute. His story therefore centres on his concerns for the safety of the children in the Institute and the proximity of the *madressa* to the Palamkote Hall.

What is the story of Palamkote Hall really about? While most obviously the story is about Tirandaz and the Wadala Muslims, it is also about Dadar Parsi Colony. During my interviews, the story never emerged as the first response to my question, "What do you remember about the riots?" Responses to that question would be personal anecdotes. Subsequently, I would refocus attention on the space, "What happened in the Colony?" or "Did anything happen in the Colony?" A response to this question would typically include the story of Palamkote Hall.

> Though I have almost no understanding of what exactly happened, in the sense that I was too small to give you an account of the violence apparently. As far as I know, a group of Muslims needed some place to hide, needed some protection,

> and they were kept at Palamkote Hall, and they stayed there for a few days. I think a Hindu mob had a riot and asked us to hand them over and then there was some fears that they would attack the Colony. I remember one night there was a lot of fear, and all the men had come down etc. (Naheed, 30)

Naheed was only six during the riots and she has no real direct memories of the violence. Much of her memories and knowledge is from reports by family and friends. It is through these channels that she has received the story of Palamkote Hall. The story endures across generations, not so much as a characteristic story of the riots but more as a story of Dadar Parsi Colony.

McAdams (1993) suggests that every individual tells stories, and within these stories, our identities reside. He calls these stories personal myths. Personal myths are internalized and provide the bearer with an ideological and thematic structure that helps him/her give meaning to and assess the world. With a development psychology perspective, he describes how personal myths evolve over the development years to produce well adapted identities. Once a personal myth is established, it absorbs new experiences to fit the narrative. According to McAdams (1993, p. 53) "Personal myths involve an imaginative reconstruction of the past in light of an envisioned future." They have a narrative tone (e.g., optimistic or pessimistic); they use imagery (sourced from culture, religion etc.); they include themes (e.g., motivational themes) and motives (e.g., agentic and communal motives). A good personal myth must ideally develop in the direction of increasing coherence, openness, credibility, differentiation, reconciliation, and generative integration (McAdams, 1993, p. 110). Coherence refers to the internal logic in a story including believable character motivations. Openness is the flexibility of the myth to incorporate new experiences. Credibility is the ability of the myth to stick to facts or objective historical truths. By differentiation, McAdams means the richly layered development of plot and characters in a personal myth. With growing differentiation, there is a need for reconciliation between conflicting forces in the personal myth. And finally, speaking to the sociality of the identity making process, McAdams suggests that a good personal myth is one that integrates the mythmaker into

society in a generative way. In that sense, the personal myth is as much oriented towards the world as it is to the self.

The story of what happened at Palamkote Hall is like a personal myth in its characteristics. As already demonstrated, it has themes, narrative tones, imagery, and agentic and communal motives. Furthermore, one can make a judgment of it in terms of the six standards of a good personal myth set out by McAdams. However, it is not a personal myth in the sense that it does not define one person's identity. Instead, it provides an identity to Dadar Parsi Colony. It is the Colony's personal myth and is constructed by its residents.

The bare bones of the story of Palamkote Hall remains the same in all the retellings. It was the story of how Dadar Parsi Colony was a space that provided shelter to neighbouring Muslims. Furthermore, the Colony was able to position itself this way because of the good offices of Rustom Tirandaz and, in extension, the Parsi residents of the Colony. The fact that it was repeated across generations with a narration of personal intimacies with both characters and events gives it authority. But the variations across narratives demonstrate that the myth was flexible enough to allow for different interpretations that accommodated individual visions of the Colony.

Let us explore this diversity in narration. The story, for now, is about Wadala Muslims being targets of violence. At this dangerous time, Rustom Tirandaz, a Parsi Corporator for the area, gave shelter and protection to these Muslims. Rustom Tirandaz was a good man, and he represented the Parsi community in playing the Good Samaritan. There was, however, one recall that differed substantially from the other narratives.

> It seems Bal Thackeray, the don of Mumbai, he came to know of this, and he threatened the local politician and the Parsis. And Bal Thackeray as you know has always been very pro-Parsis.… So, he had fired, and he had threatened the local politician that if they don't vacate within a couple of hours, "I will see to it that your Colony is no longer safe," and they did make the Muslims vacate Palamkote Hall. (Beroz, 40)

Beroz was the only one who seemed to recall that the Muslims were made to vacate Palamkote Hall, sending them forth to what was certain death. All other recollections seem to end with the Parsi Municipal Corporator succeeding in protecting the Muslims. In Beroz's estimate, it seemed like a difficult bargain was thrust upon the Corporator by the Shiv Sena leader, Bal Thackeray. Calling Bal Thackeray the don of Mumbai, Beroz underscores the power that he had. Faced with such might, Tirandaz had no choice but to release the Muslims to become targets of violence. Here too, the Parsi Corporator is shown as being a man of integrity and principle, whose arm was twisted into what was an inhuman move. But he did it to protect the Parsis and the Colony. Beroz underscores here Rustom Tirandaz's commitment to protect Parsis over Muslims.

This is especially interesting because Rustom Tirandaz's administrative control (and obligation) extended far beyond Dadar Parsi Colony, even though he was a resident of the Colony. Tanaz was the only one who referred to his constituency as going above and beyond Dadar Parsi Colony.

> (Tirandaz) was a very nice man, he was. And because his constituency went beyond Parsi Colony, it included Dharavi and all, you know, parts of Wadala. So, obviously, there are pockets of Muslims there, and they came to their corporator. (Tanaz, 72)

Tanaz was the only interlocutor who recognized Tirandaz's office as serving all in his constituency equally and that is why Muslim constituents had appealed to him for safety and protection. Tirandaz was, in fact, responding to the demands and needs of his constituency when he provided shelter. That "he was a very nice man" meant that he was doing his job, not necessarily because he was altruistic, as the other narratives imply.

The Srikrishna Commission report refers to Palamkote Hall in documenting one of the testimonies of survivors. In Chapter 1 of the report, filed under the name of the police station where the case was registered, the RAK (Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Marg) Police station , Sewri, the report reads:

> The jurisdictional territory of this police station is thickly populated. 65% of the population is composed of Hindus, while Muslim population comprises about 30%, the other 5% being the rest. There are distinct Muslim pockets in this area at Sewri Cross Road, Sanman Nagar, Wadala and Zakeria Bunder.(Srikrishna Commission Report, Volume 2, Chapter 1, Section 24: RAK Marg Police Station)

Under this section there is a testimony of one Ms. Hajirabi Mohd. Qureshi. The testimony is as follows.

> Mohd. Faruq Qureshi and Saleem Quereshi are missing from Sanman Nagar from 10th January 1993. According to the evidence of his wife Hajirabi Mohd. Qureshi, when the family was having breakfast a mob of 2,500 miscreants suddenly attacked their colony. The family shut the door and windows of the house. Some of the miscreants in the mob jumped on top of the terrace, broke open the windows and door and entered the house. They caught her husband and son Mohd. Saleem aged 18 and started attacking them with knife, sickles, tube-lights, bottles on the head and cut off the hands of her husband and son right in front of her. Her prayers on bended knees to spare their life fell on deaf ears. The miscreants dragged out Mohd. Faruq and Saleem in an almost dead condition. Hajirabi started yelling and she was thrown down the terrace by the miscreants. She then became unconscious. After regaining consciousness, she started searching for her husband and son in their area. In her area she came across a known boy Vinod and she enquired from him about her husband and son. She was told that she would get information only after about three days. She then went to Palamkote Hall at Five Gardens where a temporary shelter was arranged. Thereafter on 11th January 1993 she went to the relief camp at Mahim along with the military. She subsequently visited all the hospitals and morgues attached to them, but was unable to get any information about her husband and son. (Srikrishna Commission Report, Volume 2, Chapter 1, section 24.32)

The report does not say anything more, nor does it credit any individual, let alone Mr. Tirandaz with providing this shelter. Palamkote Hall is also written of as a temporary shelter, one that was not supposed to be for long-term purposes.

In subsequent interviews, when interlocutors shared their narrative of the story with me, I would tell them about Beroz's narrative (keeping her identity a secret) and ask them what they thought of it. Most interlocutors expressed doubt of the veracity of Beroz's story.

> No. I haven't heard this angle of the story. What I know, I may be right or wrong, they were safe here till it was time for them, till things had settled down. (Rustom, 51)

Tanaz, on the other hand, entertained the possibility that Tirandaz might have been coerced to send the Muslims away but did not think it happened the way Beroz talks about it.

> No. I think that was just a rumour. Bal Thackeray would not say that. Bal Thackeray has been, I mean, objectively speaking, he's been very supportive of Parsis. Because he knows we don't do any harm, we don't take away their jobs.… But the rumour was that the Sena will come and burn up our Colony. So, they (Colony residents) forced Rustom Tirandaz to send these people away. (Tanaz, 72)

Tanaz claims that Bal Thackeray did not threaten, but there was a rumour that he did so. The rumour was that the Sena had threatened to burn the Colony down. In these circumstances, people in Dadar Parsi Colony forced Tirandaz to send the Muslims away. Manaksha views Beroz's story from a different perspective, recalling the relationship between Tirandaz and Bal Thackeray, he says,

> I doubt it. In fact, Tirandaz and Bal Thackeray were poles apart but were good personal friends. You know where Shiv Sena started? Was it started in Bandra or in Bal Thackeray's house? It was started in a building, in a chawl opposite Chitra cinema. Tirandaz, Bal Thackeray, Manohar Joshi, and other big names

> used to meet in the evenings in this chawl. One day, I was also taken there with somebody, and Bal Thackeray was editing a magazine called "Marmik," and he was not a violent person by any means. All he wanted to do was, he was saying that Maharashtrians are all labourers only and they remain labourers. (Manaksha, 82)

In his response, Manaksha aligns Tirandaz with Bal Thackeray, and he believes the narrative of pitting Tirandaz against Thackeray is a flawed one. In his narrative, Bal Thackeray was a good guy.

Through these different recollections, the myth of the Colony providing refuge to Muslim victims during the riots endures. Rustom Tirandaz was a good man, representing Parsi goodness and worked for Parsi interests. In his generous way, he undertook the protection of the Wadala Muslims, those outside the confines of Dadar Parsi Colony but very much within his administrative jurisdiction. The Parsis, represented by Tirandaz, were a principled people, who provided protection despite being allied with Bal Thackeray, the man uniformly understood to be behind orchestrating the violence against the Muslims. The fact that a myth possesses both credibility and narrative implies that it can be manipulated to political ends. A myth is infused with power. It can be manipulated to represent a certain narrative. Lincoln (2014, p. 32–37), for instance, demonstrates how different historical myths were exploited by two different factions in Iranian politics, one lead by the Shah of Iran and the other by the dissatisfied clergy to promote their own distinct ideas of Iran, the Nation. The Palankote Hall myth, too, seems to serve many political purposes.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter argues that my interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony use their memory narratives of the riots and the massacre at Ramabai Nagar to construct a unique local oral history that envisions the Colony as a peaceful, exemplary refuge space in a bustling, concrete global city. They do this by employing three kinds of narratives. First, they construct images of the peaceful Parsi and extrapolate it to the space they

inhabit. Second, they use historical narratives and legends to construct the idea of the exemplary minority that distinguishes them from other minorities, for example, the Dalits and the Muslims, in India. In so doing they are also able to imagine the Colony as an exemplary space as compared to other spaces with other minority populations. Finally, the story of Palamkote Hall is used as a template of a myth connected to space. The myth promotes the idea of the Colony as a refuge space, one that is built of the generosity and justice-mindedness of the Parsi community represented by people like Rustom Tirandaz.

The defining feature of this local oral history is the fact that it is anchored in postcolonial Bombay Parsi identity and it fits the image of the honest, good, peaceful, charitable Parsi. The Colony's identity, like the community's identity, is also very strongly linked with Parsi personalities like Mancherji Joshi and Rustom Tirandaz, who appear to personify the Colony for many of its residents. These officers of the administration are depicted as visionaries with integrity, charitable inclinations, and principles. Dadar Parsi Colony, therefore, is construed as a peaceful, exemplary, refuge space that was envisioned as a beautiful space and remained so for the most part of its history.

Part IV: Conclusion

9. Chapter 9: "Curioser and curioser!"

9.1 Introduction

> "Curioser and curioser!" cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English). Now, I am opening out like the largest telescope that ever was! Good bye, feet!"(Carroll, 1996, p. 23)

In "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland", Alice is so overcome with the strange things happening to her, she exclaims "Curioser and curioser!". Her neck, after all, is lengthening like a telescope. The telescope is an instrument that brings close that which is distant. But more importantly, as Alice points out while she bids adieu to her feet, the telescope also shifts ones point of view. The telescope works as a good metaphor to describe this thesis. Through this telescope I have opened up new ways of seeing things and new horizons to explore in the study of religion, space, and memories of violence. This has been facilitated by the juxtaposition of three different minority religion-marked spaces in Mumbai, Mumbra, Dadar Parsi Colony, and Gautam Nagar.This chapter seeks to place on the table these new insights and horizons.

9.2 New insights

Let us consider the two overarching questions that I set out to answer in this thesis. First, how do people living in religion-marked spaces in Mumbai relate to the space they live in? Second, how do people living in such spaces remember incidents of communal violence?

In this thesis I embed my discussion of people's relationship to space within the literature of spatial segregation in Indian cities. Significantly, this literature is dominated by the use of the analytical term "ghetto". Ghetto literature in India has come under the microscope recently (Jaffrelot and Gayer, 2012; Kirmani, 2013, Jamil, 2017, Chatterjee, 2016; Gupta, 2014). While scholars like Jaffrelot and Gayer seek to

redefine the ghetto to accommodate the unique spatial marginalization of Muslims in India, others like Kirmani and Jamil seek to discard the term completely.

"Part II:Interrogating Space in Religion-marked spaces" of this thesis, proposes a different and nuanced understanding of the ghetto that is founded on peoples' experiences of the spaces they reside in. The differences in the way people relate to the religion-marked spaces provide us with a way to think of the ghetto that suits the Indian urban setting. Importantly, this thesis moves away from the centrality of the ghetto to Muslim urban spatial marginalization to viewing the ghetto as a central part of the urban landscape. In effect then, I propose a reconceptualization of the term for the Indian context to accommodate different kinds of spatial segregation. This reconceptualization addresses two fundamental criticisms that the word ghetto has garnered in Indian sociological and anthropological studies. First, the ghetto as a label tends to homogenize people's experiences within the ghetto. It does not account for different processes of evolution of such spaces. Second, researchers tend to constitute the term by using it for segregated spaces without scrutinizing it critically.

To address these two criticism, I begin, in "Chapter 3*:Māhaul* here and *māhaul* there," with an exploration of the Hindi/Urdu word *māhaul.* A word used often during the interviews, my interlocutors used *māhaul* in many different ways. This varied use of the term is borne out by a semantic exploration of the word in literature. In effect, *māhaul* is characterized by seven factors. First, a *māhaul* can be qualified. Second, it is contiguous with a certain space. Third, it traces the boundaries of a space. Fourth, it has the ability to permeate across a boundary and shows variation in intensity. Fifth, it refers to the sensory aspects of a space. Sixth, it can change over short periods of time. And finally, it can be used to describe people's personal circumstances. These characteristics allow for *māhaul* to be a useful concept with which to comprehend space from inhabitants' perspective. At the end of this chapter, I conclude that *māhaul* broadly refers to physical surroundings, spatial culture, and habitus. *Māhaul* as physical surroundings refers to the material aspects of space. *Māhaul* as spatial culture refers to culture, religious and otherwise that exist within a space. And *māhaul* as habitus, referring to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, indicates the spatially delimited

dispositions of residents. To conceive of *māhaul* as spatial culture, physical surroundings, and habitus is to add an element to the understanding of spatiality and religion in India. It gives us a tool with which to interrogate space without having to demonstrate the secular and religious in our thesis.

Taking *māhaul* as my point of departure, in "Chapter 4: Ghetto *māhaul,"* I deploy my data to converse with the literature on the ghetto. Tracing the popular and academic uses of the term "ghetto," right from its origins in medieval Europe to its current meanings in the Indian context, I argue that Indian academia has used the term to signify spaces of marginalization specially of the Muslim and Dalit community. While useful to demonstrate spatial marginalization, however, this particular conceptualization risks homogenizing Muslim-majority spaces or Dalit-majority spaces. Further, it fails to capture the different processes by which this marginalization has occurred. In my reckoning, when considered as an adjective of *māhaul,* ghetto captures the nuances of these processes. Therefore, a space can be more or less ghetto, where ghetto is a continuum and spaces can find themselves at different points of the continuum at different times. Again, providing precedence to interlocutor voices, I argue that they experience the safe *māhaul*, the *pañcāyati māhaul,* and the religious *māhaul*. While these *māhauls* exist at varying intensities, even ghetto *māhaul* can exist in varying intensities across space and time. The safe *māhaul* is one that gives inhabitants of a space relative feelings of safety and security from incursions by the majority community. The *pañcāyati māhaul* pertains to the surveillance experienced by residents within a certain space caused by living in proximity to one's own community. And the religious *māhaul* refers to religious influences within the space. These different *māhauls* influence peoples' spatial culture, physical surroundings, and their habitus. Interlocutors have demonstrated how the safe *māhaul*, the *pañcāyati māhaul*, and the religious *māhaul* of a space influence their daily lives, constraining at times and expanding at others. All three spaces exhibit elements of the ghetto *māhaul* to a greater or lesser extent.

The usefulness of the ghetto *māhaul* concept is the fact that the *māhaul* can change over time and space. So, if indeed all the three spaces have a ghetto *māhaul* to a certain

degree, then what distinguishes the three from each other? Would it be fair to group all of them together because they contain the ghetto *māhaul*? In “Chapter 5: *Māhaul* boundaries, Disgust and Precarity,” I further explore the data to determine what makes for the differences between these spaces that appear to have the ghetto *māhaul* at varying intensities. Using the notion of boundary-work, I suggest that inhabitants of both Gautam Nagar and Mumbra experience spatial boundaries that circumscribe disgust. By this I do not mean that interlocutors perceive their own space of residence as disgusting. Instead, they report that their space of residence is an object of disgust for people who live outside. Boundaries that mark disgust contribute to the experience of a place-based precarity in both Mumbra and Gautam Nagar, an aspect conspicuously absent with my interlocutors from Dadar Parsi Colony. This place-based precarity contributes further to the ghetto *māhaul* in both these spaces. Further, I have argued that place-based precarity is differentially experienced in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar. Interlocutors from Mumbra report four different kinds of place-based precarity. They experience the connotations of filth associated with Mumbra; government negligence and administrative apathy; discrimination in the job market; and connotations of crime and terrorism. These four characteristics contribute to the experience of a victimised place-based precarity. In Gautam Nagar, on the other hand, interlocutors report four different place-based precarity, vis-à-vis, spatial and communal labelling; making distinctions between *Bauddh* and *Kathewadi*; experiencing historical continuity of suffering; spatially reminiscing continuity of suffering; and perceiving Gautam Nagar as a space of social and political mobilization. The latter three characteristics contribute to developing a place-based precarity that has an empowering potential.

The selected religion-marked spaces in Mumbai, therefore, demonstrate that ghetto can be reconceptualised to accommodate different experiences of marginalization through an examination of the experiences of place-based precarity. The concept of ghetto *māhaul* allows us to interrogate these different experiences. Importantly, all three spaces demonstrate elements of the ghetto *māhaul*.

Turning to the second research question that drove this thesis, memories of violent incidents must be viewed in the narrative context in which they emerge. In “Part

3:Memories of Violence," I argue for adopting a narrative analysis of the data on memories of violence. At the out set, in "Chapter 6: Memories of Violence: Aspects and Narratives," I identify five different spatial memories (not mutually exclusive). These are flashbulb memories (memories of what one was doing when one first heard of the violent event), Lifestone memories (memories of violence that mark time and space in an individual's life story), first hand experiences of direct violence (memories of violence that was directly experienced or witnessed), intergenerational memories (memories that have been transferred from one generation to another), and absent memories (include those cases where interlocutors reported not remembering anything or claimed to have forgotten). This diversity in recall behoves us to consider the memories within the context of the narratives in which they are embedded. I borrow from Rosenthal's (1993) narrative analysis to demonstrate through Shalini's (an interlocutor from Gautam Nagar) interview, the memories in context. The narrative analysis demonstrates the significance of context and background elements in the memories that are recalled. In many ways, it is the context that produces the diversity in the kind of memories that exist across the three spaces.

Armed with the narrative analysis method, in Chapter 7, I examine the intersection between interlocutors' memories of violence and their encounter with place-based precarity in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar. While structural violence, the kind occasioned by unequal social structures and elucidated by Galtung (1969), is foundational to place-based precarity in Mumbra and Gautam Nagar, this chapter explores, specifically, memories of two instances of direct communal violence. Through narrative analysis, I conclude that interlocutors articulate their memories of violence in terms that fit in with the place-based precarity that they have already explored in the interview. I do this through the analysis of two interviews, one each from Mumbra and Gautam Nagar.

As demonstrated in Chapter 5, inhabitants of Dadar Parsi Colony do not experience any place-based precarity. Therefore, the narrative analysis I adopt for this data is to construct an oral history of the Colony that is embedded in the context of Bombay Parsi identity. Chapter 8 explores this oral history arguing for a construction of the memories of violence as a local oral history. Memories of violence within Dadar Parsi Colony

follow two main spatial narratives, one of the Colony being a peace space and the other of the Colony being an exemplary minority space. Finally, I explore the myth of Palamkote Hall, a story that was oft repeated by almost all my interlocutors when asked about their memories of violence.

9.3 New horizons

The findings of this thesis open up several avenues of research hitherto unchartered. First, the conceptualization of *māhaul* to understand space in Mumbai allows us to explore several spatial configurations and to locate religion in those spaces that cannot be strictly construed within Knott's binary of the religious and secular. This can have far reaching implications both for the study of religion as well as the study of space in India.

Second, by accommodating the concept of ghetto *māhaul* to the literature in the ghetto, I augment the nuance with which we use the term "ghetto" in the Indian urban context. The polarization among sociologists about whether to use or not to use the term has been further complicated and can lead to more insights on spatial configurations and minority spatial dispensations in Indian cities.

Third, by including the concept of precarity, a term that is used in the context of migration studies, in the discussion on the ghetto, I provide a well-timed complexity to the citizenship discussion for Indian Muslims in India. In December 2019, the Government of India passed the Citizenship Amendment Act (2019) that fundamentally redefined the illegal immigrant (The Gazette of India, 2019). In an amendment to the Citizenship Act of 1955, this act made two significant alterations, both based on religious persuasion, in how citizenship is legally conceived. In the first instance, the Act sought to ease the process by which Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, and Parsis from Muslim dominated neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan could avail of a faster track to citizenship than in normal circumstances. Muslim immigrants from these states are conspicuously left out of this list. Moreover, immigrants from other neighbouring states like Srilanka are also

missing from this list. The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) (2019), however, only pertains to those who are deemed illegal immigrants, not so for the current citizenry of India. Things are further complicated by the initiation of the complementary National Register of Citizens (NRC) process. The NRC requires specific proof of citizenship over a stipulated period of time to be deemed a citizen of India (India Today Web Desk, 2019, December 18). This exercise is meant to identify illegal immigrants. In a population like India, there are many who are unlikely to be able to provide this kind of documentation, despite having lived in India over many generations. Those who do not make it to the NRC will be deemed illegal immigrants and to them will apply the CAA. This is a complex way in which citizens of many generations will be rendered illegal. To these illegal immigrants, the CAA will be applied and its inherent discrimination will further exclude Indian Muslims from the polity of this country. This complex process of rendering one's own population illegal creates all the circumstances of migrant precarity even without migration actually taking place. Further, displaced illegal migrants will also experience place-based precarity. While the CAA and the NRC have come under public attack, neither have been withdrawn though both have been delayed. The inclusion of precarity and, particularly, the specifics of migrant precarity in the discussion on Muslim spatial segregation will provide new insights to Muslim marginalization in India. Moreover, with prospective homelessness and displacement of Muslims, place-based precarity will offer inights into Muslim lives in India.

Fourth, the intersection of place-based precarity and memories of violence is a new area of exploration. Memories of violence (even those that took place elsewhere or to other communities) have an impact on place-based precarity. Places, therefore, are marked by the memories of violence in important ways. I follow Kirmani(2013)'s lead here, and I propose that other such enquiries in religion-marked spaces in Mumbai with respect to different events and different minority communities will provide new insights to this discussion.

Fifth, I cannot conclude without exploring the implications of this thesis on peacebuilding efforts. The exploration of the ghetto literature complicates the idea of

peace. Mumbai, after all, is in a state of peace. But this peace is spatially differentiated. The idea that peace, conviviality, “new normal” are concepts that are complex and need to be examined is not new. Infact, researchers like Chambers (2019) and Gupta (2013)have demonstrated precisely this. Peace is contrived in a complex network of economic, social, and political imperatives. This problematization of peace— the existence of peaces, if you will— is a first step in acknowledging the problems of a post-violence spatial dispensation and will contribute to peacebuilding efforts, appropriately. Further, that a post-violence spatial dispensation allows for spaces that demonstrate victimization as well as spaces that demonstrate potential for empowerment, allows us to look at space itself as an instrument that can be used for peacebuilding.

Appendix 1: Interlocutors' Fictional name, Age and Sex

Sl. No.	Fictional Name	Age	Sex
		Dadar-Parsi Colony	
1	Ardeshir	45	M
2	Armaity	85	F
3	Beroz	40	F
4	Dana	42	F
5	Dinaz	34	F
6	Farhad	86	M
7	Flavia	30	F
8	Manaksha	82	M
9	Naheed	30	F
10	Nastaran	33	F
11	Parvez	36	M
12	Rustom	51	M
13	Sheharnaz	37	F
14	Tanaz	72	F
15	Tehmina	84	F

16	Tyra	35	F
17	Vahbeez	42	F
18	Yazdi	22	M
19	Zenobia	75	F

Gautam Nagar

1	Anil	22	M
2	Ganpat	32	M
3	Harish	42	M
4	Madan	43	M
5	Mahesh	32	M
6	Mukund	50	M
7	Nalin	40	M
8	Saee	33	F
9	Sandesh	35	M
10	Sarita	32	F
11	Shalini	42	F
12	Sunita	37	F
13	Vijay	20	M

Mumbra

1	Aziz	21	M

2	Basma	20	F
3	Fahima	40	F
4	Farida	26	F
5	Hanif	45	M
6	Kaneez	36	F
7	Laraib	19	F
8	Madiha	25	F
9	Mehmal	65	F
10	Mumtaz	22	F
11	Naeema	26	F
12	Nafeesa	40	F
13	Nazeen	19	F
14	Razia	42	F
15	Rehana	22	F
16	Rukhaiya	45	F
17	Saadia	21	F
18	Sanam	23	F
19	Yumna	31	F

Appendix 2: Interview Guides

Mumbra

A. Life History

1. Where were you born? What year were you born in?
2. What was the place you grew up like? Can you describe the physical characteristics of the place and house?
3. What was your family structure like while you were growing up? Family members (parents, siblings, extended family), parents' occupation
4. Since when have you been living here? Where were you living before coming here?
5. What is your family structure like today? Single/married/divorced/abandoned, children, extended family.
6. What was your/your family's social and economic standing when you were growing up?
7. Where did you do your schooling and college? What did you study? How far have your siblings studied?
8. What do you do now? What is your current occupation? Describe your journey after college/school. What did you do for a living immediately after college? What other jobs have you held?

<u>Social/Environmental History</u>

1. What was the social and economic status of the people you grew up with? (Who are these people you grew up with ? Are they religious groups, caste groups, linguistic groups etc.?)How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai? What are these other groups you compare your group to? List them.
2. What was the educational level of your peers while growing up? Who are your peers? Can you describe your peers? How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai? What are these other groups you compare yourself to? List them.
3. What kind of access to schools and college did you have? How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai?

4. What are the forms of employment available for a person of your educational level? Do you find it difficult to obtain employment? Why do you think it is difficult? What are the kind of jobs you would ideally like to do?
5. Are there some areas where you find it easier to get employment than some other places? Is it easier to get work in Mumbra than outside of it or is it easier to find work outside Mumbra than inside? Why do you think this is so?
6. What would you prefer? Would you like to work within Mumbra or outside of it? Why?

Religious and Political History

1. While growing up, was your family religious? What religious things would they do? What was your religious education like? How about your peer group/friends circle?
2. What does it mean to be a Muslim/Hindu/Parsi? Are you a religious person? How often do you go to the mosque/temple/agiary? What do you do there? What other things do you do that are related to religion?
3. Is your current family also religious? How do they follow religion? What religious things do they do? What religious education do you impart to your children?
4. While growing up did your family have any affiliations to political party or non-party organizing? If yes, what kind of affiliation, and are those affiliations still active?
5. Have your own political affiliations changed or remain the same? What changes, if any? Why? Which political party/affiliation do you support now? Why?
6. While growing up, did your family have any affiliations to religious organisations? If yes. What kind of affiliations, and are these affiliations still active?
7. Have your own religiosity changed or remain the same? What changes if any? Why? Are there any religious organisations you support now? Why?

B. Space

Relationship to space

1. Since when have you been living in this area? Where were you staying before this? What are the similarities between the place your stayed before and Mumbra? What are the differences? Describe your life in the place you stayed before. Describe your life in Mumbra?
2. Can you tell me your life story after moving to Mumbra? Has your life changed since you moved here? What are the changes? Are there any important events/transitions that happened after moving here? Transitions that changed your life in significant ways, like marriage, children, job, etc.
3. If someone wanted to move to Mumbra and they asked you what kind of place it was, how would you describe it? What are the advantages of being in a place like Mumbra? What are the disadvantages of being in a place like Mumbra?
4. Are there any particular locations in Mumbra with which you have memories, good or bad? Where do you hang out with your friends? Where do you hang out with family for entertainment? What do you like about these places?
5. Where is your college/space of work?
6. Do your friends stay in Mumbra or elsewhere?
7. On a regular basis, where do you travel in the city? For what putposes, like college, work etc. ? DO you feel that Mumbra is different to other places? In what way?

Demographics

1. What kind of people live in Mumbra? Religion? Caste? Community?
2. How do you like living with people from different communities? What are the advantages and disadvantages of living with people from different communities?
3. Do you think the demographics have changed since when you first moved here?
4. I have heard it said that this is a Muslim space? Do you agree? Why or why not?
5. Some researchers have noted that Muslims do not find housing in other parts of the city and that's why some areas become predominantly Muslim. What do you think about that?
6. Researchers have noted that Mumbra became populated by Muslims after the Bombay riots in 1992-93. What do you think about that?

Religion

1. Would you consider yourself religious? How are you religious?
2. What do you do for your religion?
3. How often do you go to the temple/mosque/agiary? Is this important in your religion? What other things do you do around the house that you would consider religious?
4. Are there people around you who are not religious? Who are they? What is your relationship to them? What it the influence of their beliefs on you? Why you think they are not religious?
5. Would you marry outside your caste/religion? Would you approve if someone marries outside their caste/religion?
6. What are your marriage practices like? If you had a daughter/son to marry, how would you go about finding a groom/bride?
7. Do you think you will consider the place of residence of the prospective bride/groom while deciding for your child? What characteristics would you look for in a location? Why? Please elaborate.

Politics

1. Which party is in power in your municipality? Who are your corporators?
2. Are you happy with the functioning of the municipality? What changes would you like to see?
3. Which party do you support? Why?

C. Violence

Memories of Violence

3. In Mumbra, are there any conflicts that happen between religious groups? Which groups? Over what? What is the nature of the conflict? Describe.
4. Why do you think such conflicts occur?
5. Some researchers/newspaper articles have pointed out that a number of Muslims who were affected by the violence of the Bombay riots of 1992-93 moved to Mumbra as they were looking for safety. What do you think about that?

6. Where were you during the riots? What were you doing when the news of the riots broke out? How did you feel?
7. Were you affected? How? Were you concerned for your own safety? What did you do? Looking back, how did you feel during the two months that the riots raged?
8. Do you think its possible that such a violent event could occur again? What religious communities are likely to become violent with each other in the current scenario? What are the causes you attribute to the riots/violence? Do they still exist? How so whether yes or no.
9. Do you remember the Ramabai Nagar massacre that happened in 1997? What do you remember about it? What did you do?
10. According to you what can be done to prevent such an event from taking place again?

Dadar-Parsi Colony

A. Life History

1. Where were you born? What year were you born in?
2. What was the place you grew up like? Can you describe the physical characteristics of the place and house?
3. What was your family structure like while you were growing up? Family members (parents, siblings, extended family), parents' occupation
4. Since when have you been living here? Where were you living before coming here?
5. What is your family structure like today? Single/married/divorced/abandoned, children, extended family.
6. What was your/your family's social and economic standing when you were growing up?
7. Where did you do your schooling and college? What did you study? How far have your siblings studied?
8. What do you do now? What is your current occupation? Describe your journey after college/school. What did you do for a living immediately after college? What other jobs have you held?

Social/Environmental History

1. What was the social and economic status of the people you grew up with? (Who are these people you grew up with ? Are they religious groups, caste groups, linguistic groups etc.?)How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai? What are these other groups you compare your group to? List them.
2. What was the educational level of your peers while growing up? Who are your peers? Can you describe your peers? How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai? What are these other groups you compare yourself to? List them.
3. What kind of access to schools and college did you have? How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai?
4. What are the forms of employment available for a person of your educational level? Do you find it difficult to obtain employment? Why do you think it is difficult? What are the kind of jobs you would ideally like to do?
5. Are there some areas where you find it easier to get employment than some other places?? Why do you think this is so?
6. Where would you prefer to work? Why?

Religious and Political History

1. While growing up, was your family religious? What religious things would they do? What was your religious education like? How about your peer group/friends circle?
2. What does it mean to be a Parsi? Are you a religious person? How often do you go to the agiary? What do you do there? What other things do you do that are related to religion?
3. Is your current family also religious? How do they follow religion? What religious things do they do? What religious education do you impart to your children?
4. While growing up did your family have any affiliations to political party or non-party organizing? If yes, what kind of affiliation, and are those affiliations still active?
5. Have your own political affiliations changed or remain the same? What changes, if any? Why? Which political party/affiliation do you support now? Why?

6. While growing up, did your family have any affiliations to religious organisations? If yes. What kind of affiliations, and are these affiliations still active?
7. Have your own religiosity changed or remain the same? What changes if any? Why? Are there any religious organisations you support now? Why?

B. Space

Relationship to space

1. Since when have you been living in this area? Where were you staying before this? What are the similarities between the place you stayed before and DPC? What are the differences? Describe your life in the place you stayed before. Describe your life in DPC?
2. Can you tell me your life story after moving to DPC? Has your life changed since you moved here? What are the changes? Are there any important events/transitions that happened after moving here? Transitions that changed your life in significant ways, like marriage, children, job, etc.
3. If someone wanted to move to DPC and they asked you what kind of place it was, how would you describe it? What are the advantages of being in a place like DPC? What are the disadvantages of being in a place like DPC?
4. Are there any particular locations in DPC with which you have memories, good or bad? Where do you hang out with your friends? Where do you hang out with family for entertainment? What do you like about these places?
5. Where is your college/space of work?
6. Do your friends stay in DPC or elsewhere?
7. On a regular basis, where do you travel in the city? For what purposes, like college, work etc. ? DO you feel that DPC is different to other places? In what way?

Demographics

1. What kind of people live in DPC? Religion? Caste? Community?
2. How do you like living with people from different communities? What are the advantages and disadvantages of living with people from different communities?
3. Do you think the demographics have changed since when you first moved here?

4. I chose this space because it is known as a Parsi space? Would you agree with this description of this space?

Religion

1. Would you consider yourself religious? How are you religious?
2. What do you do for your religion?
3. How often do you go to the temple/mosque/agiary? Is this important in your religion? What other things do you do around the house that you would consider religious?
4. Are there people around you who are not religious? Who are they? What is your relationship to them? What it the influence of their beliefs on you? Why you think they are not religious?
5. Would you marry outside your caste/religion? Would you approve if someone marries outside their caste/religion?
6. What are your marriage practices like? If you had a daughter/son to marry, how would you go about finding a groom/bride?
7. Do you think you will consider the place of residence of the prospective bride/groom while deciding for your child? What characteristics would you look for in a location? Why? Please elaborate.

Politics

1. Which party is in power in your municipality? Who are your corporators?
2. Are you happy with the functioning of the municipality? What changes would you like to see?
3. Which party do you support? Why?

C. Violence

Memories of Violence

1. Do you come across any religion-based conflicts in DPC? Have you heard/witnessed any religion-based violence happening in this area? Intra-religious or inter-religious?
2. Why do you think such conflicts occur?

3. One of the things I am interested in studying is Inter-religious conflict or violence in the city? Do you know of any that has happened? Which religious communities?
4. Where were you during the Bombay riots? What were you doing when the news of the riots broke out? How did you feel?
5. Were you affected? How? Were you concerned for your own safety? What did you do? Looking back, how did you feel during the two months that the riots raged?
6. Do you remember the Ramabai Nagar massacre that happened in 1997? What do you remember about it? What did you do?
7. Do you think its possible that such a violent event could occur again? What religious communities are likely to become violent with each other in the current scenario? What are the causes you attribute to the riots/violence? Do they still exist? How so whether yes or no.
8. According to you what can be done to prevent such an event from taking place again?

Gautam Nagar

A. Life History

1. Where were you born? What year were you born in?
2. What was the place you grew up like? Can you describe the physical characteristics of the place and house?
3. What was your family structure like while you were growing up? Family members (parents, siblings, extended family), parents' occupation
4. Since when have you been living here? Where were you living before coming here?
5. What is your family structure like today? Single/married/divorced/abandoned, children, extended family.
6. What was your/your family's social and economic standing when you were growing up?
7. Where did you do your schooling and college? What did you study? How far have your siblings studied?

8. What do you do now? What is your current occupation? Describe your journey after college/school. What did you do for a living immediately after college? What other jobs have you held?

Social/Environmental History

1. What was the social and economic status of the people you grew up with? (Who are these people you grew up with? Are they religious groups, caste groups, linguistic groups etc.?) How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai? What are these other groups you compare your group to? List them.
2. What was the educational level of your peers while growing up? Who are your peers? Can you describe your peers? How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai? What are these other groups you compare yourself to? List them.
3. What kind of access to schools and college did you have? How would you compare it with other groups in Mumbai?
4. What are the forms of employment available for a person of your educational level? Do you find it difficult to obtain employment? Why do you think it is difficult? What are the kind of jobs you would ideally like to do?
5. Are there some areas where you find it easier to get employment than some other places? Why do you think this is so?
6. Where would you prefer to work? Why?

Religious and Political History

1. While growing up, was your family religious? What religious things would they do? What was your religious education like? How about your peer group/friends circle?
2. What does it mean to be a Buddhist? Are you a religious person? What other things do you do that are related to religion? What do you do for your religion regularly? What do you do for your religion sporadically?
3. Is your current family also religious? How do they follow religion? What religious things do they do? What religious education do you impart to your children?

4. While growing up did your family have any affiliations to political party or non-party organizing? If yes, what kind of affiliation, and are those affiliations still active?
5. Have your own political affiliations changed or remain the same? What changes, if any? Why? Which political party/affiliation do you support now? Why?
6. While growing up, did your family have any affiliations to religious organisations? If yes. What kind of affiliations, and are these affiliations still active?
7. Have your own religiosity changed or remain the same? What changes if any? Why? Are there any religious organisations you support now? Why?

B. Space

Relationship to space

1. Since when have you been living in Gautam Nagar? Where were you staying before this? What are the similarities between the place you stayed before and Gautam Nagar? What are the differences? Describe your life in the place you stayed before. Describe your life in Gautam Nagar?
2. Can you tell me your life story after moving to Gautam Nagar? Has your life changed since you moved here? What are the changes? Are there any important events/transitions that happened after moving here? Transitions that changed your life in significant ways, like marriage, children, job, etc.
3. If someone wanted to move to Gautam Nagar and they asked you what kind of place it was, how would you describe it? What are the advantages of being in a place like Gautam Nagar? What are the disadvantages of being in a place like Gautam Nagar?
4. Are there any particular locations in Gautam Nagar with which you have memories, good or bad? Where do you hang out with your friends? Where do you hang out with family for entertainment? What do you like about these places?
5. Where is your college/space of work?
6. Do your friends stay in Gautam Nagar or elsewhere?
7. On a regular basis, where do you travel in the city? For what purposes, like college, work etc.? DO you feel that Gautam Nagar is different to other places? In what way?

Demographics

1. What kind of people live in Gautam Nagar? Religion? Caste? Community?
2. How do you like living with people from different communities? What are the advantages and disadvantages of living with people from different communities?
3. Do you think the demographics have changed since when you first moved here?
4. I chose this space because it is known as a Dalit–Buddhist? Would you agree with this description of this space?

Religion

1. Would you consider yourself religious? How are you religious?
2. What do you do for your religion?
3. How often do you go to the Budh Vihar? Is this important in your religion? What other things do you do around the house that you would consider religious?
4. Are there people around you who are not religious? Who are they? What is your relationship to them?
5. Would you marry outside your caste/religion? Would you approve if someone marries outside their caste/religion?
6. What are your marriage practices like? If you had a daughter/son to marry, how would you go about finding a groom/bride?
7. Do you think you will consider the place of residence of the prospective bride/groom while deciding for your child? What characteristics would you look for in a location? Why? Please elaborate.

Politics

1. Which party is in power in your municipality? Who are your corporators?
2. Are you happy with the functioning of the municipality? What changes would you like to see?
3. Which party do you support? Why?

C. Violence

Memories of Violence

1. Do you come across any religion-based conflicts in Gautam Nagar? Have you heard/witnessed any religion-based violence happening in this area? Intra-religious or inter-religious?
2. Why do you think such conflicts occur?
3. One of the things I am interested in studying is Inter-religious conflict or violence in the city? Do you know of any that has happened? Which religious communities?
4. Where were you during the Bombay riots? What were you doing when the news of the riots broke out? How did you feel?
5. Were you affected? How? Were you concerned for your own safety? What did you do? Looking back, how did you feel during the two months that the riots raged?
6. Do you remember the Ramabai Nagar massacre that happened in 1997? What do you remember about it? What did you do?
7. Do you think its possible that such a violent event could occur again? What religious communities are likely to become violent with each other in the current scenario? What are the causes you attribute to the riots/violence? Do they still exist? How so whether yes or no.
8. According to you what can be done to prevent such an event from taking place again?

References

A Correspondent (2015, April 9). Mumbai: Dadar Parsi Colony Residents fight for hawker-free zone. *Mid-day.com*. https://www.mid-day.com/mumbai/mumbai-news/article/Mumbai--Dadar-Parsi-colony-residents-fight-for-hawker-free-zone-16149172

Abbas, A.H., (2017). Disruption and Belonging: Aligarh, Its University, and the Changing Meaning of Place since Partition. *The Oral History Review*, 44(2), 301–321. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1093/ohr/ohx066?journalCode=uohr20

Abu-Lughod, L. (2008). *Writing women's worlds: Bedouin stories* [Kindle Edition]. Oakland: Univ of California Press.

Adukia, A., Asher, S., Novosad, P., and Tan, B. (2019). Residential Segregation in Urban India. *Indian Statistical Institute*, Delhi. https://www.isid.ac.in/

Agarwal, K., (2019, November 9). Ayodhya's Class of 1992: The Key Conspirators. *The Wire*. https://thewire.in/politics/ayodhyas-class-of-1992-the-key-conspirators

Ahmed, H. (2013). Mosque as Monument: The Afterlives of Jama Masjid and the Political Memories of a Royal Muslim Past. *South Asian Studies, 29(1),* 51–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/02666030.2013.772814

Ahmed, S. (2015). *Cultural politics of emotion.* New York: Routledge.

Ahmed, U. (2014). لاحاصل [*Hollow Pursuits*]. [Kindle Edition]. UA-Books.

Ambedkar, B. R. (1989). *Untouchables or the Children of India's Ghetto.* [Kindle Edition].

Ambedkar, B.R. (2011) The Buddha and his *Dhamma* in Rathore, A.S. and Ajay. V (eds.), *B.R. Ambedkar: The Budha and His Dhamma: A critical edition*. New Delhi: Oxford Univesity Press.

Ambedkar, B. R. (2014). *Annihilation of caste: The annotated critical edition.* New Delhi: Navayana Publishing Private Limited.

Amin, S. (1995). *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992*. [Kindle Edition] Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Anderson, B. (2009). Affective Atmospheres. *Emotion, Space and Society 2(2)*, 77–81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2009.08.005

Anderson, B. (2010). Migration, immigration controls and the fashioning of precarious workers. *Work, employment and society, 24(2)*, 300–317. http://doi/org/10.1177/0950017010362141

Anderson, E. (2012). The Iconic Ghetto. *The ANNALS of the American Academy pf political and Social science, 642(1*). 8–24. http://doi.org/10.1177/0002716212446299

Appadurai, A. (1981). gastro-politics in Hindu South Asia. *American Ethnologist,* 8(3), 494–511. https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1981.8.3.02a00050

Appadurai, A. (1988). How to make a national cuisine: cookbooks in contemporary India. *Comparative studies in society and history, 30(1*), 3–24. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417500015024

Ashmore, W. (2002). "Decisions and Dispositions": Socialising Spatial Archaeology. *American Anthropologist*. *104(4),* 1172–1183. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2002.104.4.1172

Assmann, J. and Czaplicka, J. (1995). Collective memory and cultural identity. *New german critique*(*65*), 125–133. https://www.jstor.org/stable/488538

Aukland, K. (2016). *Tours, Trade, and Temples: Hindu pilgrimage in the age of global tourism.* Doctoral dissertation. Department of Archaeology, History, Culture Studies, and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen.

Bacchetta, P. (2000). Sacred space in conflict in India: The Babri Masjid affair. *Growth and Change, 31(2*), 255–284. https://doi.org/10.1111/0017-4815.00128

Baglie, K. (2014). *The Trees of Dadar Parsi Colony*. Greenlines Initiative: Mumbai.

Banki, S. (2013). Precarity of place: a complement to the growing precariat literature. *Global Discourse, 3(3–4)*, 450–463. http://doi.org/10.1080/23269995.2014.881139

Barry, E. and Sorensen, M.S. (2018, July 1). In Denmark, Harsh New Laws for Immigrant 'Ghettos'. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/01/world/europe/denmark-immigrant-ghettos.html

Barth, F. (1969). Introduction. In F. Barth (ed) *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Culture Difference*. p. 9–38. Norway: Little Brown and Company.

Baumann, G. (1996). *Contesting Culture: Discourses of identity in multi-ethnic London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bayly, S. (2001). *Caste, society and politics in India from the eighteenth century to the modern age* (Vol. 3): Cambridge University Press.

Bellamy, C. (2011). *The powerful ephemeral: Everyday healing in an ambiguously Islamic place*. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Bellwinkle-Schempp, M. (2007). From Bhakti to Buddhism: Ravidas and Ambedkar. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *42(23)*, 2177–2183. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419688.

Beltz, J. (2005). *Mahar, Buddhist and dalit: religious conversion and socio-political emancipation*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.

Bengali, S. (2014, November 24th). Mumbai's strictly vegetarian enclaves give flesh-eaters the evil eye. *Los Angeles Times*. https://www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-india-vegetarianism-20141124-story.html

Bent, P. (2017). Historical Perspectives on Precarious Work: The Cases of Egypt and India under British Imperialism. *Global Labour Journal, 8(1*), 3–16. https://doi.org/10.15173/glj.v8i1.2716

Berenschot, W. (2011). The spatial distribution of riots: Patronage and the instigation of communal violence in Gujarat, India. *World Development, 39(2),* 221–230. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2009.11.029

Beteille, A. (1996). *Caste, class, and power: Changing patterns of stratification in a Tanjore village*. [Kindle Edition]. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Bevir, M. and Rhodes, R. A. (2006). Defending interpretation. *European political science, 5(1),* 69–83. http://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.eps.2210059

Bharadwaj, S. B. (2012). Myth and Reality of the Khap Panchayats: A Historical Analysis of the Panchayat and Khap Panchayat. *Studies in History*, *28(1),* 43-67. doi.org/10.1177/0257643013477250

Bharathi, N., Malghan, D. V., and Rahman, A. (2018). Isolated by caste: Neighbourhood-scale residential segregation in Indian metros. *IIM Bangalore Research Paper*(*572*). https://ssrn.com/abstract=3195672 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3195672

Bille, M., Bjerregaard, P., and Sørensen, TF. (2015). Staging atmospheres: Materiality, culture, and the texture of the in-between. *Emotion, Space and Society*, *15 (2015)*, 31–38. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2014.11.002

Bohlken, A. T., and Sergenti, E. J. (2010). Economic growth and ethnic violence: An empirical investigation of Hindu—Muslim riots in India. *Journal of peace research, 47(5*), 589–600. http://doi.org/10.1177/0022343310373032

Böhme, G. (2014). Urban atmospheres: Charting new directions for architecture and urban planning. In Borch, C., et al (Eds) *Architectural Atmospheres. On the*

Experience and Politics of Architecture. [Adobe Digital Edition]. p. 42–59. Basel, Switzerland: Birkhauser.

Bourdieu, P. (2005a). Habitus. In J. Hillier and E. Rooksby (Eds.) *Habitus: A Sense of Place* (Second Edition). p. 43– 49. London and New York: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (2005b). Outline of the theory of Practice. In Spiegel, G.M. (eds.) *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*. p. 174–194. New York and London

Boyer, P., (2009). What are memories for? In Boyer, P. and Wertsch, J.V., (Eds.) *Memory in Mind and Culture,*[EBook] 3–32. Cambridge University Press.

Brannen, J., (2013). Life story talk: Some reflections on narrative in qualitative interviews. *Sociological Research Online*, 18(2), 48–58. https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.2884

Brass, P. R. (1997). *Theft of an idol: Text and context in the representation of collective violence.* Calcutta: Seagull Books.

Brass, P. R. (2010). Forms of Collective and State Violence in South Asia. In I. Abraham, E. Newman and M.L.Weiss (Eds) *Political Violence in South and Southeast Asia: Critical Perspectives.* p. 47–68. United Nations University Press.

Brass, P. R. (2011). *The production of Hindu-Muslim violence in contemporary India*. United States of America: University of Washington Press.

Bremborg, A. D. (2011). 13 Interviewing. In M. Stausberg and S. Engler (Eds.) *The Routledge handbook of research methods in the study of religion.* p. 332–344. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Brodie, T. (2017). Between 'national community' and 'milieu': German Catholics at war, 1939-1945. *Contemporary European History*, *26(3),* 421–440. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777317000169

Brown, L. K., and Mussell, K. (1984). *Ethnic and regional foodways in the United States: The performance of group identity.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Brown, R., and Kulik, J. (1977). Flashbulb memories. *Cognition*, 5(1), 73–99

Bryld, E. (2001). Increasing participation in democratic institutions through decentralization: Empowering women and scheduled castes and tribes through panchayat raj in rural India. *Democratization*, 8(3), 149–172. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/714000213

Buck, J. (2017). " The world's best minority": Parsis and Hindutva's ethnic nationalism in India. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *40(15),* 2806– 2822. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2016.1259492

Burchardt, M., and Becci, I. (2013). Introduction: Religion takes place: Producing urban locality. In I. Becci, M. Burchardt and J Casanova (eds.) *Topographies of Faith.* [Adobe Digital Edition] Leiden :Brill. pp. 189–205. https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.pva.uib.no.

Burke, C. (2016). Bourdieu's theory of practice. In J. Thatcher et al (eds). *Bourdieu: The Next Generation: The Development of Bourdieu's Intellectual heritage in Contemporary UK Sociology*. p. 36–52. New York: Routledge.

Burkitt, I. (2012). Emotional reflexivity: Feeling, emotion and imagination in reflexive dialogues. *Sociology, 46(3),* 458–472. http://doi.org/10.1177/0038038511422587

Butalia, U. (1998, 2017). *The other side of silence: Voices from the partition of India* [Kindle Edition] Penguin UK.

Butler, J. (2006). *Precarious life: The powers of mourning and violence.* Lond and New York: Verso.

Cardoz, D., (2018) East Indian Enclaves. In A. Verghese, S. Kamat and R. Poncha (eds.) *Mumbai: Socio-Cultural Perspectives. Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities*. p. 135–141. Delhi: Primus Books.

Carroll, L. (1996). *The Complete Illustrated Lewis Carrol*. Herfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd.

Cassio, F. (2019). The sonic pilgrimage. Exploring kīrtan and sacred journeying in Sikh culture. *Sikh Formations*, *15(1–2)*, 152–182. https://doi.org/10.1080/17448727.2019.1593298

Census of India. (2011). Retrieved from http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/population_enumeration.html.

Chacko, E. (2004). Positionality and praxis: fieldwork experiences in rural India. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography,* 25(1), 51–63. **ttps://doi.org/10.1111/j.0129-7619.2004.00172.x**

Chambers, T. (2019. ‘Performed Conviviality’: Space, bordering and silence in the city. Modern South Asian Studies, *53(3*), 776–799. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X17000786

Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Mukherjee, A., Panikkar, K.N., and Mahajan, S. (1989) *India's struggle for independence 1857–1947*. New Delhi: Penguin Books

Chari, M. (2015, January 16). How an accidentally distorted drawing of the Prophet led to a riot in 19th-century Mumbai. *Scroll.in*. https://scroll.in/article/700501/how-an-accidentally-distorted-drawing-of-the-prophet-led-to-a-riot-in-19th-century-mumbai.

Chase, S. E. (2005) Narrative Inquiry: Multiple Lenses, Approaches, Voices. In Denzin N.K. and Lincoln Y.S. (ed.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research (Third Edition)*. 651–680. Sage Publication Inc.

Chatterjee, A. (2015). Narratives of Exclusion. *Economic and Political Weekly 50 (52*), 92–99. https://www.epw.in/journal/2015/52/special-articles/narratives-exclusion.html

Chatterjee, A. (2017). *Margins of Citizenship: Muslim Experiences in Urban India*. Oxon and New York: Taylor & Francis.

Chatterjee, P. (2001). *A time for tea: Women, labor, and post/colonial politics on an Indian plantation*. New Delhi: Zubaan.

Chatterjee, S. (2019). The Labors of Failure: Labor, Toxicity, and Belonging in Mumbai. *International Labor and Working-Class History*. *95*. 49– 75. http://doi:10.1017/S0147547919000073

Chatterji, R., and Mehta, D. (2007). *Living with violence: An anthropology of events and everyday life*. New Delhi: Routledge.

Chigateri, S. (2008). 'Glory to the cow': Cultural difference and social justice in the food hierarchy in India. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian* Studies, *31(1),* 10–35. http//doi.org/10.1080/00856400701874692

Chopra, R. (2018). *Amritsar 1984: A City Remembers* [Kindle Edition]. London: Lexington Books.

Christianson, S.A. (1989). Flashbulb Memories: Special, but not so special. *Memory & Cognition*, *17(4),* 435–443. https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03202615

Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). (2019, December 12). *The Gazette of India*. Ministry of Law and Justice. https://egazette.nic.in/WriteReadData/2019/214646.pdf

Clark. K.B. (1989). *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*: Weslayan University Press

Clifford, J. (1986). Introduction: Partial Truths. In J. Clifford and G.E. Marcus (Eds.) *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. 25th Anniversary Edition (2020).* p. 1–26. Berkley: University of California Press.

Clifford, J., and Marcus, G. E. (1986). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography. 25th Anniversary Edition (2020).* Berkley: University of California Press.

CNBC-Awaz report. (2017). बरकरार रहेगी तेजी, इन शेयरों पर करें भरोसा. *CNBC-Awaz*, http://hindi.moneycontrol.com/news/fundamental-market-outlook/prabhudas-lilladhers-amisha-vora-on-markets-stocks-investment-idead-shares_166869.html

Coffey, A. (1999). *The Ethnographic Self: Fieldwork and the Representation of Identity*. [Kindle Edition]. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications Limited.

Connelly, F.M., and Clandinin, D.J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, *19(5)*, 2–14. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X019005002

Contractor, Q. (2012). 'Unwanted in My City'- The Making of a 'Muslim Slum' in Mumbai. In L. Gayer and C. Jafffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation* [Kindle Edition]. Location 529–901/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Contractor, Q. (2017). "Jab Babri Masjid Shaheed Huyi": Memories of Violence and Its Spatial Remnants in Mumbai. In N. Jayaram (ed.) *Social Dynamics of the Urban, p.*135–151. New Delhi: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-81-322-3741-9.

Contursi, J. A., (1993). Political Theology: Text and Practice in a Dalit Panther Community. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, *52(2),* 320–339. https://doi.org/10.2307/2059650

Conway, M.A., Anderson, S.J., Larsen, S.F., Donnelly, C.M., McDaniel, M.A., McClelland, Logie, R.H. (1994) The formation of flashbulb memories. *Memory & Cognition, 22(3*), 326–343. https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03200860

Cresswell, T. (2015). *Place: An Introduction*. [Kindle Edition]. United Kingdom: Wiley Blackwell.

Crossley, M.L. (2013). Sense of place and its import for life transitions: the case of HIV-positive individuals. In McAdams, D.P., Josselson, R., and Lieblich, A. (ed.)

Turns in the Road: Narrative Studies of Lives in Transition. Chapter 11. [Kindle Edition] Washington, DC: American Psychological Association

Curtis, V., and Biran, A. (2001). Dirt, disgust, and disease: Is hygiene in our genes? *Perspectives in biology and medicine, 44*(1), 17–31. http://doi.org/10.1353/pbm.2001.0001

Dalal, K. (2018). Parsi Baugs: A Unique Subset of Community Architeture. In A. Verghese, S. Kamat and R. Poncha (eds.) *Mumbai: Socio-Cultural Perspectives. Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities*. p. 179–186. Delhi: Primus Books.

Das, V. (2000). The Act of Witnessing: Violence, Poisonous Knowledge, and Subjectivity. In Das, V., Kleinman, A., Remphele, M. and Reynolds, P. (Eds.). *Violence and Subjectivity*, London: University of California Press.

David, M. (1995). *Bombay, the city of dreams: A history of the first city in India*. Himalaya Publishing House.

David, M.D. (2018). Ethnic Communities of Mumbai — An Overview. In A. Verghese, S. Kamat and R. Poncha (eds.) *Mumbai: Socio-Cultural Perspectives. Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities*. p. 15–18. Delhi: Primus Books.

Dev, A., (1989) *The Story of Civilisation Part 1*. National Centre for Educational Research and Training. New Delhi. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kAg8zvA0S1vuxccsVcqyd9g35CAcFQbm/view

Deshmukh, N. (2005). Women's empowerment through Panchayati Raj institution: a case study of Wambori Gram Panchayat in Maharashtra. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, *51(2)*, 192–198. https://doi.org/10.1177/0019556120050203

Dirks, N. B. (2011). *Castes of mind: Colonialism and the making of modern India*: Princeton University Press.

DNA Web Team. (2015, September 19). Ahmedabad's Muslim area branded as Pakistan by Gujarat Police in FIR. *DNA*. https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-ahmedabad-s-muslim-area-branded-as-pakistan-by-gujarat-police-in-fir-2126540

Donner, H., and De Neve, G. (2006) Space, place and globalisation: revisiting the urban neighbourhood in India. In G. De Neve., and H. Donner (eds.) *The Meaning of the Local: Politics of Place in Urban India*. p. 1–20. London and New York: Routledge.

Dossal, M. (1995). Signatures in Space: Land Use in Colonial Bombay. In S. Patel and A. Thorner (Eds.) *Bombay: Metaphor for modern India*. p. 89–99. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. New York: Routledge.

Drake, S.C., and Cayton, H.R. (1945). *Black Metropolis: a study of Negro Life in a northern city*. [Kindle Edition, 2015] London: University of Chicago Press.

D'Souza, V. S. (1977). Does urbanism desegregate scheduled castes? Evidence from a district in Punjab. *Contributions to Indian sociology, 11(1*), 219–239. https://doi.org/10.1177/006996677701100110

Duneier, M. (2016). *Ghetto: The Invention of a place, the history of an idea*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Dupont, V. (2004). Socio-spatial differentiation and residential segregation in Delhi: a question of scale? *Geoforum, 35(2)*, 157–175. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2003.08.003

Dwivedi, S., and Mehrotra, R. (1995). *Bombay: The cities within*. India Book House.

Eastmond, M. (2007). Stories as lived experience: Narratives in forced migration research. *Journal of refugee studies*, *20(2),* 248–264. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fem007

Eck, D. L. (1985). Banaras: Cosmos and paradise in the Hindu imagination. *Contributions to Indian sociology, 19(1),* 41–55. https://doi.org/10.1177/006996685019001004

Eck, D. L. (1998). *Banaras, city of light*: Columbia University Press.

Edensor, T. (2015) Light design and atmosphere. *Visual Communication*. *14 (3),* 331–350. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357215579975

Ellingson, L. L. (1998). " Then You Know How I Feel": Empathy, Identification, and Reflexivity in Fieldwork. *Qualitative Inquiry, 4(4),* 492–514. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049800400405.

Engineer, A. A. (1984). Bombay-Bhiwandi riots in national political perspective. *Economic and Political Weekly*. *19 (29).* 1134–1136. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4373427.

Engineer, A. A. (1993). Bombay riots: Second phase. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *28 (12,13),* 505–508. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4399517.

Escobar A (2001) Culture sits in places: Reflections on globalism and subaltern strategies of localization. *Political Geography*. *20(2),* 139–174. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0962-6298(00)00064-0

Ettlinger, N. (2007). Precarity unbound. *Alternatives, 32(3),* 319–340. https://doi.org/10.1177/030437540703200303

Express News Service. (2021, December 17). Delhi riots: Court frames charges against 10 men, say they created a fear in minds of Hindus. *The Indian Express*. https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/delhi-riots-court-charges-hindus-fear-7676631/

Falzon, M-A. (2009). Introduction: Multi-sited ethnography: Theory, praxis and locality in contemporary research. In M-A. Falzon (ed.) *Multi-sited ethnography*. p. 1–23. Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.

Faria, C., and Mollett, S. (2016). Critical feminist reflexivity and the politics of whiteness in the 'field'. *Gender, Place & Culture, 23(1),* 79–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2014.958065

Farooqui, A. (1996). Urban development in a colonial situation: Early nineteenth century Bombay. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *31(40),* 2746–2759. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4404661

Fernandes, N. (2012, December 10). Island City: Mumbai then and now. *Livemint*. http://www.livemint.com

Field, E., Levinson, M., Pande, R., and Visaria, S. (2008). Segregation, rent control, and riots: The economics of religious conflict in an Indian city. *American Economic Review: Papers and Proceedings, 98(2),* 505–510. http://www.aeaweb.org/articles.php?doi=10.1257/aer.98.2.505

Fitzegerald, T. (1997). Ambedkar Buddhism in Maharashtra. *Contributions to Indian Sociology, 31 (2),* 225–251. https://doi.org/10.1177/006996697031002003

Fivush, R., and Haden, C. A. (2003). Introduction: Autobiographical memory, narrative and self. In Fivush, R. and Haden, C.A. (eds.) *Autobiographical Memory and the Construction of a Narrative Self: Developmental and Cultural Perspectives*. p. vii–xiv. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Flood, G. (1996). *An introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Friedland, R. and Hecht, R. (1998). The Bodies of Nations: A Comparitive Study of Religious Violence in Jerusalem and Ayodhya, *History of Religions, 38(2).* 101–149. https://doi.org/10.1086/463530

Friedmann, J. (2005). Place-making as Project? Habitus and Migration in Transnational Cities. In J. Hillier and E. Rooksby (Eds.) *Habitus: A Sense of Place* (Second Edition). p. 315–333. London and New York: Routledge.

Fuchs, M. (2004). Buddhism and Dalitness : Dilemmas of Religious Emancipation. In S. Jondhale & J. Beltz (Eds.), *Reconstructing the world : B.R. Ambedkar and Buddhism in India* . p. 283–300. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Galonnier, J. (2012). Aligarh: Sir Syed Nagar and Shah Jamal, contrasted tales of a "Muslim" city. In L. Gayer and C. Jafffrelot (Eds.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation* [Kindle Edition] Location. 2537– 3029/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Galonnier, J. (2015). The Enclave, the Citadel and the Ghetto: The Three-fold Segregation of Upper-Class Muslims in India. *International journal of urban and regional research*, *39(1),* 92–111. http://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12203.

Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace, and peace research. *Journal of peace research, 6(3),* 167–191. https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336900600301

Galtung, J., and Höivik, T. (1971). Structural and direct violence: A note on operationalization. *Journal of Peace research*, *8(1),* 73–76. https://doi.org/10.1177/002234337100800108

Gandhi, A. (2013). Porous Boundaries: Hindu-Muslim Demarcation and Crossings in Delhi. In I. Becci, M. Burchardt and J Casanova (eds.) *Topographies of Faith.* [Adobe Digital Edition] Leiden :Brill. p. 189–205. https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.pva.uib.no.

Gandhi, A. (2016). The language of the crowd: public congregation in Urban India. *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*, *17(3),* 308–315. http://doi:10.1080/1600910X.2016.1265570.

Gandhi, A., and Hoek, L. (2012). Introduction to crowds and conviviality: Ethnographies of the South Asian city. *Ethnography, 13(1),* 3–11. https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138111432022

Ganguly, S. (2018). Socio-Spatial Stigma and Segregation. *Economic and Political Weekly, 53(50),* 50–57. http://researchgate.net/profile/Sriti-

Ganguly/publication/334561219_Socio-spatial_Stigma_and_Segregation_A_Balmiki_Colony_in_Central_Delhi/links/5d55462c45851545af43bff4/Socio-spatial-Stigma-and-Segregation-A-Balmiki-Colony-in-Central-Delhi.pdf

Gaskell, G. D., and Wright, D. B. (1997). Group differences in memory for a political event. In Pennebaker, J.W., Paez, D., and Rime, B. (Ed.) *Collective memory of political events*: *Social Psychological perspectives, Chapter 8* [Kindle Edition]. New Jersey: Lawerence Erlbaum Associate Publishers.

Gayer, L. (2012). Safe and sound: Searching for a good environment in Abul Fazl Enclave, Delhi. In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition] Loc. 3957– 4439/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Gayer, L. and Jaffrelot, C. (2012). Introduction: Muslims of the Indian City: from Centrality to Marginality. In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Loc. 69– 527/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Gentlemen, A. (2007, September 21st). In Mumbai, one man's meat is indeed another man's poison. *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/21/world/asia/21iht-india.1.7594173.html

Ghassem-Fachandi, P. (2012). *Pogrom in Gujarat: Hindu nationalism and anti-Muslim violence in India.* [Kindle Edition]. Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press.

Ghosh, A. (1988) *The Shadow Lines.* [Kindle Edition] UK: John Murray Publishers

Ghosh, A. (2019). *Gun Island.* Gurgaon: Penguin Random House India.

Gieseking, JJ., Mangold, W., Katz, C., Low, S., and Saegert, S. (2014). Introduction in Gieseking, JJ et al. (Eds) *The People, Place and Space Reader.* [Kindle Edition] Location 355/17331. New York: Routledge.

Gill, M.S. (2007) Politics of Population Census Data in India. *Economic and Political Weekly, 42(3)*, 241- 249. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419164.

Goody, J. (1982). *Cooking, cuisine and class: a study in comparative sociology*: [Kindle Edition]. Cambridge University Press.

Govindrajan, R. (2018). *Animal Intimacies: Beastly Love in the Himalayas.* [Kindle Edition]. India: Viking, Penguin Random House India.

Guha, S. (2016). *Beyond Caste: Identity and Power in Southg Asia: Past and Present* (Revised Edition ed.). New Delhi: Permanent Black & Ashoka University.

Gujarat Samachar, October 31st, 2021. સૌરાષ્ટ્રના માર્કેટયાર્ડોમાં આજથી તા. 8 સુધી રહેશે રજાનો માહૌલ . [In Saurashtra's markets, an holiday *māhaul* will exist until 8pm]. *Gujarat Samachar*. https://www.gujaratsamachar.com/news/saurashtra/from-today-in-the-marketyards-of-saurashtra-holiday-atmosphere-will-last-till-8

Gulzar. (1999) ख़ौफ़ [Fear] In Gulzar's *रावी पार और अन्य कहानियाँ [Raavi Paar and other stories]* [Kindle Edition] . New Delhi: Rupa Publications India Private Limited. Location 134–427/8570.

Gulzar. (2017). *दो लोग [Two People]*. [Kindle Edition]. Harper Collins India Publishing Limited.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "culture": Space, identity, and the politics of difference. *Cultural Anthropology, 7(1),* 6–23. **https://doi.org/10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020**

Gupta, D. (2013). *Justice before Reconciliation: Negotiating a 'New Normal' in Post-riot Mumbai and Ahmedabad* [Kindle Edition]: Routledge.

Gupta, R. (2015). There must be some way out of here: Beyond a spatial conception of Muslim ghettoization in Mumbai? *Ethnography*. *16(3),* 352–370. https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138114552941

Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On collective memory*: University of Chicago Press.

Hannerz, U. (1996). *Transnational Connections: Culture, people, places*. London and New York: Routledge

Hannerz, U. (2003). Being there... and there... and there! Reflections on multi-site ethnography. *Ethnography, 4(2),* 201–216. http://doi.org/10.1177/14661381030042003

Hansen, K. (2003). Languages on Stage: Linguistic Pluralism and Community Formation in the Nineteenth-Century Parsi Theatre. *Modern Asian Studies, 37 (2),* 381-405. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X03002051.

Hansen, T. B. (2001). *Wages of Violence: Naming and Identity in Postcolonial Bombay*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Haque, I., Das, D. N., and Patel, P. P. (2018). Spatial segregation in Indian cities: Does the city size matter? *Environment and Urbanization ASIA, 9(1),* 52–68. https://doi.org/10.1177/0975425317749657

Hartnack, C. (2012). Roots and Routes: The Partition of British India in Indian Social Memories. *Journal of Historical Sociology, 25(2),* 244–260. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6443.2012.01424.x

Hausner, S.L., and Gellner, D.N. (2012). Category and Practice as Two Aspects of Religion: The Case of Nepalis in Britain. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 80(4),* 971–997. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfs083.

Hawley, J. S. (2020). *Krishna's Playground: Vrindavan in the 21st Century* [Kindle Edition]. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Henn, A. (2008). Crossroads of religions: Shrines, mobility and urban space in Goa. *International journal of urban and regional research, 32(3),* 658–670. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2008.00803.x

Heuzé, D. G. (2011). Tej City. Protests in Mumbai, 1988-2008. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic* Journal(5). https://doi.org/10.4000/samaj.3213

Hudson, C. (2015). ION Orchard: Atmosphere and consumption in Singapore. *Visual Communication, 14(3),* 289–308. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357215579575

Human Rights Watch. (1999). *Broken People: Caste Violence Against India's "untouchables"*. United States of America: Human Rights Watch

Ilaiah, K. (1996). Beef, BJP and food rights of people. *Economic and Political Weekly, 31*, 1443–1445. http://econdse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/beef_bjp_and_food_rights_of_people.pdf

India Today Web Desk, (2019, December 18). What is NRC: All you need to know about National Register of Citizens. *India Today*. https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/what-is-nrc-all-you-need-to-know-about-national-register-of-citizens-1629195-2019-12-18

Isaka, R. (2002). Language and dominance: The debates over the Gujarati language in the late nineteenth century. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*. 25 (1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/00856400208723463

Iyer, K. (2014). *Boombay: From Precincts to Sprawl.* [Kindle Edition]. Mumbai: Popular Prakashan Private Limited.

Jaffrelot, C. (2009). The Hindu nationalist reinterpretation of pilgrimage in India: the limits of Yatra politics. *Nations and Nationalism, 15 (1),* 1– 19. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2009.00364.x**

Jaffrelot, C., and Thomas, C. (2012). Facing ghettoisation in 'Riot City': Old Ahmedabad and Juhapura between victimisation and self-help. In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Loc. 901– 1628/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Jain, R. (2013). *Mumbra: A Status Report.* https://mdd.maharashtra.gov.in/Site/Upload/Pdf/Mumbra.pdf

Jalais, A. (2010). *Forest of tigers: people, politics and environment in the Sundarbans*. New Delhi: Routledge.

Jamil, G. (2017). *Accumulation by Segregation: Muslim Localities in Delhi*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Jaoul, N. (2016). Citizenship in religious clothing: Navayana Buddhism and Dalitt Emancipation in late 1990s Uttar Pradesh. *Focaal — Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology, 76*, 46–68. http://doi:10.3167/fcl.2016.760104

Jasani, R. (2008). Violence, Reconstruction and Islamic Reform—Stories from the Muslim 'Ghetto'. *Modern Asian Studies, 42*(2–3), 431–456. http://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X07003150

Jeffery, R., Jeffery, C., and Jeffrey, P. (2006). *Parhai ka mahaul*? An educational environment in Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh. In G. De Neve and H. Donner (Ed.) *The Meaning of the Local: Politics of Place in Urban India*. p. 116– 140. London and New York: Routledge.

Jondhale, S., and Beltz, J. (2004). *Reconstructing the world : B.R. Ambedkar and Buddhism in India*. New Dehli: Oxford University Press.

Jørgensen, M. B. (2016). Precariat–What it is and isn't–towards an understanding of what it does. *Critical Sociology, 42(7–8),* 959–974. http//doi.org/10.1177/0896920515608925

Joronen. M. and Griffiths. M. (2019). The Moment to come: geographies of hope in the hyperprecarious sites of occupied Palestine. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*. *101(2),* 69–83 https://doi.org/10.1080/04353684.2019.1569473

Junaid, M. (2020). The Price of Blood: Counterinsurgency, Precarity, and the Moral Discourse of Loyalty in Kashmir. *Comparitive Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, 40(1),* 166–179. https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201X-8186159

Jurgensmeyer, M (2020). Chapter 1: The Clash of Religious Politics in India. in Ray, A. and Ishita, B.D. (Eds.) *Nation, Nationalism and the Public Sphere: Religious Politics in India*. Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd. [Kindle Edition]. Chapter 1.

Kabir, A. J. (2002). Subjectivities, memories, loss of pigskin bags, silver spittoons and the partition of India. *Interventions*, *4(2),* 245‒264. https://doi.org/10.1080/13698010220144315.

Kaikkonen, K. I. (2020). *Contextualising Descriptions of Noaidevuohta: Saami Ritual Specialists in Texts Written until 1871.* Doctoral Dissertation. Department of Archaeology, History, Culture, and Religion Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen, Norway.

Kamat, M. (2018). Lost Histories, Lost Cultures: The Chawls and the Working Classes of Bombay. In A. Verghese, S. Kamat and R. Poncha (eds.) *Mumbai: Socio-Cultural Perspectives. Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities*. p. 159–178. Delhi: Primus Books.

Kamath, N. (2018, January 4). Dalits in Mumbai angry with ‘biased state governments’. The *Hindustan Times, Mumbai News*.

https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/dalits-in-mumbai-angry-with-biased-state-government/story-9kUbg0ZvRB7vSkpeks7aNN.html

Kanchana, R. (2012). Kozhikode (Calicut)'s Kuttichira: Exclusivity Maintained Proudly. In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Harper Collins Publishers, India. Loc. 4889–5330/ 8650.

Kanuha, V. K. (2000). “Being” native versus “going native”: Conducting social work research as an insider. *Social work,* 45(5), 439–447. https://academic.oup.com/sw/article-abstract/45/5/439/1879788.

Kanungo, P. (2012). Marginalised in a syncretic city: Muslims in Cuttack. In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Harper Collins Publishers, India. Loc. 4441– 4885/ 8650.

Karaka, D.F. (1884). *History of the Parsis: including their manners, customs, religion and present position (Vol. 2):* Macmillan.

Karkaria, B. (2015, April 19). Longing and loss at Dadar Parsi Colony. *Mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com*. https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com/others/sunday-read/longing-and-loss-at-dadar-parsi-colony/articleshow/46973617.cms

Karve, I. (1957). The Indian Village. *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute, 18*, 73–106. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42930787.

Katdare, A. (2019). लोकल मैफिल [Local Festival]. In S. Khadtare (Ed.) पु. *ल. देशपांडे लेखनस्पर्धा २०१९ [P.L. Deshpande Writing Contest 2019]* [Kindle Edition] [Marathi Edition]. Bronato.

Katz, C. (1994). Playing the field: questions of fieldwork in geography. *The professional geographer, 46(1),* 67–72. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-0124.1994.00067.x.

Kelkar, A.R. (2004). *त्रिवेणी [The Confluence of Three]* [Google Books Edition]. Delhi: Aalekh Prakashan. https://books.google.co.in/books?id=AzD9bz9qL3kC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_atb&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

Keppens, M. and Bloch, E. (2010). Introduction: Rethinking Religion in India. in Block, Keppens an Hegde (Eds.) *Rethinking Religion in India: The Colonial Construction of Hinduism*. [Kindle Edition]. Routledge South Asian Religious Series. London and New York. P. 1–22

Keul, I. and Stausberg, M. (2014). *Dwelling and Crossing: Socio-cultural dynamics of religious spaces in Mumbai.* [Website]. About page. https://mumbai.w.uib.no/

Khan, S. (2007). Negotiating the Mohalla: Exclusion, Identity and Muslim Women in Mumbai. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *42(17),* 1527–1533. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419519

Khelkar, P. (2017, October 10). नांदेड़ में चुनावी माहौल गरमाया, अंतिम दिन नेताओं ने लगाए एक दूसरे पर आरोप. *Aaj Tak* [Online Edition]. https://aajtak.intoday.in/story/election-in-nanded-maharashtra-shiv-sena-bjp-targets-each-other-1-957346.html

Kidambi, P. (2007). *The Making of an Indian Metropolis: Colonial Governance and Public Culture in Bombay, 1890–1920*: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

King, R. (1999). *Orientalism and Religion*. [Kindle Edition]. Routledge. New York.

Kirmani, N. (2008). History, memory and localised constructions of insecurity. *Economic and Political Weekly*. *43(10).* 57–64. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4027723.

Kirmani, N. (2013). *Questioning the Muslim Woman: Identity and Security in an Urban Indian Locality*. London and New York: Routledge

Klein, I. (1986). Urban development and death: Bombay City, 1870–1914. *Modern Asian Studies, 20(4),* 725–754. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X00013706

Knott, K. (2005). *The location of religion: A spatial analysis*. [Kindle Edition]. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Kobayashi, A. (1994). Coloring the field: Gender,“race,” and the politics of fieldwork. *The professional geographer, 46(1),* 73–80. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-0124.1994.00073.x

Kulkarni, D. D. (2018). Digital mūrtis, virtual darśan and a Hindu religioscape. *Nidan: International Journal for Indian Studies, 3(2),* 40–54. https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC-1273db35e9

Kumar, A. (2012). Khap panchayats: A socio-historical overview. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 59-64. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41419766

Kumar, A., and Kumar, K. (2013). *बृहत् समान्तर कोश. [Brihat Thesaurus].* New Delhi: National Book Trust.

Kumar, R. (2015) *इश्क़ में शहर होना. [A city happens in love]* [Kindle Edition]. New Delhi: Rajkamal Prakashan.

Kumar, S. (2008, September 14). To let: not for Muslims. *Tribune, India, Spectrum.* https://www.tribuneindia.com/2008/20080914/spectrum/main1.htm

Kumbhojkar, S. (2012). Contesting Power, Contesting Memories: The History of the Koregaon Memorial. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *47(42),* 103–107. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41720278.

Lamont, M. and Molnár, V. (2002). The study of boundaries in the social sciences. *Annual review of sociology, 28(1),* 167–195. http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.28.110601.141107

Laranché, S. (2012). Intangible obstacles: Health implications of stigmatization, structural violence, and fear among undocumented immigrants in France. *Social Science and Medicine, 74(6),* 858–63. http://10.1016/j.socscimed.2011.08.016

Larios, B., and Voix, R. (2018). Introduction. Wayside Shrines in India: An Everyday Defiant Religiosity. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal(18),* 1–42. http://journals.openedition.org/samaj/4546.

Lee, J., and Ingold, T. (2006). Fieldwork on foot: Perceiving, routing, socializing. In S. Coleman and P. Collins (eds.) *Locating the field: Space, place and context in anthropology*. p. 67–86. Oxford and New York: Berg

Lincoln, B. (2014). *Discourse and the construction of society: Comparative studies of myth, ritual and classification*; Oxford University Press, USA

Low, S. (1999). Introduction: Theorizing the City. In: Low S (ed) *Theorizing the City: The new urban anthropology reader*.[Kindle Edition]. p. 1–33. New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press.

Low, S. (2017) *Spatializing Culture: The Ethnography of Space and Place*. [Kindle Edition]. London and New York: Routledge.

Luhrmann, T. M. (1996). *The good Parsi: the fate of a colonial elite in a postcolonial society.* USA: Harvard University Press.

Maharashtra Times report. (2009, December 15). माहोल 'टेन्शन खल्लास'चा! [The "end of tension" atmosphere]. *Maharashtra Times.* https://maharashtratimes.indiatimes.com/maharashtra/mumbai-news/-/articleshow/5337885.cms

Palkhiwalla, B.A. (2003). *Mancherji Joshi Colony Directory*. The Dadar-Matunga Parsi Zoroastrian Association (DMPZA)

Mand, K. (2011). Researching Lives in Motion: Multi-sited Strategies in a Transnational Context. In Coleman, S. and von Hellerman, P. (ed.) *Multi-Sited Ethnography: Problems and Possibilities in the Translocation of Research Methods.* p. 41–53. New York. Routledge

Marcus, G. E. (1998). *Ethnography through thick and thin*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Marcus, G.E. (2011). Multi-sited Ethnography: Fice or six things I know about it now. In Coleman, S. and von Hellerman, P. (eds.) *Multi-sited Ethnography: Problems and Possibilities in the Translocation of Research Methods, Chapter 2*.New York: Taylot and Francis.

Marcuse, P. (1998). Space over time: the changing position of the black ghetto in the United States. *Netherlands journal of housing and the built environment, 13 (1*), 7–23. http://doi.org/10.1007/BF02496931

Marcuse, P. (2005). Enclave yes, ghetto no: Segregation and the state. In D.P. Varady (ed.) *Desegregating the city: Ghettos, enclaves, and inequality*. [Adobe Digital Edition]. p. 15-30. Albany: State University of New York.

Masselos, J. (1976). Power in the Bombay "Mohalla", 1904-1915: an exploration into the world of the Indian urban Muslim. *South Asia- Journal of South Asian Studies*, *6(1),* 78–81. http://doi.org/10.1080/00856407608730711

Masselos, J. (1993). The city as represented in crowd action: Bombay, 1893. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *28(5),* 182–188. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4399343

Masselos, J. (1994). The Bombay riots of January 1993: The politics of urban conflagration. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies, 17(1),* 79–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/00856409408723217

Massey, D.S. and Denton, N.A. (1993). *American apartheid: Segregation and the making of the underclass*. Harvard University Press

Mazumdar, S. (2005). Religious place attachment, squatting, and "qualitative" research: A commentary. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 25(1*), 87–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2004.09.003.

Mazumdar, S. and Mazumdar, S. (1999). 'Women's significant spaces': Religion, space, and community. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 19(2),* 159–170. https://doi.org/10.1006/jevp.1999.0117

Mazumdar, S. and Mazumdar, S. (2004). Religion and place attachment: A study of sacred places. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 24(3),* 385–397. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2004.08.005

McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York and London. The Guilford Press.

McAdams, D. P. and Bowman, P. J. (2013). Narrating life's turning points: Redemption and contamination.In McAdams, D.P., Josselson, R., and Lieblich, A. (ed.) *Turns in the Road: Narrative Studies of Lives in Transition. Chapter 1*. [Kindle Edition] Washington, DC: American Psychological Association

McCloskey, M., Wible, C. G., and Cohen, N. J. (1988). Is there a special flashbulb-memory mechanism? *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 117*(2), 171. https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.117.2.171

McGregor, R.S. (Ed.) (1993). *Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Mehta, D. and Chatterji, R. (2001). Boundaries, Names, Alterities. In V.Das et al, (eds) *Remaking a world: Violence, social suffering, and recovery*. p. 201–225. Berkley: University of California Press.

Mehta, S. K. (1968). Patterns of residence in poona (India) by income, education, and occupation (1937-65). *American Journal of Sociology, 73(4),* 496–508. https://doi.org/10.1086/224509

Mehta, S. K. (1969). Patterns of residence in Poona, India, by caste and religion: 1822–1965. *Demography, 6(4),* 473–491. https://doi.org/10.2307/2060091.

Menon, M. (2010). Chronicle of Communal Riots in Bombay Presidency (1893-1945). *Economic and Political Weekly*, 45(47), 63–72. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25764155.

Menon, M. (2018). *Riots and after in Mumbai: Chronicles of Truth and Reconciliation* [Kindle Edition]. New Delhi: SAGE Publications Private Limited, India.

Menon, P.M. (2012, April 11th). Apartment blocks in city turn pure vegetarian. *TNN, Times of India*. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/Apartment-blocks-in-city-turn-pure-vegetarian/articleshow/12618379.cms

Menon, M. and Adarkar, N. (2004). *One hundred years one hundred voices: The millworkers of Girangaon: an Oral History*, [Kindle Edition.] (2017). New Delhi: New Text Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Merriam, S. B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M.-Y., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., and Muhamad, M. (2001). Power and positionality: Negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 20*(5), 405–416. https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370120490.

Michaels, A. (2004). *Hinduism Past and Present*: Orient Blackswan.

Michman, D. (2011). *The emergence of Jewish Ghettos during the Holocaust*. [Kindle Edition]. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, W.I. (1997). *The Anantomy of Disgust*. [Kindle Edition]. Harvard University Press.

Mintz, S. W., and Du Bois, C. M. (2002). The anthropology of food and eating. *Annual review of anthropology, 31(1),* 99–119. http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.32.032702.131011

Misztal, B. A. (2003). *Theories of social remembering*. England and Philadelphia: Open University Press, McGraw Hill.

Mitra, A., and Ray, D. (2014). Implications of an economic theory of conflict: Hindu-Muslim violence in India. *Journal of Political Economy, 122*(4), 719–765. https://doi.org/10.1086/676316

Mogul, R. (2020, July 5). One of india's richest minority groups enjoys some of Mumbai's best rents. *CNN World*. https://edition.cnn.com/2020/07/04/india/india-parsi-colony-intl-hnk/index.html

Mohammad-Arif, A. (2012). Muslims in Bangalore: A minority at ease? . In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Loc. 5332– 5779/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Moodie, D. (2018). *The Making of a Modern Temple and a Hindu City: Kalighat and Kolkata*: Oxford University Press.

Mosoetsa, S., Stillerman, J., and Tilly, C. (2016). Precarious labor, south and north: An introduction. *International Labor and Working-Class History, 89*, 5–19. http://doi.org/10.1017/S0147547916000028

Mullings, B. (1999). Insider or outsider, both or neither: some dilemmas of interviewing in a cross-cultural setting. *Geoforum, 30(4),* 337–350. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0016-7185(99)00025-1

Nair, M.R. (2019, February 18th). Jews in Mumbai find new ways to keep religious traditions alive. *Hindustan Times.* https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/jews-in-mumbai-find-new-ways-to-keep-religious-traditions-alive/story-CYBhfoOQ1qoGIjG90vOgSJ.html

Nandy, A. (2004). The changing popular culture of Indian food: Preliminary notes. *South Asia Research, 24(1),* 9–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/0262728004042760

Nanji, R., and Dhalla, H. (2007). The landing of the Zoroastrians in Sanjan: the archaeological evidence. In *Parsis in India and the Diaspora*. p. 49–72. Routledge.

Narayan, K. (1993). How native is a “native” anthropologist? *American Anthropologist, 95(3),* 671–686. **https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1993.95.3.02a00070**

Narayan, K. (2012). *Alive in the writing: Crafting ethnography in the company of Chekhov*. [Kindle Edition]. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Narayanan, Y. (2014). *Religion, heritage and the sustainable city: Hinduism and urbanisation in Jaipur*. Routledge.

Naseemullah, A. (2018). Riots and rebellion: State, society and the geography of conflict in India. *Political Geography, 63,* 104–115. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.06.006.

Natu, N., and Mukherji, A. (2015, May 30th). Intolerant society: Marathi man denied flat in ‘veg only’ tower in Mumbai. *TNN, Times of India.* https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/Intolerant-society-Marathi-man-denied-flat-in-veg-only-tower-in-Mumbai/articleshow/47476428.cms

Neisser, U. (1982). Snapshots or benchmarks. *Memory observed: Remembering in natural contexts*, 43–48. San Francisco: W.H. Freeman & Company.

Nejad, R. M. (2015). The Muharram Procession of Mumbai. In P. van der Veer (ed.) *Handbook of Religion and the Asian City: Aspiration and Urbanization in the Twenty-First Century*. p. 89–109. Oakland: University of California Press.

Newswire report. (2009, July 31st). Denied house because I’m Muslim: Emraan Hashmi. *Outlook*. https://www.outlookindia.com/newswire/story/denied-house-because-im-muslim-emraan-hashmi/663649.

Neilson, B., and Rossiter, N. (2005). FCJ-022 From Precarity to Precariousness and Back Again: Labour, life and unstable networks. *The Fibreculture Journal,* 5.

Neilson, B., and Rossiter, N. (2008). Precarity as a political concept, or, Fordism as exception. *Theory, Culture & Society, 25(7–8),* 51–72. http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276408097796

Nelson, K. (2003). Narrative and Self, Myth and Memory: Emergence of the Cultural Self. *Autobiographical Memory and the Construction of a Narrative Self: Developmental and Cultural Perspectives*, 1. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Nijman, J. (2010). A study of Space in Mumbai Slums. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie, 101(1),* 4–17. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9663.2009.00576.x**

Nippert-Eng, C. E. (1996). *Home and work: Negotiating boundaries through everyday life*. [Kindle Edition]. London: University of Chicago Press.

Omvedt, G. (2003). *Buddhism in India: Challenging Brahminism and Caste.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, India Pvt. Ltd.

O'Sullivan., M.E. (2009). From Catholic Milieu to Lived Religion: The Social and Cultural History of Modern German Catholocism. *History Compass, 7 (3),* 837–861. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-0542.2009.00589.x**

Osella, C. and Osella, F. (2008). Food, memory, community: Kerala as both 'Indian Ocean'zone and as agricultural homeland. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies, 31(1),* 170–198. http://doi.org/10.1080/00856400701877232

Paez, D., Basabe, N., and Gonzalez, J.L. (1997). Social processes and collective memory: A cross-cultural approach to remembering political events. In Pennebaker, J.W., Paez, D., and Rime, B. (Ed.) *Collective memory of political events*: *Social Psychological perspectives Chapter 7* [Kindle Edition]. New Jersey: Lawerence Erlbaum Associate Publishers.

Pai, P. (2005). Multilingualism, multiculturalism and education: Case study of Mumbai City. In *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism p. 1794–1806*

Paik, S. (2011). Mahar-Dalit-Buddhist: the history and politics of naming in Maharashtra. *Contributions to Indian sociology, 45(2),* 217–241. http://doi.org/10.1177/006996671104500203

Palsetia, J. S. (2001a). Mad dogs and Parsis: The Bombay dog riots of 1832. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic society, 11(1),* 13–30. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186301000128.

Palsetia, J. S. (2001b). The Parsis of India: preservation of identity in Bombay city (Reprint 2008). New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.

Palsetia, J.S. (2005). Merchant Charity and public identity formation in colonial India: The case of Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. *40 (3).* 197–217. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909605055071

Pallasma, J (2014) Space, Place, and Atmosphere: Peripheral perception in existential experience. In: Borch C, Böhme G et al (eds) *Architectural Atmospheres. On the Experience and Politics of Architecture*. [Adobe Digital Reader] p. 18– 41. Basel, Switzerland: Birkhauser.

Pandey, G. (2006). The Time of the Dalit Conversion. *Economic and Political Weekly, 41(18),* 1779–1788. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4418177

Parveen, N. (2014, November). The Making of Muslim *Ilaqe*. *Seminar, 663,* 44–50.

Patel, S. (1995). Bombay's urban predicament. In S. Patel and A. Thorner (Eds.) *Bombay: Metaphor for modern India*. p. xiii–xxxv. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Pattillo, M. (2003). Extending the boundaries and definition of the ghetto. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 26(6),* 1046–1057. http://doi.org/10.1080/0141987032000132487

Patwardhan, A. (Film Maker). (2011). *Jai Bhim Comrade (Documentary Film)*. A. Patwardhan (Producer). Mumbai.

Pawar, Y. and Venkatraman, S. (2009, May 8th). Dalit colony firing : Manohar Kadam gets lifer. *NDTV.* http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/dalit-colony-firing-manohar-kadam-gets-lifer-393780

Peach, C. (2005). The ghetto and the ethnic enclave. In D.P. Varady (ed.) *Desegregating the city: Ghettos, enclaves, and inequality*. [Adobe Digital Edition]. p. 31–48. Albany: State University of New York.

Peer, B. (2015, June 10). In India’s largest Muslim ghetto. *The Hindu*. http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/in-indias-largest-muslim-ghetto/article7330090.ece

Pennebaker, J.W. and Banasik, B.L. (1997). On the creating and maintenance of collective memories: History as social psychology. In Pennebaker, J.W., Paez, D.,

and Rime, B. (Ed.) *Collective memory of political events*: *Social Psychological perspectives Chapter 1* [Kindle Edition]. New Jersey: Lawerence Erlbaum Associate Publishers.

Phadke, S., Khan, S., and Ranade, S. (2011). *Why loiter?: Women and risk on Mumbai streets*. [Kindle Edition] New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

Pinkney, A. M. (2016). Pocketing the Himalaya: sacred souvenirs of the Chār Dhām pilgrimage. In M.A. Sijapati and J.V. Birkenholtz (eds.) *Religion and Modernity in the Himalaya* [Electronic Book] London: Routledge . p. 83–102. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315659374

Poncha, R. (2018a). A Brief History of Bombay. In A. Verghese, S. Kamat, and R. Poncha (eds.) *Mumbai: Socio-Cultural Perspectives. Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities*. p. 3–14. Delhi: Primus Books.

Poncha, R. (2018b). The Parsis of Bombay. In A. Verghese, S. Kamat and R. Poncha (eds.) *Mumbai: Socio-Cultural Perspectives. Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities*. p. 57–72. Delhi: Primus Books.

Portelli, A. (2016). What makes oral history different. In Perks, R. and A, Thomson. (Eds.) *The Oral History Reader* (Third Edition) [Kindle Edition], *Chapter 4.* New York: Routledge.

Prager, J. (2009). *Presenting the past: Psychoanalysis and the sociology of misremembering*: Harvard University Press.

Prasad, R.S. (2020). Law banning triple talaq: A year ago today we reached a defining moment in the empowerment of women. *ToI Edit page, The Times of India* (from

ToI Print edition). https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/toi-edit-page/law-banning-triple-talaq-a-year-ago-today-we-reached-a-defining-moment-in-empowerment-of-women/

Premchand. M. (2017) *मानसरोवर: भाग 1 (Mansarovar : Part 1*) [Kindle Edition]Novastella, Palm Leaf Press.

Preston, L. W. (2002). Shrines and neighbourhood in early nineteenth-century Pune, India. *Journal of Historical Geography, 28(2),* 203–215. https://doi.org/10.1006/jhge.2001.0398

Punathil, S. (2021). Archival ethnography and ethnography of archiving: towards an anthropology of riot inquiry commission reports in postcolonial India. *History and Anthropology, 32 (3),* 312–330. https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.2020.1854750.

Rabinow, P. (2007). *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco: Thirteenth Anniversary Edition*. [Kindle Edition]. Oakland: Univ of California Press.

Rajaraman, I., Bohra, O.P., and Renganathan, V.S. (1996). Augmentation of Panchayat Resources. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *31 (18),* 1071– 1083. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4404091

Rao, A. (2009). *The caste question : Dalits and the politics of modern India*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

Rao, N. A., and Thaha, S. A. (2012). Muslims of Hyderabad: Land locked in the walled city. In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Loc. 3538– 3954/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Rashid, O. (2017, December 10th) What happened that December night in Ayodhya. *The Hindu.* https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/what-happened-that-december-night-in-ayodhya/article21383162.ece

Rathore, G. J. S. (2012). Ramganj, Jaipur: From occupation-based to "communal'neighbourhood?". In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Loc. 1631– 2082/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Raychaudhury, A. B. (2004). Nostalgia of 'Desh', Memories of Partition. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *39 (52),* 5653–5660. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4415984.

Reese, E. and Fivush, R. (2008). The development of collective remembering. *Memory, 16(3),* 201–212. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658210701806516

Renu, P. and Hansen, K. (1982). Panchlight. *Journal of South Asian Literature, 17(2*), 5–8. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40872469

Rimé, B. and Christophe, V. (1997). How individual emotional episodes feed collective memory. In Pennebaker, J.W., Paez, D., and Rime, B. (Ed.) *Collective memory of political events*: *Social Psychological perspectives. Chapter 6* [Kindle Edition]. New Jersey: Lawerence Erlbaum Associate Publishers.

Robinson, R. (2005). *Tremors of violence: Muslim survivors of ethnic strife in Western India* [Kindle Edition]. SAGE Publications India.

Robinson, R. (2010). Boundary battles: Muslim women and community identity in the aftermath of violence. *Women's Studies International Forum, 33(4),* 365–373. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2010.02.010

Rodman, M. C. (1992). Empowering place: Multilocality and multivocality. *American Anthropologist, 94(3),* 640–656. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1992.94.3.02a00060

Rogan, M., Roever, S., Chen, M. A., and Carré, F. (2017). Informal Employment in the Global South: Globalization, Production Relations, and "Precarity". In A. Kallaberg and S. Vallas (Eds.) *Precarious Work (Research in the Sociology of Work Volume 31)*. Pp 307– 333. Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S0277-283320170000031010

Rosenthal, G. (1993) Reconstruction of Life Stories. In Josselson, R. and Lieblich. A. (Eds.) *The Narrative Study of Lives Volume I, Chapter 4* [Kindle Edition] SAGE Publications.

Round, J. and Kuznetsova, I. (2016). Necropolitics and the migrant as a political subject of disgust: The precarious everyday of Russia's labour migrants. *Critical Sociology, 42(7–8),* 1017–1034. http://doi.org/10.1177/0896920516645934

Rozin, P. and Fallon, A. E. (1987). A perspective on disgust. *Psychological review, 94*(1), 23–41. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.94.1.23

Rozin, P., Haidt, J. and McCauley, C. R. (1999). Disgust: The body and soul emotion. In T. Dalgleish and M. Power (eds.) *Handbook of cognition and emotion*, Sussex: John Wiley and Sons. 429–445.

Rubin, D. C. (1999). *Remembering our past: Studies in autobiographical memory*: Cambridge University Press.

Saigal A (2008) Community Caretaking and Women Volunteer Teachers in Mumbai Slums. *Economic and Political Weekly. 43(42),* 69–75. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40278079

Sainath, P. (1994). Bombay riots of December 1992: a report. In M. Arslan and J. Rajan (Eds.) *Communalism in India: Challenge and Response*. p.191–199. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.

Saint, T. K. (2019). *Witnessing partition: Memory, history, fiction*: Taylor and Francis.

Satyanarayana, K. (2020). Caste violence: free speech or atrocity?. In Malreddy, P.K., Purakayastha, A.S. and Heidemann, B. (eds.) *Violence in South Asia: Contemporary perspectives.* p 37–51. London and New York: Routledge

Schierup, C.U. (2016). Under the rainbow: migration, precarity and people power in post-apartheid South Africa. *Critical Sociology, 42(7–8),* 1051–1068. https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920515621118

Schierup, C.U. and Jørgensen, M. B. (2016). An introduction to the special issue. Politics of precarity: Migrant conditions, struggles and experiences. *Critical Sociology, 42(7–8),* 947–958. https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920516640065

Schierup, C. U., Munck, R., Likić-Brborić, B., and Neergaard, A. (2015). Introduction: Migration, precarity and global governance: Challenges and opportunities for labour. In *Migration, Precarity and Global Governance: Challenges and Opportunities for Labour (first edition)* p. 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198728863.003.0001

Schudson, M. (1995). Dynamics of distortion in collective memory. *Memory distortion: How minds, brains, and societies reconstruct the past, 346.*

Scroll.in (Producer). (2018). *25 years of Bombay Riots: How Mumbra became India's largest Muslim ghetto.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltQx8weyipQ

Sen, M. (2016). *Clay Modelling in West Bengal: Between Art, Religion and Politics.* Doctoral dissertation. Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages. Faculty of Humanities, University of Oslo.

Shaban, A. (2018). Ethnic politics, Muslims and space in contemporary Mumbai. In A. Shaban (ed.) *Lives of Muslims in India* [Kindle Edition]. Location 4692–5017/6377. Oxon and New York: Routledge India.

Shah, G. (2001). *Dalit identity and politics (Vol. 2).* New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd.

Shaikh, Z. (2017, January 5). Spatial inequaliy a glaring reality in Mumbai's Muslim-dominated areas. *The Indian Express, Cities, Mumbai*. https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/spatial-inequality-a-glaring-reality-in-mumbais-muslim-dominated-areas-4459453/

Shivam, P. (2016). The Space of Street-side Religiosity. *Economic & Political Weekly, 51*(4), 56–62.

Srikrishna, B.N. (1998). *Srikrishna Commission Report*. https://www.sabrang.com/srikrish/sri%20main.htm

Shukla, S. (1968). *राग दरबारी [The Song Darbari]* [Kindle Edition]. New Delhi: Rajkamal Prakashan.

Sidhwani, P. (2015). Spatial inequalities in big Indian cities. *Economic & Political Weekly, 50(22),* 55–62. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24482493

Sikand, Y. (2003). *Sacred spaces: Exploring traditions of shared faith in India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

Singh, G., Vithayathil, T., & Pradhan, K. C. (2019). Recasting inequality: residential segregation by caste over time in urban India. *Environment and urbanization, 31(2),* 615–634. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247818812330

Singh, K. (2010). Temple of Eternal Return: The Swāminārāyan Akshardhām Complex in Delhi. *Artibus Asiae, 70(1),* 47–76. https://www.jstor.org/stable/20801632.

Singh, R. (2012, December 6). Fall in Ayodhya, wounded in Mumbra. *Tehalka*. http://old.tehelka.com/fall-in-ayodhya-wounded-in-mumbra/.

Skjoldli, J. (2017). *World Youth Day: Religious Interaction at a Catholic Festival*. Doctoral dissertation. Department of Archaeology, History, Culture Studies, and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen.

Solanki, G. (2018). *ग्यारहवीं A के लड़के [The Boys of Class11th A]* [Kindle Edition]. New Delhi: Rajkamal Prakashan.

Sridhar, K. K. (2002). Societal multilingualism and world Englishes: Their implications for teaching ESL. *Indian journal of applied linguistics*, *28(2),* 83-100.

Srinivas, M.N. (1952). *Religion and society among the Coorgs of South India*. Coorg: Asia Publishing House.

Srinivas, M. N. (1994). *The dominant caste and other essays*: Oxford University Press, USA.

Stow, K.R. (2001). *Theatre of Acculturation: The Roman Ghetto in the Sixteenth Century*. [Adobe Digital Edition]. Seattle: University of Washington Press. https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.pva.uib.no.

Staples, J. (2020). *Sacred Cows and Chicken Manchurian: The Everyday Politics of Eating Meat in India.* [Kindle Edition]. University of Washington Press.

Subramaniam, K. (2016). *Srimad Bhagavatam.* [Kindle Edition]. Mumbai: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Sumartojo S (2015) On atmosphere and darkness at Australia's Anzac Day Dawn Service. *Visual Communication. 14 (3),* 267–288. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357215579587

Susewind, R. (2017). Muslims in Indian cities: Degrees of segregation and the elusive ghetto. *Environment and Planning A, 49*(6), 1286–1307. http://10.1177/0308518X17696071.

Svob, C. and Brown, N. R. (2012). Intergenerational transmission of the reminiscence bump and biographical conflict knowledge. *Psychological science, 23(11),* 1404–1409. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612445316

Svob, C., Brown, N. R., Takšić, V., Katulić, K., and Žauhar, V. (2016). Intergenerational transmission of historical memories and social-distance attitudes in post-war second-generation Croatians. *Memory & Cognition, 44(6),* 846–855. http://doi:10.3758/s13421-016-0607-x

Sweetman, P. (2003). Twenty-first century dis-ease? Habitual reflexivity or the reflexive habitus. *The sociological review, 51*(4), 528–549.

Tandon, M. and Sehgal, V. (2017). Traditional Indian religious streets: A spatial study of the streets of Mathura. *Frontiers of architectural research, 6(4),* 469–479. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foar.2017.10.001

Talarico, J. M. and Rubin, D. C. (2003). Confidence, not consistency, characterizes flashbulb memories. *Psychological science, 14(5),* 455–461. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9280.02453

Tayob, S. (2019). Disgust as Embodied Critique: Being Middle Class and Muslim in Mumbai, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies. 42 (6),* 1192–1209 https://doi.org/10.1080/00856401.2019.1663654

Teltumbde, A. (2018). The Myth of Bhima Koregaon Reinforces the Identities It Seeks to Transcend. *The Wire*. https://thewire.in/caste/myth-bhima-koregaon-reinforces-identities-seeks-transcend

Thakur, R. A. T. I. K. A., Sinha, A. K., and Pathak, R. K. (2015). Khap Panchayats in Transition with Contemporary Times: An Anthropological Evaluation. *South Asian Anthropologist*, *15*(1), 9–14. https://www.mukpublications.com/resources/vol15-1-2.pdf

Thakur, S. and Moharana, B. (2018). Bhima Koregaon and politics of the subaltern. *Economic & Political Weekly, 53*(7), 12–14.

Thatra, G. (2020). Dalit Chembur: Spatializing the Caste Question in Bombay, c. 1920s-1970s. *Journal of Urban History.* https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144220923631

Thaver, M. (2017, July 31st). Four Years later, Battle tank outside Mumbra stands forgotten. *The Indian Express*.

https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/four-years-later-battle-tank-outside-mumbra-station-stands-forgotten-4774811/

Thenua, B. S. (2016). Khap Panchayats among the Jats of North-West: A Socio-Historical Interpretation of Medieval Period. *IRA-International Journal of Management & Social Sciences, 5(3),* 402–407. http://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jmss.v5.n3.p2

Thibault, J.P. (2015) The backstage of urban ambiances: When atmospheres pervade everyday experience. *Emotion, Space and Society, 15,* 39–46. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2014.07.001

Thompson, P. (2017). *The voice of the past: Oral history*: Oxford university press.

Thomson, A. (2013). *Anzac memories: Living with the legend*. [Kindle Edition] Victoria, Australia: Monash University Publishing.

Tilley, C. (1994). *A phenomenology of landscape: places, paths, and monuments.* (Vol. 10). Berg: Oxford.

Times News Network. (2001, September 13) Gundewar report not to be referred: Court. *The Times of India, City News, Mumbai News.* https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/Gundewar-report-not-to-be-refered-court/articleshow/1897049150.cms?from=mdr

Tiwari, S. (2013). Memories of Partition: Revisiting Saadat Hasan Manto. *Economic and Political Weekly, 48(25),* 50–58. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23527974.

Tomsky, T. (2008). Fifty Years On: Melancholic (Re) collections and Women's Voices from the Partition of India. *Life Writing, 5(1),* 61–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/14484520801902340

Trevithick, A. (2006). *The Revival of Buddhist Pilgrimage at Bodh Gaya (1811–1949): Anagarika Dharmapala and the Mahabodhi Temple*: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Trimikliniotis, N., Parsanoglou, D., and Tsianos, V. S. (2016). Mobile commons and/in precarious spaces: Mapping migrant struggles and social resistance. *Critical Sociology, 42(7–8),* 1035–1049. http://doi.org/10.1177/0896920515614983

Tsianos, V. and Papadopoulos, D. (2006). Precarity: A savage journey to the heart of embodied capitalism. *Transversal Journal, 11*. https://transversal.at/transversal/1106/tsianos-papadopoulos/en

United Nations. (2018). *The World's Cities in 2018*. https://www.un.org/en/events/citiesday/assets/pdf/the_worlds_cities_in_2018_data_booklet.pdf

Varshney, A. (2002). *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life : Hindus and Muslims in India*. [Kindle Edition]. New Haven, CT, USA: Yale University Press.

Van Maanen, J. (2011). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography* [Kindle Edition]. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Van Vree, F. (2013). Absent memories. *Cultural analysis, 12*, 1–12.

Venugopal, V., and Yilmaz, S. (2009). Decentralization in Kerala: Panchayat government discretion and accountability. *Public Administration and Development: The International Journal of Management Research and Practice*, *29(4),* 316–329. **https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.541**

Verniers, G. (2012). A minority within a minority: the Shias of Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow. In L. Gayer and C. Jaffrelot (Ed.) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. [Kindle Edition]. Loc. 2084– 2533/ 8650. Harper Collins Publishers, India.

Vevaina, L. (2013). Excarnation and the city: The Tower of Silence debates in Mumbai. In I. Becci, M. Burchardt and J. Casanova (eds.) *Topographies of Faith.* [Adobe Digital Edition] p. 73–955. Leiden :Brill.

Vevaina, L. (2015). Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good (Trust) Deeds. In P. van der Veer (ed.) *Handbook of Religion and the Asian City: Aspiration and Urbanization in the Twenty-First Century*. p. 152–167. Oakland: University of California Press.

Vij, S. (2006). Dalits, like flies to feudal lords. *Tehelka.* http://archive.tehelka.com/story_main22.asp?filename=Ne111106Dalits_like.asp

Vithayathil, T., and Singh, G. (2012). Spaces of discrimination. *Economic & Political Weekly, 47(37),* 60–66. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41720139.

Wacquant, L. (1997). Three Pernicious Premises in the Study of the American Ghetto. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 21 (2),* 341–353. http://doi/10.1111/1468-2427.00076

Wacquant, L. (2007). Territorial stigmatization in the age of advanced marginality. *Thesis Eleven*, *91(1),* 66–77. http://doi.org/10.1177/0725513607082003

Wacquant, L. (2010). Urban Desolation and Symbolic Denigration in the Hyperghetto. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *73(3),* 215–219. http://doi.org/10.1177/0190272510377880

Wacquant, L. (2012). A Janus-Faced Institution of Ethnoracial Closure: A Sociological Specification of the Ghetto. In R. Hutchison and B. D. Haynes (Ed.) *The Ghetto: Contemporary Global Issues and Controversies*. [Adobe Digital Edition]. Routledge. p 75–128. https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.pva.uib.no.

Wacquant, L. (2014). Marginality, ethnicity and penality in the neo-liberal city: an analytic cartography. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37(10),* 1687–1711. http://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2014.931991

Wadia, R.R. (2007). Bombay Parsi merchants in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In J. Hinnells and A. Williams (Eds.) *Parsis in India and the Diaspora.* pp. 133–149. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Waite, L. (2009). A place and space for a critical geography of precarity? *Geography Compass, 3(1),* 412–433. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2008.00184.x

Wallis, J., and Lambert, J. (2013). Reflections from the field: Challenges in managing agendas and expectations around Football for Peace in Israel. In N. Schulenkorf and D. Adair (eds.) *Global Sport-for-Development* . p. 99–114. London: Palgrave Mcmillan.

Wankhede, H.S. (2008). The Political and Social in the Dalit Movement Today. *Economic and Political Weekly, 43 (6),* 50-57. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40277102.

Waterson, R. (2005). Enduring Landscape, Changing Habitus: The Sa'dan Toraja of Sulawesi, Indonesia. In J. Hillier and E. Rooksby (Eds.) *Habitus: A Sense of Place* (Second Edition). p. 334– 355. London and New York: Routledge.

Weaver, C. A. (1993). Do you need a" flash" to form a flashbulb memory? *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 122*(1), 39. https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.122.1.39

Wilkinson, S. I. (2006). *Votes and violence: Electoral competition and ethnic riots in India.* [Kindle Edition] : Cambridge University Press.

Williams, A. (2009). *The Zoroastrian Myth of Migration from Iran and Settlement in the Indian Diaspora: Text, Translation and Analysis of the 16th Century Quesse-ye Sanjan 'The Story of Sanjan'*: Brill

Wilson, W.J. (1984). The Black Underclass. *The Wilson Quarterly (1976-), 8* (2), 88–99. www.jstor.org/stable/40256751

Wimmer, A. (2013). *Ethnic boundary making: Institutions, power, networks*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wirth, L. (1927). The Ghetto. *American Journal of Sociology*, 33(1), 57. http://doi.org/10.1086/214333

Wirth, L. (1928). *The ghetto*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wright, D. B., and Gaskell, G. D. (1995). Flashbulb memories: Conceptual and methodological issues. *Memory, 3(1),* 67–80. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658219508251497

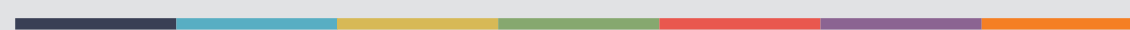
Yadav, V. and Bhagat, R.B. (2017). Changes in Slum Population and Living Conditions of Slum Dwellers in Mumbai. *Mumbai Reader*. 265–278. http://www.udri.org/wp-content/uploads/Mumbai%20Reader/MR%2017/23%20Changes%20in%20slum%20population%20and%20living%20conditions%20of%20slum%20dwellers%20in%20Mumbai_Vidya%20Yadav%2C%20RBBhagat.pdf

Yunus, R. (2018). *Inscriptions of (in)equality: Interrogating texts and practices in an Indian classroom.* Doctoral dissertation. Department of Sociology, University of Warwick.

Zelliot, E. (2011). Connected peoples: Pilgrimage in the structure of the Ambedkar movement. *Contemporary Voice of Dalit, 4(1),* 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1177/0974354520110101.

.

Graphic design: Communication Division, UiB / Print: Skipnes Kommunikasjon AS



uib.no

ISBN: 9788230858509 (print)
9788230846360 (PDF)